

**Wiltshire Council**

**Health and Wellbeing Board**

**12 July 2018**

---

**Subject: Wiltshire Multi-Agency Hoarding Protocol**

---

**Executive Summary**

- I. In response to an increase in complex and time consuming hoarding cases a task and finish group was drawn together to develop a multi-agency hoarding protocol to improve how we deal with hoarding issues.
- II. Each agency involved made a commitment to enable a safer and healthier environment for the individual and others affected by hoarding behaviour
- III. The protocol seeks to identify and adopt best practice

**Proposal(s)**

It is recommended that the Board:  
Approves the protocol and supports its use by all relevant agencies when dealing with people who hoard.

**Reason for Proposal**

To improve how the relevant agencies deal with, and work together on hoarding issues.

John Carter  
Head of Public Protection  
Wiltshire Council

## **Wiltshire Council**

### **Health and Wellbeing Board**

**12 July 2018**

---

#### **Subject: Wiltshire Multi Agency Hoarding Protocol**

---

#### **Purpose of Report**

1. To inform the Board of the completion of the Wiltshire Multi-Agency Hoarding Protocol, and to recommend adoption of the protocol for all agencies dealing with cases of people who hoard.

#### **Background**

2. Reports were presented to the Public Service Board and the Community Safety Partnership at their meetings last year which outlined the increasing number of complex cases of hoarding across the county and the need for a person centred approach to improve how all the relevant agencies deal with people suffering from hoarding behaviour. Work to develop a multi-agency protocol was agreed.
3. Prior to setting up a group to develop the protocol discussions were held with the council's safeguarding leads and the Wiltshire Service Users Network Independent Living Centre to help scope the work.
4. A number of organisations which deal with hoarding issues were invited to join a task and finish group to help develop a new protocol. Representatives included:
  - Wiltshire Council
    - Public Protection (environmental health)
    - Public Health
    - Adult Safeguarding
    - Housing
    - Adult Social Care
  - Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Service
  - Wiltshire Police
  - NHS Wiltshire CCG
  - Wiltshire and Swindon Users' Network
  - Richmond Fellowship
  - Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust
  - Wiltshire Health and Care
  - British Red Cross
  - South West Ambulance Trust
  - Selwood Housing Association

5. The task and finish group held six meetings between September 2017 and April 2018 and identified ways to improve how all agencies deal with people with hoarding behaviours. The aim of the group was to produce a concise document using consistent assessment and referral systems, and to develop a forum for sharing best practice in this area.

### **Main Considerations**

6. The resultant protocol with appendices (see **attached**) covers safeguarding, mental capacity, data sharing and communication issues. It identifies three levels of improvement - safety, utility and comfort (section 14) which acknowledge that a person centred approach may be a slow process, and the minimal level of improvement may be simply to create a safe escape route in case of fire and the fitting of a smoke alarm. The protocol utilises the clutter image rating (appendix 8) as a standardised assessment tool which has been used by the fire and rescue service for some time. It uses a three level severity rating system to identify the actions needed and the relevant agencies to be involved. The referral action flowchart is found in section 16.5, and the practitioners' assessment form, which is a common referral method, in appendix 7.
7. All agencies involved in the group agreed to using the protocol and the final draft has also been shared wider with other social housing providers in Wiltshire.
8. The involvement of the charity sector, in particular the Richmond Fellowship, has been really beneficial to get a wider perspective on the issues involved with dealing with people who hoard.

### **Next Steps**

9. The intention is that all relevant agencies will use the protocol and that it will be subject to a review after six months to identify any improvements. It will be hosted on the Wiltshire Adult Safeguarding Board website with the appendices as separate documents so they can be downloaded and used without the need to download the entire document.

**John Carter**  
**Head of Public Protection**  
**Wiltshire Council**

---