

Name of meeting: Cabinet

Date: Tuesday 5 November 2019

Title of report: Corporate Safeguarding Policy

Purpose of report:

This report seeks approval for the introduction of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy 2019.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Yes - Affects all wards in Kirklees (Corporate policy)
Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)</u> ?	Key Decision – No Private Report/Private Appendix – No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services? Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning Support?	Signed off by Karl Battersby 01/10/2019
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr. Pattison

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: None

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes

1. Summary

Kirklees Council believes that safeguarding is everyone's business and all staff, whether they have a direct or indirect contact with children, young people and adults, or who have access to information about them, have a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare. Beyond this, the Council has a duty to make appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults across all its activities. Safeguarding is a shared responsibility and depends upon effective joint working between agencies and professionals that have different roles and expertise.

In 2017, an audit review was carried out as part of 2017/18 Internal Audit Plan for the purpose of providing an overview and assessment on the Council's activities and arrangements to fulfil its statutory duties in relation to safeguarding.

The audit review identified several areas for improvement and subsequent recommendations, this includes:

Rec 3: - The Council should consider highlighting its commitment to safeguarding in a Policy document...

The above has been addressed and incorporated through the development of the proposed Corporate Safeguarding Policy.

This is a corporate policy, operating as a framework for every service in the Council and defining the roles and responsibilities for all employees, managers, elected members and volunteers in the safeguarding of children, young people and adults.

The Corporate Safeguarding Policy was noted by Executive Team on 2nd October 2018, the introduction of which was endorsed, with agreement reached for the policy to act as an overarching framework for the Council and to reinforce the Council's commitment to safeguarding as everyone's business.

The policy has now been drafted in full, with approval from the Corporate Safeguarding Oversight Group, set up to oversee the corporate safeguarding agenda.

2. Information required to take a decision

The policy is underpinned by the Council's commitment in the Corporate Plan to make it clear that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, by joining up with partners, ensuring children and adults have good access to well informed advice, support and decision making, and there are effective, timely and proportionate responses when abuse or neglect occur.

The policy will act to enable all Council employees including those who are not directly involved in safeguarding, to understand their role and responsibilities when they have a safeguarding concern, how to report it and where to find additional information.

There is also an expectation that all of the workforce, Councillors and partners share an objective to help keep children, young people and adults at risk safe by contributing to:

- Creating and maintaining a safe environment
- Identifying where there are concerns and taking action to address them in partnership with other agencies
- Preventing unsuitable people from working with children, young people and adults at risk
- Ensuring the whole workforce understands safeguarding and their accountabilities and responsibilities
- Promoting safe practice and challenge poor and unsafe practice

The policy sets out a preventive approach that ensures safeguards are proactively put in place to prevent abuse and neglect occurring.

The Council requires a competent workforce of individuals who are able to identify instances in which there are grounds for concern about the welfare of a child or adult and initiate or take appropriate action to keep them safe.

The information contained within the policy will need to be communicated to all affected stakeholders and staff. All employees will need to be made aware of their duties to safeguard as per the principles outlined in the policy.

3. Implications for the Council

- **Working with People**

This policy sets out the Council's strategic commitment to the right of every child and adult to participate in a safe society free from violence, fear, abuse, bullying and discrimination. We as a Council will put the welfare of children and adults centrally in our policies and procedures; as a Council we will take a whole family approach by working closely with children, their parents, carers and adults to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable people. We will respect the rights, wishes, feelings and privacy of children and adults by listening to them and minimising any risks that may affect them. We will invest in preventative, restorative work and early intervention to endeavour to avoid situations where abuse or harm may occur.

- **Working with Partners**

The policy requires effective partnership working between all those involved with providing services for children, young people and adults at risk, including the Police, providers and Clinical Commissioning Groups. The policy also enacts Corporate Safeguarding as everybody's business in every department within the Council. Whilst Social Services is the lead service for dealing with enquiries regarding allegations / concerns that children and adults may be suffering significant harm, everyone working or contracted within the Council has a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children, young people and adults, whatever the role of the individual. This will require better and more transparent working relationships between every team in the Council to ensure clear and accessible lines of communication and governance.

- **Place Based Working**

This whole system, whole family approach focuses on community, developing place-based safeguarding practices based on local knowledge, networks and need. The policy will seek to enable and support staff to be innovative and creative in their roles, particularly those who work on the front-line, but who may not be directly involved in safeguarding. By encouraging staff to be thoughtful about the communities they work in, to understand issues related to safeguarding and how to escalate, the council can foster a working environment which is responsive and tuned into the needs of Kirklees diverse communities.

- **Improving outcomes for children**

The policy supports much improved outcomes for children by empowering all staff and elected Members, not just those already engaged with safeguarding children, to both understand and raise safeguarding concerns. Furthermore, the policy enables a comprehensive, whole-family approach to safeguarding children which supports the Council's corporate ambition to keep as many children as possible with their families and out of care, under the Best Start outcome.

- **Other (e.g. Legal/Financial or Human Resources)**

The policy sets out a set of expectations and behaviours of all staff that are likely to have HR/OD and financial implications, for instance:

- The need for identified roles across the Council to undertake a DBS/EDBS, with required refresh (5 years) aligned to a set of DBS procedures
- Requirements for all new managers/recruiting staff to undertake Safer Recruitment training.
- In the medium term, a review of internal recruitment processes to ensure safer recruitment principles are embedded into the Council's training offer

4. Consultees and their opinions

The policy has been noted and approved by Children's Services SLT, Adult Services SLT and Corporate Strategy SLT subject to the following amendments which have been made:

- Addition of Executive Summary
- Reference Communities Board in addition to Children's Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Board
- Reference School Safeguarding Officers
- Guidance Documents to be in plain English and structured around the Corporate focus of People, Partners and Place and include implementation plan

5. Next steps and timelines

Following approval by Cabinet, the policy and Corporate Safeguarding agenda will be managed by the Corporate Safeguarding Oversight Group.

6. Officer recommendations and reasons

The Corporate Safeguarding Policy represents an opportunity to both action the recommendation of the 2017 Audit Review and ensure delivery of the Councils commitment to a safe and cohesive Borough in the Corporate Plan as well as support a Best Start for all Children in Kirklees.

This report recommends that:

Cabinet approve the Corporate Safeguarding Policy in the understanding that it will provide the overarching safeguarding framework for the Council with supervision from the Corporate Safeguarding Oversight Group.

7. Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations

To consider how IT systems will support council-wide corporate safeguarding, in terms of procedures for raising safeguarding concerns, monitoring cases and supporting governance decisions.

8. Contact officer

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9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

Corporate Safeguarding Policy (Appended)

Key Decision Notice (Appended)

ET – 02/10/2018 Noted and Endorsed

Corporate Safeguarding Oversight Group – 16/08/2019 For info/ update

SLT Childrens – 10/09/2019 Approved

SLT Adults – 16/09/2019 Approved

SLT Corporate – 19/09/2019 Approved

Corporate Safeguarding Oversight Group – 26/09/2019 Approved

ET – 01/10/2019 Approved

Portfolio Holder Briefing 07/10/2019 - Approved

10. Service Director responsible

Amanda Evans