

# MARKET LAVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Mrs Carol Hackett – Clerk, 23 Orchard Close, West Ashton, Wiltshire. BA14 6AU.

Tel: 01225 760372 or email: [clerk@marketlavingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@marketlavingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

VAT Registration Number: 296 9715 35 / Website: [www.marketlavingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.marketlavingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

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## SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND ADULTS AT RISK

### POLICY AND PROCEDURES

APPROVED AT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 15/2/2022

In creating this Safeguarding Policy and Procedures for Children and Adults at risk document we share with everyone involved with the Parish Council, our commitment to developing safe practice to protect both individuals and the Council.

#### 1.0 The Parish Council's Purpose and Aims for writing a Safeguarding Policy

- To ensure that all staff, Councillors, and volunteers, are clear about their individual behaviour and responsibilities with particular regard to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk
- For the safeguarding of children and adults at risk to be permanently and consistently integrated into all council systems and processes in order to be effective in protecting them from abuse, neglect, or harm of any kind.
- To ensure that all suspicions and/allegations of abuse will be properly investigated and dealt with appropriately and quickly
- To ensure that the recruitment of staff takes account of safeguarding issues
- To ensure that physical spaces within our premises are safe and secure
- To ensure good practices by staff, Councillors, and volunteers when participating in activities / events where children and adults at risk may be present

A child is anyone under the age of 18 years; and

An adult at risk is anyone aged 18 years or over, who may need community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age, or illness, who is or may be unable to take care of themselves, or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation.

#### 2.0 Responsibilities

The responsibility for safeguarding falls on everybody who is involved with Market Lavington Parish Council, and they are expected to support the Safeguarding Policy.

The overall responsibility for the management, review, and implementation of the Parish Council's Safeguarding Policy falls on the Council's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** is **Carol Hackett** (Parish Clerk / RFO)

The **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** is Cllr **Colin Osborn** (Parish Council Chairman)

*See Appendix 1 for DSL / Deputy DSL contact details and responsibilities*

Individual Responsibility – Every staff member, Councillor, or volunteer who supports activities / events involving children or adults at risk has a duty of care to themselves and to others. Individuals should –

- Familiarise themselves with the types of abuse, and how to recognise signs of abuse or improper behaviour
- Understand the potential risk to themselves, and ensure that good practice is adhered to at all times

- Be aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of an incident or suspicion of abuse taking place

### 3.0 Categories of Abuse

Government guidance recognises four main categories of abuse (See Working together to Safeguard Children 2010 1.33-1.36) These are Physical Abuse, Emotional Abuse, Sexual Abuse and Neglect. Detailed descriptions of what is meant by each of these categories can be found on various websites e.g., [www.safenetwork.org.uk](http://www.safenetwork.org.uk) or [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

A brief outline of these categories is as follows -

**Physical Abuse** – this may involve actions such as hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, as well as the use of inappropriate restraint, or any other behaviour to cause physical harm.

**Emotional Abuse** – is a persistent lack of love and affection, and can include verbal abuse or threatening behaviour, being ignored, intimidated, humiliated, or taunted, or any other behaviour to cause adverse effects on emotional development.

**Sexual Abuse** – is when a child or adult at risk has been forced or enticed to take part in sexual activities.

**Neglect** – is the persistent failure to meet a child or adult at risk's basic physical and/or psychological needs.

### 4.0 Signs and Symptoms of Abuse

Staff, Councillors, and volunteers, interacting with children and adults at risk will need to be aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse (detailed descriptions are available on the sites mentioned above).

**Physical Abuse:** Bruising on areas of the body that are unusual for ordinary rough and tumble bruising e.g., cheeks, buttocks, back - unusual burn marks and other injuries that cannot be explained easily - unusual cowering behaviour - watchfulness or changes in behaviour generally.

**Emotional Abuse:** Low self-esteem – changes in behaviour – evidence of self-harming – fear of adults talking to parents about their behaviour.

**Sexual Abuse:** Pain or itching in the genital area – obvious discomfort when walking or sitting – sexualised drawings – sexual knowledge beyond their age and developmental stage.

**Neglect:** Unkempt appearance – inappropriate clothing for weather conditions – hunger – constant complaining of feeling tired.

### 5.0 Code of Good practice

As a Parish Council we welcome children, young people, and adults at risk. During the normal day-to-day running of the Council there is likely to be minimal direct contact with children and adults at risk, with any that do attend our premises, likely to be part of organised groups, when the main responsibility for safeguarding remains with those who have a duty of care for the group (e.g., Guide or Brownie leaders).

However, there could be occasions when this is not the case, and Parish Council staff, Councillors, or volunteers may have to take on this responsibility (e.g., Parish Council organised events). It is possible to minimise the risk of safeguarding incidents occurring, and below are specific examples of the care which should be taken when interacting with children or adults at risk -

## Individuals must:

- **Never** be alone with unaccompanied children or adults at risk
- Treat all children and people with dignity and respect
- Provide an example for good conduct that others can follow
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour e.g., bullying and report allegations/suspicions of abuse
- Respect their right to personal privacy and encourage children and adults at risk to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes or behaviours they do not like
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret certain actions, no matter how well intentioned
- Be aware that any physical contact with a child or adult at risk may be misinterpreted
- Recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues with children or adults at risk
- Always operate within the Council's policies and procedures

## Individuals must not:

- Have inappropriate or unwarranted physical or verbal contact with children or adults at risk
- Be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour or make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or adults at risk
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- Exaggerate or trivialise any abuse issues
- Show favouritism to any individual
- Rely on your good name or that of the Council to protect you
- Believe 'it could never happen to me'
- Take a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests another more prudent approach

## 6.0 Procedures to be followed in response to an incident or signs or suspicions of Abuse

It is vitally important that the details of an allegation, an incident of abuse or mistreatment, or suspicions of abuse are carefully recorded in an 'Incident Report Form' (see Appendix 3) at the earliest opportunity, and submitted to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or if unavailable, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, as soon as practically possible.

### ***An accurate record should be made of:***

- ***The date and time of the incident and/or disclosure***
- ***The parties who were involved***
- ***What was said and done by whom***
- ***The full name of the person reporting, including signature***
- ***If there are any other witnesses their statements must also be taken (including contact details)***
- ***If there are any physical signs of the abuse e.g., bruising, black eye etc. a diagram should be drawn showing exactly where on the body the injury was sustained with a description of the size and type of injury***
- ***If there is no particular incident but rather lower level concerns, record these and arrange to speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible.***

### ***And where appropriate:***

- ***Any action taken by the Council***
- ***Reasons why there was no referral to a statutory agency if applicable***
  - If you have concerns for the immediate safety of a person or persons – dial 999
  - If you feel that the incident requires the immediate attention from statutory authorities, then call the relevant Child or Adult safeguarding teams (See Appendix 2)

There may be exceptional circumstances where it is necessary to restrain a child or adult at risk to prevent them from damaging themselves or others. Only the minimum reasonable force necessary may be used.

## **7.0 How to respond to a child or adult at risk telling you about abuse**

Remain calm and listen carefully, let the child / adult at risk talk but only ask questions for clarification purposes. Do not promise to keep what you are being told a secret. Reassure them and explain that what they have told you is important, and that you are going to have to share this with someone who can help them. Try to ascertain whether they are currently in danger. The allegations should be recorded (as detailed in 6.0) and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy as soon as possible.

If councillors have the confidence to act if they believe that a child or adult at risk may be being abused or neglected, taking action will be justified. If it turns out that the child or adult at risk is not at risk of, or suffering, abuse or neglect, provided the concerns were honestly held and reasonable and the action was taken through appropriate channels, it will have been the correct decision.

## **8.0 How to respond to allegations against a member of staff, Councillor, or volunteer**

By following the code of Good Practice guidance (as detailed in 5.0), in particularly the requirement that staff, Councillors, and volunteers should never be alone with children or adults at risk, it is hoped to avoid this situation. This is a simple but effective precaution which will safeguard against allegations being made.

Event planning will incorporate Safeguarding considerations into the Risk Assessment process, and prepare specific policies and procedures as necessary to keep participants safe e.g., missing, or lost child / adult at risk.

If someone should suspect that anyone involved with the Parish Council may be abusing a child or adult at risk, or is not following the code of Good Practice, they should act on their suspicions immediately, recording and reporting the matter (as detailed in 6.0) to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputy as soon as possible.

## **9.0 Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is obviously important, but the welfare of the child or adult at risk is paramount. Legally it is fine to share information if someone is worried about a child / adult at risk, however this should be on a need to know basis only.

## **10.0 Safe recruitment**

Market Lavington Parish Council will carry out the following checks during its staff recruitment process -

- Two satisfactory employment references will be required prior to any offer of employment being confirmed
- Proof of right to work in the UK will be obtained
- In the event that a role will involve direct and unsupervised contact with children or adults at risk, the appropriate DBS check/registration will also be carried out

### **Training**

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead / Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead** – Will participate in safeguarding training at least once every three years, with a record being kept of participation.

- **Staff** - All new staff will be provided with a copy of the Parish Councils 'Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy and Procedures' document with their induction pack, and be required to sign to confirm understanding and acceptance. Any staff whose role involves direct and unsupervised contact with children or adults at risk, will be provided with safeguarding training on induction, and then at least once every three years after, with a record being kept of participation. Regular supervision will be undertaken to ensure compliance with the safeguarding policy.
- **Councillors** – All new Councillors will be provided with a copy of the Parish Councils 'Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy and Procedures' document with their Councillor induction pack, and be required to sign to confirm understanding and acceptance. The policy will be reviewed annually, and updated, if necessary, with a copy of the approved document being circulated to all Councillors as a reminder.
- **Volunteers** – All volunteers participating in a Parish Council organised activity / event where there may be interaction with children or adults at risk, will be made aware of the existence of the Parish Councils 'Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy and Procedures' document, and be encouraged to read it. Details of where the Policy can be viewed will be provided, and a copy of the document will be given to the event organiser for reference.

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## Appendix 1.

### Designated Safeguarding Lead contact details - As of 15<sup>th</sup> February 2022

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) - Carol Hackett** (Parish Clerk / RFO)
  - Email: [clerk@marketlavingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@marketlavingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk)
  - Telephone: 01225 760372 or mobile 07759 761307
- **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) - Cllr Colin Osborn** (Parish Council Chairman)
  - Email: [c.osborn@marketlavingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:c.osborn@marketlavingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk)
  - Telephone: 01380 812450 or mobile 07792 482631

### Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Responsibilities / Procedures -

- 1) To receive any allegations, or reports of incidents of abuse or mistreatment, or suspicions of abuse
- 2) Ensure an 'Incident Report Form' has been fully completed, and any additional witness statements obtained if necessary
- 3) Liaise with Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead to review all the information collated, and consider what action should be taken
- 4) Refer matter to Statutory authorities / Child and Adult safeguarding teams if considered necessary, or if further advice / guidance required

## Appendix 2.

### Statutory authorities / Child and Adult safeguarding teams' information and contact details

If you feel that the incident requires the immediate attention from statutory authorities, then call the relevant Child or Adult safeguarding teams -

#### **CHILDREN**

This information is taken from Wiltshire Councils website  
<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/children-young-people-protection>

If you think a child or young person is at risk of significant harm, or is injured, contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) On 0300 4560108, 8.45am-5pm, Monday-Thursday and 8.45am-4pm Friday. If you need urgent help or advice outside of these hours, you can call 0300 456 0100.

Or if there is immediate danger, phone the police or emergency services on 999. For less urgent enquiries, email [mash@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:mash@wiltshire.gov.uk)

#### **VULNERABLE ADULTS**

This information is taken from Wiltshire Safeguarding Adults Board website  
<http://www.wiltshiresab.org.uk/getting-support/>

If you have concerns about a vulnerable adult contact the Adult Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0300 456 0111 Textphone: 01225 712501, 8.30am–5.20pm Monday-Thursday, and 8.30am–4.20pm Friday. If you need urgent help or advice outside of these hours, you can call 0845 607 0888

Or if there is immediate danger, phone the police or emergency services on 999. For less urgent enquiries, email: [AdviceandContact@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:AdviceandContact@wiltshire.gov.uk)

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**Police:** in an Emergency (example: they are a danger to others) phone **999**. Non-emergency **101** (example: they have left the building but were acting erratically and you wish to alert the PCSO/neighbourhood police team – calls to this number will be logged on a police database).

**Ambulance:** in an Emergency (example: they are a danger to themselves) phone **999**. Non-emergency **111** (example: they have a medical problem and you're not sure what to do – call handlers for this service will want to speak to the person direct, unless there is a reason they cannot come to the phone).

**Mental Health Support:** Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust – Dedicated telephone line offering support for adults and children in crisis 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. For anyone who may be worried about their own or someone else's mental health.

**Phone 0800 953 1919**

### Appendix 3.

#### Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Incident Report Form

To be filled out by the person reporting the concern. Please fill out all the information that is known.

Name of Child / Adult at Risk		
Age / Date of Birth		
Any additional needs, relevant conditions or known risk factors		
Parent's / Carer's / Responsible Adult's Name(s)		
Home Address		Telephone number(s) Home: Mobile:
Venue this incident took place in		
Exact location where the incident happened (e.g., main hall, toilet etc.)		
Description of what has prompted concerns (please include details of any specific incident, dates, times etc.) and describe any physical or behavioural indicators which have been observed.		

Use an additional sheet if required

Have you or anyone else spoken with the child / vulnerable adult, and if so, what was discussed?

Use an additional sheet if required

Have you or anyone else spoken with the parents / carers of the child or vulnerable adult, and if so, what was said?

Use an additional sheet if required

To whom reported		Date and time reported	
Your name and role			
Signature		Date	

Send completed form immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or their Deputy by email or in an envelope marked **Highly Confidential** (as detailed in Appendix 1).

This section is to be completed by the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or their Deputy.

Any further action taken?

Signature		Name		Date	
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Date of Policy review: February 2023

<b>Date of meeting at which any amendment to document approved</b>	<b>Details of amendment</b>