



PRESS RELEASE

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Care Agency and RGP agree a Protocol for Protection of Adults with Learning Disabilities

The Care Agency and the Royal Gibraltar Police have signed a further Memorandum of Understanding for the protection of adults under the Agency's care in the rare event that these adults are displaying behaviour that may require police involvement. The agreement sets out a consistent framework to be followed by both organisations to ensure best practice when dealing with these individuals. Both the Care Agency and Royal Gibraltar Police have agreed that, in order to guarantee continued best practice, it would be advantageous to have a more formal structure in place. The protocol, created by experts in the field of care, includes written guidelines that can provide the basis for a consistent and uniform approach.

Furthermore, the Memorandum, which is the third written protocol entered into by the Royal Gibraltar Police and the Care Agency over the past 12 months, also envisages the annual training of police officers across a number of areas. Specifically, the Royal Gibraltar Police will receive instruction on how best to respond to each individual with a learning disability. As a result of this protocol, police officers will be able to gain a greater insight into the characteristics of persons with learning disabilities and provide a more individualistic approach to their needs. In addition, Care Agency workers will receive regular on-going training to continue to improve upon the service provided within this highly specialised area of work.

The programme is led by the Care Agency and the Royal Gibraltar Police, with the participation of senior social workers, social care workers, psychiatrists, psychologists, learning disability nurses, the occupational therapist/strategy coordinator and management.

CEO for the Care Agency, Natalie Tavares, said: "Working with persons with learning disabilities is a specialised area of work and it is essential for services that ensure the well-being and safety of these persons to keep abreast with developments in this field. I am therefore very pleased to see the establishment of a further protocol between the Care Agency and the Royal Gibraltar Police. This represents another welcome move in improving an already positive working relationship with the Royal Gibraltar Police for the safety of the community, especially its vulnerable members."

The Commissioner of Police, Mr Eddie Yome, added: "With this third Memorandum of Understanding signed by the Care Agency and the Royal Gibraltar Police, both organisations continue to



demonstrate their resolve and commitment to working in partnership for the benefit of our community. We have built a strong foundation that permeates through both organisations and on which we shall continue to build.”

The Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Honourable Neil F. Costa MP, welcomed this third protocol and said: “I am extremely happy to note, that this partnership between key agencies who safeguard the welfare of vulnerable individuals, is extending its scope of action. This is another extremely welcome step forward in ensuring that best practices are followed by the Royal Gibraltar Police when responding to any situation involving vulnerable members of our community, such as persons with learning disabilities. I am confident that we have the mechanisms in place to ensure that the vulnerable in our community are safeguarded by knowledgeable and compassionate professionals, both in the Care Agency and the Royal Gibraltar Police, who can respond firmly but sensitively, and also in an effective manner.”