

Safeguarding children & vulnerable adults

1.0 Background

1.1 Every Town and Parish Council has a statutory duty to ensure the safety and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. The purpose of this Safeguarding Policy is to provide a framework for safeguarding and ensure that:

- All children, young people and adults are safe and protected from harm;
- Other elements of provision and policies are in place to enable children, young people and adults to feel safe and adopt safe practices; and
- Everyone (e.g. Councillors, council staff, volunteers) are aware of the expected behaviours and the council's legal responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults.

1.2 This document sets out a summary of why the council believes that safeguarding awareness is important, and explains how the council will deliver training and support for them. Links to more detailed documents are listed below.

1.3 Key points

- Keeping children, young people and vulnerable adults safe is everybody's business.
- You must never keep concerns about safety, abuse or neglect to yourself.
- It is not your responsibility to investigate concerns but you should tell an appropriate professional about it. If you see something, say something.
- If you have significant concerns for someone's immediate safety you should call 999, and
- By law, individuals up to the age of 18 are considered to be children.

1.4 Our statement

This council takes seriously its responsibility under the current legislation to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults, and to work together with other agencies to ensure that there are adequate arrangements within our organisation to identify and support those who are suffering harm. Where someone is suffering significant harm, or is likely to do so, action will be taken to protect that person.

2.0 Who is responsible

2.1 Cornwall Council operates telephone helplines and professional support where you can report concerns or incidents of abuse. They are confidential to all parties. Details in the Appendix attached.

2.2 Councillors and staff have a responsibility to pass on any concerns reported to them or any they observe. Their first step may be to share their concerns with another councillor or someone else who can agree what is the appropriate next step. We call this other person a Designated Person (see 4.1 below). As community leaders, we should all be aware of other peoples' needs and vulnerabilities.

3.0 What is the responsibility?

3.1 We have a statutory responsibilities to risk assess situations where the council and its members may interact with residents; to undergo awareness training; to report issues.

3.2 Ethical responsibility. The job of the council is to represent the interests of the community, and understanding the needs of your residents is an important part of your role as a councillor.

4.0 What we will do

4.1 The Parish Council will create two posts for the role of 'Designated Person' to whom concerns and incidents should be reported. One of the DPs will be the parish clerk and the other will be a portfolio holder, chosen and confirmed each year at the annual parish council meeting. The DPs will undergo additional training and are expected to lead and champion the council's safeguarding agenda. The Clerk's Office will maintain a log of reports made to the DPs.

4.2 Parish councillors are not expected to be safeguarding experts but as part of their position in the community, are expected to have a greater awareness of the signs of abuse and know how to make an appropriate intervention.

4.3 Safeguarding awareness will be included as part of councillor induction, and appropriate training will be added to the council's Training Policy.

4.4 The council will formerly assess situations where safeguarding may be an appropriate concern, for example, at events it organises or meetings. Records of assessments and their outcomes will be logged.

4.5 The council will raise awareness of its safeguarding responsibilities to other stakeholders in the parish, and will act as a point of contact for residents who may need signposting to professional help.

5.0 Legal

5.1 Information sharing: any information collected by the Designated Persons is secured under the council's General Privacy Notice and the 2018 Data Protection Act.

6.0 Further reading

6.1 References from Cornwall Council

Safeguarding Teams

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/what-is-safeguarding/>

Safeguarding Adults

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/adult-care-services/safeguarding-adults/>

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