



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

Cleobury Mortimer Town Council is committed to ensuring that children, young people and adults at risk are protected and kept safe from harm while engaging in any services, activities or facilities provided by the Council or on its behalf.

The Council recognises its duty of care and legal responsibilities under the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013 and the Care Act 2014.

SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy develops procedures and good practice within our organisation to ensure that each person can demonstrate that there is an understanding of the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk.

This policy applies to :

- Councillors and Employees of the Council
- Contractors and Volunteers engaged in Council activities
- Organisations or individuals using Council premises or facilities to deliver services.

It covers all Council-led or supported activities, events, meetings and services where children, young people or adults at risk may be present.

DEFINITIONS

- Child/Young Person – anyone under 18 years of age
- Adult at Risk – a person aged 18 years or older who is, or may be, in need of care/support and is unable to protect themselves from harm or exploitation.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Council will take all reasonable steps to:

- Promote a culture of safeguarding and which is embedded in all Council activities, services and decision-making
- Ensure Councillors, Employees, Contractors and Volunteers understand their safeguarding responsibilities and undertake appropriate training
- Ensure appropriate reporting routes are in place
- Work in partnership with statutory agencies such as Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership and West Mercia Police. The Council will fully co-operate with these agencies when they are conducting an official investigation into any abuse or neglect reports.

The Town Council has a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who is responsible for dealing with any safeguarding concerns and will:

- Act as the first point of contact for safeguarding concerns
- Escalate concerns where necessary to Shropshire Council or the Police as appropriate
- Maintain secure safeguarding records.

The DSL for the Council is Councillor Helen Smith – email: helen.smith@cleobury.org.uk.



The Deputy Safeguarding Officer is the Town Clerk - Mrs Dorothy McBride – phone 01299 271154 or email: dorothy.mcbride@cleobury.org.uk.

All councillors, staff, contractors and volunteers have a responsibility to:

- Recognise and report safeguarding concerns promptly and appropriately to the DSL
- Not investigate or question the individual other than to clarify the concern
- Treat all disclosures sensitively and confidentially
- Act in line with this policy and undertake required training.

IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY

To minimise risk and ensure a safe environment, the Council will:

- Carry out risk assessments for events and activities
- Require appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, if required, for Councillors, Employees, Contractors or Volunteers involved in regulated activities
- Ensure that there is adequate supervision for children and vulnerable adults engaging with the Council
- Maintain safe facilities ie lighting, access and signage
- Ensure hire agreements for Council facilities require compliance with safeguarding standards
- Ensure that all Councillors, Employees, Contractors and Volunteers have the contact number of the DSL in case of an emergency
- Ensure that lone working arrangements prioritise safety
- Ensure that all Councillors and Employees have up-to-date training to raise awareness of the Council's responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults. Training to be completed at least once every four years.
- Require the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy to complete Level 2 Safeguarding Training
- Ensure that safeguarding forms part of the induction for new Councillors, Employees, Contractors and Volunteers.

RECOGNISING CONCERNS

All Councillors, Employees, Contractors and Volunteers should be aware of the main categories of abuse:

- Physical, emotional or sexual abuse
- Domestic abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect or self-neglect
- Financial or material abuse
- Discriminatory abuse
- Organisational abuse
- Modern slavery
- Online abuse
- Exploitation including county lines, cuckooing, grooming.

Signs of abuse may include:

- Unexplained injuries
- Fearfulness or withdrawal
- Sudden changes in behaviour
- Financial irregularities
- Poor hygiene or malnutrition
- Distress or anxiety.



REPORTING CONCERNS

Any safeguarding concern must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or in their absence, to the Deputy Safeguarding Officer. The person who encounters a case of suspected or alleged abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. This is a task for the professional protection services.

Steps to record concerns:

- Stay calm and listen
- Take the disclosure seriously
- Do not promise confidentiality. Confidentiality must be respected, but safeguarding concerns must never be kept secret.
- Reassure the person they have done the right thing by reporting the concern
- Record the facts and report this immediately to the DSL.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will assess the issues and, if necessary, escalate as appropriate:

- For a child – phone Shropshire Council First Point of Contact on **0345 678 9021** or submit a report via the [Shropshire Council Children's Referral Portal](#)
- Alternatively, for a child, phone the **NSPCC Helpline on 0800 800 5000** for advice or reporting anonymously
- For an adult – Phone Shropshire Council First Point of Contact on **0345 678 9044**
- Outside normal office hours, contact the [Emergency Social Work Team](#) or phone **0345 678 9040**
- For non-urgent safeguarding concerns regarding a child, please visit [Children's Referral Portal](#)
- Alternatively, concerns can be reported online to the NSPCC via [their website](#) or phone 0800 800 5000
- Police (non-emergency 101 or / emergency 999).

If you believe a child, young person or adult to be at immediate risk of harm, or in need of emergency medical attention, call the emergency services on 999.

For the very latest information and advice about safeguarding children visit the [Shropshire Safeguarding Community Partnership website](#).

Or contact Childline: 0800 1111 / [website](#).

If the report is about the DSL or another councillor, it will also be investigated in line with Council policies and may be referred to Shropshire Council's Monitoring Officer and the Police where appropriate. Complaints about employees will be reported to the Town Clerk or Council Chair in the first instance and escalated as appropriate.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

The Council will treat personal data collected during the safeguarding process in accordance with its Data Protection Policy on processing personal data. Confidentiality will be respected and information given will only be shared with safeguarding authorities.

All safeguarding reports will be held securely and retained in line with the Council's Document Retention Policy.

Review

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed every four years and whenever there are any safeguarding incidents, legislative changes or amendments to guidance issued by relevant statutory bodies.

Next review: September 2030.