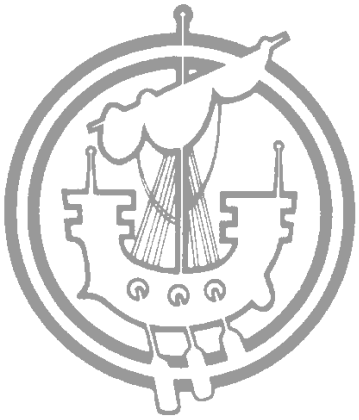
WESTERN ISLES ADULT PROTECTION COMMITTEE

BIENNIAL REPORT 2016 – 2018



October 2018

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report is delivered by the Chair of the Western Isles Adult Protection Committee in terms of the requirements of s46 of the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007.

1.2 The statutory basis is that the report is to the relevant Minister at the Scottish Government, but it has been noted over the past two cycles of biennial reports that the level of analysis and feedback by government of the reports has significantly reduced. The practical focus of this report is therefore to provide the Western Isles Integration Joint Board and the Chief Officer Group an account of the work of the committee, to review its work and set out priorities for the future.

1.3 Unlike many other partnership areas, it is not possible to have a staff structure wholly committed to adult protection, and the task of the lead officer is set within wider responsibilities for mental health support; in many respects this is seen as a positive aspect of the local structure, but it does present some challenges to ensure that adult protection receives the necessary priority within the range of local support services.

1.4 The Committee is very appreciative of the national structures that exist to enable a good degree of peer support across national partnerships. The quarterly meetings of adult protection chairs and the networks for lead officers are an invaluable part of enabling the committee to review its practices and priorities against those emerging in other geographical areas.

1.5 A fundamental responsibility of the Committee is to ensure that local practice in protecting adults at risk responds to identified local priorities, local and national service inspections and significant case reviews from other partnership areas. It is intended that the national inspection on adult protection across six partnership areas published in June 2018 will be used as a benchmark for reviewing local practice.

1.6 The Committee, for the same reason, also welcomes the emerging guidance on significant case reviews, setting out clearer structures for sharing learning points across the country.

IMPROVING LOCAL PRACTICE

2.1 The Adult Protection Committee has held two joint meetings with the Child Protection Committee, both with a focus on shared learning points from nationally reported case reviews. These were presented by the respective lead officers and have, in the case of adult protection, led to a renewed focus on the importance of chronology in recording case activity, an action that is being currently incorporated into the review of local procedures as well as the development of the IT system operated across social work services.

2.2 A further initiative has been holding video meetings across the three island partnerships, Orkney, Shetland and the Western Isles. While the need to benchmark practice in general has to have a broader geographical base, there are particular areas, such as the comparison and contrast of local data trends, and sharing experiences of the operation of the risk and concern hubs, where the inter-island focus provides a useful function.

2.3 A later section of this report covers the actions taken in response to the local inspection of older people's services, and the national inspection of selected adult protection partnerships. These are central to the Committee agenda for continuous reflection on current practice and service improvement.

2.4 A further section of the report gives more detail on user engagement. While it is seen universally as a basic element of good practice, the practicality of how to achieve effective user engagement seems more elusive. The relatively low numbers of adult protection case conferences make the idea of building in routine or selective experiential feedback more challenging, but the Committee has taken steps in the areas of advocacy and with adults with learning disabilities to ensure that practice engages as closely with users or prospective service users as possible.

2.5 The section on data gives further detail on the local picture for adult protection. In this area as well because of small numbers, there are some limits to the analysis of trends to identify priorities for action although, for example, the predominance of alcohol-based and mental health referrals does point out areas for special attention.

2.6 Data-gathering in general has improved in the period covered by this report, partly by the refinement of national data reporting practice and partly by local initiative. The regular reports, area by area, on the local risk and concern referrals (coupled with access to the equivalent data for the other island area) have given an added stream of data for the Committee to review.

2.7 The decision taken by the Committee to extend full membership to the Fire and Rescue Service has subsequently been reinforced by the key issues identified in the

national inspection of Adult Protection. The committee is also to be strengthened by having direct membership from Hebridean Housing Partnership, the local registered social landlord. In view of the increasing prominence of financial abuse in the national agenda, it is intended that the occasional participation by Trading Standards in the work of the committee should be extended to full membership.

Case Study 1

Elizabeth is a younger adult who suffered a serious acquired brain injury and had to move into a 24-hour placement. The placement was for older adults, but this was the only option in her local area. Elizabeth was aggressive and assaulted another resident and an ASP referral was made. The ASP investigation highlighted that Elizabeth's needs were not being met and she was becoming frustrated. Additional one-to-one support was provided for her to meet her assessed need and she has since settled.

USER ENGAGEMENT

3.1 The Committee has welcomed the new representation of the lead officer from Advocacy Western Isles. This is a relatively recent development, within the past six months, but shows a commitment to providing a greater and more independent voice to service users. Giving higher priority to this element of practice will be reflected in the summary that concludes this report outlining priority areas for development.

3.2 An initiative taken by the Committee in listening to the views of adults with learning disabilities is evidence of the benefits that accrue from national networking promoted by the quarterly chairs' meetings. An exceptionally effective session was held within the chairs' meeting in November 2017 by People First, a national self-led group of adults with learning difficulties, on 'Supported Decision-Making'. That presentation focused on the place of learning disability within the Mental Health (Scotland) Act 2003, but at the same time illustrated how the voice of the user can be amplified.

3.3 The impact of this activity was further illustrated by the national conference reviewing 10 years since the implementation of the Adult Support and Protection Act. A keynote presentation at this event was a constructively critical review by People First.

3.4 Spurred on by these events, in March 2018 the Committee convened a meeting with the Child Protection Committee, Western Isles Domestic Abuse Forum and the Public Protection Chief Officer Group to meet with a wide range of adults with learning disabilities under the umbrella of their Speak Out Group. The central event of this meeting was 'an entertainment with a serious message', play-acted scenarios of challenges commonly faced by people with learning disabilities in everyday situations.

3.5 The aims of this meeting were set out: to help the respective committees develop their communication skills and methods; to bring service users and potential users more closely into the work the committees are engaged in; to help draft information, whether by leaflet or on-line, in ways that better reach out to the wider public.

3.6 As well as meeting the expectation of improving communication with some harder-to-reach users for the committees hosting the event, the meeting, which took place at a well-attended session in the Comhairle chamber, was followed by invitation to the Speak Out Group to meet with elected members of the Comhairle and with members of Hebridean Housing Partnership.

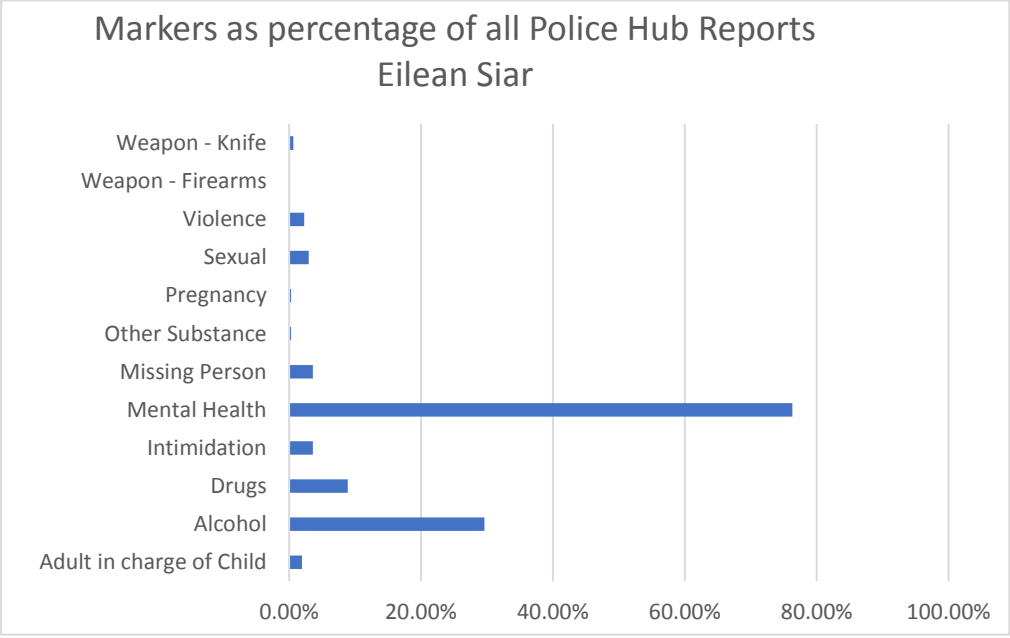
RISK AND CONCERN HUB

4.1 The report from the Risk and Concern Hub for the Western Isles is a standing item on the Committee agenda, dovetailing with the regular data report from the Lead Officer. At the video meetings with the other two island authorities, it was agreed that sharing the reports on hub activity would be useful, enabling some overview of patterns and sources of referral.

4.2 Prior to the establishment of the hubs, the Western Isles had in place, as did some other partnerships, well-established processes for weekly joint screening of referrals in local meetings involving lead officers from the police, NHS and council. There had been some concern that the implementation of the new process was driven by the need to screen the overwhelming volume of referrals coming from the police in some of the larger partnerships and that there could be a diminution in the local arrangement.

4.3 It did take some time to settle in to the national process, but it is now clear that the screening system works effectively, and that the data emanating from the hub provides useful information both for assessing local priorities and for comparison with other partnerships.

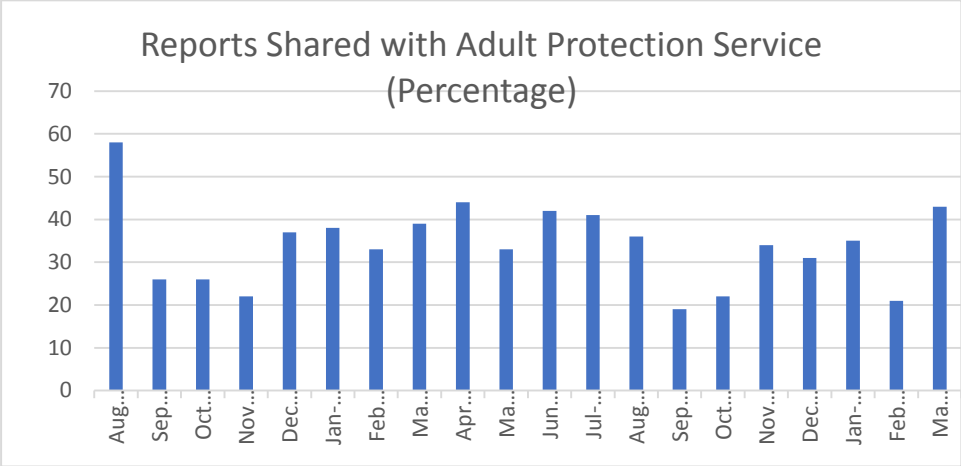
4.4 That regular data reinforces for the committee the place that alcohol abuse and mental health play in referrals about vulnerable adults and those at risk.



4.5 Each hub report on an adult concern referral is identified by ‘markers’, features which play a significant part in this initial referral. Many referrals may have more

than one marker, such as one concerning a missing person with mental health difficulties.

4.6 What is indisputable in the local concern referrals is the predominant way that mental health and alcohol features, reinforcing the place that these issues have within the general public health agenda in the Western Isles. It also provided an impetus for the introduction of further police training on mental health, referred to in the follow-up inspection report detailed later.



4.7 There is no discernible trend in the pattern of reports to the Hub shared with adult protection services. At the introduction of the new system, it was acknowledged that one of the central issues it sought to address, the overwhelming number of referrals being routed from police, was not a problem that extended to the Western Isles. The referral numbers managed through the risk and concern hub continues to be manageable.

Case Study 2

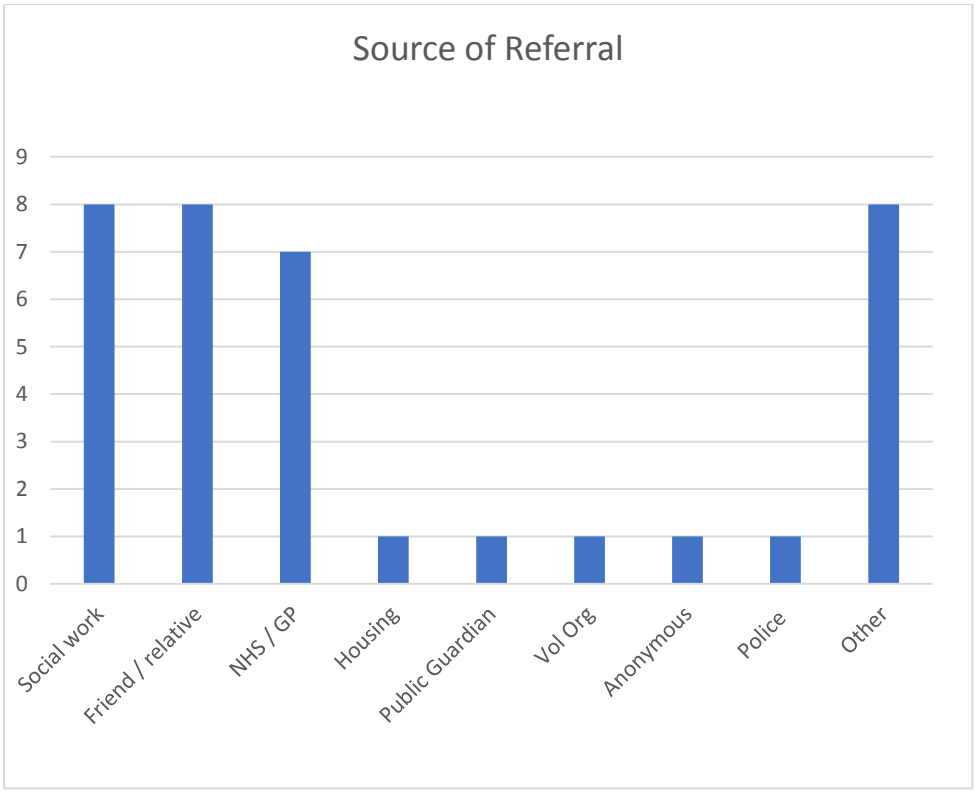
Seumas has been diagnosed with dementia and he puts himself at considerable risk at times. He lives with his daughter and main carer, Mary M. who herself has support needs and admits she cannot always meet Seumas' needs. After an incident of significant self-harm, an ASP investigation and case conference took place, a care package was put in place involving care at home, assistive technology and overnight respite at home, Seumas' wish to stay at home with Mary M has been respected and the risks he presents have been reduced. Mary M has been provided with some respite from her caring responsibilities.

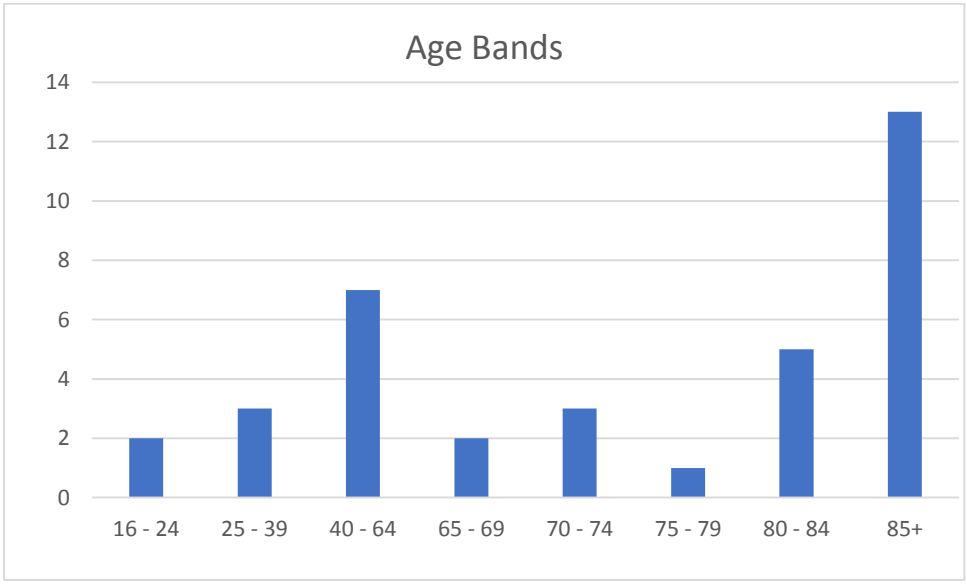
WESTERN ISLES REFERRALS AND RESPONSES

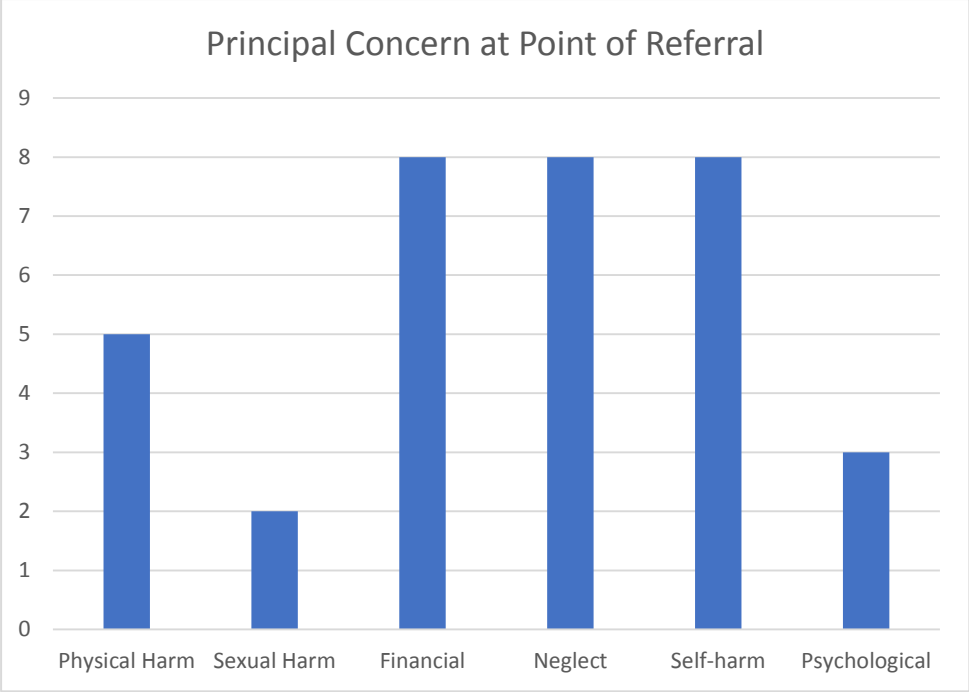
5.1 With the data provided by the Risk and Concern Hub Reports, combined with improved data collection within the CareFirst system used by social work services locally, there is significant improvement in the information available to the committee in its scrutiny of local performance.

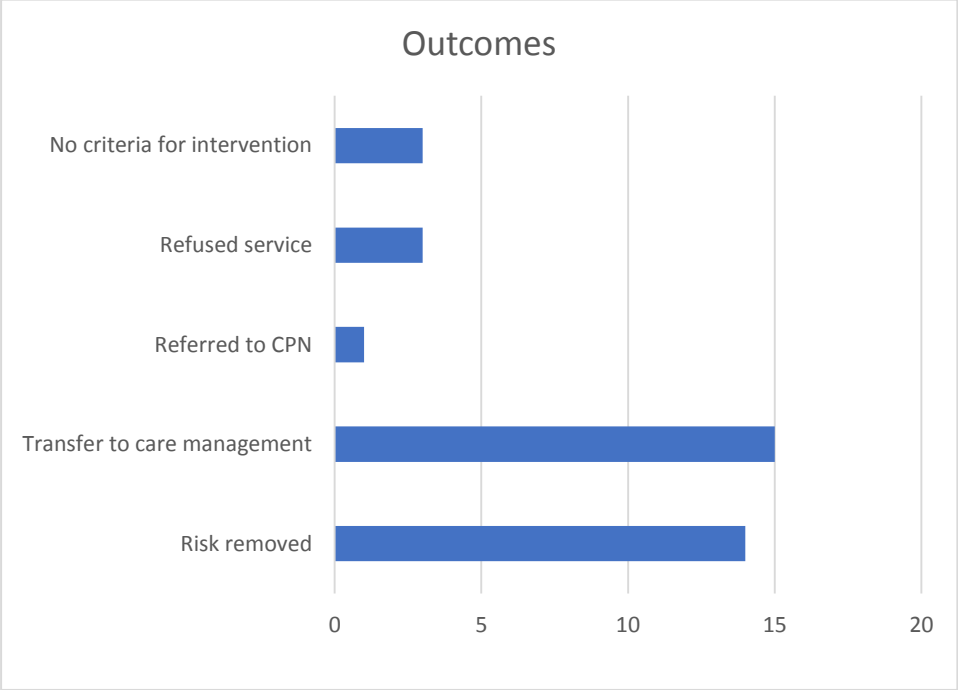
5.2 The next step forward in this is the development of regular comparative reports on national data on adult protection, which is reflected in the action plan at the end of this report. While the committee recognises that there are many factors which may explain differentials with national data trends, including the relatively small numbers represented by activity in the Western Isles, this process will help members delve deeper into reasons for any notable deviation in local referrals and cases.

5.3 The following charts give analysis of referrals dealt with for 2017 – 2018 outwith those referred through the Risk & Concern Hub noted in the previous section.


Source of Referral
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
Social work
Friend / relative
NHS / GP
Housing
Public Guardian
Vol Org
Anonymous
Police
Other


Age Bands
14
12
10
8
6
4
2
0
16 - 24
25 - 39
40 - 64
65 - 69
70 - 74
75 - 79
80 - 84
85+





5.4 The category of 'risk removed' covers a variety of outcomes. In 3 of the cases with concern about financial harm, the Adult with Incapacity proxy resigned, removing from that person the Power of Attorney. In 2 other cases, the outcome was a change of placement to protect the adult.

5.5 Transfer to care management involves referral to community care within social work services for continuing support and intervention.

Case Study 3

Iain has a learning disability and was being financially exploited by another service user who harassed him on the day he received his benefits. An ASP investigation took place and Iain did not want any action taken against the perpetrator. Iain agreed a plan to minimise the financial harm he experienced by having his support agency become DWP appointees. In this way, he accesses smaller amounts of his benefits in a planned way, reducing his exposure to all his money being exploited on benefit payment day and also supporting and encouraging Iain to plan and budget better.

TRAINING AND AWARENESS RAISING

6.1 The Committee recognises that public awareness and training tailored appropriately to the specialist or generic responsibilities of those in the statutory or third sectors are the foundations of an effective adult protection service.

6.2 The Committee has been in dialogue with the Public Protection COG to agree an effective structure for public protection training. This will be based on a general workforce training module, and a secondary session more focused on specific workforce training. Additional attention will be given to bespoke induction sessions for key staff groups to complement the other modules.

6.3 As noted in the follow-up report on the local inspection, there was some discontinuity in the lead staffing arrangements for adult protection following the retiral of the lead officer. With organisation of the service now in place, the lead officer has adopted an energetic and responsive programme of training and update for staff across a range of services and agencies.

6.4 For frontline staff, training was delivered for the lead officer and nominated council officers by the Highland Council lead officer. Highland Council provided access to all their locally developed training resources and these were adapted for use locally, including bespoke home care and care home presentations.

6.5 Level 1 and level 2 training has been provided for the following staff groups: Environmental Health, Adult Education, Homelessness staff, Social Care assessors, Care Home staff, Care at Home managers, Adult Day Care staff.

6.6 The North Lanarkshire Adult Support and Protection Committee significant case review into the death of Miss A has been developed into locally into a case study training resource. This was first presented to the joint meeting of the APC and CPC, and there followed a multi-disciplinary session on the Isle of Barra with attendees from social work, home care, adult day care and substance misuse services.

6.7 It is planned to roll out this training across the rest of the isles with the following professional agencies expressing an interest in participating: adult, children & families social workers; psychology; psychiatry; homeless; police; 3rd sector providers; adult education; residential care. The sessions are designed to have multi-disciplinary attendance to stimulate discussion.

PUBLIC PROTECTION CHIEF OFFICER GROUP

7.1 The Public Protection COG has been a very positive coordinating point throughout the period covered by this report, overseeing the work of the separate committees, monitoring outcomes of inspections and the consequential improvement plans.

7.2 The COG decided to develop the annual Child Protection Conference into a tripartite event to include involvement with the Domestic Abuse Forum and the Adult Protection Committee. A team drawn from the three groups was formed to establish a common issue and devise a programme which would be relevant to all three sectors.

7.3 The theme of Adverse Childhood Experiences and their impact on later life was agreed as a topic that embraced all three disciplines. The event, introduced by the Chair of the COG, was held in An Lanntair Art and Exhibition Centre in Stornoway in September 2017 and drew an attendance in excess of 130 practitioners and managers.

7.4 The keynote speaker was John Carnochan, co-founder of the internationally recognised Violence Reduction Unit in Glasgow; the supporting speaker was Nel Whiting from Women's Aid in Edinburgh. The presentations were supplemented by performances by the Baldy Bane Theatre Company.

7.5 The Chairs of all three Committees all spoke at the conference to showcase the activities of the three respective planning mechanisms. The feedback from those attending was very positive and on that basis at the conclusion action was set in train to establish a similar event for 2018.

7.6 In the follow-up inspection detailed in section 7 of this report, members of the chief officers' group described an improving picture of working relationships across the partnership. They were happy with the reports produced by the independent chair of the adult protection committee and were able to describe some improvements made because of the data collected. For example, in recognition of the number of referrals where mental health issues were a factor, specific training had been developed for police officers.

WESTERN ISLES OLDER PEOPLES INSPECTION

8.1 The Western Isles was the subject of an inspection of its Older Peoples Services in 2015, which identified a number of areas within these services that required to be addressed by improvement actions. Although the follow-up inspection, in May 2018, falls outside the reporting period for this biennial report, it seems more appropriate to refer to it here rather than in two years' time.

8.2 In the original inspection report, picking up an issue highlighted in an earlier biennial report to which reference was made by the inspectors, the need to improve both data collection and the use of data formed the recommendation that related directly to adult protection services.

Recommendation 6

The Western Isles partnership, through its involvement of the public protection chief officers' group and the adult protection committee, should ensure that action is taken to improve data collection, its use for improvement purposes and the quality of CareFirst recording. It should also ensure that a clear programme of self-evaluation is undertaken. This should include an audit of the effectiveness of its screening arrangements for adult support and protection referrals.

8.3 The Adult Protection Committee contributed to the development of the preparation workplan for the follow-up inspection by holding a well-attended workshop for members to take forward actions that would contribute to addressing the key theses relevant to adult protection in the inspection report.

8.4 In its follow-up report it was noted that the recommendation had been made because they found the collection and use of management information and self-evaluation activity required attention. They also had concerns that the low number of adult protection referrals being made to and dealt with by the partnership might be reflective of an insufficient awareness and focus on adult support and protection.

8.5 The recent follow-up report noted improvement action taken. "The partnership had undertaken a good amount of work to ensure that the quality of CareFirst recording had improved. Adult protection CareFirst forms had been introduced and used to capture more meaningful local performance data. They were being used to improve the quality of reports to the adult protection committee. The council was in the process of procuring more user-friendly software, which, we were told, would support more effective running of data reports. For some time, the adult support and protection lead officer had been preparing quarterly data reports on adult protection concerns received from the police hub, information on referrals received, and an overview of adult support and protection cases."

8.6 Staff whom the inspection team met with and who were involved with the adult protection committee confirmed this data was now considered routinely at the committee's meetings to encourage discussion and identification of improvement actions. The partnership had also established links with both the Orkney and Shetland Islands to allow benchmarking to be done on adult support and protection on an inter-island basis. Reference is made to this in section 2 of this biennial report.

8.7 While partners had made good progress in improving the quality of the data collected, they acknowledged there was still work to be done to sustain continued improvement. Data provided basic information, but the partnership recognised it needed to improve the range of data collected, for example monitoring case conference timescales and outcomes as well as qualitative data to support more robust, evidence-based joint self-evaluation.

8.8 Senior officers were now screening referrals more effectively. A weekly screening meeting had been established with the Inverness police hub and health colleagues, which assisted a multi-agency approach. All partners were described as engaging well with this process, which had been instrumental in identifying more meaningful data and trends as well as identifying staff training needs. The council and police lead officers for adult protection also played a key role in screening their own single-agency referrals. However, these processes were yet to be audited to assess their effectiveness.

8.9 The partnership acknowledged that staff vacancies and recruitment challenges had significantly impacted on the progression of parts of this recommendation, particularly in relation to self-evaluation. Because of key personnel leaving the council, vacancies within health staff and challenges in recruiting new staff the improvement agenda had stalled. To address this, the Comhairle restructured by merging the lead officer role with a social work team manager post. We saw that the post holder played an active role in screening adult protection referrals and providing support to staff who commented positively about this. However, this was not a temporary arrangement and the inspection team considered that the partnership should ensure that its sustainability was kept under review.

8.10 Members of the chief officers' group described an improving picture of working relationships across the partnership. They were happy with the reports produced by the independent chair of the adult protection committee and were able to describe some improvements made because of the data collected. For example, in recognition of the number of referrals where mental health issues were a factor, specific training had been developed for police officers.

8.11 In summary, the follow-up inspection found evidence to confirm that some significant progress had started to be made in the preceding six-month period with examples being:

- completion of some early self-evaluation work that identified themes for improvement; this exercise had informed the most recent, more robust and SMART adult support and protection improvement plan
- adoption of more robust adult support and protection processes across all stages from initial inquiry or referral to case conference
- introduction of a range of adult support and protection training, both on a single- and multi-agency basis as well as bespoke training for care at home and third sector staff.

8.12 The continuing programme of work to address the subjects looked at in the follow-up inspection are summarised in the action plan at the end of this report.

Case Study 4

Michael and Peggy are siblings in their late 80s who were living together in the community. Peggy has advanced dementia and Michael is her main carer. An ASP referral was received relating to financial exploitation by their Power of Attorney. An ASP investigation took place and the Office of Public Guardian and the police were informed. The OPG took steps to protect Peggy's accounts and Michael was supported by social work to protect his own accounts. The ASP intervention highlighted that Michael could no longer meet Peggy's or his own needs in the community and both he and Peggy were admitted to a care home with rooms next door to each other.

THEMATIC INSPECTION OF ADULT PROTECTION SERVICES

9.1 The Committee has acknowledged the contribution to development of services in the Western Isles that the publication of the national thematic inspection on Adult Protection can offer. While we were not included in the spread of partnerships which were inspected, the expectation is that all partnerships will reflect on the key issues raised in the reports and make positive use of them.

9.2 To this end, the APC has been given a presentation by senior management within adult protection at Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and is engaged in a process of reflecting on local service in the context of the key issues summarised at the conclusion of Part 1 of the national report.

9.3 It is intended to follow this up in detail at a workshop which will replicate the model used locally in 2017 which helped to develop positive actions arising from the inspection of older people's services in the Western Isles. This workshop will draw on the widened membership of the committee and is intended to be the foundation for the workplan that will underpin the operation of the service and the committee in 2019.

SUMMARISED ACTION PLAN

Objective	Subject	Actions	Target Dates
Improve Committee Scrutiny	Provision of data for Committee	Present regular national data reports alongside local data to facilitate comparison.	January 2019
	Extended membership of Committee	Conclude arrangements for additional membership from (a) Fire & Rescue Service, (b) Hebridean Housing Partnership & (c) Trading Standards.	December 2018
	Extend knowledge base of committee members	Establish programme for Committee briefing by professional staff on key national significant case reviews and other relevant reports	Start by March 2019
		Provide refresher session for members on ASP Act	November 2018
Service Improvement	Western Isles ASP Procedures	Conclude latest revision of procedures	January 2019
	Significant Case Reviews	On conclusion of national guidance, establish local parameters and guidance on SCRs for adult protection, maintaining a consistent approach with local child protection SCR procedures; present to COG for approval	January 2019
	Inter-island partnership	Set programme for six-monthly video meetings with Orkney and Shetland for APC chairs and senior professional staff.	December 2018

Objective	Subject	Actions	Target Dates
Service Improvement (continued)	Chronology recording	Within the CareFirst IT system, build in processes to improve chronology recording of case activity	February 2019
	National Thematic Inspection	Workshop for Committee members and professional staff • to promote evaluation against key issues summarised in the Report • to refresh Committee action plan for 2019	November 2018
Training	Public Protection	Conclude the framework and programme on public protection training, and present to COG for final approval	December 2018
	Audit of current training	Prepare analysis of training provision and training gaps across all sectors that should have access to adult protection training	March 2019
	Public awareness	In association with the timing of any planned national campaign, prepare local press and media programme to promote public awareness of adult protection issues	Dependent on national campaign dates

Appendix

Adult and Child Services Governance Structure