



Adopted by Full Council on: 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Review Date: March 2025

Author: Town Clerk

Version: One

# **SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURE (CHILD AND VULNERABLE ADULTS)**

## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 Kingswood Town Council makes a positive contribution to a strong and safe community and recognises the right of every individual to stay safe. Kingswood Town Council comes into contact with children and/or vulnerable adults through the following activities:

- Delivery of services
- Involvement in activities within our properties
- Volunteer workdays
- General contact

1.2 This policy seeks to ensure that Kingswood Town Council undertakes its responsibilities with regard to protection of children and/or vulnerable adults and will respond to concerns appropriately. The policy establishes a framework to support paid and unpaid staff in their practices and clarifies the organisation's expectations. The Town Clerk is the Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult representative to whom any suspicions or concerns should be reported.

## **2.0 Legislation**

2.1 The principal pieces of legislation governing this policy are:

- Working together to safeguard Children 2010
- The Children Act 1989 • The Adoption and Children Act 2002:
- The Children act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Care Standards Act 2000
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

- The Police Act – CRB 1997
- Mental Health Act 1983
- NHS and Community Care Act 1990
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

### **3.0 Definitions**

3.1 Safeguarding is about embedding practices throughout the organisation to ensure the protection of children and vulnerable adults wherever possible. In contrast, child and adult protection is about responding to circumstances that arise.

3.2 Abuse is a selfish act of oppression and injustice, exploitation and manipulation of power by those in a position of authority. This can be caused by those inflicting harm or those who fail to act to

prevent harm. Abuse is not restricted to any socio-economic group, gender or culture. It can take a number of forms, including the following:

- Physical abuse
- Verbal abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Bullying
- Neglect
- Financial (or material) abuse

### **3.3 Definition of a child**

A child is under the age of 18 (as defined in the United Nations convention on the Rights of a Child).

### **3.4 Definition of Vulnerable Adults**

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited. This may include a person who:

- Is elderly and frail
- Has a mental illness including dementia
- Has a physical or sensory disability
- Has a learning disability
- Has a severe physical illness
- Is a substance misuser
- Is homeless

## **4.0 Responsibilities**

4.1 All staff (paid or unpaid) have responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies, and to pass on any welfare concerns using the required procedures. We expect all staff (paid or unpaid) to promote good practice by being an excellent role model, contribute to discussions about safeguarding and to positively involve people in developing safe practices.

4.2 Kingswood Town Council has responsibility to ensure:

- The policy is in place and appropriate
- The policy is accessible to all members of staff
- The policy is implemented
- The policy is monitored and reviewed on an agreed time scale or when changes are made to any of the legislation relating to this policy
- Sufficient resources are allocated to ensure that the policy can be effectively implemented
- That the policy is appropriate to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults
- Ensure all staff have access to suitable training
- Any volunteers working for the Town Council and having unsupervised access to vulnerable users (eg. Running children's entertainment) will be required to be DBS checked
- The lead officer is The Clerk to Kingswood Town Council
- Receive staff concerns about safeguarding and respond to all seriously, swiftly and appropriately
- Keep up to date with local arrangements for safeguarding and DBS
- Develop and maintain effective links with relevant agencies

## **5.0 Implementation Stages**

5.1 The scope of this Safeguarding Policy is broad ranging and in practice, it will be implemented via a range of policies and procedures within the organisation. These include:

- Grievance and disciplinary procedures – to address breaches of procedures/ policies
- Health and Safety policy, including lone working procedures, mitigating risk to staff and clients
- Equal Opportunities policy– ensuring safeguarding procedures are in line with this policy, in particular around discriminatory abuse and ensuring that the safeguarding policy and procedures are not discriminatory
- Data protection (how records are stored and access to those records)
- Reporting accidents and incidents

## **6.0 Communications training and support for staff**

6.1 The Staffing committee commits resources for induction, training of staff (paid and unpaid), effective communications and support mechanisms in relation to Safeguarding.

## **7.0 Professional Boundaries**

7.1 Kingswood Town Council expects staff to protect the professional integrity of themselves and the Council.

## 8.0 Reporting

8.1 The process outlined below details the stages involved in raising and reporting safeguarding concerns at Kingswood Town Council:

- Communicate your concerns with The Clerk or the Staffing Committee
- Seek medical attention for the vulnerable person if needed
- Discuss with parents of child or with vulnerable person
- Obtain permission to make referral if safe and appropriate
- If needed seek advice from the Children and Families helpdesk or adults helpdesk (below)
- Complete the Local Authority Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Incident Report Form if required and submit to the local authority within 24 hours of making a contact
- Ensure that feedback from the Local Authority is received and their response recorded. If the immediate manager is implicated, then refer to the Staffing Committee

## 9.0 Allegations Management

9.1 Kingswood Town Council recognises its duty to report concerns or allegations against its staff (paid or unpaid) within the organisation or by a professional from another organisation. The process for raising and dealing with allegations is as follows:

- a. First step: Any member of staff (paid or unpaid) from Kingswood Town Council is required to report any concerns in the first instance to the Clerk/staffing committee. A written record of the concern will be completed by the Clerk/Staffing Committee.
- b. Second step: Contact local authority for advice. In South Gloucestershire this can be done via the Safeguarding team: 01454 866000 or for the children's team 01454 868007 for the adult's team

<https://sites.southglos.gov.uk/safeguarding/#report>

<p>Adults Safeguarding Board</p>	<p>Children's Partnership</p>
<p>Concerned about an adult? 01454 868007 - Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm 01454 615165 - Out of hours and at weekends In an emergency please ring 999</p>	<p>Concerned about a child? 01454 866000 - Monday to Thursday 9am - 5pm 01454 866000 - Friday 9am - 4.30pm 01454 615165 - Out of hours and at weekends In an emergency please ring 999</p>

c. Third step: Follow the advice provided

9.2 Kingswood Town Council recognises its legal duty to report any concerns about unsafe practice by any of its paid or unpaid staff to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/barring-referrals>

## **10.0 Monitoring**

The organisation will monitor the following Safeguarding aspects:

- Safe recruitment practices
- DBS checks undertaken and reviewed
- References applied for new staff
- Records made and kept of supervision sessions
- Training – register/ record of staff training on child/ vulnerable adult protection
- Monitoring whether concerns are being reported and actioned
- Checking that policies are up to date and relevant
- Reviewing the current reporting procedure in place
- Presence and action of The Clerk responsible for Safeguarding is in post

## **11.0 Managing Information**

11.1 Information will be gathered, recorded and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Policies. All staff must be aware that they have a professional duty to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. The public interest in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults may override confidentiality interests. However, information will be shared on a need to know basis only, as judged by the Clerk.

11.2 All staff must be aware that they cannot promise service users or their families/ carers that they will keep secrets.

## **12.0 Communicating and reviewing the policy**

12.1 Kingswood Town Council will make clients aware of the Safeguarding Policy through the following means:

- Providing, if requested, a written copy of the policy, providing a link to the Web site where it will be available

12.2 This policy will be reviewed by the Council annually and when there are changes in legislation and changes in the provision of services and facilities offered by Kingswood Town Council.