

## BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Report of:** Cllr Paul Claussen, Executive Member for Place

**To:** Cabinet 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018

**Author:** Donna Hall, Licensing and Business Support Manager  
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**Subject:** Safeguarding Policy

**Purpose:** To consider and approve the new Safeguarding Policy for Breckland Council

### **Recommendation(s):**

- 1) That the Cabinet approve and agree to adopt the new Safeguarding Policy
- 2) That delegated authority be given to the Executive Director for Strategy and Governance in consultation with the Executive Member for Place to make minor amendments to this policy

### **1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Safeguarding encompasses legal duties and responsibilities to protect people's health, wellbeing and human rights, supporting them to prevent problems from escalating and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.
- 1.2 District Councils have a range of statutory duties to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of individuals and communities which complement but do not duplicate those of our partners. We work with a wide range of partners including: Childrens Services; Adult Social Care; Health; Police; voluntary organisations and may more.
- 1.3 This Council embraces its duties and responsibilities to keep people safe. A policy ensures that we fulfil our legal duties, taking consistent and effective action to protect those who need safeguarding. This includes:
  - Having effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place
  - Having a workforce who know how to identify concerns
  - Referring concerns to partner agencies
  - Working with closely partners (e.g. police, social care, etc)
  - Undertaking regular audit and scrutiny to test our effectiveness.
- 1.4 This policy and its related procedures apply to and must be available to and followed by all staff, councillors, volunteers, and contractors or consultants working on behalf of and/or representing the Council.
- 1.5 An up to date detailed policy is a key tool which goes some way to enabling us to demonstrate compliance with our obligations as a District Council under the Children Act 2004 and the Care Act 2014.

- 1.6 Breckland Council has had a Child Protection Policy in place for many years which has been due a refresh. It was agreed that the Council also needed to ensure that a policy in relation to safeguarding adults was adopted, so a joint policy has now been developed.
- 1.7 The Safeguarding Policy has been developed in consultation with the Norfolk Children and Adults Safeguarding Boards. Much of the detail in the policy is there to reflect the Boards' current positions and protocols on safeguarding.
- 1.8 The policy sets the strategic position and outlines key information in relation to safeguarding. Procedures have also been written for staff to provide information and processes in more detail. The procedures relate to key areas including: Children; Adults; Domestic Abuse; Hate crime; Modern Day Slavery and Human Trafficking; PREVENT and radicalisation.
- 1.9 Internally, safeguarding is governed by a Strategic Board which is chaired by the Executive Director of Strategy and Governance who is also the Council's Designated Safeguarding Officer. Underneath this board there is an Operational Safeguarding Group which meets regularly and is made up of officers across the Council whose role touches safeguarding: such as Housing and Community Safety. This is facilitated by the Council's two Deputy Safeguarding Lead Officers. In order to support this important work, an internal secondment has now been recruited to, for a 12 month Safeguarding Officer post.

## 2.0 **OPTIONS**

- 2.1 Consider the report and attached policy and agree the recommendations.
- 2.2 Do nothing

## 3.0 **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 3.1 Under section 11 of the Children Act we have a duty to ensure our functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- 3.2 The Care Act 2014 requires us to work with other agencies to prevent and stop the risk and experience of abuse or neglect, and ensure that adult's wellbeing is promoted.
- 3.3 A policy is an essential part of meeting this, and we would be criticised by the Children and Adults Safeguarding Boards for failing to adopt and follow such a policy.
- 3.4 It is therefore recommended that the attached policy is considered and approved by Cabinet.

## 4.0 **EXPECTED BENEFITS**

- 4.1 The policy upholds the Council's position in taking all aspects of safeguarding very seriously and provides a clear and consistent framework in doing so.
- 4.2 The policy will enable us to demonstrate compliance with the adult and children safeguarding duties, and will be made available to relevant agencies when we are audited.
- 4.3 The policy will be made available to all staff and members and training and communications will be used promote the key areas within it.

## 5.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

In preparing this report, the report author has considered the likely implications of the decision - particularly in terms of Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues; Constitutional & Legal; Contracts; Corporate Priorities; Crime & Disorder; Equality & Diversity/Human Rights; Financial; Health & Wellbeing; Reputation; Risk Management; Safeguarding; Staffing; Stakeholders/Consultation/Timescales; Transformation Programme; Other. Where the report author considers that there may be implications under one or more of these headings, these are identified below.

## 5.1 **Constitution & Legal**

5.1.1 The Legal Services manager has been involved in the preparation of this policy. The policy does not form part of the major policy framework and can be approved by Cabinet.

## 5.2 **Contracts**

5.2.1 The policy will be made available to all contractors. The Council's approach to safeguarding in respect of contracts is contained within the policy.

## 5.3 **Corporate Priorities**

5.3.1 The safeguarding policy strongly support the corporate priority of "Enabling stronger, more independent communities"

## 5.4 **Crime and Disorder**

5.4.1 The policy reflects the Council's approach to tackling some criminal acts such as domestic abuse, human trafficking etc. Officers work closely with other agencies such as the police in relation to these matters.

## 5.5 **Equality and Diversity / Human Rights**

5.5.1 It is not considered that the policy would infringe human rights. Due consideration has been given to the matters such as obtaining consent, when deciding whether to refer a matter to another agency.

## 5.6 **Health & Wellbeing**

5.6.1 The policy strongly supports the Council's approach in promoting health and wellbeing.

## 5.7 **Reputation**

5.7.1 Failure to adopt and implement a robust safeguarding policy could lead to reputational risk in the event of a serious case review or audit.

## 5.8 **Staffing**

5.8.1 The policy does not require any additional staffing resources, however a temporary Safeguarding Officer has been appointed to support safeguarding work in general.

## 5.9 **Stakeholders / Consultation / Timescales**

5.9.1 The Operational and Strategic Safeguarding Boards have been directly consulted on this policy.

5.9.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission considered this policy on 8<sup>th</sup> November. Feedback was given in relation to use of the term “Honour based violence” and whether this was still the correct terminology. It has been decided to leave this in the policy unchanged, because this is still the terminology used by the Norfolk Safeguarding Children and Adults Boards, but this will be monitored. At this meeting a query was also raised regarding the frequency of member training on safeguarding. It was agreed that this would be reviewed and training would be provided following approval of the policy.

## 6.0 **WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

Although this is an internal policy, it is designed to safeguard everyone, therefore will affect all wards.

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Background papers:- Care Act 2014  
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>

Children Act 2004  
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents>

Government Guidance “Working Together to Safeguard Children”  
<https://www.norfolkscb.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Working-Together-to-Safeguard-Children-2018.pdf>

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### **Lead Contact Officer**

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**Key Decision:** No

**Exempt Decision:** No

**This report refers to a Mandatory Service**

### **Appendices attached to this report:**

Appendix A Safeguarding Policy