

Safeguarding & Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Thursday 09 January 2025

Recommendations

I recommend that the Committee:

- a. Consider the proposed amendments to the Committee's work programme for 2024/25.

Report of the Scrutiny and Support Officer

Summary

Background

1. The Safeguarding & Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutiny of safeguarding, education and SEND, and of community safety. In particular it will lead on ensuring effective accountability of safeguards in place and scrutiny of the Council's work around:
 - a) safeguarding vulnerable children;
 - b) safeguarding vulnerable adults;
 - c) education;
 - d) SEND; and,
 - e) reducing crime and the fear of crime.
2. This Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinises the Council's work to achieve its priority that Staffordshire offers every child and young person the best start in life, and the chance to achieve their potential.
3. This Overview and Scrutiny Committee also scrutinises the Council's responsibilities regarding reducing crime and the fear of crime and wider Community Safety priorities. It acts as the Council's designated crime and disorder committee, being 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 as appropriate.
4. As the committee will be responsible for priorities around education, learning and SEND, the statutory education co-optees will sit on this committee. Its membership will therefore include the following co-optees who shall have voting rights when the Committee considers education matters:

- at least one Church of England diocese representative;
 - one Roman Catholic diocese representative; and
 - up to three parent governor representatives.
5. Following a recommendation from the Adult Social Care Enhanced Assurance Working Group, the Chairman of the Health and Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee will be invited to attend the Safeguarding & Education Overview & Scrutiny Committee when it considers the Adult Safeguarding Board Annual Report.
 6. This Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviews its work programme at every meeting. Our focus in scrutiny is on tangible outcomes for the residents of Staffordshire, to use the data provided and members experience to debate and question the evidence, to provide reassurance in what is being done.

To review our meetings they can be found on this link: [Committee details - Safeguarding and Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Staffordshire County Council \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk/committees/safeguarding-and-education-overview-and-scrutiny-committee)

If you would like to know more about our work programme, please contact helen.phillips@staffordshire.gov.uk

Work Programme Update

7. The 28 November meeting was cancelled because of delays in DfE attainment figures and challenges with accessing attainment details from Capita. A new meeting has been scheduled on Friday 21 March 2025 at 10.00am to accommodate this.
8. A written ILACs update has been requested as a substitute to the report that had been due for consideration at the November meeting. A report outlining further progress will then be included on the February agenda.
9. An additional meeting has been scheduled for Wednesday 12 February. This will be a joint meeting between the Safeguarding and Education, and the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committees to consider proposals for a new social care management system prior to a decision by Cabinet.
10. After consideration the Chairmen of the Safeguarding and Education and the Health and Care O&S Committees have agreed to delay the

proposed joint working group to consider SEND Preparation for Adulthood until after the anticipated inspection.

11. The Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) Annual report will be published and shared with the Committee in the New Year.
12. The Chairman will feedback on developments from the Staffordshire Strategic Children's Improvement Board (SSCIB) (previously called the Children's Improvement Board) after each meeting.

Link to Strategic Plan

13. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee remits and work programmes are developed to ensure that scrutiny reinforces the value and importance of challenge and they are aligned to the ambitions and delivery of the principles, priorities and outcomes of the Staffordshire Corporate Plan.

List of Appendices and Background papers:

Section 7 of Staffordshire County Council's Constitution:

[Section 7 - Overview and Scrutiny Committees.pdf \(staffordshire.gov.uk\)](#)

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Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

Date	Item	Basis/ Theme /Details	Actions/ Outcomes
Thursday 13 June 2024 at 10.00am	Work Programme Planning	Annual update of Work Programme	An informal work programme planning session will take place prior to the July meeting
	Education key themes	Following changes to the Committee's remit to now include education, a presentation on the work of Education Teams and current key themes and issues will help inform work programme planning	The key themes raised with the O&S Committee will form part of their informal work programme planning session.
	Children's Services Ofsted Improvement Plan	Having scrutinised the draft improvement plan at the April meeting this is an opportunity to consider the final improvement plan document, as agreed by partners and Ofsted.	https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50237007 As part of their informal work programme planning session the Committee will consider how they wish to monitor progress
Thursday 25 July 2024 at 10:00am	Domestic Abuse Contract – 6 months on	To scrutinise the implementation of the new Domestic Abuse contract more than six months after its introduction	The Committee welcomed progress made over the five years of the previous contract period to support both adult and child victims and perpetrators of DA.
	Resettlement Team	Item for pre-decision scrutiny (scheduled to be considered by Cabinet in September)	The O&S Committee welcomed the progress made by the Resettlement Team in respect of Government schemes. They congratulated the

Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

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			<p>Team on the changing reactive nature of the work which made longer term planning so difficult. Members were happy to endorse the approach to the Resettlement Team and wish to include further scrutiny on funding in comparison to workload in 12 to 18 months time.</p>
<p>Thursday 12 September 2024 at 10.00am</p>	<p>Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report</p>	<p>Report brought annually</p>	<p>The improvements made since the last annual report were welcomed and the Committee noted for future scrutiny that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the new mission, vision and values will be published in December; • greater use of data and more nuanced explanation of training be included in the SSCP Annual report for 2024-25.
	<p>Managing Self-Neglect</p>	<p>Proposed at the February Triangulation meeting.</p>	<p>The Committee supported the work on self-neglect.</p>
	<p>Adult Safeguarding backlog reduction</p>	<p>Review of progress made, and the sustainability of, the recent actions to reduce the adult safeguarding concern backlog</p>	<p>The Committee welcomed the improvements made as a result of the Transformation Project and will receive detail on progress with the referral portal in due course once this trial has been completed</p>
	<p>Recommissioning of Children’s Community Support Framework inc Domiciliary Care</p>	<p>Item for pre-decision scrutiny</p>	<p>The Committee supported the open framework approach and implementation of a Flexible Framework. They also supported the proposal that Cabinet grant to the Director of Children’s</p>

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			<p>Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, delegated decision to extend the contract as per Contractual Particulars for the extension periods after the initial term of contract</p> <p>The Committee noted that the delegated authority for alternative approval of individual call-off contracts will be sought as per D13.5 of the Council's Procurement Regulations.</p> <p>Members fully supported and endorsed the option to recommission the new Children's Community Support Service via a new open framework from 1 October 2025, based on option 3.</p>
<p>Tuesday 8 October 2024 at 10.00am</p>	<p>SEND</p>	<p>To share the current position and scrutinise the process and preparation for inspection, looking at timelines, and what value scrutiny can add</p>	<p>The Committee welcome the work to prepare for the anticipated SEND inspection. They agreed that their Chairman discuss with the Cabinet Member for Education and SEND and with the Chairman of the Health and Care O&S, the possibility of a joint letter to the ICB's Executive Board asking for their assurance over the quality of data that will influence the inspection. They also asked the Chairman to discuss with the Chairman of the Health and Care O&S the possibility of a joint working group to consider the transition to adulthood elements of the SEND inspection.</p>

Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme				
Date	Item	Basis/ Theme /Details	Actions/ Outcomes	
Thursday 28 November 2024 at 10.00am cancelled	School attainment	Consideration of attainment in Staffordshire schools.	Meeting cancelled as data from DfE delayed. Items moved into the New Year	
	School absenteeism and exclusions	Consideration of the current absenteeism from Staffordshire schools, and the rise in the number of exclusions, considering the reasons for both of these and the work to address increases.		
Thursday 9 January 2025 at 10.00am	Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adults Safeguarding Partnership Board – Annual Report	This report is considered annually. NB The Chairman of the Health & Care O&S was invited to attend for this item but was unable to attend.		
Wednesday 12 February 2.00pm Joint meeting with the Health & Care O&S Committee	Social Care Case Management System	The Council are currently in the process of procuring a social care case management system. The Chairs of Health and Care and Safeguarding and Education O&S Committees have agreed to hold a joint meeting to scrutinise proposals		

Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

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		prior to the Cabinet decision on the proposed new system.	
Thursday 20 February 2025 at 10.00am	MASH review and adoption of a Staffordshire Children's Front Door		
	Progress with implementation of the Children's Services Improvement Plan	Detailing progress and development with the implementation of the Improvement Plan	
	Adult Vulnerability Hub (adult MASH) performance data	Considering the new Adult MASH, development of its performance data and reporting mechanism for this	
Friday 21 March 2025 at 10.00 am	School attainment	Consideration of attainment in Staffordshire schools.	
	School absenteeism and exclusions	Consideration of the current absenteeism from Staffordshire schools, and the rise in the number of exclusions, considering the reasons for both of these and the work to address increases.	

Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

Date	Item	Basis/ Theme /Details	Actions/ Outcomes
Thursday 10 April 2025 at 10.00am			

Further Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Work

Working Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> joint working group with the Health and Care O&S on preparation for the SEND Inspection, specifically around the SEND Transition to Adulthood
Briefings received outside of Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Help Pilot Project in Stafford & Lichfield Academies & the role of the Regional Schools Commissioner ILACS governance table
Items for future scrutiny	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consideration of the Resettlement Team’s funding in comparison to workload be included on the Committee’s work programme in 12 to 18 months from their July 2024 meeting
Standing items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crime & Disorder Children Improvement Board, now called the SSCIB – Staffordshire Strategic Children’s Improvement Board, dates for 2024 are: 29.05.24 , 26.06.24 , 31.07.24 , 25.09.24, 30.10.24 , 27.11.24 , 18.12.24 SACRE Annual Report

Membership



Bob Spencer (Chairman)
Gill Burnett-Faulkner (Vice Chairman - Overview)
Paul Snape (Vice Chairman – Scrutiny)
Janet Eagland
Ann Edgeller
Julia Jessel
Johnny McMahon
Gillian Pardesi
Kath Perry
Conor Wileman
Rev Prebendary Michael Metcalf (Co-optee)
Steve Bell (Co-optee)
Rachel Dingle (Co-optee)