

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report to Community Overview & Scrutiny Panel

11 September 2017

TITLE:	Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk of Abuse and Neglect
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Cllr Michael Bowen, Portfolio Holder for Communities
CONTACT OFFICER:	Mark Trillo Executive Director (People) and Monitoring Officer
WARDS INVOLVED:	All

Appendices Attached - None

1. Reason for the Report

The Council adopted its Child Protection Policy in 2006 and subsequently updated the policy to incorporate adults at risk of abuse and neglect in 2014 in response to the introduction of the Care Act 2014. A revised policy was agreed by members in 2016. This is the annual update to members on the Council's action to meet its safeguarding duties.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That the Community Overview & Scrutiny Panel 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 Legislation and statutory guidance make it necessary for the Council to ensure that it has policies and procedures in place 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 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.

- 3.4 The Council has established an officer group, chaired by the Executive Director (People) to co-ordinate the Council's response to safeguarding.
- 3.5 Recent actions include: providing safeguarding training for staff members; reviewing procurement and contract management procedures; introducing a new staff safety system; and on-going provision of training for licensed taxi drivers. The Council has also supported the work of the Moorlands Together Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership to safeguard the local community.
- 3.6 The Council was required by Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board to complete a safeguarding audit (under s11 of the Children Act 2004) and judged itself to have met each of the standards.

4. How this report links to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The Council is committed to providing quality services.

5. Options and Analysis

- 5.1 None.

6. Implications

6.1 Community Safety - (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

The Council's policy assists the Council to ensure the safety of children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect.

6.2 Workforce

The Council's policy requires all staff with direct or indirect access to children or adults at risk of abuse or neglect to be vetted, checked and provided with an appropriate level of training. There is a requirement that every member of staff has an awareness of the Council's policy.

6.3 Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment

There are no specific implications.

6.4 Financial Considerations

The policy commits the Council to ensure appropriate training for staff and members.

6.5 Legal

The policy assists the Council to fulfil its statutory duties with respect to the protection of children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect.

6.6 Sustainability

No specific implications.

6.7 Internal and External Consultation

No specific implications.

6.8 Risk Assessment

Implementation of the policy will assist the Council to manage risks in relation to the impact of its services and activities on individual children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect.

7. Background and 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.

7.2 The Council's officer group, chaired by the Executive Director (People) continues to meet on a quarterly basis to co-ordinate the Council's response to safeguarding. In addition, the Executive Director represents the District Council on both Staffordshire's Adult and Children Safeguarding Boards. The Council's Principal Officer (Communities and Partnerships) also chairs the Staffordshire District's Safeguarding Sub-group and represents the District Councils at the Executive meetings of the two Staffordshire Safeguarding Boards. These arrangements allow the Authority to demonstrate that it is meeting key statutory requirements of co-operating with relevant partners and also help the Council to develop and deliver its own internal responses to the safeguarding requirements.

Activity since the last annual report

7.3 The Council was required by Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) to complete a safeguarding audit (under s11 of the Children Act 2004) to help make sure that the Council's functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

7.4 The audit required the Council to self-assess its performance against five standards and, as documented in the following table, the Council

judged itself to have met all of the standards. The Council, however, identified two areas of improvement in relation to safer recruitment (below).

Standard		Judgement	Recommendations
1	Accountability Structure	Standard Met ✓	
2	Listening to Children/YP	Standard Met ✓	
3	Information Sharing	Standard Met ✓	
4	Safe Recruitment	Met with recommendations	The Council identified two areas of improvement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HR Officers to undergo safer recruitment training; • review and revise policies as required after training.
5	Staff Training/Training	Standard Met ✓	

- 7.5 One of the Council's HR Business Partners has now completed Level 4 Safer Recruitment Training thus addressing the recommendation to emerge from the SSCB self-assessment, and the next step is to revise the Council's recruitment procedure to incorporate recommendations and good practice from the training.
- 7.6 The Council also completed a similar self-assessment following a request by the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership. This asked the Council to rate itself against a number of criteria grouped under five main headings: Leadership, Management and Governance; Safe Recruitment and PiPOT (Person in Position of Trust) Management; Policy and Procedure; Training and Workforce Development; and Practice. The Council judged itself to have met each of the criteria.
- 7.7 Further Level 1 safeguarding training for frontline staff has been arranged for September 2017. Once this has been completed, all relevant frontline staff members will have been trained (including any new starters). On-line training has also been facilitated for eight contractors via the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board.
- 7.8 The Council has introduced a new system for flagging customers who may pose a potential risk to the psychological, mental, physical or emotional wellbeing of employees or agents of the Council. This system is designed to both safeguard employees and to assist the Council to meet its general duties for staff safety under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The Council has also developed a policy outlining the

steps that will be taken to support domestic abuse victims at work, which it intends to bring forward for approval in autumn 2017.

- 7.9 The Council has carried out a review of its procurement and contract management processes to ensure that adequate safeguarding checks are included. All new procurement activities require contractors and their employees to agree to the conditions of the Council's safeguarding policy and this includes ensuring that relevant checks have been made of any contractor's staff involved in undertaking regulated activities. In addition, reviews of all existing or historic arrangements that fall within or outside of formal contractual arrangements are being undertaken to ensure that all contractors or subcontractors employed by the Council have agreed to the conditions as set out within the Council's Safeguarding Policy and that their employees have had the appropriate checks undertaken. Where contractors or subcontractors fail to abide by our policy and its requirements, the Council will cease use of their services.
- 7.10 The revised Hackney Carriage and Private Licensing Policy was adopted by the District Council in January 2017. In accordance with the policy, any safeguarding issues relating to taxi drivers will be fully investigated and where appropriate the driver will be suspended and referred to the Licensing Sub Committee. The Council has continued its programme of providing safeguarding training for taxi drivers operating in the District and 95% have now been trained. Further training will be provided for the remaining drivers in the coming months.
- 7.11 One of the priorities of the Moorlands Together Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership has been support for vulnerable people. Work to support this priority has included:
- Commissioning Connected Youth CIC to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation within the district using an outreach approach and engaging young people in diversionary and preventative activities. The project also offered advice and information to young people in relation to vulnerability and risk, sexual health, drugs and alcohol, mental health and coping with life circumstances, eating disorders, friendships, keeping safe online, knowing their rights as young people and peer support
 - Funding a Police Link Worker to work with victims of domestic abuse to assist in the development of safety plans, which helps safeguard them from further abuse and harm.
 - Funding the Safe & Sound target hardening service (additional security measures) for both those who are vulnerable to crime or have been a victim of crime.
 - Funding the Sanctuary Scheme to increase the security of the homes of domestic abuse victims.
 - Providing information and advice on illegal money lending. Illegal money lending often sees unlicensed lenders target vulnerable people

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Background Papers

Location

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