Ashby Herringfleet & Somerleyton Parish Council

SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. Introduction and purpose

This policy sets out how Ashby Herringfleet & Somerleyton Parish Council (the Parish Council) operates to keep adults at risk of abuse or neglect and children safe from abuse.

The policy is about stopping abuse where it is happening and preventing abuse where there is a risk that it may occur.

We have a Duty of Care to our Councillors, staff, volunteers and service users. We are committed to the protection and safety of adults at risk and children whether they are volunteers and/or participants in our activities. We will protect and support the volunteers who work with us as well as users of our services.

All citizens of the United Kingdom have their rights enshrined within the Human Rights Act 1998. Children's legislation includes the Children's Act 1989 and 2004.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. For our safeguarding policy to be effective every volunteer, and staff member who supports us whatever their role, will play their part in keeping people safe.

2. Definitions

Adult at risk of abuse or neglect

For the purposes of this policy, adult at risk refers to someone over 18 years old who, according to paragraph 42.1 of the Care Act 2014:

- has care and support needs
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- as a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

If someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service they may still be an adult at risk

Children and young people are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old. This policy will apply to all Councillors, staff, contractors and volunteers and will be used to support their work.

"Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children" is defined in Working Together 2018 as:

- protecting children from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of children's health and development
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

3. Persons affected by this policy

- All Councillors and staff
- All volunteers
- All service users

- All visitors and contractors

4. Our Policy

- The Parish Council has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse.
- There are no excuses for not taking all reasonable action to protect adults at risk and children from abuse, exploitation, radicalisation and mistreatment.
- The Parish Council recognises that under the Care Act 2014 it has a duty for the care and protection of adults who are at risk of abuse. It is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding effectively if concerns are raised.
- The welfare of the child and/ or adult at risk is paramount and all adults have the right to protection from abuse.
- We are committed to working with appropriate agencies including Suffolk Social Care, Suffolk Safeguarding Teams and the police etc. to ensure the reporting of abuse is appropriate and in line with local and national requirements and Information Sharing guidance.
- We will create an environment where Councillors, staff and volunteers feel able to raise safeguarding concerns and feel supported with their safeguarding responsibilities.
- All Councillors, volunteers and staff are given an induction to the organisation; which includes awareness of their safeguarding responsibilities and procedures to be followed if they have a safeguarding concern.
- Appropriate Safeguarding training is provided to Councillors, volunteers and staff as part of their induction; and have a safeguarding refresher course every three years.
- All volunteers and staff are required to report any suspected abuse and be aware of the appropriate reporting and support procedure for safeguarding including the reporting of people at risk of radicalisation and extremism.
- All Councillors, volunteers and staff must be clear on appropriate behaviour and responses and follow our agreed Code of Conduct/ Behaviour. Where appropriate, failure to maintain standards will be dealt with using the Parish Council's procedures.
- All Councillors, volunteers and staff who come into contact with adults at risk of abuse, and children and their families as part of their Parish Council duties will be alert to possible signs of abuse and consider whether there may be safeguarding concerns. They will discuss their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, to get appropriate support.
- There is Designated Lead for safeguarding at the Parish Council.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Parish Council will fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities in a way that ensures that adults and children are safeguarded from harm. The Safeguarding Lead is responsible for following up and reporting any suspected reports of abuse.
- Appropriate recruitment of Councillors, volunteers and staff is in place including consideration of when to obtain a DBS check.
- The Chair of the Parish Council will have leadership responsibility for The Parish Council's safeguarding arrangements

This policy was adopted by Ashby Herringfleet & Somerleyton Parish Council at its meeting on 13th January 2022.
Policy last reviewed September 2024
Review due May 2027

PROCEDURES: FLOWCHART FOR REFERRAL FOR ACTUAL OR SUSPECTED ABUSE

Concerns

Suspicion/allegation of abuse by: personal disclosure, observation, report by another person, anonymous communication

RECORD Sign and Date

Consult

Speak with the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Lead.

IMPORTANT: It is not your responsibility to decide if abuse has happened. It IS your responsibility to report it to the Safeguarding Lead, and/ or appropriate authority

RECORD Sign and Date

Action reporting for CYP

DO NOT INVESTIGATE

The Parish Council Safeguarding Lead/Deputy would normally make the referral. You would only do so if a delay in contacting the PC Safeguarding would put a child at risk.

You must notify the PC Safeguarding asap of any referral you make

Refer to Customer First or Police – see numbers below.

Parents and carers should be advised that you are doing this unless this might put the child at risk or cause any delay in referring

RECORD Sign and Date

Confirm

Verbal referrals must be followed up using the Secure Online Portal. Send a copy of the notes/ referral to the PC safeguarding within 24 hours

RECORD Sign and Date

Action reporting for adults at risk of harm

DO NOT INVESTIGATE

It is essential that wherever possible it is the adult at risk who will decide on the chosen course of action, taking into account the impact of the adult at risk's mental capacity where relevant.

However, the people and organisations caring for, or assisting them, must do everything they can to identify and prevent abuse happening wherever possible and evidence their efforts.

The Parish Council Safeguarding Lead would normally make the referral. You would only do so if a delay in contacting the PC Safeguarding would put an adult at risk

You must notify the PC Safeguarding asap of any referral you make

Use the Secure Online Adult Care Portal on Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership website. If you have difficulties with making the referral contact Customer First or the Police as appropriate

Commitment

You may be required to provide other information, as required.

Remember ALL notes will be disclosable should a formal or criminal investigation occur. *Make sure that your notes are dated, professional, separate opinion from fact, use the same words as were used during the disclosure, do not change words.*

Contacts:

Customer First Suffolk if you are a professional call 0808 800 4005

Professionals wanting guidance on making a referral call the MASH Professionals Consultation line 03456 061 499

Call the police on 999 if it is an emergency

Safeguarding Lead: Parish Council Chair **Safeguarding Deputy Lead: Parish Council Vice Chair**