

**SUBJECT: SAFEGUARDING & PROTECTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE  
POLICY 2024**

**DIRECTORATE: CHIEF EXECUTIVE & TOWN CLERK**

**REPORT AUTHOR: EMILY KATE HOLMES – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR –  
TRANSFORMATION & STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT**

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To present the revised Safeguarding & Protecting Vulnerable People Policy to Executive Committee for approval.

## **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1 Safeguarding is a statutory duty for the council. It encompasses a range of legal duties and responsibilities designed to protect people's health, wellbeing, and human rights, and support them in preventing problems from escalating and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse, and neglect. This report provides an overview of the policy to support the council to fulfil its statutory responsibilities and to demonstrate safeguarding competence and compliance.
- 2.2 City of Lincoln's existing safeguarding policy was already aligned to agreed county multi-agency policy and practices. Safeguarding compliance is audited and checked through a process of self-assessment and external audit by the respective safeguarding boards.
- 2.3 This report presents the updated safeguarding policy and procedures which have been amended as part of the full review which is required every three years. The key changes are summarised in the report.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Council has statutory duties to undertake in relation to safeguarding and to promote the wellbeing of individuals and communities. Safeguarding covers a range of legal duties and responsibilities to protect people's health, wellbeing and human rights, to prevent problems from escalating and enabling households and individuals to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.
- 3.2 To safeguard residents, the council works collaboratively with other statutory services including Lincolnshire Police, Adult Social Care and Children's Services. The way agencies work together is shaped through countywide strategic partnerships including Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership, Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board, Safer Lincolnshire Partnership and Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership.

## **4. Safeguarding and Protecting Vulnerable People Policy and Procedures**

- 4.1 The Safeguarding and Protecting Vulnerable Policy and Procedures supports the Council to protect those who need safeguarding by providing a reference point and guidance for staff, elected members, volunteers and commissioned services acting on behalf of the Council. This document seeks to provide practical guidance to ensure the Council undertakes its duties and promotes the wellbeing of residents and communities.
- 4.2 Safeguarding responsibilities are broadly consistent across the different areas of protecting vulnerable people. This includes;
- Having effective policy and procedures in place with clear roles and responsibilities
  - Recognising abuse or knowing how to recognise concerns
  - Training and safely recruiting a capable workforce
  - Reporting concerns to partner agencies
  - Working closely with partners such as social care services, health agencies, Lincolnshire Police and other local authorities
  - Responding to allegations
  - Undertaking and participating in regular audit and scrutiny for continuous improvement
- 4.3 This report provides an updated version of existing policies and framework to fulfil statutory duties and demonstrate safeguarding competence and compliance following a full review.
- 4.4 The key policy changes in the document can be summarised;
- Updated Policy title to include Protecting Vulnerable People
  - Roles and responsibilities updated to reflect change in personnel
  - Sectioned the policy into parts for ease of navigation and to enable clear version control and updates for topics
  - Updated guidance on domestic abuse to reflect the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and joint multi-agency domestic abuse protocol
  - Updated to reflect multi-agency working practices including the joint agency escalation protocol, self-neglect protocol and joint multi-agency domestic abuse protocol
  - Updates to Prevent to reflect the updated statutory guidance and Venue Hire Policy
  - Refreshed and updated links to external resources and guidance

## **5. Strategic Priorities**

- 5.1 Consideration and support for vulnerable residents is an integral part of the council's strategic plan, Vision 2025, and particularly the priority 'Let's reduce all kinds of inequality'. The remit covered through the Safeguarding & Protecting Vulnerable People Policy and Procedures demonstrate how the Council provides help and support to the most vulnerable in the city. This is delivered by making sure vulnerable residents have access to advice and services, working closely with partners to ensure that correct support is in place.

## **6. Organisational Impacts**

### **6.1 Finance (including whole life costs where applicable)**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

### **6.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules**

Maintaining appropriate Safeguarding Policy & Procedures, the council ensures that any legal requirements and duties are being met including;

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- Care Act 2014
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 statutory guidance
- Prevent Duty Guidance (updated 2023)

### **6.3 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights**

The policy and procedures provides information to protect vulnerable individuals from significant harm. There is a responsibility to protect children and young people until they reach their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and adult safeguarding responsibilities are in place for vulnerable individuals from the age of 18 onward. The policy highlights the need to have specific regard to individuals with disabilities, be aware of additional care needs and mental capacity at a given time. The policy refers to cultural abuse and also protection of harm for those individuals impacted by Hate Crime and Mate Crime. A person is not defined as vulnerable because of a single characteristic however some characteristics may be a contributing factor in putting an individual at risk.

## **7. Risk Implications**

- 7.1 (i) Alternative options considered were that the policy is not updated or that the council has 8 separate policies and procedures for Safeguarding Children, Safeguarding Adults at Risk, Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Hate Crime & Mate Crime, Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking, County Lines & Cuckooing and Preventing Violent Extremism. This is not recommended.
- 7.2 (ii) Key Risks Associated with the Preferred Approach – “Failure to protect the vulnerable in relation to the Council’s PREVENT and compliance with safeguarding and domestic abuse duties” is a risk identified in the Council’s strategic risk register. Having an up-to-date policy and procedure that is relevant, current and simple to understand helps mitigate against this risk.

## **8. Recommendations**

- 8.1 That feedback from the meeting of Policy Scrutiny Committee dated 12 March 2024 (*Minute ‘To Follow*) on the adoption of the revised Safeguarding and Protecting Vulnerable People Policy and Procedures be reviewed.
- 8.2 That the content of the report and the updated policy and procedures be approved.

<b>Is this a key decision?</b>	No
<b>Do the exempt information categories apply?</b>	No
<b>Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?</b>	No
<b>How many appendices does the report contain?</b>	9
<b>List of Background Papers:</b>	None
<b>Lead Officers:</b>	<p>Emily Kate Holmes, Assistant Director Transformation &amp; Strategic Development and Joanne Smith, Safeguarding Lead Officer  <a href="mailto:Emily.kate.holmes@lincoln.gov.uk">Emily.kate.holmes@lincoln.gov.uk</a>  <a href="mailto:Joanne.smith@lincoln.gov.uk">Joanne.smith@lincoln.gov.uk</a></p>