



Wimblington & Stonea
Parish Council

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Policy Document: Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

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Any queries or requests for amendments should be addressed to:

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Important

Call 999 if a Vulnerable adult is at immediate risk or call the police on 101 if you think a crime has been committed.

For more information follow the link -

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/adults-&-older-people/report-abuse

Introduction

The Purpose of this document is to define and describe the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy that has been adopted by Wimblington & Stonea Parish Council.

This policy document will be reviewed by members of Wimblington & Stonea Parish Council and updated or amended where necessary.

Overview

Wimblington & Stonea Parish Council believes that it is always unacceptable for a vulnerable adult to experience abuse or harm of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all vulnerable adults by a commitment to a practice that protects them.

Principles

The welfare of Vulnerable adults is paramount;

Wimblington & Stonea Parish Council is responsible for establishing appropriate policies and procedures to ensure that the Council's activities promote the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable adults, e.g. safe recruitment policies, safe working practice.

Wimblington & Stonea Parish Council has a duty to promote the well-being of vulnerable adults and to cooperate with the District and County Council in delivering its safeguarding duties;

All vulnerable adults have the right to be protected from harm, exploitation and abuse and to be provided with safe environments to live and play;

Working in partnership with vulnerable adults, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting vulnerable adults' welfare;

All adults whatever their background and culture, maternity or pregnancy status, age, disability, gender, racial origin, religious belief, sexual orientation and/or gender identity, have the right to participate in society in an environment which is safe and free from violence, fear, abuse, bullying and discrimination.

Purpose

This policy demonstrates how the Council will meet its legal obligations and reassure members of the public, service users, councillors, employees and people working on behalf of the Council:

What they can expect Wimblington & Stonea Parish Council to do to protect and safeguard vulnerable adults;

To provide councillors, staff and volunteers with guidance on the procedures that they should adopt in the event that they suspect a vulnerable adult may be experiencing, or be at risk of harm;

To voice any concerns they may have, through an established procedure;

That an effective recording and monitoring system is in place; That councillors, employees, volunteers and contracted service providers receive the appropriate training.

Policy Statement

Wimblington & Stonea Parish Council is committed to safeguarding vulnerable adults and protecting them from abuse when they are engaged in services organised and provided by, or on behalf of, the Council.

Wimblington & Stonea Parish Council will take any concern made by a councillor, employee, volunteer or contracted service provider, vulnerable adult seriously and sensitively.

Wimblington & Stonea Parish Council will not tolerate harassment of any councillor, employee, volunteer, contractor, vulnerable adult who raise concerns of abuse.

Wimblington & Stonea Parish Council with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Adults procedures and will respond positively to any recommendations regarding the improvement of its safeguarding policies and procedures.

Aims

Respecting the rights, wishes, feelings and privacy of vulnerable adults by listening to them and minimising risks that may affect them;

Preventing abuse and harm by good practice, creating a safe and healthy environment to avoid situations where abuse or allegations of abuse occur;

Ensuring that councillors, employees, volunteers and contracted service providers understand the Council's relevant Codes of Conduct and Safeguarding Policy;

Raising awareness among councillors and employees of the safeguarding duty the Council has in relation to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Group Acts, where the County Council has lead responsibility;

Ensuring that contracted, commissioned and grant funded services have safeguarding policies and procedures commensurate with the level of involvement they have with vulnerable adults;

Responding to any allegations appropriately and implementing the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures;

To share information about concerns with agencies that need to know, to achieve these aims, we will ensure that training appropriate to the level of involvement with vulnerable adults is available for councillors, employees, volunteers and contracted service providers;

Respond appropriately to concerns reported;

Develop and implement effective procedures for recording and responding to incidents and accidents;

Develop and implement effective procedures for recording and reporting to the appropriate authorities, any allegations or suspicions of harm or abuse;

Promote the welfare and wellbeing of vulnerable adults during and within council services, including in the planning of services;

Maintain a good level of safe working practice at all times to minimise risk to vulnerable adults that come into contact with councillors, employees, volunteers and contracted service providers.

Scope of this Policy

This Safeguarding Policy is for councillors, employees, volunteers or contracted service providers that come into contact with or deliver Council services to vulnerable adults.

Safe working culture and practice should be used on all occasions where councillors, employees, volunteers or contractors come into contact with vulnerable adults.

Safe recruiting is of particular importance in the following instances:

- Fun days/Village events.
- Work experience.
- Community engagement.
- Visits to homes.
- Parks and Grounds Maintenance.
- Sports and leisure activities.

Contractors-Commissioning-Grant Funded Organisations

Any contractor, sub-contractor, or other organisations commissioned or funded by or on behalf of the Council engaged in areas where workers are likely to come into regular contact with vulnerable adults, should have its own vulnerable adult policies.

Contractors, sub-contractors and other organisations commissioned or funded by or on behalf of the Council must undertake and monitor the validity and the level of the DBS (ex CRB/ISA) checks for their relevant workers.

Definitions

When the term “vulnerable adults” is used in this document, refers to a:

- A person aged 18 years or over and who may be unable to take care of themselves, or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited.
- Have a mental health problem or illness, including dementia.
- Have a disability.
- Have a sensory impairment.
- Are old and frail and or experiencing a temporary illness.
- People with a substance misuse or an alcohol problem.

When the term “Carer” is used, we mean it in the broadest sense to include partner, parents, and guardians.

The term “Contractors” also refers to sub-contractors and contracted service providers.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Safer recruitment decisions

Wimblington & Stonea Parish Council is not a vulnerable adults Services Authority and therefore, scope for working directly with vulnerable adults is limited.

Disclosure should only be sought where individuals have substantial or regular or unsupervised contact with vulnerable adults as part of their duties or responsibilities for or on behalf of the council.

DBS checks only guarantee that the person concerned doesn't have a relevant criminal conviction up to the date that the certificate is issued.

Risk assessments will be undertaken within the council to identify any jobs that are likely to involve regular and/or substantial unsupervised contact with vulnerable adults.

DBS checks will be undertaken appropriate to the right level of contact.

The risk assessment for an adult working with vulnerable adults must also take into account other forms of potential abuse (i.e. financial abuse).

When posts are advertised, applicants are notified if they are subject to a DBS check.

Checks are usually undertaken biennially

For further information about the Disclosure and Barring Service DBS, please check their external website.

Recognising Potential Abuse

In this policy, abuse covers physical, emotional, sexual and mental abuse including bullying.

Abuse can also be financial for vulnerable adults.

The abuse of vulnerable adults are difficult issues and present challenges to all who provide services for these groups.

Even for those experienced in working with vulnerable adults' abuse, it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place.

People working for Wimblington & Stonea Parish Council (whether in a paid or voluntary capacity) are not experts at such recognition.

However, they do have a responsibility to act if they have any concerns about the behaviour of someone (an adult towards a vulnerable adult).

Wimblington & Stonea Parish Council will therefore encourage and expect councillors and staff (or anybody working on behalf of the Council, either paid or unpaid) to discuss any concerns they may have about the welfare of a person immediately, with the chairman of the parish council or the parish council clerk.

It is not the responsibility of council members, employees, volunteers or contracted service provider to determine if abuse is taking place. It is however, their responsibility to follow the appropriate procedure within this policy should an alert be received, or concern raised that abuse may be taking place.

Following the correct procedure will ensure the correct people/agencies are informed and the appropriate action taken.

Data Protection, Record Retention and Storage of Information by The Parish Council

Copies of safeguarding referrals and any other relevant documents or records (e.g. telephone calls, CCTV information, etc.) relating to the incident will be securely stored.

This information will be retained in accordance with data protection periods and retention guidelines.

The Council's Data Protection Policy is available on the Website.

All staff and volunteers must also comply with the Council's internet and email policies.

Information relating to an employee will be retained in their personal file.

Access to Safeguarding incident records will be restricted only to the Parish Clerk and the Chairman of the Parish Council.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Confidentiality is a key issue in Safeguarding.

Safeguarding vulnerable adults is more important than the privacy of another person.

Sometimes sharing information is necessary to establish the level of risk to a vulnerable adult.

Ask yourself; is it safe for me NOT to share the information?

Decisions on who needs to be informed are set out in the Cambridgeshire Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Board Information Sharing Protocols.

It is important that information is shared appropriately and sensitively with relevant agencies.

Always record what you have shared, with whom and why.

If an allegation is made towards another member of staff, full support will be given in line with the Council's Whistle Blowing Policy.

When it is not appropriate to share concerns

Information obtained about individuals should usually be shared with them unless sharing the information would be likely to result in serious harm to the individual, or the information relates to a third party who expressly indicated the information should not be disclosed. (e.g. where a carer may be responsible or accused for the abuse or not able to respond to the situation appropriately).

Where information is obtained and recorded which should not be shared with the individual concerned for one of the above reasons, it should be noted on the record and the reasons recorded.

Complaints

All complaints relating to safeguarding issues will be dealt with in line with the Council's complaints policy.

Implementation and Monitoring

All members of council, staff and volunteers are responsible for carrying out their duties in a way that safeguards and promotes the welfare of vulnerable adults.

They must also act in a way that protects them from wrongful allegations of abuse as far as possible, in line with this policy.

They must bring matters of concern about safety and welfare vulnerable adults to the Parish Clerk or the Chairman of the Parish Council.

Contractors, sub-contractors or other organisations funded by or on behalf of the council are responsible for applying to appropriate DBS checks and that their staff comply with their appropriate Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedures.

They are also responsible for informing Council of any concerns they encounter and refer in relation to safeguarding issues.

Reporting and Monitoring

Understanding and compliance with procedures will be monitored through a range of mechanisms including: audits, one to ones, annual appraisals, employee feedback.

Communication

In order for this policy to be successfully implemented, it is essential that it be effectively communicated to all staff, councillors, volunteers, carers and anybody else affected.