

**STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

**18 March 2024**

<b>TITLE:</b>	<b>Safeguarding Children and Adults at risk of Abuse and Neglect</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR:</b>	<b>Councillor Bill Cawley - Executive Councillor for Community Safety and Planning</b>
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	<b>David Smith – Head of Communities, Culture and Climate Change</b>
<b>WARDS INVOLVED:</b>	<b>All</b>

**Appendices Attached – Safeguarding Policy**

- 1. Reason for the Report**
  - 1.1 To provide Councillors with an update on the Council’s safeguarding arrangements.
- 2. Recommendation**
  - 2.1 That the Committee notes the actions taken by the Council in response to its safeguarding duties.
- 3. Executive Summary**
  - 3.1 The Council is committed to ensuring the safety and protection of people using its services.
  - 3.2 The Council is required to enact policies and procedures to ensure that children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect are safeguarded when using services provided by or on behalf of the Council.
  - 3.3 The key elements of the Council’s response include: developing a Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk of Abuse and Neglect policy; developing a referral and reporting mechanism; providing training for all staff members; and establishing a corporate safeguarding group to oversee the Council’s response.

#### 4. **How this report links to Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1 The Council's safeguarding action supports the delivery of Aim 1 of the corporate plan: Help create a safer and healthier environment for our communities to live & work.

#### 5. **Alternative Options**

- 5.1 None to consider.

#### 6. **Implications**

6.1	<u>Community safety, including safeguarding and prevention of terrorism</u>  The Council's policy and associated action assists the Council to ensure the safety of children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect.
6.2	<u>Workforce</u>  The Council's current policy requires all staff to be DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checked to the appropriate level, dependent upon role and contact with Children and Adults at risk of abuse or neglect. There is a requirement that all staff have an awareness of the Council's current policy. The Council ensures that all staff have statutory safeguarding training to the appropriate level for their role.
6.3	<u>Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment</u>  No specific implications beyond those identified in the corporate safeguarding policy.
6.4	<u>Financial Considerations</u>  None
6.5	<u>Legal</u>  The Council's policy and associated activity enables it to fulfil its statutory duties regarding the protection of children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect.
6.6	<u>Climate Change and Sustainability</u>  None
6.7	<u>Conservation and Enhancement of Biodiversity</u>  None

6.8	<u>Consultation</u>  None
6.9	<u>Risk Assessment</u>  Implementation of the safeguarding policy assists the Council to appropriately manage risks in relation to the impact of its services on individual children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect.

Mark Trillo  
**Executive Director (Governance & Commissioning)**

**Web Links and  
Background Papers**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

<https://www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/safeguarding>

<https://www.ssscb.org.uk/>

<https://www.ssaspb.org.uk/Home.aspx>

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**7. Detail**

7.1 The Council approved a Child Protection Policy in 2006 and subsequently updated the policy to incorporate adults at risk of abuse and neglect in 2014. The introduction of the Care Act in May 2014 necessitated some changes and a revised policy was agreed by the Council in 2016. The Council has recently reviewed the policy and it remains fit for purpose apart from some changes that have been made to organisational contact details.

7.2 The Council's officer group, chaired by the Executive Director (Governance and Commissioning), continues to meet on a quarterly basis to co-ordinate the Council's response to safeguarding. The group receives updates from those services and functions with the greatest involvement with children and adults at the risk of abuse and neglect (Housing, Licensing, Leisure, HR, Commissioned Services, Revenues and Benefits, Assets and Customer Services). It has also considered several specific issues in the last 12-months including:

- Arrangements for monitoring the safeguarding arrangements of key services providers, including Parkwood, Alliance Norse and AES.
- Arrangements for ensuring that those booking Council premises or holding events on Council land have appropriate safeguarding processes in place;
- Staff safety (in conjunction with the corporate Health and Safety Group);

and

- Specialist, service-specific training requirements, including safer recruitment, neurodiversity, autism, suicide and safer recruitment training.

7.3 The Council recorded 20 safeguarding incidents during 2023/24, which mainly originated from Customer Service Advisors, with other incidents being reported by Environmental Health and Housing. This does not include concerns about the welfare and well-being of individuals who do not meet the threshold for safeguarding established by the Adult and Children Safeguarding Boards. All recorded incidents are reviewed and where appropriate are reported through to the County safeguarding arrangements. Support is also provided for those who do not meet the threshold, which normally involves referring and signposting to appropriate internal or external services.

7.4 Council Officers continue to receive appropriate training according to the role and responsibilities. Thirty-four new starters received “Basic Safeguarding Training and Policy” on the E-ssentials system. In addition:

- 25 people have completed a Level One Safeguarding course;
- 7 have completed a Level Two Safeguarding course;
- 4 have completed a Level 3 Safeguarding course;
- 1 person has completed Level 4 Safeguarding; and
- 5 people have completed Safer Recruitment training.

7.5 Local authorities have a legal duty to “have due regard for the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism” in relation to their service provision (the Prevent duty). The Home Office issued updated guidance on the Prevent duty in 2023. The guidance suggests that the Prevent duty should be seen as part of an organisation’s wider approach to safeguarding and that preventing (safeguarding) someone from being radicalised into terrorism should be managed in the same way as other safeguarding responsibilities. The Council has introduced several measures to respond the Prevent duty:

- Training for staff members on the Prevent duty, which is refreshed every two years;
- Information made available on the Council’s intranet; and
- Prevention of terrorism is now considered as an implication in every Council report.

7.6 The revised Council report template also now asks authors to highlight and relevant safeguarding implications.

7.7 The Moorlands Together Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership (CSP) brings together organisations to work collaboratively to make our district safer including Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, Staffordshire County Council, Staffordshire Police, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service and Support Staffordshire. Funding to support partnership activity is provided by Staffordshire Commissioner for Police, Fire and Crime and by individual agencies through mainstream budgets.

7.8 The CSP's priorities for 2023/24 were antisocial-behaviour, domestic abuse, rural crime, fraud, and vulnerable people. Safeguarding-related actions included:

- Providing home safety packs to victims of domestic abuse
- Raising awareness of potential threats that target the vulnerable people within our communities (fraud, scams and cyber-crime).
- Raising awareness of healthy relationships and mutual consent /respect through educational, theatre-based workshops

7.9 The CSP also has responsibility for conducting reviews of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by:

- a person to whom they were related or with whom they had been in an intimate personal relationship, or
- a member of the same household as themselves.

7.10 These are known as domestic homicide reviews (DHRs) and were established on a statutory basis under Section 9 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004). The Moorlands Together CSP has published the results of one review in the last 12-months, which considers an incident that occurred in 2018.