

REPORT TO CABINET

REPORT OF: CARE SERVICES MANAGER

REPORT NO: CSM11

DATE: 7th February 2005

TITLE:	PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE PEOPLE – DRAFT POLICY & PROCEDURES
FORWARD PLAN ITEM:	Protection of Vulnerable Persons
DATE WHEN FIRST APPEARED IN FORWARD PLAN:	1 st January 2005
KEY DECISION OR POLICY FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL:	Key Decision

COUNCIL AIMS/PORTFOLIO HOLDER NAME AND DESIGNATION:	Cllr P Martin-Mayhew
CORPORATE PRIORITY:	Vulnerable People
CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS:	None
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT IMPLICATIONS:	To be included in Publication Scheme
BACKGROUND PAPERS:	Protection of Vulnerable People – Policy & Procedures

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A policy and procedure for the protection of vulnerable people helps to provide a safe and positive environment for children and vulnerable people. Although no standards or procedures can offer complete protection implementing a policy minimises the risk of abuse and exploitation.
- 1.2 The Policy clarifies what is requested of staff in relation to the protection of children and vulnerable people and sets out standards of behaviour for staff when they are around vulnerable people and what to do if they notice or are told about inappropriate behaviour in others. The policy is a statement of intent that demonstrates the Council's commitment to safeguarding children and vulnerable people from harm.
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2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is recommended to:-

- (1) Approve the draft Policy and Procedures for the Protection of Vulnerable People and undertake consultation.**
 - (2) Invite comments from key agencies and organisations through a process of consultation.**
 - (3) Following the consultation period forward the Policy and Procedure to Council for consideration and approval.**
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3. DETAILS OF REPORT

- 3.1 The purpose of the document, Protection of Vulnerable people – Policy and Procedures - detailed in Appendix 1, is to introduce a council wide policy that would clearly demonstrate what the council's responsibilities and obligations are in respect of protecting vulnerable members of the community.
- 3.2 The procedures clearly identify what action should be taken if a member of staff from Leisure and Cultural Services, Care Services, DWO tradesman, a Housing Officer, a Customer Services staff member or a Building Inspector (ie any member of the council's staff) or an Elected Member were to witness or observe an incident that caused them to have concerns as to the safety or welfare of a child or a vulnerable adult who they may come across in the course of carrying out their duties.
- 3.3 There is some evidence that staff have been placed in very difficult circumstances and action has had to be taken to protect, not only the children or adults involved, but also the employee. Where such circumstances apply and managers have received concerns expressed by staff they have been able to take correct and appropriate action and this may have included referral to the proper agencies such as social services or the police for further

investigation. There is absolutely no suggestion that anything other than correct action has been taken in such situations in the past.

- 3.4 However, to properly ensure that the council deal with such situations in the correct manner for the future (ie compliance with county wide procedures and involvement with the Area Child Protection Committee) and to ensure total consistency across the whole of the authority's workforce in how such incidents are handled, policies and procedures that all staff and Members understand need to be introduced and implemented so that we can clearly demonstrate our role in safeguarding the safety and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The policy and procedures document, as detailed in Appendix 1, aims to help all council staff and members to:

- describe the different forms of abuse that children and vulnerable people may be subjected to
- recognise the possible signs of abuse
- describe situations in which children and adults may be particularly vulnerable
- describe the council's procedures for dealing with cases of suspected abuse.

- 3.5 A considerable amount of work is required to ensure that all members of the council's staff and Elected Members are made aware of this document and its' likely impact on the council and its' activities. In this respect, there are a number of actions that need to be taken to ensure full integration of this policy :-

- to disseminate the document to all service managers for them to consider the implications of introducing the policy and procedures in their service area(s) and to nominate section co-ordinators to ensure training and awareness issues are catered for.
- to disseminate the document to all elected members for information and awareness purposes.
- to create a small officer / member working group
- to oversee the implementation of the policy across the council,
- to ensure it is embedded in the day-to-day activities of the council,
- to evaluate training needs and then provide appropriate training at all levels,
- to act as a central monitoring point within the authority responsible for dealing with all concerns, reports and referrals to other agencies
- to review changes in associated legislation, amending the policy and procedures as required.

4. COMMENTS OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND STRATEGIC RESOURCES

No comments.

5. COMMENTS OF CORPORATE MANAGER, DEMOCRATIC AND LEGAL SERVICES (MONITORING OFFICER)

No comments.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 In approving this policy and associated procedures, the council will be taking account as to the workings of the Lincolnshire Adult Protection Committee – Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults and the Lincolnshire Area Child Protection Committee and the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- 6.2 The Policy sets out standards of behaviour for staff and raises the awareness of this important issue. The Policy will help to safeguard children and vulnerable people from them.

7. CONTACT OFFICER

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24th January 2005