



BCP COUNCIL SAFEGUARDING STRATEGY

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1. Purpose

This Safeguarding Strategy supersedes the safeguarding policies and strategies of the preceding Councils of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. In this Strategy BCP Council sets out what you can expect from us and others who are expected to comply with this strategy.

1.1 Definition of 'safeguarding'

Safeguarding is about supporting and protecting people in their relationships with other people.

It can range from taking responsibility for not causing harm through our interactions, to being mindful of people's emotional wellbeing & welfare, through to reporting concerns about a child, young person or adult with care and support needs being at risk of harm or abuse.

Safeguarding is not just about meeting our statutory duties, it is about keeping each other and ourselves safe, it is about speaking out and taking appropriate action to prevent any kind of harm or abuse from happening. For further detail, see Appendix 1.

1.2 BCP Council has a statutory and moral duty to make appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk of harm.

The key pieces of legislation are the [Care Act](#) and [Childrens Act](#).

BCP Council is committed to ensuring that it's residents, who are at risk of being unable to protect themselves from harm or abuse, have local, timely and high-quality services that support them to stay safe.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk of harm is a responsibility for all BCP Council staff and its representatives and not just the responsibility of those who work directly with these groups of people.

BCP Council believes this responsibility is core to the work of BCP Council and therefore, runs through all our work with our communities and staff. We seek to promote awareness of the personal contribution that any individual can make towards Safeguarding others.

This strategy:

- sets out how BCP Council meets its legal obligations
- ensures staff and representatives understand their responsibilities
- sets out how we will protect and safeguard children, young people and adults at risk of harm or abuse
- embeds Safeguarding at the heart of planning, commissioning, decision making and delivery of services
- seeks to maximise the opportunities to identify and respond to Safeguarding needs

2. Who does the Strategy apply to?

- 2.1 BCP Councillors; employees; people on work placements; contractors; volunteers; partners and anyone delivering a service on behalf of BCP Council or its representatives.
- 2.2 We will ensure that all employees, potential employees and contractors are made aware of this Strategy and any acceptance of an offer of employment or contract will automatically be taken as a commitment of acceptance of the Strategy and a pledge to demonstrate that commitment in their performance.
- 2.3 This Strategy is applicable to all who represent BCP Council and applies in day to day interactions with customers and staff.

3 The Strategy

- 3.1 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. BCP Council has a leadership role and seeks to promote this ethos within our communities and, through promotion of joint working with our partners.
- 3.2 BCP Council believes that anyone who may have direct or indirect contact with children, young people or adults at risk of harm - or who has access to information about them - has a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare.
- 3.3 The Safeguarding Strategy focuses on the workplace responsibilities of staff, although BCP Council recognises that responsibilities of safeguarding and promoting welfare extends to an individual's personal and domestic life.
- 3.4 It is BCP Council's Strategy to ensure that no act or omission on the part of BCP Council, or that of its staff puts a child, young person or adult with care and support needs at risk
- 3.5 In doing so, this Strategy highlights how BCP Council administers systems and processes.
 - **Prevent Harm** - robust systems and procedures to proactively prevent harm from occurring, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk and support staff to fulfil their obligations;
 - **Competent & Aware** - that BCP Council's Councillors, employees and volunteers are confident, competent, capable and receive training, so they are aware of their roles and responsibilities; for example, officers in Trading Standards or staff responsible for Licensing Taxis, will need to be aware of issues such as domestic violence, modern slavery and exploitation and how to report it.
 - **Information** - to provide staff with information about the procedures they must adopt if they suspect a child or adult with care and support needs may be at risk of experiencing harm or abuse;
 - **Welfare and wellbeing** - of children and adults at risk is considered throughout planning and commissioning processes.

- **Public awareness** - is raised through the provision of accessible information which helps people understand different types of abuse, how to stay safe and, how to raise a concern;
- **Oversight** - of work which involves safeguarding practice through line management arrangements (i.e. Supervision / line management / appraisal processes), so it is robust;
- **Quality assurance** - thorough scrutiny processes and systems, which measure the effectiveness of services, including that effective recording and monitoring are in place;
- **Partnerships** – collaborative working with statutory, voluntary and independent agency partners, sharing responsibility for Safeguarding and providing good examples of leadership. For example, the Local Authority Education Safeguarding Advisor and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) works with the designated safeguarding leads in schools to promote the safeguarding agenda.

4. How is this Strategy implemented and communicated?

- 4.1 The following procedures will support the implementation of this strategy:
- Recruitment and selection procedures
 - Induction, training and supervision procedures
 - Whistleblowing policy
 - Complaints procedure
 - Children's safeguarding procedures
 - Pan Dorset Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults policy and procedure
 - in the planning, design, commissioning and delivery of all BCP Council Services
- 4.2 This Strategy will be made publicly available on BCP Council's website.
- 4.3 The Strategy will also be publicised amongst staff. Information and training material will be issued to all new staff and Councillors as part of their induction package.
- 4.4 The Strategy will be shared with all partners through relationships e.g. Safeguarding Boards

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 The Role of Councillors

Councillors are accountable for ensuring that safeguarding priorities are identified, and sufficient resource is available for these needs to be addressed. They will undertake scrutiny to understand the issues and whether safeguarding is effective within BCP Council.

Councillors have a responsibility to support BCP Council's commitment to the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk of harm within BCP Council and should:

- adhere to the Councillors Code of Conduct;
- attend safeguarding training to ensure that they fully understand the key issues with regards to the BCP Council's statutory safeguarding duties and responsibilities;
- scrutinise the BCP Council's Policies and Procedures on Safeguarding;
- hold the Leader, Chief Executive, Corporate Directors and Portfolio Holders with responsibility for these areas to account;
- listen to complaints /allegations and report all concerns to the appropriate BCP Council Units.

Where elected members do not act in a way that promotes safeguarding or in line with their codes of conduct, there may be grounds for reporting their behaviour to the Standards Committee, which may require an investigation under the Councillor Code of Conduct.

If a safeguarding issue occurs relating to a Councillor, the Designated Officer informed of the breach should contact the Monitoring Officer immediately. Where there is evidence of illegal activity, the Councillor will be reported to the relevant authorities and may face criminal investigation. Annual awareness training will be offered to Councillors.

In view of the raised awareness of safeguarding issues and to set an example, it is appropriate for all elected BCP Councillors to be requested to undertake a basic DBS check.

There is no national guidance available, from sources such as the Local Government Association (LGA), in relation to DBS Checks for Elected Members.

However, in line with the Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) Regulations 2002, Councillors undertaking regulated activity will be required to agree to undertake an Enhanced DBS.

Regulated activity includes if they:

- are the Leader of the Council
- discharge, as a result of their membership, any education or social services function;
- are a Cabinet Member (the Cabinet with responsibility for discharging education and social services functions);

- are a Member of a committee of the council which discharges education or social service functions;
 - are a Member of a fostering/adoption panel
 - are a Member of the Corporate Parenting Board
- BCP Council will fund the checks. A log of DBS checks will be maintained by Law and Governance Services.

Councillors will be expected to review their DBS every four years on re-election.

5.2 Leader of BCP Council

The Leader of the BCP Council is responsible for the following with regards to safeguarding:

- to encourage all Councillors to attend training and seek each Political Group Leader's support in ensuring all Councillors do attend specific training provided;
- to hold the Chief Executive, Directors and Officers to account to ensure the Local Authority is fulfilling its statutory role with regards to safeguarding;
- to appoint a Portfolio Holder with the capability and willingness to undertake the Champion role and statutory role for Children's Services;
- to appoint a Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Adult Safeguarding who is also aware and politically accountable for ensuring the Local Authority fulfils its legal responsibilities with regards to safeguarding adults.

5.3 Lead Councillors Roles

Lead Councillor roles include certain Portfolio Holders, Chairs of Overview & Scrutiny Committees and Chairs of Licensing Boards.

They are politically accountable for ensuring that the local authority fulfils its legal responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk of harm. Chairs of relevant Committees and Boards need to work with relevant officers to ensure that Councillors on the Committees and Boards have sufficient and relevant training and development in related safeguarding issues.

They should focus on satisfying themselves that there are systems in place for effective co-ordination of work with other agencies with relevant responsibilities (such as the police and health).

Lead Councillors should also take steps to assure themselves that effective quality assurance systems are in place and functioning effectively in the local authority, and for challenging partner agencies on how they fulfil their responsibilities.

The roles of the Portfolio Holders with responsibility for safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk of harm are to:

- challenge and ensure that partner agencies are fulfilling their roles in safeguarding;
- support, challenge and monitor the roles of the Chief Executive, Corporate Directors and officers in their safeguarding roles and responsibilities.

For more information about the Lead Member for Children's Services (LMCS), see Appendix 2.

5.4 Safeguarding Responsibilities - Roles of BCP Council Officers

Whilst safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, there are several specific safeguarding roles that individuals hold within BCP Council.

The following is a guide as to the safeguarding roles within the BCP Council:

5.4.1 Chief Executive


The Chief Executive has overall responsibility regarding all aspects of safeguarding. They are expected to understand how safeguarding operates on the front-line through reporting processes and other means of hearing and observing this (this is described as a 'line of sight').

The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that the Directors of Children's Services and Adult Services champion safeguarding within the organisation, are fulfilling their managerial responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk of harm, including by ensuring that the Safeguarding Children's Arrangements and the Safeguarding Adults Board are working effectively.

The Chief Executive and other executive officers have a Governance role to ensure that both of the above are working effectively.

5.4.2 Corporate Director of Children's and Corporate Director of Adult Social Care Services

These roles have specific responsibilities:

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- to provide effective strategic professional leadership for the Children's and Adult's Services and ensure the delivery of improved outcomes for children, young people and adults in the BCP Council;
 - to champion Safeguarding throughout the organisation
 - to support effective interagency and partnership working to protect children, young people and adults at risk from harm;
 - to lead improvements of preventative services and those delivering early interventions;
 - to lead and manage any necessary cultural change;
 - to lead the implementation of standards and ensure performance and practice monitoring arrangements are in place;
 - to be a member of the relevant Safeguarding Board (i.e. Safeguarding Children's Arrangements or the Safeguarding Adults Board);
 - to provide an example to partner agencies and organisations of good leadership and accountability in safeguarding;
 - to have a line of sight of practice across services, through reporting processes and some direct contact.

5.4.3 Corporate Directors

Corporate Directors of other Services:


- will ensure that staff within their Directorates have good awareness of Safeguarding, are aware of their associated responsibilities.
- will ensure their staff are aware of the processes which support BCP Council's commitment to Safeguarding and to work effectively across the organisation.
- where there are ways to support the Safeguarding commitment, they will enable their staff to do so.
- will provide leadership to promote a commitment to Safeguarding
- ensure safeguarding is considered in business planning and service delivery

5.4.4 Director of Organisational Development

This post holder works to ensure that stringent recruitment procedures are in place and that appropriate checks are made on staff working with children and adults at risk of harm. This includes being responsible for the administration of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and ensuring that DBS referrals are made if appropriate.

The post holder will act as the first point of call for staff reporting safeguarding allegations against employees and will link with relevant Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

5.4.5 Service Directors

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- maintain a clear organisational and operational focus on safeguarding;
 - identify within their Unit a Safeguarding Champion
 - ensure the Safeguarding Strategy is taken account of within Service and Team plans

The roles of the Service Directors within Children and Adults Social Care Services, relating to safeguarding responsibilities are to:

- play a key role as Senior Officers in promoting the safety and wellbeing of children and adults who may be at risk of harm, abuse or neglect;
- ensure that relevant statutory requirements and other national standards are met
- contribute fully to the effective working of the relevant Safeguarding governance arrangements which cover the Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole areas
- ensure that effective liaison and management of any concerns about the health and welfare of a child or an adult who may be at risk of harm are responded to in line with the relevant safeguarding adults or safeguarding children's policy and procedures

5.4.6 Safeguarding Lead Managers in Adult's and Children's Services

The post-holders will:

- work to ensure the effective implementation of the Safeguarding Policies & Procedures throughout BCP Council
- raise awareness of safeguarding issues amongst staff and equip them with the information and links, including facilitating the Safeguarding Champion's network meetings;
- establish and maintain effective multi-agency working with all relevant statutory and non-statutory agencies;
- identify needs and oversee provision of staff training, including disseminating lessons learnt;
- provide professional support and advice to other colleagues and Safeguarding Champions across BCP Council and from partner organisations.

5.4.7 Line Managers across BCP Council

Managers across BCP Council:

- will ensure that recruitment procedures are followed and that appropriate checks for all job roles, particularly for staff working with children and adults care and support needs, including agency, voluntary, temporary or work placements. This also includes requesting Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and ensuring that DBS referrals are made if appropriate.
- will carry out the correct safeguarding induction process for all new staff including ensuring the appropriate training is attended.
- will ensure that all staff within their remit are made aware of the relevant safeguarding procedures and have the appropriate ongoing training.
- provide management oversight to ensure that the Safeguarding principles communicated through training are implemented in day to day practice
- will support Service unit Safeguarding Champions to attend relevant training and meetings relevant to their role
- will support staff to raise safeguarding concerns when necessary
- to ensure that accurate records are kept in relation to any concerns raised

5.4.8 Service Unit Safeguarding Champions

Each Service Unit will identify at least one Safeguarding Champion and they will be supported to attend quarterly network meetings led by the Safeguarding Lead officers.

This role will ensure that effective liaison and management of any concerns about the health and welfare of a child or an adult who may be at risk of harm, are responded to in line with the BCP Council safeguarding adults and safeguarding children's policy and procedures.

The key responsibilities of the Service Unit Safeguarding Champion are:


Please note that this is not a job description but allows clarity of the role of the Service Unit Safeguarding Champion:

- to attend the safeguarding meetings
- to act as a source of support, advice, and expertise when staff within the Team / Unit have a concern about possible risk or harm
- to assist colleagues to refer any cases of concern of suspected harm or abuse in conjunction with their line manager
- to receive and consider safeguarding messages and update and disseminate them, as relevant within the Unit/Team
- to ensure staff know how to access relevant safeguarding Adults and Children awareness training and Domestic Violence awareness training
- to attend regular Safeguarding Champion liaison meetings and disseminate information within their Unit/Team
- to contribute to Audits, Internal Management Reviews and Serious Case Reviews as and when required and relevant
- to give feedback on existing safeguarding policies and procedures and their development

5.4.9 Outside Organisations, Contractors and Partnership Agencies

Organisations delivering services involving children or adults at risk of harm on behalf of BCP Council are required to comply with the relevant Safeguarding Policies and, where relevant, to have their own policy and procedures in place.

This includes the requirement that all specifications for contracted and commissioned services are required to comply with this Strategy.



This will be part of commissioning and contracting arrangements, which is in line with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, having regard to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the public.

Relevant and proportionate safeguarding criteria will be built into the procurement documents and processes as required.

Remember “Safeguarding is Everyone’s Business”



6. Behaviours, Induction, Training and Supervision

- 6.1 So that the behaviours of those involved in service delivery, including BCP Councillors, are above reproach and they are equipped with the skills to Safeguard people in our community, BCP Council will ensure that all staff have an appropriate level of awareness to recognise and respond to signs of harm or abuse.
- 6.2 This will be done by:
- A requirement that anyone who will have contact with or access to records about children, young people, or adults at risk of harm, is subject to the appropriate statutory DBS checks before being allowed to work unsupervised with these groups or have access to their records.
 - A requirement to adhere to BCP Council's Code of Conduct, BCP Councils Behaviour Framework and any relevant professional Code of Conduct
 - A requirement that all staff, BCP Councillors and contracted services will undertake a basic level of awareness training as part of their induction. Some staff will be required to undertake additional training depending upon their role.
 - A commitment from BCP Council to uphold the Behaviour Framework or the relevant Code of Conduct

7. Enforcements and Sanctions

- 7.1 Failure to comply with our Safeguarding Strategy could have significant legal and financial implications for BCP Council and individuals. That is why it is important to embed Safeguarding and demonstrate consideration of Safeguarding in our strategies, policies, plans and procedures.
- 7.2 Councillors who fail to comply with this Strategy will be subject to procedures set out in their code of conduct.
- 7.3 Officers who breach this Strategy will be subject to BCP Councils Disciplinary Procedure.

8. Information Sharing and Reporting Concerns

- 8.1 BCP Council will ensure that there are clear and effective procedures in place to enable the reporting of any suspected or actual cases of abuse or harm.
- 8.2 When there is a reasonable cause to believe that a child, young person or adult with care and support needs, may be experiencing, or at risk of experiencing neglect abuse or harm, consideration must always be given to referring these concerns to Children's or Adults Social Care. Matters must be referred to the Police if there is suspicion that a crime may or has been committed.

- 8.3 Feedback must be given to the referrer about the action taken. However, the persons' right to confidentiality may limit the detail that can be given to third parties.
- 8.4 The above principles of confidentiality apply to all Councillors, employees and contracted staff. However, information about children, young people, families and adults at risk of harm, neglect or abuse will be shared appropriately, and always in accordance with BCP Council's Information Management and Data Sharing Strategy. If there is any doubt whether the information ought to be shared advice must be sought from the Information Governance Team.

Contact details for reporting harm or abuse relating to an child, young person or adult at risk of harm can be found [here](#).

- 8.5 BCP Council will apply the principles set out in its [Whistle Blowing Strategy](#) to encourage the reporting of legitimate concerns and by reassuring staff, representatives or anybody acting on their behalf that they will be protected from victimisation or future disadvantage if they raise legitimate concerns in good faith.
- 8.6 If you feel that a Councillor has not behaved in a correct way you can make a complaint to the BCP Council to request the matter is investigated.
- 8.7 More information about how you may raise your concerns about a Councillor can be found [here](#).

Appendix 1 – Definitions of Safeguarding

Safeguarding is about supporting and protecting people in their relationships with other people

It can range from taking responsibility for not causing harm through our interactions, to being mindful of people's emotional wellbeing & welfare, through to reporting concerns about a child, young person or adult with care and support needs being at risk of harm or abuse

Safeguarding is not just about meeting our statutory duties, it is about keeping each other and ourselves safe, it is about speaking out and taking appropriate action to prevent any kind of harm or abuse from happening

Children and Young People

Are defined as anyone under the age of 18

Safeguarding children includes:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up with care that keeps them safe and well; and acting to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Children can be harmed through:

- witnessing and being involved in domestic violence;
- neglect of their physical care, emotional needs or living in poor home conditions;
- the impact of drug or alcohol misuse by parents;
- sexual exploitation / trafficking often linked with going missing and running away;
- exploitation involving criminal activity
- sexual abuse by family people in authority /other young people /people linked to the family;
- physical abuse;
- the impact of parents' mental health problems or learning disability;
- being victims of anti-social behaviour / bullying;
- cybercrime, including on-line grooming;
- exposure to radicalisation

Adults at risk

An adult at risk is anyone aged 18 and over who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs, e.g. the person may be purchasing their own care, or having it provided by family) and;
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect

An adult at risk may therefore be a person who:

- is frail due to age, ill health, physical disability or cognitive impairment;
- has a learning disability;

- has a physical disability and/ or a sensory impairment;
- has mental health needs including dementia or a personality disorder;
- has a long-term illness /condition;
- is addicted to alcohol or illicit substances;
- is a victim of domestic violence or abuse;
- is an unpaid carer or unpaid member of family/ friend who provides support and personal care

Other adults who may face risk may not be considered as an adult at risk of harm within the definitions above, they may be:

- victims or witnesses of domestic abuse;
- victims or people at risk of honour-based violence;
- victims of sexual violence;
- victims or people at risk of forced marriage;
- adults susceptible to radicalisation;
- victims or people at risk of human trafficking or modern slavery
- Care leavers up to the age of 25, if they have care or support needs

Appendix 2 Further Information about lead responsibilities

Statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services (DCS) and the Lead Member for Children's Services For local authorities (April 2013) states:

The Lead Member for Children's Services (LMCS)

Section 19 of the Children Act 2004 requires every top tier local authority to designate one of its BCP Councillors as Lead Member for Children's Services. The LMCS will be a local BCP Councillor with delegated responsibility from the BCP Council, through the Leader or Mayor, for children's services. The LMCS, as a member of the BCP Council Executive, has political responsibility for the leadership, strategy and effectiveness of local authority children's services. The LMCS is also democratically accountable to local communities and has a key role in defining the local vision and setting political priorities for children's services within the broader political context of the BCP Council.

The LMCS is responsible for ensuring that the needs of all children and young people, including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, and their families and carers, are addressed. In doing so, the LMCS will work closely with other local partners to improve the outcomes and well-being of children and young people. The LMCS should have regard to the UNCRC and ensure that children and young people are involved in the development and delivery of local services. As politicians, LMCSs should not get drawn into the detailed day-to-day operational management of education and children's services. They should, however, provide strong, strategic leadership and support and challenge to the DCS and relevant Councillors of their senior team as appropriate.