

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 17TH OCTOBER 2023

### REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

#### SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK OF ABUSE REPORT (MARCH 23- OCTOBER 23)

#### EXEMPT INFORMATION

None

#### PURPOSE

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

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The Committee review the report and raise any questions in relation to the content with the Assistant Director Partnerships in collaboration with the Portfolio Holder for Environmental Health and Community Partnerships 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 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

**Safeguarding Statistics**

The number of safeguarding concerns referred via the council’s safeguarding reporting procedure for the date period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023 are detailed in the table below:

Referral type	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Total
Child referrals	2	4	6
Adult referrals	7	8	15
Total combined referrals	9	12	21

Table 1: Safeguarding concerns raised by staff 2023.

Miscellaneous	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Total
	1	4	5

We have seen a slight decrease in referrals for the first 2 quarters as in previous years. However, we have increased more knowledge and awareness of what constitutes a referral through updated training and our community safety events that have been opened out to all our partner agencies.

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, private sector housing officers, environmental health and members.

The miscellaneous covers referrals that come through mainly the council enquires or maybe to gather further information to decipher if it hits the threshold for a referral to be made into safeguarding. We have also continued to work alongside our outside agencies such as Wates and Engie to support their safeguarding referrals. Quarterly meetings take place for updates with the 2 contractors to make sure that we can offer support and advice and any new updates needed.

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

**Safeguarding Training**

We have continued to purchase the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) core slides for the delivery of level 1 safeguarding training. This helps to update staff/members in line with the updates for Staffordshire.

Staff can access a range of training modules through the SSCB [home page](#) .

Along with this there are opportunities to attend the SSCB - Free Lunch & Learn events which have included changes within the structures to front door services and an update on the Forced Marriage Unit.

Staffordshire Connects has been relaunched to have a single access point to direct to services. [The Staffordshire connects website](#) provides a wealth of services that

professionals and families can access without an enquiry being made to [Staffordshire Childrens Advice and Support Service](#)

Staff, members, and the public can access contact details of local tier 2 family support services by typing in 'Family Support Providers' in the Children's Centre's and Parenting.

Parents or carers should always be informed that staff/members are contacting, unless doing so would place them or the children at risk of harm.

### **Taxi driver safeguarding training**

Taxi driver training has now moved over to a specialist training provided Equo.

They cover all aspects of training in packages to the drivers i.e., Disability Awareness, Safeguarding including exploitation. The training is especially for taxi and private hire drivers and is in use around the UK.

This is managed through the council's licensing team.

### **Adult Safeguarding Board**

The council is still an active member with information received regarding updates, training and events.

Stafford Borough Council have taken the main lead to represent all the districts and boroughs at the quarterly meetings. The districts then attend quarterly catch ups.

### **Modern Slavery**

Modern Slavery refers to the offences of human trafficking, slavery, servitude, and forced or compulsory labour. This can then be considered as five sub threats:

- sexual exploitation of adults.
- trafficking of adults into conditions of labour exploitation.
- trafficking of adults into conditions of criminal exploitation.
- trafficking of minors into conditions of sexual, criminal or labour exploitation; and other forms of exploitation.

Staffordshire has seen a gradual increase in the reporting of Modern Slavery which is in line with the national picture.

As a Council we support the work of the Staffordshire Police Modern Slavery tactical group and information provided by our partner agencies and publish an annual Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement, required under the Modern Slavery Act 2015. The annual statement 2022/23 was endorsed by the Audit and Governance Committee on [27<sup>th</sup> September 2023](#) .

A multi-agency approach and data sharing is required in order to target offenders for disruption which will assist with safeguarding victims and preventing further exploitation.

## Community Safety

Two Community Safety Forums have been hosted by the council with support from our community safety partners over the last 6 months, with subjects being Anti-social Behaviour within the community and presentations from the accessing Early Help.

We Love Tamworth held on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2023 involved 30 community safety partners showcasing themselves to the public.

We have also attended the VCSE (voluntary community social enterprise) days hosted by Support Staffordshire. Helping and supporting working relationships to networking and update partners.

In July 2023, seven knife-crime awareness sessions were delivered in Tamworth secondary schools by Alison Cope, whose son was sadly murdered in 2013. These sessions were funded through the Community Safety Partnership and well received.

## Contextual Safeguarding <sup>1</sup>

The Multi Agency Child Exploitation Panel (MACE) is the forum for safeguarding children at risk of exploitation within a partnership arena. MACE meetings take place bi-monthly, the Partnership Vulnerability Officer attends and contributes to this meeting.

The partnership team are currently working with the Staffordshire County Council Families First Child Exploitation Coordinator, to explore how the council can strengthen current partnership working arrangements to prevent child exploitation and improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people.

The Community Safety Partnership, with funding from the Staffordshire Commissioner have recently appointed an Anti-Social Behaviour Practitioner as part of the youth offending team to support the links with vulnerable children and exploitation. This will strengthen work with the Council's Partnership Support and Enforcement Officer who works with the local policing team to address issues around young people identified as being involved in ASB.

## Prevent

Prevent is part of the government's overall counter-terrorism strategy which is called [CONTEST](#).

The Prevent duty requires all borough and district Councils (as specified authorities) to have a due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and is priority under the Community Cohesion element of the Tamworth Community Safety Partnership Plan.

The Prevent strategy has three specific objectives:

1. Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it

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<sup>1</sup> Contextual safeguarding is an approach to safeguarding that recognises that young people may be at risk of significant harm not only within their home environment, but also outside it. The traditional safeguarding approach does not consider extra-familial contexts, which has led to cases of abuse and exploitation falling under the radar.

2. Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support.
3. Work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation.

The Assistant Director Partnerships is the district council representative on the County Prevent Board.

A Prevent Duty compliance assessment has recently been completed by working through the Home Office Prevent Toolkit in conjunction with the Board which informs the Tamworth plan. The Assistant Director Partnerships along with the Vulnerability Officer and Community Cohesion Officer will monitor the work plan regularly to ensure that there continues to be a proportionate response to any risks outlined and ensure the council is compliant with the Duty.

Home Office basic training for staff has been introduced through the safeguarding awareness course and other key staff have been identified who may require enhanced training.

A full report will be presented to Cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023 to provide reassurance and endorse compliance. Hereafter update reports will be presented to the Infrastructure Safety and Growth Scrutiny Committee on annual review of the Community Safety Partnership Plan.

Between 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023 and 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023, 5 referrals were made to the Staffordshire Channel panel with concerns from Tamworth, with schools being the biggest referrer. There have been no referrals by Tamworth Borough Council staff.

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

The Tamworth Vulnerability Partnership meetings continue to take place on a weekly basis with the Partnership Vulnerability Officer, Safer Communities and Homes Manager and Police supporting the overseeing of the referrals and updates.

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.

This is also linked into meetings to support Anti -Social case reviews previously known as Community Triggers and youth ASB.

### **Anti-social behaviour coordination group**

The ASB Coordination group is a weekly TEAMS meeting that links all our partner agencies within and outside the borough to discuss all concerns relating to anti-social behaviour. It also helps support the links established with other partnership meetings and helps the mechanisms in place for actions that have and can be taken.

The meeting is chaired by our Partnerships Enforcement Officer and extended to all agencies within the public and private sectors to share information and to support intervention and signposting of services.

## **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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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 performance indicators