



Adults and Safeguarding Committee

19 September 2019

Title	Adults Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Update
Report of	Chairman of Adults and Safeguarding Committee
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	None
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Summary

This report provides an update on the Adults Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) which was launched on 10 June 2019 and an overview of key activities achieved and planned. The Committee is asked to note the report.

Officers Recommendations

1. The Committee is asked to note this progress update.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

Introduction

- 1.1. The annual delivery plan sets out the key activities for delivering the Adults and Safeguarding Committee's priorities within the [Corporate Plan 2019-2024](#), along with key indicators and risks to help monitor and manage performance. The establishment of an Adults MASH supports the delivery of the priority 'Safeguarding adults at risk of abuse and neglect' for 2019/20.
- 1.2. This report provides an update for the Committee on the establishment and performance of the Adults MASH following its initial launch on 10 June 2019. The MASH is being launched in phases.
- 1.3. The initial phase has included:
 - Co-location of Adult Social Care Urgent Response Team, Learning Disabilities Duty Team, Social Care Direct and a Solace Independent Domestic Violence Advisor
 - Agreed multi-agency processes and timescales for responding to referrals with clear standards for virtual and physical partners
 - One single point of access for all safeguarding referrals
 - Regular multi-agency care management meetings
- 1.4. The next phase will see the co-location of the Metropolitan Police and Family Service's MASH.

Aims

- 1.5. The Adults MASH aims to deliver a better coordinated, responsive multi-agency risk assessment approach to safeguard adults at risk in Barnet. The quality and speed of decision making in relation to safeguarding concerns will be enhanced through better information sharing between agencies with a truly multi-agency focus on better outcomes for adults at risk.

The MASH Model - Physical and Virtual Working

- 1.6. The Adults MASH brings together knowledge and expertise from across Adult Social Care and key partner agencies. Leads from each team or agency work collaboratively on the screening of safeguarding concerns and provide information to support safeguarding decisions and enquiries. The Adults MASH is based in the secure office space in the Council's new Colindale office.

- 1.7. Through engagement and the co-design of the MASH model with teams and agencies it was established that most partners were unable to commit a physical dedicated resource within the MASH. The risks associated with this have been mitigated through the identification of safeguarding lead contacts within these agencies (i.e. GP practices) who are required to respond to information requests within set timescales.
- 1.8. Current virtual partners in the MASH are:
- Barnet Metropolitan Police
 - Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group
 - NHS Community Health/GPs
 - NHS Hospital Trusts
 - Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust
 - Barnet Mencap
 - Barnet Homes
 - London Fire Brigade
 - London Ambulance
- 1.9. The Barnet Enfield Haringey Mental Health Trust has agreed to provide a laptop with access to their records management system, RIO, to assist with the screening of concerns and information gathering within the MASH. This is currently being arranged.
- 1.10. There is an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor from Solace present in the MASH on a weekly basis and there have already been useful case discussions taking place which has aided the assessment and triage of cases. The Learning Disabilities Duty team are also co-located in the MASH and they bring their specialist expertise and knowledge to complex cases.
- 1.11. Partners are engaged to contribute to multi-agency meetings to discuss cases and share their expertise and knowledge to bring about better quality decisions on referrals within the MASH.
- 1.12. Further links are being established with the Westminster Drug Project, Community Rehabilitation Company, Probation Service and voluntary and community sector organisations.
- 1.13. The effectiveness and success of this model will be continually monitored as the MASH operates and any issues will be reported through governance channels.

Governance

- 1.14. Information sharing across partners within the Adults MASH is supported by the London Multi-Agency Safeguarding Policies and Procedures Data Sharing Agreement and a local MASH protocol.
- 1.15. The Adults MASH is also governed by a monthly multi-agency operational group and a quarterly steering group and reports to Adult Social Care senior management and the Barnet Safeguarding Adults Board. There is also a Professional lead for Safeguarding who escalates complex cases to the DASS.
- 1.16. The first Operational Group met in July and was well attended with good representation from across the partnership including a GP safeguarding lead. There was positive engagement and feedback on the MASH following launch.
- 1.17. An overview of how adult safeguarding activities are managed and overseen within the Adults and Health Directorate has also taken place. The Professional lead for Safeguarding working closely with the Principal Social Worker, escalate any concerns about the MASH and safeguarding casework to the DASS. There is also a comprehensive learning and development programme for safeguarding available to staff within the Directorate, and also for key partners and agencies. The safeguarding arrangements in the Directorate will shortly be subject to a planned Internal Audit.

Performance and Staffing

- 1.18. Anecdotal evidence from other Adult MASHs indicates that an increase in safeguarding referrals can occur following the establishment of a MASH. Whilst this has not occurred yet, the impact of the MASH will be closely monitored.
- 1.19. Hence, we will review the staffing of the MASH as the pathways are embedded and further tracking of activity is done. For example, the safeguarding referrals from the Hospital Trusts are no longer sent to the Hospital Social Work teams and instead are referred to the MASH. This will help ensure that we have refocused resources within the Directorate appropriately.
- 1.20. There continues to be quality assurance of all safeguarding activities by experienced social work managers in the MASH and by the Head of Assessment and Prevention. There is additional specialist expert guidance and capacity from the Quality in Practice Team with 'live care work auditing' to ensure that the good effective safeguarding practice, decision making and recording is maintained during this period of development.
- 1.21. The adult MASH continues to develop a bespoke performance monitoring tool using Mosaic and this is monitored as part of the project plan.

Communications

1.22 A series of briefings sessions were delivered and communications circulated to inform key stakeholders about the MASH prior to its launch. Further communications activities will be undertaken to ensure partners are fully engaged and informed including improvements to online information and the finalising of a referral webform.

Further Activities

1.23 There is a project plan in place for the next phase of activities which have been identified to strengthen and build upon the initial implementation of the Adults MASH:

- Improve information systems access (i.e. RIO)
- Enhanced performance reporting
- Further communications activities with key partners
- Development of internet and intranet pages and establishment of safeguarding referral webform
- Metropolitan Police and Family Service MASH co-location at Colindale when Family Services move from the North London Business Park office.
- Expand links with other organisations including the voluntary and community sector and establish physical co-location where possible.

1.24 Our aim continues to be to ensure that the Adults MASH is as effective as possible. To that end, we will continue to work with partners to increase co-location as much as possible and ensure virtual working is continually improved.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 To ensure the Committee is kept informed and updated on the progress of the Adults MASH.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

3.1 Not applicable

4 POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Not applicable

5 IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

5.1.1 The Adults MASH supports the 2019/20 priority 'Safeguarding adults at risk of abuse and neglect'.

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

5.2.1 The Adults MASH has been established through the use of existing staff resources within Adult Social Care. With the use of enhanced performance monitoring in the MASH, safeguarding volumes will be vigorously assessed to identify any issues around resource capacity and demand.

5.2.2 These issues will be reported through the established governance channels set out in this report.

5.3 Social Value

5.3.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. Before commencing a procurement process, commissioners should think about whether the services they are going to buy, or the way they are going to buy them, could secure these benefits for their area or stakeholders. The council's contract management framework oversees that contracts deliver the expected services to the expected quality for the agreed cost. Requirements for a contractor to deliver activities in line with Social Value will be monitored through this contract management process.

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

5.4.1 The Care Act 2014 put safeguarding duties onto a statutory footing, and the relevant care and support statutory guidance requires local authorities to create strong multi-agency partnerships that provide timely and effective prevention of and responses to abuse or neglect.

5.4.2 The Council's Constitution (Article 7, Article 7 – Committees, Forums, Working Groups and Partnerships) sets out the responsibilities of all council Committees. The responsibilities of the Adults and Safeguarding Committee include:

- (1) Responsibility for all matters relating to vulnerable adults, adult social care and leisure services.
- (2) Work with partners on the Health and Well Being Board to ensure that social care, interventions are effectively and seamlessly joined up with public health and healthcare and promote the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and its associated sub strategies.
- (3) To submit to the Policy and Resources Committee proposals relating to the Committee's budget for the following year in accordance with the budget timetable.
- (4) To make recommendations to Policy and Resources Committee on issues relating to the budget for the Committee, including virements or underspends and

overspends on the budget. No decisions which result in amendments to the agreed budget may be made by the Committee unless and until the amendment has been agreed by Policy and Resources Committee.

- (5) To receive reports on relevant performance information and risk on the services under the remit of the Committee.

5.4.3 The council's Financial Regulations can be found at:

<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s46515/17FinancialRegulations.doc.pdf>

5.5 Risk Management

5.5.1 The council has an established approach to risk management, which is set out in the Risk Management Framework. Risks are reviewed quarterly (as a minimum) and any high level (scoring 15+) risks are reported to the relevant Theme Committee and Policy and Resources Committee. In addition, the Annual Delivery Plan risks associated with the priorities for this Committee are outlined in the report.

5.5.2 **Delays to the co-location of the Metropolitan Police and Family Services to the MASH.** Further delays to the move of these teams to Colindale could impact on the quality and speed of decision making within the MASH and delay opportunities for closer collaborative working, learning and sharing across teams. This could lead to poorer outcomes for adults at risk of abuse, harm or neglect. This will be mitigated through strengthened links between teams through regular meetings at both MASH locations and ensuring virtual contacts are able to respond rapidly to requests.

5.5.3 **Increase in safeguarding referrals.** Increase in the volume of safeguarding referrals could lead to teams being unable to manage the demand which could impact the speed in processing of concerns and the quality of the outcomes for adults at risk. Close performance monitoring and demand management will be required to ensure capacity within the MASH is sufficient. Any issues will be escalated through governance channels.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 Section 49 of the Equalities Act 2010 introduced the Public Sector Equality Duty, which requires that a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under that Act;

(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

5.6.2 The protected characteristics under the Equality Act are:

- Age
- Disability

- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

5.6.3 The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day to day business and to keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services.

5.7 Corporate Parenting

5.7.1 In line with the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the council has a duty to consider Corporate Parenting Principles in decision-making across the council. There are no implications for Corporate Parenting in relation to this report.

5.8 Consultation and Engagement

5.8.1 The development of the MASH involved the engagement and consultation of Adult Social Care's key agencies and teams to co-design the referral process, thresholds framework and operating principles of the MASH.

5.8.2 The establishment of an Adults MASH supports the delivery of the priority 'Safeguarding adults at risk of abuse and neglect' for 2019/20 as part of the Corporate Plan. Consultation on the Corporate Plan was carried out in Summer 2018.

5.9 Insight

5.9.1 Not applicable

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 [Adults and Safeguarding Committee Priorities, 2019-2024](#)

6.2 [London Multi-Agency Adult Safeguarding policy and procedures](#) – updated April 2019

6.3 [Progress Report - Adults Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub \(MASH\)](#), 4 June 2018 (Item 9)