

Report No.
ES11123

London Borough of Bromley

PART 1 - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: PUBLIC PROTECTION AND SAFETY POLICY,
DEVELOPMENT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date:

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: ADULT SAFEGUARDING - IMPACT OF WORK CARRIED OUT
BY PUBLIC PROTECTION & SAFETY TEAMS

Contact Officer: Rob Vale, Head of Trading Standards
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Chief Officer: Nigel Davies, Director Environmental Services

Ward: All wards

1. Reason for report

This report provides members with an overview of the work carried out by Public Protection and how it impacts on older and vulnerable adults in our community. A schedule of some of the main areas of our work which impacts directly on older residents is attached in Appendix 1.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

PDS Committee Members are asked to:

1. Comment on the contents of the report and indicate areas of work which they would like to scrutinise at the next Public Protection and Safety Development and Scrutiny Committee meeting on the 25th October 2011

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing policy.
 2. BBB Priority: Supporting Independence.
 3. Public Protection and Safety Portfolio Plan 2011-2012
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: N/A
 2. Ongoing costs: N/A.
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Public Protection & Safety Portfolio
 4. Total current budget for this head: £3.7m
 5. Source of funding: Existing revenue budget 2011/12 plus £15,000 allocation from the Portfolio Holder Fund budget for 2011/12
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): 59
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours:
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory requirement.
 2. Call-in: Call-in is not applicable.
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): The overall aim of the service is to work towards informed and confident residents and the protection of vulnerable adults through advice and education, intervention and investigation. Advice and education packs will be delivered to 3000 older consumers through organised events with the aim of helping them feel safer in their own home.
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? N/A.
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

Background

- 3.1 The Safeguarding Adults agenda is deliberately broad and challenges local authorities and its partners to reduce and prevent vulnerable members of our communities from becoming victims of crime, harm and abuse.
- 3.2 Safeguarding is about making people aware of their rights, protecting them and preventing abuse, whether it is through the disruption and apprehension of bogus builders by Trading Standards, raising awareness of domestic violence through the Community Safety team or through the co-ordination and development role of the Bromley Safeguarding Adults Board.
- 3.3 The London Borough of Bromley has one of the lowest levels of crime in London and one of the highest proportions of residents who feel the borough is a safe place to live. Through the Safer Bromley Partnership there are demonstrable links with a range of partners including police and voluntary sectors which provide for low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour. Bromley also has the largest number of older residents of any London Borough (according to the 2001 census) and this can in itself present a unique set of challenges.
- 3.4 In particular, older consumers are more likely to be targets of specific crimes such as distraction burglaries, bogus traders and lottery scams.
- 3.5 The Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Safety has given the Public Protection division a clear steer to strengthen links with partners so that it can better fulfil the aims of all services with regards the protection of vulnerable adults. To this extent, additional funding from the Safer Bromley Partnership has been made available for project work in this area.

Public Protection and Safety Division

- 3.6 There are five key service delivery areas within the division:

Public Health Nuisance

Trading Standards

Food, Safety and Licensing

Environmental Protection

Community Safety and Anti Social Behaviour

- 3.7 The Public Protection & Safety Portfolio Plan 20-11/2012 refers to these areas as the framework for activity within the division. These are all front line service providers with daily contact with residents and therefore all will have an impact on older consumers living in the borough.

Key areas impacting on elderly residents.

Public Health Nuisance

- 3.8 The Public Health Nuisance team investigate all complaints of public health significance, including noise, rubbish and smells and complaints relating to 'filthy and verminous' premises where a person may allow their property to deteriorate to such an extent that it is prejudicial to health or a nuisance.

- 3.9 The team investigate approximately 50 'filthy and verminous' complaints per annum and the complaints are typically reported to the team when a neighbour notices an unpleasant smell or vermin and by referral from social services or a housing officer.
- 3.10 The majority of complaints received relate to older residents who find it difficult to look after themselves and their property. They may also suffer with mental health problems, extreme old age or a physical disability. In some situations they may have relied completely on their partner to carry out domestic tasks only for their partner to leave, pass away or become incapable of carrying out the tasks themselves.
- 3.11 Officers in the Council's Public Health Nuisance Team can take action to remedy such premises under the provisions of the Public Health Act 1936. These cases have to be dealt with sensitively and often in partnership with the Social Services department and other external partners including the police and housing associations.
- 3.12 Often a statutory notice may be served on the occupant and arrangements made for works in default to be carried out to undertake improvements on behalf of the occupant. Where there are concerns for the resident, officers work with partners including the Social Services team and the Housing Team to consider, in appropriate cases, any mental health issues and serious hazards such as no heating or hot water.

Trading Standards

- 3.13 The Trading Standards team has a significant contribution to make to the success of safeguarding vulnerable adults through cohesive working relationships with specific partners who can assist in the identification of vulnerable consumers. A key priority for the team is to prevent older and vulnerable consumers from becoming victims of commercial crime. This is delivered through a series of initiatives of advice, information and education, and through prevention, detection and prosecution of doorstep criminals.
- 3.14 Our key partners include Bromley Police (in particular the Public Protection Unit), Victim Support, banks and building societies, Adult and Community Services and Corporate Communications for profile raising and media alerts.
- 3.15 Measurable outcomes include delivering around 50 talks per year to partners and groups representing older consumers to raise the awareness of scams and bogus builders, empowering consumers to feel safe in their own homes and ensuring they have access to help and support when needed.
- 3.16 Partnership working is critical to the success of the team being able to disrupt and investigate scams against the elderly and the team recognises the need to continually improve links with existing partners and also forge new relationships in the community to help identify potential victims of scams.
- 3.17 Funding from the Safer Bromley Partnership will drive a key campaign to raise the profile of the rapid response team, scams and bogus callers both to older consumers (for example by talks to groups such as Womens' Institutes) and our partners (for example Bromley Carers, Citizens Advice, Older Persons Units) with the aim of increasing awareness, increasing reporting levels and ultimately increasing disruption and prosecution results. In particular officers will visit all banks and building societies and provide training and advice to staff to encourage participation with a protocol aimed at alerting Trading Standards and police to suspicious cash withdrawals or fund transfers by elderly consumers who have been targeted by a scam or bogus caller.
- 3.18 Last year Trading Standards investigated around 600 complaints about property repairs and 150 enquiries about scams. Of these 255 related to cold callers who had targeted an older consumer. The team investigated bogus builder complaints totalling £1million and were able to

disrupt the activities of some traders, saving Bromley residents at least £500,000. The team received 90 intelligence reports relating to bogus builders from the police and 20 alerts from local banks.

Community Safety and Anti-social Behaviour

- 3.19 The Community Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour team are responsible for a range of activity aimed at reducing crime and disorder and making Bromley a safer place to live. It is responsible for ensuring close partnership working exists between the council and other agencies such as police and the Fire Brigade and supports community groups and voluntary sector agencies, such as Victim Support, Bromley Neighbourhood Watch Association and the Bromley Community Engagement Forum.
- 3.20 The team is particularly instrumental in working with the community at large to encourage everyone to take responsibility for adult safeguarding and raising awareness of domestic violence.
- 3.21 Funding from the Safer Bromley Partnership Portfolio Holder will enable the team to work with Trading Standards in producing an advice pack for consumers which will include the re-launch of the Nominated Neighbour Scheme and promote the Safer Bromley Trader register. Further funding may be used to deliver additional 'Ma Kelly' Theatre performances designed to educate older consumers about the dangers of doorstep traders and distraction burglaries.
- 3.22 The ASB team have launched a new MATRIX designed to provide regulators and partners with a one stop referral mechanism for customers and clients who have been identified as at risk or vulnerable. The scheme provides an automatic gateway to a panel whose membership represents services across the council and voluntary sector and assigns a team responsibility to ensure all possible safeguarding opportunities are delivered. The form came about as a result of the Fiona Pilkington report and is a refined version of the original Home Office document. The aim is to bring as many agencies on board to use the form in order to provide a seamless procedure for vulnerable adult at risk referrals which will ensure all agencies are aware of the main issues and work together on them. The panel currently includes partners such as all the major housing associations, police, and adult and child services. All officers in Public Protection have access to this referral system.
- 3.23 Domestic abuse is dramatically under-recognised and under-reported in vulnerable and older adults. This can be for a number of reasons, including a lack of awareness among professionals of what constitutes domestic abuse and what services are available. The Domestic Abuse Work Plan includes a target to deliver awareness raising training sessions and briefings to professionals working with vulnerable adults, and ensuring publicity is disseminated to relevant services and agencies. The team will also be participating in the BSAB conference along with Trading Standards and the Anti-Social Behaviour team.
- 3.24 Longstanding initiatives funded or part funded by the Safer Bromley Partnership continue to deliver meaningful outcomes to vulnerable consumers in the Borough. The Face Lift Project delivered by the Community safety team aims at improving the appearance of homes occupied by older consumers in order to reduce the likelihood of travelling bogus builders to target them for property repairs. It involves working with voluntary groups, police and adult services, using equipment already purchased. The Safer Bromley Van, acting on referrals from all partners via Victim Support also provides reassurance and support to older consumers by fitting secure locks and security features to help them feel safer at home. Partnership work with the Fire Brigade provides free Home Fire Safety Checks for vulnerable residents.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Building a Better Bromley - Supporting Independence
Bromley Safeguarding Adults Board - Awareness priority
Public Protection & Safety Portfolio Plan 2011-2012
Trading Standards Service Plan 2011-2012

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 A total of £15,000 has been allocated from the Portfolio Holder Fund budget within Community Safety Budget for the 'Safeguarding Elderly' project of which £5,200 has been agreed by the Portfolio Holder in relation to the Trading Standards banks and building societies protocol as referred to in Appendix 1.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Personnel, Legal
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Public Protection & Safety Portfolio Plan 2011-2012 Public Protection Business Plan 2011-2012 Trading Standards Service Plan 2011-2012

Appendix 1

Public Protection and Safety – Main Adult Safeguarding initiatives

Name of Activity	Purpose	Lead	Strategic Links	Milestones/costs
Banks & Building society protocol	Ensure all banks are aware of TS rapid response number Raise awareness of potential victims of scams and rogue traders	Public Protection Trading Standards	PPSP 2011-2012 TS Service Plan 2011-2012 BSAB Awareness priority BBB Supporting Independence	Part of planned work and includes 60 visits by end of December 2011 to provide training packs to bank staff Part funded by PHF (£5,200 inc below)
Consumer empowerment	Empower vulnerable consumers to resist scam and bogus builder problems	Public Protection Trading Standards	PPSP 2011-2012 TS Service Plan 2011-2012 BSAB 2011-2012 Work Plan BBB Supporting Independence	Part of planned work which includes providing at least 50 talks to consumer and partner groups by March 2012. Deliver 3000 self help packs to older consumers via organised events Part funded by PHF (see above)
Building Bridges	Improve links with key partners with the aim of delivering key priorities for TS with regards to protecting vulnerable consumers from becoming victims of commercial crime	Public Protection Trading Standards	PPSP 2011-2012 TS Service Plan 2011-2012 BBB Supporting Independence	Part of planned work including targeting Domiciliary Care Agencies in Bromley
Nominated Neighbour	Re-launch of the Nominated Neighbour scheme to encourage community involvement in protecting vulnerable consumers	Community Safety Team	PPSP 2011-2012 BSAB Awareness priority BBB Supporting Independence	Part of planned work includes delivery 3000 self help packs to older consumers via organised events which is part funded by PHF (see above)
Public Health	Ensure vulnerable adults subject to public health referrals are empowered to exercise control over their lives and supported to manage risk	Public Protection Public Health Nuisance Team	PPSP 2011-2012 BSAB 2011-2012 Work Plan BBB Supporting Independence	Part of planned work
Domestic Violence	Raise awareness of domestic abuse amongst professionals to increase identification and support.	Domestic Abuse Strategy Coordinator	PPSP 2011-2012 BSAB 2011-2012 Work Plan BBB Supporting Independence	Part of planned work includes delivery of targeted training sessions & briefings to professionals working with vulnerable adults. Distribute literature to partners, participate in the BSAB conference and maintain involvement in services for vulnerable adults
National Doorstep Crime Initiatives	Work with regional and national partners to highlight dangers of	Public Protection Trading Standards	PPSP 2011-2012 TS Service Plan 2011-2012	Part of planned work includes participation in national and

	doorstep crime		BBB Supporting Independence	regional activities such as OFT Your Doorstep Campaign and Operation Liberal
NCCZ	Review of No Cold Calling Zones to re-launch advice pack, particularly to older residents	Trading Standards Safer Neighbourhood Teams BCEF Community Outreach Survey 2011	PPSP 2011-2012 TS Service Plan 2011-2012 BBB Supporting Independence	Part of planned work
MATRIX	Ensure effective communication between partner agencies for referrals of at risk adults	ASB Team	PPSP 2011-2012 BSAB 2011-2012 Work Plan BBB Supporting Independence	Part of planned work
Registered Trader Scheme	Promote the use of traders who are registered with the scheme	Community Safety Team	PPSP 2011-2012 BBB Supporting Independence	Part of planned work
Face Lift	Improve the appearance of residential properties occupied by elderly to avoid approached from property repair traders	Community Safety Team	PPSP 2011-2012 BBB Supporting Independence	Part of planned work
Safer Bromley Van	Provide reassurance to vulnerable residents by fitting security to property	Community Safety Team Victim Support	PPSP 2011-2012 BBB Supporting Independence	Part funded by PHF (existing arrangements)