

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITIES and HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD

10 November 2020

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 REVISED SAFEGUARDING POLICY

To seek endorsement of the updated Safeguarding Policy

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Since 2016 the Council has had a combined Safeguarding Policy and Reporting Procedure for Children, Young People and Adults at Risk. The Policy needs to be updated and endorsed by the Council on an annual basis.

1.1.2 The Council has a Safeguarding Task Group which oversees safeguarding work and is responsible for updating and maintaining the Policy. A revised version of the Safeguarding Policy is attached as Annex 1 of this report.

1.2 Aims of the Safeguarding Policy

1.2.1 The policy aims to ensure that an overarching approach to safeguarding is embedded within all Council services and that staff, elected Members, those delivering services on behalf of the Council and volunteers have a good understanding of safeguarding guidelines and good practice.

The policy aims to:

- Raise awareness of the duties and responsibilities for children, young people and adults at risk of harm
- Encourage good practice among staff, elected members, volunteers and contractors, to safeguard children and adults at risk who receive Council services
- Provide clear guidance on procedures to be adopted if it is suspected that an adult, young person or child may be at risk of harm

1.3 Updates to the Policy

- 1.3.1 There have been some changes since the Safeguarding Policy was last brought to the attention of the Board. The Kent Safeguarding Children Board has changed to become the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KSCMP), with slightly different reporting arrangements and responsibilities. These revisions have been included in the updated version.
- 1.3.2 With regard to adult safeguarding, Kent County Council no longer accept “Adult LADO” referrals (LADO- Local Authority Designated Officer). These referrals were specifically for people wishing to report concerns against any person who works with adults in a position of trust. It is now important that the Council has its own policy and procedures in place to respond to these concerns. This is reflected in the revised policy with clear pathways for raising these concerns, including links to the Councils Whistleblowing Procedure.
- 1.3.3 As with previous versions of the policy, there is advice and guidance provided to encourage everyone to respond to safeguarding issues and concerns. This has become particularly relevant in the current climate, as we know the effects of the Covid restrictions have increased difficulties for many, leaving some people more vulnerable, more susceptible to abuse and also increasing anxiety and mental health issues.
- 1.3.4 To ensure the profile of safeguarding remains high and is a focus for everyone at the Council, we have appointed a Member Champion for Safeguarding. Councillor Rhodes has agreed to undertake this role and can act as another point of contact in addition to any of the Council Safeguarding Designated Officers.

1.4 Legal Implications

- 1.4.1 The Children Act 2004
- 1.4.2 The Care Act 2014

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.5.1 The Council contributes £1500 per year towards the running of the KSCMP. This funding enables KSCMP to provide free training on a variety of child safeguarding issues.

1.6 Risk Assessment

- 1.6.1 N/A

1.7 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.7.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.8 Policy Considerations

1.8.1 Community

1.8.2 Equalities/Diversity

1.8.3 Health and Safety

1.8.4 Safeguarding Children Framework

1.8.5 Young People

1.9 Recommendations

1.9.1 That the revised version of the Safeguarding Policy and Reporting Procedure for Children, Young People and Adults at Risk be endorsed.

1.9.2 That Councillor Rhodes be the Member Champion for Safeguarding.

The Chief Executive confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

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Nil

Julie Beilby
Chief Executive