



SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Approved: Full Council

Date: 26th January 2021

1. Background

- 1.1 Billingham Town Council delivers services which can bring members of staff, Councillors, volunteers, and other organisations into contact with children or vulnerable adults. This could be either as the main part of their role or indirectly when engaged in activities, working outdoors in a public place or seeing residents in the Town Council office.
- 1.2 This policy is based on our responsibilities under the Children Act 2004, specifically Section 11 which places a duty on key people and public bodies, including Councils, to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and the promote the welfare of children.
- 1.3 With regard to safeguarding vulnerable adults, this policy has been developed in accordance with guidelines produced by the Department of Health 'No Secrets' guidance and The Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

2. Definitions

- 2.1 A child or young person is anyone under the age of 18 (The Children Act 1989).
- 2.2 A vulnerable adult is someone who by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness is unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.
- 2.3 An adult for the purposes of this policy is anyone over 18 years of age.

3. Purpose of this Policy

- 3.1 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all those who have direct or indirect contact with children or vulnerable adults, or who have access to information about them, have a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare. Also, government guidance makes it clear that it is a shared responsibility, and depends upon effective joint working between organisations and professionals that have different roles and expertise.
- 3.2 The purpose of this policy is to
 - set out the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and how this will be implemented by Billingham Town Council in the discharge of its duties; and
 - to provide staff, Councillors and volunteers with guidance on procedures they should adopt in the event that they suspect a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be experiencing, or be at risk of harm.
- 3.3 This policy applies to all members of staff, Councillors and all those organisations who have a working relationship with the Town Council, including volunteers.

4. Policy Objective

4.1 The objectives of this policy are:

- to ensure that where possible, all facilities and activities offered by the Town Council are designed and maintained to limit risk to children and vulnerable adults;
- to promote the general welfare, health and development of children by being aware of child protection issues and to be able to respond where appropriate as a local government organisation;
- to maintain procedures in recording and responding to accidents and complaints and to alleged or suspected incidents of abuse and neglect;
- as the Town Council does not directly provide care or supervision services to children and vulnerable adults, it expects all children and vulnerable adults using its facilities to do so with the consent, and if necessary, supervision of a parent, carer or other responsible adult.

5. Promoting a Safe Environment

5.1 In order to promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults, the Town Council wishes to promote a safeguarding culture in its premises and activity areas. We will achieve this by stating that all activities with children either require a parent or guardian present, or a relevant consent form is completed by a parent or guardian. A minimum of one Town Council staff member will be present at all times with another adult.

5.2 The Town Clerk is the Safeguarding Officer for the Town Council and in their absence, the Deputy Town Clerk will take on this role.

5.3 The role of the Safeguarding Officer is:

- To ensure that before any Town Council organised event with children or vulnerable persons the appointed Safeguarding Officer brief all appropriate participants;
- To ensure that Councillors/volunteers are aware of the risk they may face in certain circumstances whilst carrying out their duties;
- To ensure that any volunteers recruited to work with children and vulnerable adults are interviewed and two written references taken up;
- Decisions on whether any person should be DBS checked will be made by the Town Clerk after consideration as to whether the reason relates to 'regulated activity' relating to children or vulnerable adults as defined by law. The costs of any DBS checks will be covered by the Town Council.

5.4 All members of staff, Councillors and volunteers will be provided with a copy of the Safeguarding Policy and will adhere to the following recommended behaviour:

- A minimum of two adults to be present when supervising children;

- Not to play physical contacts games;
- Adults to wear appropriate clothing at all times;
- Ensure that accidents are recorded in the accident book;
- Never do anything of a personal nature for a young person.

5.5 If there is an incident or disclosure indicating that there may be a child or vulnerable adult safeguarding issue, it will be recorded in an incident book and reported to the Safeguarding Officer who will be responsible for ensuring the matter is reported the safeguarding body at Stockton on Tees Borough Council.

5.6 In the event of a contractor, working directly for the Town Council, being deemed to be working in any area where children or vulnerable adults may be at risk, then that contractor will be asked to provide their Safeguarding Policy.