



Safeguarding Children, Young People & Adults at Risk

Policy & Procedures

This policy sets out what should be done if you witness a situation where a vulnerable person is at risk

Important:

Remember it is not up to you to decide if abuse has taken place, BUT it is up to you to report ANY concerns.

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1. INTRODUCTION

New Milton Town Council ('The Council') delivers a varied range of services and functions which can bring employees, Members, volunteers & Contractors into contact with children, young people and adults at risk.

The Council is under a legal (and a moral) duty to ensure that its functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk. The purpose of this safeguarding policy is to set out these legal duties, provide a framework and set out the procedures for discharging these safeguarding obligations. Including, promoting wellbeing, preventing harm and responding effectively to concerns.

The Council believes that all children, young people and adults have the right to be safe, happy and healthy and deserve protection from abuse. The Council is committed to safeguarding from harm all children, young people and adults using any of its services and involved in any of its activities, and to treat them with respect during their dealings with the Council irrespective of their age, gender, disability, race, religious belief, sexual orientation, transgender status or any other protected characteristic (Equality Act 2010).

The important message that this policy seeks to deliver is that the Council's role in safeguarding is not to establish or judge whether abuse is taking place, it is to report any concerns we have over the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk.

This policy covers four separate but closely related topics: Child Safeguarding, Adult Safeguarding, Domestic Abuse and Prevent and is written in accordance with the Children Act 2004, the Care Act 2014, the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and the associated statutory guidance.

2. WHO IS THIS POLICY FOR?

This policy applies to all Council employees, volunteers ('Council staff') Members, and Contractors including sub-Contractors and organisations that are commissioned, funded by or working on behalf or in partnership with the Council ('Contractors') who come into contact with children, young people and/or adults at risk, whether in someone's home, on Council premises, or in the community.

This policy is not a standalone document and should be read in conjunction with the Council's other policies which contain important safeguarding information.

3. REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years and will be updated whenever there is a change in applicable legislation and statutory guidance. Furthermore, this policy will be updated to reflect any particular points of learning which arise out of the Council's duties. This will ensure the document is fit for purpose and up to date.

4. SCRUTINY

At the end of each calendar year, the Town Clerk will provide an annual report to the Council's Executives detailing its ongoing safeguarding duties and reporting the number of safeguarding referrals that have been made. This will keep Council's senior councillors up to date on the Council's safeguarding responsibilities.

5. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

5.1 What is child and young person safeguarding?

The Children Act 2004 places a statutory duty on all agencies, including Town Councils, to ensure that their functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Prevailing statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015, defines this as:

Protecting children from maltreatment.

Preventing impairment of children's health or development.

Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

This includes notifying the appropriate agency within the relevant Council Authority (HCC) who will take action to identify, prevent and support children that are **Missing, Exploited and Trafficked ('MET')** and those that are at particular risk of **Child Sexual Exploitation ('CSE')**.

5.2 Who is a child or young person?

The Children Act 1989 states the legal definition of a child is "a person under the age of 18". There is no legal definition of a young person. For the purposes of this policy, a young person is someone who might not perceive themselves as a child, but who is still in the age range of the legal definition of a "child".

5.3 Types of child abuse

A person may abuse or neglect a child or young person by inflicting harm or by failing to prevent harm. There are four main forms of child abuse, and a child or young person may be subjected to more than one form of abuse:

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve actions such as hitting, shaking and burning as well as giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison. Physical abuse as well as being a deliberate act can be caused by an omission or failure to act to protect.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is a persistent lack of love and affection. A child may be constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted. This can make the child nervous and withdrawn. Other forms of emotional abuse include excessive overprotection and unrealistic pressure to succeed. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of children although it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing the child or young person to take part in sexual activities whether or not the child is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. Sexual abuse can involve penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling. It may also involve non-contact activities such as showing pornographic material or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and or psychological needs. These needs include, for example, adequate food and warm clothing and also medical care. Children may be left alone unsupervised.

Abuse may take place in a family, in an institutional or community setting, by those known to the victim or, more rarely, by a stranger. The abuser in any case may be an adult or adults, or a child or children. People who behave abusively come from all backgrounds and walks of life. They may be professional people; doctors, nurses, social workers, advocates, councillors, staff members or could be volunteers or others deemed to be in community or family positions of trust. They may also be relatives, friends, neighbours or people who use the same services as the person experiencing abuse.

5.4 What is Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)?

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse that is based on an ongoing exploitative relationship between perpetrator and child. A child or young person under the age of 18 is sexually exploited when they have received 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, gifts, money) in exchange for sex. Sexually exploitative relationships are characterised by an imbalance of power and the use of controlling behaviours to keep the child or young person in a dependent position. Such relationships are often preceded by "grooming" where the perpetrator establishes an exclusive bond with the victim.

Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework forms (SERAF) are available from Hampshire's Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP). Guidance will be provided to the appropriate staff members on the use of this form.

5.5 Missing, Exploited, Trafficked (MET)

A key priority in Hampshire is for agencies to work together to identify and prevent children and young people from becoming Missing, Exploited or Trafficked. Council staff should be aware of this issue. A strategy has been prepared which can be accessed at: www.hampshirescp.org.uk

5.6 Indications that a child is being abused

The following is a list of physical and behavioral indications that a child or young person is being abused.

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruises, cuts and burns particularly if situated on parts of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- Injuries for which an explanation seems inconsistent.
- Fear of parents being approached about such injuries.
- Reluctance to get changed e.g. wearing long sleeves in hot weather.
- Flinching when touched or approached.
- A failure to thrive or grow.
- Sudden speech disorders.
- Difficulties in making friends.
- The child is prevented from socialising.
- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour.
- Fear of being left with a specific person.
- Sexually explicit behaviour.
- Sexual knowledge beyond their age and developmental level.
- Distrust of adults particularly those whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food.
- The child being dirty/smelly and unkempt.

- Loss of weight.
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions.

This list is by no means definitive, and it is important to remember that there may be other reasons for changes in behaviour.

5.7 Disabled children

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 defines a disabled person as someone who has “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

It is important that Council officers recognise when they are having contact with a disabled child. Children with disabilities have the same rights to be safe from abuse and neglect and to achieve their potential as non-disabled children. However, disabled children can be more susceptible to abuse and the early indicators suggestive of abuse or neglect can be more complicated than with non-disabled children. Children with disabilities may also be more vulnerable to abuse due to their lack of understanding of what abuse is, their trust in adults and through being less able to express their views or worries.

5.8 Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCP)

The Council must cooperate with Hampshire County Council, and particularly the Hampshire Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (SCP) in relation to child safeguarding. Website: www.hampshirescp.org.uk

6 SAFEGUARDING ADULTS

6.1 What is safeguarding of adults?

The Care Act 2014 creates a legal framework for how Hampshire County Council and its partners (which include the Council) should work together to protect adults with care and support needs to keep them safe from abuse or neglect.

The aims of adult safeguarding are to:

- stop abuse or neglect wherever possible.
- prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs.
- support them in making choices and having control about how they want to live.
- focus on improving life for the adults concerned.
- raise public awareness so that communities play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect.
- provide accessible information so people understand the types of abuse, how to stay safe and how to raise concern about someone’s safety or well-being; and
- address what has caused the abuse or neglect.

6.2 The six principles

There are six principles that underpin all adult safeguarding work. These are as follows:

1. **Empowerment:** People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.
2. **Prevention:** It is better to act before harm occurs.
3. **Proportionality:** Using the least intrusive response that is appropriate to the risk presented.
4. **Protection:** Support and representation for those in greatest need.

5. **Partnership:** Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
6. **Accountability:** Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

6.3 Which adults need safeguarding?

An adult is a person who is aged 18 years or over.

Statutory safeguarding duties apply to any adult who:

- has needs for care and support; 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.

6.4 What is adult abuse or neglect?

There are different types of abuse and neglect and different circumstances in which these occur. Incidents may be one-off or multiple, may affect one person or many, and may involve an act of abuse or neglect or a failure to act.

Physical Abuse

Hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

Sexual Abuse

Rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Psychological Abuse

Emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

Financial or Material Abuse

Theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Neglect and acts of omission

Ignoring medical or physical care needs, failing to provide access to appropriate health, social care, welfare benefits or educational services, withholding the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Discriminatory Abuse

Racism, sexism or acts based on a person's disability, age or sexual orientation. It also includes other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment such as disability hate crime.

Domestic Abuse

Psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse and so called 'honour' based violence.

Organisational abuse

Neglect and poor care practice within a care setting such as a hospital or care home or in relation to care provided in someone's own home ranging from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be neglect or poor practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within a care setting.

Modern slavery

Encompassing slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Self-Neglect

Covers a wide range of behaviour including neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and behaviour such as hoarding.

6.5 Recognising Abuse and Neglect

Abuse can happen anywhere: in someone's own home, in a public place, in hospital or in a care home, when an adult lives alone or with others. Anyone can carry out abuse or neglect, including:

- spouses / partners and other family members.
- friends and acquaintances.
- neighbours and local residents.
- people who deliberately exploit adults they perceive as vulnerable to abuse.
- paid staff or professionals; and
- volunteers and strangers.

The adult may say or do things that provide a clue e.g. making a complaint, calling for an urgent response, voicing concern, or issues may emerge during the course of dealings with the adult.

6.6 Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Partnership (SAP)

The Council must cooperate with Hampshire County Council, and particularly the Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Partnership in relation to child safeguarding. Website: <https://www.hampshirescp.org.uk/>

7 DOMESTIC ABUSE

7.1 What is Domestic Abuse?

The cross-government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- Psychological abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Financial abuse
- Emotional abuse

Controlling behaviour is defined as ‘a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.’

Coercive behaviour is defined as ‘an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish or frighten their victim.’ Threatening behaviour includes threats of violence, threats of suicide or threats to take the children from the abused person.

Domestic abuse is more than just an argument. It is rarely an isolated incident; it is usually an ongoing pattern which escalates over time, becoming more destructive and even life-threatening. Different types of abuse may occur at different times or in combination: some are criminal acts, and all are emotionally damaging for the victim and their family, including children who may witness this.

7.2 Who Experiences Domestic Abuse?

The scale of domestic abuse is hard to quantify. It happens largely behind closed doors. Victims are often too frightened or embarrassed to report what is happening or do not trust that they will be believed by others or safeguarded after their disclosure.

Domestic abuse affects people of all ages, social background, gender, religion, sexual preference or ethnicity, in a range of relationships: married, separated, divorced, living together, dating, heterosexual, gay or lesbian, and includes child on parent abuse, sibling abuse and elder abuse.

Domestic abuse affects children who witness the abuse and may require safeguarding action to be taken.

7.3 Responding to Domestic Abuse

It is not the Council’s role to decide whether abuse has occurred, but if Council staff, Contractors or Members notice anything of concern this should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or the Deputy) who is also the Council’s Single Point of Contact for domestic abuse concerns. Contractors should report the concern to their contract administrator in the first instance.

In some circumstances the DASH (Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour Based Violence) Risk Assessment tool should be used to identify the level of risk and actions needed. Guidance will be provided to the appropriate staff members on the use of this form.

<https://www.dashriskchecklist.com/>

7.4 Support for employees

If any member of Council staff requires support for personal domestic abuse issues, they can contact the Council’s independent and confidential counselling service Right Management:

<https://democracy.newforest.gov.uk/documents/>

7.5 Support services available locally

Stop Domestic Abuse provides support to women, men and children affected by domestic abuse in the New

Forest Area.

Telephone number: 03300533630

Website: [STOP DOMESTIC ABUSE](#)

Email: info@stopdomesticabuse.uk

Or: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/domestic-abuse-partnership>

8 PREVENT

8.1 What is Prevent?

In accordance with the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have “**due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism**”.

The revised Prevent strategy, published by the Government in 2015, is part of the national counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. The aim of the Prevent strategy is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

8.2 What is terrorism and extremism?

The *Prevent* strategy applies to all forms of terrorism and non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views that terrorists then exploit. Preventing people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism requires challenge to extremist ideas where they are used to legitimise terrorism and are shared by terrorist groups.

The Terrorism Act 2000 defines **terrorism** as an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people, serious damage to property or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

The Prevent strategy defines **extremism** as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. It also includes calls for the death of members of the armed forces.

8.3 What is the Council's role?

The Council is required to:

- Train staff to understand Prevent and raise awareness so that a relevant change in behavior observed by Council staff is not ignored.
- Ensure that Council owned venues and publicly available resources are not used by extremists to disseminate views.
- Ensure organisations the Council works with are not engaged in extremism.
- Report any concerns to the Hampshire Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub [Hampshire MASH](#)
- Co-operate with the Channel Panel which is a multi-agency support model used to help address issues when they have been identified.

8.4 Reporting concerns

Council staff, Contractors or Members may be in a position where they notice a change of behaviour in someone, or notice alarming behaviour, which may indicate that a person is being drawn into an extremist way of thinking.

Concerns that someone is promoting terrorism or otherwise may be involved in violent or non-violent extremism, or about someone who may be vulnerable to being drawn into such activity, must be reported directly to the Council's Designated Safeguarding Officer (or the Deputy) as quickly as possible who will implement the county referral procedure.

Contractors should report the concern to their contract administrator in the first instance.

For general advice and information from Hampshire Police email:

prevent.engagement@hampshire.pnn.police.uk

In an emergency, please dial 999 or call the Anti-Terrorism Hotline on 0800 789 321.

Prevent training is available at the link below

<https://www.elearning.prevent.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

9 SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE

9.1 Reporting procedure

All Council staff, Contractors and Members must ensure that they are aware of the Council's reporting procedures and are familiar with those members of Council staff who are responsible for safeguarding issues (as outlined in Section 10 of this policy).

For Council staff, all concerns relating to safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk should be reported using the appropriate Safeguarding Concern Report. Available from the council office shared drive.

These reports are submitted directly to Hampshire County Council's Adult or Children's Services for review and copied to key Council staff, including the Designated Safeguarding Officer (and the Deputy).

It is important that detailed and specific information is included within the Safeguarding Concern Report.

For concerns relating to domestic abuse or the Council's Prevent duty a detailed written summary should be emailed to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or the Deputy).

9.2 Process

OBSERVE – RECORD – DISCUSS & INFORM – REPORT

OBSERVE

- Council staff, Contractors or Members may observe a potential safeguarding concern in the course of their duties (relating to a child, young person, adult at risk, domestic abuse or potential terrorist activity).
- A safeguarding concern may also be disclosed to a member of Council staff, Contractors or Members. If a safeguarding concern is disclosed, the recipient of the information should:
 - Stay calm.
 - Listen carefully.
 - Reassure the person that they are being taken seriously and have done the right thing to tell someone.
 - Be clear that others will be informed.
 - Listen carefully.

- Avoid jumping to conclusions.
- Only ask questions for clarification, and ensure open questions are used in order to avoid leading questions.
- Let the person talk at their own pace. If they have specific communication needs, provide support and information in a way that is most appropriate to them.

If the incident or disclosure is considered severe, such as an immediate threat to life or serious harm, the member of Council staff should call the police on 999.

- The member of Council staff, contractor or Members should make an accurate written record of what they have seen or what has been said to them.
- This record should be made as soon as possible, with report completed within 24 hours where possible. Maximum 48 hours.
- The record must include as much information as possible, including:
 - The date and time of the incident or disclosure.
 - The name, address and date of birth of the person considered to be at risk.
 - The nature of the allegation or incident and, if possible, the name, address and date of birth of any person alleged to have caused the harm.
 - Factual observations e.g. any visible injuries, the person's behavior, physical, emotional state etc.
 - A record of exactly what was said by all parties.
 - Whether there was consent for the information to be shared.
 - All action that was taken.
 - The record should be signed and dated and stored securely and with restricted access in accordance with the Council's Data Protection and Records Management Policies.

DISCUSS & INFORM

- The member of Council staff should immediately inform their line manager of the safeguarding concern. The line manager may need to assist the member of Council staff with producing the written record.
- If further information is needed, contact should be made with the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or the Deputy).
- In cases of allegations against Council staff, Contractors, or Members section 11 of this policy contains further guidance.
- Members should contact the Council's Designated Safeguarding Officer (or the Deputy) to outline the concern.
- Contractors should contact their contract administrator to outline the Concern. Further advice can be sought from the Council's Designated Safeguarding Officer (or the Deputy) as required.

REPORT

- The member of Council staff, with the assistance of their line manager as appropriate, should complete the appropriate Safeguarding Concern Report.
- In the case of concerns raised Members, the Safeguarding Officer (or the Deputy) should complete the appropriate Safeguarding Concern Report.

- In the case of concerns raised by Contractors, the contract administrator should complete the appropriate Safeguarding Concern Report.
- Clear records must be kept where a decision not to report is taken, setting out the reason for this decision.
- Safeguarding Referrals do not need consent from the child, young person or adult at risk (or their family), but it is best practice to seek this wherever possible. You will need to inform them that you have a duty to report the information.

ACTION

- The Designated Safeguarding Officer (and the Deputy) will monitor all Safeguarding Concern Reports and identify if any action is required by Council staff as part of service delivery.
- The Designated Safeguarding Officer will monitor such action and ensure it is carried out.

Should any employee feel they require support following involvement with safeguarding concerns, they can 'speak in confidence' to their line manager or get further information about how to access counselling.

10 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

10.1 Responsibility

Responsibility for this policy lies at all levels of the Council. All Council staff, Contractors and Members should read and understand this policy and the reporting procedures.

10.2 Safeguarding Leads

Designated Safeguarding Officer

Louise Beardmore- Youth Services Manager

Designated Deputy Safeguarding Officer

Graham Flexman- Town Clerk

All Safeguarding Leads are contactable on 01425 619120

10.3 Designated Safeguarding Officer

The Designated Safeguarding Officer and the Deputy have the following responsibilities:

- To provide advice and information relating to safeguarding concerns.
- To ensure the Council's safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date and compliant with legislation and statutory guidance.
- To ensure appropriate training is available for employees, Members, and volunteers.
- To work and cooperate with the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Board and the Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board as appropriate and engage with the Safeguarding Officers across the District.

10.4 Executive Committee

The Council's Executive Committee is responsible at a strategic level for ensuring that the Council complies with its safeguarding duties. They will receive reports annually on the discharge of those duties from the Town Clerk. Their support is fundamental to the success of the Council in fulfilling its safeguarding responsibilities.

10.5 Town Clerk

The Town Clerk acting as the Proper Officer of the Council has a responsibility to ensure that practices and procedures take account of the Council's commitment to safeguarding.

The Town Clerk is responsible for the following:

- Making sure all members of staff within their service are aware of this safeguarding policy and reporting procedures.
- Identifying those services and posts which are likely to have an involvement with children or adults at risk.
- Ensuring that members of staff whose duties involve contact with children and adults at risk are screened at the appropriate level and are appropriately qualified/ training to be working with these groups.
- Ensuring that all members of staff in their service receive training appropriate to their role in accordance with the criteria of this policy.
- Ensuring that all Contractors engaged with their service are subject to contractual arrangements which include appropriate provisions relating to safeguarding as outlined in Appendix 1.
- Making sure the appropriate Safeguarding Concern Reports submitted by their service are accurate and sufficiently detailed.
- Where members of staff in their service interact with children, young people and adults at risk ensuring robust risk assessments are undertaken.

10.6 Line Managers

Line Managers should supervise and support members of staff to discharge their employment duties in a way which has regard to the Council's safeguarding responsibilities.

If an allegation or incident is reported to a line manager, they must confirm that the staff member has made a record of all observations and discussions to date.

If appropriate, the line manager should support the staff member with making a written record and in completing a timely Safeguarding Concern Report.

The line manager may need to complete this on behalf of the members of staff. The line manager can seek further clarification or advice from the Council's Designated Safeguarding Officer or their Deputy.

10.7 Elected Members

Members are responsible for ensuring that they are familiar with this safeguarding policy and reporting procedures, and they act in compliance with it in the performance of their role.

Members have a high level of interaction with members of the public and are just as likely as other Council staff to witness or have disclosed to them incidents of abuse.

Members should report any safeguarding concerns directly to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or the Deputy).

Members are also responsible for ensuring they attend any relevant training that is offered.

10.8 Town Clerk

The Town Clerk plays a key role in safeguarding. Including the following responsibilities:

- Working with Assistant Town Clerk in maintaining a record of those posts that are likely to work with children, young people or adults at risk and identifying the level of involvement and the appropriate level of screening required.
- Ensuring that recruitment procedures are robust and that information pertinent to working with these groups is obtained during the recruitment procedure.
- Ensuring that all safeguarding and Disclosing Barring Service checks are carried out at the level required in respect of every role identified involving contact with children, young people and adults at risk.
- Incorporating appropriate statements into the job descriptions for all safeguarding leads and new members of staff outline their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Making sure all members of staff have an identified line manager.
- Ensuring induction procedures are adhered to for all staff who are likely to have contact with children, young people and adults at risk.
- Maintaining a record of staff training.
- Developing and maintaining the Council's Personal Development Interview process so that all Council staff are evaluated on an annual basis.
- Supporting staff members in dealing with allegations of abuse or lack of care by Council staff.
- To refer information about individuals who may pose a risk to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

10.9 All Council staff

All Council staff should:

- Act appropriately when dealing with children, young people or adults at risk.
- Keep a clear record of discussions, events and observations relating to safeguarding matters.
- Discuss concerns with line managers.
- Report any concerns about abuse or neglect using the appropriate Safeguarding Concern Report.
- Ensure the information on the Safeguarding Concern Report is comprehensive, accurate and up to date.
- React to serious concerns by calling emergency services.

10.10 Contractors

All Contractors used by the Council should ensure that they comply with the terms of this policy in particular, sections 9.2, 12.4 and Appendix 1.

11 ALLEGATIONS AGAINST COUNCIL STAFF

11.1 Concerning behavior

It is essential to act quickly and effectively if an allegation is made, or if there is suspicion or concern about

a Council employee, Member or contractor's relationship with a child, young person or adult at risk, particularly if they have:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child, young person or adult at risk.
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, young person or adult at risk.
- Behaved towards a child, young person or adult at risk in a way that indicates she/he is unsuitable to work with them.

In line with the Prevent duty, Council staff must also remain vigilant to the possibility that another staff member may be at risk of being drawn into promoting terrorism or otherwise may be involved in violent or non-violent extremism.

11.2 Whistle Blowing

It is acknowledged that it may be very difficult for a member of staff to report that a colleague has potentially behaved inappropriately towards a child, young person or adult at risk. The Council will fully support and protect any member of staff or Member who, in good faith, reports concerns about a colleague's practice or the possibility that a child or vulnerable adult may be being abused. This is in keeping with the Council's Whistle Blowing policy.

The Whistle Blowing policy is specifically intended to promote honesty and openness and ensure that any employee who raises an issue or concern regarding suspected malpractice or serious wrongdoing in the workplace will not be subject to any detriment.

11.3 Process

The reporting process as outlined in section 9 above of this policy should be followed. It is important that in relation to an allegation against a member of staff the following steps are also taken at the stage:

DISCUSS & INFORM

- At the very initial stage of informing a manager, if the concern relates to a member of staff's line manager, they should report it to the Town Clerk immediately, or if that is their line manager, directly to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or the Deputy) without discussion with the line manager.
- Where an allegation relates to **any** employee this should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or the Deputy). In the very early stages advice must be sought from the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or the Deputy) and/or Police before informing the person who is subject to an allegation, this is to consider whether there is a potential to tamper with any evidence.
- Where an allegation is made against a Council Member this should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or the Deputy) and the Council's Monitoring Officer at NFDC.
- In the case of an allegation being made about the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or the Deputy) this should be reported to the Chairman of the Council.
- Where allegations are about the poor practice of staff members rather than abuse, this should always be communicated to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or the Deputy) for guidance and appropriate action.

11.4 Types of Investigation

Where there are allegations of abuse or concerns about poor practice regarding a member of Council staff or an elected Member there may be three strands of investigation:

1. Child/adult at risk safeguarding investigation (externally led by Hampshire County Council Child or Adult Services).

2. Criminal Investigation (externally led by Hampshire Constabulary).
3. A disciplinary or misconduct investigation (internally led by the Council).

In the first two strands, the Council will not be involved in any form of investigation unless requested to do so by the Children/Adult Services or the Police Authority.

The Human Resources Service will be responsible for any disciplinary or misconduct investigations and normal employment procedures will apply. The Safeguarding Officer at NMTC will be responsible for investigating allegations against a Council Member in accordance with the normal procedures for complaints against a Council Member for failure to comply with the members' Code of Conduct.

If someone is removed from working with a child, young person, or adult at risk because it is considered that they pose a risk of harm the Disclosure Barring Service will be notified.

11.5 Referral to Hampshire County Council

In relation to allegations against members of staff and Council Members, it will be the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or the Deputy), in consultation with the Designated Lead for Employee Allegations or the Monitoring Officer, to make any required additional referral to Hampshire County Council.

<https://www.hampshirescp.org.uk/report-a-concern/>

In relation to adults, contact should be made with Hampshire County Council directly via Adult Services.

11.6 Minimising Risk to Staff

It is essential that all Council staff, Contractors and Council Members are conscious of how they should conduct themselves to minimise the risk of finding themselves the subject of an allegation under the child, young person or adult at risk protection processes.

Staff should act in accordance with this policy and all other relevant Council policies in the performance of their duties.

12 RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 Procedures

All Council staff members will be appointed in accordance with the Council's Recruitment and Selection procedures.

12.2 Disclosure Barring Service Checks

Each post should undergo a risk assessment to determine the nature and extent of access to children, young people or adults at risk.

The appropriate level of Disclosure Barring Service Check will then be carried out in accordance with current legislation.

Each job description will clearly state the level of Disclosure Barring Service Check required and this will be included in the job advertisement.

12.3 Selection requirements

In addition to the appropriate Disclosure Barring Service checks, all new members of staff who will work with children, young people or adults at risk will:

- Undergo an interview which will include appropriate questions relevant to safeguarding.
- Have their identity confirmed from official documentation.
- Be required to provide two satisfactory references.
- Have their work history relating to children, young people or adults at risk (as appropriate) explored.
- Be subject to a probationary period of employment.

12.4 Contractors and Third Parties

Contractors that are involved in areas where workers come are likely to come into regular contact with children, young people or adults at risk must be subject to contractual arrangements which include appropriate provisions relating to safeguarding as outlined in Appendix 1. Where such services are tendered out this aspect must be included in the tender specification and form part of the assessment criteria. These organisations must ensure that the correct DBS checks have been carried out for all relevant workers and provide staff with appropriate safeguarding training.

12.5 Funding and Grants

Where organisations and groups that work with children or adults at risk apply to the Council for grant or funding assistance, the award of the grant or funding will be subject to an appropriate and proportionate scrutiny of the organisation or groups' safeguarding and Prevent practices.

12.6 Hiring of Council facilities to others

Any hirer who provides activities for children, young people or vulnerable adults is required to adhere to current safeguarding legislation and guidance. Steps must be taken on hiring out any Council facilities, to ensure that the hirer will not be using those facilities for the promotion of extremist views. This will be a condition of hire.

12.7 Photography and use of photographic equipment

If any member of staff is organising an event or meeting and would like to take photos or record a video of activities which might involve children, young people or adults at risk, advice should be sought regarding the need for a Privacy Impact Assessment.

13 TRAINING

13.1 The Council's commitment

The Council recognises that it has a commitment to ensure that all staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities when working with children, young people or adults at risk. The training process will help staff to:

- Be able to recognise the different signs of abuse, and what appropriate course of action should be taken in these circumstances.

- Have an understanding of the potential risks to themselves, and ensure good practice is adhered to at all times.
- Recognise signs of improper behaviour from other staff and take appropriate action.
- Have an awareness of Prevent and the referral pathway to report concerns.

The Council will ensure all staff receive an appropriate level of training. This will be based on a tiered approach, depending on the degree to which the post holder is engaged with children, young people and adults at risk. The training will be delivered as a rolling programme.

13.2 Levels of training

Appropriate training will be made available.

14 INFORMATION SHARING

14.1 Confidentiality

The Council must consider confidentiality in the performance of its duties. However, the right of a child, young person or adult at risk that is to be protected from harm is paramount and confidentiality may be overridden in circumstances where abuse is suspected.

However, where an allegation is made, and whilst it is being investigated, every effort should be made to ensure confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should only be shared on a “need to know” basis.

14.2 Sharing information

The Council must comply with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and act in accordance with its Data Protection Policy.

However, it is acknowledged that sharing information is essential to safeguard those at risk of abuse, neglect and exploitation. The appropriate use of Safeguarding Concern Reports will not be considered a breach of the data protection rights of the individual concerned.

The Council is party to a number of information sharing protocols and this overrides the need for confidentiality in respect of the relevant statutory authorities as long as all activity is properly recorded.

Any queries regarding the sharing of safeguarding information with an external agency should be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or the Deputy) or appropriate Legal Services.

14.3 Safeguarding Boards

Serious Case Reviews

Information requests

The Council is under a Duty to provide information requested to either the Safeguarding Childrens Board or

the Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board provided certain criteria is met. Any request for information from the Boards should be directed to the Designated Safeguarding Officer (or the Deputy).

15 OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION

In an emergency, such as an immediate threat to life or serious harm, the member of Council staff should call the police on 999.

15.1 Concerns about a child

To report your concerns or to talk to a duty social worker regarding child protection call HantsDirect (Children's Services):

0300 555 1384 (office hours)

0300 555 1373 (out of hours)

Professionals Line 01329 225379

www.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services

15.2 Concerns about an adult at risk

To report your concerns or to talk to a duty social worker regarding vulnerable adults call HantsDirect (Adult Services):

0300 555 1386 (office hours)

0300 555 1373 (out of hours)

Professionals Line 01329 225378

<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/adults-contacts.htm>

15.3 Other useful contacts

- Police (non-emergency): 0845 045 45 45
- NSPCC Child Protection Helpline: 0800 800 5000 www.nspcc.org.uk
- ChildLine: 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk
- Elder Abuse Response helpline: 0808 8088141 www.elderabuse.org.uk
- Respond (for people with learning difficulties): 0808 8080700 www.respond.org.uk
- Women's Aid (the key national charity in England for women and children experiencing physical, sexual or emotional abuse in their homes): <https://www.womensaid.org.uk/>

