

PAMPISFORD PARISH COUNCIL

SAFEGUARDING POLICY

1. Introduction

Everyone has a responsibility for safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Pampisford Parish Council is committed to delivering services that safeguard those who engage with them. The Parish Council will fully support and protect anyone, who in good faith (without malicious intent), reports his or her concern about a colleague's practice or the possibility that abuse or bullying is taking place.

This policy outlines good practice to promote the safety of those using the Council's services and to protect employees, volunteers and elected councillors from false allegations.

2. References

This policy should be used in conjunction with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) inter-agency procedures (see www.cambslscb.org.uk) and the Department for Children, Schools and Families document 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' (www.dcsf.gov.uk).

All employees, volunteers and councillors are covered by this Safeguarding Policy.

3. Background

The Children's Act 2004, Childcare Act 2006, Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Government's 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010' place a duty on key statutory agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. The 2004 Act embodies five principles that are key to the wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults and are known as the 5 Every Child Matters outcomes:

- Be healthy;
- Stay safe;
- Enjoy and achieve;
- Make a positive contribution;
- Achieve economic well being.

In practical terms this means that the Parish Council has a responsibility to provide a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults in which their welfare is of paramount importance and in which they can achieve their potential.

4. Aims

4.1 This policy aims to set out procedures for the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults by protecting them from abuse (see Appendix 1 for definitions of types of abuse).

4.2 The Parish Council will achieve this by:

- a) Respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and feelings of children, young people and vulnerable adults;
 - b) Promoting good practice that encourages a safe environment; protects all parties and avoids mistaken allegations of abuse;
 - c) Providing all employees, volunteers and councillors who fall within the Parish Council's regulated activities with instruction, training and information that will ensure that they:
 - are properly equipped to recognise abuse and mistreatment;
 - are clear about how to report and record concerns;
 - understand the need to take advice about concerns from relevant specialists when necessary;
 - work in a way which will protect them, as far as possible, from accusations of abuse.
 - d) Ensuring that all suspicions or allegations involving employees, volunteers and councillors are dealt with effectively and efficiently and that appropriate criminal, disciplinary and appeals procedures are implemented.
 - e) Ensure employees, volunteers and councillors who work with children, young people and vulnerable adults are subject to Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) checks and/or a satisfactory disclosure prior to taking up the post.
 - f) Require all contractors and, where appropriate, their employees undertaking regulated activity on behalf of the Parish Council to adopt and abide by the processes laid out in the Safeguarding Policy.
- 4.3 Reviewing this policy at least once every 3 years or when major change in the organisation or in relevant legislation occurs.

5. Definitions

- 5.1 **Children and Young People** - Anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday.
- 5.2 **Vulnerable Adult** - Any person aged 18 or over for whom a 'regulated activity' is provided.
- 5.3 **Employees, volunteers and councillors** - Anyone working for or on behalf of the Parish Council, whether paid or on a voluntary basis.
- 5.4 **Regulated Activity** - Regulated activity is defined as work which involves close and unsupervised contact with vulnerable groups including children. The definition of regulated activity is contained in Appendix 3. Regulated activity excludes family arrangements and personal non-commercial arrangements.

N.B. The Parish Council currently does not undertake any form of regulated activity.

- 5.5 **Close and Regular Access** - The term used to describe working or volunteering with children, young people or vulnerable adults:

- Where an individual is regularly caring for, training or supervising a child, young person or vulnerable adult;
- Where an individual has sole charge of children, young people or vulnerable adults.

N.B. The Parish Council currently does not undertake any form of close or regular access.

6. Guiding Principles

- 6.1 This policy applies to all of the Parish Council's employees, volunteers, councillors and sub-contractors. Additionally, and where appropriate, this policy applies to contractors involved in regulated activity on behalf of the Parish Council (see Appendix 4).
- 6.2 The guiding principles for safeguarding are:
- the welfare of the individual is paramount;
 - everyone has the right to protection from abuse;
 - employees, volunteers and councillors should work in an open and transparent way;
 - employees, volunteers and councillors should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motives or intentions (see Appendices 4 and 5).
 - The same professional standards should always be applied regardless of culture, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual orientation reflecting the protected areas as outlined in The Equality Act 2010 of age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 6.3 Confidentiality will be upheld in line with current data protection and human rights legislation. The information sharing protocol of Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children's Board will be followed in circumstances where information is shared with other agencies in the interest of a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

7. Areas of Specific Responsibility

- 7.1 All employees, volunteers and councillors –
- have a responsibility to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults, and report abuse without delay to the appropriate person;
 - should be aware of and act in accordance with this Safeguarding Policy and related guidance;
 - should not begin any regulated activity prior to satisfactory completion of the Parish Council's recruitment and selection process and DBS checks;
 - should be aware of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour for employees, volunteers and councillors in charge of children, young people and vulnerable adults;

- (e) have a responsibility to inform the Parish Council's Clerk (or the Chairman of the Council) of any allegation of abuse.

7. Advice and Support

- 7.1 All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

8. Support following allegations of abuse

- 8.1 Consideration will be given to providing the appropriate support to individuals, both those subject to, and those making, allegations of abuse.

9. Training

- 9.1 Appropriate training will be provided to the Parish Council's employees, volunteers and councillors in the event of the Council engaging in work within the parameters of regulated activities.

- 9.2 The level of required training will be followed in line with Government guidance.

10. Monitoring and Appraisal

- 10.1 In the event of an employee's role including regulated activities, this will be reviewed in relation to the Safeguarding Policy on an annual basis via a supervision meeting as appropriate.

- 10.2 This policy will be reviewed at least once every three years.

11. Vulnerable Person Referral Form

- 11.1 If an employee, volunteer or councillor has a concern about poor practice or abuse or needs to report an incident concerning a child or young person, the form in Appendix 6 should be completed and passed to the Clerk to the Council (or to the Chairman of the Council).

- 11.2 If an employee, volunteer or councillor has a concern of poor practice or abuse or needs to report an incident concerning an adult considered vulnerable by the activity they are participating within at a particular time, the form in Appendix 7 should be completed and passed to the Clerk to the Council (or to the Chairman of the Council).

12. Responding to disclosure

- 12.1 Within 24 hours of being informed of an incident the Clerk to the Council (or the Chairman) will report the incident or seek the appropriate advice. The Clerk (or the Chairman) will advise the referrer of the action they will take and provide further feedback as appropriate. Guidance on how to respond to disclosure is given in Appendix 2.

13. Responding to an accusation of poor practice or abuse

- 13.1 **What if I am accused of poor practice or abuse?**

- d.p. note
- (a) You have a responsibility to contact your line manager immediately, or as soon as possible, and should provide a detailed written account of the circumstances.
 - (b) The Clerk (or Chairman) will, maintain communication with and, advise the referrer of the action they will take and provide further feedback as appropriate.
 - (c) An investigation of the circumstances leading to the accusation will be undertaken by the Clerk (or Chairman) and as appropriate further action will be taken and a report submitted to the Council.

13.2 What if a member of my team or a colleague is accused of poor practice?

- (a) Consideration should be given to withdrawing the employee from duty at the earliest opportunity.
- (b) Working with the individual employee a detailed written record of the event should be made.
- (c) An investigation of the circumstances leading to the accusation will be undertaken by the Clerk or the Chairman and, as appropriate, further action will be taken and a report submitted to the Council.
- (d) If such an investigation establishes poor practice, rather than abuse, then the following action will be considered -
 - Appropriate training and supervision;
 - Review of general practice in relation to safeguarding;
 - Implementation of standard disciplinary procedures.

13.3 What if an allegation of abuse is made against a member of my team or a colleague?

- (a) Consideration should be given to withdrawing the employee from duty at the earliest opportunity.
- (b) Working with the individual employee a detailed written account of the event should be made.
- (c) The Clerk (or the Chairman) will advise the referrer of the action they will take and provide further feedback as appropriate.
- (d) An investigation of the circumstances leading to the accusation will be undertaken within a reasonable timeframe as appropriate to the particular circumstances of the case and, as appropriate, further action be taken.
- (e) If abuse cannot be ruled out then the Police should be contacted.
- (f) If abuse is confirmed:
 - The standard Disciplinary Procedure should be implemented;
 - A review of general practice in relation to safeguarding should be undertaken.