

REPORT FROM: HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMISSIONING

TO: EXECUTIVE

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Report Author: Gill Dickson

Tel. No: 66 1361

E-mail: Gill.dickson@pendle.gov.uk

SAFEGUARDING UPDATE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Members on the current position with regards to the Council's role in family support and safeguarding children and adults.

RECOMMENDATION

To note the content of this report and raise any issues for consideration.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION

To ensure that Pendle Council is meeting its statutory duty in the Children Act 2004 and Care Act 2014.

ISSUE

Background

1. This update follows the last report on 30 June 2022, and includes updates on:
 - Pendle Council Safeguarding Policies
 - Staff & Member Safeguarding Training update
 - Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)
 - Training for Taxi Drivers
 - Lancashire Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership and Lancashire Safeguarding Adults Board Section 11 / Care Act Compliance update

2. In 2022, PBC revised its two Safeguarding policies, 'Family Support & Safeguarding Children' and 'Promoting Welfare & Safeguarding Adults' to align them with the new Lancashire safeguarding governance arrangements and national and Lancashire directives. For example, the policies now refer to the Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) and Trauma Informed practices.
3. As with the previous Safeguarding policies, the revised policies were shared and endorsed by Pendle Leisure Trust.
4. Implementation was delivered through the staff and Elected Member Safeguarding refresher training programme, which commenced in October 2022.
5. The PBC Safeguarding policies are refreshed every 3 years; the next refresh for both PBC Safeguarding policies is June 2025. It is likely that the refresh policy will merge both the Childrens and Adults Safeguarding policies, in line with other Lancashire district approaches.

Staff & Member Safeguarding Training update

Training for all staff and Elected Members

6. An awareness session for Members, which includes Safeguarding and Health and Wellbeing in their broadest sense, is planned for 11 September 2024.
7. All PBC, Liberata and PLT staff received the refresher Safeguarding Awareness training to support policy implementation Oct 22 - Feb 2023. This was rolled out as a face to face 'train the trainer' session with Extended Management Team, who then cascaded this to staff via a PowerPoint presentation.

Training for front line staff

8. Since the last Executive Safeguarding update, an in-depth face to face training session was delivered for Housing and Environmental Health staff for those with contact with children/young people and/or parents/carers and adults.
9. The training was bespoke to our needs, combined both Adults and Children Safeguarding and facilitated by a specialist trainer with costs met by the corporate training budget.
10. Training for Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) for all Lancashire districts was delivered in September 2023. DSL training is undertaken every 3 years.

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL)

11. The DSL role currently sits with Head of Policy & Commissioning. The Deputy DSL is also in this Service Area.
12. Frontline staff are key to identifying safeguarding concerns in the community; they are the ones that flag any concerns to the DSLs. Given that all of PBC's operational staff are in the Place Directorate, good practice would suggest that such roles also sit within Place. Other districts have recognised the need for an operational safeguarding contact and have DSL/ Safeguarding Champions based within their frontline services. PBC can review its DSL approach as part of the Policy refresh next year. Alternative internal reporting/recording tools will also be explored to help to rationalise and simplify the process, enabling frontline staff and managers to report/record any concerns directly.

Training for Taxi Drivers

13. All Safeguarding training for taxi drivers is now delivered on-line via Blackburn with Darwen Learning platform. New license holders are required to undergo training as a condition of obtaining their license. Refresher sessions for existing drivers is carried out every 3 years, and this is taking place via the CSAP e-module 'Sexual Abuse and an Introduction to Child Sexual Exploitation'. Safeguarding and Child Sexual Exploitation training is now embedded in Pendle's revised Taxi Licensing Policy.
14. Since the last Safeguarding update report, 413 new drivers have undertaken the training and circa 484 existing drivers have undertaken the refresher training. To monitor compliance, Taxi drivers are required to send PBC their completion certificate.

Lancashire Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (CSAP) and Lancashire Safeguarding Adults Board Section 11 / Care Act Compliance update

15. Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on key people and bodies to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The application of this duty will vary according to the nature of each agency and its functions.
16. The Audit Tool is circulated to partners so that the Safeguarding Boards can assess compliance with the duty. It is used across pan-Lancashire, including Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool. Pendle Council has submitted a return on this audit tool since it was introduced in 2012. The last one was in 2022.
17. We are currently awaiting instruction from CSAP about the next Section 11, the outcome of which form the basis of an action plan to monitor areas for improvement.

Next Steps

18. The Policy refresh, and roll out of the associated training, will commence in 2025.
19. PBC will seek to enhance its Safeguarding reporting and recording mechanisms, making better use of IT and empowering frontline staff to take action. Both service area Safeguarding Champions and DSL allocation will be reviewed as part of the Policy refresh in 2025.
20. The next Executive update report will be June 2025, for Members to consider the refreshed policies and associated refresher training courses.
21. To continue the joint work with PLT, other districts and the CSAP.

IMPLICATIONS

Policy: This update relates to both the existing Family Support and Safeguarding Children Policy and Promoting Welfare and Safeguarding Adults Policy.

Financial: None arising directly from the report.

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

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

https://www.pendle.gov.uk/downloads/download/2944/safeguarding_policies.