



Safeguarding Policy

Lytchett Minster and Upton Town Council
LMUTC/SH/Pol31/VMarch25

Approved by Town Council: 18 March 2025

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Policy Statement

Lytchett Minster and Upton Town Council is committed to ensuring that children and vulnerable adults are protected and kept safe from harm whilst they are engaged in any activity associated with the Town Council.

Policy Objective

The purpose of this document is to introduce the Council's "Policy and Guidelines for Safeguarding Children and Adults".

The following are the objectives of the Safeguarding policy and Guidelines:

- To highlight how Lytchett Minster and Upton Town Council undertakes its legal commitments in the field of safeguarding children and adults.
- To give assurance to members of the public, service users, councillors and employees and people working on behalf of the Council that there are clear arrangements in place to safeguard and protect children and adults.
- That Council staff and Councillors have clear guidelines for when a child or adult may be at risk of harm, or their wellbeing is being adversely affected.
- To ensure that any staff within the Council work together to protect people from abuse or harm of any kind.
- To ensure that where possible all facilities and activities offered by the Town Council are designed and maintained to limit risk to children and vulnerable people.
- To promote the general welfare, health and development of children by being aware of child protection issues and to be able to respond where appropriate as a local government organisation.
- To develop procedures in recording and responding to accidents and complaints and to alleged or suspected incidents of abuse and neglect.
- As the Town Council does not directly provide care or supervision services to children, it expects all children using its facilities to do so with the consent and the necessary supervision of a parent or other responsible adult.

Scope

This policy relates to all 'children' and to adults at risk over the age of 18 regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or religion or cultural background.

By the nature of the organisation, it is inevitable that various degrees of contact with children and adults at risk will occur and it is therefore our policy to have in place clear guidelines for safeguarding and promoting their welfare as well as protecting our employees and other adults in a position of responsibility from potential allegations of abuse.

Responsibilities

All members, volunteers and staff of Lytchett Minster & Upton Town Council must:

- Understand and apply this policy and procedures in their activities
- Identify opportunities and undertake appropriate training to support them in their role
- Act appropriately at all times and be able to challenge inappropriate behaviour in others
- Be able to recognise harm and know how to report concerns in a timely and appropriate way

Members and Managers of Lytchett Minster & Upton Town Council must:

- Encourage all staff and volunteers to understand this policy
- Offer opportunities to undertake appropriate safeguarding training and refresher training
- Ensure the policy and procedure is adhered to and to undertake regular compliance audits
- Ensure that the Council's whistle-blowing policy is communicated to all staff and volunteers.

The role and responsibilities of the named person(s) are:

- To ensure that all staff are made aware of what they should do and who they should go to if they are concerned that a child/young person/vulnerable adult may be subject to abuse or neglect
- Ensure that any concerns about a child or vulnerable adult are acted on, clearly recorded, referred on where necessary and, followed up to ensure the issues are addressed.
- The named person(s) will record any reported incidents in relation to a child/young person/vulnerable adult or breach of Safeguarding policies and procedures. This will be kept in a secure place and its contents will be confidential.

Procedures

The Council will maintain an operating procedure (see Appendix 1).

The Town Clerk will always refer allegations or suspicions to Dorset Council Social Services for investigation.

The operating procedures shall include sections on: definition of abuse, what staff should do if they have concerns / a child/vulnerable adult says or indicates they are being abused, exploited, emergency action, allegations of abuse against staff and safer working procedures

Equalities

The equalities policy must be applied to ensure there is no discrimination based on race and ethnicity, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion and belief, language or human rights.

Definitions

- Safeguarding is the process of protecting vulnerable people, whether from crime, other forms of abuse or from being drawn into terrorist related activity.
- Vulnerable adults - adults, where vulnerable activities as defined by legislation take place (any person aged 18 years or over who is or may be in need of community services by reason of mental, physical or learning disability, age or illness AND is or may be unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation).
- Children are legally defined as any person under the age of 18.

Aims

The aims of the policy are to:

- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties within the scope of this policy.
- Support the promotion of a safe working environment and a culture of care in which the rights of all vulnerable people are protected and respected.
- Promote best practice in how employees and associated workers interact with vulnerable people.

Responsibilities – Safeguarding Officer

The Town Clerk is the Council's designated Safeguarding Officer responsible for ensuring that:

- Promote best practice in how employees and associated workers interact with vulnerable people.
- Advice and information is provided relating to safeguarding concerns.
- Consideration to safeguarding should be considered in any risk assessment for Town Council events.
- Information from employees, members, volunteers, children, vulnerable adults or parents and carers who have safeguarding concerns is received and recorded.
- Information is assessed promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate.
- Consultation take place initially with Children or Adult Services to test out any doubts or uncertainty about concerns as they arise.
- A formal referral to a statutory agency or the police without delay and ensure the proper transfer of information relating to dealings with children and vulnerable adults, where necessary.

- The Council's safeguarding policies and procedure are up to date and compliant with legislation and guidance.
- Appropriate training is available for employees, members and volunteers.
- Advice is available for staff regarding posts which may require checks for previous criminal record through Disclose and barring service (DBS)

Appendix 1

1. **Safeguarding operating procedure**

1.1 Contact information if a person or child provides information about abuse or neglect or they share information in groups when a Council representative is present:

- (i) For an adult referral contact Adult Access on 01305 221016 or email adultaccess@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm) or out of hours 10305 858250.
- (ii) For a child referral contact Children's Advice and Duty Service on 01305 228866 and .
- (iii) The Police on 101 or for an emergency 999.
- (iv) Inform the Town Clerk on 01202 022831.
- (v) Clerks within Dorset must contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) via lado@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk if they ever become aware of an allegation that a person who works with children (Town Council councillors and / or employees) has behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child; possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child or; behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that they may pose a risk of harm to children.

This applies not only to people who are employed to work with children, but also to unpaid volunteers and to people working on a casual, agency or self-employed basis.

The LADO must be contacted within 1 working day in respect of all of the above circumstances. The LADO is available to discuss concerns and to assist clerks in deciding whether they need to make a referral and take any immediate action to protect a child.

1.2 Criteria:

- abuse or neglect are forms of maltreatment,
- somebody may abuse or neglect a vulnerable person by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm,
- persons may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or a stranger,
- forms of abuse include physical abuse / harm, emotional abuse / ill treatment, sexual abuse including non-contact activities, neglect (persistent failure to meet a person's basic physical and/or psychological needs likely to result in the serious impairment of the person's health or development).