



SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. INTRODUCTION

Ashington Town Council make a positive contribution to a strong and safe community and recognise the right of every individual to stay safe.

Ashington Town Council deliver services to children and vulnerable adults and therefore must take responsibility for safeguarding.

This policy seeks to ensure that members and officers know how to respond if they see a potential safeguarding issue.

2. POLICY AIMS

- To prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to children and vulnerable adults.
- To stop abuse and neglect wherever possible.
- To address the causes of abuse or neglect.

3. LEGISLATION

The principal pieces of legislation governing this policy are:

- i. Working together to safeguard Children 2010
- ii. The Children Act 1989
- iii. The Adoption and Children Act 2002
- iv. The Children act 2004
- v. Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- vi. Care Standards Act 2000
- vii. Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- viii. The Police Act – CRB 1997
- ix. Mental Health Act 1983
- x. NHS and Community Care Act 1990
- xi. Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

4. DEFINITIONS

Safeguarding is about embedding practices throughout the organisation to ensure the protection of children and vulnerable adults wherever possible.

In contrast, **child and adult protection** is about responding to circumstances that arise.

Abuse is a selfish act of oppression and injustice, exploitation, and manipulation of power by those in a position of authority. This can be caused by those inflicting harm or those who fail to act to prevent harm. Abuse is not restricted to any socio-economic group, gender, or culture. It can take a number of forms, including the following:

- ❖ Physical abuse
- ❖ Verbal abuse
- ❖ Sexual abuse
- ❖ Emotional abuse
- ❖ Bullying
- ❖ Neglect
- ❖ Financial (or material) abuse



5. DEFINITION OF A CHILD

A child is under the age of 18 (as defined in the United Nations convention on the Rights of a Child).

6. DEFINITION OF VULNERABLE ADULTS

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from harm or from being exploited. This may include a person who:

- ❖ Is elderly and frail
- ❖ Has a mental illness including dementia
- ❖ Has a physical or sensory disability
- ❖ Has a learning disability
- ❖ Has a severe physical illness
- ❖ Is a substance misuser
- ❖ Is homeless

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

THE COUNCIL

Ashington Town Council has responsibility to ensure a Safeguarding Policy is in place and appropriate, that the policy is accessible to everyone and is implemented.

Ashington Town Council must ensure the policy is appropriate to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. The policy must be monitored and reviewed annually, or when changes are made to any of the legislation relating to this policy.

Sufficient resources must be allocated to ensure that the policy can be effectively implemented, and that staff have access to suitable training.

The Council must ensure that any volunteers working for the Town Council and having unsupervised access to vulnerable users will be required to be DBS checked.

EVERYONE

All staff, members, volunteers, and contractors have responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy, and to pass on any welfare concerns as set out.

It is expected that staff, members, volunteers, and contractors will report their safeguarding concerns.

We expect everyone at Ashington Town Council to promote good practice by being an excellent role model, contribute to discussions about safeguarding and to positively involve people in developing safe practices.

It is not the responsibility of Ashington Town Council, or individuals to conduct their own safeguarding investigation, this will be undertaken by either Northumberland County Council or the Police.



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8. SAFEGUARDING PROCEDURE

This is based on what is usually referred to as the “4 Rs”:

RECOGNISE

All staff, members and volunteers should be able to recognise *potential* signs of abuse. However, it is not the responsibility of staff, members, or volunteers to decide whether abuse or harm has occurred, it is their responsibility to respond appropriately, by referring these concerns to the appropriate person or agency.

RECORD

Take a note of what you have seen. What happened? Why did it happen? When did it happen? What was said? Any other notable facts you can recall.

REPORT

Once the information has been recorded, make sure to share this via a referral.

REFER

Ensure that the Council’s appointed Safeguarding Officer is contacted. If there is an immediate risk of harm to the individual, contact the Police, or ring OneCall.

OneCall is one number for all adult social care, children's services, and community health enquiries in Northumberland. Helping the most vulnerable people to keep safe and well 24-7.

Telephone: 01670 536 400

Email address: onecall@northumberland.gov.uk

9. SAFEGUARDING LEAD

The delegated Safeguarding Lead is the Clerk.

They are delegated to receive concerns about safeguarding and to respond swiftly and appropriately as required.

The Safeguarding Lead is required to keep up to date with local arrangements for safeguarding and DBS, and to develop and maintain effective links with relevant agencies.

10. ALLEGATIONS MANAGEMENT

Ashington Town Council recognises its duty to report concerns or allegations against its staff, members, or volunteers within the organisation or by a professional from another organisation.

The process for raising and dealing with allegations is as follows:

First step: Any member of staff, member or volunteer from Ashington Town Council is required to report any concerns in the first instance to the Clerk. The Clerk will complete a written record of the concern.

Second step: Contact OneCall for advice.

Third step: Follow the advice provided.

If the concern relates to the Clerk, contact OneCall directly.