
SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Cleobury Mortimer Town Council is committed to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of all volunteers and visitors (Adults and Children) who attend our premises, or who participate in activities elsewhere, as far as is reasonable and practicable.

This policy relates to the safeguarding of those that may be vulnerable, and to children.

Cleobury Mortimer Town Council commits to:

- identify risks, and take appropriate action in conjunction with the safeguarding lead
- provide a safe and nurturing environment for all those considered vulnerable
- provide adequate information, instruction and training in relation to safeguarding
- provide adequate support and supervision to volunteers carrying out Council business

Definition of an Adult at risk:

Aged 18 or over, who may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.

Vulnerable adults are entitled to: privacy; be treated with dignity; lead an independent life and be enabled to do so; be able to choose how they lead their lives; the protection of the law; have their rights upheld regardless of ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age, religion or cultural background.

POLICY STATEMENT

As a Town Council, we want to ensure dignity to adults and children. We are here to support individuals and families, and their circumstances and actively encourage an inclusive environment.

We seek to ensure that all our Councillors, Officers and Volunteers are aware of what is required from them under the Safeguarding Policy and make sure that it is practised at all times.

It is the responsibility of each one of us to prevent the physical, sexual or emotional abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults and children.

The Town Council is committed to co-operate fully with the appropriate statutory services when they are conducting official investigation into physical, emotional or sexual abuse and neglect of vulnerable adults, children or young people (by an adult or young person).

Implementation

Cleobury Mortimer Town Council will plan its work so as to minimise situations where abuse might occur.

Although the number of people who actively seek to abuse vulnerable adults and children is very small, the Council can reduce opportunities for abuse in various ways. We will, for instance:

- Ensure that there is adequate supervision for all vulnerable adults engaging with the Council
- Ensure that all Councillors, Officers and Volunteers have the contact number of the safeguarding lead in case of an emergency
- Make sure the designated safeguarding lead has up-to-date training

Designated person and their role

The Town Council has a designated safeguarding lead who is responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of vulnerable adults or children. THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING LEAD FOR THE COUNCIL IS DEBBIE BROWN.

The Council also has a secondary safeguarding officer who is responsible for dealing with any related concerns in the event that the designated person is ill, on holiday or an allegation of abuse is made about him/her. This person is MATTHEW SHEEHAN.

Recording

The designated safeguarding lead will make notes and keep confidential records of any disclosure or concerns they have or another Councillor, Officer or Volunteer has and will seek advice from the Social Services Department or the Police.

Councillors, Officers and Volunteers must ensure that their recording of facts, incidents, referrals, and discussions are all sufficient, accurate, concise, up-to-date, legible, dated, factual and kept confidential. Opinions should be kept to a minimum and backed up by factual evidence. Any supporting evidence should be preserved and clearly labelled. These records must be stored securely in a manner that safeguards the individual's right to privacy and security. These records are available to individuals on request (not third-party information) and may be used as evidence in disciplinary proceedings or in civil or criminal prosecutions.

Whistle-blowing

Councillors, Officers and Volunteers are encouraged to act when suspicious that abuse is occurring – no matter what the setting, who the perpetrator is or who the victim is. The Council will respect and not penalise those who stand up for anyone who is suspected of being abused.

REMEMBER

It is important that Councillors, Officers and Volunteers are aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional vulnerable adult and child protection agencies following a referral to them of concern about someone.

Additional points

Displaying Information

- a) The contact details of the designated safeguarding lead will be displayed on the Council website.
- b) Make sure all Councillors, Officers and Volunteers know the name of the designated lead and how they might be contacted.

Applying agreed procedures for protecting vulnerable adults and children

It is possible to be lulled into a false sense of security, believing that those who work alongside vulnerable adults and children will never be guilty of abuse. It is not safe to assume that all others are automatically safe to be with vulnerable adults or children.

For this reason, all procedures set in place to protect vulnerable adults and children should apply to all those in contact with them. This is not the same as treating each person who relates to vulnerable adults and children as being under suspicion, but a matter of taking sensible measures to protect vulnerable adults and children, which are then observed by everyone.

If anyone has concerns, please raise them with the designated safeguarding lead. If it is brought to the attention of the designated person and not adequately dealt with the next step is to talk to Social Services/the Police as a private citizen to discuss your concerns.

Disclosure of Information

There is a difference between confidentiality and secrecy. All personal and delicate information disclosed to us is confidential but may not always be secret.

Personal and delicate information about volunteers (such as contact details) will be:

- Confidential to the Council GDPR Officer (Clerk) and will only be shared with other volunteers on a 'need to know basis' *and*
- Can be shared with another agency when:
 - Permission is given by the person about whom the information is held
 - There is an overriding justification to share information without the person's consent
 - The law requires it

Supervision as a means of protection

Volunteers should be able to raise issues about their area of work and discuss them. When receiving feedback, particular attention should be paid to any situation or suggestion that a vulnerable adult or child is being highly favoured or harshly treated, as these are signs of abuse.

In all recruitment decisions concerning volunteers:

- a) a detailed application form should be completed
- b) an informal interview will provide an extended conversation to allow an opportunity to explore in more detail the applicant's experience and motivation for volunteering

Training

Councillors, Officers and Volunteers are required to read the NHS England Safeguarding Adults Guide:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/adult-pocket-guide.pdf>

Further guidelines concerning the safeguarding policies of Shropshire council can also be obtained from their website:

<https://shropshire.gov.uk/shropshire-choices/i-need-help/keeping-adults-safe/a-guide-to-adult-safeguarding-in-shropshire/>

Further information about safeguarding children can also be sought from Shropshire Safeguarding partnership:

<http://www.safeguardingshropshireschildren.org.uk/>

Councillors and Officers will receive Safeguarding Training every 3 years

General

All vehicles used in the transportation of vulnerable adults must have a valid road fund licence, be **appropriately insured**, have a valid MOT certificate and comply with all appropriate legislation and regulations. Seat sharing is not permitted and seat belts must be worn.

Review

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed every two years and whenever there are any legislative changes or amendments to guidance issued by relevant statutory bodies. Next review December 2022.