



CABINET

19TH JANUARY 2017

AGENDA ITEM (7)

SAFEGUARDING POLICY - CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

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| Accountable Member | Councillor Mrs. SL Jepson Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities |
| Accountable Officer | Simon Wright Community Safeguarding Officer 01993 861569 simon.wright@westoxon.gov.uk |

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| Purpose of Report | To seek approval for updated policy and procedure documents in respect of safeguarding for children, young people and vulnerable adults. |
| Recommendation(s) | (a) That the updated Safeguarding Policy and procedure documents be approved; (b) that the Head of Leisure and Communities, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, be authorised to make any subsequent amendments required as a result of legislative or operational changes. |
| Reason(s) for Recommendation(s) | To update the policy and procedure documents of the Council in respect of safeguarding vulnerable groups. |

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| Ward(s) Affected | None specifically |
| Key Decision | No |
| Recommendation to Council | No |

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| Financial Implications | None |
| Legal and Human Rights Implications | The documents reflect the legislative requirements placed on the Council in respect of safeguarding namely the Children's Act 2004 and the Care Act 2014. |
| Environmental and Sustainability Implications | None |
| Human Resource Implications | None |

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| Key Risks | Failure to discharge its duty will have a significant reputational impact on the authority as well as the individuals involved. The policy and procedure documents, training and partnership working will help mitigate this risk. |
| Equalities Analysis | Equality analysis carried out and taken into account in report/policy. |

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| Related Decisions | None |
| Background Documents | None |
| Appendices | <p>Appendix 'A' - Safeguarding Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults - Policy</p> <p>Appendix 'B' - Safeguarding Children, Young People & Vulnerable Adults - Procedure and Guidance</p> |

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| Performance Management Follow Up | The performance of the Council in respect of safeguarding is measured through the Section 11 audit that is submitted on an annual basis to the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Boards. |
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| Options for Joint Working | None |
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| <p>Background Information</p> <p>1. The Council has a duty, under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, to ensure that, in discharging functions, regard is given to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people under the age of 18. In addition, under the Care Act 2014, the Council has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable adults.</p> <p>2. The Safeguarding Policy has been reviewed to ensure that it reflects the current legislation, Countywide procedures and working practices at the Council. Attached at Appendix 'A' is a revised policy.</p> <p>3. The updated document is designed to outline the legislative requirements in respect of safeguarding and the duties that are placed on the Council in this regard. It also specifies the duties and responsibilities of various Officers of the Council in respect of safeguarding and issues to be considered when recruiting employees and volunteers.</p> <p>4. Training is an important aspect of safeguarding and the policy details the various levels of training available, including specific training that must be undertaken by some staff. It is intended that all staff should have access to basic information on safeguarding, with specialist courses being provided as necessary. As the duties also extend to elected Members, it is also intended to hold awareness sessions with Councillors. The Council, through the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Boards, has access to a variety of training courses.</p> <p>5. The document makes links to existing policies that are in place to deal with suspected abuse or bullying by employees, and these incidents would be dealt with by the Head of Human Resources, in conjunction with the safeguarding leads.</p> <p>6. The main amendments that have been made to the policy are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to amalgamate the policies relating to children and young people and those for vulnerable adults; | |
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- to highlight the requirement on contractors to have suitable safeguarding policies in place; and
- to clarify the requirements when employing staff who may have direct contact with vulnerable groups.

7. The policy is supplemented by a procedure and guidance document, attached at **Appendix 'B'**, which outlines how to spot potential abuse or concerns about a service user.

8. The document gives guidance on good practice when dealing with a potential disclosure, the referral process, sharing of information and the main contacts within the Council in respect of safeguarding. It should be stressed that Officers or Councillors are not expected to make a judgement on any concerns, but to advise one of the safeguarding leads who will contact the relevant Social Care Team at Gloucestershire County Council.

9. An important part of safeguarding work is participation in County-wide partnerships where good practice can be shared and also ensures that all partners are working to similar standards. The Council adheres to agreed information sharing protocols.

10. In addition to the revised policy and procedures, it is further requested that the Head of Leisure and Communities, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, be authorised to make any subsequent amendments to the policy. This is being requested so that any legislative amendments can be incorporated quickly and also so that any changes in the way that County-wide partnerships operate can be reflected in the documents.

11. Once approved, it is intended to promote awareness of safeguarding issues with staff via the Intranet and through Team Meetings and Briefings. It is also hoped to develop a 'champions network' of staff from key areas who would have some additional training and be advocates of safeguarding in their service areas.

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