

Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday 16 February 2023

10:00

Oak Room, County Buildings, Stafford

The meeting will be webcast live which can be viewed at any time here:

<https://staffordshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

John Tradewell
Director of Corporate Services
8 February 2023

A G E N D A

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes of the meeting held on 5 January 2023** (Pages 1 - 8)
4. **Executive Response to the Report of the Spot Light Review on Sexual Harassment in Schools January 2022** (Pages 9 - 18)

Response of the Cabinet Members for Children and Young People and for Education (& SEND)
5. **Children's Transformation Project - progress briefing**

Presentation on behalf of the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People by the Assistant Director for Children's Wellbeing and Partnership
6. **Possible Working Group/Inquiry Day activity** (Pages 19 - 22)

Report of the Scrutiny & Support Officer
7. **Work Programme** (Pages 23 - 34)
8. **Exclusion of the Public**

The Chairman to move:-
"That the public be excluded from the meeting for the

following items of business which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Local Government Act 1972 indicated below”.

Part Two

(All reports in this section are exempt)

nil

Membership

Gill Burnett (Vice Chair – Overview)	Gillian Pardesi
Janet Eagland	Kath Perry, MBE
Derrick Huckfield	Bob Spencer (Chair)
Johnny McMahon	Mike Wilcox
	Conor Wileman

Notes for Members of the Press and Public

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Minutes of the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 5 January 2023

Present: Bob Spencer (Chair)

Attendance

Gill Burnett (Vice-Chair (Overview))	Kath Perry, MBE
Janet Eagland	Mike Wilcox
Johnny McMahon	Conor Wileman
Gillian Pardesi	

Also in attendance: Paul Northcott

PART ONE

38. Declarations of Interest

There were none at this meeting.

39. Minutes of the Safeguarding O&S meeting held on 24 November 2022

Resolved: That the minutes of the 24 November 2022 Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

40. Adult Safeguarding Transformation Project

The Cabinet Support Member introduced the report updating Members on the Adult Safeguarding Transformation Project that had started in February 2020. Its aim was to ensure the correct processes and capacity were in place to deliver the Council's statutory responsibilities for safeguarding.

The Committee had previously considered progress with the Transformation Project at their meeting of 14 September 2021. At that time Members had been made aware that all reported adult safeguarding concerns were reviewed by the Staffordshire Adult Safeguarding Team (SAST) on the day the concern was received, being risk assessed by a qualified social worker (Advanced Practitioner) working with other professionals across the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub). Any concerns assessed as high risk were responded to as a priority.

The Committee received figures showing an increase in the number of Safeguarding concerns reported since 2017. During 2022 there had been an increase in the number of Safeguarding concerns reported between May and September, which had led to a backlog of work for this period. Members asked whether there had been a reason for this increase. They heard that no specific reason had been identified, and that there had been similar increases seen amongst other local authorities. The Transformation Project had enabled this backlog to be addressed. The number of outstanding concerns had now been reduced to 250, with the longest waiting for less than one month. Most of these reported concerns would not require a Section 42 enquiry. It was hoped that more consistent recording introduced as part of the Transformation project would enable appropriate contingency planning in the future.

The Committee heard that a wholesale review of processes and forms had been completed, removing duplication and repetition. This had enabled a reduction in administration tasks. Capacity had also been reviewed. The SAST was now fully staffed with seven substantive Advanced Practitioner posts filled. Key performance indicators for timeliness of decision making had been introduced, aiming to make an initial decision within 5 working days, and ideally within 2 working days. Members received details of month-on-month improvements made and details of the ongoing work to develop contingency plans to reduce the risk of delays caused by demand increases.

Hidden neglect was a concern for the Committee, with Members informed that robust practises were in place within adult social care and with commissioning colleagues to help uncover where abuse was hidden. Better relationships had also been developed with Healthwatch to help identify any concerns in care homes, hospitals or with agencies. Abuse taking place in an individual's own home was more difficult to identify, however work was undertaken to raise awareness with agencies such as GPs to help support identification. Financial abuse was also an area of concern for the Committee, with training to help identify this issue being provided as well as support in place from the Office for Public Guardianship, however there was always more to be done.

Concerns were also shared around the appropriate use of Section 42 referrals. In particular whether changes made as a result of the Transformation programme would impact on other parts of the service or key stakeholders. This had not been the case and Members were reassured that consideration of possible impacts on stakeholders had been part of the planning process. Further work was needed to ensure appropriate Section 42 referrals made by some agencies, with Members querying referrals made by the West Midlands Ambulance Service in particular. Sandwell Council was the lead commissioner for this service

and Members suggested the Committee's concerns around the burden that inappropriate Section 42 referrals was putting on the system should be shared with them.

Members suggested more sophisticated use of data would help in identifying areas of concern and support contingency planning.

Resolved: That:

- a) progress on the Adult Safeguarding Transformation Project, including details of Key Performance Indicators, be welcomed; and
- b) the Chairman write to Sandwell Council, as lead commissioner for the West Midlands Ambulance Service, advising them of the Committee's concerns at the burden inappropriate Section 42 referrals places on the adult safeguarding system.

41. Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB) Annual Report 2021/2022

[John Wood, Independent Chairman of the SSASPB & Helen Jones, Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board Manager, in attendance for this item]

As part of requirements within the Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance, the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board's (SSASPB) Annual Report is presented to the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee were aware that the Board had a strategic role to oversee and lead adult safeguarding and consider a range of matters that contributed to the prevention of abuse and neglect.

The Annual Report covered the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. During this period there had been 13,227 occasions where concerns had been reported that adults with care and support needs may have been experiencing or at risk of abuse and neglect. This was an increase of 1,051 from 2020/21. Following initial assessment, the duty of enquiry requirement had been met in 21% of those reported concerns, a decrease of 4% from 2020/21. Members heard that arising from this increase discussions were taking place amongst safeguarding partners to develop a mutual understanding of what constitutes a safeguarding concern with the aim of ensuring proportionate ongoing management to protect resources.

The Committee received details of the age, gender and ethnicity of those subject to a Section 42 enquiry. They also received details of the type of abuse and location of reported abuse. The Annual Report also contained case study examples which exemplified types of abuse and neglect and the multi-agency responses to these. The Committee were informed that these case studies helped to give context to the Annual Report, particularly when considering the readership of the Report and the need to present a balanced picture.

In Staffordshire, 67% of adults subject of a Section 42 enquiry provided a response to the question of whether their desired outcomes from the enquiry had been met in full, partially met or not met. 97% of those responding stated that their desired outcomes were either fully or partially met. This was a slight reduction from the reported 98% last year. Members heard that the reasons given for desired outcomes not having been met had been explored by the Board and received examples of reasons for this.

Hidden abuse had been a priority for the Board and remained a theme that was addressed by them. In particular it was important that awareness training was in place as personnel changed amongst practitioners. The Committee were keen to be a part of this awareness training to help spot hidden abusive behaviours.

The importance of data was discussed. In particular the areas where specifics were unknown, eg 6% of ethnicity was unrecorded. This had the potential to impact on targeting resources as the most vulnerable groups may not be identified accurately. There was a constant strive to improve data recording and to ensure all practitioners understood the importance of thorough and accurate data, although sometimes the data recording systems used made this difficult. Members also emphasised the benefits of meta-analysis to help identify the most vulnerable and target support appropriately. Board partners were at different stages of data recording, and this had an impact on data analysis. However, these suggestions would be taken to the Board's Quality Assurance Group for consideration.

Members raised concerns at the lack of reference within the Report to online abuse. Abuse recording was in line with the Care Act and therefore online abuse was not recorded as a stand-alone category. However, this type of abuse was recorded within existing categories. Work by Age Concern and Age UK helped support awareness raising and education in this area. Consideration was given to how this could be more obviously reflected in the Report, with a suggestion that this should be included on the Board's next Audit and Assurance agenda.

Members raised the disparity in numbers between referrals from Staffordshire when compared with those from Stoke-on-Trent. As in previous years this was due to a different interpretation to recording. This had been the subject of discussion, with interpretational differences remaining unresolved.

Resolved: That:

- a) in accordance with the requirements of the Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance the SSASPB Annual Report be received; and,
- b) the Committee take part in hidden abuse awareness training;

- c) consideration of how more sophisticated data analysis could be used within the report be included on the SSASPB next Quality Assurance meeting agenda; and
- d) how online abuse could be highlighted in future Annual Reports be included on the SSASPB's next Audit and Assurance agenda.

42. Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report

[Ian Vinall, Independent Chairman and Scrutineer of the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board]

The Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (SSCB) partners had changed the role of the Board Chair in May 2022, adding the function of Scrutineer and therefore making the role different from that of the previous Board Chair. This role enabled a critical friend approach, considering the impact and outcomes on children and young people of the safeguarding system. It was designed to promote reflection and drive improvements. Listening to the voice of the child was crucial within this role. The new independent Chairman shared initiatives with the Committee, including: an inaugural meeting with the Chairs of the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Child Safeguarding Board and Adult Safeguarding Board to enable consideration of shared priorities; understanding the impact of neglect; impact of graded care profile and disparity between the number of practitioners trained compared with its use across the safeguarding system; the role of schools as key stakeholders in safeguarding children, although schools were not statutory partners; scrutiny of the MASH as Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent form separate Hubs; Staffordshire Police inspection and the poor findings with regard to children's safeguarding; changes to social care and health, and ensuring there wasn't a negative impact on the safeguarding system resulting from these changes; a focus on transitional safeguarding at 18 from children's to adults social care; and, safeguarding concerns identified in the inspection report at Werrington Youth Offender Institute (YOI).

The Committee were aware that the SSCB worked together in partnership to safeguard and promote the welfare of children across areas of safeguarding activity that considered the need to promote equality of opportunity and to meet the diverse needs of all children in Staffordshire. The objectives of the Board were pursued through core statutory functions which were set out within the Children Act 2004 and the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. These core functions were achieved through the work of the Board's revised subgroup structure. Governance arrangements of the SSCB had been the subject of significant review since 2019 and were in line with the statutory guidance.

The Committee heard that child grooming and online harm was being considered by the Board's Child Exploitation Task Group, a joint group with Stoke-on-Trent, looking to identify where exploitation was taking place. Members asked if further detail of the work could be shared with the Committee at a later date.

Family Involvement Boards were raised by Members as a vehicle where concerns around a number of safeguarding issues were discussed. One area of concern was around teenage pregnancy and Members asked what work the SSCB was undertaking to tackle this area. The SSCB Chairman suggested this was an area that could be taken back to the Board for further consideration.

Members also raised concerns at the continued difficulties around communication and sharing information. These frustrations were shared by many practitioners across the system. Appropriate information sharing was key and this happened well within the MASH. However, challenges were present where children fell below the statutory framework, as in these cases consent to share information was necessary, and this was not always forthcoming.

Members noted a new information system was proposed for the MASH and asked what timescales were anticipated for its introduction. The IT system currently used had been in place since 2010. However, this was no longer fit for purpose and options were currently being explored to introduce an updated system with consideration around the most effective systems and cost. There was no agreed timescale at present but it was anticipated the changes would take place within the next 6 to 12 months.

Members noted that the number of missing children had decreased recently, however it remained a concern as missing education left them vulnerable. The Committee were reminded of the work undertaken by the Sexual Harassment in Education Inquiry Day. This work would be shared with the new SSCB Independent Chairman.

Members remained concerned at the safeguarding impacts of online abuse, feeling there was an epidemic of mental health issues for children related to this and asking whether the Board were able to assure the Committee around the work undertaken to mitigate this. In particular they noted the work of the National Cyber Security Agency and crypto analysis at GCHQ, being aware that security services saw online grooming as a step towards radicalisation. Members also raised the importance of education in awareness raising with children and young people, and the 5 Rights campaign by Baroness Beeban Kidron OBE, which Members hoped would be adopted in Staffordshire. The Board were aware of the range of risks. The Independent Chairman agreed to take these issues back to the SSCB, and in particular the very tangible suggestion around the 5 Rights

campaign. The Committee asked for further detail on developments with this.

Members also queried what emotional support was available for children and young people post covid, particularly tackling issues around social anxiety. Examples of partnership working were shared through Integrated Care Boards and Early Help Teams in other local authorities. Part of the SSCB's role was to encourage partners to hear children's stories to help explain issues and unblock support. Challenges for children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties and CAHMS support was an area of work for the Board.

Resolved: That:

- a) the SSCB Annual Report setting out progress made by the partnership during 1st April 2021 and 31st March 2022 be received;
- b) the Chair of the Child Exploitation Task Group attend a future Safeguarding O&S meeting with the Independent SSCB Chairman to consider progress in tackling the issues raised;
- c) further detail is shared with the Committee on work to tackle safeguarding concerns of teenage pregnancy; and
- d) the SSCB Independent Chairman take back to the Board the Committees concerns and suggestions around online abuse and the 5 Rights campaign, updating the Committee on progress.

43. Work Programme

Following discussions at the December Triangulation meeting Members agreed the following amendments to their work programme:

- the pre-decision scrutiny item on the House Project, originally scheduled for February, to be put back to their April meeting;
- the Chairman of the Sexual Harassment in Education Inquiry, Rev Preb Metcalf, be invited to the February meeting where the Executive Response to the Inquiry day report will be considered;
- an item on Safeguarding concerns re children permanently excluded from school requested at the November meeting has been included on the work programme for 20 April;
- an item on DoLS included on work programme for 20 April;
- an item considering adult safeguarding assessments be included on the work programme for 20 April; and
- the proposed item on Early Help Strategy will now be included as part of consideration on the Family Hub.

Members were also informed that work had begun in considering the 2023-24 work programme. Items from this meeting for inclusion on the new work programme were:

- separation of the MASH;
- Catch22 presentation;
- Online abuse and grooming;
- Work of the SSCB Child Exploitation Sub-group;
- Partnership approaches to early Help and emotional and behavioural support.

Any further items Members wished to put forward for consideration for the new work programme should be forwarded to the Chairman, Vice Chairmen or the Scrutiny Support Officer.

Resolved: That the changes to the work programme be agreed.

Chairman

Local Members Interest
N/A

Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Thursday 16 February 2023

Sexual Harassment in Schools Spotlight Review – Executive Response

Recommendation

That the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider the Executive Response to the final report and recommendations of their Spotlight Review on Sexual Harassment in Schools.

That the Committee monitors the Action Plan and implementation of the recommendations made on a six-monthly exception basis until all recommendations have been fully implemented.

Reason for recommendation

The final report and recommendations of the joint Spotlight Review on sexual harassment in schools was endorsed by the Health and Care, Prosperous, and Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committees and forwarded, with their comments, to the Cabinet Members for Children and Young People and for Education (and SEND) for their Executive Response. The three Committees agreed to delegate monitoring of the response and implementation of the recommendations to the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Executive response is now attached (appendix A) for consideration.

Background

At the beginning of the new municipal year the Safeguarding, Prosperous and Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committees each raised sexual harassment in schools as an area for further scrutiny, with each separate Committee including this issue on their work programme. To avoid duplication the Committees agreed to undertake a joint spotlight review with one member from each committee taking part.

Sexual harassment in schools is an issue of concern nationally. The “Everyone’s Invited” on-line platform raised the profile of this issue and

highlighted concerns around the levels of abuse and harassment in education. The Government asked Ofsted to complete a rapid review to identify the extent of any problems and give recommendations for addressing these.

This joint spotlight review considered the issues highlighted nationally and scrutinised whether these were reflected in Staffordshire Schools, to what extent, and how/whether the issues identified were being address. The final report and recommendations were considered by the parent Overview and Scrutiny Committees at their April 2022 meetings, with each Committee endorsing the report for submission to the Cabinet Members for their executive response (Appendix A).

Summary

The Spotlight Review was held on 14 January 2022. Representatives attended with a range of expertise, including educationalists and safeguarding professionals. Further information was gathered after the review to address remaining queries.

The findings from this investigation give a current picture of the work to identify and address sexual harassment and abuse within schools. Following their investigations, the Review Members produced their conclusions and set out seven recommendations to support the considerable work already in place.

As this was a joint review, with representation from three separate Overview and Scrutiny Committees, each Committee considered the report and recommendations, endorsing it and submitting it (with accompanying comments) to the Cabinet Members for Children and Young People, and Education (and SEND) for their Executive Response.

Next Steps

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee need to consider the Cabinet Member's response to the Spotlight Review and recommendations and agree how they will monitor the actions agreed.

Link to the Strategic Plan

Offer every Staffordshire child and young person the best start in life, and the chance to achieve their potential.

Implications

The equalities and legal; resource and value for money; and risk implications are set out in the Review Group report.

Contact Officer

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Appendices/Background papers

- Executive Response to the Spotlight Review of Sexual Harassment in Schools Final Report and Recommendations
- Final Report of the Spotlight Review of Sexual Harassment in Schools
- Minutes of the 11 April Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Minutes of the 14 April Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Minutes of the 21 April safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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**SPOTLIGHT REVIEW OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN SCHOOLS - ACTION PLAN
APPENDIX 1**

JOINT HEALTH & CARE, PROSPEROUS AND SAFEGUARDING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

SPOTLIGHT REVIEW OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN SCHOOLS

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	RECOMMENDATION	PROPOSED ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	DEADLINE
1	That the Cabinet Members for Education (and SEND) and for Children & Young People join with the three Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairmen in writing to Central Government, welcoming the valuable work which is taking place to make fit for purpose and to bring into law the Online Safety Bill, and calling on the Government as a matter of urgency to consider what further action should be taken to protect children from online peer-on-peer sexual harassment and abuse.			
2	That progress with the new PSHE initiative is monitored and the impact on schools assessed	There is a PHSE steering group and Education Safeguarding Leads sit within that group. The	Natalie McGrath PHSE Co-	Ongoing Estimated date of impact

**SPOTLIGHT REVIEW OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN SCHOOLS - ACTION PLAN
APPENDIX 1**

	<p>in 12 months' time. (This is specifically in relation to mapping current PSHE provision and the development of a suite of quality assured resources and set of guiding principles for use by schools when delivering PSHE, enabling a consistency around provision, supporting a cohesive and coordinated curriculum, identifying evidence based best practice and providing a bank of good quality resources that are easily accessible for schools.)</p>	<p>assessment and impact are currently being worked on by the PHSE co-ordinators for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent and we await this report. The PHSE coordinators have worked closely with the NSPCC to ensure that Harmful Sexual Behaviour training has been licensed for schools and supported the distribution of licences to Education settings in Staffordshire in order that their knowledge is strengthened.</p> <p>The PHSE Co-ordinator role has been piloted in the Newcastle District and quality assurance of suitable PHSE resources for schools is ongoing. A newsletter is also produced by the PHSE Coordinator for schools, and they also attend and have input at the DSL Briefings for Staffordshire schools.</p>	<p>ordinator</p>	<p>report 28 February 2023</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>That a one stop shop resource bank, which includes details of</p>	<p>The Education Safeguarding Advice Service provide a wealth</p>	<p>Charles Daniels-</p>	<p>Completed and updated on an</p>

**SPOTLIGHT REVIEW OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN SCHOOLS - ACTION PLAN
APPENDIX 1**

	<p>support organisations, training, and teaching resources, be developed.</p>	<p>of information on all areas of safeguarding including guidance, training and learning. These pages are updated on an ongoing basis and a monthly update summary is provided to all school staff via the School Bag. SLN - ESAS pages</p> <p>The ESAS section on the SLN have dedicated sections focussing on Child Sexual Abuse CSA Harmful sexual behaviour and Hackett tool HSB</p> <p>To highlight good practice, following the DSL Briefing in January which focused solely on Sexual abuse, the resources within the SLN were quality assured by expert professionals in the field (SARAC & Lucy Faithful Foundation, both of whom were guest speakers at the briefing).</p>	<p>School Improvement Officer (Access to Learning)</p>	<p>ongoing basis</p> <p>The DSL Briefing regarding sexual abuse took place on 12 January 2023</p>
4	<p>That a bank of case study evidence based good practice</p>	<p>The ESAS section on the SLN has a dedicated section focusing</p>	<p>Charles Daniels-</p>	<p>Completed and updated on an</p>

**SPOTLIGHT REVIEW OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN SCHOOLS - ACTION PLAN
APPENDIX 1**

	<p>examples of how differing specific peer on peer abuse and harassment was dealt with be developed as a resource tool for headteachers, senior management and DSLs.</p>	<p>on Learning from rapid and child safeguarding practice reviews</p> <p><u>Learning from rapid and child safeguarding practice reviews</u></p> <p>Education Safeguarding Advisors highlight good practice to Education Safeguarding Leads, and this is shared during their daily contact with schools.</p> <p>We have identified that we need to develop the good practice section within the SLN.</p>	<p>School Improvement Officer (Access to Learning)</p>	<p>ongoing basis</p> <p>Part of ongoing action plan. Implementation February 2023</p>
5	<p>Consider the introduction of local Designated Safeguarding Lead meetings as a way of sharing best practice, experience and addressing concerns amongst groups of schools.</p>	<p>The Education Safeguarding Leads undertake half-termly DSL briefings, County wide, which are open to all schools. These are extremely well attended, are recorded and available for future use and dissemination to schools' staff, within the SLN.</p> <p>They also provide specific support to schools on a case-by-</p>	<p>Charles Daniels-School Improvement Officer (Access to Learning)</p>	<p>DSL Briefing dates</p> <p>12 October 2022 12 January 2023 15 March 2023 11 May 2023 14 June 2023</p>

**SPOTLIGHT REVIEW OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN SCHOOLS - ACTION PLAN
APPENDIX 1**

		<p>case basis as well as professional challenge to schools if concerns are raised or highlighted.</p> <p>The Education safeguarding Advisors provide daily support and challenge to all our educational settings.</p> <p>ESAS does not have the capacity to hold District level meetings however strong links have been introduced to schools and embedded in practice with the district-based Vulnerability Hubs (Police), the District Operation Leads (Children's Social Care) and Effective Practice Development Officers (EPDOs) Early Help.</p>		
6	<p>A representative from the Health & Care and the Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committees be invited to attend and take an active part in the scrutiny of the Annual report for 2022.</p>	<p>Recommendation for O&S Chairmen</p> <p>During scrutiny of the final report and subsequent Scrutiny Chair's Forum it was agreed that scrutiny should remain with Safeguarding O&S, as</p>	<p>Helen Phillips, Scrutiny & Support Officer</p>	<p>Annual Report scrutinised at 5 January O&S meeting</p>

**SPOTLIGHT REVIEW OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN SCHOOLS - ACTION PLAN
APPENDIX 1**

		the lead scrutiny committee on this item.		
7	That the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees consider progress made from these initiatives and the impact for schools in 12 months' time, with consideration that this could be undertaken by the current spotlight review members.	<p>Recommendation for O&S Chairmen</p> <p>During scrutiny of the final report and subsequent Scrutiny Chair's Forum it was agreed that scrutiny should remain with Safeguarding O&S, as the lead scrutiny committee on this item.</p>		

Local Members Interest
N/A

Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Thursday 16 February 2023

Working Group and/or Inquiry Day suggested activity

Recommendation

That the Committee:

- a. Suggest and consider possible areas for working group and/or inquiry day activity, to form part of their overview and scrutiny work in the next municipal year.

Report of the Scrutiny and Support Officer

1. Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the flexibility to undertake working group and/or inquiry day activity outside of their calendared committee meetings. During the year a range of queries and areas for further scrutiny have been raised by the Committee and Members may also have additional suggestions they wish to highlight at the meeting. This is an opportunity for Members to raise and consider a range of issues, deciding whether there is further scrutiny work to be undertaken in the new municipal year and the most appropriate way this work could be carried out.

Report

Background

2. The Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee has seven calendared meetings in each municipal year. It also has the ability to undertake work outside of the scheduled meetings as appropriate. This can be in the form of briefings, external visits, inquiry days, spotlight reviews or working groups.
3. Any additional work needs to add value. To achieve this each piece of work needs to have clearly defined aims and terms of reference as well as an agreed time schedule.

Summary

4. Over the past year the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee has identified the following areas for further scrutiny:
- a) Introduction of the District Hub model and its impact (particularly noted in connection with the expectation that this new model would result in a decrease in SEND complaints) (considered at the 19 July meeting)
 - b) Early Help, and the implementation of the Strategy (considered at 1 September meeting) alongside partnership approaches to Early Help and emotional and behavioural support (raised at the 5 January 2023 meeting) (NB it has been proposed that Early Help should be considered as part of the wider Family Hub model)
 - c) Family Hub (considered at 1 September meeting and scheduled to come to the November meeting in 2023)
 - d) Children's Transformation (considered at 1 September meeting) (it has been agreed that the Committee will receive 4 monthly updates on progress with this implementation, 3 of these to be briefings only and the fourth to be a full progress report)
 - e) On-line safety, abuse and grooming (raised at the 5 January 2023 meeting)
 - f) Safeguarding concerns of children permanently excluded from school (requested at the 24 November meeting with a report being brought to the 20 April 2023 meeting)
 - g) separation of the MASH (raised at the 5 January 2023 meeting)
 - h) work of the SSCB Child Exploitation Sub-group (raised at the 5 January 2023 meeting)
 - i) the progress with the PEEL inspection action plan (this is being considered by the PFCP at a special meeting on 21 February. The Chairman has been invited to attend that meeting. It is anticipated that the Commissioner will attend a Safeguarding O&S meeting later in the year to discuss a range of areas raised by the Committee around the action plan)
 - j) MacAlister Report (considered at the 1 September meeting and included on the new work programme, with the meeting date dependent on confirmation from Central Government of the report proposals they intend to implement)
5. Members may have other topics and/or areas of concern to be considered for additional overview and scrutiny work.

Next Steps

6. Any agreed areas for further overview and scrutiny activity should be agreed amongst the Committee, with consideration to what added value

any proposed work would have. Where a number of pieces of additional work are proposed, Members are asked to prioritise these.

7. Once this work has been agreed and prioritised, the preparation work will be undertaken by the Scrutiny and Support Officer, with a view to this being part of the first meeting of the new municipal year.

Link to the Strategic Plan

8. Offer every Staffordshire child and young person the best start in life, and the chance to achieve their potential; and
9. Encourage good health and wellbeing, resilience and independence.

Implications

10. The equalities and legal; resource and value for money; and risk implications will depend on the future work agreed by the Committee.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Safeguarding Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2022-2023

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WORK PROGRAMME

Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 2022/2023

This document sets out the work programme for the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2022/2023.

The Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutinising: children and adults' safeguarding; community safety and Localism. The Council has three priority outcomes. This Committee is aligned to the outcome: The people of Staffordshire will feel safer, happier and more supported in and by their community.

We review our work programme at every meeting. Sometimes we change it - if something comes up during the year that we think we should investigate as a priority. Our work results in recommendations for the County Council and other organisations about how what they do can be improved, for the benefit of the people and communities of Staffordshire.

Councillor Bob Spencer

Chairman of the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee

If you would like to know more about our Work Programme or how to raise issues for potential inclusion on a Work Programme, then please contact Helen Phillips, Scrutiny and Support Officer (helen.phillips@staffordshire.gov.uk)

Work Programme 2022/2023

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
Page 25	Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Kate Bullivant		complaints around SEND were likely to level off.
	Customer Feedback & Complaints Annual report – Adults Social Care Cabinet Member: Julia Jessel Lead Officer: Kate Bullivant	Report brought annually	Members welcomed the report and, in particular, commended the proactive work to identify and address future challenges from the new Social Care Act.
	Draft Early Help Strategy Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Natasha Moody	Draft Early Help Strategy for pre-decision scrutiny	The comments and concerns raised by the Committee inform the further development of the Early Help Strategy.
1 September 2022 10.00 am	Family Hub Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Ruth Blunn-Jennings	Pre-decision scrutiny	This initiative was supported and because of the importance of the proposed changes Members suggested a whole council briefing would be beneficial.
	Children’s Services Transformation Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Neelam Bhardwaja/Natasha Moody	The new Children’s Transformation went live on 1 October 2021. More than six months on this is an opportunity for Members to seek reassurance that it is delivering as intended, including on SEND.	The candid assessment and feedback of the Transformation process was welcomed. A mechanism for regular feedback on the action plan progress will be established, with a full review in 12 months.

Work Programme 2022/2023

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
Page 26	<p>MacAlister Report Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Nisha Gupta</p>	<p>Suggested at 17 June meeting – looking at the report’s proposals and how they impact on Staffordshire’s Children’s Services November date for this suggested at 3 Aug Triangulation Originally scheduled for 4 November meeting but moved back awaiting publication of the final report. Final report published on 23 May 2022</p>	<p>The Committee were pleased that much of the direction of travel proposed in the Report was reflected in the Staffordshire approach. Members now await details from central Government on the areas for implementation.</p>
	<p>Ofsted Focused Visit – improvement action plan Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Nisha Gupta</p>	<p>The Chairman attends the Children’s Improvement Board (CIB) meetings on behalf of the Committee. At the June CIB details of the Ofsted Focused Visit were discussed, including the development of an improvement action plan. The Chairman requested this plan be brought to the O&S Committee.</p>	<p>Members welcomed the improvement action plan and will look to receive details of progress with its implementation.</p>
	<p>Domestic Abuse recommissioning arrangements Cabinet Member: Victoria Wilson Lead Officer: Trish Caldwell</p>	<p>Pre-decision scrutiny item</p>	<p>The Committee raised a number of issues for Cabinet to consider before taking a decision on the Contract renewal.</p>

Work Programme 2022/2023

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
24 October 2022 10.00 am Page 27	Community Safety & the Outcome of the Fishmonger Hall Investigation Cabinet Member: Victoria Wilson Lead Officer: Trish Caldwell	Findings from the Fishmonger Hall incident showed there had been inadequate management of the assailant. Members want to satisfy themselves that changes have been made to prevent further such incidents. This also impacts on the Committee's role as the designated crime and disorder panel. This will include outcomes from the Commissioner's 28 June meeting considering Inquiry findings.	Concerns were shared around the naming of the assailant and his heritage in the report. These details will be removed from future reporting. The detailed changes made within Police, CTU and Probation were welcomed.
	The LAs role in the Prevent Partnership & Feedback from the Commissioner's 28 June meeting Cabinet Member: Victoria Wilson Lead Officer: Trish Caldwell	As part of their Crime and Disorder role the Committee wish to scrutinise the methods the LA has in addressing community safety. They also requested feedback from the Commissioner's meeting with partners around learning from the Fishmonger Hall inquest.	Overall Members recognised the importance of the Prevent work and the LA's role in this. Concerns remain around internet access, particularly outside of education settings, and how to educate individuals to ensure they can stay safe whilst using these services.
24 Nov 2022 10.00 am	Regional Permanency Partnership Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Scott Crawford & Jo Sullivan	Previously considered at 6 July 2021 O&S Committee where Members requested details of how the partnership progresses and specifically the two pilot projects TESSA and Mockingbird.	Members welcomed the progress made and congratulated Officers for the work done.

Work Programme 2022/2023

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
	<p>Young Carers Report of the O&S sub-group</p>	<p>Report of the O&S sub-group that met with young carers to consider the support they receive and the levels of care they provide</p>	<p>All recommendations to be action. The Committee agreed that the Chairman would discuss with the Cabinet Member for Education ways in which the profile of the Young Carers Service can be raised in schools and how to extend the Member advocate initiative.</p>
<p>5 January 2023 10.00am</p>	<p>Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB) – Annual Report Independent Chair: John Wood Lead Officer: Helen Jones</p>	<p>Report brought annually.</p>	<p>The Committee want to be part of the hidden abuse awareness training. They requested consideration of how more sophisticated data analysis could be used within the report. This will be included on the SSASPB’s next Quality Assurance agenda. Having concern at how online abuse could be highlighted in future Annual Reports, this issue will be taken back to the SSASPB’s next Audit and Assurance meeting.</p>
	<p>Adult Social Care Transformation – update Cabinet Member – Julia Jessel</p>	<p>Suggested at the 1 September Triangulation to update the Committee on developments and progress with the Transformation programme, including performance against KPI.</p>	<p>The Committee welcomed progress on the Adult Safeguarding Transformation Project, including details of Key Performance Indicators.</p>

Work Programme 2022/2023

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
	Lead Officer: Jo Cowcher, Ruth Martin		The Chairman to write to Sandwell Council, as lead commissioner for the West Midlands Ambulance Service, advising them of the Committee's concerns at the burden inappropriate Section 42 referrals places on the adult safeguarding system
Page 29	<p>Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report Independent Chair: Ian Vinall Lead Officer: Lynn Milligan</p>	Report brought annually	<p>The Chair of the Child Exploitation Task Group attend a future Safeguarding O&S meeting with the Independent SSCB Chairman to consider progress in tackling the issues raised.</p> <p>Further detail is shared with the Committee on work to tackle safeguarding concerns of teenage pregnancy.</p> <p>The SSCB Independent Chairman take back to the Board the Committees concerns and suggestions around online abuse and the 5 Rights campaign, updating the Committee on progress.</p>

Work Programme 2022/2023

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
16 Feb 2023 10.00 am	Children's Transformation - briefing Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Neelam Bhardwaja/Natasha Moody	At the Triangulation meeting of 1 September 2022 it was agreed that the Committee receive a progress briefing approximately every 4 months, with a full progress report at 12 months (September 2023)	
	Sexual Harassment in Education – Executive Response Cabinet Members: Mark Sutton & Jonathan Price	Cabinet Member's response to the Spotlight Review Recommendations	
	Possible working group/inquiry day activity	O&S Members to consider possible areas for working group and/or inquiry day topics to form part of work programme planning moving into the new municipal year.	
20 April 2023 10.00 am	Safeguarding of Permanently Excluded Pupils Cabinet Members: Mark Sutton & Jonathan Price Lead Officer: Tim Moss & Karl Hobson	Looking at the safeguarding issues of those pupils who have been permanently excluded from school. Particularly in connection with the high level of exclusions in Staffordshire. Suggested by the Chairman at the 24 November O&S meeting and agreed for the April meeting at the 7 December Triangulation meeting.	

Work Programme 2022/2023

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
	Safeguarding Assessment Cabinet Member: Julia Jessel Lead Officer: Ruth Martin	Suggested at the 7 December Triangulation	
	DoLs Cabinet Member: Julia Jessel Lead Officer: Pete Hampson	Suggested at the 7 December Triangulation	
	Placement Sufficiency Strategy Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Natasha Moody	Suggested at the Triangulation meeting of 7 December.	
	Whole Life Disabilities Strategy 2023 Cabinet Member: Julia Jessel Lead Officer: Andy Marriot & Nicola Day	Pre-decision scrutiny	
tbc	Early Intervention & prevention Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Neelam Bhardwaja	Suggested by the Cabinet Member at 17 June meeting.	

Work Programme 2022/2023

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
tbc	Governance Model Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Neelam Bhardwaja	Suggested by the Cabinet Member at 17 June meeting. Considering how to work better together. Trying to develop a better and more effective governance model.	

Items for Consideration – Work Programme 2022/2023

Suggested Item	Details (Background)	Proposed Date of Meeting

Standing Items 2022/2023

Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
Crime & Disorder Cabinet Member: Victoria Wilson Lead Officer: Catherine Mann/Trish Caldwell	This O&S Committee is the LAs designated Crime and Disorder Panel. Following discussions with the Chairman and Officers from the PFCC and the Cabinet Member and Officers responsible for community safety, it was agreed that the Chairman and Vice Chairmen will meet with the Cabinet Member and Officers after each Safer and Stronger Communities Strategy Group (SSCSG) to gain an overview of community safety within the County and identify areas for further scrutiny as appropriate.	Chairman and Vice-Chairman briefings on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thursday 19 May (at the conclusion of Full Council) to brief on performance discussed at the 18 May 2022 SSCSG NB the May SSCSG was moved to 16 June and consequently the briefing was moved to 20 June Tuesday 13 September to brief on performance discussed at the 12 September 2022 SSCSG Wednesday 1 March to brief on SSCSG of 13 February

Standing Items 2022/2023

Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
Children Improvement Board (CIB) Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Neelam Bhardwaja	The Chairman attends the CIB on behalf of the O&S Committee and feeds back developments to Members at each meeting as part of the work programme agenda item. CIB scheduled dates: 28.04.22; 25.05.22; 30.06.22; 20.07.22; 25.08.22; 29.09.22; 27.10.22; 24.11.22; 22.12.22	Concerns shared around safeguarding of children permanently excluded from schools included on the CIB in November 2022 was raised by the Chairman at their November O&S meeting and included on the work programme for 20 April 2023.
Themes emerging from Serious Case Reviews Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Neelam Bhardwaja	Where Serious Case Reviews have taken place the Overview & Scrutiny Committee will consider any learning that can be taken from the Review	Some areas picked up by the DHR review process

Briefing Notes / Updates / Visits 2022/2023

Date	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome

Working Groups / Inquiry Days 2022/2023

Date	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
21 September 2022	Young Carer Visits	Following scrutiny of the Young Carers Service in April, Members requested the opportunity to speak first hand with young carers to consider the service they receive.	Findings reported back to the Committee at their November 2022 meeting. All recommendations agreed and actioned. The Chairman agreed to discuss with the Cabinet Member for Education ways in which the

Working Groups / Inquiry Days 2022/2023

Date	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
			profile of the Young Carers Service can be raised in schools and how to extend the Member advocate initiative.

Membership – County Councillors 2022-2023

Bob Spencer (Chairman)
 Gill Burnett (Vice Chairman - Overview)
 Richard Ford (Vice Chairman – Scrutiny)
 Janet Eagland
 Derrick Huckfield
 Johnny McMahon
 Gillian Pardesi
 Kath Perry
 Mike Wilcox
 Conor Wileman

Calendar of Committee Meetings - 2022-2023

16 June 2022 at 10.00 am
 19 July 2022 at 10.00 am
 1 September 2022 at 10.00 am
 24 October 2022 at 10.00 am
 24 November 2022 at 10.00 am
 5 January 2023 at 10.00 am
 16 February 2023 at 10.00 am
 20 April 2023 at 10.00 am
 Meetings usually take place in the Oak rm, County Buildings