



Northumberland County Council

County Council

17 January 2024

Introduction of Corporate Safeguarding Policy

Report of Councillor(s) Councillor Glen Sanderson, Leader of the Council

Responsible Officer(s): Helen Paterson, Chief Executive

1. **Link to Key Priorities of the Corporate Plan**

Tackling Inequalities - The Council is committed to practices that protect adults and children from harm regardless of age, sex, disability, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or any other protected characteristic as covered by the Equality Act 2010.

Every child and adult has a right to participate in a safe society without any violence, fear, abuse, bullying or discrimination. Every child and adult has the right to be protected from harm, neglect, exploitation and abuse. This policy seeks to ensure that all Councillors, employees, volunteers and all those who carry out work for or with the Council recognise their responsibility in protecting children and adults at risk from abuse and neglect and working in a way that promotes and supports their best interests.

2. **Purpose of report**

This report outlines the recommendation to introduce a Corporate Safeguarding policy (appendix 1).

This policy will be established in addition to the existing policies and procedures operated within the Adults, Ageing and Wellbeing, and the Children, Young People and Education Directorates.

The policy will apply to all officers, volunteers, contractors and Councillors and makes it clear how the Council undertakes its legal commitments in regard to safeguarding to children and adults.

The policy is intended to support, strengthen and provide clarity to the wider organisation in relation to the process for reporting concerns, the support available

to everyone and the responsibilities of new Key Officers ('Designated Managers') and Councillor roles across the wider Council.

3. Recommendations

To approve the introduction of the policy and agree that it apply to all officers, volunteers, contractors and Councillors with effect from 1 April 2024.

4. Background

Corporate Safeguarding is everybody's business in every Directorate within the Council. Everyone working or contracted within the Council has a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children, young people and adults, whatever their role.

Although every organisation working with children, young people and adults should, of course, be committed to safeguarding and promoting their welfare, a number of organisations have statutory roles or duties:

- Under Part 3 of the Children Act 1989 and Part 2 of the Children Act 2004, Northumberland County Council has a duty to ensure that it undertakes its functions in a way that safeguards and promotes the welfare of children
- Under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, it is Northumberland County Council's duty to ensure that every reasonable step is taken to protect adults and prevent crime and disorder when it undertakes its functions
- Part 1 of the Care Act 2014 establishes a clear legal framework for how local authorities and other statutory agencies should protect adults with care and support needs who are at risk of abuse or neglect.
- Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021

This policy reflects the Council's commitment to safeguard children and adults and to protect them from being abused. It is intended to ensure there is a clear understanding of the policies for safeguarding children and adults amongst employees, Councillors and those working on behalf of the Council and the associated referral process for reporting concerns.

Outlined within the policy are robust corporate and directorate procedures to ensure compliance with the policy and defined communication arrangements so that all are aware of the key officers in each directorate who are responsible for children and adult safeguarding issues.

All employees / workers and Councillors currently receive information and basic training regarding safeguarding however, the introduction of this policy would require a greater focus on highlighting responsibilities and the specific roles that key officers and Councillors will adopt.

The policy outlines the functions of key officers and Councillors and proposes to introduce the role of "Designated Manager". This role will deal with safeguarding children and adult's issues within each service within the Directorate. The Designated

Managers will be fully trained and will take on responsibility for acting as a key source of advice and support for other employees / workers in their Directorate on how to access advice on safeguarding issues. They will ensure local compliance is monitored and reported to the Executive Management Team (EMT).

5. Options open to the Council and reasons for the recommendations

Option 1 - To approve the adoption of the policy

Option 2 - To reject the adoption of the policy

Option 1 is the recommended option based on the clearly stated benefits outlined in this report including the objective of reinforcing the Council's ability to meet its statutory obligations.

6. Implications

Policy	Oversight of Corporate and HR policies and procedures
Finance and value for money	There are no direct financial implications associated with this report
Legal	Introduction of the policy would enable the Council to fulfil its statutory obligations
Procurement	None identified
Human resources	Policy would apply to all employees of the Council and may require enforcement in circumstances of non-compliance.
Property	None identified
The Equalities Act: is a full impact assessment required and attached?	Not required The policy will apply equally to all employees, workers and Councillors and will not disproportionately impact any particular group.
Risk assessment	The introduction of the policy would reduce / minimise safeguarding risks
Crime and disorder	None
Customer considerations	The introduction of the policy will give additional assurance to the public that there are robust arrangements in place to safeguard children and adults at risk
Carbon reduction	None

Health and wellbeing	The introduction of the policy will ensure that those working for or on behalf of the Council are confident to raise the alarm when they suspect that a person's basic physical, emotional, social or psychological needs are not being met and / or their wellbeing has been impaired.
Wards	N/A

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Northumberland County Council Corporate Safeguarding Policy

8. Background papers

[Northumberland Safeguarding Adults Board Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures](#)
[Northumberland Children's Services Procedures Manual](#)

9. Links to other key reports already published

Not applicable

10. Author and Contact Details

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