

HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 19 OCTOBER 2021

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 Regulatory and Community Safety, 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 21st April 2021.

Safeguarding Statistics

The number of safeguarding concerns referred via the council's safeguarding reporting procedure for the date period 1st April 2021 to 30th September 2021 are detailed in the table below:

Referral type	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
Child referrals	3	9			12
Adult referrals	5	10			15
Total combined referrals	8	19			27

Table 1: Safeguarding concerns raised by staff 2021-22

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

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

Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB)

Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) is the key statutory body for coordinating and ensuring effective arrangements are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in Staffordshire.

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations, agencies and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (Working Together 2018).

The Board also has a duty to hold agencies to account in terms of their safeguarding arrangements and practices. Organisations that are delivering services directly or indirectly to children and young people must complete the Section 11 safeguarding audit.

This year's review of Section 11 duties focused on learning and development. The information requested to seek assurance was submitted to the Board in July, and we are currently awaiting feedback.

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

Under the Care Act 2014 the SSASPB has to:

- i) establish how it will hold partner agencies to account and gain assurance of the effectiveness of its arrangements
- ii) determine its arrangements for peer review and self-audit

The SSASPB Audit and Assurance Sub-group has developed a four tier audit model. Tier 2 is for individual agencies to audit themselves against an agreed set of standards. There is no statutory requirement for any organisation to complete the

Tier 2 SSASPB audit, but co-operation to do so is sought and it can provide useful information for improvement. The audit has been completed and submitted to the Board in August, and we are currently awaiting feedback.

Safeguarding Training

Safeguarding training continues to be delivered via two E-Learning modules to all new starters and staff requiring refresher training. Staff are required to attend additional safeguarding children training depending on their level of contact with children and families. The Partnership Vulnerability Officer is also available to deliver virtual safeguarding training via Microsoft Teams if required. A virtual safeguarding training session was delivered to Members on the 10th June 2021.

Suicide Prevention Training

Staff have been attending a half-day suicide prevention training session delivered by Staffordshire Mind.

The training aims to help staff to:

- Tackle misconceptions and stigma regarding suicide
- Recognise the signs that someone may be at risk
- Have open and honest dialogue about suicide
- Use a simple 4 step suicide intervention
- Signpost to local support services

35 members of staff have completed the training with a further 9 registered to attend forthcoming sessions. Mind will continue to deliver sessions until March 2022.

Taxi driver safeguarding training

The Partnership Officer has recommenced delivery of safeguarding training to taxi drivers. The training is delivered virtually via Microsoft Teams.

Multi-agency working

Multi-agency Child Exploitation Panel (MACE)

The Partnership Vulnerability Officer continues to attend the bi-monthly MACE panel meeting. Part of the MACE panel remit is to identify current local issues and themes and coordinate a multi-agency response. The Partnership Manager and Partnership Vulnerability Officer are scheduled to meet with an officer from the Staffordshire Police Child Exploitation Early Intervention and Prevention Team to discuss how we can work together going forward to raise awareness about child exploitation with local businesses and the wider community.

Locality Partnership Meeting

Officers from the partnership team attend the locality partnership meeting which takes place monthly. Representatives from statutory and community and voluntary organisations attend. The meeting provides a forum for early help services to share information on the support that is available for children and families in Tamworth. The sharing of this information enables professionals to signpost families at the

earliest opportunity into services that can offer support. Information from this meeting is cascaded to relevant service area within the Council.

Modern Slavery

The Partnership Manager and the Partnership Vulnerability Officer attended the County tactical meeting coordinated by Staffordshire Police. This multi-agency meeting identifies emerging trends and hotspot areas and also provides a forum for agencies to draw on the expertise of other professionals to respond effectively to concerns around modern slavery. The partnership team are currently undertaking a piece of work to establish who is best placed to represent TBC at future meetings.

Tamworth Vulnerability Partnership (TVP)

The weekly 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. The partnership has reviewed the terms of reference and has widened the scope of the meeting to consider other community safety priority areas including youth anti-social behaviour in the community.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report. The training requirements will be met from existing revenue budgets within GS1005.

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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Partnership Vulnerability Officer

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Children Act 1989](#)

[Children Act 2004](#)

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#)

[Care Act Statutory Guidance](#)

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Safeguarding referral overview

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