

Public Protection Service Redesign

Report by: Alison White, Head of Adult and Community Care

1 Purpose of Report

This report is to formally inform Midlothian council of the innovative new arrangements for Public Protection across East and Midlothian local authority areas.

2 Background

2.1 For some time it has been recognised that while the structures in Public Protection have developed separately over time, the reality for most service users is that their needs often span more than one category, for example many children or adults at risk of harm live in households where domestic violence is an issue.

2.2 In addition the current structure and number of committees is onerous, requiring multiple attendances by increasingly busy staff and partners, often at senior management level. Whilst recognising important differences between the areas, as the public protection agenda is growing, partnership agendas reflect this common interest and there is frequently duplication of content. Accordingly East and Midlothian Critical Services Oversight Group (CSOG), comprising Chief Officers of all constituent partner agencies, agreed to establish a project to address the significant overlaps within different areas of public protection, and to streamline its Committee structures and establish a single Public Protection Committee. To our knowledge this is the first such committee in Scotland.

2.3 CSOG will continue to provide the necessary governance, scrutiny and oversight of Public Protection work across both local authority areas.

2.4 East and Midlothian Public Protection Committee (EMPPC) will be established to replace the current Adult Protection Committee, Child Protection Committee, Offender Management Committee and Violence Against Women Partnership and to ensure robust links with Midlothian and East Lothian Drug and Alcohol Partnership (MELDAP). The chair is required to be independent of the two Councils in line with Adult Support and Protection statute, therefore defacto it must fall to either Health or Police, or alternatively consideration could be given to the appointment of an Independent chair. CSOG has agreed that the initial chair of the new Committee will be the Assistant Director for Public Protection for NHS Lothian.

2.5 In addition there will be one standing sub-group which will focus on Performance and Quality across all areas. This sub-group will be chaired by a senior member of staff from one of the core agencies. This sub-group will have responsibility for developing and implementing a

consistent framework for self evaluation, audit and scrutiny. This will include co-ordinating and managing the governance of all levels of case reviews and ensuring that learning is incorporated into practice across all Public Protection areas.

- 2.6 It is not envisaged that any other standing sub-groups will be required in the initial stages, with Lead Officers taking responsibility for specific crosscutting work streams, co-opting relevant people and establishing short life groups to progress the work of EMPPC as required. Lead Officers will have responsibility for ensuring robust Quality Assurance systems in each of the key areas of Public Protection and will report to the Public Protection Committee through the Public Protection Team Manager.
- 2.7 An operational Offender Management Group will be maintained to ensure robust governance and links with frontline activity.
- 2.8 The new Public Protection Team will be co-located in an operational “hub” at Brunton Hall, Musselburgh with a staff presence from social work police and health, and will take forward an integrated, “lifespan” approach to all aspects of public protection. This approach will provide innovative opportunities for a cohesive response and will support operational staff in partner agencies to improve outcomes for our most vulnerable service users.
- 2.9 MELDAP staff will also be co-located with the Public Protection Team to maximise opportunities for the development of formal links and agreed key joint work streams from the MELDAP strategy which are crosscutting with the work of the Public Protection Team.
- 2.10 The Project is on target for implementation in April 2014 and we are working towards core staff being co-located at that time.

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

The key driver for the revised service is to ensure sustainable services and streamline future provision. There is potential for significant economic benefits going forward, in terms of fewer meetings and less travel. The cost of the project overall will be met from existing budgets.

Existing joint posts; Child Protection Lead Officer and Administrator, Adult Protection Lead Officer, Training and Development Officer and Administrator, and Violence Against Women Strategy Co-ordinator, Domestic Abuse Adviser and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) co-ordinator are being brought together to form the core Public Protection Team under a new joint post of Public Protection Team Manager. This is anticipated to increase efficiency in providing opportunities for a more integrated response and will support operational staff in partner agencies to improve outcomes for vulnerable service users.

3.2 Risk

The revised Public protection service will contribute to addressing corporate risk that the councils and their partners would be unable to maintain or improve the quality and standard of public protection work due to increased complexities and depleting resources thus leaving service users in Midlothian at risk of harm.

3.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- x ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- x ☐ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☐ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☐ Sustainable growth
- x ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

- 3.4/** It is expected that with multi-agency staff based in a co-located hub there will be significant opportunities to streamline services and provide a more holistic, streamlined response to vulnerable service users.

3.4 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Midlothian Council and its Community Planning Partners have made a commitment to treat the following areas as key priorities under the Single Midlothian Plan:-

- Early years and reducing child poverty
- Economic Growth and Business Support
- Positive destinations for young people.

Please explain under this section how the proposals contained in this report will contribute to the achievement of the key priorities.

The revised committee structure and the integrated “lifespan” approach to public protection for service users which a Public Protection Team offers, creates options for ongoing sustainability in terms of a more streamlined, efficient and effective Public Protection service which links to all of the above key priorities.

3.5 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

It will be important to monitor and measure the sustainable effectiveness of the Public Protection Service against improved outcomes for service users and impact on performance. This will be done through an overarching action plan which will be informed by individual action / improvement plans from each of the key areas. This will be monitored by the Performance and Quality sub group which will report to the Public Protection Committee.

3.6 Adopting a Preventative Approach

It is increasingly clear that while structures in Public Protection have developed separately the reality for most service users is that their needs usually span more than one category i.e. many children on the child protection register have substance misusing parents or domestic abuse as a “cause for concern”. This evidence-led model links to the prevention aspect of single outcome agreements.

3.7 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

The Project Implementation Team has consulted operational managers and trade union representatives as appropriate. A progress report has been communicated to key stakeholders and a wider communication strategy is ongoing as part of the implementation plan.

3.8 Ensuring Equalities

An Equalities Impact Assessment is not currently required as no policy or people changes have been identified. This will be undertaken in line with streamlining operational practice.

3.9 Supporting Sustainable Development

The revised committee structure and the integrated “lifespan” approach to public protection for service users which a Public Protection Team offers, creates options for ongoing business sustainability in terms of a more streamlined, efficient and effective Public Protection service. It is expected that with multi-agency staff based in a co-located hub there will be significant opportunities to streamline services with less meetings and consequently less travel between bases.

3.10 IT Issues

In order to implement the revised structure within a co-located environment, IT issues are being addressed to allow respective agencies access to their systems. This is under discussion with IT managers in relevant agencies. The cost of this has not yet been finalised and is expected to be borne by respective agencies.

4 Summary

The reports presents the revised Public Protection structure which will address the significant overlaps within different areas of public protection and take forward an integrated, “lifespan” approach to all aspects of public protection. This will provide opportunities for seamless working and will support operational staff in partner agencies to improve outcomes for our most vulnerable service users.

The new Public Protection Team will be co-located in an operational “hub” within Brunton Hall, with a staff presence from social work police and health. Further work is in progress to streamline operational processes and strengthen links with operational staff and the revised Public Protection Team.

5 Recommendations

Council is asked to:

- Approve this report; and
- Support the new arrangements for Public Protection across East Lothian and Midlothian local authority areas.

Date 04 March 2014

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Background papers

Appendix 1 Public Protection team Structure

Appendix 2 Public Protection Governance arrangements

Declaration Box

Instructions: *This box must be completed by the author of the report. The box will be copied and saved by the Council Secretariat who will delete it from the report prior to photocopying the agenda.*

Title of Report: Public Protection Service Redesign

Meeting Presented to: Council

Author of Report: Anne Thompson Lead Officer, Adult Protection, East and Midlothian.

I confirm that I have undertaken the following actions before submitting this report to the Council Secretariat (Check boxes to confirm):-

- ☒ *All resource implications have been addressed. Any financial and HR implications have been approved by the Head of Finance and Integrated Service Support.*
- ☒ *All risk implications have been addressed.*
- ☒ *All other report implications have been addressed.*
- ☒ *My Director has endorsed the report for submission to the Council Secretariat.*

For Cabinet reports, please advise the Council Secretariat if the report has an education interest. This will allow the report to be located on the Cabinet agenda among the items in which the Religious Representatives are entitled to participate.

Likewise, please advise the Council Secretariat if any report for Midlothian Council has an education interest. The Religious Representatives are currently entitled to attend meetings of the Council in a non-voting observer capacity, but with the right to speak (but not vote) on any education matter under consideration, subject always to observing the authority of the Chair.