

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 8 DECEMBER 2020

### REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR REGULATORY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

#### SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK OF ABUSE REPORT

#### EXEMPT INFORMATION

None

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of the report is to provide a biannual safeguarding update to the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

**That members:**

**Review the report and raise any questions in relation to the content with the Assistant Director – Partnerships in collaboration with the Portfolio Holder for Communities and Public Health, and thereafter endorse.**

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tamworth Borough Council has a legal responsibility to safeguard children and adults with care and support needs from abuse and neglect. The safeguarding children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect policy and procedure provides a framework for safeguarding, and demonstrates the council's commitment to safeguard children and adults at risk.

Safeguarding is integrated into the day-to-day operations of the council. The council responds to all safeguarding concerns raised in line with the safeguarding procedure. Reporting of concerns is fundamental in ensuring that children and adults at risk receive the necessary support to safeguard and promote their welfare.

The following information provides an overview of the number of safeguarding referrals received and an update on the safeguarding work that has taken place since the last update provided to the Committee on the 02<sup>nd</sup> April 2020.

The service area has continued to operate throughout the Covid 19 pandemic. Safeguarding and vulnerability meetings that would have normally taken place face-to-face are now held remotely, either via Microsoft Teams or by telephone conferencing. The Partnership Vulnerability Officer has been a point of contact, for not only Tamworth Borough Council staff, but also statutory and voluntary sector colleagues requiring support in relation to safeguarding and vulnerability within the community.

### **Safeguarding Statistics**

The number of safeguarding concerns referred via the council's safeguarding reporting procedure for the date period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020:

Children referrals 17 referrals

Adult referrals 20 referrals

Referrals continue to be received from a wide range of council staff including, customer service officers, housing solutions officers, tenancy sustainment officers, sheltered housing managers and private sector housing officers.

A quarterly overview of safeguarding referrals is attached at Appendix 1.

### **Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSSCB)**

The [SSSCB website](#) has now been updated. The website provides comprehensive information on safeguarding children. Staff and members can access information to help support them when working with families and children. The website also provides safeguarding practice guidance and core procedures. The website learning zone provides information on training that staff and members can access. Communication from SSSCB with district/borough councils will be via the District Partnerships Subgroup.

### **SSSCB Training, Practice and Development Group**

The training group meet virtually on 9<sup>th</sup> September with the Partnership Vulnerability Officer in attendance. The new user friendly training website has been launched with courses currently being delivered virtually. District/borough councils no longer make a financial contribution to the SSSCB and therefore will now have to pay for the cost of staff accessing SSSCB training courses. The Assistant Director for Partnerships has reviewed the safeguarding budget and going forward additional training costs will be met from the existing budget.

### **Staffordshire and Stoke –on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB)**

The peer-to-peer audit workshop has now been rescheduled and will take place on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> November via Microsoft Teams.

This audit workshop session will provide an opportunity to review the tier 2 audits that were completed in February 2019. The aim of the workshop is to review a section of

the audit in more detail in small multi-agency groups. Organisations will be required to provide evidence of compliance around service standard 3 – policy and procedure. The audit will also provide an opportunity for learning and sharing of good practice across organisations. The audit will also highlight any areas that require improvement going forward.

### **District Partnerships Subgroup**

The Community Partnership Manager and the Partnership Vulnerability Officer continue to attend virtual meetings of the district partnership subgroup. The meeting provides an opportunity to share good practice across the eight districts and discuss emerging themes around safeguarding and community safety. The recent *Football is Coming Home* ‘show domestic abuse the red card’ campaign launched in June across a number of the boroughs/districts, is an example of districts worker together to pool resources and expertise to deliver a consistent message in relation to domestic abuse across Staffordshire.

### **Safeguarding Training**

A new safeguarding training recording process has been agreed, and staff roles that require additional levels of safeguarding training are currently being identified.

A significant amount of work has gone into the development of two introduction to safeguarding eLearning modules for staff and members. The modules will cover safeguarding children and safeguarding adults at risk, and are underpinned by the Tamworth Borough Council safeguarding policy and procedure. Modules are near completion with a view to launching them on the Astute learning platform by the end of October.

The partnership team are currently reviewing the delivery of taxi driver training in light of Statutory Taxi & Private Hire Vehicle Standards published by Department for Transport July 2020. During the Covid 19 pandemic, and to date, all face-to-face training sessions have been put on hold. The partnership team are exploring other training methods to deliver the sessions.

### **Safeguarding Champions**

The Partnership Vulnerability Officer is currently exploring the additional training that safeguarding champions will undertake and how this will be facilitated.

### **Multi Agency Child Exploitation Panel (MACE)**

Multi Agency Child Exploitation Panel formerly known as Vulnerable Adolescent Multi-agency Panels (VAMAP).MACE will be the forum for safeguarding children at risk of exploitation within a partnership arena.

MACE meetings take place bi-monthly and are currently being held virtually. The Partnership team, along with colleagues from Staffordshire County Council children team are currently exploring how to link young people who are potentially at risk of

becoming involved in criminal activity into positive diversionary activities.

### **Tamworth Vulnerability Partnership (TVP)**

The Partnership Vulnerability Officer and Assistant Director for Partnerships are to undertake a piece of work with partners to review the TVP terms of reference. This piece of work was put on hold due to the Corona Virus crisis.

The partnership meeting continues to be well attended by representatives from statutory organisations. The partnership provides a joined-up response to vulnerability within the community and endeavours to provide help at the earliest opportunity to improve outcomes for vulnerable people.

### **Suicide Guidance Procedure**

Assistant Director Partnerships along with the Partnership Vulnerability Officer are to undertake consultation with a number of Heads of Service to agree implementation of this guidance going forward. The guidance and procedure is to help staff when dealing with cases where a person is threatening suicide. The guidance and procedure will be incorporated into the safeguarding policy going forward and appropriate training provided for staff.

### **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report. The cost of training and materials will be met from existing budgets.

### **LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND**

The Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk of Abuse and Neglect Policy has been risk assessed and no significant risks exist. From a legal perspective the authority is meeting its expectations and requirements in relation to vulnerable children and adults at risk.

### **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

The policy and staff in this important service will continue to operate locally and in conjunction with partners to sustain the levels of support, training and guidance required.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Tamworth Borough Council has both a legal and moral duty to protect children and adults at risk from harm and abuse. The Children Act 1989 and 2004 along with the associated government statutory guidance sets out our legal responsibilities for protecting children. The Care Act 2014 along with associated statutory guidance recognises and reinforces that organisations make a significant contribution to adult safeguarding.

## **REPORT AUTHOR**

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## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

[Children Act 1989](#)

[Children Act 2004](#)

[Care Act Statutory Guidance](#)

[Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards](#)

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 Safeguarding referral overview

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