

# Workington Town Council

## Safeguarding Policy



### NOTE TO STAFF:

*It is the policy of Workington Town Council that staff and councillors must be familiar with and follow the following Safeguarding principles and procedures.*

*This policy does not replace common sense, but clarifies, and where necessary, defines certain matters. The protection of children, commonly called 'safeguarding', is about working in a manner that is open and clear and not as a list of 'dos and don'ts'.*

**REMEMBER: It is always better to be proved wrong about your concerns, having referred them on, than to be proved right, but be shown later to have done nothing about it.**

*If, after reading this document, there is any doubt about your obligations and responsibilities in respect of the safety and welfare of children please consult the Safeguarding Manager.*

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### 1. DEFINITION

Workington Town Council is committed to safeguarding the welfare of all children and young people who come into contact with the services we provide. The guidelines and procedures set out in this policy will apply equally to any vulnerable adults and any reference to a child or a young person should be read as a reference to a vulnerable adult also.

For the purposes of the Disclosure and Barring Service (and previously the Criminal Records Bureau), a child is defined as someone who is under 18 (or under 16 if the child is employed). Workington Town Council also uses this definition.

Workington Town Council follows the same core definition of 'vulnerable adult' as stated in the 1997 Consultation "Who Decides?" issued by the Lord Chancellor's Department. This document defines a vulnerable adult as someone aged 18 and over who;

*"...is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation".*

### 2. PRINCIPLES

Children and young people should be treated with care, respect and dignity. The responsibility for the creation of a safe and rewarding environment for any child that is involved in our work and services belongs to everyone in the team, whether staff, contractor or volunteer.

All staff members are expected to be professional in their conduct and work in a manner that is open, honest and trustworthy. Staff members are expected to behave responsibly at all times, especially when children are present.

Anyone working with children will be expected to maintain a safe and appropriate distance at all times. There will be minimal physical contact with children, and any necessary physical contact will be public and appropriate. Staff members will not do things of a personal nature for any child that s/he is able to do independently.

### 3. SAFEGUARDING MANAGER

Chris Bagshaw, the Town Clerk for Workington Town Council, has responsibility for the Safeguarding Policy and acts as Safeguarding Manager. The duties of this role include:

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the requirement to work in compliance with the Safeguarding Policy.
- To be the point of referral for questions in relation to the Safeguarding Policy.

- To be the point of referral for anyone who, during the course of the event, believes that a child or young person may be at risk of harm, is told by a child or young person of a child welfare issue; or believes that a person may pose a risk of harm to any child; and keep a record of any safeguarding issues which arise.

During events and festivals, the Events Officer, Amy Johnson, is responsible for upholding the Safeguarding Policy for any activities happening on site.

#### 4. LONE WORKING

Workington Town Council's intention is that its staff should never be alone with a child or young person in the course of their work. Any activity with children and young people should be planned accordingly. However, we recognise that in an emergency this may be unavoidable.

In such instances, staff members should contact the Safeguarding Manager immediately and move to an open, public space. If it is not possible to move to a public space, staff members should never be on their own with a child – two adults should always be present.

#### 5. DISCLOSURE

'Disclosure' occurs when a child tells you that they have been abused. This is a rare occurrence in this sort of working environment but not unknown. If a child shares concerns with us, we will listen, stay calm, be reassuring, avoid judgements and we will never promise to keep the disclosure secret.

It is important to make a note of anything the child says during a disclosure as the information will need to be passed on to the relevant authorities for further action. For example, it is useful to make a note of the following:

- The child's name and address
- The name of the parent, guardian or carer for the child
- The nature of the disclosure
- Other additional useful information such as age, language and if the child has a disability.

The appropriate authority should be contacted immediately if the child is in imminent danger or if a criminal offence has been committed. This should then be followed-up with a report to the Safeguarding Manager. The Safeguarding Manager will ensure the incident is on record, that all appropriate measures have been taken and that action has been taken by the relevant authority.

**REMEMBER:**

All cases where a worker suspects that a child is suffering, or is at risk of suffering significant harm, must be reported to Local Authority Children's Social Care Services/Protection Services/Gateway Services.

This must be followed up in writing by the referrer within 24-48 hours. Within one working day of a referral being received, a local authority social worker should make a decision about the type of response that is required and acknowledge receipt to the referrer. Where this does not happen, the person making the referral should contact Children's Social Care/Protection Services/Gateway Services again.

It is very important that you understand your own local procedures and timescales.

#### 6. PAID WORK AND WORK EXPERIENCE

Children and young people may not carry out paid work for Workington Town Council unless they have an appropriate work permit or performance licence. Further to this, staff members offering work experience placements to young people must have arrangements in place in advance of the event. In both cases, the Safeguarding Manager must be contacted for guidance and to gain prior permission.

#### 7. DBS CHECKS – WORKINGTON TOWN COUNCIL EMPLOYEES

The law requires that individuals working closely with children **must** have a DBS check, whilst those working less directly with children **may** be required to have one. The following staff members work regularly with children and have had a satisfactory DBS check:

- Amy Johnson

- Emma Chapman
- Alison Saxby
- Chris Bagshaw
- Raegan Blacker

The DBS certificates are stored in the Town Council's Personnel files and can be accessed with permission from the Town Clerk. The Safeguarding Officer has a record of the renewal date for each certificate and will notify staff when it is due to be updated.

### **8. DBS CHECKS FOR EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND GRANT APPLICANTS**

Where external organisations are likely to have significant contact with children and young people as a direct result of their work for, on behalf of, or in partnership with the council, they are required to have safeguarding procedures in place. They must be made aware of this policy and must provide the council with a copy of their Safeguarding Policy. This applies to both contractors working directly for the council, and to organisations applying for grants and funding.

If you feel it is necessary for an external organisation or contractor to have a DBS check before carrying out any work, then it must be applied for directly by the council. Please note it is not lawful to request to see a pre-existing DBS check as it is a breach of the Data Protection Act. DBS checks are tailored to specific enquiries so an individual providing the results of a previous DBS check would run the risk of sharing information that is irrelevant to the role.

### **9. RECORD KEEPING**

All records containing personal information or contacts details should be kept in accordance with Data Protection Guidelines (1998) and GDPR regulations (2018). To follow best practice in record keeping, it is worth ensuring the following procedures are observed:

- Only keep records for as long as is necessary.
- Files containing sensitive or confidential data should be locked away and access to the keys strictly controlled.
- These records should only be accessed by staff members that need to see the information to carry out their work.
- If records are stored electronically then it is worth password-protecting the document. Again, this password should only be given out to staff members who need access to the document to carry out their work.

### **10. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST A COUNCILLOR OR MEMBER OF STAFF**

Workington Town Council takes allegations of abuse, criminal activity and inappropriate behaviour seriously and will act quickly to ensure the necessary steps are taken. If a staff member, councillor or contractor is observed or accused to have harmed a child or vulnerable adult it must be reported to the Police at the earliest possible opportunity.

Following a complaint to the Police, the incident must be reported to a relevant staff member or Councillor at the Town Council:

- *If the complaint is about a Councillor of Workington Town Council:* The incident should be reported to the Town Clerk at Workington Town Council and the Monitoring Officer at Allerdale Borough Council.
- *If the complaint is about a member of staff at Workington Town Council:* The incident should be reported to the Town Clerk at Workington Town Council.
- *If the complaint is about the Town Clerk at Workington Town Council:* The incident should be reported to the Mayor of Workington Town Council and the Chair of Workington Town Council's Finance, Property and Employment Committee.
- *If the complaint is about a third party:* The incident should be reported to the relevant Officer (e.g. the Events Officer for an incident relating to a festival or event) and the Town Clerk at Workington Town Council.

Following the report of an incident, action will be taken in accordance with Workington Town Council's Complaints Procedure. Please refer to the *Workington Town Council Complaints Code Policy and Procedure* document for further details.

### **11. Contact details for the Safeguarding Manager:**

Chris Bagshaw, Town Clerk  
01900 702986 or [chris.bagshaw@workingtontowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:chris.bagshaw@workingtontowncouncil.gov.uk)

**12. Contact details for the Safeguarding Officer (Events & Festivals only):**

Amy Johnson, Events Officer

01900 702986 or [amy.johnson@workingtontowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:amy.johnson@workingtontowncouncil.gov.uk)