

TITLE OF REPORT: **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) – Update**

REPORT OF: **Alison Elliott, Interim Strategic Director – Care, Wellbeing and Learning**

Summary

This report provides a comprehensive update in relation to Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) that has been established by Gateshead Council, in collaboration with a range of partner agencies, in order to support and protect vulnerable adults within the Borough. The report also includes a brief update in relation to Operation Encompass as well as a detailed case study of a recent case in order to demonstrate the type of positive work that is being carried out by agencies involved within the MASH.

1 Background

- 1.1 As a reminder, at the last Overview and Scrutiny Committee in October 2015, members requested information relating to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub that has been established in Gateshead.
- 1.2 The overarching vision of the MASH is to: “provide a single gateway for all safeguarding, domestic abuse and vulnerable victim referrals; to expedite the sharing of information in an efficient and consistent manner and to protect and safeguard the most vulnerable within the Borough”.
- 1.3 The MASH provides a regular opportunity for partner agencies and Council services to come together and discuss vulnerable residents in Gateshead to ensure that appropriate, co-ordinated, proportionate and timely interventions can be implemented to safeguarding and protect individuals. It provides a platform to devise referral pathways, mechanisms for sharing information and a shared understanding of partner roles and responsibilities.

2 Update

- 2.1 The initial phase of the MASH commenced in November 2014 with the secondment of two Police Officers onto the Safer Communities team – and was enhanced further in January 2015 (with the commissioning of support services).
- 2.2 The MASH has been extended until March 2017, as a result of the successful Home Office Innovation Fund Bid, and will include a greater focus on the identification and support offered to protect serial victims of domestic abuse. As a result, MASH is comprised of: a dedicated MASH Business Manager and Partnership Support Officer as well as 2 Police Officers. A range of specialist staff have also been commissioned including: 3 x Support Workers (from Oasis Aquila, Victim Support and Northumbria Community Rehabilitation Company), 2 Serial Victims Domestic Abuse Workers (from Oasis Aquila and Barnardos) and

1 x Mental Health Worker (from NTW); whilst discussions have also been undertaken with STFT and Evolve.

2.3 The MASH continues to meet twice-weekly and is now receiving all 'lower-level' concerns from Northumbria Police and the North East Ambulance Service. All referrals are inputted into CareFirst, so we can ensure information is captured, and monitored, using a standardised and consistent format. This also enables the MASH to identify in a timelier manner, if individuals are already and/or were previously known to services within Gateshead Council.

2.4 Since April 2015, there have been a total of 333 separate referrals received into the MASH. As expected, Northumbria Police continue to submit a higher proportion of referrals followed by the North East Ambulance Service.

Agency	Referrals
Northumbria Police – Adult Concerns	136
North East Ambulance Service – Adult Concerns	49
Northumbria Police Referrals	44
Safeguarding Adults Referrals	26
The Gateshead Housing Company	13
Independent Domestic Violence Adviser Service	10
Total	333

2.5 On average, the MASH receives approximately 30 to 40 referrals per calendar month, with most referrals received in November 2015 at 65 – and is due to the change in referral process (i.e. referrals of all lower level concerns).

3 Case Study

3.1 The case study provides an overview of the actions that were put in place as part of the MASH to safeguard and protect the vulnerable individual. The case study refers to a female living in a Gateshead Housing Company property in the Blaydon area of Gateshead.

Background:

- Since July 2015, TGHC received numerous complaints regarding shouting and arguing coming from the property in the early hours of the morning.
- Complaints were also received in relation to the condition and untidiness on the outside of the property.
- As a result of these complaints, CM's tenancy was at risk.
- CM did not attend any appointments with services and/partner agencies.
- She was known to have had previous mental health involvement and would refuse to contact her GP for support.

Referral

- A home visit was carried out by TGHC in October 2015, where CM was found to be erratic and argumentative, stating she had been assaulted by a relative and that they were taking money from her.
- As a result of CM's vulnerabilities, she was referred into the MASH.
- All partner agencies confirmed that they had no current and/or previous involvement with CM.

Actions:

- Initial checks were made with Safeguarding Adults – but CM did not meet necessary threshold criteria (unless she agreed to financial abuse in relation to her relative taking money, however she refused to comply).
- A joint visit took place November 2015 with MASH Social Worker and The Gateshead Housing Company officer, which resulted in further disclosures about CM's mental health, and potential options to help support. As a result, the following actions were identified:
 - Contact being made with CM's GP to arrange an appointment/visit
 - Support in clearing/tidying the outside of CM's property
 - Support to be provided in relation to rent/payment methods
 - Provided assistance with housing application (as it was disclosed that CM wished to move properties) and arranged for CM to view property
 - Arranged for CM to have a CPN
 - Referral made to Creative Support

Next Steps

- There have been no further incidents and/or referrals relating to CM
- CM has actively engaged with GP and CPN, as necessary.
- CM is currently in the process of moving properties – which should provide her with further support, away from her the relatives causing CM distress.
- The referring agency continues to monitor the situation and will refer back into the MASH for further action, if necessary.

4 Operation Encompass – Performance

4.1 As a reminder for members, Operation Encompass is the initiative that has been established to share information with schools to be able to support children who are affected following a domestic abuse incident. Since the inception of Operation Encompass in April 2015 to 4 January 2016, the following referrals have been received:

- 529 separate domestic abuse incidents reported – of which, a total of 1,185 children were involved
- Average age of the child involved, 9yrs
- 172 Incidents were open / opened to Children Services
- 132 Repeat incidents recorded
- 58 Incidents were both repeat incidents and open to Children Services
- 73% of incidents involved households where two children reside

5 Serial Victims Project

5.1 The Serial Victims Project is funded through the Home Office Innovation Fund until March 2017. The project is currently developing with the Serial Victims Domestic Abuse workers in post from Oasis Aquila and Barnardos.

5.2 The analyst for the MASH creates a list based upon Northumbria Police data which is refreshed on a monthly basis, ensuring that those clients with the most serial victims will receive support at the earliest stage. To date 21 serial victims have been allocated to workers.

- 5.3 A draft process and toolkit is currently being developed by the Domestic Abuse Workers to highlight what services can be delivered to each client, although each client will receive a tailored service depending on their needs.

6 Recommendation

- 6.1 Members are asked to:
- (i) Discuss the report;
 - (ii) Comment on the Case Study outlined in section 3;
 - (iii) Agree to receive a regular updates in relation to MASH;

Contact: Val Hall

Ext: 2782