



Cabinet

Tuesday, 9 July 2024

Report of Councillor Rhea Rayside
Cabinet Member for People &
Communities

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures 2024-2027

Report Author

Carol Drury, Community Engagement Manager

 carol.drury@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

The Children Act 2004 and the Care Act 2014 place responsibilities on the Council with regard to the safeguarding of children, young people and adults with needs of care and support. This report brings to the attention of Cabinet the update of the Council's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Recommendations

That Cabinet approves the 2024-2027 Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

Decision Information

Is this a Key Decision? No

Does the report contain any
exempt or confidential
information not for publication? No

What are the relevant corporate
priorities? Effective council

Which wards are impacted? (All Wards);

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, diversity and inclusion and community safety the following implications have been identified:

Finance

- 1.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

Completed by: Paul Sutton Interim Head of Finance (deputy 151)

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 The legal and governance implications relating to the proposed changes to the Council's Policy are set out in the body of the report and Appendices.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Monitoring Officer

Risk and Mitigation

- 1.3 This policy provides robust guidance and procedures for the safeguarding of vulnerable individuals within South Kesteven. The required training pathway for staff and Members ensures that everyone who has direct contact with our residents is aware of reporting procedures for when concerns are identified.

Completed by: Tracey Elliott, Governance & Risk Officer

Diversity and Inclusion

- 1.4 Equality requirements and considerations are contained within the policy and outlined further within the Equality Impact Assessment found at Appendix B.

Completed by: Carol Drury – Community Engagement Manager

Community Safety

- 1.5 Safety and the safeguarding of vulnerable individuals within our society is at the heart of this Policy. Its adoption and subsequent implementation will ensure the identification and reporting of such incidents are carried out in the most effective and expedient manner.

Completed by: Ayeisha Kirkham – Head of Service (Public Protection)

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Safeguarding Policy 2024-2027 reflects the responsibilities a District Council has in regard to the protection of adults and children. The policy, and the procedures contained within it, was originally developed in collaboration with the other six District Councils of Lincolnshire to ensure consistency of approach. This document which can be found at Appendix A, reflects the legal duties and moral responsibilities of the Council in the safeguarding of individuals from significant harm.
- 2.2 The Council has statutory duties under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 and Section 14 of the Care Act 2014 to protect people from harm and neglect and to co-operate with other agencies.
- 2.3 As a District Council, responsibilities for safeguarding both children and adults are, in essence, the same – to report incidents or concerns to the responsible authority (Lincolnshire County Council) and to work with other agencies to ensure the welfare of children and vulnerable adults within this district. The policy also provides guidance to officers and members for interventions when a safeguarding threshold is not met but the individual is in need of support.
- 2.4 This policy covers the period 2024-2027 and will be reviewed on a three-yearly basis, however, any changes to legislation or statutory guidance will be made with immediate effect during this period if required.
- 2.5 The policy includes a generic overview of safeguarding responsibilities and also includes topic-specific chapters which provide information and guidance relating to:
 - Domestic Abuse
 - Prevent
 - Hate Crime and Mate Crime
 - Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking
 - County Lines and Cuckooing
 - Stalking
 - Transient Families
- 2.6 Whilst some of these headings relate to criminal activity, they have at their core, vulnerable individuals often groomed into negative behaviours who are themselves victims requiring support.
- 2.7 The policy also contains training pathways for staff which are necessary to meet the requirements of the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP), the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adult Board (LSAB) and the National Competencies set out for child and adult safeguarding.

2.8 Updates to the policy relate to changes in legislation and statutory guidance and include:

- Amendments throughout Chapter 3 Safeguarding Children and Young People to reflect updates to statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children including direction that:
 - *“children who need help and protection deserve high quality and effective support. This requires individuals, agencies, and organisations to be clear about their own and each other’s roles and responsibilities, and how they work together”.*
 - *“successful outcomes for children depend on strong multi-agency partnership working across the whole system of help, support and protection including effective work from all agencies with parents, carers, and families.”*
 - *“Early help is support for children of all ages that improves a family’s resilience and outcomes or reduces the chance of a problem getting worse.”*
- The chapters relating to Domestic Abuse (Chapter 5) and Prevent (Chapter 6) have been updated in relation to the introduction of, or changes to, the law to include:
 - The latest definition of domestic abuse: *“Any incident or pattern of incidents of abusive behaviour such as physical or sexual abuse, violent or threatening behaviour, controlling or coercive behaviour, economic abuse, psychological, emotional or other abuse between people aged 16 or over who are personally connected”* as defined in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, and
 - The introduction of implicit reference to children as victims of abuse.
 - The updated Prevent Duty, which forms the basis of Chapter 6, includes the need to tackle ideological causes of terrorism by limiting exposure to radicalising narratives, both online and offline and to create an environment where radicalising ideologies are challenged and not permitted to flourish. This is known under the Duty as reducing permissive environments.
 - Through the Duty, the Council is now required to ensure that it is not hiring a venue/building to a group that espouses a terrorism-related narrative. The Duty also outlines the need to ensure IT cannot be used to access information related to terrorism or proscribed organisations.
 - Previously the Prevent Duty has referred to vulnerable people being radicalised. It has been recognised that people do not need to be vulnerable to become radicalised. The definition has therefore been amended to now describe people as susceptible to radicalisation.
- Amendments have been made to Chapter 11 – Transient Families
 - This chapter was previous called ‘Mobile Families’ and is adapted from Transient Families Guidance produced by the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership. It is aimed at raising awareness and encouraging vigilance and the professional curiosity of staff, volunteers and elected

members when it comes to families that move frequently and appear to live very transient lifestyles.

- Appendix B – Training Structure and Programmes has been updated to meet the requirements of the 6 year training pathways of the LSCP and the LSAB to ensure the Authority continues to meet national competency standards.

3. Key Considerations

3.1 The Safeguarding Policy provides details of the Council's legislative requirements regarding the delivery of the Safeguarding responsibilities.

4. Other Options Considered

4.1 The Council could retain its existing Safeguarding Policy but in doing so would operate outside of updated legislation and in isolation of other the District Councils of Lincolnshire.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

5.1 By adopting the Safeguarding Policy 2024-2-27 the Council will continue to have consistency with its District partners whilst maintaining the requirements of the Children Act 2004 and the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Care Act 2014 and the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adult Board.

6. Consultation

6.1 Members of Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee were asked to review the updated Safeguarding Policy at the meeting of 28th March 2024 and recommend its approval to Cabinet.

7. Appendices

7.1 Appendix A – Safeguarding Policy and Procedures 2024-2027.

7.2 Appendix B – Safeguarding Policy and Procedures Equality Impact Assessment.