

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leader and Cabinet
AUTHORS: Management Team

20th July 2004

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE FROM ABUSE POLICY AND PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE ADULTS FROM ABUSE POLICY

Purpose

1. To consider the "Protection of Children and Young People from Abuse Policy" (**Appendix A**) and the "Protection of Vulnerable Adults from Abuse Policy" (**Appendix B**) and agree that implementation should commence in accordance with the recommendations.

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2.

	The policy sets out the means by which this authority will ensure it works in close partnership with Cambridgeshire Social Services (CSS) to enable it to carry out its lead role in both areas.
Partnership	The policy addresses one of the key elements of the Community Strategy vision, which is to provide "Safe, healthy, and active communities" by working with residents in local communities, and with the voluntary and community organisations, which support them.

Background

3. Over recent years the government has introduced various statutory obligations and related initiatives, which require all authorities to cooperate more fully so as to ensure that abuse situations are highlighted as early as possible. The key contribution that all District Councils are expected to play is by being aware and in bringing concerns to the attention of the lead authority, which is Cambridgeshire Social Services.

Considerations

4. There are already various service policies/guidelines in place (e.g. Sheltered Housing) or being considered to meet the requirements of the Supporting People legislation.
5. These two corporate policies will ensure the authority complies with the needs of those customers who can be identified as vulnerable adults, in accordance with current and developing legislation. It also identifies the over-riding principles, which any service guidelines must adhere to.
6. The Lead authority, with the specialist skills to investigate cases of abuse is the County Council's Social Services Department. This policy identifies the very important role that the District Council can play to ensure that effective and robust links are maintained with Social Services and in there is an awareness of relevant

issues by employees and councillors concerned. Only in this way will the needs of vulnerable people be secured.

7. The potential negative implication of not requiring abuse awareness training to be undertaken would be that staff may miss potential or actual abuse situations. They might also inadvertently (i.e. through ignorance) put themselves in situations of risk where they might be falsely accused of causing abuse.

Financial Implication:

8. The emphasis in these policies is to enable staff and Members to be aware of potential abuse situations and to refer the matter to the appropriate authorities. There are no direct financial implications due to these policies. The majority of training is freely available from the lead Authority (i.e. CSS). If appropriate Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks have not yet been carried out then there will be a need to fund additional checks at £15 per check.

Legal Implications

9. There could be considerable legal liability if the authority was found not to have a clear policy and ongoing implementation proposals to ensure potential abuse situations are highlighted as soon as possible to the Lead Authority.

Staffing Implications:

10. Where appropriate awareness training has not been undertaken then those staff affected will need to complete that training.
11. Management Team has identified two corporate lead officers to be owners of the two policies to ensure they are kept up-to-date etc. These two officers have not yet attended appropriate training courses. It would be unreasonable to expect them to take on this key responsibility until the training has been completed. It is anticipated that appropriate training arrangements can be made by the autumn.

Consultations:

12. There has been extensive internal consultation, which involved appropriate staff from all departments and included a workshop event on January 13th 2004.
13. The Adult Protection Coordinator (Ivan Molyneux), Cambridgeshire County Council, Social Services Department, has been very helpful in reviewing each draft and has indicated his approval of these guidelines.

Conclusions

14. The Cabinet is recommended to formalise these policies to ensure the corporate view is used to develop service guidelines and to ensure staff are fully prepared to enable them to recognise abuse situations.

Recommendations

15. That Cabinet:
 - (a) approve the two policies attached as Appendix A and Appendix B to this report;
 - (b) agree there should be a progressive implementation, subject to information and training being provided across the Council, with a view to full implementation by autumn 2004.

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