

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE UPDATE</b>
<b>DIRECOTORATE:</b>	<b>HOUSING</b>
<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>PAULA BURTON - SAFEGUARDING OFFICER</b>

## **1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 To inform the Policy Scrutiny Committee of the current position with regards to Protecting Vulnerable People in Lincoln.

## **2. Current situation**

### **2.1 Safeguarding children and adults**

The promotion of safeguarding in the lead up to the Section 11 Audit and the completion of the training pathways has improved the knowledge and practices of all staff especially front line officers. This has been further embedded with the return to normal ways of working. Although the number of referrals has not increased, when it is considered that due to Covid restrictions visits have greatly reduced this suggests that under normal circumstances there would be an increase in concerns being identified. This appears to be the same for other partner agencies, moreover the level of complexity and seriousness of concern is resulting in many cases being escalated; with less cases being identified at an early help stage. The impact of this situation may result in pressure on resources, in addition, now that restrictions are being lifted, there is a likelihood of referrals increasing.

### **Team Around the Adult**

The Team Around the Adult approach has now gone live across the county. Within Lincoln an alternative local approach of applying the process is being developed as the number of cases within the city are higher than the other districts within the county. It is hoped that the cases will be heard at existing multi-agency meetings without any cases being duplicated in multiple meetings/conferences.

### **Missing and Child Exploitation**

Recent analysis of cases has demonstrated that Lincoln remains the district in the county with the highest number of child exploitation cases. A new analyst is due to be recruited for the county to enable dedicated research to be undertaken and monitored. It has been requested that when this officer is in place they investigate if the cases are recorded on the basis (a) the location, e.g. Lincoln, where they occurred and (b) the residency of the child

(that is, does the child usually live in Lincoln or is their last known permanent residence out of the area?). This approach seeks to establish whether the case relates to a child living in Lincoln who has been such to exploitation or instead the child has been trafficked into Lincoln.

## 2.2 **Domestic Abuse**

The new Domestic Abuse Act is now being implemented. Most of the practices in the new Act are already in place in Lincolnshire. The main change is that there will be a new Domestic Abuse Board that will be part of the Safer Lincolnshire Partnership and sit alongside the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adult Board. The Act has also introduced the criteria of being a victim of domestic abuse as a priority need under the homelessness legislation.

## 2.3 **Modern Slavery**

Modern Slavery is a broad term that can include:

- Forced labour – any work or services, which people are, forced to do against their will under the threat of some form of punishment.
- Debt bondage or bonded labour – the world’s most widespread form of slavery, when people borrow money they cannot repay and are required to work to pay off the debt, then losing control over the conditions of both their employment and the debt.
- Human trafficking– involves transporting, recruiting or harbouring people for the purpose of exploitation, using violence, threats or coercion.
- Descent-based slavery – where people are born into slavery because their ancestors were captured and enslaved; they remain in slavery by descent.
- Child slavery – many people often confuse child slavery with child labour, but it is much worse. Whilst child labour is harmful for children and hinders their education and development, child slavery occurs when a child is exploited for someone else’s gain. It can include child trafficking, child soldiers, child marriage and child domestic slavery.
- Forced and early marriage – when someone is married against their will and cannot leave the marriage. Most child marriages can be considered slavery.

City of Lincoln Councils role in stopping Modern Slavery:

- Ensuring staff have a clear understanding of Modern Day Slavery and know how to recognise and report signs.

- Communicating and promoting materials highlighting Modern Day Slavery as an issue within Lincolnshire.
- Ensuring our Procurement procedures are in line with the Modern Day Slavery Charter
- Ensuring we have a current Modern Slavery Statement

#### Revised Modern Slavery Statement 2021/22

It is a statutory requirement for all local authorities to have a Modern Slavery Statement. This should detail how the authority identifies, reduces and manages risks around Modern Slavery. A copy of the City of Lincoln Councils revised Modern Slavery Statement 2021/22 is provided in **Appendix A**.

### **3. Section 11 Audit**

Due to the resourcing pressures being experienced with the response to Covid-19, it was agreed that the Section 11 Audit would still be completed but there would be no peer moderation. The statutory partners that have to be audited annually e.g. Police, NHS would still be moderated, along with a dip sample of other partners but this did not include CoLC. CoLC passed the audit and is currently awaiting the outcome report. Once the report is received any recommended actions will be considered and completed.

The LSCP Policy Officer has agreed to informally peer review our evidence once the Section 11 Audit has been completed so that we can have feedback of how our services are operating.

### **4. Police Operations**

#### Op Vigilance

Op Vigilance is a multi-agency operation being led by the Police. There have been “days of action” that the Council, Police and Trading Standards participated in over the last eight months. The aims of the action were to disrupt exploitation within the designated area of the city, raise awareness of the subject of exploitation and share information professionals and the public about the signs to look out for to identify when there is a potential concern.

#### Op Stabilise

Op Stabilise is a police led operation that is aiming to disrupt the selling and trafficking of drugs and the associated exploitation and illegal activities that are connected with this. This operation has recently been publicised in the press and it is expected that there will be further awareness raised once the cases are heard at court.

**5. Staff welfare**

There is a new Professional Supervision procedure has been distributed to all managers of staff but is mainly aimed at being completed with front line staff. The supervision is similar to a 1:1 for officers but it focuses on the discussion of cases and the aim is to ensure that officers have the opportunity to discuss the cases with someone else and also to ensure that any support is identified and offered to the officers.

**6. Communications**

The Protecting Vulnerable People Group has a Communications Plan that incorporates national, county and local campaigns to raise awareness of various areas of Protecting Vulnerable People. The campaigns shared recently are about Domestic Abuse and Child Exploitation.

**7. E-cins IT system**

Following the last CMT update discussions have taken place with the Data Protection Officer and the process is being followed to introduce E-cins for safeguarding concerns to record vulnerable people and people of concern. It is proposed that the use of the system will be incorporated in the review that is due to take place of the Health & Safety policy.

**8. Recommendations**

It is requested that the Policy Scrutiny Committee:

- Note the contents of this update.