

**North East Derbyshire District Council**

**Cabinet**

**8 June 2016**

**Safeguarding Arrangements Scrutiny Review**

**Report of Councillor T Reader - Chair of the Communities Scrutiny Committee**

This report is public

**Purpose of the Report**

- To ask Cabinet to approve the recommendations of the Communities Scrutiny Committee's Review of Safeguarding Arrangements.

**1 Report Details**

1.1 The Communities Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake a review of Safeguarding Arrangements as part of its work programme for 2015/16. It was felt timely to review this area following the events in Rotherham and subsequent reports on Child Sexual Exploitation. The Committee is also the Statutory Committee for the review of the work of the Community Safety Partnership.

1.2 The review aimed to:

- Consider whether governance arrangements are robust;
- Review what reporting mechanisms are available and are they effective;
- Review safeguarding arrangements in place in key services;
- Consider whether staff are appropriately trained and aware;
- Consider Scrutiny's role in challenging Council's actions;
- Consider the relationships between Cabinet, Scrutiny and Officers;
- Identify any obstacles to effective safeguarding and make recommendations for improvement;
- Raise members and officers knowledge of this area;
- Identify what improvements could be made to our safeguarding activities.

1.3 The Review Panel met on six occasions and considered a variety of information to gain an understanding of the subject area. The Review Panel interviewed a range of officers and the portfolio holder with responsibility for Community Safety and Health. The full report attached at **Appendix 1** sets out in more detail the evidence gathered and synopsis of the views expressed.

1.4 The recommendations are:

- That the Council reviews the level of awareness in the Authority with regard to:
  - Policies and procedures;

- Reporting mechanisms;
  - Distinction between Safeguarding Children and Child Protection.
- That the policies be brought up to date following officer changes and the introduction of Starting Point
  - That the Council have a policy for Safeguarding Children and a Child Protection Policy
  - That the Council considers how it can raise the profile of Safeguarding and Child Protection including;
    - Cabinet member to champion and keep issues high on agenda;
    - Use of posters in licensed premises including hotels, Bed and Breakfast, take aways taxi premises;
    - Member involvement in safeguarding meetings;
    - Regular articles in the Councils newspaper.
  - That all staff within the authority receives training in safeguarding appropriate to their role
  - That the licensing service take a more proactive role in the night time economy and make stronger links with Care Homes and Schools
  - That the Council consider how it can encourage more intelligence sharing between the Council and its partners.
  - That Cabinet considers the use of CCTV cameras in business premises such as leisure centres, take aways, taxis and hotspots.

## **2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation**

2.1 To ensure the Council's Safeguarding arrangements are robust.

## **3 Consultation and Equality Impact**

3.1 As detailed in the full report.

## **4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

4.1 Not applicable

## **5 Implications**

### **5.1 Finance and Risk Implications**

5.1.1 This will be determined if Cabinet decide to accept the Scrutiny Review recommendations as part of the Lead Officer response.

## 5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

5.2.1 This will be determined if Cabinet decide to accept the Scrutiny Review recommendations as part of the Lead Officer response.

## 5.3 Human Resources Implications

5.3.1 This will be determined if Cabinet decide to accept the Scrutiny Review recommendations as part of the Lead Officer response.

## 6 Recommendations

6.1 As detailed in paragraph 1.4 of this report.

## 7 Decision Information

<b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b> (A Key Decision is an executive decision which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	This is not a key decision at this stage prior to the decision of this matter by Cabinet
<b>District Wards Affected</b>	
<b>Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework</b>	

## 8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1	Safeguarding Arrangements
<b>Background Papers</b> (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Contact Number</b>
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**NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS**

**APRIL 2016**

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## **Chairs Foreword**

I am pleased to present this report on behalf of the Scrutiny Review Panel of the Communities Scrutiny Committee. It details the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the panel from its review of Safeguarding Arrangements with the main focus on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

Members of the panel recognised the fantastic work by our ALMO Rykneld Homes and the good responses provided by their staff. It was felt that Rykneld have good policies and procedures in place that the Council could learn from in regards to safeguarding children. We also hope to raise the profile of CSE in the Council and keep the subject high on the agenda.

The licensing department also has been highlighted as an area of focus and details are contained within the report.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Council Staff along with the Rykneld Homes team involved in the review for their advice, support and cooperation throughout the review process.

Can I also thank all of my scrutiny colleagues for taking part in the review and making the review enjoyable and enlightening.

In conclusion I would like to take time to thank our Scrutiny Officer Sue Veerman whose work in co-ordinating the evidence gathering made this review possible.

Kindest regards

Cllr Tracy Reader

## **Review Panel**

The review panel comprised the following members:

Councillor T Reader	(Labour) – Review Panel Chair
Councillor W Armitage	(Conservative)
Councillor B Barnes	(Labour)
Councillor L Blanshard	(Conservative)
Councillor M Foster	(Conservative)
Councillor J Hill	(Labour)
Councillor C Hunt	(Labour)
Councillor J Lilley	(Labour)
Councillor C Tite	(Labour)

## **1. Recommendations**

- 1.1 That the Council reviews the level of awareness in the Authority with regard to:
  - Policies and procedures;
  - Reporting mechanisms;
  - Distinction between Safeguarding Children and Child Protection.
- 1.2 That the policies be brought up to date following officer changes and the introduction of Starting Point
- 1.3 That the Council have a policy for Safeguarding Children and a Child Protection Policy
- 1.4 That the Council considers how it can raise the profile of Safeguarding and Child Protection including;
  - Cabinet member to champion and keep issues high on agenda;
  - Use of posters in licensed premises including hotels, Bed and Breakfast, take aways, taxi premises;
  - Member involvement in safeguarding meetings;
  - Regular articles in the Councils newspaper.
- 1.5 That all staff within the authority receives training in safeguarding appropriate to their role
- 1.6 That the licensing service take a more proactive role in the night time economy and make stronger links with Care Homes and Schools
- 1.7 That the Council consider how it can encourage more intelligence sharing between the Council and its partners.
- 1.8 That Cabinet considers the use of CCTV cameras in business premises such as leisure centres, take aways, taxis and hotspots.

## **2. Introduction**

- 2.1 At its meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2015 the Communities Scrutiny Committee agreed to undertake a review of Safeguarding Arrangements within the Authority.
- 2.2 The Committee thought it timely to review this area following a request received from the Standards Committee for Scrutiny to consider the report into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham. Scrutiny had undertaken a review into Safeguarding within the Authority in 2012. However, given the serious nature of the events in Rotherham the Committee felt they wished to look at some of the key areas raised in the Jay report and subsequent Louise Casey review to ensure that the arrangements within North East Derbyshire were still robust.

## **3. Scope of Review**

- 3.1 The review aimed to:-
- Consider whether governance arrangements are robust;
  - Review what reporting mechanisms are available and are they effective;
  - Review safeguarding arrangements in place in key services;
  - Consider whether staff are appropriately trained and aware;
  - Consider Scrutiny's role in challenging Council's actions;
  - Consider the relationships between Cabinet, Scrutiny and Officers;
  - Identify any obstacles to effective safeguarding and make recommendations for improvement;
  - To raise members and officers knowledge of this area;
  - Identify what improvements could be made to our safeguarding activities.

## **4. Method of Review**

- 4.1 The review panel met on six occasions to consider the scope of the review, key issues they wanted to discuss and key people they wished to interview.
- 4.2 Evidence was gathered in a variety of ways including written sources and interviews with a range of officers. The portfolio holder with responsibility for Community Safety and Health was also interviewed.



## **5. Evidence and Research**

5.1 A number of documents and evidence were provided to the review panel for consideration. Details are provided below:-

- Safeguarding Children – A Practical Guide for Overview and Scrutiny Councillors – Local Government Association;
- Child Protection Policy – North East Derbyshire District Council;
- Quick Reference Guide – Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults - North East Derbyshire District Council;
- The Troubled Families Programme – Communities and Local Government;
- Starting Point Poster – Derbyshire County Council;
- Articles on North East Derbyshire District Council Intranet: Safeguarding – Officer Guide, Safeguarding Awareness Sessions, Child Protection Policy;
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Presentation by Paul Hackett, Director of Transformation and Lead Officer for Safeguarding within North East Derbyshire District Council;
- Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham 1997-2013 – Alexis Jay OBE;
- Report of Inspection of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council – Louise Casey CB – February 2015;
- Section 11 Audit Tool – Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Board;
- Interviews with stakeholders.

## **6. Key Findings**

### **6.1 Observations/Comments**

6.1.1 One of the key issues raised by the Jay Report on the events at Rotherham Council was the failure of challenge within the organisation at all levels, including Senior Councillors and Scrutiny Committees. The Communities Scrutiny Committee was therefore keen to examine the culture within North East Derbyshire District Council. Officers at various levels within the Authority and the portfolio holder were asked for their views on the culture of the organisation and whether they would feel comfortable raising an issue or challenging the behaviour/actions or non action of colleagues or members in relation to safeguarding. All stakeholders said they would feel comfortable in challenging in this area. Officers commented on the organisation having a culture of awareness and openness. Issues were talked about within teams and people were not afraid to speak out or challenge those in authority. Many officers mentioned the support

they received from their managers in the area of Safeguarding. One officer referred to a recent challenge she had made and the support she had received from her manager when doing so.

- 6.1.2 The Committee were keen to test the awareness of stakeholders of safeguarding. Several of the officers interviewed mentioned the events at Rotherham and felt it had raised the profile within the Council with regard to Child Sexual Exploitation, which had been a positive thing. One stakeholder commented that it had made people understand that it was something you could not keep to yourself as in doing so you put yourself at risk and risked putting the Authority into disrepute. The majority of stakeholders stated safeguarding was everyone's responsibility. It was understood that the Council was not the key provider of safeguarding but the Committee was clear that everyone had a role to play. However, the Committee felt that there was scope for this awareness to be raised so have included this in their areas for improvement.
- 6.1.3 The Director of Transformation advised the Committee that the Strategic Alliance Management Team had agreed that basic safeguarding awareness training should be mandatory for all staff and members on a rolling three year programme. A training register of employees who have attended training is kept by Human Resources and Payroll. Many examples were provided by officers of attendance at training during evidence gathering by the Committee. These included the recent sessions on safeguarding awareness. These sessions had been well received. Between January to March 2015 166 employees across NEDDC and Bolsover District Council had received basic awareness training for adults and children. During the period November 2015 to February 2016 112 North East Derbyshire employees attended a training session and 19 Members attended a safeguarding briefing. One manager commented he was due to attend training soon but none of his team has yet been on a course, whilst another stakeholder confirmed that in their area all front line staff had been trained. The Committee welcomed this training and monitoring but wanted to ensure that people across the organisation received training in a timely manner and that where appropriate key areas received more in depth training.
- 6.1.4 The Committee heard that the Council had policies on Child Protection and Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults, which were available on the Council's website and intranet. Reference was made by several interviewees to the Councils Child Protection Policy, the Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults Policy and the Quick reference guide Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults. This guide had been circulated to all staff and members. The Committee was informed that there was an accountability framework set out in the policy and the role of the lead officer and link officers was documented. However, it was recognised that North East Derbyshire staff were not safeguarding professionals and the need to understand that issues were referred to Derbyshire County Council for assessment.
- 6.1.5 The Committee also wanted to consider whether employees were taking ownership of safeguarding within the Council and when working with our partners. Discussion was held on the involvement of Rykneld Homes, the Community Partnership Team, the Licensing Team and Leisure Services. Rykneld Homes demonstrated an effective approach and emphasised that they take these issues very seriously. In support of this they provided evidence of clear procedures in

place and the steps they would follow. Staff appeared confident in their knowledge and talked of an open and honest forum for staff to raise any concerns. They also aimed to keep ward members informed of any relevant issues. Details of measures taken to provide appropriate staff skills, links with schools, and tenant checks for risks were all raised in support of their statements. Safeguarding measures/expectations were written into the tendering process and contracts. An induction was provided covering safeguarding and what to do if you identify an incident. The Council has similar arrangements for external providers which were mentioned by a couple of the stakeholders interviewed. The Policy stated that all Council services which are contracted out will have to adhere to the Council's Child Protection Policy and procedures or have their own policy which meets the Council's requirements.

- 6.1.6 The Community Safety Partnership Manager outlined the work they were undertaking with the Police, Youth workers and the Multi Agency Teams to help safeguard children. One area of work was to provide diversionary activities for children and young people in a safe environment. Details were given on the Council's Leisure Service and the safeguarding measures they undertake. These included provision of training, design of changing rooms and advice to teachers regarding the supervision requirements when children visit the leisure centres. One senior officer from another department with the Council provided an example of a case he had been involved with and the outcome which was successful.
- 6.1.7 The Committee asked how we share information between ourselves within the Council and with other agencies. Reference was made to the attendance by the Lead officer or link officers at appropriate safeguarding meetings including the Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Board and the Team Around Family. Other stakeholders commented on various arrangements on sharing data and the relationships between licensing and the Police, trading standards, Fire Service and Safeguarding Children at Derbyshire County Council. Several officers said that information was shared where there was a reason but not randomly as there was a need to respect confidentiality and data protection. Rykneld Homes commented that they share a lot of information and have a good relationship with Social Services and the Police. They also mentioned sensitive information and stated that where appropriate they would share links with partners including Community Safety, Mental Health and the Multi Agency Teams and that a protocol was in place. The portfolio holder commented that if it is in the interest of a child we must do it. The Council's Policy says it will support any raising of concerns and provide protection if a malicious complaint is made.
- 6.1.8 With regard to Licensing the Director of Transformation advised the Committee of a visit Officers and Members had made to Oxford City Council in November 2015 to look at their policies and procedures. They had been subject to a serious case review with regard to Child Sexual Exploitation where taxis had been involved. This meant that they had done considerable work on licensing following this. The visit had assisted in the sharing of any best practice following their review. Changes had been made within licensing following the visit. A new test has been implemented for new taxi drivers with a specific section added on safeguarding. A 70% percent pass rate for the knowledge test overall was required. This is part of the Council's information pack that is forwarded to all applicants for driver's licences. There are questions included in the knowledge test on Safeguarding and Disability Awareness. He reported that Chesterfield and South Derbyshire

Licensing teams were piloting training of taxi drivers to raise their awareness of Child Sexual Exploitation with a view to rolling out the training across Derbyshire. A presentation on Child Sexual Exploitation had also been given to the Licensing Committee at North East Derbyshire. With regard to monitoring the Senior Lead Officer received regular performance reports and an Annual Report was taken to SAMT and Cabinet on child protection referrals and training delivered.

6.1.9 One further issue raised by a couple of interviewees was concern that the threshold criteria for cases were becoming too high and as a result social workers were not being allocated. The view was expressed that this was a matter of concern that was being discussed by a range of partners.

## 6.2 Areas for Improvement

6.2.1 The level of awareness of policies and procedures was varied amongst the stakeholders interviewed. The majority were aware that policies were in place but some officers were not clear on the distinction between Safeguarding and Child Protection. Additionally several officers commented that the policies were not completely up to date. Changes of staff had not been updated and also changes within Social Services needed to be included. The majority of interviewees made no reference to Starting Point which had been launched on 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2015. This service provided advice and support and safeguarding services for Derbyshire children and young people all in one place. Reference was made to the departure of the link officer who took the lead in co-ordinating this area and it was felt that this role had not been adequately reallocated currently. The Committee concluded that they would like to see the policies brought up to date and the introduction of two separate policies for Safeguarding and Child Protection which clearly demonstrated their respective roles.

6.2.2 The Committee also felt there was still room for improvement in the profile of safeguarding and child protection. The Committee was informed by the Director of Transformation that Derbyshire had agreed to use The Say Something If You See Something campaign and a number of posters were available for licence premises including hotels, B&Bs, taxis and takeaways. Issues raised were that involvement of members in safeguarding meetings should be considered and the Cabinet portfolio should champion this area and keep issues high on the agenda. Previously the Council had raised awareness by having publicity posters on the office corridor walls with details like the contact number. These were taken down for updating and have not been put back. Leaflets and pop-ups on computer screens with the starting point number were also suggested. One stakeholder commented that the intranet at North East was good in this area but not so at Bolsover. Given that many officers are in joint roles it was suggested that standardising the two intranets and having joint policies would be useful. The Council's newspaper could also be used proactively to inform the general public of this issue. The Communities Scrutiny Committee also recognised their role in this area and agreed to discuss this further as part of work programming for the new Committee year.

6.2.3 With regard to licensing the Committee felt that this was a key area and that all the Licensing team should be trained. The Committee was advised during the course of the review that they had now been trained. As a licensing authority the Committee thought we should be more proactive in areas such as the night time

economy. They also felt that more could be done to make linkages with care homes and schools with regard to information on children being picked up and dropped off. Alertness to situations where child sexual exploitation may be taking place was important.

- 6.2.4 The Council has guidance within its policy on when to share information and have entered the Child Information Sharing Protocol. Rykneld Homes were signed up to a data sharing information policy with NEDDC. Rykneld Homes commented that they recognised that between the partners there was extensive knowledge which should be used. Reference was made to the Esins system and how this could assist. However, a number of stakeholders commented on information sharing and said that not all agencies were as keen to share information. One stakeholder commented they do share information when needed but not randomly. Reference was also made to the Safeguarding Group and the need for them to ensure they share their experience. From the variance in the views expressed the Committee thought we could be smarter and more joined up in this area.
- 6.2.5 A discussion was held on the role of cameras in helping to spot incidents of concern and one stakeholder advised the Committee of something that had been captured on an incident camera. This was raised with the police and it turned out to be adult activity but demonstrated that cameras can be useful. Another stakeholder said he thought CCTV was a great advantage. The Committee expressed the view that they would like the use of CCTV in appropriate business premises such as Leisure Centres, take-aways, taxis and at known hotspots to be encouraged.

## **7 Conclusions**

- 7.1 The Committee heard views from a variety of stakeholders during this review. They acknowledged the work that had been undertaken to date to ensure the Council had effective safeguarding arrangements in place.
- 7.2 However, a number of areas for improvement were identified, mainly around raising awareness and keeping the subject of safeguarding high on the agenda, the role of licensing, the use of cameras to detect suspicious incidents, training, intelligence sharing and alertness to situations where child sexual exploitation may be taking place.

## **8 Stakeholders Engaged During the Review**

Steve Brunt	- Assistant Director - Street Scene
Peter Campbell	- Assistant Director - Community Safety
John Chambers	- Licensing Co-ordinator
Faye Green	- Community Safety Manager
Paul Hackett	- Executive Director - Transformation
Lee Hickin	- Assistant Director - Leisure
Matt Kane	- Governance Manager
Lillian Robinson	- Portfolio Holder - Community Safety and Health
Rebecca Slack	- Housing Strategy and Enabling Manager
Sarah Sternberg	- Assistant Director - Governance & Monitoring Officer
Heather Summers	- Head of Neighbourhoods – Rykneld Homes
Jayne Walker	- Community Sustainment Officer – Rykneld Homes