



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY 2010

Introduction & Policy Aims

This policy applies to all staff (permanent, casual and temporary), volunteers and Elected Members who may come into contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults in the course of their work, whether in someone's home, on Council premises, or in the community.

It informs staff, volunteers and Elected Members about

- **what actions to take if you have concerns about the safety or welfare of a child, young person or vulnerable adult (see 'Quick Reference Summary' on page 11)**
- **what will happen once you have taken these actions**

It is supported by guidance which identifies

- **what abuse is**
- **signs that might be indicators of abuse**

It is designed to ensure that all staff, volunteers and Elected Members are equipped with the knowledge, skills and information to enable them to undertake their safeguarding responsibilities for Horsham District Council.

Why Safeguard?

Everyone, including children, young people and vulnerable adults, has the right not to be abused.

Horsham District Council recognises the need to ensure the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults when they come into contact with services provided by the Council.

Many staff have regular contact with people within these groups, and are in a position to observe signs which might indicate that a person is at risk. If signs, which cause concern are observed, Council staff volunteers and Elected Members have a responsibility to refer suspected cases of abuse to an appropriate agency or person.

There are also staff, volunteers and Elected Members who may not have direct contact with some of these groups, but who have access to sensitive information about children, young people and vulnerable adults or, who work in public places, develop policy and plan services for children, young people and vulnerable adults. It is equally important that these staff, volunteers and Elected Members have regard to the importance of safeguarding.



What does the Policy say?

Horsham District Council will promote the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults through all services it delivers and will consult them, so that they may help shape the Council's services.

All staff (casual, temporary and permanent), volunteers and Elected Members have a duty to report allegations, disclosures and suspicions of abuse or neglect and consultants and contractors should be covered through procurement arrangements.

West Sussex County Council has a multi-agency Children's Safeguarding Board for the county, which Horsham District Council supports.

It is not the Council's job to establish whether or not abuse is taking place but it is the Council's responsibility to report any concerns over the welfare of children, young people or vulnerable adults . This duty extends to the identification of abuse, poor practice by staff, volunteers and elected members of the Council, as well as allegations brought to the attention of the Council by a member of the public/community.

Scope	Guidance Note A
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A range of services provided by or on behalf of the District Council has the potential to impact upon the lives of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

This Policy outlines the Council commitment to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It covers:

1. What is Safeguarding
2. Key Legislation and Guidance
3. Accountability
4. Commitment
5. Responsibilities
6. Recruitment
7. Training and Development
8. Procurement
9. Funding Agreements
10. Information Sharing and Partnerships
11. Procedures
12. Designated Officers
13. Responding, Recording and Reporting
14. Support for Reporter of Alleged Abuse
15. Associated Policies

The policy applies to all staff, volunteers and Elected Members. The term "staff" Staff refers to casual, temporary, and permanent staff. Consultants and contractors are covered through Procurement..

Information on the Roles and Responsibilities to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults with regard to Horsham District Council functions can be found in Guidance Note A.



1. What is Safeguarding?

Guidance Note B

The Council aims to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults irrespective of their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief and/ or sexual orientation. They all have the right to protection from abuse.

The term ‘children and young people’ is used to refer to anyone under the age of 18 years while the term ‘vulnerable adult’ can include people (over 18 years) with learning disabilities, older people, people with physical or sensory disabilities, people with mental ill health, people with certain physical illnesses or people with drug or alcohol problems.

There are two parts to safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults :

- a duty to *protect* children from maltreatment
- a duty to *prevent* impairmentⁱ

The Council intends to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults from the following types of abuse.

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Financial Abuse
- Neglect
- Bullying (including psychological abuse)
- Risk of injury

More information about the types of abuse can be found in Guidance Note B.

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child, young person or vulnerable adult by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children, young people and vulnerable adults may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.ⁱⁱ

Horsham District Council is committed to promoting and safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults in all its services affecting them and will consult with children, young people and vulnerable adults in policy and service delivery matters which affect them, so that they may help shape the Council’s services.

Promoting welfare refers to creating opportunities to enable children and young people to have optimum life chances in adulthoodⁱⁱⁱ in line with the ‘Every Child Matters’ framework and in particular the five outcomes, namely:

1. Physical and mental health and emotional well-being (“be healthy”)
2. Protection from harm and neglect (“stay safe”)
3. Education training and recreation (“enjoy and achieve”)
4. The contribution made by them to society (“make a positive contribution”)
5. Social and economic well being (“achieve economic well being”)

The emphasis in the Council’s work with vulnerable adults is to promote the empowerment and well-being of vulnerable adults through the services it provides and to act in a way which supports the rights of individuals to lead a life based on self determination and personal choice as well as recognise people who are unable to take their own decisions and/or protect themselves and their assets.

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2. Key Guidance and Legislation

Guidance Note C

This policy has been produced to meet the Council's legal obligations in relation to following legislation and guidance for safeguarding of children and young people.

- The Children Act (2004)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2006) Statutory Guidance
- What To Do If You're Worried A Child Is Being Abused (2006)
- Department of Health 'No Secrets' 2000

Other relevant guidance and legislation is outlined in Guidance Note C.

Currently there is no statutory duty for District Councils to report suspected abuse of vulnerable adults; however Horsham District Council is committed to applying the principles of safeguarding children and young people to vulnerable adults .

3. Accountability

Guidance Note I

Ultimately, accountability for safeguarding and protecting children under this policy falls to the Chief Executive as detailed in the Children Act 2004. The Council has delegated this responsibility to Director of Community Services.

The Elected Member responsible for safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults is the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Housing and Community Development.

The Council's Designated Officers are responsible for ensuring that all safeguarding and welfare concerns are reported to the relevant investigating agencies in accordance with the Council's Safeguarding Policy and ensuring that information is recorded appropriately.

In addition to the above, the Council's Lead Designated Officer is responsible for:

- monitoring referrals,
- supporting the Council Designated Officers
- co-ordinating and delivering training
- facilitating an internal Safeguarding Working Group

All staff, volunteers and Elected Members:

- have a duty to report allegations, disclosures and suspicions of abuse or neglect.
- are responsible for ensuring that the activities in which they are involved during the course of their work are carried out in accordance with this policy, as set out in staff and volunteer Role Profiles.

Managers and Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring that staff and volunteers understand, adhere to and implement this Policy.



4. Commitment - Horsham District Council 's Safeguarding Policy

Horsham District Council will seek to meet its safeguarding responsibilities by:-

- undertaking is 'duty to co-operate' under the Children Act.
- being a 'champion', influencing other organisations to improve children, young people and vulnerable adults' lives.
- not employing people or recruiting volunteers who are a risk to children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- providing some services which could aggravate or resolve children, young people and vulnerable adults safety issues (e.g. anti-social behaviour investigations).
- identifying potential risks to children, young people and vulnerable adults and directly influencing children's, young people's and vulnerable adults ' lives through the services it provides.
- learning from lessons of high profile cases (including that of Victoria Climbié and Baby Peter)
- not placing staff, volunteers or elected members in situations where they may be accused of inappropriate behaviour towards children, young people or vulnerable adults .

Horsham District Council accepts its moral and legal responsibility to:

- implement procedures,
- provide a duty of care for children, young people and vulnerable adults ,
- safeguard well being of children, young people and vulnerable adults, and
- protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse when they are engaged in services organised and provided by the Council.

Horsham District Council will achieve this by:

- respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and feelings of children, young people and vulnerable adults
- raising the awareness of the duty of care responsibilities relating to children, young people and vulnerable adults throughout the Council.
- promoting and implementing appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults to protect them from harm.
- ensuring where services are provided by third parties that these organisations have appropriate policies and procedures in place to comply with their safeguarding duties
- creating a safe and healthy environment within all our services, avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur.
- recruiting, training, developing, supporting managing and supervising staff, elected members and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse, and minimise risk to them.
- responding to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children, young people or vulnerable adults in line with this policy and associated procedures, the Local Area Safeguarding Board and 'No Secrets' guidance as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- having a formal process for notifying and recording warnings to other agencies about potential child, young person or Vulnerable Adult abuse.
- having (and promoting to staff, volunteers and Members) clear communication channels in case of suspicions about child, young person or vulnerable adults abuse, or other risks.
- requiring staff, elected members and volunteers to adopt and abide by the Council's 'Children, Young People And Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy' and associated procedures.
- reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of this policy and associated procedures document on an annual basis, including the Section 11 Audit



5. Responsibilities

Guidance Note A

Under this policy, all staff, volunteers and Elected Members have a responsibility to:

- a. Prevent abuse or harm of children, young people and vulnerable adults . i.e. endeavour to ensure that all children, young people and vulnerable adults using the Council's services do so safely and appropriately, and are treated with respect and understanding.
- b. Protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse or harm. i.e. take all reasonable steps to safeguard and protect the rights, health and well-being of children, young people and vulnerable adults who take part in activities organised by the Council and within its facilities, as well as those of children, young people and vulnerable adults who staff may come into contact with in the course of their work.
- c. Support children, young people and vulnerable adults . i.e. promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults
 - For children and young people, promoting welfare refers to creating opportunities to enable children and young people to have optimum life chances in adulthood in line with Every Child Matters and in particular the five outcomes, as outlined on page 3.
 - For vulnerable adults promoting welfare refers to the empowerment and well-being of vulnerable adults through the services it provides and to act in a way which supports the rights of individuals to lead a life based on self determination and personal choice as well as recognise people who are unable to take their own decisions and/or protect themselves and their assets.

More information on the Roles and Responsibilities to safeguard Children, young people and vulnerable adults with regard to Horsham District Council functions can be found in Guidance Note A.

6. Recruitment

Guidance Note D

All staff and volunteers will be appointed in accordance with the Council's Recruitment and Selection Procedures and its Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) and Independent Safeguarding Authority policies. (The CRB Policy can be found in Guidance Note D). These are designed to provide a rigorous and thorough selection process and to carry out all necessary checks, particularly on individuals seeking to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults .

Horsham District Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy will be revised to take account of the Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy and the following statement will be included in all new staff and volunteer role profiles, and existing role profiles as and when reviewed.

"All employees are required to undertake basic safeguarding training and to apply these principles as part of their day-to-day working practice. This post is subject to achieving competency level 1□, 2□ or 3□ (Heads of Service to tick as appropriate) safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults."



7. Training and Development

Guidance Note E

Training, development and continuous review is key to ensuring that this Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy is implemented effectively.

All staff, volunteers and elected members will receive safeguarding training. The training will be at a level appropriate for their role, depending on the degree to which they are in contact with, have sensitive information about and/or plan services for children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Council's tiered approach to safeguarding training is outlined in Guidance Note E.

Staff training and development needs and opportunities relating to safeguarding and protection issues will be identified and addressed through induction, (initial) probation reviews and individual annual appraisals, as well as in response to any changes in legislation. Training may include internal courses/workshops, externally accredited courses/seminars or workshops organised by child protection/vulnerable adult safeguarding agencies.

Elected Members training and development will be identified and addressed through their induction.

8. Procurement

Guidance Note F

Partners or contractors working for, with, and on-behalf of the Council will be required to meet the Council's Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy requirements.

All contracts let by the Council which involve services for those who are likely to encounter children, young people and vulnerable adults will include appropriate reference to complying with the Council's Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy. Evidence of this will be requested at the point of tender and then subsequently checked at periodic intervals.

9. Funding Arrangements

Groups and organisations, which receive funding from the Council for services and projects that affect children, young people and/or vulnerable adults will be required to prove that they discharge their safeguarding responsibilities in line with Horsham District Council's statutory safeguarding responsibilities.

This will include evidence of appropriate and proportionate safeguarding policies, recruitment and vetting procedures and training and development for staff, volunteers, trustees etc.

10. Information Sharing And Partnerships

The Council supports the principle of sharing information with other agencies and will document information where appropriate to support this process. The Council is committed to close working with partners in all matters relating to safeguarding and protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults as well as to the relevant partnerships.



11. Procedures	Guidance Notes G and H
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This Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy informs all staff, Elected Members and volunteers of what actions they should take if they have concerns or encounter a case of alleged, disclosed or suspected child, young person or vulnerable adult abuse.

Staff, Elected Members and volunteers may come across cases of suspected abuse either through direct contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults, for example, running a holiday activity or for peripatetic staff (e.g. Housing Officers, Environmental Health, Benefit Officers) through visiting homes as part of their day to day work.

The primary responsibility of staff, Elected Members and volunteers is to ensure that any relevant information is passed to one of the Council's Designated Safeguarding Officers, who will then discuss any action or referral to the relevant authority or authorities including the Police or West Sussex County Council Children and Adult Services without delay.

It is not the District Council's responsibility to decide whether or not a child, young person or vulnerable adult has been abused. It is, however, the District Council's responsibility to report all concerns.

Responding to Disclosures

Abused children, young people and vulnerable adults are more likely to disclose details of abuse to someone they trust and with whom they feel safe. By listening and taking seriously what the child, young person or vulnerable adult is saying, staff, Elected Members and volunteers are already helping the situation. The following points are a guide to help you respond appropriately.

If a child, young person or vulnerable adult discloses abuse to you, you must:

- Stay calm and be sensitive
- Inform the child, young person or vulnerable adult disclosures who the abuse that you may need refer this to one of the Council's Designated Officer(s), and depending on the severity of the information disclosed, it may need to be referred to the Police and Children and Adult Services.
- Record all observations and everything that is said
- Contact one of the District Council's Designated Officers at the earliest possible opportunity.

Responding to Observations and Suspicions

If you suspect abuse, you must:

- Stay calm and be sensitive
- Record all observations and everything that is said
- Contact one of the District Council's Designated Officers at the earliest possible opportunity.



Out of Hours Arrangements

If you suspect abuse or abuse is disclosed to you outside normal office hours, you must:

- Contact the West Sussex Children and Adult's Out-of-Hours Service directly on 01903 694422
- Record all observations and everything that is said
- Report the disclosure / suspicions and subsequent action to one of the Council's Designated Officers the next working day.

Should you wish to consult with one of Horsham District Council's Designated Officers before reporting your concerns to West Sussex Children and Adults Out-of-Hours Service, phone the Council's Duty Officer on 07801 900491.

Allegations against Staff, Volunteers and Elected Members

It is important that any concern for the welfare of a child, young person or vulnerable adult arising from abuse, harassment, inappropriate conduct or neglect by a member of staff, volunteer or Elected Member of the Council should be reported immediately.

- (i) If you have received an allegation about a member of staff / volunteer or are concerned about their poor practice, you must:
- o Stay calm and be sensitive
 - o Record all observations and everything that is said
 - o Contact the Council's Head of Corporate Support Services at the earliest possible opportunity, who will investigate in liaison with the Council's Lead Designated Officer.

In the case of an allegation or concern about the Council's Head of Corporate Support Services, this should be reported to the Director of Community Services or the Chief Executive.

- (ii) If you have received an allegation about an Elected Member or are concerned about their poor practice, you must:
- o Stay calm and be sensitive
 - o Record all observations and everything that is said
 - o Contact one of the Council's Monitoring Officer at the earliest possible opportunity, who will investigate in liaison with the Council's Lead Designated Officer/Standards Committee, as appropriate.



12. Designated Safeguarding Officers

Guidance Notes H and I

Details of who the Council's Designated Safeguarding Officers are can be found in Guidance Note H. Guidance Note G sets out the role and responsibilities of Designated Officers.

13. Responding to, Recording and Reporting Allegations, Disclosures and Suspicions

Guidance Notes J, K, L and M

Recording

Staff, volunteers and Elected Members must fill in a Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Incident Reporting Form (Appendix G) for all allegations, disclosures and suspicions relating to the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Staff, volunteers and Elected Members must also record all action taken by them in relation to all safeguarding allegations, disclosures and suspicions, for example, referring to a Designated Officer, sharing information or referring to West Sussex Children and Adult's Services if out-of-hours. (See Appendix H – Record of Action in relation to Safeguarding Allegations, Disclosures And Suspicions)

All forms must be completed and records updated as soon as immediately practical to ensure all the facts are recorded properly and accurately. Copies of the Incident Report Form are available on the Intranet and from the Council's Designated Safeguarding Officers.

All completed forms must be passed to the Designated Officer dealing with the allegation, disclosure or suspicion, and ultimately to the Lead Designated Officer. All completed forms and related correspondence will be held in a single, corporate database.

Reporting

All staff, volunteers and Elected Members must report safeguarding allegations, disclosures and suspicions to one of the Designated Officers or Lead Designated Officer immediately.

It is the responsibility of the Council's Designated Safeguarding Officers to take a lead on and report allegations, disclosures and suspicions to Police and/or Children and Adult Services. It is also their responsibility to ensure completed forms/all records are passed to the Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer and to take any other action appropriate.



Suspicion / Observation

Stay calm and be sensitive

Observe. Intervene if emergency medical attention required or there is immediate harm to CYPVA.

Inform Designated Safeguarding Officer. (If out of hours, contact the West Sussex Children and Adult Service Out-of-Hours Service directly and report to one the Designated Safeguarding Officers the next working day).

Record all details using the Children, young people and vulnerable adults Safeguarding Incident Reporting and Record of Action Forms

Forward all completed forms to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Designated Safeguarding Officer to take appropriate action (e.g. referral to Children and Adult Services) and record action using relevant form.

All relevant paperwork to be forwarded to Lead

Disclosure

Stay calm and be sensitive.

Inform the child, young person or vulnerable adult disclosure the abuse that you may need refer this to one of the Council's Designated Officer(s), and depending on the severity of the information disclosed, it may need to be referred to the Police and Children and Adult Services

Listen. Intervene if emergency medical attention required or there is immediate harm to CYPVA.

Inform Designated Safeguarding Officer. (If out of hours, contact the West Sussex Children and Adult Service Out-of-Hours Service directly report to one the Designated Safeguarding Officers the next working day).

Record all details using the Children, young people and vulnerable adults Safeguarding Incident Reporting and Record of Action Forms

Forward all completed forms to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Designated Safeguarding Officer to take appropriate action (e.g. referral to Children and Adult Services) and record action using relevant form.

All relevant paperwork to be forwarded to Lead

Allegation Against Member of Staff / Volunteer

Stay calm and be sensitive

Listen. Observe. Intervene if emergency medical attention required or there is immediate harm to CYPVA.

Inform the Head of Corporate Services.

Record all details using the Children, young people and vulnerable adults Safeguarding Incident Reporting and Record of Action Forms

Forward all completed forms to the Head of Corporate Services.

Head of Corporate Services to investigate, alongside the Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer / Director of Community Services and to take appropriate action. All action to be recorded using relevant form.

All relevant paperwork to be forwarded to Lead Designated

Allegations Against An Elected Member

Stay calm and be sensitive

Listen. Observe. Intervene if emergency medical attention required or there is immediate harm to CYPVA.

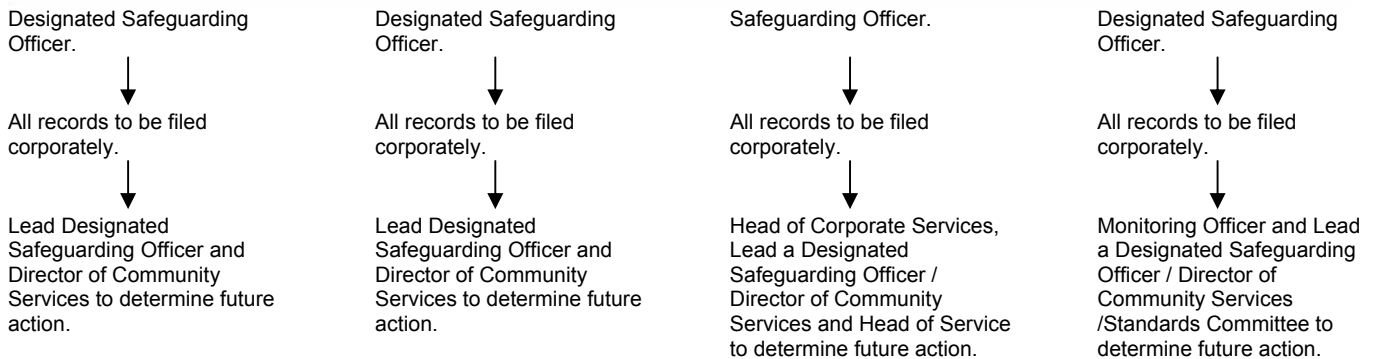
Inform the Monitoring Officer.

Record all details using the Children, young people and vulnerable adults Safeguarding Incident Reporting and Record of Action Forms

Forward all completed forms to the Monitoring Officer.

Monitoring Officer to investigate, alongside the Lead Designated Safeguarding Officer / Director of Community Services/Standards Committee and to take appropriate action. All action to be recorded using relevant form.

All relevant paperwork to be forwarded to Lead



14. Support for the Reporter of the Alleged Abuse

Strong feelings may be generated by an allegation, disclosure or suspicion of abuse to or neglect of children, young people and vulnerable adults, especially if the allegation relates to a member of staff, volunteer or elected member. This can raise concerns among other staff, volunteers or elected members and create difficulties in reporting such matters.

The Council will fully support and protect all staff, volunteers or elected members who, in good faith and without malicious intent, report his or her concern about a colleague's practice or the possibility that a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be being abused.

15. Associated Policies

This 'Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy' should also be read in conjunction with the following Council documents:

- Recruitment and Selection Procedures
- CRB Policy and Procedures
- Corporate Equalities Policy
- Complaints & Comments Policy and Procedures
- Health and Safety Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Disciplinary Procedures
- Officers' Code of Conduct
- Members' Code of Conduct

ⁱ Department of Health, Department for Education and Employment and Home Office (2000) *Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families*. The Stationery Office, London. Paragraph 1.5.

ⁱⁱ HM Government (2006) *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, page 37

ⁱⁱⁱ Department of Health, Department for Education and Employment and Home Office (2000) *Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families*. The Stationery Office, London. Paragraph 1.17.