

# Wimborne Minster Town Council Safeguarding Policy

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## 1. Introduction

1.1 Wimborne Minster Town Council (the Council) is committed to taking all reasonable precautions to safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable persons that use its services and promotes a safeguarding culture and environment.

1.2 Definitions:

- child - any person under the age of 18;
- vulnerable adult - adults, where vulnerable activities as defined by legislation take place (any person aged 18 years or over who is or may be in need of community services by reason of mental, physical or learning disability, age or illness AND is or may be unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation).

1.3 The welfare of children and vulnerable adults is paramount. Council recognises its responsibilities for the safeguarding of all children and young who may be unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation, regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability.

All people have the right to be safe from harm and must be able to live free from fear of abuse, neglect and exploitation and to that end the Council adopts this policy that applies to, and must be followed, by all councillors, staff, and volunteers.

1.4 The following principles are those upon which this Safeguarding Policy is based:

- the welfare of a child, young person and a vulnerable adult will always be paramount,
- the welfare of families, the vulnerable and the elderly will be promoted,
- the rights, wishes and feelings of children, young people and their families and vulnerable adults will be respected and listened to,
- those people in positions of responsibility within Council will work in accordance with the interests of those safeguarded and follow the policy outlined below.

1.5 This document is written in accordance with the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' produced by the Department of Health in 2015 and 'The Care Act' 2016 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 (GDPR). Personal information will be shared (confidentially) with the relevant authorities when a child, young person or vulnerable adult is deemed to be 'at risk'

1.4 All staff, volunteers and councillors are to refer situations of abuse to the Town Clerk - the Town Clerk is the responsible officer for implementing this policy and named person for Child Protection and Safeguarding within Council.

## 2. Responsibilities

- 2.1 All councillors, volunteers and staff of Council must:
- understand and apply this policy and procedures in their activities;
  - identify opportunities and undertake appropriate training to support them in their role;
  - act appropriately at all times and be able to challenge inappropriate behaviour in others;
  - be able to recognise harm and know how to report concerns in a timely and appropriate way
- 2.2 Councillors and managers must:
- encourage all staff and volunteers to understand this policy;
  - offer opportunities to undertake appropriate safeguarding training and refresher training;
  - ensure the policy and procedure is adhered to and to undertake regular compliance audits;
  - ensure that the Council's Whistle-blowing Policy is communicated to all staff and volunteers.
- 2.3 The role and responsibilities of the named person(s) are:
- to ensure that all staff are made aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that a child/young person/vulnerable adult may be subject to abuse or neglect
  - ensure that any concerns about a child or vulnerable adult are acted on, clearly recorded, referred on where necessary and, followed up to ensure the issues are addressed.
- 2.4 The named person(s) will record any reported incidents in relation to a child/young person/vulnerable adult or breach of safeguarding policies and procedures. This will be kept in a secure place and its contents will be confidential.

### 3. Procedures

- 3.1 The Council will maintain an operating procedure (see section 5 below).
- 3.2 The Town Clerk will always refer allegations or suspicions to Dorset Council Social Services for investigation.
- 3.3 The operating procedures shall include sections on: definition of abuse, what staff should do if they have concerns / a child/vulnerable adult says or indicates they are being abused, emergency action, allegations of abuse against staff and safer working procedures

### 4. Council Standards

- 4.1 Councillors, volunteers and other members of staff will not be subject to DBS checks unless there is a change in their council duties which requires regular contact with children or vulnerable people.
- 4.2 Some volunteers may be asked to submit two references depending on their role (including phone numbers) by reputable individuals (not family members) which the Town Clerk will check. Please see Council's Volunteer Policy for more information.

- 4.3 If the Council becomes aware or is informed of information from a reputable source (e.g. Police, NSPCC, Social Services etc.) that an individual is not suitable to be involved with a Council project, it has the right to stop the individual from having any further involvement in any Council projects or services.
- 4.4 A copy of this policy will be available for inspection at all relevant Council premises.

## 5. Safeguarding operating procedure

- 5.1 Contact information if a person or child provides information about abuse or neglect or they share information in groups when a Council representative is present:
- (i) For an adult referral contact Adult Access on 01305 221016 or email [adultaccess@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:adultaccess@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk) (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm) or out of hours 10305 858250.
  - (ii) For a child referral contact Children's Advice and Duty Service on 01305 228866.
  - (iii) The Police on 101 or for an emergency 999.
  - (iv) Inform the Town Clerk on 01202 022831.
- 5.2 Criteria:
- abuse or neglect are forms of maltreatment,
  - somebody may abuse or neglect a vulnerable person by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm,
  - persons may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or a stranger,
  - forms of abuse include physical abuse / harm, emotional abuse / ill treatment, sexual abuse including non-contact activities, neglect (persistent failure to meet a person's basic physical and/or psychological needs likely to result in the serious impairment of the person's health or development).

[End]