

<b>Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council</b>	
MEETING:	Wellbeing Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel
MEETING DATE:	18 May 2012
TITLE:	Care Services Quality Assurance
WARD:	ALL
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>	
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b>	
Appendix 1 – “Summary Quality Assurance Framework”	

## 1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 To provide the Wellbeing PDS Panel with an overview of the systems, processes, information gathering and reporting mechanisms that contribute to the current quality and performance assurance framework for care services in Bath & North East Somerset.

## 2 RECOMMENDATION

The Wellbeing PDS Panel is asked to:

- 2.1 Note the current Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) for care services; and
- 2.2 Engage with the further development of the QAF, including a clear articulation of the role of the Panel.

### **3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 There are no specific financial impacts associated with the QAF.
- 3.2 Over the past two to three years, the financial viability of some providers of care services has come into question as they have been severely tested by the economic downturn and, also, by pressure from commissioners (both Local Authority and NHS) to deliver efficiency savings. This has led to a growing concern that providers may seek to reduce their operating costs by compromising on the quality and/or safety of care service provision by, for example, employing fewer and/or less skilled/experienced care staff.

### **4 THE REPORT**

- 4.1 An increasing number of safeguarding referrals are being recorded both locally and nationally, particularly, multiple safeguarding alerts in relation to a single care service and/or provider. Analysis of the multiple alerts and the setting is being undertaken and consideration is being given to 3.2 above. However, the increase in referrals has been expected due to the awareness raising activity of the Local Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB) and, also, the fact that the profile of adult abuse has been raised nationally for example by the abuse identified at Winterbourne View through the BBC Panorama programme, through the review of No Secrets and the Government's commitment to put safeguarding adults on a statutory footing.
- 4.2 The context within which care services are provided has also changed significantly in recent years. There is an increasingly diverse market; the current economic climate is putting strain on the financial viability of care services providers; and commissioning and contracting arrangements are becoming increasingly complex, which makes communication between commissioners and across the health and social care system more challenging.
- 4.3 A summary of the current Care Services Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) is set out in Appendix 1. The QAF has developed significantly over in the lifetime of the Health & Wellbeing Partnership. It is likely to need further development in light of the findings from the Winterbourne View Serious Case/ Independent Management Reviews by a number of bodies, including the Strategic Health Authority, South Gloucestershire Local Adult Safeguarding Board, and CQC. It is anticipated that findings will be published in August or September this year. The Panel may wish to receive a report following publication and, also, to have input into subsequent local action planning, which could include a necessity to further develop or enhance the QAF.

### **5 RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 5.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

### **6 EQUALITIES**

An EqIA has not been completed because this report is provided for information and to assist the Panel in articulating its role rather than for decision making or policy development.

## **7 CONSULTATION**

7.1 No specific consultation has been undertaken on the contents of this report.

## **8 ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION**

8.1 *Customer Focus; Health & Safety; Other Legal Considerations*

## **9 ADVICE SOUGHT**

9.1 The Council's Monitoring Officer (Divisional Director – Legal and Democratic Services) and Section 151 Officer (Divisional Director - Finance) have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

<b>Contact person</b>	Jane Shayler, Telephone: 01225 396120
<b>Background papers</b>	
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	