

Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday 15 June 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
7 June 2023

A G E N D A

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**
- 3. Minutes of the Safeguarding Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 20 April 2023** (Pages 1 - 6)
- 4. Focus for the Future**

Forward look at current and potential areas of interest within the remit of the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee to help inform work programme planning.

Views of the Cabinet Members for: Children & Young People; Education (and SEND); Communities & Culture; and Health & Care, and presentations by:

- Neelam Bhardwaja, Director for Children and Families
- Ruth Martin, Adult Safeguarding Lead
- Trish Caldwell, County Commissioner for Regulatory Services and Community Safety

- 5. 'Living my Best Life': Report on the Joint Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent people in Staffordshire 2023-2028** (Pages 7 - 22)

Report of the Cabinet Member for Health and Care

- 6. Work Programme Planning** (Pages 23 - 34)

7. 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-Faulkner (Vice-Chair (Overview))	Kath Perry, MBE
Janet Eagland	Paul Snape (Vice-Chair (Scrutiny))
Ann Edgeller	Bob Spencer (Chair)
Johnny McMahon	Mike Wilcox
Gillian Pardesi	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 20 April 2023

Present: Bob Spencer (Chair)

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

Also in attendance: Tina Clements, Julia Jessel, Paul Northcott and Jonathan Price

Apologies:

PART ONE

50. Declarations of Interest

Name of Member	Nature of Association	Minute No
Kath Perry MBE	Son is a Vice President of an Academy Trust	52

51. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2023

Resolved: That the minutes of the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 February 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

52. Safeguarding of Permanently Excluded Pupils

[Councillor Mrs Tina Clements, Chairman of Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in attendance for this item.]

The Scrutiny Committee were aware of the significant impact a permanent exclusion could have on an individual and had requested detail of the potential safeguarding impacts. Members received details of the exclusion process and the Local Authorities (LAs) role within this, including the role of the Education Inclusion Officers (EIOs).

Members heard that a key safeguarding function of the EIO's was to arrange suitable full-time education for the excluded pupil, to being from

the sixth day after the first day that permanent exclusion took place. In most cases this was provided through the pupil attending a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU). Staffordshire had six secondary PRUs, a secondary Progress Centre and one primary PRU.

Each excluded pupil was also discussed at the weekly Alternative Provision Panel (APP), where their sixth day provision was confirmed and monitored. Attendees at the APP included representatives from Youth Offending, PRU Headteacher, SEND, EIOs, education welfare and the education commissioner. The Panel challenged and reconsidered education provision if it appeared not to be meeting the needs of the pupil. Where a pupil was unable to attend a PRU, the APP would consider other alternative provision, possibly requiring the LA to commission a service. This may mean the six-day window for provision was not met. In these circumstances the EIO would work closely with the family to ensure the pupil was safeguarded.

All the commissioned providers had undergone a robust process before becoming an approved provider, which included the scrutiny of their safeguarding policy. For excluded pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) the EIO would liaise closely with the SEND key worker to ensure whatever provision was put in place met their needs, until another long-term provision could be secured.

Members heard that there had been 167 students permanently excluded from Staffordshire schools (both academy and maintained) during this academic year. The EIO worked with the school to help consider alternatives to exclusion, such as a managed move to another school or a prevention placement at a PRU. Where an exclusion was made, for the first five days after the exclusion the school remained responsible for the pupil's education, which was normally through virtual learning packages.

The Committee heard about the innovative work of the Progress Centre, working on instances where the pupil was under threat of exclusion for a one off, out of character event. The Progress Centre was a unit within another school. The pupil would spend a short, concentrated amount of time receiving education in the Unit, but quickly starts receiving part of their education within the school that hosts the Unit. This enabled the individual to retain some continuity with mainstream education and, so far, had a 90% success rate in returning pupils to mainstream education.

The Committee discussed the role of governors in the exclusion process, understanding the importance they had in reviewing the headteachers decisions and the formal part they had in the process.

Members queried the appeal process, having concern that the process was weighted in the school's favour and questioning why the appeal was brought by parents, with pupils not able to appeal in their own right. The legal responsibility for a child's education lay with the parent, which was why they had the right to appeal an exclusion. The child could attend the review panel and have their voice heard, although there was a need to consider the impact this might have on the child, and whether it was in their best interests. Recent changes had made the exclusion appeals process more balanced, including where a child had a social worker, the requirement for their social worker to be included in all meetings to help give context to the child's circumstances. EIO also worked to support the family in this process. The Review Panel's ultimate power would be to direct the school to readmit the pupil. The school could veto this, but would receive a £4000 to £5000 fine if they did so.

The Committee queried whether PRU's had adequate capacity, or if excluded pupils would find themselves on a waiting list before receiving their sixth day provision. In some cases there could be a slight delay, but this would be due to specific placement requirements, such as transport provision or risk assessments for a child presenting with particular needs.

PRU staff had great expertise in managing challenging behaviours. Sharing this expertise with mainstream school colleagues helped prevent exclusions, however large numbers of pupils in PRU's meant that capacity for this preventative work would be limited.

The Committee considered differences between school structures and cultures. They heard about the successful pilot project, initially in Newcastle, which was now County wide. The pilot looked at restorative practice and relationships to support schools being more inclusive, with an example shared with the Committee of its impact and success.

The Committee queried whether Ofsted had a role in the exclusion process. The culture of a school and its behaviour was considered by Ofsted as well as its results. To achieve an outstanding judgement from Ofsted a school would need to have excellent results, behaviours and be fully inclusive.

Members queried whether the process was different for those pupils who attend Staffordshire schools but lived in neighbouring counties. In these instances the sixth day provision would be the responsibility of the LA within the county they lived rather than the county of the school they had been attending.

Members heard that no displaced or asylum-seeking children had currently come through the exclusion system. Significant resource within

school supported these children, with schools welcoming them and work in place to understand their trauma.

Members asked for further detail on the following:

- the number of permanently excluded pupils who were now being home educated;
- the number of permanent exclusions in the last 12 months;
- how many permanently excluded pupils took the school to appeal, and how many of these appeals were successful;
- the split between maintained and academy schools of the number of pupils who appealed and the number of appeals that were successful;
- numbers of permanently excluded pupils showing race, gender, SEND to help establish whether certain groups were disproportionately excluded;
- the numbers of permanently excluded pupils who were open to early help, earliest help or with a social worker;
- exclusion comparison figures from previous years to help identify trends;
- exclusion comparison figures from other shire counties;
- whether the bulk of exclusions were from particular schools and/or particular areas of the County.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member and Officer for sharing their knowledge and expertise with the Committee. The Scrutiny Committee were very encouraged by the work undertaken and the way the different circumstances were managed.

Resolved: That:

- a) the Committee's thanks go to the Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND) and the Head of Attendance and Inclusion and his team for the work to safeguard permanently excluded pupils; and,
- b) the requested further detail listed above be forwarded to the Scrutiny Members.

53. Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

The Council has a statutory duty to manage Deprivation of Liberty Safeguard (DoLS) applications. The Scrutiny Committee had last considered a report on DoLS applications at their meeting of 10 January 2022. At that time it had been expected that DoLS would have been replaced by new legislation and a new process called Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) by October 2022. LPS would have reduced demand and time requirements that currently exist with DoLS, having less demand for specialist workforce. However, LPS had been delayed with no implementation date identified.

The Scrutiny Committee were aware that Staffordshire had a large number of care homes which resulted in a large number of DoLS applications compared with other LAs. They heard that during 2022/23 on average per month 550 applications were received, an increase of more than 20% compared with the average of 450 monthly applications in 2021/22. Up to half of these applications may be reapplications, with rising numbers of reapplications impacting on the overall increase.

The Scrutiny Committee were aware that historically there had been a large waiting list for DoLS applications. Following the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman report in 2019 there had been a sustained effort to reduce the waiting list. Members received details of the reduced figures throughout 2021 – 2022.

It was noted that Staffordshire reported all uncompleted DoLS applications, whereas some LAs only reported those applications outstanding for more than 28 days. Currently in Staffordshire the majority of DoLS applications were undertaken within 36 days. There were a very small number assessed as low risk that had been waiting for over a year and these were being looked at as a matter of urgency. Changes to processes had also been made to make these more efficient, including a proportionate response to requests and changes to administration. During the autumn of 2022 the Council had increased capacity from an external provider to help manage additional demand. Whilst the provider had been anticipated to complete 80 assessments per week, they were in fact completing between 40-60 per week. Members heard that the provider was paid per completed assessment, however when retendering consideration would be given to assessment amounts within the new contract.

Members queried whether the Council had enough Best Interest Assessors (BIA). Whilst Staffordshire had BIAs, training new BIAs had been paused as it was expected the number needed would reduce once LPS were introduced. As the timescales for LPS were now unsure there was a need to train more. There had also been a rota for BIAs, which had also been paused but would need to be reintroduced.

Members queried the difference between DoLS requested by hospital or care homes as opposed to those for individuals that remained in their own home. Community DoLS underwent a similar assessment but in a different format undertaken by the Community Team.

Members received trend and forecast figures for completing 500 and 450 applications per month, and asked how realistic these were. These targets were challenging but realistic. There was a commitment to continued funding to help reduce the backlog, including the retendering for the private contractor assessments and a commitment to reduce the

timescales from 36 days, which would also help reduce the backlog. Performance was monitored on a quarterly basis and the Cabinet Member for Health and Care had fortnightly briefings with the Director for Health and Care.

Comparative data with other LAs would be available in the Autumn and Members asked for detail of this at that time.

Resolved: That:

- a) the Committee is reassured by the work undertaken to manage the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards applications; and
- b) comparative data on application figures with other LAs be forwarded to the Committee once available.

54. Work Programme

This was the last meeting for this municipal year. There were a number of items to carry forward for possible addition on the 2023/24 work programme, including:

- the role of the PSHE co-ordinator after the first twelve months; and
- meeting with the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner following the February Panel meeting to discuss the PEEL report (a briefing from this meeting having been forwarded to Members).

Members also requested that the previous inquiry day report on Edge of Care should be circulated to Members along with implementation of recommendations to consider whether there was further follow-on work.

Members had previously completed work with young carers and agreed to become Young Carer Advocates. Further work was suggested on how this could be progressed.

Resolved: That the additions to the to work programme be noted.

Chairman

Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Thursday 15 June 2023

'Living my Best Life': Report on the Joint Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent people in Staffordshire 2023-2028

Recommendation

- a. That the Committee consider and comment on the proposed 'Living my Best Life': Joint Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent people in Staffordshire 2023-2028

Local Member Interest:

N/A

Report of Councillors Julia Jessel, Mark Sutton and Jonathan Price

Summary

1. Staffordshire County Council and the Integrated Care Board (ICB) have jointly developed a final draft of a new 'Living my Best Life': Joint Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent people in Staffordshire 2023-2028. This replaces the Whole Life Disability Strategy 2018-2023. The comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will inform preparation of the final report to Cabinet on the 19 July 2023.

Background

2. There are around 21,000 adults with a learning disability living in Staffordshire, of whom 3,400 have a moderate or severe disability, and 7,000 adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder. 26,000 Staffordshire residents aged 18-65 have a disability that makes personal care difficult; 35,000 aged over 65 are unable to manage at least one mobility activity on their own, such as going to the toilet or getting in and out of bed. 6,200 adults have registrable eye conditions or are severely visually impaired; 18,200 experience severe hearing loss (Source: Poppi and Pansi Data, Oxford Brookes). Currently, national prevalence data for children and young people is limited. There is no national repository of quality reviewed data for individuals under 18.
3. The majority of people with disabilities and neurodivergences manage with help and support from their family, friends and communities, and assistance from technologies. It is important that universal services such as education, shops, leisure and cultural activities, and health services

are inclusive, accessible and adapted to their needs. Also, that there are appropriate housing options that enable them to live independently. A small number of people with disabilities and neurodivergences are eligible for dedicated care and support from the County Council and/or the NHS and need a reasonable choice of good quality, sustainable services that can achieve their outcomes.

4. Staffordshire County Council and the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board (ICB) have agreed to jointly develop a new 'Living my Best Life': Joint Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent people in Staffordshire 2023-2028, replacing the current [Whole Life Disability Strategy 2018-2023](#). It aspires to support all disabled and neurodivergent individuals to live the best lives possible.
5. The new Staffordshire Disability Partnership Board will co-ordinate development and oversee implementation of the Strategy, reporting to the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Strategy will complement the [Staffordshire Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Strategy](#) and the [SEND Strategy for Special Provision - Staffordshire County Council](#).

Strategy development

6. The Strategy has been co-produced through a two-stage process:
 - a. Stage One. A survey exploring quality of life and factors considered most important by disabled and neurodivergent people for them to live their best lives. This was carried out during December 2022. The findings are summarised in the next section and have been used to develop a draft vision and priorities for the Strategy.
 - b. Stage Two. The draft vision and priorities for the Strategy have been discussed with disabled and neurodivergent people, politicians, carers and professionals face-to-face in each district/borough during January and February 2023 to seek their views.
7. The Strategy has also been co-produced with commissioners and senior managers across care Commissioning, Children and Families and the Integrated Care Board. This is to ensure we can be honest about what is possible within the resources available and develop a vision, priorities and outcomes that work towards the aspirations of disabled and neurodivergent people whilst remaining realistic and deliverable.

The learning so far

8. Over 500 individuals responded to the survey across all eight Staffordshire Districts, including 265 disabled and neurodivergent people. Responses were provided from all gender, sexual orientation and ethnic

groups identified in the survey. 146 carers and 97 professionals and organisations across the public, private and voluntary sectors also responded to the survey.

9. Views on disabled and neurodivergent people's quality of life suggest:

- a. Disabled and neurodivergent people have good contact with friends and family; where they live feels like home and a place where they can do what they want; and the people who support them are listening to their needs.
- b. Disabled and neurodivergent people do not have as many opportunities as they would like to learn and develop and do not know enough about activities and services in their communities. Disabled and neurodivergent people are not getting as much help as they would like when needed or as much choice and control as they would like – carers of disabled and neurodivergent children and young people felt this particularly strongly.

10. The factors mentioned most as being important by disabled and neurodivergent people to live their best lives were as follows:

- a. Adults: 1 - Family, friends and relationships; 2 - Access to health and social care, shops and other services, 3 - Appropriate and safe home, 4 – Social life, social skills and getting out and about, and 5 – Learning and education.
- b. Children and young people: 1- Positive educational experience; 2 - Social life, social skills, getting out and about, and 3 - Family, friends and relationships, 4 – Adjustments made to support me, and 5 – Personal safety.

11. A vision for the Strategy and key priorities were drafted in response to the feedback received from the Stage One engagement process. The Stage Two engagement process (to engage on the emerging vision and priorities) has involved face to face conversations. In total, this has involved 22 disabled and neurodivergent people, 29 carers, 36 professionals and 16 independent organisations. Within these figures, some individuals were able to reflect more than one perspective (for example a carer and a person with a disability themselves).

12. Further face to face engagement involved forums (Day Opportunities and Supported Living) attended by at least 50 providers, the Learning Disability and Autism Carers Forum working group (attended by 10 carers with close family ties to someone with a learning disability and / or autism) and the Staffordshire Autism Joint Implementation Group (attended by 9 professionals, carers and people with lived experience) and a number of established, district based voluntary organisations

supporting people with various disabilities and/or neurodivergences, facilitated by an independent Advocacy provider.

13. A summary of the feedback that has been received in the Stage Two engagement process and associated actions are outlined in table 1:

Table 1: Stage two feedback and actions taken in response to that.

Feedback received	Actions taken
Most of the changes to the vision focussed on improvements to the wording, not the intention within it, and regarding its deliverability.	The vision statement has been shortened and simplified. Embedding the Disability Partnership Board arrangements are seen as key to oversee Strategy delivery.
A small number of individuals (mostly from the Learning Disability and Adult Social Care Carers Forum) have had slightly different ideas about how we worded our emerging priorities for the Strategy.	The suggestions given for rewording were very action orientated. This approach led to a rewording of emerging priorities into clearer strategic outcome statements to drive positive change.
People identified a number of issues and potential actions that they felt the Strategy needed to address.	Suggestions people gave were captured in relation to individual strategic outcomes and we found a good connect between these. They have been used to create key priority actions in the Strategy and will also inform the action plan.
A small number of individuals indicated that they were not comfortable with our 'Living my Best Life' title and some recommended that Autism should not be mentioned separately within the title of the Strategy. There has also been some debate over the best terminology to use for neurodivergences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will retain the Strategy title 'Living my Best Life' agreed by most people we have engaged with. Autism has however been removed from the title. Some individuals suggested we used terms such as 'neurodiversity' instead of 'neurodivergence' or 'deaf' instead of 'hearing impaired'. We have sought advice from communications colleagues to support wording used in the final draft Strategy.

14. In addition to using stages one and two engagement feedback, the draft Strategy (Appendix One) has subsequently been informed by:

- a. Summary feedback collated from previous engagement processes.
- b. A review of best practice for disabilities and neurodivergences.
- c. Considering the Community Impact Assessment outcomes.

Steps towards approval and implementation

15. An overview of the learning from the engagement processes was presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board on 2 March 2023.
16. The draft strategy will be presented and reviewed at the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 15 June 2023 and any potential amendments will be made accordingly following this meeting.
17. The Strategy will be reviewed at the ICB Quality and Safety Committee on 14 June 2023 and considered for final approval by the ICB board on 20 July 2023.
18. The Strategy will be considered for final approval by Cabinet on 19 July 2023.
19. An associated action plan will be co-produced by the end of December 2023. Delivery of the action plan will be overseen by the new Disability Partnership Board and ultimately, the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Link to Strategic Plan

20. The Strategy will support the Council's Strategic Plan (2022-2026) including people having access to more good jobs and sharing the benefit of economic growth; living in thriving and sustainable communities; and people being healthier and independent for longer.

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity:

21. Matters relating to disabilities and neurodivergences are also relevant to the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Community Impact:

22. A Community Impact Assessment has been completed.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 – 'Living my Best Life': Joint Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent people in Staffordshire 2023-2028. *Draft Strategy*

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Living my Best Life

A Joint Strategy for Disabled and
Neurodivergent people in Staffordshire 2023-
2028

Foreword

1. Many people with disabilities and neurodivergences have positive life experiences and outcomes. However, some do not experience the same opportunities that other people take for granted. This Strategy aims to improve health and wellbeing, economic, educational and social outcomes and help make Staffordshire a place where disabled people and people with neurodivergences can live their best lives.
2. This is a joint Strategy between Staffordshire County Council (SCC) and Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board (ICB). It complements national and local strategies and good practice (including our SEND and Carers' strategies, as detailed on our [ADD WEBPAGE ADDRESS] webpage here). It also considers what people have told us. This includes our partners, the public, professionals, politicians, local organisations and people living with disabilities and neurodivergences, and their carers.
3. In this Strategy, we are referring to the Equality Act (2010) definition of a disability, rather than, for example, using a narrow definition based around eligibility for particular services. This Equality Act definition is a 'physical or mental impairment with a significant and long-term adverse effect on an individual's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.' Neurodivergences are about brain function and behaviours that are not considered typical.
4. The Strategy supports a wide range of people, and not just those who receive particular services. It aims to raise community awareness and remove barriers so people can be recognised and treated as individuals and not for their disability or neurodivergence. Accountability will come through our new county-wide joint Disability Partnership Board arrangements, so that meaningful change can happen at scale.
5. We would like to thank everyone who has supported this Strategy so far. This marks the start of a journey. It will take years, not months for big changes to happen. We hope that through commitment from ourselves, our partners and the wider community, we can create the right conditions for this.

Cllr Julia Jessel - Cabinet Member for Health and Care, SCC

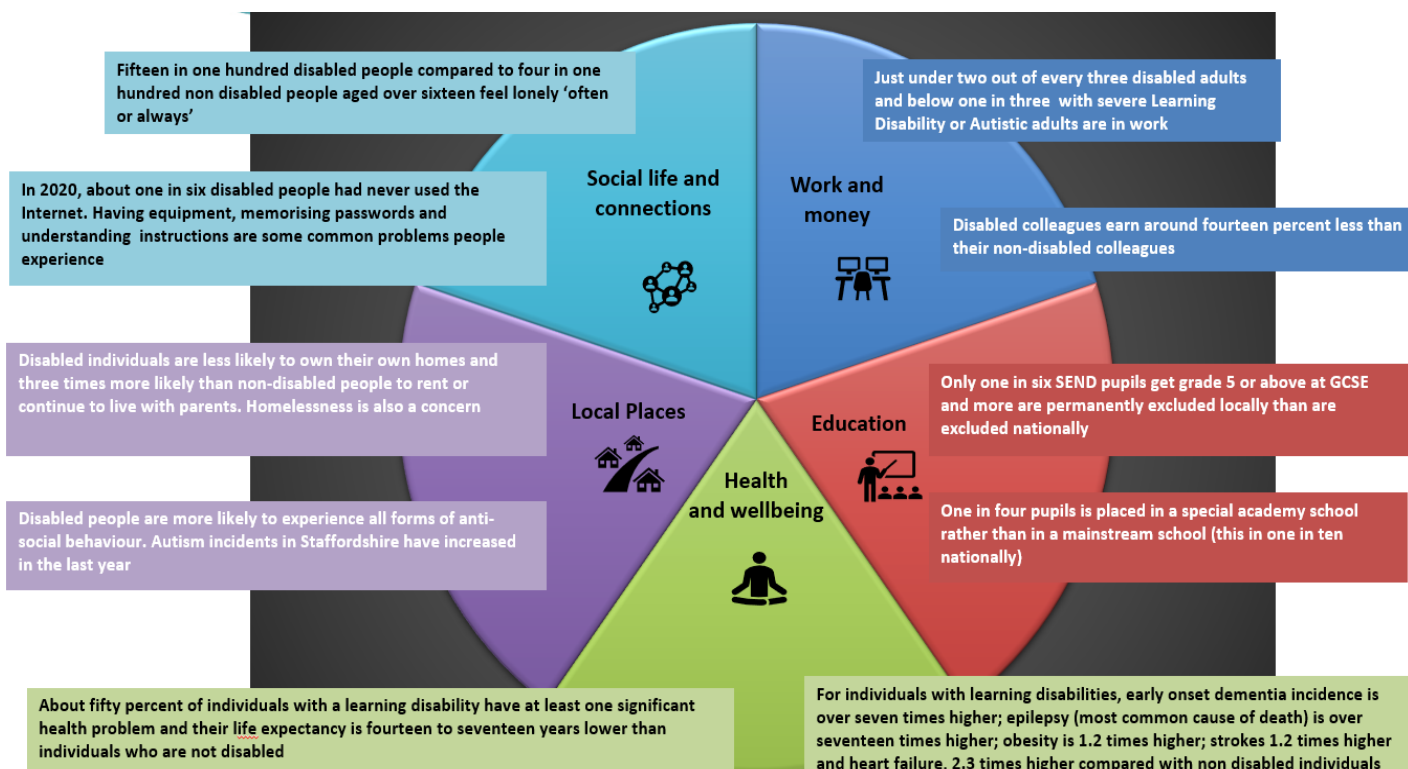
Cllr Mark Sutton - Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, SCC

Cllr Jonathan Price – Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND), SCC
Dr Richard Harling, MBE - Director of Health and Care, SCC
David Pearson, MBE - Non-Executive Chair, Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent ICB
Peter Axon – Interim Chief Executive Officer, Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care System / Board

Background: What We Know

Disability / Neurodivergence	Prevalence: Adults	Prevalence: Under 18's
Impaired mobility / Personal care activities	About 6 in 100 aged 18-65; 1 in 6 aged over 65	Less than 1 in 100
Registrable eye condition / Severe visual impairment	Approximately 2 in 100	Less than 1 in 1,000
Severe hearing loss	Around 3 in 100	Close to 0
Learning disability	About 1 in 40	Same as adults
Autism	About 1 in 100	1 in 50
Down syndrome	Less than 1 in 1,000	Same as adults
ADHD	Around 3-4 in 100	Same as adults
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder	Just over 3 in 100	Same as adults

- Disabilities and neurodivergences can impact on people’s experiences and their chances of achieving their potential. They may struggle educationally and at work. They may have difficulty accessing social, leisure, retail sport, cultural and religious opportunities in their local area. They may feel more lonely and unsafe and be more vulnerable to crime and abuse. They may also have problems accessing health services and using digital technologies. Certain disabilities and neurodivergences are associated with an increased risk of chronic ill health and can shorten an individual’s life expectancy.
- Some disabilities and neurodivergences are not diagnosed. Some are not visible. Not all people living with them want others to know. This makes reducing inequalities (ensuring everyone can experience things in an equal way) a more complex challenge.



What you have told us

Views on Quality of Life

8. Views on disabled and neurodivergent people's current quality of life suggest that disabled and neurodivergent people:
 - i. Have good contact with friends and family.
 - ii. Where they live feels like home and a place where they can do what they want.
 - iii. People who support them are listening to their needs.
9. However, they:
 - i. Do not have as many opportunities as they would like to learn and develop.
 - ii. Do not know enough about activities and services in their communities.
 - iii. Are not getting as much help as they would like when needed.
 - iv. Are not having as much choice and control as they would like.
 - v. Do not always feel respected and listened to (under 18's)

Views on what people need to live their best lives

10. The top five factors mentioned most often by disabled and neurodivergent people to live their best lives were:

For adults:

1. Family, friends and relationships
2. Access to health and social care, shops and other services
3. Appropriate and safe home
4. Social life, social skills, getting out and about
5. Learning and education.

For children:

1. Positive educational experience
2. Social life, social skills, getting out and about
3. Family, friends and relationships
4. Adjustments made to support me
5. Personal safety.

Our Shared Vision for the Strategy

We want Staffordshire to become a place where people living with disabilities and neurodivergences can do what matters to them; where they are valued and treated as equals in all aspects of society; and where they can live a healthier and better quality of life for longer.

The outcomes we aim to achieve

11. Based on suggestions from our engagement processes, we will aim to achieve the following outcomes through this Strategy:

A. Staffordshire is more open and inclusive.

- i. Co-ordinating training and awareness raising for 'all.'

This includes general awareness raising in educational settings, in the wider community and in local businesses (including those that offer services to local communities and those that are employers).

It also includes specialist training and awareness raising for statutory service professionals (including education, emergency services, health and social care, housing, transport or police and criminal justice).

- ii. Expanding 'Celebrating Differences' as a tool to record, share and grow good practice.

This means expanding [Celebrating Differences](#) from a campaign focussed on Learning Disability and Autism into a larger 'movement' representing all visible and invisible disabled and neurodivergent groups. We will consider introducing influential champions and positive role models, lived experience- mentoring and organisational equality self-assessments into this.

B. Stronger partnerships are built around and include disabled and neurodivergent people.

- i. Continuing to establish the Disability Partnership Board and promoting inclusion and equality as a core theme for local partnerships.

The Disability Partnership Board (linking to the Family Strategic Partnership Board) will oversee the Strategy and involve individuals with lived experience and their carers. Inclusion and equality across all

aspects of health and wellbeing will be considered (including for example housing, health and employment).

- ii. The Council and Integrated Care Board (ICB) working closer together to improve outcomes.

The Council and the ICB will explore more opportunities for joint working and joint funding of services, where this improves outcomes.

- iii. Creating more safe spaces in Staffordshire.

The Strategy will aim to help more businesses to offer designated safe spaces across local communities.

- iv. Ensuring Supportive Communities and Family Hubs link with disabled and neurodivergent people and professionals.

These programmes of work helps individuals and local communities to help themselves. For example, [Community help points](#) and [Family Hubs](#) are central points of access to information and advice. Local community navigators help people navigate to opportunities and support available in the wider community. It is important to understand what is needed, maximise community capacity and link to wider support networks and improve accessibility of information for disabled and neurodivergent people, their carers and for professionals.



C. Disabled and neurodivergent people are communicating their needs and action is being taken.

- i. Expanding opportunities to give more people a voice (self-advocacy), so they can communicate confidently, be heard and influence action.

This could include the following, among other actions:

- a. Including a 'How can I help you' or similar campaign into Celebrating Differences to normalise reasonable adjustments.
- b. Encouraging more peer support networks and providing a means for statutory and other organisations to communicate and share information with them.
- c. Including people with lived experience and their carers in shaping strategies and services and feeding back on the impact this has.
- d. Using or developing simple approaches so that people can identify their needs confidently and discretely.
- e. Embedding health passports.
- f. Applying lessons learnt from the LeDeR programme.



D. Disabled and neurodivergent people and their carers are better informed and in control.


- i. Identifying people's preferences and making information, advice and guidance and signposting information more accessible to them.

This is about exploring the ways people with disabilities and neurodivergences prefer to access information and advice whilst also considering their different accessibility needs.

- ii. Making sure that existing information, advice and guidance is comprehensive.

This is about supporting people to access digital technology. It is also about linking people to information and advice, including for example:

- a) Helping them cope with day to day living (such as paying bills, completing online forms and locating disabled facilities).
- b) Coping with key life changes (such as parenting and transition to adulthood).
- c) Accessing specialist equipment and support.
- d) Carer skills development to help carers cope with day-to-day challenges and changing needs of the individuals they support.

 **E. In carrying out their responsibilities for Care and support, the ICB and Council will consider the whole person's needs, aspirations and what they can do. It will not stop them doing what they want to do.**

- i. Reinforce a strengths-based approach across health and care.

This is about considering people's aspirations and potential in terms of service planning; market development; assessment and care planning; service commissioning; quality assurance; and monitoring of care and support provided. It is also about increasing people's choice and control in relation to the support they receive.

- ii. Reduce health inequalities and improve access to NHS services.

This includes earlier identification and diagnostics, giving people tools and support to prevent their needs escalating and making adjustments so that people have equal access to and experience of services.

- iii. Ensure quality and value for money of dedicated services.

This means offering a good standard of care and support as well as spending public money wisely and living within our means. It includes for example exploring more opportunities for joint working with the ICB.

Our Approach



Measuring our Success

The five strategy outcomes will form the basis of an action plan for this strategy. The County-wide Disability Partnership Board will meet every four months and oversee delivery of the action plan. It will provide an update on progress to the Staffordshire Health and Wellbeing Board every year.

Local Members Interest
N/A

Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Thursday 15 June 2023

Work Programme Planning

Recommendation

- a. That the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider and agree an initial list of priorities to form the basis of their work programme for 2023/24.

Report of the Scrutiny and Support Officer

1. The scrutiny structures have been designed to ensure effective accountability for the delivery against the Council's key outcomes set out in Staffordshire County Council's Strategic Plan. The Safeguarding Overview & Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutiny of:
 - Children and adults' safeguarding
 - Community safety
2. In developing a work programme the Committee is encouraged to identify issues that are a current priority for local people and communities and/or are a priority for the Council and partners. If a matter is a recurring issue for the people you collectively as Councillors represent, then the likelihood is that it is something the Committee should spend time on. The more relevant the issue is to local communities then the greater the likelihood of engaging those communities in the scrutiny process and of producing outcomes that will be visible to those communities. Members are encouraged to raise and discuss issues that should form the basis of the work programme and review these periodically throughout the year to ensure they remain relevant and will add value to what the Council and partners are doing.

Report

Background

3. The Committee will lead on ensuring effective accountability of safeguards in place to protect adults and children and young people whilst scrutinising the wider community safety and localism priorities. The Committee is the designated crime and disorder committee. This is

distinct from the role of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel, who are responsible for scrutinising the decisions of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, but to whom it may refer matters.

Developing the Work Programme

4. This meeting is an opportunity for the Committee to begin to identify and prioritise what it wishes to scrutinise during the current municipal year. Officers and Cabinet Members will be present at the meeting to outline the County Council's responsibilities in relation to safeguarding, public protection and localism, and highlighting priorities for the Council going forward.
5. When agreeing matters for your work programme you are encouraged to ask the following questions:
 - Is the matter of particular concern to local people?
 - Is the issue an identified priority for the County Council or partners?
 - Does the issue relate to an area of service with a trend in weak performance? For example, has this issue been identified by external auditors or inspectors?
 - What difference could scrutiny make?
 - What would happen if you did not look at this issue?

Matters Arising from Last Year's Work Programme

6. Areas that were highlighted for further work during the last municipal year are:
 - Safeguarding concerns of permanently excluded pupils, an item was considered by Members at their 20 April meeting, with further work identified;
 - Meeting with the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner to consider progress following the PEEL report;
 - Family Hub, including the Early Help Strategy;
 - Online abuse and grooming;
 - Work of the SSCB Child Exploitation Sub-group;
 - Partnership approaches to early help and emotional and behavioural support;
 - Impact of the new PSHE Co-ordinator 12 months on (scheduled for 27 July agenda)
 - Children's Transformation
 - Ofsted Action Plan - progress

Recurring Work Programme Items

Complaints and Representations Annual Report – Children’s Services. Children’s services are required to submit an annual report on complaints and representations to the relevant County Council Committee. Trends in complaints are used to inform the Scrutiny Committee’s work programme.

Complaints and Representations Annual Report – Adults’ Services. Whilst there is not a statutory obligation for Adults’ Services to submit a report to a County Council Committee, the ‘safeguarding’ scrutiny committee has scrutinised this report on an annual basis. Trends in complaints are used to inform the Scrutiny Committee’s work programme.

Annual Report of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board. The Committee considers this report on an annual basis for comment.

Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board. The Committee considers the Board’s Annual for comment.

Outcomes from inspections. Adults and children’s services are subject to a programme of announced/unannounced inspections throughout the year. The Committee will be updated on the outcomes from inspections and Members may be required to contribute to them.

Meeting with the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. The Committee has the opportunity to scrutinise the work of the Commissioner specifically in regard to community safety. The Chairman is copied into the agenda and minutes of the Police, Fire and Crime Panel and every effort is made to ensure that the Committee is not duplicating the work of the Panel.

Training and development

7. Training and development sessions will be run for Members as required. Members are invited to make any suggestions for development to the Chair or the Scrutiny and Support Officer.

Link to the Strategic Plan

8. The remits of the Council’s Overview & Scrutiny Committees link to the strategic priorities set out in the County Council Strategic Plan. Work

programmes should link to community priorities or strategic outcomes if they are to deliver noticeable outcomes for local communities and the organisation.

Implications

9. The County Council has a responsibility to undertake adequate Equality Impact Assessments to ensure services do not have a negative impact on any one section of the community and the scrutiny committees have a role in ensuring that this responsibility is fulfilled. Scrutiny as a function must also comply with the relevant legislation. When considering work programme items, especially when undertaking reviews of policy, the scrutiny committees must always consider whether their recommendations may impact differently on various individuals/sections of the community.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Draft Work Programme 2023/24

Contact Details

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WORK PROGRAMME

Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 2023/2024

This document sets out the work programme for the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2023/2024.

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 2023/2024

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
15 June 2023 10.00am	<p>'Living my Best Life': Report on the Joint Strategy for Disabled and Neurodivergent people in Staffordshire 2023-2028</p> <p>Cabinet Member: Julia Jessel Lead Officer: Andy Marriot & Nicola Day</p>	Pre-decision scrutiny – postponed from last municipal year	
	<p>Safeguarding Overview & Scrutiny Focus for the Future</p> <p>Cabinet Members: Julia Jessel, Mark Sutton, Jonathan Price, Victoria Wilson Lead Officers: Richard Harling, Neelam Bardwaja, Catherine Mann</p>	Cabinet Members and Lead Officers highlight topics within their portfolio to support the Committee's work programme planning	
	<p>Work programme Planning</p> <p>Lead Officer: Helen Phillips</p>	Within the remit of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, begin planning the work programme for 2023-24.	
27 July 2023 10.00 am	<p>Customer Feedback & Complaints Annual report – Children's Social Care</p>	Report brought annually	.

Work Programme 2023/2024

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
Page 29	Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Kate Bullivant		
	Customer Feedback & Complaints Annual report – Adults Social Care Cabinet Member: Julia Jessel Lead Officer: Kate Bullivant	Report brought annually	
	PSHE Coordinator impact after first 12 months Cabinet Member: Jonathan Price Lead Officer: Phil Pusey	The Inquiry Day report into Sexual Harassment in Schools asked that the O&S Committee consider the impact of the new PFCC funded PSHE Coordinator role after its first 12 months.	
14 September 2023 10.00 am			
23 Nov 2023 10.00 am	Children’s Services Transformation 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	

Work Programme 2023/2024

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
	<p>Family Hub – progress & Early Help Strategy Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Natasha Moody</p>	<p>Progress with the implementation of the Family Hub initiative, to include details of the Family Improvement Boards and progress with the Early Help Strategy</p>	
	<p>MacAlister Report Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Nisha Gupta</p>	<p>Consideration of the areas accepted by the Government for implementation, and their impact for Staffordshire Children’s Services</p>	
<p>January 2024 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>Staffordshire Safeguarding Children’s Board Annual Report Independent Chair: Ian Vinall Lead Officer: Lynn Milligan</p>	<p>Report brought annually</p>	
<p>15 Feb 2024</p>			

Work Programme 2023/2024

Date of Meeting	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
10.00 am			
18 April 2024 10.00 am			
tbc	Ofsted Focused Visit – improvement action plan Cabinet Member – Mark Sutton Lead Officer – Nisha Gupta	Considered at 1 September 2022 O&S meeting – agreed to review progress with implementation of action plan.	
tbc Page 31	Hearing the voice of the child Cabinet Member – Mark Sutton Lead Officer – Neelam Bhardwaja	16 February meeting Members requested a better understanding of how the voice of the child is heard – particularly with respect to early identification of emerging online threats and challenges.	
tbc	Safeguarding Assessment Cabinet Member: Julia Jessel Lead Officer: Ruth Martin	Suggested at the 7 December Triangulation	

Items for Consideration – Work Programme 2023/2024

Suggested Item	Details (Background)	Proposed Date of Meeting

Standing Items 2022/2023

Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome
<p>Crime & Disorder Cabinet Member: Victoria Wilson Lead Officer: Catherine Mann/Trish Caldwell</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Chairman and Vice-Chairman briefings on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<p>Children Improvement Board (CIB) Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Neelam Bhardwaja</p>	<p>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: 26.04.23, 23.05.23, 28.06.23, 25.07.23, 27.09.23, 24.10.23, 28.11.23, 20.12.23</p>	
<p>Themes emerging from Serious Case Reviews Cabinet Member: Mark Sutton Lead Officer: Neelam Bhardwaja</p>	<p>Where Serious Case Reviews have taken place the Overview & Scrutiny Committee will consider any learning that can be taken from the Review</p>	<p>Some areas picked up by the DHR review process</p>

Briefing Notes / Updates / Visits 2023/2024

Date	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome

Working Groups / Inquiry Days 2023/2024

Date	Item	Details (Background)	Action / Outcome

Membership – County Councillors 2022-2023

Bob Spencer (Chairman)
 Gill Burnett (Vice Chairman - Overview)
 Paul Snape (Vice Chairman - Scrutiny)
 Ann Edgeller
 Janet England
 Johnny McMahon
 Gillian Pardesi
 Kath Perry
 Mike Wilcox
 Conor Wileman

Calendar of Committee Meetings - 2023-2024

15 June 2023 at 10.00 am
 27 July 2023 at 10.00 am
 14 September 2023 at 10.00 am
 23 November 2023 at 10.00 am
 4 January 2024 at 10.00 am
 15 February 2024 at 10.00 am
 18 April 2024 at 10.00 am
 Meetings usually take place in the Oak rm, County Buildings

