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# **Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding Children Board**

## **INDIVIDUALS WHO POSE A RISK TO CHILDREN**

### **STAFFORDSHIRE MULTI-AGENCY RISK ASSESSMENT PANEL – OPERATIONAL PROTOCOL**

**Section E 02**

Version 1

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## E 02 Staffordshire Multi Agency Risk Assessment Panel- Operational Protocol



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#### 01 Process

When a Sex Offender Registration is received at the Force Records Office it is passed to the Force Intelligence Bureau which makes an initial assessment of risk (within 72 hours). Details relating to the known offending history will be considered as part of the assessment.

High risk/urgent cases are forwarded to the Public Protection Unit for consideration of immediate discussion at the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Panel (Detective Chief Inspector, Child Protection, to be consulted at the earliest opportunity).

Other cases, (medium and low risk), to be forwarded for later consideration as follows:

Force Intelligence Bureau send a pro-forma on each offender to the relevant Police Divisional Detective Inspector to be transmitted on to the Crime Management Unit. A decision will then be made re which agencies to receive the pro forma relating to the offender. This will always include the Probation Service (relevant Assistant Chief Probation Officer) who will forward the pro-forma to the relevant local team. The Children and Young People's Services Department Vulnerable Children and Corporate Parenting Division will also be notified by the Police.

The Police Pro-forma to include the following details:-

Offence(s); offender(s) name and aliases; address; date of birth; victim; date of birth; address

On receipt of the pro-forma, Police, Probation, Children and Young People's Services Department Vulnerable Children and Corporate Parenting Division and other relevant agencies to research the subject and agree a meeting date. Meeting to be convened by the Police and chaired by the Assistant Chief Probation Officer.

Police and Probation will be represented at every meeting; both Children and Young People's Services Department Vulnerable Children and Corporate Parenting Division and Schools Division , Health and other agencies will attend whenever appropriate.

Agency representation will be at a level/number deemed appropriate to each agency. Only relevant personnel will attend.

Notes of the meeting and proposed action plan will be recorded in writing. Probation to provide secretariat.

For consistency, agencies will be asked to provide standard written information to the meeting. This will subsequently be retained by the relevant agency.

Monitoring and evaluation of the conduct and outcome of the meeting to be achieved using the Police pro-forma, standardised Probation documentation and feed in from other agencies.

## **02 Policy Statement**

Staffordshire Probation Service and Staffordshire Police  
STAFFORDSHIRE MULTI-AGENCY RISK ASSESSMENT PANEL  
RE: SEX OFFENDERS ACT 1997

Part 1 of the Sex Offenders Act 1997 which imposes a requirement on offenders convicted or cautioned for specific sex offences to notify the Police of their name and address and any changes thereto, was implemented on 1 September 1997. This legislation and the regime to ensure its effectiveness has a number of implications for Staffordshire Probation Service and Staffordshire Police

It is recognised that this policy statement must fit with the work of other decision-making panels. For example, in those cases where Mental Health legislation applies, and a community care plan approach is required, then longer term work will be vested with this multi-agency group.

Equally, multi-agency intervention may be prompted by Local Safeguarding Children Board actions in relation to a known child at risk. This will constitute the primary decision-making panel. In the meantime, the adult(s) concerned will be monitored by the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Panel.

In cases not of this order, the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Panel will be the primary group.

**Staffordshire Probation Service**

Staffordshire Probation Service has a responsibility to identify those dangerous and high-risk offenders who come within its remit. The 1991 Criminal Justice Act spelt out that one of the purposes of placing an offender on supervision on a Probation Order or a Combination Order is "to protect the public from harm and preventing the commission of further offences". Also, changes in the early release from prison system mean that more potentially dangerous offenders now have become a statutory responsibility for the Probation Service. Moreover, National Standards state that one of the objectives of supervision in all cases is "to protect the public from harm from the offender". Most recently, the Sex Offenders Act 1997 makes it clear

that the Probation Service should undertake risk assessment and risk management in conjunction with the Police and other child protection agencies.

Staffordshire Probation Service is committed to ensuring the effective supervision of offenders and requires staff at all levels to be vigilant for indications of possible risk of serious harm to the public from offenders, and to implement the policy and practice guidelines relating to the assessment and management of risk.

#### Staffordshire Police

'Staffordshire Police will be a major partner in achieving a safe and tranquil environment'. This statement underpins one of the main aims of the Police Service – the protection of life and property. Staffordshire Police is committed to working with Staffordshire Probation Service to identify those dangerous and high-risk offenders which come within their remit and, in partnership with other agencies, to take appropriate joint action to prevent the commission of further offences from those offenders and thereby protect the public from the harm they may cause. This commitment has been formalised within the context of the Sex Offenders Act 1997, which requires the Police to work with other agencies in order to protect children and vulnerable adults.

#### Working Together

Effective work with high-risk offenders requires productive partnerships with appropriate agencies. In Staffordshire, forums or protocols exist for sharing information on particular offenders deemed to be potentially dangerous or of high risk. These include Child Protection Conferences under the Local Safeguarding Children Board (SCB) auspices, the mentally disordered offenders forum and the Racial Harassment forum. In addition to these forums/protocols, Staffordshire Police and Staffordshire Probation Service agree to share appropriate information and work together with other agencies as appropriate to manage the risks that offenders registered under the Sex Offenders Act 1997 pose for the community as effectively as possible. It must be recognised that whilst both services seek to diminish risk, some offenders are likely to re-offend.

To secure the effectiveness of this process, the protocol has the full approval of Probation, Police, Children and Young People's Services - both Vulnerable Children and Corporate Parenting Division and Education Divisions - and Health.

### **03 Management of Risk**

3.1. Staffordshire Probation Service and Staffordshire Police will liaise in the management of those offenders who pose a major risk to public safety. The criteria for referral will be those offenders registered under the Sex Offenders Act 1997.

3.2. The objectives of this liaison are as follows:-

- to share information on all offenders convicted of offences against children and required to register under the Sex Offenders Act 1997.

- to share information at critical stages of any agency's contact with the offender, e.g. prior to a person's release from a custodial sentence.
  - to assess the level of risk to individuals/the community.
  - to devise strategic plans as appropriate to minimise risk.
  - to agree implementation.
  - to monitor and review.
- 3.3. Relevant offenders will include all offenders required to register in accordance with the Sex Offenders Act 1997. An initial 'screening' risk assessment will be conducted on all sex offenders required to register under the Act by Staffordshire Police Force Intelligence Bureau. This will identify cases requiring urgent referral to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Panel and will also serve to prioritise and categorise the level of risk offenders pose.
- 3.4. Where a Child Protection Conference under the auspices of the LSCB is not in force and where an offender has been assessed as likely to be dangerous and a high risk, the Divisional Crime Manager will arrange referral of the case to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Panel, involving the Probation Service, the Police, Children and Young People's Department Vulnerable Children and Corporate Parenting Division and any other relevant agency. In order to facilitate the sharing of information, the number of people should be restricted to those who have a significant contribution to make in terms of information regarding the individual offender. Meetings will be chaired by the Assistant Chief Probation Officer. Dependant on the nature and urgency of the concerns expressed, the Probation Service and the Police will determine what information should be shared and with whom, prior to reference to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Panel

## **04 Disclosure**

- 4.1. Disclosure to a third party will not take place unless preceded by a multi-agency risk assessment. The nature of the information disclosed and the extent of its dissemination should be decided on a case by case basis.
- 4.2. Where disclosure is recommended to any third party the matter must first be referred to the Assistant Chief Constable (Operations). It should be noted that disclosure to members of the public will be the exception to the rule.
- 4.3. Disclosure to any third party must be carefully managed. The Police will take the lead in providing guidance on precisely how the third party should respond to the information.

## **05 Confidentiality**

For each agency, the following apply:-

- Normally, that no third party information should be disclosed without third party consent.

- That information which is required to satisfy a legal obligation, e.g. child protection must be disclosed (without consent).
- That agencies have the responsibility to protect confidential information in such a way that it cannot be accessed inappropriately. All agencies must therefore take into consideration Data Protection legislation whereby all personal information can be accessed (by right) by the subject of the information.
- Public risk will outweigh the obligations of confidentiality to an individual.
- Only persons who can contribute to the discussion regarding public risk and the management of dangerous behaviour in each individual case should be invited to a case discussion so that boundaries on confidentiality are preserved as tightly as possible.
- Members of the public will be strictly excluded from risk assessment meetings.
- Every member of the case discussion, and all documentation regarding discussion, will have a statement regarding confidentiality.

#### Monitoring and Evaluation

The operation of this protocol will be reviewed on an annual basis by the ACPO (Risk Management) and relevant Police Manager.

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