

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY WELLBEING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
12 SEPTEMBER 2017

EXECUTIVE - 10 OCTOBER 2017

Title:

SAFEGUARDING POLICY FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK

[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Kevin Deanus]

[Wards Affected: All]

Summary and purpose:

The Council currently has two Safeguarding Policies adopted in late 2014; for children and vulnerable adults. In line with safeguarding guidelines set out by Surrey County Council, the statutory authority for safeguarding, it is recommended that the two policies are merged. The new policy, attached as Annexe 1, will adhere to Surrey County Council's adopted and recommended format and therefore will ensure a consistent Safeguarding Policy is adopted by district and boroughs throughout the county.

This report summarises the Council's safeguarding responsibilities and proposes the new combined Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults at Risk. In addition to merging the two previous policies the new policy updates current procedures to reflect best practice, clarifies the reporting process, and highlights the differing forms of abuse and indicators as well as summarising other related policies and strategies.

The policy was considered by the Community Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12 September 2017 and the Committee's comments are included towards the end of the report.

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

This report relates to the Council's community wellbeing priority.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications.

Legal Implications:

It is a statutory responsibility for local authorities to have effective safeguarding arrangements identified in the Children's Act 1989 and 2004 and more recently in the Care Act 2014.

Introduction

1. A life that is free from harm, abuse, and neglect is a basic right of every person. The objective of safeguarding is to prevent and reduce the risk of harm to adults

and children from abuse or other types of exploitation and impairment of development, while supporting individuals to maintain control over their lives and enabling them to make informed decisions without coercion. Although safeguarding is recognised as a key responsibility of local authorities, safeguarding is still everybody's business, and as neighbours, citizens, and community members we need to be alert to neglect and abuse, and be committed to reporting our concerns.

The Policy

2. The Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults at Risk sets out how the Council will meet its obligations to safeguard children and adults at risk. It applies to staff, agency workers, volunteers and contractors employed by the Council. It is also applicable to Councillors undertaking official duties on behalf of the Council. The policy complements and supports the agreed multi-agency procedures set down by the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board and Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board.
3. The policy is governed by a set of key principles and themes, designed to ensure that people who are at risk experience the process in such a way that it is sensitive to individual circumstances, is person-centred and is outcome-focused. It is vital for successful safeguarding that the procedures in this policy are understood and applied consistently at an individual, managerial, and organisational level.
4. The policy follows the safeguarding guidelines promoted and adopted by the statutory body for safeguarding - Surrey County Council. The policy contributes to adopting a consistent approach to safeguarding by all boroughs and districts. It also brings together the Council's two currently separate policies, Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adults, as the process of referral is very similar.
5. The policy identifies a wide range of common types of abuse or neglect that Councillors, staff, agency workers, volunteers and contractors employed by the Council should be aware of. Details of other related policies and strategies are included.
6. The essential elements of the policy are awareness of the Council's responsibilities for safeguarding and how to make a referral should a concern be raised. Once the policy is adopted, there will be awareness training for all staff on how to make a referral if there is a concern.

Comments from the Community Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

7. The Community Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the policy at its meeting on 12 September 2017.
8. The Committee was in full support of the new policy and felt that the revised format was much easier and simple to follow. Members endorsed the approach that had been taken and suggested that the document kept the page numbers and, once the final document was ready, paragraph numbers were added for ease of reference.

Recommendation

It is recommended that

1. the Executive recommends adoption of the Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults at Risk to the Council; and
2. the Constitution be updated to reflect the wider remit of the Safeguarding Policy in the Policy Framework section to include Children and Adults.

Background Papers

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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