

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy

It is not up to you to decide whether a child or vulnerable adult is suffering harm because of abuse or neglect, but it is up to you to report any concerns as soon as possible.

Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Policy Statement	3
3. Aim of the Policy.....	3
4. Scope of Policy	4
5. Prevent	5
6. Review.....	6
7. Responsibilities	6
8. Allegations Against Employees or Members	8
9. Funding and Grants.....	9
10. Hiring Facilities to Others	9
11. Tendering and Contracting out Services	9
12. Out of Hours Working	10
13. Confidentiality	10
14. Information Sharing and Record Keeping.....	10
15. Complaints Procedure	10
16. Recruitment	11
17. Training	11
18. Safeguarding Children.....	12
19. Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults	14
20. Procedures for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults	15
23. Safeguarding Code of Conduct and Good Practice.....	17
24. Legislation /Guidance	18
25. Useful Contacts and Sources of information	18
Appendix A	19
Appendix B	22
Appendix C.....	24

Appendices

Appendix A Safeguarding Children Concern Form

Appendix B Safeguarding Adult Concern Form

Appendix C Safeguarding Procedure

1. Introduction

1.1 Havant Borough Council delivers a varied range of services and functions which can bring employees and members into contact with children or vulnerable adults. This could be either as the main part of their role or indirectly when they are carrying out their work such as during a home visit, working outdoors in a public space or seeing customers in a reception area.

1.2 Havant Borough Council recognises that we all have a responsibility to protect children and vulnerable adults and has developed a safeguarding policy which includes the Prevent duties, (Counter Terrorism & Security agenda) to ensure that effective practices are in place for all the councils' activities.

1.3 Havant Borough Council believes that all children and vulnerable adults have the right to be safe, happy and healthy and deserve protection from abuse. The council is committed to safeguarding all children and vulnerable adults using any of its services and involved in any of its activities, and to treat them with respect during their interactions with the council.

1.4 This policy is written in accordance with The Children Act 2004, The Care Act 2014 and associated guidance.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 Havant Borough Council is committed to practices that protect children and vulnerable adults from harm regardless of age, gender, disability, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or any other protected characteristic as covered by the Equality Act 2010. Employees and members accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop self-awareness of the issues that cause children and vulnerable adults harm.

3. Aim of the Policy

3.1 The aims of the policy are to:

- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties within the scope of the policy.
- Support the promotion of a safe working environment and a culture of care in which the rights of all children and vulnerable adults are protected and respected.
- Promote procedures, codes of conduct and best practice in how employees and members interact with children and vulnerable adults while providing council services.
- Develop clear guidance and procedures for those employees and members working with children and vulnerable adults and ensure through training and support that they are aware of these and can implement them
- Provide a framework for developing partnerships with appropriate external bodies' e.g. Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and Hampshire Safeguarding Adults

Board to ensure that the policy continues to reflect legal and best practice requirements in respect of the responsibility of care of children and vulnerable adults

- Enable information sharing about safeguarding concerns with relevant agencies whilst involving parents/carers, children and vulnerable adults where applicable.
- Support the procedures for the safe recruitment of employees and members in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance.
- Provide effective management for employees through supervision, support and training.

4. Scope of Policy

4.1 The policy is in respect of the council's responsibility towards:

- Children; legally defined as any person under the age of 18 including unborn children (The Children Act 2004). From this point the terms child or children will be used to refer to this group.
- The Care Act 2014 refers to an 'adult at risk' of abuse or neglect with care and support needs however for this policy we will retain the term vulnerable adult.
- The employees of the council who will encounter children or vulnerable adults during their work.
- Members of the borough council when on council business.
- Contractors when carrying out work on behalf of Havant Borough Council.
- The term 'parent/ carer' is used throughout as a generic term to represent parents, carers and guardians for both children and vulnerable adults.
- The policy covers all functions and services of the council.

4.2 Child protection is defined in The Children Act 2004 as:

- Protecting individual children identified as either suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm because of abuse or neglect.

4.3 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's' health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up and living in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

4.4 It is also important to recognise that in providing services, the council is not acting in loco parentis (in place of the parent)

4.5 Adult Safeguarding is defined in the Care Act 2014 as:

An adult at risk has:

- needs for care and support (whether the local authority is meeting these or not)
- is experiencing, or at risk of abuse or neglect
- and**
- as a result of these needs is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or risk of it.

4.6 The Mental Capacity Act 2015 and Code of Practice should be adhered to by employees who work with members of the public who lack capacity.

4.7 This policy is to be used in conjunction with the borough council's:

- Equality Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Disciplinary Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Social Media Policy
- ICT Security Policy
- Lone Working Procedures (individual team versions)
- Recruitment Policy
- DBS Policy
- Code of Conduct

Havant Borough Council is committed to regularly reviewing its policies and good practice.

5. Prevent

5.1 Prevent is a requirement of the Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015 and places a duty on specified authorities in the exercise of their functions to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into extremism and terrorism. In accordance with guidance, Prevent is included as part of our responsibilities to safeguard vulnerable groups and when using this policy should be considered in the same context as any other safeguarding concern.

5.2 Extremists are known to target vulnerable children and adults to radicalise them to their ideology.

5.3 Radicalisation is usually a process not an event. During that process, behaviours as well as opinions are likely to change. These changes may be apparent to the friends, families and work colleagues of the person concerned and may include a change of ideology and beliefs held, appearance, language used, peer groups and interests.

5.4 Havant Borough Council is a specified authority and are required to:

- Offer training of staff to understand Prevent
- Report any concerns via the agreed reporting procedure which in Hampshire will follow the same process as used to report safeguarding concerns into the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.
- Feed into Channel Panel as required with a multi-agency approach to identify and provide voluntary support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism.

6. Review

6.1 This policy and associated guidance will be reviewed annually or whenever there is a change in the related legislation. This will ensure the document is fit for purpose and up to date and compliant with our Section 11 duties of the Children Act 2004 and any other relevant legislation.

7. Responsibilities

7.1 Responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies at all levels of the council. We have a duty to comply with and take part in any multi-agency safeguarding arrangements put in place with regards the vulnerable groups we are working with such as attendance at statutory protection conferences.

7.2 Cabinet are responsible for ensuring that the council has a policy, which adequately provides protection for children and vulnerable adults in receipt of its services and for the regular review of this policy in the light of changes to legislation.

7.3 Members are responsible for ensuring that they are familiar with and understand the policies and procedures relating to their role which may bring them into contact with children and vulnerable adults either directly or indirectly and raise any concerns appropriately.

7.4 Heads of Service are responsible for assisting HR and other related officers in performing their safeguarding functions primarily around:

- Identifying those services and posts that are likely to have an involvement with children and vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring that employees whose duties will involve contact with children or vulnerable adults are screened at the appropriate level and are appropriately qualified and/or trained in working with these groups.
- Ensure a risk assessment is carried out and updated regularly for any staff member who is recruited for whom there has been information released on their DBS.
- Ensuring that all necessary procedures and practices are in place to provide adequate protection both for children and vulnerable adults and protection for the employees working with them.
- Ensuring that proper records are kept of any incidents occurring within their service area and that these are held securely and passed on to the Safeguarding Lead or the Monitoring Officer if the incident involves an employee.
- Ensure managers across their service have undertaken Safer Recruitment Training if they have teams who come in to contact with members of the public.

7.5 Human Resources Service is responsible for:

- Working with Heads of Service in maintaining a record of those posts that are likely to work with children or vulnerable adults and identifying the level of involvement and the appropriate level of screening required.
- Ensuring that recruitment procedures are robust and that information pertinent to working with these groups is obtained during the recruitment procedure.
- Ensuring that all safeguarding and DBS checks are carried out and repeated every 3 years at the level required in respect of every role identified involving contact with children and vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring that employees in contact with these groups are adequately trained and aware of their responsibilities in this area.
- Supporting Heads of Service in dealing with allegations of abuse or lack of care by staff.
- Referring any information about individuals who may pose a risk to the DBS.

7.6 All Employees and particularly those encountering children and vulnerable adults are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they are familiar with and understand the policies and procedures relating to their work which brings them into contact with children and vulnerable adults either directly or indirectly and raise any concerns about their level of knowledge with their managers in order that this may be addressed.
- Treating all children and vulnerable adults with respect when they encounter them whilst carrying out their work.

- Reporting to their manager or the Safeguarding Lead any concerns they may have about abuse or a lack of care of children or vulnerable adults.

7.7 The designated Safeguarding Lead has the responsibility to:

- Provide advice and information relating to safeguarding concerns
- Receive and record information from employees, members, children, vulnerable adults or parents and carers who have safeguarding concerns.
- Assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining more information about the matter as appropriate.
- Ensure a formal referral to a statutory agency or the police has been made without delay and ensure the proper transfer of information relating to dealings with children and vulnerable adults, where necessary.
- Collate information from relevant services to inform a chronology for the purpose of a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review, or Safeguarding Adult Review.
- Ensure that recommendations from any reviews the council has been involved in are implemented.
- Ensure the councils' safeguarding policies and procedures are up to date and compliant with legislation and guidance.
- Ensure appropriate training is available for employees and members.
- Be responsible for ensuring any internal safeguarding allegations are reported to the Hampshire County Council Local Authority Designated Officer if the staff member is in a position of trust and in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.
- Liaise with the Community Safety Manager regarding Prevent as required.

7.8 The designated Safeguarding Lead should be aware of the local child and vulnerable adult protection networks, the role of the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and The Hampshire Safeguarding Adult Board and the existence of local safeguarding procedures. It is essential for the designated Safeguarding Lead to have received training in child protection and safeguarding vulnerable adults.

8. Allegations Against Employees or Members

8.1 Where there is an allegation against employees or members concerning children or vulnerable adults in which it is alleged that an employee or member has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed a child or vulnerable adult
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or vulnerable adult

- Behaved in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children or vulnerable adults.

The following shall apply:

8.2 The Human Resources service will be responsible if the allegation concerns an employee and the normal employment procedures would apply.

8.3 If the allegation relates to a member, the council's Monitoring Officer will be responsible in accordance with the normal procedures relating to an allegation of a failure to comply with the Member Code of Conduct.

8.4 In each case it shall be the responsibility of the Human Resources service or the Monitoring Officer, as appropriate, to make any required report to the Hampshire County Council Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for children or Designated Safeguarding Adult Officer for adults. Section 22 sets out further guidance regarding the reporting process.

9. Funding and Grants

9.1 Where organisations and groups that work with children or vulnerable adults apply to the council for grant assistance, the granting of funds will be subject to a safeguarding policy being in place by the recipient organisation checked on application by a self-declaration to this effect. Guidance for organisations or groups regarding adopting a safeguarding policy can be provided by the Safeguarding Lead if needed.

10. Hiring Facilities to Others

10.1 Any hirer who provides activities for children must state this fact on the booking form and sign a self-declaration that they are aware of safeguarding procedures or have their own safeguarding policy in place.

11. Tendering and Contracting out Services

11.1 Any contractor or sub-contractors engaged by the council in areas where workers are likely to encounter children or vulnerable adults, should have its own safeguarding policy in place or failing this, must comply with the terms of this policy.

11.2 All new contracts let by the council which involves services for children and vulnerable adults will include appropriate reference to complying with the policy and that evidence is requested at point of tender and then subsequently checked at periodic intervals.

12. Out of Hours Working

12.1 It is recognised that employees and members work outside of office hours and therefore may have difficulties contacting the Safeguarding Lead. If there is an incident or allegations of abuse outside of office hours, this should be reported directly to the **Hants Direct Out of Hours (Children and Adults Services) Duty team on 0300 555 1373**.

12.2 The employee, member or volunteer should then complete the Safeguarding Children Concern Form (Appendix A) or Adult Concern Form (Appendix B) and contact the Safeguarding Lead at the first opportunity.

12.3 Any out of hours working undertaken by an employee should comply with lone working procedures (for individual teams).

13. Confidentiality

13.1 HBC will act in accordance with information sharing guidance and legislation.

13.2 The legal principle that “the welfare of the child is paramount” means that the considerations of confidentiality that might apply to other situations within the borough council should not be allowed to override the right of the child to be protected from harm. The same applies to vulnerable adults where there is an immediate risk of harm but wherever possible consent from the adult should be obtained before a referral is made unless doing so places the individual at further risk.

13.3 Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned both when an allegation is made and whilst it is being investigated. (See Whistle Blowing Policy).

14. Information Sharing and Record Keeping

14.1 Ensure that any information shared is necessary for the purpose for which it is being shared, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared and stored securely (marked confidential).

When sharing personal data there must be an identified lawful basis (under Data Protection), which is documented/ recorded, to share that data. Keep a record of the decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If it is decided to share, then record what is shared, with whom and for what purpose. Staff are not required to store safeguarding concern forms once this has been sent to the Safeguarding Lead.

15. Complaints Procedure

15.1 It is important to maintain an open culture where employees, members, children, vulnerable adults and parents/carers feel able to express concerns both about safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and concerns about issues of poor practice when dealing with children and vulnerable adults.

Employees and members can raise concerns about other employees or members by following the Whistle Blowing Policy or other appropriate procedure.

An easy to follow complaints procedure for members of the public including partners, and young people is available on the council's website, or from the council offices.

16. Recruitment

16.1 Through its recruitment procedures for all employees who work directly with children or vulnerable adults, HBC will:

- Check for convictions for criminal offences against children and vulnerable adults in accordance with current legislation.
- Explore each applicant's experience of working or contact with children or vulnerable adults prior to an appointment being made.
- Obtain two references, one of which must be from a current or most recent employer. Qualifications and professional registration will also be verified prior to an appointment being made.
- Undertake any other pre-employment checks, for example confirmation of the applicant's right to work in the UK.

17. Training

17.1 HBC recognises that it has a commitment to ensure that all employees, members and volunteers have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities when working with children and vulnerable adults. The council's training process will help them to:

- Be able to recognise signs of abuse and what appropriate course of action should be taken in such circumstances.
- Understand the potential risks to themselves and ensure that good practice is adhered to at all time.
- Have an awareness of Prevent and the referral pathway to report concerns

17. 2 All employees who work directly or indirectly with children and vulnerable adults will be required to have training in the above areas at a level commensurate to their role.

17.3 Training for members will be delivered in accordance to need and relevant guidance.

18. Safeguarding Children

18.1. Recognising Child Abuse

- Recognising child abuse is not easy and it is **not** the responsibility of employees, or members to decide whether abuse has taken place or if a child is at significant risk, they do however have a responsibility to act if they have any concerns.
- Whilst any child could be at risk of abuse, those with disabilities or who are in care (or leaving care) have an increased risk of vulnerability. Therefore, when working with these groups or their families, employees and members need to be mindful of this increased risk factor.

18.2 Recognising what Child Abuse is

There are four main forms of child abuse*

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve actions such as hitting, shaking and burning as well as giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison. Physical abuse as well as being a deliberate act can be caused by an omission or failure to act to protect.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is a persistent lack of love and affection. A child may be constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted. This can make the child nervous and withdrawn. Other forms of emotional abuse include excessive overprotection and unrealistic pressure to succeed. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of children although it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing the child or young person to take part in sexual activities whether the child is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. Sexual abuse can involve penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling. It may also involve non-contact activities such as showing pornographic material or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. This includes children and young people up to the age of 18 who are victims of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and or psychological needs. These needs include, for example, adequate food and warm clothing and medical care. Children may be left alone unsupervised. Emotional neglect is when children are deprived of love and affection.

Missing, Exploited & Trafficked (MET)

Children or young people can be exploited for criminal and sexual purposes and this occurs when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive for a sexual or criminal activity

- (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants
- (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or
- (c) through violence or threats of violence.

The victim may have been exploited even if the activity appears consensual. This does always involve physical contact and can take place using technology.

Trafficking children relates to 'the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a person by means of threat, use of force, coercion, abductions, fraud, deception or abuse of power for the purpose of exploitation'. For the person to be recognised as a victim of trafficking, these three elements must be proven:

- Movement (including within the UK)
- Control, through harm/ threat of harm or fraud
- For exploitation

(Working Together to Safeguard Children HM Gov 2018)

18.2 Indications that a child is being abused:

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruises, cuts and burns particularly if situated on parts of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- Injuries for which an explanation seems inconsistent.
- Fear of parents being approached about such injuries.
- Reluctance to get changed e.g. wearing long sleeves in hot weather.
- Flinching when touched or approached.
- A failure to thrive or grow
- Sudden speech disorders
- Difficulties in making friends
- The child is prevented from socialising.
- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour.
- Fear of being left with a specific person.
- Sexually explicit behaviour.
- Sexual knowledge beyond their age and developmental level.
- A distrust of adults particularly those with whom a close relationship would normally be expected.
- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food.
- The child being dirty/smelly and unkempt.
- Loss of weight.
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions.
- Unexplained gifts/expensive hobbies/activities
- Access to illegal substances
- Missing/skipping school/home/events
-

18.3 This list is by no means definitive and it is important to remember that many children will exhibit some of these indicators at some time and the presence of one or more should **not** be taken as proof that abuse is occurring.

18.4 There may be other reasons for changes in behaviour such as a death in the family or the birth of a new baby. It is crucial that this is only a process of observation and that at no point in time should an employee, or member feel that they should be actively investigating abuse or a potential abuser.

18.5 The responsibility of the employee, or member is to ensure that if they have concerns about the welfare of a child, they must report it and must **never** assume that others will do so.

19. Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

19.1 What is abuse of vulnerable adults?

Physical

Hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions.

Sexual

Rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Psychological

Emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

Financial or material

Theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure (with wills), property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Neglect and acts of omission

Ignoring medical or physical care needs, failing to provide access to appropriate health, social care, welfare benefits or educational services, withholding the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Discriminatory

Racism, sexism or acts based on a person's disability, age or sexual orientation. It also includes other forms of harassment; slurs or similar treatment such as hate crime.

Domestic abuse

Psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse and so called 'honour' based violence.

Organisational abuse

Neglect and poor care practice within a care setting such as a hospital or care home or in relation to care provided in someone's own home ranging from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment. It can be neglect or poor practice as a result of the structure, policies, processes and practices within a care setting.

Modern slavery

Encompassing slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment.

Self-Neglect

Covers a wide range of behaviours including neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

20. Procedures for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

20.1 These procedures seek to ensure that all employees, members and volunteers have a clear understanding of their responsibilities when working with children and vulnerable adults.

20.2 See the steps summarising the procedure for responding to suspicions of abuse against children or vulnerable adults or other concerns relating to the protection of children and vulnerable adults (Appendix C).

20.3 The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Safeguarding Children Partnership and Children's Trust Thresholds Chart can be used by employees to support them when communicating concerns to Children's Services:

<https://www.hampshirescp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Hampshire-IOW-Thresholds-Chart-July-2019-1.pdf>

20.4 In addition to this 'A Guide to Recognising Neglect in Children' can be used if concerns specifically relate to neglect:

<https://www.hampshirescp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/A-Guide-to-Recognising-Neglect-in-Children-Updated-October-2019.pdf>

20.5 A Community Partnership Information Form can be used to share non urgent information with the Police. This includes when a crime has not been committed and a child/ adult is not at immediate risk:

<https://www.safe4me.co.uk/portfolio/sharing-information/>

20.6 If an employee disagrees with a decision taken by the Safeguarding Lead then they should raise their concerns with the Strategic Safeguarding Lead. If the disagreement is in relation to the outcome of a decision made by Children's Services, or Adult Services then the following protocols can be followed to help resolve the disagreement:

<http://www.hampshiresab.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Safeguarding-Adults-Escalation-Protocol.pdf>

<https://www.hampshirescp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/4LSCB-Joint-Working-Protocol-for-the-Professional-Challenge-and-Resolution-of-Professional-Disagreement-May-2019.pdf>

21. Responding to allegations and suspicions of abuse to children or vulnerable adults.

21.1 If a child or adult discloses abuse to you directly you must:

- Stay calm.
- Listen carefully.
- Find an appropriate, early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared. Do not promise to keep secrets.
- Allow the child/ adult to talk and at their own pace and in their own words.
- Ask questions for clarification only and always use open questions that cannot lead.
- Reassure the child/ adult that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
- Record in writing what was said using the child's/ adults' own words as soon as possible. Note the date and time, any names mentioned and to whom the information was given. Ensure that this record is signed and dated.
- Relay this information as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Lead, your line manager or Head of Service.
- All reports should be made using the Safeguarding Children Concern Form, or Safeguarding Adult Concern Form which can be found on Skoop: <http://intranet/basic-page/hr-policies-and-procedures-HBC>

Ref: Safeguarding Children Concern Form (Appendix A) and Safeguarding Adult Concern Form (Appendix B)

21.2 Remember that it is important that everyone at HBC is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is **not** responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. This is the task of the professional agencies following a referral to them. **If you think a child or a vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, then always contact the Police on 999. Report your actions to your line manager and Safeguarding Lead.**

22. Responding to suspicions that an employee, or member may be abusing a child or vulnerable adult or not following the Code of Conduct and Good Practice.

22.1 Any employee, or member who suspects that a colleague, or member may be abusing children/ vulnerable adults or in any way behaving inappropriately, should act on their suspicions. Action should also be taken if it is felt that colleagues are not following the codes of conduct set out in this document. This action will serve not only to protect children/ or vulnerable adults but also colleagues from false accusations.

- Write down the details of the incident following the guidelines in this policy.
- Pass this report to your manager at the earliest opportunity.
- The manager should then take appropriate action to ensure the safety of the child/ adult and of any other child/adult who may be at risk.
- The matter should then be discussed with the Monitoring Officer and if necessary, the Safeguarding Lead and HR, who will then consider whether the matter is an issue relating to poor practice or to child / adult abuse.

- If the matter relates to poor practice, procedures relating to misconduct should be followed. If the matter relates to child / adult abuse the matter should be referred to Children or Adult Services who may involve the Police, and the employee suspended pending the outcome of an internal investigation into the allegations.

22.2 HBC acknowledges that this is an extremely sensitive issue and assures all employees and persons working on its behalf that it will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith, reports a concern that a colleague is, or may be, abusing a child or vulnerable adult.

23. Safeguarding Code of Conduct and Good Practice

23.1 These guidelines are designed not only to protect children and vulnerable adults but also to protect employees, and members from situations where false allegations may occur.

23.2 Employees and members must:

- Treat all children and vulnerable adults and their possessions with respect.
- Provide an example of good conduct they wish others to follow
- Ensure that whenever possible there is more than one adult present during activities with children and vulnerable adults or that at least they are within the sight or hearing of others
- Respect the child/ vulnerable adult's right to personal privacy and encourage them to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like.
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret their actions, no matter how well intentioned.
- Be aware that physical contact with a child or vulnerable adult may be misinterpreted and be mindful of why, how and where they make physical contact.
- Recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/ suspicions of abuse.
- Be identifiable and have their photo ID card on display
- Keep the child's or vulnerable adult's needs first.

23.3 Employees and members must **not**:

- Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or vulnerable adults
- Make sexually suggestive comments, even in fun
- Make derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or vulnerable adults
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking the facts
- Exaggerate or trivialise child or vulnerable adult abuse issues
- Show favouritism to individuals
- Ask people to do things that are potentially dangerous, illegal or unreasonable.
- Allow bullying
- Let allegations a child or vulnerable adult makes be ignored or go unrecorded
- Take children or vulnerable adults alone in a vehicle unless in an emergency or with parental consent.
- Take children/ vulnerable adults to their home.
- Meet up with children / vulnerable adults outside of their work with HBC unless it is with the full consent and knowledge of the person's parents / carers and their manager.
- Never enter a house when a child is in there on their own unless the child is in danger.

The points above relate to face to face contact, via telephone and email. The Social Media Policy and ICT Security Policy must also be followed.

24. Legislation /Guidance

The Children Act 2004

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

Information Sharing Advice for practitioners – A guide to interagency working (HM Government 2018)

The Care Act 2014

The Counter-Terrorism & Security Act 2015

Mental Capacity Act 2005

25. Useful Contacts and Sources of information

To report your concerns or to talk to a duty social worker regarding child protection call HantsDirect (Children's Services)

Use this link to complete the electronic Inter Agency Referral Form for non-urgent concerns:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/contacts>

0300 555 1384 (office hours for urgent concerns) 0300 555 1373 (out of hours)

Professionals Line 01329 225379

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/safeguardingchildren/childprotection/reportingabuse>

A range of **toolkits** to support employees when sharing concerns with Children's Services are available through Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership including: Adopting a Family Approach, Abusive Head Trauma, Every Sleep Counts, Female Genital Mutilation, Neglect and Understanding Unidentified Adults: <https://www.hampshirescp.org.uk/toolkits/>

HSCP also have a range of **procedures** which can be referred to for safeguarding children in specific circumstances, for example: disabled children, unborn babies, children who move across local authority borders, looked after children, fabricated induced illness and more: <http://hipsprocedures.org.uk/page/contents>

To report your concerns or to talk to a duty social worker regarding vulnerable adults' call HantsDirect (Adult Services)

0300 555 1386 (office hours) 0300 555 1373 (out of hours) Professionals Line 01329 225378

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/adultsocialcare/safeguarding>

The 4LSAB Multi- Agency Policy, Process and Guidance should be used to support responses to concerns regarding abuse or neglect. https://www.hampshiresab.org.uk/professionals-area/hampshire_4lsab_multiagency_safeguarding_adults_policy_guidance/

Prevent referrals should be made using the online referral form which can be found with supporting information through: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/community/prevent>

Employee Assistance Programme

Should an employee feel they require support following their involvement with a safeguarding concern, information on the HBC Health Assured- 24/7 Employee Assistance Programme can be found on the council's intranet (under 'Employee Information'). Tel: 0800 030 5182.

Appendix A

SAFEGUARDING CONCERN FORM CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE (pre-birth- 18th birthday)

This form should be completed as fully and factually as possible. Take care to highlight anything which is recorded and only opinion, or hearsay.

Be careful not to investigate or question the child, or young person unnecessarily.

About you	
Name	
Job role	
Service or department	
Work address	
Contact telephone number	
Email	
Consent to sharing information	
Has the child's parent(s) / carer(s) consent been gained for this referral?	Please delete as appropriate Consent given Consent refused Consent not requested
Give further information about the consent For example: 1. Verbal consent given by mother, and not father. 2. Consent requested of mother on [date] and refused 3. Consent not requested as this may pose a risk to the child /parent	
About the children	
First and last name	
AKA/ previous names (optional)	
Gender at birth	
Identified gender (if different) optional	

Date of birth/ estimated delivery date	
Ethnicity	
Does the child or family need any support with communication?	Please delete as appropriate Yes No
Child's address	
Does the child have any siblings? Or are you aware of any other children living at the child's home address?	Please delete as appropriate Yes No Unknown
Adults in the child's life	
Select all significant adults known to you	Please delete as appropriate Mother Father Other adult living at the same address as the child Other adult living elsewhere None known
Describe the situation you are worried about	
What has happened to concern you? Include as much detail as possible, including: what you have observed what you have been told (and by who) what you have not seen (e.g. missed appointments, non-attendance at school, not seen alone) what you have not been told (e.g. the child is unable to communicate due to age / another reason) when (e.g. times and dates) wider context that suggests risk.	
Describe what is currently in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child(ren) you are concerned for. Include as much detail as possible, including: what you and other professionals have done/are	

doing what support from other family/the community is in place when/ how frequently/ for how long?	
If known, please provide details of other agencies involved with the family. Including: agency contact details names	
Describe the views of the family on what concerns you. For example, have the family requested support? Have they denied that an incident that concerns you took place? If not known, please enter 'Not known'.	
Date and time of concern	
To be completed by Safeguarding Lead	
Actions agreed	
If a referral was not made detail the reasons	
Future actions	
Name	
Signature	
Job Role	
Date	

Remember to always maintain confidentiality. Do not discuss this incident with anyone other than those who need to know.

NB This form should be kept by the relevant Safeguarding Lead and the information it contains should be passed to the relevant agency as soon as possible.

Appendix B

SAFEGUARDING CONCERN FORM Adult (aged 18 and over)

This form should be completed as fully and factually as possible. Take care to highlight anything which is recorded and only opinion, or hearsay
Be careful not to investigate or question the adult unnecessarily.

About you	
Name	
Job role	
Service or department	
Work address	
Contact telephone number	
Email	
Consent to sharing information	
Has the adult's consent been gained?	Please delete as appropriate Yes No
Is the individual over 65?	Please delete as appropriate Over 65 Under 65
About the adult	
First and last name	
Address	
Contact telephone number	
Email address	
Date of birth	
Their GP surgery name (if known)	
Their GP address (if known)	

Questions about concern What best describes the reason for your concern?	Select one or more of the following options: Physical abuse Domestic violence or abuse Sexual abuse Psychological or emotional abuse Financial or material abuse Modern slavery Discriminatory abuse Organisational or institutional abuse Neglect or act of omission (e.g. medication error) Self-neglect (including hoarding)
Please describe what happened including when, where, who and has it happened before?	
Is the concern ongoing	Please delete as appropriate Yes No
Has anything been put in place to stop the incident/ concern happening again?	
Do you know what the person you are concerned about wants to happen?	
Who else have you reported this to?	Please delete as appropriate CQC Police Trading Standards Health Services Fire & Rescue Family
Date and time of concern	
To be completed by Safeguarding Lead	
Actions agreed	
If a referral was not made detail the reasons	
Future actions	
Name	
Signature	
Job Role	
Date	

Remember to always maintain confidentiality. Do not discuss this incident with anyone other than those who need to know.

NB This form should be kept by the relevant Safeguarding Lead and the information it contains should be passed to the relevant agency as soon as possible.

Appendix C

Safeguarding Procedure

Step One –Identifying a concern

You are concerned a child (0-18), or adult is at risk, or has been abused because:

- You have seen something
- A child, or adult says they have been abused, or wishes to harm themselves e.g. suicide
- Somebody else has told you they are concerned
- An adult has disclosed they are abusing a child, or adult at risk
- There has been an allegation against a member of staff

Step Two –Your responsibility regarding sharing information

Talk to your line manager and agree whether information should be shared with Children's, or Adult Services. If your line manager is not available, or you are unsure, you can seek advice from the Safeguarding Lead, or deputy. If your line manager and Safeguarding Lead are both unavailable, refer your concern straight to Children's, or Adult Services by the end of your working day. Our internal Child, or Adult Concern Form should be completed by you and the information should be directly copied on to the Inter-Agency Form (IARF) regarding a child (if they are not in immediate danger). Otherwise, telephone: 0300 555 1384. Link to IARF: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/childrenandfamilies/contacts>. Non urgent concerns regarding adults should be shared with Adult Services using their online referral form: <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth/adultsocialcare/contact/professional-referral>. Or, telephone: 0300 555 1386. Call 101 if a child, or adult is in danger, or 999 if it is an emergency. 999 should also be called if a crime may have or has been committed.

Step Three – Recording

- The Safeguarding Concern Form should be completed for all concerns regardless of whether a decision was made to contact Children's, or Adult Services. This can be found on Skoop under: <http://intranet/basic-page/hr-policies-and-procedures-hbc>
- The form should be completed, then passed on to the Safeguarding Lead with a record of who was spoken to, along with any decisions, or actions agreed.
- Interim Safeguarding Lead (HBC)- Ryan Gulliver, 01730 234167
- Deputy Lead (EHDC & HBC) Tracey Wood, 02392 446626

Notes

In the cases of concern about a member of staff, you should talk to your line manager in the first instance and Safeguarding Lead. If your concern is about an elected member, then you should speak to the Monitoring Officer.

If the employee is in a position of trust, then the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer), or the DASM (Designated Adult Safeguarding Manager) will co-ordinate the next steps for any staff complaints or allegations. If the adult is not in a position of trust, because they do not work directly with children, then the Disciplinary Procedure must be followed.

Anyone can "whistle blow" directly to the police or social services if they feel their concerns will not be managed appropriately by the council.

EVERYONE should observe confidentiality with colleagues, family and friends.