

ST IVES TOWN COUNCIL



**SAFEGUARDING POLICY
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS**

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SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

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1.0 AIM OF POLICY

1.1 The aim of this policy is to set out the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults in Cornwall and how this will be implemented by St Ives Town Council (the Council) in the discharge of its duties.

1.2 Policy Statement

The policy is in place in order for officers and councillors to work to prevent abuse and know what to do should a concern arise. They will enable St Ives Town Council to:

- Promote good practice and work in a way that can prevent harm and abuse occurring.
- Ensure that any allegations of abuse or suspicions are dealt with appropriately and the person experiencing the abuse is supported.

1.3 Everyone, including children, young people and vulnerable adults, has the right not to be abused. The Council recognises the need to ensure their welfare when they come into contact with the services it provides.

1.4 This policy applies to all members of staff of the Council, Councillors, volunteers and any individuals or organisations representing or who have a working relationship with the Council.

2.0 SCOPE OF POLICY

2.1 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all Council employees who, during the course of their employment, have direct or indirect contact with children and vulnerable adults, have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

2.2 This overarching policy addresses both children and vulnerable adults safeguarding responsibilities. However, the Council recognises that there are also some distinct differences between these groups set out in the policy.

2.3 Responsibilities of the Council

- To accept the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures, to provide a Duty of Care for children, young people and adults at risk of abuse, safeguard their wellbeing and protect them from abuse.
- To raise awareness of safeguarding to ensure that everyone can play their part in preventing and identifying and responding to abuse and neglect.
- To ensure that all staff, councillors, volunteers and any other individual working or acting on behalf of the Council are familiar with the policy and any associated procedures.
- To work with other agencies within the framework of both the Safeguarding Children Partnership for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (OSCP) and the Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB).
- To act within its confidentiality policy and will usually gain permission from adults before sharing information about them with another agency. The safeguarding of a child or an adult who is at risk or if a crime has been committed will override any need for consent.

- To make a safeguarding referral as appropriate i.e. if there is an immediate danger or the child/adult is at risk of harm.
- To ensure that all new staff, volunteers and councillors are provided with a copy of the safeguarding policy.
- To ensure all contractors/partners working directly with the Council meets the safeguarding standards as expected by the Council (A copy of the safeguarding policy must be given to any contractor/partner).
- To require all Councillors/volunteers and anyone paid to adopt and abide by this safeguarding policy and to understand their responsibilities therein.
- To monitor and evaluate the policy annually or in the light of any changes to Government legislation and guidance.
- To ensure there is a designated lead person for safeguarding at the Town Council, which is the Town Clerk.
- To ensure that the designated safeguarding lead undertakes LSCB/SAB endorsed safeguarding children and safeguarding adults training for this role and that they attend refresher training every three years.
- To ensure as far as is reasonably practicable that everyone is safe and secure in any facility or environment it provides or facilitates.
- Enhanced DBS checks will be required if any Councillor, volunteer or paid member of staff is required to teach, train, instruct, care for or supervise children or provides advice, guidance to children and/or is carrying out health care, personal care, assisting with cash, bills or shopping or with affairs or transportation for any adult. In the case of the current provision of services, this will include all staff and volunteers working in the Library and Information Service, the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor.
- To ensure records are kept of any referrals and any notes, records of conversations concerning that referral are kept in the folder and that it is stored in a secure place with limited access to designated people.

2.4 Related Policies

This policy will need to be read in conjunction with the following Council policies: Equality and Diversity, Data Protection, Working with Volunteers, Complaints Policy and any others deemed appropriate.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

3.1 Children and young people are defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday” Children Act 1989

3.2 Adults at Risk

An adult at risk is ‘any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and support’

3.3 A vulnerable adult is someone aged 18 or over:

- Who is, or may be, in need of community care services due to age, illness or a mental

- or physical disability;
- Who is, or may be, unable to take care of himself/herself, or unable to protect himself/herself against significant harm or exploitation.
- For example, a person who:
 - i. is frail due to age
 - ii. is suffering from mental illness or dementia
 - iii. has drug or alcohol problems
 - iv. has a learning disability
 - v. has mental or physical ill health or disability
 - vi. has sensory loss e.g. hearing/sight impairment

3.4 TYPES OF ABUSE

‘No Secrets’ produced by the Department for Health in 2000 described abuse as ‘a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons’. There are seven categories of abuse.

Physical: causing physical harm, including hitting, shaking, biting, grabbing, withholding food or drink, force-feeding, wrongly administering medicine, unnecessary restraint, failing to provide physical care and aids to living;

Sexual: including sexual assault, rape, inappropriate touching/molesting, forcing or enticing someone into sexual acts they don’t understand or feel powerless to refuse; grooming a child or young person in preparation for abuse.

Emotional or psychological: persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection, including verbal abuse, shouting, swearing, threatening abandonment or harm, isolating, taking away privacy or other rights, bullying/intimidation, blaming, belittling, silencing, controlling or humiliating;

Financial or material: illegal or improper use of an adult’s property, money or other assets without their informed consent or where the consent is obtained by fraud. It can include withholding money or possessions, theft of money or property, fraud, intentionally mismanaging finances, borrowing money and not repaying;

Neglect: persistent or severe failure to meet a person’s basic physical and psychological needs. It will result in serious impairment of their health or development, and can include withholding shelter, food, drink, heating and clothing, failing to provide access to health, social and educational services, ignoring physical care needs, exposing a person to unacceptable risk, failing to ensure adequate supervision or unresponsiveness to the basic emotional needs of a child;

Discriminatory: including slurs, harassment and maltreatment due to a protected characteristic (Equality Act 2010);

Institutional: including the use of systems and routines which neglect a person receiving formal care e.g. in a children’s home.

3.5 SIGNS OF ABUSE

There are many possible signs of abuse, none being conclusive on their own.

Examples include:

- i. Unexplained injury / weight loss / cuts and bruises / dirtiness
- ii. Changes in behaviour

- iii. Depression / low self-esteem
- iv. Lack of self-care / dehydration / abnormal eating pattern
- v. Harm to self
- vi. Obsessive behaviour
- vii. Bills not being paid
- viii. An overly critical or disrespectful carer who may bully or undermine
- ix. Isolation from usual network of friends, family or community

3.6 SAFEGUARDING

3.6.1 Safeguarding children from abuse and promoting their welfare means:

- i. Protecting children from maltreatment;
- ii. Preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- iii. Ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care;
- iv. Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

3.6.2 Safeguarding vulnerable adults means protecting them from maltreatment, and preventing injury or significant harm. Abuse violates an adult's human and civil rights. It can vary from treating someone with disrespect in a way which significantly affects the person's quality of life, to causing actual physical suffering.

3.6.3 A safeguarding concern arises if abuse is suspected or disclosed. Abuse can happen anywhere – at home, in a residential or nursing home, a hospital, in the workplace, at a day centre or educational establishment or in the street.

4.0 REPORTING SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

4.1 A safeguarding concern arises if abuse is suspected or disclosed. Abuse can happen anywhere – at home, in a residential or nursing home, a hospital, in the workplace, at a day centre or educational establishment or in the street.

4.2 We all have a responsibility to report any safeguarding concerns over the welfare of children, young people or vulnerable adults. This extends to the identification of signs of abuse, poor practice by staff, councillors and others acting for or on behalf of the Council, and allegations brought to our attention by a member of the public. Reporting safeguarding concerns can prevent serious abuse or harm from happening, or from escalating.

4.3 Staff, councillors and volunteers must not attempt to investigate abuse themselves; neither must they confront anyone who is allegedly responsible for abuse nor tell them that allegations have been made about them.

4.4 The officer responsible for receipt of concerns and forwarding them on is the Clerk. If the Clerk is absent do not wait for them to return to work.

4.5 Report safeguarding allegations or concerns to Cornwall Council's Children's or Adults Services at the earliest possible opportunity, and at least within 24 hours

4.6 Dial 999 if a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be in imminent danger or a criminal offence may have been committed

4.7 On reporting a concern as much factual information should be provided as possible. For example:

- The child, young person or vulnerable adult's name and address (and parents'/carers' address if different)
- The reason for concern – a note of significant events or conversations should be made

as promptly as possible to assist with any referral and subsequent investigation.
Evidence such texts or Facebook entries should be preserved

- Any other known factors which may be contributing to the problem

- Additional information such as age (or date of birth), ethnicity, religion, language and disabilities / specific needs.

4.8 The safeguarding concern should still be reported whether or not the information is complete.

5.0 CONFIDENTIALITY, RECORD KEEPING AND SHARING INFORMATION

5.1 Information about safeguarding concerns should be regarded as confidential. The information is not secret, however, and the Council will co-operate with investigations by Cornwall Council's Children's or Adults services, or the Police as applicable, and follow their advice to ensure that any risk to the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults is addressed.

5.2 Where a disclosure is made it is important that the staff member does not promise the child/young person/vulnerable adult to keep the information secret but says that they will only disclose it to someone who can help them.

5.3 It is extremely important that allegations or concerns are not discussed, as any breach of confidentiality could be damaging to the child or vulnerable adult, their family and any child protection investigation that may follow.

6.0 ALLEGATIONS AGAINST A COUNCILLOR OR MEMBER OF STAFF

6.1 If someone witnesses behaviour by a councillor, member of staff, contractor, partner or an allegation is made about them that indicates that they have, or may have:

- harmed a child, young person or vulnerable adult, or put them at risk of harm;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, young person or vulnerable adult or
- behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, young people or vulnerable adults,

They must report it as a safeguarding concern to the Police and/or Cornwall Council's Children's or Adults Services at the earliest possible opportunity.

6.2 A councillor or member of staff must report any allegation made against them to the Clerk or Chairman of the Staffing Committee.

6.3 Safeguarding concerns and allegations relating to staff will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure (including in instances where the member of staff resigns or leaves). However, investigations by the responsible authorities will take precedence over internal council procedures relating to conduct. The Clerk or Chair of the Staffing Committee will liaise with the responsible authorities to agree the appropriate course of action.

6.4 The Clerk or Chair of the Staffing Committee will seek advice from Cornwall Council's Children's or Adult Services or Police prior to informing a member of staff of an allegation against them. The Clerk or Chair of the Staffing Committee will offer appropriate welfare support to the member of staff and ensure that they are kept appropriately informed during any investigation process.

6.5 In accordance with the law, the Council will refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) any member of staff:

- who was dismissed because they harmed a child or adult;
- who was dismissed or removed from working in a regulated activity because they might have harmed a child or adult otherwise;
- who would have been dismissed for either of these reasons, but they resigned first; or
- who works with children or vulnerable adults in regulated activity and has been cautioned or convicted for a relevant offence.

6.6 Safeguarding concerns and allegations relating to councillors will be referred to the Monitoring Officer and dealt with in accordance with the Code of Conduct of Members of the Council.

7.0 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

7.1 Criminal record checks will be made where appropriate.

7.2 Roles that involve “regulated activities,” such as caring for, supervising or being in sole charge of children or vulnerable adults, require an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check. This may include checking whether someone is included in the two DBS ‘barred lists’ of individuals who are unsuitable for working with children and adults. DBS Checks must be obtained for staff and volunteers undertaking these roles, and they will not be permitted to commence unaccompanied work until they have been received. Members in civic roles, including the mayor, deputy mayor and any civic deputies, will also be subject to enhanced DBS checks.

7.3 It is against the law for employers to employ someone, or allow them to volunteer for this kind of work if they know they are on one of the barred lists.

8.0 INFORMATION AND TRAINING

8.1 Appropriate information will be made available to staff and councillors in the form of this policy and any necessary training.

9.0 EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS LICENSED BY, OR WORKING WITH, FOR, OR ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL.

9.1 The Council works with and through a number of external organisations such as charities, contractors, other public sector bodies etc. Where these external organisations are likely to have significant contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults as a direct result of their work for, on behalf of, or in partnership with the Council, they are required to have safeguarding procedures, such as safe recruitment and selection processes, in place.

9.2 They must be made aware of this policy and must provide the Council with a copy of their safeguarding procedure or undertake to act in accordance with the Council’s policy.

10. HOW TO MAKE A SAFEGUARDING REFERRAL

10.1 ADULTS ALERT/REFERRAL

If you’re an adult experiencing abuse or neglect, or if you’re concerned about an adult possibly experiencing abuse or neglect, contact Cornwall Council Adult Services on Adult Care, Health and Wellbeing on 0300 1234 131 or email accessteam.referral@cornwall.gov.uk Your call will be put through to the Access Team who will listen to what you have to say and will ask you questions so they fully understand the concerns you are raising.

10.2 If you’re a member of staff at the Town Council or other professional, all professionals must

complete [interagency adults safeguarding referral form](#). (a copy of the form is also appended to this policy) or email adultsafeguardingconcerns@cornwall.gov.uk or ring the Adult Safeguarding Service on 01872 326433 for advice. Staff should receive a written response to their referral. [Making a High Risk Behaviour Referral](#) - for professionals to use when referring a person to the High Risk Behaviour Panel.
Email to safeguardingadultsboard@cornwall.gov.uk

10.2 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE ALERT /REFERRAL

To report an incidence of abuse or neglect, please contact the Multi Agency Referral Unit (MARU) on **0300 123 1116**. ***A copy of the agency referral form is appended to this policy.***

The MARU will try to help by signposting to the service that can best help meet the child's needs. Sometimes they will recommend speaking to the Early Help Hub and they will complete an Early Help assessment. If you, or someone else, is concerned about the safety or welfare of a child(ren), the Children and Families Service will carry out an assessment to consider the most appropriate help.

An out of Hours Service is available for:

- Children, young people or families experiencing immediate difficulties; or
- People who have an immediate concern for the safety of a child/young person

The Cornwall Council's Children's Social Work out of Hours Service can be contacted on **01208 251 300**. The service is available on weekdays from 5.15pm each evening (4.45pm Fridays) until 8.45am the following morning; weekends from 4.45pm on Friday until 8.45am the following Monday and all public holidays.

Anyone telephoning the Out of Hours Service will be asked for their telephone number, location and which specialist Out of Hours Service they think they need. The Operator will then contact to the appropriate specialist service for the area.

The out of Hours Service does not deal with routine requests. Non-urgent requests should always be referred to the appropriate local Children's Social Work office during normal hours, telephone: 0300 1234 101.

If there is an immediate issue of safety then the Police should be called.