



POST IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW

# Northern Ireland Policing Board

PSNI – Protecting  
Vulnerable People

Final Report – April 2009

ADVISORY





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<b>Glossary</b>	
<b>ABE</b>	Achieving Best Evidence
<b>ACC</b>	Assistant Chief Constable
<b>ACPO</b>	Association of Chief Police Officers
<b>DCU</b>	District Command Unit
<b>HMIC</b>	Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
<b>HSS</b>	Health and Social Services
<b>ICS</b>	Information and Communication Services
<b>MASRAM</b>	Multi Agency Sex Offender Risk Assessment and Management
<b>NI</b>	Northern Ireland
<b>NIO</b>	Northern Ireland Office
<b>NIM</b>	National Intelligence Model
<b>NIPB</b>	Northern Ireland Policing Board
<b>NIPS</b>	Northern Ireland Prison Service
<b>OCMT</b>	Occurrence and Case Management Team
<b>OHW</b>	Occupational Health and Welfare
<b>PBNI</b>	Probation Board Northern Ireland
<b>PIP</b>	Performance Improvement Plan
<b>PIR</b>	Post Implementation Review
<b>PPANI</b>	Public Protection Arrangements Northern Ireland
<b>PPU</b>	Public Protection Unit
<b>PSNI</b>	Police Service of Northern Ireland



# **1 Executive Summary**

## **1.1 Background and Introduction**

The Best Value Review (BVR) of Vulnerable People reviewed all areas covered within Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary's definition of 'Vulnerable People' namely:

- Children
- Missing Persons
- Victims of Sexual Offences
- Victims of Domestic Abuse.

It was also agreed to include 'Older People' within the scope of the review.

The objectives of the Best Value Review of Protecting Vulnerable People were:

- To make recommendations which were geared towards improving the effectiveness of how the PSNI protects vulnerable people
- To make recommendations which were geared towards improving the efficiency of how the PSNI protects vulnerable people.

The theme of Protecting Vulnerable People was formally approved by the Policing Board Resources and Improvement Committee in February 2007.

The purpose of the Best Value Review of Vulnerable People was to provide stakeholders with a clear view of the area reviewed and the issues uncovered during research. Additionally, the report outlined a series of improvement activities which were geared towards improving the effectiveness and efficiency of how the PSNI protects vulnerable people. The outcome of these improvements will ultimately determine the direction of how PSNI protects vulnerable people in the future.

## **1.2 Review Methodology**

### **1.2.1 Objectives**

The objectives of this Post Implementation Review (PIR) are:

- To identify the main drivers for the initial Best Value Review
- To identify and interview the key stakeholders in the review in order to assess progress

- To identify any other pertinent information and documentation which would be useful for this review.

### 1.2.2 Approach

Following the completion of the Best Value Review of Protecting Vulnerable People a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) was developed to allocate responsibility for the implementation of the recommendations. Through the use of the agreed Performance Improvement Plan from the Best Value Review, this PIR will:

- Review the progress to date against each recommendation by interviewing key stakeholders and owners of the recommendations and examining the evidence provided.
- Consider the costs and benefits of the implementation where appropriate.

## 1.3 Progress on Recommendations

In order to improve PSNI's systems and processes for protecting vulnerable people, a total of 19 recommendations were made as a result of the Best Value Review of Protecting Vulnerable People. The recommendations can be grouped into four specific areas: Development of Policies and Strategies, Operational Activities, Use of IT and Training.

An extensive data collection and analysis process was carried out between December 2008 and February 2009. This included interviews with key stakeholders and a review of various documents. As a result of this it is concluded that 17 (90%) of the recommendations were implemented, one (5%) was superseded by adopting an alternative mechanism and one (5%) was not fully implemented. This recommendation will therefore be carried forward and reviewed in the next financial year. It is important to the success of this follow up review that the person responsible and the timescale for implementation are agreed in advance.

Category	Recommendation	Implemented	Superseded	Not fully Implemented
Development of Policies and Strategies	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 12	5	1	
Operational Activities	6, 7, 9, 10, 11	4		1
Use of IT	8, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17	6		
Training	18, 19	2		
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17(90%)</b>	<b>1(5%)</b>	<b>1(5%)</b>

## **1.4 Summary**

### **1.4.1 Summary of benefits obtained**

Through the actions which the PSNI has taken as a result of the implementation of the recommendations from the Best Value Review of Protecting Vulnerable People, benefits have been accrued. Specific examples of these benefits include:

#### *Development of Policies and Strategies*

- The updated Policy Directive 05/06 'Dealing with Victims and Witnesses' provides general guidance on dealing with vulnerable groups and refers PSNI Officers to other specific guidance in relation to particular vulnerable groups. This provides a central method which then refers Officers to more detailed guidance.
- PSNI's emphasis on tackling older people's fear of crime through positive reassurance has been formalised through the updated 'Reassurance Policy' and the Policy on 'Preventing and Responding to Crime against Older Persons'. This should help Officers to consider applying reassurance methods going forward.
- Regional Guidance on 'Police Involvement in Residential Units – Safeguarding of Children Missing from Home and Foster Care' has been produced and launched. This should clarify PSNI's role in relation to residential units going forward.
- The PSNI formalised their commitment to preventing child abuse within the 2009-2012 Policing Plan, but there are no performance targets/indicators. This will fall within the remit of the PPU's going forward.
- PSNI worked on a multi-agency basis with organisations such as PBNI and NIPS to produce the new Public Protection Arrangements Northern Ireland (PPANI). PPANI provides guidance to relevant agencies (e.g. Youth Justice, PSNI) in relation to the effective assessment and management of the risks posed by sex offenders, certain violent offenders and potentially dangerous people.

A range of policies and procedures have been developed and adjusted to be cognisant of vulnerable people. PSNI should ensure that the use and impact of these policies is reviewed periodically to ensure that the guidance is implemented in practice and to ascertain that the guidance meets the needs of Vulnerable People on an ongoing basis.

#### *Operational Activities*

- Public Protection Units have been introduced within each District to provide a Unit with responsibility for protecting the public with regard to domestic abuse, physical and sexual abuse of children, missing and vulnerable people and sexual and violent offenders. The Service Procedure on Public Protection Units details the individual and collective responsibilities of relevant PSNI Officials in relation to achieving this. The creation of the

new Units allows Officers to develop an expertise in this area which will assist the delivery of more effective services going forward.

- A draft Policy Directive ‘Service Vetting for the Police Community’ has been developed to clarify the vetting requirements for PSNI Officials. The Officers assigned to the PPU’s have all been vetted and the Policy Directive provides for periodic re-vetting.
- The PPU’s have been provided with guidance in relation to sharing information and intelligence and the development of effective communication processes.
- PPU staff have access to OHW support when they require it and can self refer to the service. Mandatory processes have not been put in place however supervisors can refer individuals to the service if they consider this is required.

#### *Use of IT*

- Access Level Controls have been developed to limit access to the work undertaken by the PPU’s. A range of mechanisms have been identified to assist PSNI to flag operationally important information such as child abuse referrals, sex offenders and non-molestation orders. PPU’s have been allocated responsibility for the quality control of Vulnerable People incident recording going forward.
- While the IT capability to flag operational important information has been identified PSNI should ensure that appropriate safeguards are put in place to monitor and audit the data collected to determine its accuracy and to ensure that the flagging system is actively used to achieve improved information flows and safeguard vulnerable people.

#### *Training*

- A range of training programmes have been developed and delivered to ensure that PPU staff are appropriately trained. These include joint investigative training on the children’s joint protocol and training in relation to interviewing vulnerable adults.
- PPU Inspectors now undertake the role of Designated Risk Manager and PPU’s have also taken over the role of Sex Offender Risk Management. PPANI has also led to changes in the MASRAM approach. 107 people have received the new training for people involved in the risk management process. This includes modules on understanding human sexuality, sex offenders and sex offending.

### **1.4.2 Cost of benefits obtained**

The majority of the recommendations have been implemented by changing information provision and working methods, which have no cost implications. The main focus of the review was to improve PSNI’s policies and procedures to protect vulnerable people. The evidence which we have gathered through the course of our review would suggest that this has been the case.

The implementation of the recommendations provided in the Best Value Review have produced a range of benefits in terms of the efficiency, economy, effectiveness of PSNI's approach to protecting vulnerable people. While one of the recommendations has yet to be implemented, the impact of those which have been introduced is evident. Improved policies, procedures, operational activities, use of IT and training have been noted as a result of the implementation of the recommendations from the Best Value Review of Protecting Vulnerable People.

### **1.4.3 Impact of Non Implemented Recommendations**

The non implemented recommendation relates to including vulnerable persons as a live agenda item within the NIM business process. PSNI Officials informed us that in practice specific vulnerable people e.g. missing persons are included within daily briefings and that consideration of use of the NIM process for all vulnerable people is ongoing.

### **1.4.4 Overall Impact of Best Value Review**

Overall as a result of the Best Value Review, there are a number of areas within which clear evidence of improvements and increased efficiencies can be seen. These include:

- The introduction and updating of Policy Directives and Service Procedures to provide guidance to PSNI Officers
- The use of IT systems to facilitate improved protection of vulnerable people
- The introduction of PPU's to develop expertise in relation to protecting vulnerable people.

From the information which we have obtained as a result of our review, it is clear that, where changes have occurred, these have been managed by the PSNI, and the benefits obtained have arisen as a direct result of the implementation of the recommendations of the Best Value Review of Vulnerable People. Continued monitoring of the impact and work of the new PPU's, the usage of the IT system and the implementation of the new and updated Policy Directives and Service Procedures should ensure that the maximum benefits are obtained from the implementation of these recommendations.

## **1.5 Acknowledgement**

We would like to thank the staff of the Police Service of Northern Ireland for their assistance in undertaking this review.

## **2 Background and Introduction**

The theme of Protecting Vulnerable People was formally approved by the Policing Board Resources and Improvement Committee in February 2007. The Best Value Review of Vulnerable People reviewed all areas covered within Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary's definition of 'Vulnerable People' namely:

- Children
- Missing Persons
- Victims of Sexual Offences
- Victims of Domestic Abuse.

It was also agreed to include 'Older People' within the scope of the review.

## **3 Review Methodology**

### **3.1 Objectives**

The objectives of this Post Implementation Review (PIR) are:

- To identify the main drivers for the initial Best Value Review
- To identify and interview the key stakeholders in the review in order to assess progress
- To identify the evidence of implementation
- To identify any other pertinent information and documentation which would be useful for this review.

### **3.2 Approach**

Following the completion of the Best Value Review of Protecting Vulnerable People a Performance Improvement Plan was developed to allocate responsibility for the implementation of the recommendations. Through the use of the agreed Performance Improvement Plan from the Best Value Review, this PIR will:

- Review the progress to date against each recommendation by interviewing key stakeholders and owners of the recommendations and examining the evidence provided
- Comment on the costs and benefits of the implementation where appropriate.

After analysing the information and consulting with stakeholders we will then highlight any clear improvements that have been achieved since the Best Value Review of Protecting Vulnerable People was carried out and whether any corrective action needs to be taken in order to realise the benefits identified. We will also assess whether the changes that have occurred have been controlled in a systematic manner to ensure that the PSNI attain the full benefit of the recommendations.

## **4 Best Value Review of Protecting Vulnerable People**

The theme of Protecting Vulnerable People was formally approved by the Policing Board Resources and Improvement Committee in February 2007. The Best Value Review of Vulnerable People reviewed all areas covered within Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary's definition of 'Vulnerable People' namely:

- Children
- Missing Persons
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- Victims of Domestic Abuse.

It was also agreed to include 'Older People' within the scope of the review.

The objectives of the Best Value Review of Protecting Vulnerable People were:

- To make recommendations which are geared towards improving the effectiveness of how the PSNI protects vulnerable people
- To make recommendations which are geared towards improving the efficiency of how the PSNI protects vulnerable people.

The purpose of the Best Value Review of Vulnerable People was to provide stakeholders with a clear view of the area reviewed and the issues uncovered during research. Additionally, the report outlined a series of improvement activities which were geared towards improving the effectiveness and efficiency of how the PSNI protects vulnerable people. The outcome of these improvements will ultimately determine the direction of how PSNI protects vulnerable people in the future.

## 5 Progress on Performance Improvement Plan

- Recommendation not fully implemented, to be carried forward
- Recommendation superseded by other events
- Recommendation implemented, evidence of improvement found

### Best Value Review of Protecting Vulnerable People

Recommendation Number	Recommendation Description	Management Response	Progress Evidence	Performance Status
1	PSNI will develop and implement an integrated Service Procedure outlining how it protects Vulnerable People. This document will cover all aspects of Vulnerable People as defined by HMIC, including: Missing Persons, Sexual Offences, Children and Domestic Abuse	Accepted	<p>While a range of individual Service Procedures and Policy Directives still exist in relation to specific vulnerable groups, PSNI's Policy Directive 05/06 'Dealing with Victims and Witnesses' provides the procedures that PSNI Officers must follow when dealing with all victims/witnesses. The Policy Directive defines the terms 'vulnerable victim' and 'vulnerable witness' and provides general guidance on dealing with a range of vulnerable groups such as older people, children and young people, victims of domestic abuse and victims who do not speak or understand English.</p> <p>The Directive also refers Officers to specific Service Procedures to obtain guidance in relation to particular groups of vulnerable people. Examples of other available guidance include Policy Directives 'Police Response to Domestic Incidents' and 'PSNI Child Protection Policy' and a General Order entitled 'Police Action in Respect of Missing Persons'.</p> <p>PSNI Officials informed us that each District now has a Public Protection Unit (PPU) in place. The role of the PPU is to protect the public with regard to domestic abuse, physical and sexual abuse of children, missing and vulnerable people and sexual and violent offenders. Service Procedure 57/2008 'Public Protection Units' notes that PSNI has a statutory</p>	●●●

Recommendation Number	Recommendation Description	Management Response	Progress Evidence	Performance Status
			responsibility to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. The Service Procedure also details the individual and collective responsibilities of members of the PPU's and other PSNI Officials in relation to achieving this.	
2	PSNI will design and implement a clear accountability framework for the protection of Vulnerable People (this should include all HMIC defined categories for vulnerable people as well as older people). This framework will include all associated roles from operational officers up to and including ACPO lead	Accepted	See recommendation 1.	●●●
3	The PSNI will update its Policing with the Community Strategy to include greater emphasis on tackling the fear of crime on older people through positive reassurance	Accepted	<p>Policy Directive 08/06 'Reassurance Policy' states PSNI's 'commitment to increasing public confidence and delivering reassurance by working in partnership with the community to address the public's sense of insecurity and fear of crime'. The document provides procedures and guidance in relation to reassurance.</p> <p>Policy Directive 10/06 'Preventing and Responding to Crime Against Older Persons' also notes the importance of reassurance.</p>	●●
4	The PSNI will along with HSS partners, formulate "Guidance" in relation to Police involvement with Residential Units and the Safeguarding of children missing from home and foster care. This guidance should be based on the successful pilot conducted in 2006	Accepted	A regional Guidance entitled 'Police Involvement in Residential Units - Safeguarding of Children Missing from Home and Foster Care' was agreed in March 2008. PSNI Officials informed us that this document was launched on 30th September 2008.	●●●

Recommendation Number	Recommendation Description	Management Response	Progress Evidence	Performance Status
5	PSNI will along with key partners, explore how specific Child Abuse parameters can be built into Part 3 of the Policing Plan	Accepted	<p>The introduction to the 2008-11 Policing Plan notes that child protection is a key area where police are working in partnership with other agencies. Specific reference is made to preventing child abuse in all its forms and it is noted that PPU's have been established to tackle the management of child abuse.</p> <p>PSNI Officials informed us that they have experienced difficulties setting key performance indicators in relation to child abuse but Part 3 of the Policing Plan 2008-11 now refers to the implementation of PPU's to deal with child protection issues (which includes child abuse).</p>	●●●
6	PSNI will ensure that the implementation process for Public Protection Units includes roles (with clearly articulated job descriptions), management arrangements, co-location, training, vetting, adequate resources and information sharing. Officers involved in PPU's should not be routinely abstracted and used to perform other duties. These issues should be reflected in the new PPU Policy Directive. There should be a sound rational for staffing levels within PPU's that takes account for workload and resilience. A minimum standard for staffing including supervisory staff should be consistent service wide. The proposed supervisory levels will consist of 1 D/Inspector, 1 D/Sergeant and 1 Sergeant.	Accepted	<p>PSNI Officials informed us that each District now has a Public Protection Unit (PPU) in place. Service Procedure 57/2008 'Public Protection Units' details the individual and collective responsibilities of members of the PPU's and other PSNI Officials.</p> <p>The Service Procedure identifies the minimum number and level of staff within each PPU and individual job descriptions have been developed. The Service Procedure also makes reference to the use of intelligence information, management arrangements and training.</p>	●●●
7	PSNI will implement robust vetting procedures for the selection of Police officers and staff in relevant roles within Public Protection Units. Appropriate periodic re-vetting, and management protocols in cases of allegations against police officers will also be included	Accepted	PSNI's Draft Policy Directive 'Service Vetting Policy for the Police Community' states the vetting requirements for PSNI Officials. PSNI Officials informed us that the initial 120 officers assigned to PPU's have all been vetted to 'Management Vetting Level' as defined in the forthcoming Service Vetting Policy. The Policy also identifies the	●●●

Recommendation Number	Recommendation Description	Management Response	Progress Evidence	Performance Status
			<p>requirement for periodic re-vetting of Officers.</p> <p>PSNI's General Order on 'Service Confidence Procedures' addresses the management of any allegations against Police Officers. The draft Service Vetting Policy also allows for officers to have their vetting level suspended or removed in such circumstances.</p> <p>PSNI Officials informed us that ICS are currently establishing a new database for the Service Vetting Unit which will be incorporated on the current NICHE system. This will ensure that all re-vetting will automatically be flagged six months prior to expiry.</p>	
8	PSNI will ensure that appropriate Access Control Levels are developed and implemented for the work conducted by Public Protection Units.	Accepted	PSNI Officials informed us that Access Control Levels were applied to the NICHE system in June 2008 to limit access to PPU cases to PPU and OCMT staff. The NICHE system was reviewed and access restrictions were viewed.	●●●
9	PSNI will routinely include all categories of vulnerable persons as a live agenda item within the NIM business process	Accepted	<p>PSNI Officials informed us that work is currently being undertaken to progress the implementation of this recommendation. Consideration has been given to how this recommendation can be implemented but consensus has not been reached due to concerns regarding the wide definition of 'vulnerable persons'.</p> <p>PSNI Officials informed us that in practice issues regarding individual vulnerable people are highlighted in morning briefings.</p>	●
10	The PSNI will ensure that clear communication and interface guidelines are provided to Public Protection Unit's to ensure that effective communication and information sharing is achieved by using the NIM	Accepted	Service Procedure 57/2008 'Public Protection Units' provides guidance on the sharing of information and intelligence and the use of the NIM business process.	●●●

Recommendation Number	Recommendation Description	Management Response	Progress Evidence	Performance Status
	business process			
11	PSNI will provide Public Protection Unit staff with the opportunity to be regularly debriefed by OHW to meet welfare or other needs. This should occur for all officers on a routine basis or when a difficult or stressful investigation is undertaken.	Accepted	<p>PSNI Officials informed us that PPU staff are routinely reminded that OHW support is available to them when they require this service. PPU staff self refer to this service and therefore no central record is held specifically in relation to the number of PPU staff making use of the service.</p> <p>PSNI Officials informed us that mandatory meetings are being introduced in some Districts and that supervisors have the right to refer individuals if they consider it to be appropriate.</p>	●●●
12	PSNI will explore the possibility of developing a more UK specific risk model for the current Harris Hastings approach used, with ACPO	Accepted	<p>PSNI Officials informed us that the development of a more UK specific risk model can only be addressed through multi-agency working.</p> <p>PSNI Officials worked on a multi-agency basis alongside organisations such as PBNI, NIPS and the Youth Justice Agency to develop the new Public Protection Arrangements Northern Ireland (PPANI). PPANI provides guidance to relevant agencies (including PSNI) in relation to the effective assessment and management of the risks posed by sex offenders, certain violent offenders and potentially dangerous people.</p>	●●●
13	PSNI will allocate specific responsibility for the quality control of Vulnerable People incident recording from Command and Control and NICHE. Districts will audit their data collection and referral mechanism to ensure statistics accurately reflect work being done	Accepted	PSNI Officials informed us that PPUs will take responsibility for this going forward and that in practice PPU Members routinely review all incidents on a daily basis to ascertain if data is recorded accurately.	●●●

Recommendation Number	Recommendation Description	Management Response	Progress Evidence	Performance Status
14	PSNI will scope the potential for extending NICHE to include all Vulnerable Persons	Accepted	<p>The NICHE system has the capability to flag operationally important information such as vulnerable people.</p> <p>While this capability exists, further work is now required to identify which business unit will take responsibility for identifying which vulnerable people should be included in NICHE and updating the system on an ongoing basis.</p>	●●●
15	PSNI will explore how the NICHE system can flag operationally important information such as Non-Molestation Orders and Occupation Orders to ground level officers via Command and Control	Accepted	<p>The NICHE system has the capability to highlight operationally important information such as Non-Molestation Orders and Occupation Orders using a flagging system. This information can then be brought to the attention of ground level Officers via Command and Control.</p> <p>While this capability exists, further work is now required to identify which business unit will take responsibility for updating these flags on an ongoing basis.</p>	●●●
16	PSNI will explore how Child Abuse referrals can be designed into the NICHE system	Accepted	<p>The NICHE system has the capability to flag operationally important information such as Child Abuse Referrals. PSNI Officials informed us that the Occurrence and Case Management (OCM) has been enhanced to accommodate additional information that Child Protection Investigators may require such as including video interviews within the system.</p>	●●●
17	PSNI will explore the possibility of implementing a system that allows officers involved in the management of sex offenders to be informed if an offender is involved in any incident. This may be achievable by enhancing the flagging system currently available via NICHE	Accepted	<p>The flagging system on NICHE has the ability to inform officers involved in the management of sex offenders when the individual has been 'involved in an occurrence'.</p> <p>PSNI Officials informed us that the Horizon team is currently working with PPANI to update the information available on NICHE to show details in relation to all sex offenders. This work is due to be completed in early 2009. PPU will take</p>	●●●

Recommendation Number	Recommendation Description	Management Response	Progress Evidence	Performance Status
			lead responsibility for maintaining this system going forward.	
18	The PSNI will implement a planned approach to educating all relevant staff in public protection matters	Accepted	<p>Relevant staff have undertaken a range of training including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children's Joint Protocol - Joint Investigative Training</li> <li>• Interviewing Children as per ABE</li> <li>• Vulnerable Adults</li> <li>• Interviewing Vulnerable Adults as per ABE</li> <li>• Specialist Child Abuse Investigators Development Programme</li> <li>• Domestic Abuse</li> <li>• Domestic Violence .</li> </ul> <p>All of the above are ongoing courses and new staff are trained as required.</p>	●●●
19	PSNI will design and implement a suitable training assessment and evaluation process to support the new MASRAM training program	Accepted	<p>PSNI Officials informed us that the role of Designated Risk Manager is now undertaken by PPU Inspectors and the PPU Inspectors have taken on the role of Risk management of Cat 1 and 2 sex offenders. Cat 3 sex offenders are the responsibility of the multi agency PPT.</p> <p>PPANI has not made a number of changes to MASRAM, it has replaced it. MASRAM no longer exists as such.</p> <p>To date 107 people have also received the new training for personnel involved in the risk management process. This is linked to the Stable and Acute 2007 risk assessment tool and includes modules in relation to understanding human sexuality, sex offenders and sex offending.</p> <p>The Police Training College is looking at further training for PSNI officers visiting sex offenders which goes beyond the</p>	●●●

Recommendation Number	Recommendation Description	Management Response	Progress Evidence	Performance Status
			<p>risk assessment tool alone. This is a new course developed by NPIA and is at an early stage. Crime Training is looking at developing this course to suit Northern Ireland. PSNI would like to get this course delivered around September 2009.</p>	



## **6 Summary**

### **6.1 Summary of benefits obtained**

Through the actions which the PSNI has taken as a result of the implementation of the recommendations from the Best Value Review of Protecting Vulnerable People, benefits have been accrued. Specific examples of these benefits include:

#### *Development of Policies and Strategies*

- The updated Policy Directive 05/06 ‘Dealing with Victims and Witnesses’ provides general guidance on dealing with vulnerable groups and refers PSNI Officers to other specific guidance in relation to particular vulnerable groups. This provides a central method which then refers Officers to more detailed guidance.
- PSNI’s emphasis on tackling older people’s fear of crime through positive reassurance has been formalised through the updated ‘Reassurance Policy’ and the Policy on ‘Preventing and Responding to Crime against Older Persons’. This should help Officers to consider applying reassurance methods going forward.
- Regional Guidance on ‘Police Involvement in Residential Units – Safeguarding of Children Missing from Home and Foster Care’ has been produced and launched. This should clarify PSNI’s role in relation to residential units going forward.
- The PSNI formalised their commitment to preventing child abuse within the 2009-2012 Policing Plan, but there are no performance targets/indicators. This will fall within the remit of the PPU’s going forward.
- PSNI worked on a multi-agency basis with organisations such as PBNI and NIPS to produce the new Public Protection Arrangements Northern Ireland (PPANI). PPANI provides guidance to relevant agencies (e.g. Youth Justice, PSNI) in relation to the effective assessment and management of the risks posed by sex offenders, certain violent offenders and potentially dangerous people.

A range of policies and procedures have been developed and adjusted to be cognisant of vulnerable people. PSNI should ensure that the use and impact of these policies is reviewed periodically to ensure that the guidance is implemented in practice and to ascertain that the guidance meets the needs of Vulnerable People on an ongoing basis.

#### *Operational Activities*

- Public Protection Units have been introduced within each District to provide a Unit with responsibility for protecting the public with regard to domestic abuse, physical and sexual abuse of children, missing and vulnerable people and sexual and violent offenders. The Service Procedure on Public Protection Units details the individual and collective responsibilities of relevant PSNI Officials in relation to achieving this. The creation of the

new Units allows Officers to develop an expertise in this area which will assist the delivery of more effective services going forward.

- A draft Policy Directive ‘Service Vetting for the Police Community’ has been developed to clarify the vetting requirements for PSNI Officials. The Officers assigned to the PPU have all been vetted and the Policy Directive provides for periodic re-vetting.
- The PPU have been provided with guidance in relation to sharing information and intelligence and the development of effective communication processes.
- PPU staff have access to OHW support when they require it and can self refer to the service. Mandatory processes have not been put in place however supervisors can refer individuals to the service if they consider this is required.

#### *Use of IT*

- Access Level Controls have been developed to limit access to the work undertaken by the PPU. A range of mechanisms have been identified to assist PSNI to flag operationally important information such as child abuse referrals, sex offenders and non-molestation orders. PPU have been allocated responsibility for the quality control of Vulnerable People incident recording going forward.
- While the IT capability to flag operational important information has been identified PSNI should ensure that appropriate safeguards are put in place to monitor and audit the data collected to determine its accuracy and to ensure that the flagging system is actively used to achieve improved information flows and safeguard vulnerable people.

#### *Training*

- A range of training programmes have been developed and delivered to ensure that PPU staff are appropriately trained. These include joint investigative training on the children’s joint protocol and training in relation to interviewing vulnerable adults.
- PPU Inspectors now undertake the role of Designated Risk Manager and PPU have also taken over the role of Sex Offender Risk Management. PPANI has also led to changes in the MASRAM approach. 107 people have received the new training for people involved in the risk management process. This includes modules on understanding human sexuality, sex offenders and sex offending.

## **6.2 Cost of benefits obtained**

The majority of the recommendations have been implemented by changing information provision and working methods, which have no cost implications. The main focus of the review was to improve PSNI’s policies and procedures to protect vulnerable people. The evidence which we have gathered through the course of our review would suggest that this has been the case.

The implementation of the recommendations provided in the Best Value Review have produced a range of benefits in terms of the efficiency, economy, effectiveness of PSNI's approach to protecting vulnerable people. While one of the recommendations has yet to be implemented, the impact of those which have been introduced is evident. Improved policies, procedures, operational activities, use of IT and training have been noted as a result of the implementation of the recommendations from the Best Value Review of Protecting Vulnerable People.

### **6.3 Impact of Non Implemented Recommendations**

The non implemented recommendation relates to including vulnerable persons as a live agenda item within the NIM business process. PSNI Officials informed us that in practice specific vulnerable people e.g. missing persons are included within daily briefings and that consideration of use of the NIM process for all vulnerable people is ongoing.

### **6.4 Overall Impact of Best Value Review**

Overall as a result of the Best Value Review, there are a number of areas within which clear evidence of improvements and increased efficiencies can be seen. These include:

- The introduction and updating of Policy Directives and Service Procedures to provide guidance to PSNI Officers
- The use of IT systems to facilitate improved protection of vulnerable people
- The introduction of PPU's to develop expertise in relation to protecting vulnerable people.

From the information which we have obtained as a result of our review, it is clear that, where changes have occurred, these have been managed by the PSNI, and the benefits obtained have arisen as a direct result of the implementation of the recommendations of the Best Value Review of Vulnerable People. Continued monitoring of the impact and work of the new PPU's, the usage of the IT system and the implementation of the new and updated Policy Directives and Service Procedures should ensure that the maximum benefits are obtained from the implementation of these recommendations.