

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

INTRODUCTION

Corfe Mullen Town Council (The Council) delivers a wide variety of services and functions which can bring employees, elected members and volunteers into contact with a wide variety of people. This could be either as the main part of their role or indirectly when they are carrying out their work such as during home visits, working outdoors in a public space or seeing customers in a reception area.

Everyone who is vulnerable has the right to be safe, happy and healthy and deserve protection from abuse. A person's ability to keep themselves safe is partly determined by their individual circumstances and it is recognised that this may change at different stages in a person's life. The Council is committed to safeguarding all vulnerable people using any of its services and being involved in any of its activities and to treat them with respect.

The Council recognises that we all have a responsibility to protect vulnerable people and have developed this safeguarding policy to ensure that effective practices are in place for all of the Council's activities.

The Council's policy operates under the umbrella policies and best practice developed by the Dorset Safeguarding Children Board, the Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board and the Community Safety Council (CSP), in respect of vulnerable people.

DEFINITIONS

- Safeguarding is the process of protecting vulnerable people, whether from crime, other forms of abuse or from being drawn into terrorist related activity.
- Vulnerable people are both children and adults whose circumstances make them particularly vulnerable to abuse, neglect or harm
- Children are legally defined as any person under the age of 18.

AIM OF THE POLICY

The aims of the policy are to:

- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties within scope of the policy.
- Support the promotion of a safe working environment and a culture of care in which the rights of all vulnerable people are protected and respected.
- Promote best practice in how employees and associated workers interact with vulnerable people while providing Council services.
- Develop clear guidance and procedures for those employees working with vulnerable people and ensure through training and support that they are aware of these and able to implement them.
- Provide a framework for developing partnerships with appropriate external bodies e.g. Dorset Safeguarding Children Board, Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board and the Community Safety Council, to ensure that the policy continues to reflect legal and best practice requirements in respect of the responsibility of care of vulnerable people.

SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy is in respect of the Council's responsibility towards:

- Employees and elected members of the Council who will come into contact with vulnerable people on a regular basis during the course of their work.
- Volunteers and other workers involved in the provision of Council services but not employed by the Council, including workers in organisations with whom the Council has contracts for the delivery of services.
- All the functions and services of the Council.

This policy should also be used in conjunction with:

- Disciplinary Procedure
- Grievance Procedure
- Dorset Safeguarding Children Board <https://www.dorsetlscb.co.uk/site/home/>
- Dorset Safeguarding Adult Board <https://www.dorsetforyou.com/dorsetsafeguardingadultsboard>
- Prevent Guidance <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually or whenever there is a change in the related legislation or when an incident occurs. This will help us ensure that these documents are up to date and fit for purpose.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Safeguarding Officer

The Town Clerk is the Council's designated Safeguarding Officer.

Responsible for ensuring that;

- A deputy or deputies are appointed to act in their absence or on their behalf
- Advice and information is provided relating to safeguarding concerns
- Information from employees, members, volunteers, children, vulnerable adults or parents and carers who have safeguarding concerns is received and recorded.
- Information is assessed promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate.
- Consultation takes place initially with Children or Adult Services to test out any doubts or uncertainty about any concerns as soon as possible.
- A formal referral to a statutory agency or the police without delay and ensure the proper transfer of information relating to dealings with children and vulnerable adults, where necessary.
- The Council's safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date and compliant with legislation and guidance.
- Appropriate training is available for employees, members and volunteers.
- Advice is available for staff regarding posts which may require checks for previous criminal records through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).
- Liaison takes place with the Dorset Children Safeguarding Board, the Dorset Adults Safeguarding Board and the CSP to keep up to date on current best practices.

Elected Members

Responsible for ensuring that;

- The Council has a policy, which adequately provides protection for vulnerable people in receipt of its services and for the regular review of this policy in the light of changes to legislation.
- Adequate resources and opportunities are available for all staff to undergo appropriate safeguarding training.
- Appropriate procedures are in place to deliver safeguarding.
- Staff are supported in identifying those posts where the nature of the work requires a check for previous criminal records from the DBS.

Council Managers

Responsible for ensuring that:

- Employees, volunteers, contractors and other workers in their area are aware of the Council's Safeguarding Policy and attend safeguarding training courses when required to do so.
- A DBS check is obtained for those posts within their area that they have identified as requiring such checks.
- The recruitment process for employees to those posts identified as requiring a DBS check allows sufficient time to obtain such checks before commencement in the role.

All Employees, Volunteers, Contractors and Other Workers

All members, employees, volunteers, contractors and other workers, particularly those working with vulnerable people, are responsible for:

- Attending training courses when required to do so to ensure that they are familiar with and understand the policies and procedures relating to their work with or in the vicinity of children, young persons and vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring that they feel confident in working within this environment and working with their managers to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills to carry out their tasks in this context.
- Treating all those vulnerable people with whom they come into contact while carrying out their work equally and with respect.
- Reporting to their line manager any concerns they may have about abuse or a lack of care of vulnerable people.