

**CABINET
7 FEBRUARY 2019**

SAFEGUARDING POLICY, GUIDANCE AND PROCEDURES

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr Colin Slade, Cabinet Member for Community Well Being

Responsible Officer: Mrs Jill May, Director of Corporate Affairs & Business Transformation and Corporate Safeguarding Lead Officer

Reason for Report: To provide Members with the updated Safeguarding Policy and a review of best practice.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Cabinet approves the revised Safeguarding Policy.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: The report helps the Council meet its legal responsibilities in respect to safeguarding and child protection and contributes to the Corporate Plan.

Financial Implications: To provide training for relevant staff.

Legal Implications: If we do not have appropriate policies and procedures in place we may not meet the requirements of relevant Safeguarding legislation i.e. the Children's Act 2004, Care Act 2014, etc.

Risk Assessment: Failure to have adequate policies and procedures in place may result in harm or injury to a child or vulnerable adults.

Equality Impact Assessment: Equality Impact Assessment: No equality issues identified for this report

1.0 Introduction

1.0 The purpose of this report is to update you on the Council's Safeguarding Policy.

1.1 The revised policy is in response to the need to provide greater clarity of the roles and responsibilities of officers involved in safeguarding throughout the Council.

2.0 Safeguarding Policy

2.1 A recent review of the Council's existing Safeguarding Policy identified the opportunity to enhance the Council's capability to attend to any identified concerns. The revised policy set out in Appendix 1, provides greater clarity of the roles and responsibilities of officers throughout the Council.

2.2 Provide a framework for developing partnerships with appropriate external bodies e.g. The Devon Children and Families Partnership Devon (previously known as Safeguarding Children Board) and Devon Safeguarding Adults Board, to ensure that the policy continues to reflect legal and best practice requirements in respect of the responsibility of care of children, young people and adults with care and support needs.

2.3 There is still a commitment from the other districts to work in partnership to promote best practice and share knowledge so that all the districts are working towards the same standard.

3.0 The Devon Children and Families Partnership

3.1 The Devon Children and Families Partnership (DCFP) was established on the 1st July 2017. It merges the functions of the Devon Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) and the Children, Young People and Families Alliance (Alliance). Devon Local Safeguarding Children's Board statutory duties are discharged through this new partnership.

3.2 The partnership is made up of an executive board and a quality assurance group as well as sub/working groups who will report to the executive and will be scrutinised by the quality assurance group.

3.2 The DCFP has a new website:
<https://www.devonchildrenandfamiliespartnership.org.uk/> and has a new email address: childrenfamiliespartnership@devon.gcsx.gov.uk

4.0 Data Protection Act 2018

4.1 Data Protection Act 2018 has a new category of "child abuse data" which was defined as "*personal data consisting of information as to whether the data subject is or has been the subject of, or may be at risk of, child abuse*". Child abuse is defined as physical injury (other than accidental injury) to, and physical and emotional neglect, ill-treatment and sexual abuse of, an individual aged under 18.

4.2 It provides for a lawful ground for the processing of special category personal data – without consent if the circumstances justify it – where it is in the substantial public interest, and necessary for the purpose of:

(i) Protecting an individual from neglect or physical, mental or emotional harm; or

(ii) Protecting the physical, mental or emotional well-being of an individual where that individual is a child or an adult at risk (as defined in the Bill, but consistent with the expected definitions of, respectively, under 18 or having needs for care and support, experiencing or at risk of neglect or any type of harm, and unable to protect themselves).

4.3 It should be stressed that the amendment still expects the possibility of obtaining consent from an individual to be considered (and in these circumstances it would have to be explicit). If in the circumstances the consent cannot be given, or the data controller cannot reasonably be expected to obtain it – notably because obtaining it would prejudice the safeguarding purpose (i.e. the protection of the individual) – then the ground applies.

5.0 Training

5.1 With the introduction of the Learning Management System (LMS) all employees have been asked to complete the e-learning modules on safeguarding with a specified timeframe.

5.2 The Safeguarding Officer monitors the Learning Management System to make sure all staff has received training on safeguarding and child protection.

5.4 Group managers attended a safeguarding and county lines briefing session during December 2017.

5.5 The Safeguarding Officer gave an update on modern slavery, child exploitation and safeguarding presentation to Elected Members before full Council in October 2017.

5.6 As part of Learning at Work week, the Corporate Safeguarding Officer organised a training session for staff on child exploitation and online protection with an external partner.

5.7 Also during Learning at Work week, the Corporate Safeguarding Officer with the Specialist Lead for Community Safety and Emergency Planning gave two Q & A sessions on subjects covered by County Lines; those who attended found this type of session and approach beneficial.

5.8 The Corporate Safeguarding Officer together with the Training & Development Officer will be delivering safeguarding awareness training on 15 November 2018 to the Street Scene Service as it has been recognised that the operatives do not have access to the Learning Management System.

5.9 The Corporate Safeguarding Officer will be delivering safeguarding training to the 'Tenants Together' Group on 8 November 2018 on behalf of our Housing Service.

6.0 Internal Audit Report

6.1 Devon Audit Partnership carried out an initial audit of child protection & safeguarding and reviewed the procedures undertaken by the authority in meeting its safeguarding responsibilities.

6.2 It is the overall opinion of the auditor that the Safeguarding arrangements process is adequately controlled.

7.0 Development Plan

- 7.1 The Devon District Wide Safeguarding Group has agreed to share best practice and work together to create safeguarding standards across Devon. One of the priorities is to improve officer knowledge around suicide and prevention of it.
- 7.2 Suicide Prevention Toolkit – North Devon and Torridge have implemented a suicide intervention toolkit to raise awareness of the subject and to enable staff to signpost to partner agencies for support.
- 7.3 We will be creating an online version of the toolkit to raise awareness of the subject and to support officers should they encounter someone disclosing to them their intention.
- 7.4 We will be providing awareness training over the next 12 months to services across the council.
- 7.5 We acknowledge we will not be able to prevent someone committing suicide however we may just make a difference to one person.

8.0 Monitoring

- 8.1 Over the year the number of referrals and allegations made by staff has been recorded. These are monitored to make sure services are passing on the relevant information to other partner agencies and to ensure/evidence that the procedures put in place deliver. There were 6 incidents between April and September 2018 and 2 incidents on which advice was sought from the police. Information is gathered on a six monthly basis.

Contact for more Information: Jill May Director of Corporate Affairs & Business Transformation.

Circulation of the Report: Leadership Team and Cabinet Member

List of Background Papers:

Appendix 1 - Revised MDDC Safeguarding Policy