

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL

9 JUNE 2020

Title:

Safeguarding Policy for
Children and Adults at Risk

Portfolio Holder: Cllr David Beaman, Health, Wellbeing and Culture

Head of Service: Andrew Smith, Head of Housing Delivery and Communities

Key decision: No

Access: Public

1. Purpose and summary

- 1.1 This report proposes changes to the Council's Safeguarding Policy of 2017 and reflects changes within Surrey County Council Children's Services following the Ofsted re-inspection of services for children in need of help and protection in May 2018 where they found Surrey County Council's Children Services inadequate in relation to: *Children who need help and protection and Leadership, management and governance*.
- 1.2 The body of the Policy remains the same and 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. The areas of the Policy that have been updated are in relation to:
- the new agreed multi-agency approach called **Effective Family Resilience** (Annexe 1, Appendix 5) and the subsequent change to Council's own structure that reflects this new approach (Annexe 1, Appendix 3 & 4); and
 - the increased profile of Contextual Safeguarding as an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people and vulnerable adults' experiences of significant harm beyond their families. The Policy has been updated to ensure it reflects this area (Annexe 1, Appendices 6, 7 & 8).

2. Recommendation

The Executive recommends to Council that the updated Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults at Risk is adopted.

3. Reason for the recommendation

It is a statutory responsibility for local authorities to have in place effective safeguarding arrangements.

4. Background

4.1 On 14 August 2017 the Council adopted the Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults at Risk which merged the previously separate Safeguarding Children and Adult Policies (2014) in accordance with Surrey County Council's recommended format, to ensure a consistent Safeguarding Policy was adopted by Districts and Boroughs throughout the County.

4.2 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 Partnership and Surrey Safeguarding Adults Partnership.

4.3 Since the adoption of the Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults at Risk in 2017 there have been changes within Surrey County Council Children's Services which has necessitated reviewing and updating the Policy. This follows the Ofsted re-inspection of services for children in need of help and protection in May 2018 where they found Surrey County Council's Children Services inadequate in relation to: *Children who need help and protection* and *Leadership, management and governance*.

4.4 The body of the Policy remains the same as it 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. The areas of the Policy that have been updated are in relation to the new agreed multi-agency approach called **Effective Family Resilience** (Annexe 1, Appendix 5) and the subsequent change to Council's own structure that reflects this new approach (Annexe 1, Appendix 3 & 4).

4.5 One area of safeguarding that has increased in profile is **Contextual Safeguarding**. Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people and vulnerable adults' experiences of significant harm beyond their families. Contextual safeguarding includes:

- a. Modern Day Slavery
- b. Child Exploitation (including sexual exploitation and serious Organised Crime)
- c. Online bullying and grooming
- d. Radicalisation and prevent
- e. Anti-Semitism and Hate Crime

The Policy has been updated to ensure it reflects this area (Annexe 1, Appendices 6, 7 & 8).

4.6 The essential elements of the Policy remain the same: awareness of the Council's responsibilities for safeguarding; how to raise a concern, make a referral if required, and record and monitor all concerns.

4.7 In line with the new multi-agency Effective Family Resilience approach it is vital for successful safeguarding that the procedures in this Policy are understood and applied consistently at an individual, managerial, and organisational level. With this in mind a Safeguarding programme is being developed to encourage officers to look at the whole family context when considering safeguarding and to gain confidence in the assessment of whether thresholds for referral have been met or whether support is more appropriate. This will be delivered to all appropriate staff.

5. Relationship to the Corporate Strategy and Service Plan

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.

The vision within the Corporate Strategy states that Waverley Borough Council is an authority which promotes and sustains the *value and worth of all residents, regardless of income, wealth, age, disability, race, religion, gender or sexual orientation*, the very essence of safeguarding.

6. Implications of decision

6.1 Resource (Finance, procurement, staffing, IT)

All financial resource implications will be contained within existing budgets. Where new resources requirement arise, the business case will be brought to the Executive for decision.

6.2 Risk management

Risk is managed through the Council's Safeguarding Board.

6.3 Legal

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.

6.4 Equality, diversity and inclusion

Whilst there are no direct equality, diversity or inclusion implications in this report 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 regardless of race, religion, gender etc.

6.5 Climate emergency declaration

There are no environmental and sustainability objectives associated with this Policy.

7. Consultation and engagement

7.1 Waverley's Safeguarding Policy sits within the context of the Surrey County Council overarching Safeguarding Policy. It is not subject to public consultation.

8. Other options considered

8.1 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.

9. Governance journey

9.1 The Safeguarding Policy forms part of the Council's Policy Framework and is for approval by Full Council.

Annexes:

Annexe 1 – Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults at Risk

Background Papers

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

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