

Safeguarding Policy

Head of Service/Contact:	Rod Brown, Head of Housing & Community
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	N/A
Annexes/Appendices (attached):	Annex 1: Draft Safeguarding policy for children and adults
Other available papers (not attached):	None

Report summary

This report summarises the Council's safeguarding responsibilities and proposes a combined safeguarding policy for children and adults. The new policy updates current procedures to reflect best practice, clarifies reporting process and highlights differing forms of abuse and indicators as well as summarising other related policies and strategies.

Recommendation (s)

To agree the adoption of the Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults as set out in Annex 1 to this report.

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 This policy would contribute to the borough's priority Supporting our Community and aid the delivery of the objectives of the East Surrey Community Safety Partnership.

2 Background

- 2.1 A life that is free from harm, abuse, and neglect is a basic right of every person. The objective of safeguarding is to prevent and reduce the risk of harm to adults and children from abuse or other types of exploitation and impairment of development, while supporting individuals to maintain control over their lives and enabling them to make informed decisions without coercion.

Strategy and Resources Committee

27 November 2018

- 2.2 Although safeguarding is recognised as a key responsibility of local authorities, safeguarding is still everybody's business, and as neighbours, citizens, and community members we need to be alert to neglect and abuse, and be committed to reporting our concerns.
- 2.3 The council's existing safeguarding policy does not reflect current legislative requirements and is in need of updating. Surrey County Council is the statutory authority for safeguarding and have set out the adopted and recommended format for such policies which the proposed policy will meet.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The proposed Safeguarding Policy for Children and Adults sets out how the Council will meet its obligations to safeguard children and adults. It applies to staff, agency workers, volunteers and contractors employed by the Council. It is also applicable to Members in their role as Ward Councillors or undertaking official duties on behalf of the Council. The policy complements and supports the agreed multi-agency procedures set down by the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board and Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board.
- 3.2 The policy is governed by a set of key principles and themes, designed to ensure that people who are at risk experience the process in such a way that it is sensitive to individual circumstances, is person-centred and is outcome-focused. It is vital for successful safeguarding that the procedures in this policy are understood and applied consistently at an individual, managerial, and organisational level.
- 3.3 The policy follows the safeguarding guidelines promoted and adopted by the statutory body for safeguarding - Surrey County Council. The policy contributes to adopting a consistent approach to safeguarding by all boroughs and districts.
- 3.4 The policy identifies a wide range of common types of abuse or neglect that Councillors, staff, agency workers, volunteers and contractors employed by the Council should be aware of. Details of other related policies and strategies are included.
- 3.5 The essential elements of the policy are awareness of the Council's responsibilities for safeguarding and how to make a referral should a concern be raised. There will be a programme of awareness raising and appropriate training for all staff on how to make a referral if there is a concern.

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 This policy does not have any direct financial implications for the Council

Strategy and Resources Committee

27 November 2018

4.2 The Council recently approved the appointment of a Community Safety and Enforcement Officer who will serve as the primary contact with other agencies regarding safeguarding.

4.3 The Head of Housing and Community is identified as the Responsible Officer for safeguarding issues and will chair a Corporate Safeguarding Group who will meet routinely to review patterns in referrals and identify adaptations to current practice.

4.4 The Corporate Safeguarding Group will report periodically to senior officers to ensure adequate monitoring and governance is maintained.

4.5 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** *None for the purposes of this report.*

5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

5.1 All organisations that work or come into contact with children or vulnerable adults need to have safeguarding policies and procedures in place. The Council has a duty of care that includes safeguarding for children and people in a vulnerable situation. It is important to ensure both members and officers across the organisation are aware of how complaints and concerns about adults at risk are properly identified and acted upon. This is in addition to the range of statutory responsibilities for local authorities to have effective safeguarding arrangements as identified in the Children's Act 1989 and 2004 and more recently in the Care Act 2014, in place. By having a policy document which sets our responsibilities and how we will discharge them, ensures some of the most vulnerable within our communities are protected.

5.2 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** *none arising from the contents of this report.*

6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

6.1 The adoption of this policy will ensure the Council has an approach to safeguarding of children and adults which reflects good practice and reflects guidance from Surrey County Council.

6.2 The adoption and practice from following this policy will ensure the Council is effectively supporting the work of the east Surrey Community Safety partnership, of which this Council is a statutory member.

7 Partnerships

7.1 This policy will help strengthen how the Council works effectively with Surrey County Council in managing safeguarding within the borough.

7.2 The Council is an active member of the East Surrey Community Safety Partnership, which include many partners who work in the safeguarding arena.

Strategy and Resources Committee

27 November 2018

8 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 It is a statutory requirement to have effective arrangements in place to respond to safeguarding concerns. If an up to date policy was not agreed, the Council could encounter reputational risks in not being able to demonstrate effective arrangements were in place.
- 8.2 In the event of harm occurring, not having effective safeguarding arrangements in place could expose the council to financial and legal risks also.

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 9.1 It is a statutory responsibility for local authorities to have effective safeguarding arrangements identified and this policy fulfils this requirement.
- 9.2 The recommendation is that the attached draft safeguarding policy for children and adults is adopted.

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);