

Child Protection & Vulnerable Persons at Risk Safeguarding Policy & Procedures

POLICY STATEMENT

- Our Parish Council is committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children and adults and take all reasonable precautions to safeguard the welfare of children and adults at risk when they are using its services.
- The Parish Council will raise awareness of safeguarding matters and concerns to ensure that everyone can play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect.
- The Parish Council will work within the safeguarding framework of the Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership and will refer any concerns IMMEDIATELY to the TWC Family Connect Team.
- If a group or organisation that works with children, young people or adults at risk works in partnership with the Parish Council, then the Clerk is responsible for checking that the group or organisation has adequate and appropriate procedures for safeguarding.

DEFINITIONS

In law, a **child** is defined as up to and including the age of 18 in The Children's Act of 1989. Extensions of this exist for children who are disabled and for those in local authority care settings.

There is no standard single definition for an adult at risk, but for this policy we are using this simple definition

An **adult at risk** is someone aged 18 year or over who, due to disability, mental function, age, illness or traumatic circumstances, may not be able to take care or protect themselves against the risk of harm, abuse, bullying, harassment, mis-treatment or exploitation.

What is abuse?

Abuse can take many forms and includes:

Physical, including FGM

Sexual

Financial or material

Self-neglect

Discrimination

Domestic Violence

Psychological or emotional

Neglect or acts of omission

Organisational

Exploitation or modern slavery

Some abuse may fall into more than one category. These are difficult and complex issues and advice should be sought whenever necessary at the earliest opportunity.

SAFEGUARDING OFFICER

The Clerk will be the Council's Safeguarding Officer and will be responsible for:

- Promoting safeguarding best practice within the parish at all times
- Ensuring that safe employment and volunteer recruitment procedures are in place and followed at all times
- Attending refresher training and organizing appropriate training for employees, volunteers and members

- Referring cases to Family Connect at the earliest opportunity and supporting staff through the referral process
- Keeping records of all incidents and concerns and ensuring that all records are stored securely

The name and contact details for the Safeguarding Officer will be displayed on the Parish Council website and on noticeboards within the Parish, together with the telephone contact details for Childline and Family Connect.

MEASURES TO MINIMISE THE RISK OF HARM

All staff, volunteers and members need to be aware that they have a responsibility to do what is reasonable to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk. To minimize the risk to children, adults at risk and parish council personnel, the following procedures will be followed:

Safe Recruitment

All staff and volunteers, whose duties regularly bring them into contact with children, young people and adults at risk will be carefully selected. This will include taking appropriate references and carrying out checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Enhanced DBS checks will be required if any member, staff member or volunteer carries out 'regulated activities' for adults. That is, providing health care, personal care, assisting with cash, paying bills or shopping, providing transportation etc. in order to receive health care, personal care or social care.

Induction and Training

New employees, volunteers and members will be made aware of the Child Protection & Vulnerable Persons at Risk Safeguarding Policy & Procedures.

The Clerk, as designated safeguarding lead, will undertake training for the role and will attend refresher training at least every three years, or when advised to do so due to changes in law.

The Clerk will encourage good practice and identify any training needs within the Team.

All employees, volunteers and members will be expected to attend a Safeguarding and Sexual Exploitation training.

Parish Council Events

Risk assessments for all events will include an additional assessment of where there is risk of harm to children or adults at risk. Control measures will be put in place to minimize the risk of harm to those involved.

The Emergency Plan will identify a Designated Responsible Person as the Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer for the duration of the event, in the absence of the Clerk.

How to respond to someone who makes a Disclosure or Allegation of Abuse

- Reassure the person concerned
- Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief
- Listen carefully to what they are saying
- Assure them that the information will be treated seriously
- Ask questions to ensure you have gathered the full facts but DO NOT start to investigate or ask further detailed probing questions
- Do not promise to keep it a secret
- Tell the person what you are going to do next in order to get help to keep them safe
- Record what you have been told / witnessed as soon as possible, using the child or adult at risk's own words wherever possible

Action to take following a disclosure by a child or adult at risk or an allegation against an employee, volunteer or member

- If a disclosure or allegation about abuse or neglect has been made, then it must be referred immediately to The Clerk.
- In the case of an emergency where there is an immediate risk of significant harm, the Police should be informed.
- Where the allegation is against a member of staff, volunteer or member, the Clerk should inform the Chairman of the Council as soon as possible.
- If the allegation is against the Chairman, then it should be referred to the Vice Chairman.
- The Parish Council will not become involved in referrals as a third party.
- All disclosures and allegations, however insignificant they may seem or when they occur, must be referred to TWC Family Connect as soon as possible - as any delay could result in more harm.
- If the referral is made by telephone, it is important that it is confirmed in writing.
- **Parish Council staff, volunteers or members should not undertake their own investigation or offer comment. Details must remain confidential.**
- All details about an incident or disclosure should be recorded and all recordings should be signed and dated and kept confidential and secure.
- Notes of any discussions between employees, volunteers, members and the Clerk must be signed and dated and filed securely.
- Information relating to individuals and safeguarding is strictly confidential. Any records must be kept secure. Only the Clerk and Chairman should be able to access these files.

Responding to concerns about a person's welfare where there has been no specific disclosure or allegation

All employees, volunteers and members must share their concerns with the Clerk who will make the necessary referral to TWC Family Connect.

Contacting Telford & Wrekin Council with a concern about a child or an adult at risk:

**FAMILY CONNECT 01952 385385 Monday to Friday
9am until 5pm**

EMERGENCY DUTY TEAM 01952 676500 Out of Hours

Concerns can also be reported online via the TWC Website.

If someone is in immediate danger – telephone 999 without delay.