

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leader and Cabinet

27 June 2013

AUTHOR/S: Director of Housing

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Purpose

1. To present to Cabinet a revised safeguarding policy which brings together for the first time, the policies relating to both adults and children.
2. This is a key decision because it is likely to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards and it was published in the Council's forward plan on 29 May 2013.

Recommendation

3. Cabinet is recommended to approve the updated Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedure attached as **Appendix A**.

Reasons for recommendation

4. The renewed policy enables the Council to meet its legal obligations.

Background

5. The Council must have a safeguarding policy in relation to children in accordance with section 11 of the Children's Act 2004.
6. The Council currently has separate policies dating from 2009 for safeguarding children and the protection of vulnerable adults.

Considerations

7. There is a need to refresh the policies to take into account recent legal changes. There have been incremental legislative changes arising from the recommendations from Government reviews such as the Munro Report. There have also been some adjustments to definitions as to what constitutes abuse. For example, the definition of domestic violence can now include violence, abuse and controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour of anyone over the age of 16 regardless of gender or sexuality. These have been addressed in the new policy.
8. The Council has also been involved in significant work with partner agencies within the County. This work includes working with the Local Safeguarding Childrens Board, representing districts on the County Council's Multi-Agency Referral Unit, working on Together for Families as part of a Countywide approach to "high demand families" and representing districts on the County Council's Adult Safeguarding Board. From many of these boards there are sub-groups that are task specific to look at issues arising such as child sexual exploitation and the housing services role in the Multi-

Agency Referral Unit. It is therefore proposed that to enable a more holistic approach that the policies are combined to reflect the Council's commitment to safeguarding.

9. In amalgamating the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults policies and incorporating families there is no designated single portfolio holder with such responsibility; it is now shared across a number of portfolios.

Options

10. Cabinet may choose to approve the new policy as it is presented in Appendix A.
11. Cabinet may also choose to accept the new policy subject to some final amendments or may choose to reject the policy and ask for it to be re-presented.

Implications

12. Financial	Small costs associated with training and attendance at multi-agency forums.
Legal	Under the Safeguarding Childrens Act the Council must have a Safeguarding Policy, trained Designated Officers, Senior Named Officers and Children's Champions (Senior staff and Elected Member).
Staffing	Trained designate officers must be identified by the Council.
Risk Management	The Council will be in breach of its legal obligations if it does not have an appropriate safeguarding policy in place. The policy is designed to ensure that issues of concern identified by Council officers in the course of their work are reported and acted upon in an effective way for the protection of vulnerable people in our district.
Equality and Diversity	This policy impacts positively on children and vulnerable adults
Equality Impact Assessment completed	Yes
Climate Change	N/A

Consultations

13. No further consultations have been undertaken as the original policies were fully consulted on and a task for the on-going action is to involve the newly formed Youth Council on the Safeguarding Groups Action Plan.

Consultation with Children and Young People

14. A task arising from the Section 11 Audit 2012/13 is to involve the newly formed Youth Council on the Safeguarding Groups Action Plan.

Effect on Strategic Aims

15. This policy supports the Council to ensure that it continues to offer an outstanding quality of life for its residents.

Conclusions / Summary

16. The policy enables the Council to meet its legal obligations to safeguarding children and also to provide a framework from which the Safeguarding Group officers group can work to ensure that policies and procedures are kept up to date with changes in law, definition and working practices.

Background Papers: The Councils Safeguarding Children and Protection of Vulnerable Adults policies 2009

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