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Safeguarding Policy

Timsbury Parish Council acknowledges the duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (including young people) and adults using or receiving services provided or commissioned by the Parish Council.

The purpose of this Policy is to protect and promote the welfare of the children and adults using or receiving services provided or commissioned by Timsbury Parish Council and support the Council, its officers, elected and co-opted members and volunteers in fulfilling their statutory responsibilities.

Timsbury Parish Council is not a Children's Services Authority (as Bath & North East Somerset is) and it is not the role of the Parish Council to investigate allegations of abuse. However, all members, employees, volunteers, and contracted service providers have a clear responsibility to act when they suspect or recognise that a child, young person, or vulnerable adult may be a victim of significant harm or abuse.

Introduction

Timsbury Parish Council makes a positive contribution to a strong and safe community and recognises the right of every individual to stay safe.

Timsbury Parish Council encounters children, young people and / or vulnerable adults through the following activities:

Provision of a Community Library and Information Hub

Ownership of recreation facilities and children's play area which are managed by the independent Conygre Trust.

The types of contact will be controlled and limited to occasional contact by councillors, administrators, staff as well as volunteers who are working directly with the Parish Council.

This policy seeks to ensure that Timsbury Parish Council undertakes its responsibilities with regard to protection of children (which includes young people up to aged 18 and vulnerable adults and will respond to concerns appropriately. The policy establishes a framework to support paid and unpaid staff in their practices and clarifies the organisation's expectations.

Legislation

The principal pieces of legislation governing this policy are:

- Working together to safeguard Children 2010
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Adoption and Children Act 2002:

- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Safeguard Children 2015
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Care Act Care Standards Act 2000
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- The Police Act – DBS 2012
- Mental Health Act 1983
- NHS and Community Care Act 1990
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

Definitions

Safeguarding is about embedding practices throughout the organisation to ensure the protection of children, young people and / or 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.

Abuse can take a number of forms, including the following:

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

Definition of a child/young person

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

Definition of Vulnerable Adults

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over who may be unable to take care of him/herself or protect him/herself 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

Responsibilities

All staff (paid or unpaid) have responsibility to follow the guidance laid out in this policy and related policies, and to pass on any welfare concerns using the required procedures.

We expect all staff (paid or unpaid) to promote good practice by being an excellent role model, contribute to discussions about safeguarding and to positively involve people in developing safe practices.

Additional specific responsibilities

The Designated Senior Manager / lead officer is the Clerk to the Council. This person's responsibilities are to monitor and report contacts and to raise any concerns with the Chairman of the Parish Council.

Implementation Stages

The scope of this Safeguarding Policy is broad-ranging and, in practice, it will be implemented via a range of policies and procedures within the organisation. These include: Whistle Blowing / Complaints; Grievance and Disciplinary; Health and Safety; Equal Opportunities and Data Protection.

Safe recruitment

Timsbury Parish Council ensures safe recruitment through the following process:

Ensuring that all job descriptions contain reference to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and to this Policy.

Disclosure and Barring Service Gap Management

The organisation commits resources to providing Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check on staff (paid or unpaid) whose roles involve contact with children and /or vulnerable adults.

To avoid DBS gaps, the organisation will undertake a rolling review of DBS checks every 3 years where staff regularly meet children or vulnerable adults.

In addition to checks on recruitment for roles involving contact with children / vulnerable adults, for established staff the following processes are in place:
3-year reviews.

Communications training and support for staff

Timsbury Parish Council commits resources for induction, training of staff (paid and unpaid), effective communications and support mechanisms in relation to Safeguarding

Induction will include discussion of the Policy and confirmation of understanding, together with discussion of other policies and ensuring familiarity with reporting systems.

Training

All staff who, through their role, are in contact with children and /or vulnerable adults will have access to safeguarding training at an appropriate level. Sources and types of training will include safer recruitment and understanding child protection.

Communications and discussion of safeguarding issues

Commitment to the following communication methods will ensure effective communication of safeguarding issues and practice:

participation in multi-agency safeguarding issues and meetings.

Support

We recognise that involvement in situations where there is risk or actual harm can be stressful for staff concerned. The mechanisms in place to support staff include:

debriefing support and follow-up support as necessary.

Professional boundaries

Professional boundaries are what define the limits of a relationship between a support worker and a client. They are a set of standards we agree to uphold that allows this necessary and often close relationship to exist while ensuring the correct detachment is kept in place.

Timsbury Parish Council expects staff to protect the professional integrity of themselves and the organisation.

The following professional boundaries must be adhered to:

Timsbury Parish Council does not allow paid or unpaid staff to give gifts to or receive gifts from clients. However, gifts may be provided by the organisation as part of a planned activity.

If the professional boundaries and/or policies are breached this could result in disciplinary procedures or enactment of the allegation management procedures.

Reporting

The process outlined below shows the order of stages involved in raising and reporting safeguarding concerns at Timsbury Parish Council:

1. Communicate your concerns with your immediate manager
2. Seek medical attention for the vulnerable person if needed
3. Discuss with parents of child, or with a vulnerable person, obtain permission to make referral if safe and appropriate. If needed, seek advice from the Children and Families or Adults helpdesks.
4. Complete the Local Authority Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Incident Report Form, if required, and submit to the local authority within 24 hours of making a contact
5. Ensure that feedback from the Local Authority is received and their response recorded. The Local Authority has a process for reporting and this must be adopted. Organisations will be expected to complete the local authorities initial contact form when informing them of a concern about a child. The use of this form and compliance with the policy will be mandatory and must be built into your policy. Information on reporting concerns will be found at www.gscb.org.uk.
6. If the immediate manager is implicated, then refer to their line manager or peer.

Allegations Management

Timsbury Parish Council recognises its duty to report concerns or allegations against its staff (paid or unpaid) within the organisation or by a professional from another organisation.

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

1. Any member of staff (paid or unpaid) from (insert name of organisation) is required to report any concerns in the first instance to their line manager/ safeguarding manager/ peer
2. Contact the appropriate local authority for guidance
3. Follow the advice provided

Timsbury Parish Council recognises its legal duty to report any concerns about unsafe practice by any of its paid or unpaid staff to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), according to the ISA referral guidance document:

<http://www.isa.gov.org.uk/PDF/ISA%20Referral%20Guidance%20%20V2009-02.pdf>

Monitoring

The organisation will monitor the following Safeguarding aspects:

- Safe recruitment practices
- DBS checks undertaken
- References applied for new staff
- Records made and kept of supervision sessions
- Training – register/ record of staff training on child/ vulnerable adult protection
- Monitoring whether concerns are being reported and actioned
- Checking that policies are up to date and relevant
- Reviewing the current reporting procedure in place
- Presence and action of Designated senior manager responsible for Safeguarding is in post

Managing information

Information will be gathered, recorded, and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Policy.

All staff must be aware that they have a professional duty to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. The public interest in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults may override confidentiality interests. However, information will be shared on a need to know basis only, as judged by the Clerk to the Council.

All staff must be aware that they cannot promise service users or their families/ carers that they will keep secrets.

Conflict resolution and complaints

Conflicts in respect of safety of vulnerable adults will be taken forward by the Clerk to the Council via the CCC Community and Adult Care Directorate.

Communicating and reviewing the policy

Timsbury Parish Council makes clients aware of the Safeguarding Policy through the following means:

The Council's website www.timsbury.org/parishcouncil

This policy will be reviewed by the Council every 3 years and when there are changes in legislation or practice.

Approved and Adopted by Timsbury Parish Council 6th August 2018
