

CHESHIRE FIRE AUTHORITY

MEETING OF: PERFORMANCE AND OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
DATE: 4TH SEPTEMBER 2019
REPORT OF: NICK EVANS
AUTHOR: JESSICA BURTON AND LEE MCGARITY

SUBJECT: SAFEGUARDING REPORT 2018-19

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this paper is to outline the number of safeguarding referrals that have been made by Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service from January 2018 to the end of May 2019. Information about future developments is also included.

Recommended: That

[1] This report be noted; and

[2] The future developments suggested in paragraph 29 be noted.

Background

2. Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service accepts and closely manages its responsibilities as a public service, ensuring that all adults and children it interacts with are kept safe and free from harm.
3. The Safeguarding Children policy requires the Prevention Youth Engagement Manager to provide an annual report detailing the findings of routine safeguarding policy compliance audits.
4. This is the first year that this report will also include details of adult safeguarding referrals and identified trends and analysis.
5. From January 2018 to May 2019, there have been eighteen children's safeguarding referrals submitted and on all occasions, the referrals have complied with the policy.
6. From January 2018 to May 2019, there have been twenty-five adult's safeguarding referrals submitted and on all occasions the referrals have complied with the policy.
7. It is apparent from the audits undertaken and summarised in this paper, that the Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adult policies and procedures are effective and well embedded within the organisation.

Information

8. The Service is committed to ensuring that all adults, children and vulnerable young people, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity, have the right to protection from abuse. All observations, disclosures and allegations of abuse are taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately. All staff, both paid and unpaid, working for the Service have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Officer detailed within the policies.
9. The Safeguarding Children policy provides a framework to ensure that all personnel, both paid and volunteers, comply with the policy procedures which are designed to support the recommendations of the Children Act 2004 (S.10).
10. The Safeguarding Adults policy provides the framework within which members of the Service shall report matters of concern wherever an adult at risk is subject to harm, abuse or neglect. This includes self-neglect or harm and abuse or neglect arising from poor service provision or professional practice. Compliance with this policy ensures that the Service works in support of local authority statutory responsibilities as set out in the Care Act 2014.
11. Key milestones during this reporting period regarding the Safeguarding Children policy and preventative work completed to support CFRS staff and volunteers:
 - Staff attended the annual NSPCC Safeguarding Conference 'how safe are our children' which had a large focus on internet safety.
 - Staff attended NSPCC Designated Safeguarding Officer Training.
 - The Safeguarding Children E-Learning package has been rewritten and launched on learn pro reflecting recent changes to the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 document.
 - Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) refresher training has been delivered by Warrington Local Safeguarding Children Board to SMT, HR, Youth and Operational Managers within the service.
 - A Deputy Safeguarding Lead for children has been established to promote further resilience when dealing with safeguarding concerns. This is the Youth Development Manager for the service.
 - Training has been delivered to youth staff covering conflict resolution when working with young people.
 - A recent external Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and Local Safeguarding Adult Board (LSAB) audit has been conducted to ensure frontline staff are aware of internal referral processes.

12. Key milestones during this reporting period regarding the Safeguarding Adult policy and preventative work completed to support CFRS staff and volunteers:
- The Adult safeguarding policy reviewed and brought up to date to reflect recent legislation changes.
 - A recent external Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and Local Safeguarding Adult Board (LSAB) audit conducted to ensure frontline staff are aware of internal referral processes.
 - Refresher training and policy awareness for all Station Managers and Group Managers completed.
 - New external provider of Safeguarding training identified and planned training dates proposed for all Prevention staff and Service Delivery managers.
 - Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) refresher training delivered by Warrington Local Safeguarding Children Board to SMT, HR, Youth and Operational Managers within the service.

Children and Young Persons Reporting Data:

13. The Service works with young people in order to promote positive safety messages that assist in making them aware of the dangers of fire, arson and road traffic collisions. We offer children and young people the opportunities to engage with the Service and develop themselves in order to become more skilled, safer and responsible citizens who offer a positive contribution to their local community. This work is important but must only be done in accordance with the policy. Non-compliance with the policy by Service employees or volunteers is considered a serious disciplinary offence.
14. The routine annual audit shows that the number of referrals has decreased during 2018 (table 1 and 2).
15. Table 1: Number of referrals by year:

Year	2017	2018-2019
No.	20	18

Table 2: 2018 referrals by area:

2018-2019 Area Referral Split	
Cheshire East	2
Cheshire West and Chester	3
Halton and Warrington	13

Table 3: A breakdown of the referrals received:

Breakdown of referrals by source	
Fire Cadets	1
Firesafe Scheme	0
HSA visits	3
Fire Incidents	7
Prince's Trust Team	5
Targeted Youth Support Team	2

16. The referrals were concerned with a range of issues. However, it is apparent from the audit that staff both paid and unpaid are working with an increasing number of young people with, at times, complex mental health issues. Although, nationally an increase in mental health has been statistically proven it is also noted that the support services and statutory interventions remain limited which identifies gaps in support for vulnerable children and young people. Youth staff working within our youth engagement team have noticed a large increase in pastoral care that is required to promote positive emotional wellbeing for young people living within our communities.
17. There have been a number of other incidents which relate to the children and young people we work with, however, on the gathering of the information it became apparent that these issues did not amount to a safeguarding referral. The children and young people were referred to alternative support agencies that specialised in advice and guidance around their specific need.
18. Fundamentally, the purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of all children, young people and vulnerable young people whom the Service comes in contact with. Furthermore, it provides processes which provide protection for the Service and the individuals who work for it. It remains critical that all Service personnel, and volunteers continue to raise concerns regarding children to the relevant safeguarding leads so informed decisions can be made. This will ensure that we are fulfilling our requirements as an organisation to keep children and young people safe from harm and allow them to receive the specialist interventions that may be required.

Adult Reporting Data:

19. The Service continues to identify and subsequently work with vulnerable adults across Cheshire. Once identified the Prevention team will case manage the person, if appropriate to do so, and will work with partners to ensure the safety of each individual. This work is important but must only be done in accordance with the policy. Non-compliance with the policy by Service employees or volunteers is considered a serious disciplinary offence.

20. The routine annual audit shows that the number of referrals has increased during 2018-19 (table 4 and 5). This is due to the amount of data captured within this reporting period. For the year of 2018 alone, we saw a small decrease in the number of referrals made, 19 compared to 21 in 2017.

Table 4: Number of referrals by year:

Year	2017	2018/2019
No.	21	29

Table 5: A breakdown of the referrals made:

Main Issue Identified:	Mental Health	Hoarding	Self Neglect
Total number:	15	6	8

NB: Of the 15 mental health safeguarding referrals nine of these included an alcohol or substance misuse issue and three included a smoking issue. Three of the six hoarding referrals included an issue with Dementia or Alzheimer's. One of the self neglect referrals also included a smoking issue.

Table 6: A breakdown of the referrals made by unitary area:

Breakdown of referrals by unitary area	
Cheshire East	14
Cheshire West and Chester	1
Halton and Warrington	14

21. As indicated by table 5 above, the majority of the referrals made by the Service have mental health as the main contributing factor. The Service has recently completed a secondment to enable a member of staff to work within Cheshire and Wirral Partnership as a mental health engagement officer. Their role is to engage with the service users of Cheshire Wirral Partnership (CWP) to reduce the risk of fire. It is also to promote the fire risks within these households to the staff of CWP.
22. Each of the breakdowns for referral has an element of mental health as a consideration. This is a very complex area and one that the Prevention team has gained excellent partnership agency contacts for quick resolutions and referral pathways.
23. The Service has been working with each of the four unitary local authorities to help resolve the hoarding encountered within properties. A letter was sent to the head of environmental services in each local authority. This highlighted

the powers afforded to local authority housing officers and environmental officers in the most extreme cases encountered.

Future Developments

24. A number of future developments have been identified during the policy's operation, these include:
- A full review of the Children's Safeguarding Policy.
 - A full review of the Adult's Safeguarding Policy.
 - PAPYRUS mental health training to be provided to all staff in the Youth Engagement Department who regularly work with complex young people to support them with their day to day practice.
 - Safeguarding process flow chart to be developed and a copy provided to all staff with up to date contact details for the Designated Safeguarding Officer including the Deputy Safeguarding Officer.
 - Safeguarding training to be commissioned to train those staff who specialise in working with children and young people. Safeguarding refreshers to operational crews to be delivered. This is required every two years to ensure staff remain upskilled relating to safeguarding.
 - Refresher safeguarding training provided to all operational staff ensuring that the referral processes continue to be embedded.

Financial Implications

25. There are no known financial implications associated with the submission of this paper.

Legal Implications

26. All referrals complied with the policies and reporting procedures and therefore there are no legal implications associated with the information in this report.

Equality and Diversity Implications

27. The Children and Young People programmes ran by the service are fully inclusive. Young people from all backgrounds and abilities can access our programmes. All children and young people can engage in our interventions regardless of gender, marital status, gender realignment, disability, race, colour, ethnic group, national origins, nationality, religious belief or sexual orientation.
28. All interventions carried out with adults are fully inclusive and carried out regardless of gender, marital status, gender realignment, disability, race, colour, ethnic group, national origins, nationality, religious belief or sexual orientation.

Environmental Implications

29. As a Fire and Rescue Service, we have a pivotal role to play regarding the environment. All our children and young people programmes support the Service's environment policy and targets.

**CONTACT: NAOMI THOMAS, GOVERNANCE AND CORPORATE PLANNING
MANAGER**

TEL [01606] 868804

BACKGROUND PAPERS: NONE