

Safeguarding Policy (Children and Vulnerable Adults) Over Parish Council

This policy will enable Over Parish Council to demonstrate its commitment and contribution to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children. Safeguarding should be seen as everybody's business and is the responsibility of everyone.

Over Parish Council's Policy Statement

- We have a Duty of Care for children, young people and vulnerable adults to safeguard their wellbeing and protect them from abuse.
- In respecting the rights of children and vulnerable adults the Parish Council will promote safeguarding good practice to help protect, prevent, and reduce the opportunity for harm and abuse.
- The Parish Council will ensure that if any allegations are reported to the Council they are dealt with swiftly and appropriately.
- The Parish Council aims to support and promote good practice from those working with children and vulnerable adults.
- Our policy supports Councillors/Clerk to make informed and confident responses to safeguarding concerns if they arise.
- The Parish Council promotes the health, welfare, and safety of children and vulnerable adults within our policies and decision making.

Definitions- For the purposes of this policy:

- A child is "Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday". Children Act 1989.
- An adult at risk is an individual who "Has needs for care and support, is experiencing, or at risk of those care and support needs and is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of or the experience of abuse or neglect". Care Act 2014.

Related Policies

This policy will need to be read in conjunction with the following Parish Council policies: Equality and Diversity, Data Protection, Working with Volunteers, Complaints Policy and any others deemed appropriate.

Safeguarding Responsibilities - Over Parish Council

- To ensure that all Councillors, Volunteers, and Employees are familiar with our policy and understand their responsibilities.
- To work with other agencies within the framework of the Local Safeguarding Boards if required.
- To provide safe facilities and undertake regular assessments and take swift remedial action when required.
- To ensure that all new Councillors are provided with a copy of the safeguarding policy.
- Contractors and others working directly with the Parish Council, such as Hirers/Event Organisers/ Community Volunteers etc, will be required, where relevant, to produce their own suitable safeguarding policy.
- The Parish Council will monitor and evaluate the policy annually or in the light of any changes to Government legislation and guidance.
- To ensure there is a lead person for safeguarding in the Parish Council. This will be for Over Parish Council the Parish Clerk. The Council will support and

enable the Clerk to undertake any safeguarding training identified as appropriate.

- To ensure as far as is reasonably practicable that everyone is safe and secure when accessing any facility or environment or facilitates that the Parish Council is responsible for be it premises or land.
- In the event of the Clerk or Councillor needing to make a safeguarding referral accurate records will be securely kept along with notes, records of conversations. Such records are to be stored in a secure place with access limited to the Parish Clerk.
- The Council has clear expectations that Councillors, Employees, all users of Parish Council facilities, Organisers of parish events, Volunteers those hiring / using Parish Council facilities communicate, behave, and interact in an appropriate and professional manner.
- The Parish Council expects those hiring or using parish facilities to undertake risk assessments of their activities including any safeguarding aspects.

Responding to a Concern of Abuse or an Allegation

Councillors do not work directly with vulnerable groups so the likelihood of involvement in a safeguarding referral is remote but not impossible. It is essential that Councillors and the Clerk are clear about what to do if they are directly involved in an allegation being disclosed to them, first or second hand, so that they can act swiftly and confidently.

If an allegation is made directly to a member of the council the following steps should be followed to help, ensure that the referral clearly sets out what the allegation is with the necessary detail needed, to enable a swift and appropriate response from the statutory agencies:

- Reassure the person concerned.
- Listen to what they are saying.
- Remain calm and do not show shock or disbelief.
- Tell them that the information will be treated seriously.
- Ask questions to ensure you gather the full facts **but do not start to investigate** or ask detailed probing questions.
- Do not promise to keep it a secret.
- Tell the child or adult at risk what you are going to do next to get help to keep him/her safe.
- Comply with the Parish Council's Data Protection Policy.

Recording an Allegation

- Use the adult at risk/child's words where possible.
- Record what they are saying.
- Record what you have been told/witnessed as soon as possible.
- Make the referral (see below)

Types of Abuse

Abuse significantly harms the physical and or emotional development of a child There are four main types of abuse perpetrated against children and adults

- physical abuse
- emotional abuse

- sexual abuse
- neglect.

Allegations Made About a Group or Organisation Using Parish Council Facilities

If a local resident or other member of the public shares safeguarding concerns or an allegation with Parish Councillors about something they have seen or heard during/on Parish Council facilities being hired for events, clubs etc they should be passed immediately to the Parish Clerk.

The Clerk will act for the Council by contacting the identified event/group leaders/contractors and sharing the concern. The Clerk will record the subsequent conversation/communication with the person who has been informed asking for confirmation that they have taken appropriate action as per their safeguarding policy.

If the Clerk remains concerned by the feedback (this will not be details about the case) or about actions taken by the group organisers/contractors, then the Clerk will call the relevant number below to make a direct referral.

Allegations Made About a Parish Councillor or Employee

If any such safeguarding allegation is made it should be reported to the Clerk. The Clerk will make a referral as appropriate / necessary. If appropriate, the Clerk will consult with/make a referral to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) Should the matter involve the Clerk the allegation should be reported to the Chair of the Parish Council or in exceptional circumstances a direct safeguarding referral made as below.

Making a Referral

Please dial 999 if the child or adult is in immediate danger.

Over Parish Council takes its safeguarding responsibilities very seriously and is committed to dealing with all aspects of abuse or neglect. Concerns that a child or adult is at risk of experiencing, or is experiencing, abuse or neglect, should be reported to Cambridgeshire County Council's Customer Services via the contact numbers below.

It is most likely to be the Parish Clerk who initiates this process for Over Parish Council as lead for safeguarding, but Councillors need to be familiar too in case they need to make a referral however unlikely.

No attempt should be made to investigate before making a referral. If you have a concern or allegation about a child or an adult being at risk, you need to call one of the numbers (Customer Services) below as soon as possible:

- **Children's Services: 0345 045 5203**
- **Adult Services: 0345 045 5202**
- **Emergency Duty Team (Out of Hours) 01733 23472**

If you have concerns about an adult working with a child under the age of 18 and this needs to be reported contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) [link access to the LADO page for more information](#)

Customer Services will refer concerns to the most appropriate health or social care team, who will then be able to review the concern raised.

Referrers can expect a call back within 48 hours to let them know that the concern has been received. In some instances, if a reported concern has been made on another person's behalf, the referrer may not be entitled to know what else is being done to support that person. If the referrer remains concerned about the referral, they have made they should contact Customer Services again.

For more advice about safeguarding

- adults visit www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/careandsupport
- children visit [Safeguarding children and child protection - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)

Policy approved and adopted by Over Parish Council on 9th April 2019

Reviewed on 9th February 2021

Review date due annually or in the light of any changes to Government legislation and guidance.

Appendix 1

Safeguarding Good Practice Guide - Over Parish Council

Whilst parish council members are unlikely to be involved with children or vulnerable adults during the performance of their duties, they need to be mindful of safeguarding issues/ good practice.

- Councillors are expected to adhere to the 'List of Recommended Behaviour' namely:
 - ✓ A minimum of two adults present when supervising children
 - ✓ Not to play physical contact games
 - ✓ Adults to always wear appropriate clothing
 - ✓ Ensure that accidents are recorded in an accident book
 - ✓ Never do anything of a personal nature for a young person
 - ✓ Use of appropriate language
- Keep secure records in an incident book of any allegations about a child/ young person made to a council member or employee.
- If there is a child abuse incident it should be reported immediately to the clerk who will be responsible for ensuring the matter is handled in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Board procedures and referred to the Council for further action.
- Facilities provided by the Parish Council are inspected on a regular basis and at least annually by a representative of RoSPA or a similar organisation.
- The Parish Council will share information about child protection and good practice with partner organisations, councillors, employees, volunteers, parents, and carers as required.
- In the event of a contractor, working directly for the Parish Council, being deemed to be working in any area where children or vulnerable adults may be

at risk, i.e., directly in contact, then that contractor will be asked to provide a copy of their Safeguarding Policy and/or evidence of DBS certificates.

- The Parish Council should have sight of any safeguarding policy from hirers before they are allowed to participate in the use of any Parish Council owned facilities.
- Some adults are more at risk of being abused than others and we need to be aware of who those are - older people, people with a visual or hearing impairment, people with a physical disability, people with learning disabilities or mental health problems, people living with HIV or AIDS who have care and support needs
- The terms of what is child abuse now includes sexual exploitation and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- The safeguarding of a child or an adult who is at risk or if a crime has been committed will override any need for consent.