

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

03 October 2023

Report of the Chief Executive

Part 1- Public

Executive Non Key Decisions

1 **REVISED SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND REPORTING PROCEDURE**

To endorse the revised Safeguarding Policy and Reporting Procedure 2023 – 2027

1.1 **Background**

1.1.1 The Council has had a combined Safeguarding Policy and Reporting Procedure for Children, Young People and Adults at Risk. Members endorsed the previous Safeguarding Policy in 2020 and it now needs to be updated to reflect additional revised guidance and procedures.

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 Due to evolving policies and procedures including updated information from the Safeguarding Boards, we have made some revisions to the TMBC Policy.
- 1.3.2 We have added to the information on self-neglect and hoarding, with a link to the revised policy and clutter rating, to help any staff who are visiting properties to correctly identify this issue and understand the process for referrals and support. In addition, there are sections added with links to the Mental Capacity Act, the “Think Family” toolkit and “Making Safeguarding Personal”. All these areas were highlighted during the external safeguarding audit and peer review session undertaken by the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board.
- 1.3.3 Going forward, as new safeguarding practice and procedures are endorsed by the Safeguarding Boards, the TMBC Policy will be amended accordingly. Any, major changes, or amendments will be brought to the attention of Members and staff.
- 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 Keers 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
- 1.4.3 Mental Capacity Act

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.5.1 The Council contributes £1,500 per year towards the running of the KSCMP. This funding enables KSCMP to provide free training on a variety of child safeguarding issues.
- 1.5.2 The Council has been using QES (secure safeguarding database) on a free trial basis for one year. This arrangement is due to end 1 December 2023 and will cost approximately £2,500 per year thereafter.

1.6 Risk Assessment

- 1.6.1 Safeguarding and Prevent are included on the Councils Strategic Risk Register. There would likely be a significant impact should a child, young person or adult at risk of harm, including radicalisation and child exploitation, if TMBC are unable to demonstrate appropriate processes were in place.

A Section 11 (audit of child safeguarding) is undertaken every other year, with review and recommendations for improvement provided by KSCMP. In addition, a

KMSAB Self-Assessment Audit and Peer Review take place every other year in relation to Adult Safeguarding. Alongside the Council's own internal auditing, measures are in place to identify any areas of risk or requirements for improvement.

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 Keers **BE APPOINTED** 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.

1.9.3

Background papers:

contact: Gill Fox

Nil

Julie Beilby
Chief Executive