

Safeguarding and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Training for members and staff of licensed premises in the Borough.

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Portfolio: Finance, IT and Customer
& Communities and Social Cohesion

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To update Members on the proposed co-ordination of CSE awareness training to members and partners.

To reaffirm to Members the role of the Borough Council in safeguarding children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect.

Recommendations

That the Partnerships Team liaise with the Democratic Services to co-ordinate additional CSE awareness training for members of the Licensing Committee by the end of the current financial year.

That Members participate in awareness training and assist Officers to encourage staff of licenced premises to participate in similar training as appropriate.

Reasons

The Children Acts (1989) and (2004), the Care Act (2014) and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) place statutory duties on District Councils to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging their functions they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect.

The statutory guidance 'Working together to safeguard children: a guide to inter agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (2015)' provides core legislative requirements regarding the expectations of the role of District Councils working alone or in partnership with other organisations.

1. Background

1.1 Safeguarding children can be defined as “The process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully”.

1.2 Safeguarding duties also apply to an adult who: has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and; is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect. The adult experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect will hereafter be referred to as the adult throughout this report.

- 1.3 The Children Act (2004) requires each local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) made up of representatives from the agencies and bodies which have regular contact with children or have responsibility for services to them (or their families) in the local area and builds upon the provisions of the Children Act (1989).
- 1.4 As a statutory authority providing services in the community to children and their families the Borough Council is required to co-operate in the establishment, operation, and participation of the LCSB and is a member of the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (SSCB), which became operational in April 2006. The Borough Council also has a legal responsibility to safeguard, promote wellbeing and protect children when discharging our functions.
- 1.5 The Care Act (2014) introduced a statutory requirement for each local authority to establish a Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) made up of representatives from the agencies and bodies which have regular contact with adults at risk of abuse and neglect or have responsibility for services to them (or their families) in the local area. The Borough Council is a member of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership (SSASP).
- 1.6 The Borough Council participates in the District Safeguarding Sub Group (for Children and Adults at risk of abuse and neglect) and has assisted in the creation of the recently reviewed Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk of Abuse and Neglect Policy template, which was adopted in Newcastle in October 2015.
- 1.7 The Policy seeks to help protect all children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect living in our communities and to support the Borough Council, its staff, elected members and volunteers.
- 1.8 In line with the legal responsibilities set out in Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, the Council has undertaken an audit to ensure that in discharging its functions the Council has regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The audit assessment gave the Council the opportunity to highlight areas of strength and to identify areas for further development, which have now been incorporated into the revised Policy.
- 1.9 The audit highlighted opportunities to train elected members on the Public Protection and Licensing Committees to assist them in delivering their duties with regard to the Council's safeguarding obligations and preventing and disrupting CSE. It also highlighted the need to equip key partners such as staff in licensed premises with knowledge of safeguarding, CSE and pathways for referral.

2. **Proposal and Reasons for Preferred Solution**

- 2.1 It is proposed that the Partnerships Team liaise with the Democratic Services to co-ordinate CSE awareness training for members of the Licensing Committee by the end of the financial year, to provide members with the confidence and competence to meet the challenges of decision making in this area of the law.
- 2.2 It is also proposed that safeguarding and CSE training is made available for staff of licensed premises (similar to that recently being delivered to taxi drivers) to raise awareness and explain how to raise the alarm with any concerns around suspicious activity.
- 2.3 The training to be delivered will cover the following;
 - What is abuse
 - Child sexual exploitation
 - How young people are targeted
 - Indicators of risk
 - Human trafficking

- Licensing duty of care in relation to safeguarding
- How should a member of staff deal with a disclosure
- How to pass information on.

3. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

- 3.1 The training proposal contributes to delivery of the Council's Sustainable Communities Strategy 2014-2020 by delivering assisting in preventing the exploitation of vulnerable residents. It also meets the Council's Corporate Priorities for Creating Healthy and Active Communities and Creating a Cleaner, Safer and Sustainable Borough.

4. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 4.1 The Council has statutory duties under the Children Act (1989) and (2004), the Care Act (2014) and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging functions it has regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect.

- 4.2 The statutory guidance 'Working together to safeguard children: a guide to inter agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (2015)' provides core legislative requirements regarding the expectations of the role of district councils working alone or in partnership with other organisations.

5. **Equality Impact Assessment**

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is being developed for this area of work.

6. **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 6.1 The training will be delivered using existing resources in the Partnerships Team at the Council for Elected Members and staff from local licensed premises unless additional external funding can be achieved.

- 6.2 There are resource implications for Council officers who are involved in and will co-ordinate delivery of the training and safeguarding activity thereafter but these are met through existing arrangements.

7. **Major Risks**

- 7.1 Failure to take appropriate action regarding safeguarding may result in the Council being unable to perform its statutory duties, leaving the Council open to legal challenge.

- 7.2 Failure to take appropriate action regarding safeguarding may lead to a child or adult at risk suffering unnecessary harm.

- 7.3 There is also a risk of reputational damage to the Council if it does not deliver its statutory duties lawfully and effectively.

8. **Key Decision Information**

- 8.1 The Council has statutory duties to safeguard, promote wellbeing and protect children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect.

- 8.2 This report can be considered key in the following ways: -

- It results in the Borough Council committing existing resources for the function to which the decision relates and;
- To be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more electoral wards in the Borough.

9. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

9.1 Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy – October 2015.

10. **List of Appendices**

10.1 None.

11. **Background Papers**

11.1 None.