

REPORT FROM: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

TO: POLICIES AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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SAFEGUARDING POLICIES UPDATE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To discuss and agree the updated corporate Policies for Pendle Council (attached) and associated learning and development needs for Members.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Policy and Resources Committee agrees:

- (1) To comment on, and endorse, the revised 'Family Support and Safeguarding Children Policy' and 'Promoting Welfare and Safeguarding Adults Policy' (with any amendments following discussion).
- (2) That all Members are requested to attend a mandatory training session to ensure all Elected Members are familiar with the revised Policies and procedures.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- (1) To support Elected Members in protecting the welfare of children and young people and vulnerable adults in Pendle.
- (2) To ensure that Pendle Council is meeting its statutory duty in the Children Act 2004 and Care Act 2014.

ISSUE

Members may recall the two policies: 'Family Support and Safeguarding Children' and 'Safeguarding Adults'. The former was refreshed in May 2015 and the latter developed in February 2016 (as a new policy). Both were due for renewal in 2018.

Over the last few months, we've undertaken a review of both policies, working with other district councils and the Lancashire Safeguarding Boards (LSB), to ensure that they are fit for purpose. Although separate policies for children/adults remain, both have been condensed and now follow a

similar format. However, recognising that both the children and adult safeguarding reporting procedure is the same, it is proposed that the training elements for both policies are now combined.

Family Support & Safeguarding Children Policy

This is a condensed version of the May 2015 policy, with a revised format to align the contents with district needs and expectations. Early Help still features throughout with clear guidance on referral pathways for support agencies. Reference to CAF (Common Assessment Framework) has been modified to take account of district council's potential role in this process.

The Policy has been revised in a way that makes it more relevant to districts and the format easy to follow and process. It includes the following sections:

- Introduction
- Why do we have this Policy?
- What can I do to protect children and young people? (includes early help/ family support)
- How should I respond if a child/ young person discloses abuse?
- What if a child/ young person make an allegation against me?
- What if no-one is listening to me?
- Who are our Designated Safeguarding Officers?
- Corporate procedures for safeguarding children and young people (flow diagram)
- Understanding types of abuse
- Training
- Code of Conduct for staff, volunteers and councillors
- Contacts & Communications
- Reporting domestic abuse (Appendix 1)
- Examples of situations (Appendix 2)

Promoting Welfare and Safeguarding Adults Policy

In developing the Vulnerable Person's Policy: Debt Recovery, it became apparent that there was a corporate policy gap around supporting vulnerable adults. Previously, the Safeguarding Adults Policy solely focussed on vulnerable adults considered at risk of or experiencing harm with little or no reference to prevention and early support due mainly to the absence of any Continuum of Need Framework for adults, equivalent to that of the Pan-Lancashire Continuum of Need for Children.

Despite the absence of a wider prevention framework for adults, discussions with other districts and the Pendle Welfare Reform Group affirmed the need for districts to develop their own response for supporting vulnerable adults with low level unmet needs.

When considering the Vulnerable Person's Policy: Debt Recovery, Management Team agreed that the corporate policy gap would be addressed when reviewing the Adult Safeguarding Policy, which was completed over the summer. As such, the Adult Safeguarding Policy has been revised to take account of the wider prevention and Early Help agenda and is now the 'Promoting Welfare & Safeguarding Adults' Policy. This addresses Early Help/ support for vulnerable adults who are struggling as well as outlining the corporate Safeguarding procedures.

The format is similar to the Family Support & Safeguarding Children policy:

- Introduction
- Why do we have this Policy?
- What is the Policy about?
- What are my responsibilities? (includes Early Help)

- How should I respond if someone reports abuse?
- What do I do in an emergency?
- Is consent required to share concerns?
- Can I ever promise not to tell?
- What if no-one is listening?
- What happens next?
- Who are our Designated Safeguarding Officers?
- Corporate procedures for supporting Vulnerable Adults
- Understanding types of abuse
- Training
- Code of conduct for staff, volunteers and councillors
- Contacts & Communications
- Reporting domestic abuse (Appendix 1)
- Examples of situations (Appendix 2)
- Transforming Lives Referral Pathway (Appendix 3)

Staff Training

There were high levels of training/attendance at Pendle Council, for Levels 1 and 2 Safeguarding Children, and Safeguarding training for Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO) when it was first delivered in summer/autumn 2015. With the commitment to refresh the training every three years, refresher training will now be delivered to all PBC, Liberata and PLT staff through the corporate training programme.

Elected Members

Awareness-raising for Elected Members is recommended (based on the LGA: Tackling child sexual exploitation, A resource pack for councils, Dec 2014) and it is proposed that, as a minimum all Elected Members undertake the Level 1 Children and Adults Learning as a mandatory requirement. The training would link to, or be incorporated into, the Member training programme, particularly for those Elected Members who sit on Committees such as the Licensing Committee.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: The safeguarding processes are particularly relevant to Pendle Council as a statutory 'duty to cooperate' partner under the Lancashire Safeguarding Boards.

Financial: Staff time for training and to record and potentially, follow up, family support or safeguarding issues when they arise is regarded as part of existing relevant job roles. Additional training costs to be funded from the central training budget and potentially achieve economies of scale by joining with PLT and other district councils.

Legal: Pendle Council has a statutory duty to safeguard children (Children Act 2004) and adults (Care Act 2014).

Risk Management: The risks of not having a process to deal with and communicate safeguarding issues, are high for the children and adults concerned, as well as for Pendle Council's reputation.

Health and Safety: None arising directly from the report.

Climate Change: None arising directly from the report.

Community Safety: Safeguarding links directly to the work of the Community Safety Partnership in protecting our communities.

Equality and Diversity: Safeguarding could be a particular issue in more deprived Pendle wards where other geographical inequalities exist.

APPENDICES

Family Support and Safeguarding Children Policy

Promoting Welfare and Safeguarding Adults Policy

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Lancashire Safeguarding Children's Board:

<http://www.lancshiresafeguarding.org.uk/>

Lancashire Safeguarding Adults Board:

<http://www.lancshiresafeguarding.org.uk/lancashire-safeguarding-adults.aspx>