

HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 20TH MARCH 2025

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR

People Services, Leisure and Engagement

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK OF ABUSE REPORT (NOVEMBER 24 -MARCH 25)

EXEMPT INFORMATION

None

PURPOSE

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

RECOMMENDATIONS

1.It is recommended that the Committee endorse the report.
Any, questions in relation to the content with the Assistant Director Partnerships in collaboration with the Portfolio Holder for People Services, Leisure and Engagement.

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 24th October 2024.

Safeguarding Statistics

The number of safeguarding concerns referred via the council’s safeguarding reporting procedure for the date period 1st April 2024 to 5th March 2025 are detailed in the table below:

Referral type	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
Child referrals	1	4	6	6	17
Adult referrals	4	7	12	11	34
Total combined referrals	5	11	18	17	51

Table 1: Safeguarding concerns raised by staff 2024 (Numbers as of time of report 05/03/25)

Miscellaneous	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
	3	2	4	0	10

Numbers of referrals have seen an increase over the last 2 quarters, this may be due to updated training that has been delivered over the past 6 months to staff and to members along with safeguarding updates and an increase in referrals to the Tamworth Vulnerability Partnership meetings. The adult/ family will not always hit the threshold for a safeguarding enquiry, but professionals will meet to discuss a plan of action. Increased knowledge and awareness of what constitutes a referral through the delivery of up-to-date inhouse training along with outside agencies has supported this.

Staff have also had the opportunity to take up a range of different training opportunities from the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and New Era

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, street scene, members.

The miscellaneous table 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 contracted 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.

Safeguarding Training

We have continued to deliver the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) 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 SSCP [home page](#) .

Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk of Abuse & Neglect Policy and Procedure

Version: 20 of the policy is now live on infozone and the astute training has been disseminated to all Staff/ Councillors.

The main update for the policy is the updated of Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board to Partnership. The Partnership has the same functions of the board.

The **Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP)** is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how local organisations will co-operate, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people living in Staffordshire.

Safeguarding Partnerships support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where there is a clear, shared vision for how to improve outcomes for children locally across all levels of need and all types of harm ensuring there is a prompt, appropriate and effective response to ensure the protection and support of the child. The voice of children and families combined with the knowledge of experienced practitioners and insights from data, provides a greater understanding of the areas of strength and/or improvement within arrangements and practice. Information is sought, analysed, and shared to understand outcomes for children and identify new safeguarding risks or emerging issues and our senior leaders promote and embed a learning culture which supports local services to become more reflective and implement changes to practice

Every partnership has three named Lead Safeguarding Partners. In Staffordshire they are:

- Chief Executive of Staffordshire County Council
- Chief Constable of Staffordshire Police
- Chief Executive for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board

The delegated safeguarding partners for the three lead safeguarding partners meet regularly as an Executive group to work together for the purposes of strategic decision making and to hold each other to account.

Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Learning in Practice Forum

The Learning in Practice Forum is a multi-agency group that has delegated responsibility from Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) to:

Contribute to, consult, collaborate, and quality assure a multi-agency training plan for 2025/2026

Agree the provision of appropriate multi-agency safeguarding professional development and training.

How multi-agency training and multi-disciplinary training will be monitored for impact on outcomes for children and families.

Creating learning cultures in which practitioners stay up to date as new evidence of

best practice emerges.

To identify improvements to practice for protecting children from harm and to share learning including from success that could lead to improvements elsewhere.

Representatives include District/Borough Councils.

Adult Safeguarding Board

The Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB) is a broad partnership of local organisations that work together to help to protect adults in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. We do this by co-ordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of what each of our members does.

The Board's role is to assure itself that safeguarding partners act to help and protect adults who:

- have needs for care and support.
- are experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect.
- as a result of those care and support needs are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

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.

Domestic Abuse (inc Stalking and Harassment)

Domestic abuse remains a priority for the Community Safety Partnership. The support service through New Era has been commissioned for a further 3 years for the County by the Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire and Crime.

Training is ongoing for relevant staff to refer victims of domestic abuse to services.

As part of the training updates New Era run a wide range of training events for staff to attend throughout the year. [New Era \(Ending Relationship Abuse\) Events - 3 Upcoming Activities and Tickets | Eventbrite](#)

The Assistant Director Partnership remains on the County Domestic Abuse Commissioning and Development Board.

Community Safety

The Tamworth Community Safety Plan was presented at the **Infrastructure, Safety and Growth Scrutiny Committee on 5th March** To consider the 2025 annual refresh of the Tamworth Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-2026, priorities, and action plan.

The Tamworth Community Safety Partnership Plan 2023-2026 is a three-year rolling plan which outlines how partners are going to collectively tackle community safety issues across Tamworth borough.

Priorities for 2025/26 will be as follows:

- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and tackling perceptions
- Community Cohesion
- Domestic Abuse (including stalking and harassment)
- Drug Related Crime and Harm (including the prevention of exploitation of young people – County Lines)
- Public Place and Serious Violence (including Violence, Abuse and Intimidation of Women and Girls -VAIWG)
- Road Safety**& Vehicle Crime
- Vulnerable Persons (the prevention of harm to persons at risk of criminal exploitation or becoming victims of crime including prevent radicalisation, exploitation and hate crime)

As safeguarding cuts across a lot of the priorities this will link in with our safeguarding processes and support the priorities above with a range of task and finish groups, County Council partnership meetings and working around the new Domestic Abuse strategy to be put in place by Staffordshire County Council.

Contextual Safeguarding ¹

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.

Children who are discussed at MACE can be subject to ASB interventions so this information will link in with the work we do within the ASB Coordination group.

ASB Coordination group

The group consists of a wide range of partner agencies coming together to discuss issues around anti-social behaviour within the Borough.

The remit of the group is:

- To identify in partnership with other agencies individuals and locations that are causing significant levels of anti-social behaviour
- To ensure that appropriate support is provided to repeat victims of ASB
- To take multi agency action on these individuals
- To implement multi agency policies and procedures to tackle nuisance and ASB
- To act as a central point for referrals of serious cases of ASB and to co-ordinate

¹ 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.

action on them

- To monitor and assess the impact of the tools and powers provided by the ASB, Crime and Policing Act 2014

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, Police and Staffordshire County Council Children's service 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.

As of January 2025, 28 cases have been discussed at the TVP meeting. This is an increase on cases as at the same time period last year we had 15 cases discussed in 2024.

8 Housing
2 Anti-Social Behaviour issues
1 Domestic
3 Mental health
2 Vulnerability
2 Community Safety
8 Concerns for safety
1 Hoarding
1 Fraud

As of 04/03/25

All cases discussed come to a resolution with support being offered to the individuals being discussed

Case study

Referral from Adult social care to gain some insight into this gentleman. Current poor living condition and resides with lots of pets in the property – said to be looked after during safe and well. Mr X was asleep in kitchen dressed in blankets with a lit cigarette in his hand. Mr X's home was cluttered with waist high items such as animal related items and lots of shoes. Concerns of the boiler not working and wished to discuss with housing further and fire service due to concerns for safety of this gentleman.

The property is 50% ownership with a housing association.

Actions

Housing officers attended the meeting to give an update on actions put forward to help their tenant. It was agreed at the meeting that the fire service would do a home risk fire check and speak about fire safety with Mr X.

Mr X has a good relationship with his neighbour and that neighbour agreed to support Mr X regarding the concerns raised.

A safe and well visit was completed by social worker and his housing officer where a

support plan was put in place to address the issues raised.
He agreed to a RSPCA referral for the animals.
Works that needed to be done on the property and funding was looked into to purchase a skip to help with the clearing of the clutter within the property.

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 Safer Communities and Homes Manager 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.

With legislation from

[Children Act 1989](#)

[Children Act 2004](#)

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#)

[Care Act Statutory Guidance](#)

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

This Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) aims to evaluate the impact of our safeguarding policies and practices on different sections of the community. This assessment covers training, safeguarding referral cases, Tamworth Vulnerability Partnership (TVP) referrals, and general safeguarding obligations to the community.

Equality Impact Assessment is included

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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