

THE STATEMENT OF GOVERNMENT POLICY ON ADULT SAFEGUARDING

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1. Summary

- 1.1 The Government's policy on Adult Safeguarding has been clearly set out in the statement published on 16th May 2011 (Appendix A). The Government proposes that agencies can use the principles set out in the statement to benchmark existing adult safeguarding arrangements to see how far they support the aim of preventing and reducing the risk of harm to vulnerable adults and to measure future improvements. The set of principles can be used by Local Authority Social Services and housing, health, the police and other agencies for both developing and assessing the effectiveness of their local safeguarding arrangements.
- 1.2 This report summarises the content of the statement and proposes that the individual partner members of the Adult Safeguarding Board considers the principles outlined in the statement and contributes to a review of the Adult Safeguarding Policy accordingly.

2. Recommendations

- A. That Members of the Health & Wellbeing Board ensure that as partner members of the Adult Safeguarding Board they contribute to the ongoing review of the Adult Safeguarding Policy in light of the principles set out by the Government.
- B. That the Health & Wellbeing Board receives a report by January 2012 on the revised adult protection policy and the proposed improvements.

REPORT

3. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 3.1 The Government's recently published statement of policy on Adult Safeguarding provides the Local Authority, in partnership with other public agencies and the community, the opportunity to review the current Adult Safeguarding Policy. The risks to vulnerable people of being subject to abuse or significant harm are reduced

by a clear, effective and agreed policy being in place, to which all partners contribute.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 Agencies should continue to fund the current infrastructure which supports adult safeguarding.

5. Background

5.1 The Government's policy objective is to prevent and reduce the risk of significant harm to vulnerable adults from abuse or other types of exploitation whilst supporting individuals in maintaining control over their lives.

5.2 The Government believes that safeguarding is everybody's business with communities playing a part in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse. Measures need to be in place locally to protect those least able to help themselves.

5.3 Safeguards against poor practice, harm and abuse need to be an integral part of care and support. We should achieve this through partnerships between local organisations and agencies (such as housing, health, the police and Care Quality Commissioning (CQC) and with communities and individuals.

5.4 The last service inspection by CQC of Adult Safeguarding in December 2009 concluded that Shropshire was performing well in safeguarding adults. It also noted the Council and its partners "gave a high priority and was working to successfully improve arrangements for keeping local people safe".

5.5 In order to continue to maintain and improve this approach, the Council and its partners needs to review its safeguarding approach and activity against the principles clearly set out in the statement. These are:-

- **Empowerment** – Presumption of person led decisions and informed consent.
- **Protection** – Support and representation for those in greatest need.
- **Prevention** - It is better to take action before harm occurs.
- **Proportionality** – Proportionate and least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
- **Partnership**- Local solutions through services working with their communities, Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
- **Accountability** – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Shropshire Council has carried out a preliminary benchmarking exercise of its own activity against the principles and outcomes as set out in the statement and whilst we believe we fare very well there is room for further improvement. This will no doubt be the same for other agencies.

- 6.2 It is therefore proposed that the Adult Safeguarding Board leads a review of the Adult Protection and Safeguarding Policy, using the outcomes and principles and that organisations contribute to that review, both as individual organisations and partners on the Safeguarding Board.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

None

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Cllr Anne Hartley

Local Member

All

Appendices

Appendix. 1 – Statement of Government Policy on Adult Safeguarding.