

Tewkesbury Borough Council Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Revised Draft - February 2019

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1.0 Policy Statement

- 1.1 Tewkesbury Borough Council is committed to working in partnership with others to safeguard children and vulnerable adults from all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- 1.2 This policy aims to ensure that an overarching approach to safeguarding is embedded within all Council services and that all staff, Elected Members, those delivering contracts on behalf of the Council and volunteers understand their role and responsibilities in supporting residents to live a life free from abuse, exploitation and intimidation.
- 1.3 Tewkesbury Borough Council will create an environment where everyone is encouraged to think of safeguarding as being their responsibility, understanding the need for them to play a full and active part in the delivery of the Council's response.
- 1.4 The Council will create an organisational culture where the reporting of abuse and exploitation is encouraged, and everyone feels supported to do so.
- 1.5 The Council believes that all individuals, regardless of age, disability, gender and gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation, should have the greatest possible control over their lives. They should be able to make informed decisions or be supported to make these decisions if unable to do so themselves, without fear of harm or abuse from others.
- 1.6 The Council will ensure that it complies with all relevant safeguarding legislation.

2.0 Lead Safeguarding Officer

- 2.1 The senior officer responsible for safeguarding is the Head of Community Services. On a day-to-day basis the detail of who to contact regarding safeguarding concerns is set out within this policy.

3.0 Information sharing

- 3.1 To keep children and vulnerable people safe from harm, professionals will share relevant information across geographical and professional boundaries as required.
- 3.2 When there is reason to believe that a child, young person or adult with care and support needs, may be suffering or may be at risk of suffering harm, we will always refer these concerns to the relevant authorities. Information about children, young people, families and adults at risk will be shared appropriately, and always in accordance with the Council's Information Management and Data Sharing Policy and the Gloucestershire Information Sharing Partnership Agreement, to enable organisations to respond quickly.

- 3.3 Information will also be shared in accordance with the Council's duty to supply information to the local Safeguarding Adults and Safeguarding Children Executive and Delivery Boards upon request, under the Care Act 2014 and the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, accordingly.

4.0 Safeguarding Children & Young People

- 4.1 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people encompasses the protection and welfare of children under the age of 18 (including unborn babies). It also incorporates the additional aims of preventing the impairment of children's health and development; ensuring they grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, providing optimum life chances.

5.0 Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

- 5.1 The purpose of adult safeguarding is to prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs. The statutory framework introduced under the Care Act applies to any person aged 18 or above who:

- has needs for care and support (regardless of the level of need and whether or not these needs are being met),
- is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, and
- as a result of those needs, is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

- 5.2 Adults with care and support needs should be supported in maintaining control over their lives and to make informed choices without coercion. Ill treatment and wilful neglect of a person who lacks capacity is a criminal offence under the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

6.0 Forms of safeguarding

6.1 Child sexual exploitation (CSE)

- 6.1.1 CSE is an illegal activity by people who have some form of power and control over children and use it to sexually abuse them. It involves forcing or enticing a child (under the age of 18) to take part in sexual activities whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. This includes exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where children (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of performing, and/or others performing on them, sexual activities. CSE can be a form of organised or complex abuse, involving a number of abusers and/or a number of children.

6.2 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

- 5.2.1 ACEs are specified traumatic events occurring before the age of 18. They can include direct experiences, such as sexual, physical or verbal abuse and emotional and physical neglect, and indirect experiences such as parental separation, substance misuse, mental illness, incarceration or domestic abuse.
- 6.2.2 Nearly half of people in England experience at least one ACE, with around 9% experiencing four or more ACEs. The more ACEs a person experiences, the higher the risk of poorer health and social outcomes later in life. People with six or more ACEs die on average 20 years younger than people with no ACEs.

6.3 Domestic abuse

- 6.3.1 Domestic Abuse is defined as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or 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.

6.4 Honour based abuse, including female genital mutilation and forced marriage

- 6.4.1 Honour Based Abuse (HBA) is violence and abuse in the name of honour, covering a variety of behaviours (including crimes), mainly but not exclusively against females, where the person is being punished by their family and/or community for a perceived transgression against the 'honour' of the family or community, or is required to undergo certain activities or procedures in 'honour' of the family.
- 6.4.2 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a collective term for illegal procedures which include the removal of part/all external female genitalia for cultural or other nontherapeutic reasons. The practice is not required by any religion. It is painful, medically unnecessary and has serious health consequences at the time it is carried out and in later life. The procedure is typically performed on girls of any age, but is also performed on new born girls and on young women before marriage/ pregnancy. A number of girls die as a direct result of the procedure, from blood loss or infection
- 6.4.3 A Forced Marriage (FM) "is a marriage conducted without the valid consent of both parties, where duress is a factor" ('A Choice by Right' HM Government 2000).

6.5 Radicalisation

- 6.5.1 As a national counter-terrorist strategy Prevent aims to stop people becoming involved in terrorist activity or supporting terrorism by working with individuals and communities to address issues before they become a criminal matter, and to stop people moving from extremism into terrorist-related activity.

6.5.2 Prevent is a strand of the Government's antiterrorism strategy led by the Home Office and focuses on working with individuals and communities who may be vulnerable to the threat of violent extremism and terrorism. Supporting vulnerable individuals and reducing the threat from violent extremism in local communities is priority for statutory partners and their partners.

6.6 Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking

6.6.1 Modern Slavery (and Human Trafficking) involves the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of people who, with the threat or use of force, coercion, abduction, abuse of power or deception are exploited for the purposes of prostitution, forced labour, slavery or other similar practices. Victims are trafficked all over the world, including in and around the UK, and even throughout the district.

6.7 E-Safety

6.7.1 Children and adults with care and support needs can be easy targets for online grooming with a view to exploiting them, sometimes even without their knowledge. The Council takes very seriously the potential for online abuse and exploitation and works with partner agencies to raise awareness of e-safety within its workforce and the community by training staff to understand and recognise the signs and symptoms and report concerns to the appropriate agencies.

6.8 Stalking

6.8.1 The protection of Freedoms Act 2012 defines "stalking" as an offence. There is however no legal definition, but examples include: following or spying on a person or forcing contact with the victim through any means including social media. Any of these examples carried out repeatedly or persistently can cause significant alarm or distress.

7.0 Roles & Responsibilities

7.1 Staff and Elected Members must ensure they familiarise and comply with the Council's Safeguarding Policy and associated procedural documents. They must participate in relevant training to recognise the varying forms of abuse and report any concerns.

7.2 It is the responsibility of staff and Elected Members to consider safeguarding implications in their decision-making processes, including the procurement of services.

7.3 All external organisations, including voluntary groups and contractors providing services to and on behalf of the Council are required to comply with the Council's Safeguarding Policy. Where appropriate they should have their own Safeguarding Policy and procedures in place, copies of which should be provided to the Council for reference.

7.4 Whilst safeguarding is the responsibility of all staff, Elected Members, those delivering contracts on behalf of the Council and volunteers, there are a number of safeguarding roles within the Council with specific responsibilities briefly set out below:

Designated Safeguarding Leads (Contact Points):	
Post Title	Telephone Number
Head of Community Services	TBC
Housing Services Manager	TBC
Environmental Health Manager	TBC
Community Safety & ASB Officer	TBC

8.0 Corporate Management Team

8.1 The council's Corporate Management Team will ensure that:

1. The council meets its legal obligations.
2. Where applicable the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults is considered in strategies, plans and services.
3. The best safeguarding practices are embedded and maintained across all services to ensure continuous improvement and compliance with national and local policies.
4. All safeguarding matters relating to safeguarding are expedited in a timely manner and treated seriously.
5. Staff are supported on all aspects of safeguarding and procedures are adhered to.
6. Safeguarding referrals *are regularly reviewed*
7. This policy and procedure, associated documentation and training plans are reviewed to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

8.2 The council's Heads of Service and Operational Managers will ensure that:

1. The Safeguarding Policy is adhered to across the organisation;
2. Staff complete and implement the appropriate safeguarding training;
3. Staff handling safeguarding issues are fully supported;
4. They take responsibility for the quality of safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults in their service area;

5. Staff and volunteers working with children, young people and vulnerable adults have employment checks appropriate to their role and legislative requirements.

9.0 Human Resources

9.1 The council's Human Resource Manager will ensure that:

1. The relevant policies are in place, e.g. Whistle-blowing, Safer Recruitment and Disciplinary Procedures;
2. Managers are supported in the use of the policies directly and indirectly associated with safeguarding;
3. Support with the pre-employment checks (including through the Disclosure and Barring Service) is given to managers and staff, as appropriate;
4. All staff are trained in safeguarding policies and procedures during induction;
5. All staff training associated with safeguarding is up-dated on a regular basis.

10.0 Staff

10.1 Council staff will ensure that they:

1. Treat all safeguarding matters seriously;
2. Report all concerns as per the reporting procedure;
3. Are aware of the council's safeguarding policies and procedures;
4. Complete the safeguarding training relevant to their role.

11.0 Volunteers

11.1 Any volunteers operating either in their own right as individuals or as part of a larger organisation on behalf of the council working with children, young people and / or vulnerable adults will be required to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and will be made aware of the council's Safeguarding Policy as part of their overall induction.

12.0 Outcomes

12.1 The anticipated outcomes of this policy are:

- demonstration of commitment at the most senior level, to safeguarding in this Council and Borough;
- as far as is within the Council's control, influence and knowledge, to ensure that children and adults at risk are protected against abuse, neglect and/or exploitation;

- to embed the Council's approach and commitment to the safeguarding agenda;
- to have a clear line of accountability within the Council for safeguarding;
- to be fully compliant with all relevant legislation;
- to ensure that all staff and Elected Members are fully trained and aware of their responsibilities and the correct procedures to follow with regards to safeguarding.

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