



# Child Protection Policy

May 2016

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## Executive Summary

Local authorities have overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in their area. Whilst local authorities play a lead role, safeguarding children and protecting them from harm is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children and families, or who works for a local authority, has a role to play.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined<sup>1</sup> for the purposes of this policy as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

This council, together with local agencies including the police and health services, also has a duty under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to ensure that it considers the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children when carrying out its functions. This duty extends to contractors who deliver services to children and families on behalf of the council.

Professionals working in agencies with these duties are responsible for ensuring that they fulfil their role and responsibilities in a manner consistent with the statutory duties of their employer.

This policy sets out the arrangements to ensure this will be achieved within the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk.

**The nominated child protection co-ordinator for the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk is Debbie Gates, Executive Director Central and Community Services, to whom all concerns should be addressed in the first instance:**

**Debbie Gates  
Executive Director Central and Community Services  
01553 616605  
Debbie.Gates@west-norfolk.gov.uk  
King's Court  
Chapel Street  
King's Lynn  
Norfolk  
PE30 1EX**

**the Council's Deputy child protection co-ordinator, who should be contacted in Debbie's absence, is Becky Box, Personnel Services Manager, who can be contacted on 01553 616502, [becky.box@west-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:becky.box@west-norfolk.gov.uk), address as above**

<sup>1</sup> see 'Working together to safeguard children' A guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, HM Government (March 2015)

## Introduction

*The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk believes that all children have the right to live their lives to the fullest potential, to be protected, to have the opportunity to participate in and enjoy any activity, and to be treated with dignity and respect. Although many children have wonderful experiences, abuse does happen.*

This Child Protection Policy is designed to ensure the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk meets its responsibilities and safeguards children and young people from potential abuse or harm as well as protecting itself and its staff, elected members and volunteers.

### 1.1 Definitions<sup>2</sup>

- The term children or young person is used to refer to anyone under 18 years of age.
- The term parent is used as a generic term to represent parents, carers and guardians.
- The term staff or employee is used to refer to any person working for or on behalf of the Council in a paid or voluntary capacity, including employees of Alive Management Limited and Joint Employees of Alive Management and Alive Leisure.
- The term contractor or sub-contract is used to describe any individual or organisation delivering services to children and families on behalf of the council

### 1.2 Policy Statement

The Borough Council believes that all children and young people irrespective of their age, class, religion, culture, disability, gender, ethnicity or sexual preference have the right to protection from harm. We have a duty to promote the welfare of and safeguard all children and young people from harm as far as is reasonably practicable. We will do this by

- raising awareness of child protection and safeguarding children across the organisation so that all staff are aware of their responsibilities
- ensuring our recruitment procedures are robust and proper checks and procedures are followed
- where appropriate, ensuring contractors and funded organisations have child protection policies and procedures in place.

### 1.3 Corporate Responsibilities

The Council undertakes a range of activities to demonstrate its commitment to meeting its responsibilities with regards to child protection, including:

- active participation in the Norfolk District Safeguarding Group, which has been established to ensure all Norfolk district Council's are meeting their duties and obligations in accordance with relevant legislation
- effective co-ordination of an internal safeguarding group to ensure the effective sharing and dissemination of safeguarding related information within the organisation
- participation in an annual Section 11 audit undertaken by the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board – designed specifically to ensure that

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<sup>2</sup> Taken from 'Working together to safeguard children' Department of Children, Schools and Families (2010)

organisations are comply with the requirements of section 11 of the Children Act 2004

#### **1.4 Service Specific Responsibilities**

This policy sets out the Council's overall approach to child protection and ensures that we are compliant with our statutory obligations. Certain services, in particular Housing Services and Community Safety services, will retain their own operational guidance and procedures for dealing with specific incidents and/ circumstances. For other services, where there are no specific processes in place, this policy and the procedures outlined within it should be adhered to in full.

## **1. The Legal Framework**

There is a considerable body of legislation, government guidance and standards designed to ensure that children are safeguarded from harm. These include the 'Children Act 1989', the 'Children Act 2004', the 'Protection of Children Act 1999', the 'Human Rights Act 1998', the 'Sexual Offences Act 2003' and the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015' document by the Department of Health.

The statutory inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié highlighted the lack of priority status given to safeguarding. The Government's responses to these findings included the 'Every Child Matters' green paper and the 2004 Children Act. Section 11 of this act places a duty on organisations and individuals (including this authority) to ensure their functions are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

*Everyone who works with or around children need to be aware of the laws that aim to protect children from harm.*

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Section 11 places a duty on local authorities and district councils that provide children's and other types of services, including children's and adult care services, public health, housing, sport, culture and leisure services, licensing authorities and youth services. The responsibilities and duties placed on the Council by the Children Act 2004, the Children Act 1989 and the Protection of Children Act 1999 are outlined in Appendix A – which in particular highlights the need for inter-agency co-operation and reciprocal duties between such agencies, including district and county councils.

## **2. Diversity Statement**

The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk is bound by the provision and spirit of the relevant legislation and all its work is informed by a commitment to the promotion of diversity. All constituent agencies are required to ensure that their services are equally underpinned by such commitment.

The Borough Council believes that the welfare of children is of paramount concern, and that their individual needs and rights should be respected. Those working with

children and young people should be sensitive to the diversity of children's circumstances and backgrounds (e.g. in respect of their age, gender, physical and mental ability, ethnicity, culture and religion, language, sexual orientation and socio-economic status).

These principles underpin all Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk policies, procedures, protocols and training.

The Borough Council will use its influence to promote these principles and will seek wherever possible, both in its own work and that of its partner agencies, to eliminate discrimination, harassment and attacks on any group or individual. We will monitor the effectiveness of our work, and that of partner agencies, in these areas, and continuously seek to improve our performance.

### 3. Aims, Objectives & Scope

***The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk accepts the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures, to provide a duty of care for children and young people, safeguard their well-being and protect them from harm when they are engaged in services organised and provided by the Council.***

#### 4.1 Aims

With this Child Protection Policy, the Council aims to:

- Raise awareness of the duty of care responsibilities relating to children and young people throughout the Council.
- Actively encourage good practice amongst all staff, elected members and volunteers throughout the Council and promote wider awareness wherever possible, i.e. partnership organisations and user groups.
- Create a safe and healthy environment within all our services, avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur.
- Respect and promote the rights, wishes and feelings of children and young people. Listen to children and young people, minimising dangers and working closely with other agencies.
- Recruit, train, supervise and support staff who work with children and young people to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children and young people from abuse or harm, and themselves against false allegations. Staff who work with children and young people will be subject to the appropriate level of Disclosure and Barring Services check.
- Respond to any allegations and concerns against staff appropriately and implement the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures.
- Requires staff to adopt and abide by the Council's Child Protection Policy and Procedures and Council's Officer Code of Conduct (as detailed in the Employee Handbook).

#### 4.2 Objectives

The Council will do this by:

- Providing appropriate training for staff to enable them to recognise the potential signs and indicators of abuse or harm and to improve good practice.
- Aiding staff to respond sensitively and seriously to a child or young person who discloses information about abuse and be confident and able to take appropriate action swiftly, regardless of whom the allegation is about, e.g. carer/staff member.

- Maintaining a level of good working practice at all times and therefore reducing the risk to children and young people under the care of our staff and volunteers.
- Promoting the general welfare and well being of children and young people during and within Council services.
- Developing and implementing effective procedures for recording and responding to incidents and accidents.
- Developing and implementing effective procedures for recording and responding to complaints of alleged or suspected child abuse.

### 4.3 Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all council activity, including that of Alive Management Limited, whether functions are directly provided or commissioned from a third party. It sets out the corporate arrangements made by the Council to meet its responsibilities. The accompanying supporting notes provide detailed guidance. It remains the responsibility of each service area, function or facility to make appropriate arrangements to comply with these responsibilities. These arrangements will reflect local circumstances and the nature of the service provided. This policy will be subject to review on an annual basis.

### 4.4 Norfolk Local Safeguarding Children Board

The Norfolk Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) brings together all agencies and professionals in Norfolk. The aim is to work together to protect children from abuse and neglect, and minimise any adverse consequences of abuse. The Borough Council is a member agency and as such the Chief Executive is the Council's representative on the LSCB Executive Board. As a member agency, the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk is signed up to all LSCB protocols and procedures.

## 5 Definition of Abuse, Harm & Neglect

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm, or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. They may be abused by an adult or adults, or another child or children.

**Employees and Elected Members should note that it is not their responsibility to determine if a child is being abused, only to record and report their concerns to the Council's Child Protection Co-ordinator, Children's Services or the Police who have the responsibility to investigate concerns.**

The following definitions and symptoms are not a comprehensive or definitive list, but it provides a guide to the more common non-accidental injuries which may suggest situations where more expert advice should be sought.

### 5.1 Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

<b>Indicators of physical abuse or harm may or may not include:</b>	
<i>Physical Observations</i>	<i>Behavioural Observations</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bruising especially:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- bruising on the trunk</li> <li>- bruises on the upper arm, shoulders and/or neck consistent with gripping</li> <li>- finger tip bruising/finger marks</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Burns and scalds especially:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cigarette burns</li> <li>- burns caused by lengthy exposure to heat</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Human bite marks</li> <li>• Fractures, particularly spinal fractures</li> <li>• Swelling and lack of normal use of limbs</li> <li>• Any serious injury with no explanations/inconsistent accounts</li> <li>• Untreated injuries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unusually fearful with adults</li> <li>• Unnaturally compliant to parents</li> <li>• Refusal to discuss injuries/fear of medical help</li> <li>• Withdrawal from physical contact</li> <li>• Aggression towards others</li> <li>• Wears cover-up clothing</li> </ul>

## 5.2 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

<b>Indicators of emotional abuse may or may not include:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical, mental and emotional development lags</li> <li>• Acceptance of punishment which appears excessive</li> <li>• Over reaction to mistakes</li> <li>• Continual self-depreciation</li> <li>• Sudden speech disorders</li> <li>• Fear of new situations</li> <li>• Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations</li> <li>• Neurotic behaviour (such as rocking)</li> <li>• Self harming</li> <li>• Fear of parents being contacted</li> <li>• Extremes of passivity or aggression</li> <li>• Drug/solvent abuse</li> <li>• Running away</li> <li>• Compulsive stealing, scavenging</li> </ul>



### 5.3 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

<b>Indicators of sexual abuse may or may not include:</b>	
<i>Physical Observations</i>	<i>Behavioural Observations</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damage to genitalia, anus or mouth</li> <li>• Sexually transmitted infections</li> <li>• Unexpected pregnancy in very young girls</li> <li>• Soreness around the genital area, anus or mouth</li> <li>• Unexplained recurrent urinary tract infections and discharges or abdominal pain</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual knowledge inappropriate for age</li> <li>• Sexualised behaviour in young children</li> <li>• Sexually proactive behaviour/promiscuity</li> <li>• Hinting at sexual activity</li> <li>• Inexplicable falling off in school performance</li> <li>• Sudden apparent changes in personality</li> <li>• Lack of concentration, restlessness and aimlessness</li> <li>• Socially withdrawn</li> <li>• Overly compliant behaviour</li> <li>• Acting out, aggressive behaviour</li> <li>• Poor trust in significant adults</li> <li>• Regressive behaviour, onset of wetting by day or night</li> <li>• Onset of insecure, clinging behaviour</li> <li>• Arriving early at school, leaving late, running away from home</li> <li>• Suicide attempts, self-harm, self-disgust</li> <li>• Eating disorders, hysteria attacks in adolescents</li> </ul>

### 5.4 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food and clothing, shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment, failing to protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger, failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-takers, or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

<b>Indicators of neglect may or may not include:</b>	
<i>Physical Observations</i>	<i>Behavioural Observations</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor personal hygiene</li> <li>• Poor state of clothing</li> <li>• Emaciation, pot belly, short stature</li> <li>• Poor skin tone and hair tone</li> <li>• Untreated medical problems</li> <li>• Obesity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constant hunger</li> <li>• Constant tiredness</li> <li>• Frequent lateness or non-attendance at school</li> <li>• Destructive tendencies</li> <li>• Low self-esteem</li> <li>• Neurotic behaviour</li> <li>• No social relationships</li> <li>• Running away</li> <li>• Compulsive stealing or scavenging</li> <li>• Multiple accidents and accidental injuries</li> </ul>

It is important to remember that many children and young people will exhibit some of these signs at some time and the presence of one or more should not be taken as proof that abuse or neglect is occurring. There could be a number of reasons for changes in behaviour such as a new birth or death in the family for example. However, **staff should talk to the designated Child Protection Co-ordinator if they have any concerns at all about a child.**

## **6 Responding to Concerns & Allegations**

The following procedures are intended to inform all staff, elected members and volunteers of what actions they should take if they have concerns or encounter a case of alleged or suspected child abuse.

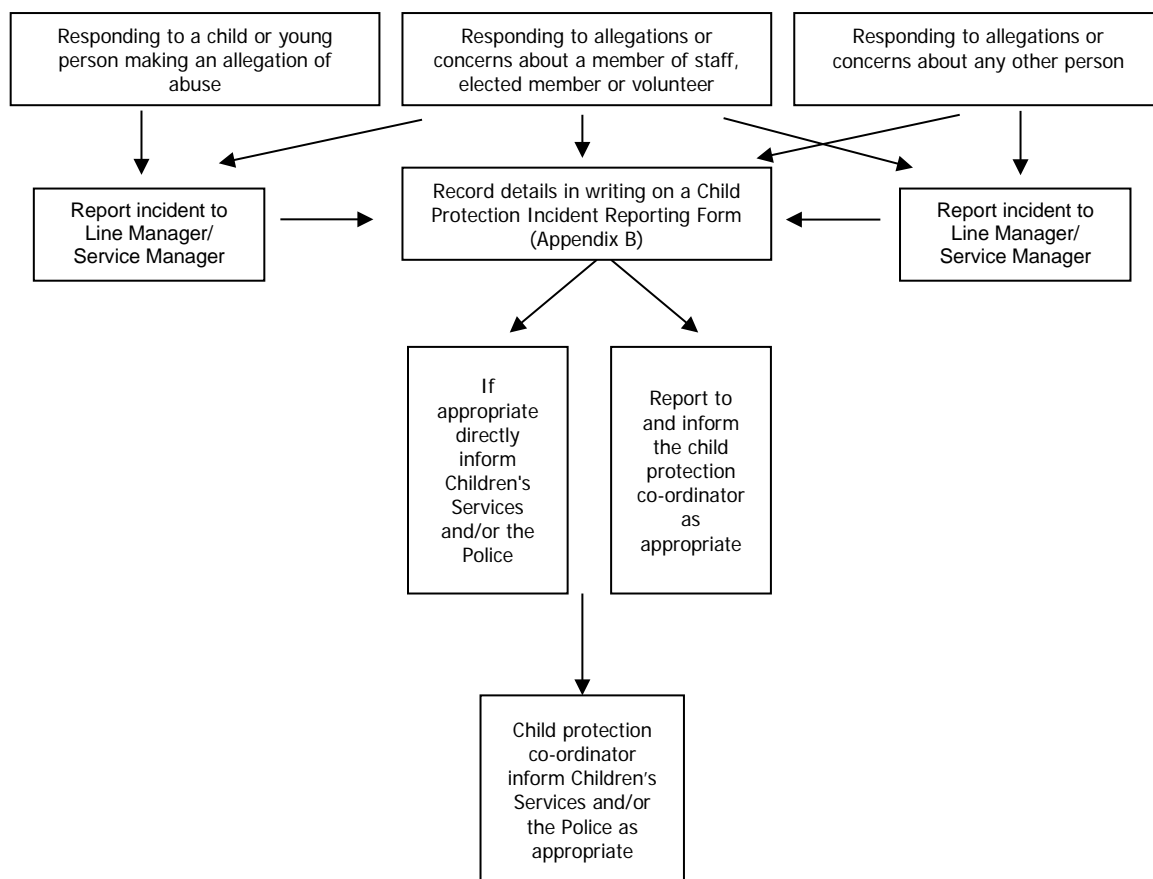
### **6.1 Duty to Refer**

There is a duty on staff to report concerns about children where they may be at risk of harm or abuse. It is appropriate to gather and record facts about the concern, but care must be taken not to prejudice formal investigations which must be conducted in accordance with laid down procedures. There are a range of situations that staff, elected members and volunteers may need to respond to where there is a concern or case of alleged or suspected harm. For example:

- responding to a child or young person or officer etc disclosing abuse, i.e. they make an allegation of harm
- responding to allegations or concerns about a member of staff, elected member or volunteer
- responding to allegations or concerns about any other person, i.e. parent, carer, other service user and the impact their actions may have on a child.

### **6.2 Response Procedure - Summary**

The diagram below summarises the basic response procedure/actions that should be followed for the response situations described above.



NB. Exceptions to the above are Housing Services and Community Safety where designated senior officers have the authority to report incidents directly. Staff in these areas should contact their Service Manager in the first instance.

### 6.3 Responding to a child or young person making an allegation of abuse

Abused children and young people will only tell people they trust and with whom they feel safe. By listening and taking seriously what the child or young person is saying you are already helping the situation. The following points are a guide to help you respond appropriately.

- Stay calm and listen carefully to what is said.
- Find an appropriate opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
- Allow the child or young person to continue at their own pace.
- Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Reassure the child or young person that they have done the right thing in telling you.
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared. Record in writing on a Child Protection Incident Reporting Form all the details that you are aware of and what was said using the child or young person's own words, as soon as possible. An example of this form and accompanying guidance can be found in Appendix B.
- Report and inform the Child Protection Co-ordinator and/or directly contact Social Services and the Police as appropriate.

- The Child Protection Co-ordinator informs relevant persons, i.e. Children's Services and/or the Police if appropriate.

REMEMBER: It is not your job to judge or investigate BUT to inform

#### **6.4 Responding to allegations or concerns against a member of staff, elected member or volunteer**

- Take the allegation or concern seriously.
- Consider any allegation or concern to be potentially dangerous to the child or young person.
- Record in writing on a Child Protection Incident Reporting Form all the details that you are aware of as soon as possible. An example of this form and accompanying guidance can be found in Appendix B.
- Report to and inform the Child Protection Co-ordinator or directly contact Children's Services and/or the Police as appropriate.
- Child Protection Co-ordinator informs relevant persons, i.e. Children's Services and/or the Police.

REMEMBER: It is not your job to judge or investigate BUT to inform

#### **6.5 Responding to allegations or concerns against any other person e.g. parent, carer, service user**

- Take the allegation or concern seriously.
- Consider any allegation or concern to be potentially dangerous to the child or young person.
- Record in writing on a Child Protection Incident Reporting Form all the details that you are aware of as soon as possible. An example of this form and accompanying guidance can be found in Appendix B.
- Report to and inform the Child Protection Co-ordinator
- Child Protection Co-ordinator informs relevant persons, i.e. Children's Services and the Police if appropriate.

REMEMBER: It is not your job to judge or investigate BUT to inform

#### **6.6 Allegations of previous abuse**

Allegations of abuse may be made some time after the event, for example by an adult who was abused as a child by a member of staff who is still working with children. Where such an allegation is made, the procedures detailed above should be applied, and the matter reported to Children's Services or the police. This is because others may still be at risk. Anyone who has a previous criminal conviction for offences related to abuse is automatically excluded from working with children. This is reinforced by the details of the Protection of Children Act 1999, which states that it is an offence for such an individual to apply for or for an employer to offer, employment with children and young people. Jobs which require contact with children and young people will require a Disclosure and Barring Service check which reveals any previous convictions which make applicants ineligible for such a role.

#### **6.7 Child Protection Co-ordinator**

The nominated Child Protection Co-ordinator is responsible for:

- Ensuring the Child Protection Policy is adhered to.
- Ensuring that the relevant staff member records their concerns/completes the disclosure form as soon as possible.

- Recording their own conversations with the person, staff member or child to whom the disclosures were made.
- Contacting Children's Services, preferably in the area the child lives – passing on full details including factual information that they have on the child/young person.
- Providing a contact telephone number for Children's Services to get back to the Council.
- Ensuring Children's Services confirm who will liaise with the parent/carer.
- Increasing awareness of child protection issues within the Council.
- Maintaining clear communication channels between Co-ordinators.
- Ensuring that if a disclosure has been made to another member of staff that the child is not re-questioned by any other officer of the Council.

The nominated child protection co-ordinator for the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk is:

**Debbie Gates**  
**Executive Director Central and Community Services**  
**01553 616605**  
[Debbie.Gates@west-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:Debbie.Gates@west-norfolk.gov.uk)  
 King's Court  
 Chapel Street  
 King's Lynn  
 Norfolk  
 PE30 1EX

The Council's deputy child protection co-ordinator is:

**Becky Box**  
**Personnel Services Manager**  
**01553 616502**  
[becky.box@west-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:becky.box@west-norfolk.gov.uk)  
 Address as above

## 6.8 Further help and information

If you are unsure about making a formal referral then you should phone

- Child protection and safeguarding referrals should be made to the MASH and followed up in writing, preferably on an NSCB1 within 24 hours.
  - Telephone 0344 800 8020
  - Referral forms sent to:-
  - Email: [mash@norfolk.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:mash@norfolk.gcsx.gov.uk)
  - Fax: 01603 762445
  - Post: The MASH Team Manager, Floor 5, Vantage House, Fisher's Lane, Norwich NR2 1ET
- For specialist Police advice you can contact the Duty Detective Sergeant within the MASH.
  - Email : [MASHSupervisors@norfolk.pnn.police.uk](mailto:MASHSupervisors@norfolk.pnn.police.uk)
  - Call : Direct dial 01603 27(6151)
- Professional consultations can be sought via the MASH on 0344 8008020

Any investigation undertaken will be led by Children's Services and/the Police. The relevant contact details for Children's Services (referrals and consultation) and the Police are:

**Children's Services  
Norfolk County Council**  
Tel: 0344 800 8020  
County Hall  
Martineau Lane  
Norwich  
Norfolk  
NR1 2DH

**Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board Support Team: 01603 223409**

**Norfolk Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Team: 01603 223473**

#### **Norfolk Police**

Please contact the Police on the 101 number.

If you are unable to contact any of the above and there is an immediate danger dial 999 stating clearly that it is a child protection issue that needs immediate attention.

## **6.9 Confidentiality and Sharing of Information**

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need to know basis only, i.e. the Child Protection Co-ordinator, Children's Services, the Police. It is extremely important that allegations or concerns are not discussed, as any breach of confidentiality could be damaging to the child or young person, their family, the person whom the allegation is being made against and any child protection investigations that may follow.

Informing the parents of a child or young person you may have concerns about needs to be dealt with in a sensitive way and will be co-ordinated by the Child Protection Co-ordinator in consultation with Children's Services and/or the Police.

Any individual under suspicion has the right to be notified about the cause for concern. This should be done in joint consultation with Children's Services and the Police. It is important that the timing of this does not prejudice the investigation. Recorded information should be stored in a secure place with access limited to Child Protection Co-ordinators, in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure). If enquiries arise from the public (including parents) or any branch of the media, it is vital that all staff, elected members and volunteers are briefed so that they do not make any comments regarding the situation. All media enquiries should be directed through the usual channels e.g. the Communications Manager and team.

## **6.10 Photography and Pornography**

There is increasing evidence that some people have used children and young person's activities and events as an opportunity to take inappropriate photographs or video footage of children and young people. Staff, elected members and volunteers

should be vigilant at all times and any person using cameras or videos (including those on mobile phones, iPads or PDA's) within the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk's services and at events or activities which involve children and young people should be approached and asked to complete a consent form for the use of cameras and other image recorders. An example of this form can be found in Appendix C.

When commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to cover Council services, events and activities you must ensure that you make your expectations clear in relation to child protection.

- Check credentials of any photographers and organisations used.
- Ensure identification is worn at all times, if they do not have their own – provide it.
- Do not allow unsupervised access to children or young people or one to one photographic sessions.
- Do not allow photographic sessions outside of the activities or services, or at a child or young persons home.
- Parents must be informed that photographs of their child or young person may be taken during Council services, activities or events, and parental consent forms need to be signed agreeing to this. This must include information about how and where these photographs will be used. An example of this form can be found in Appendix D.
- It is recommended that the names of children or young people should not be used in photographs or video footage, unless with the express permission of the child or young person's parent.

## **7 Good Practice for Staff, Elected Members & Volunteers**

Promoting good practice among staff, elected members and volunteers will limit the possibilities of allegations against themselves, the Council and potential risks in which situations of harm or abuse of a child may occur.

The guidelines aim to promote positive practice and are examples of care which should be taken by staff, elected members and volunteers while working with children and young people.

### **7.1 Staff, Elected Members & Volunteer Guidelines for Good Practice**

- Always be publicly open when working with children and young people.
- Avoid situations where a member of staff, elected member or volunteer and an individual child or young person are alone unobserved. If a conversation is being held in a room away from others, where possible it should be held in a room with a glass door or window, and more than one adult should be present.
- Children or young people should never be left unattended. For example, it is the parents/carers responsibility to supervise any children in their care whilst they are visiting the Council offices and children should not be left unattended within the council offices.
- Respect the child or young person and provide a safe and positive environment.
- If any form of physical contact is required it should be provided openly and according to appropriate guidelines, i.e. National Governing Body of Sport Guidelines

- If supervision in changing rooms or similar environments is required, ensure staff work in pairs and never enter opposite sex changing rooms.
- With mixed groups, supervision should be by a male and female member of staff, where possible.
- Staff, elected members and volunteers must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone equally within the context of the activity.
- Staff, elected members and volunteers must place the well being and safety of the child or young person above the development of performance.
- Staff, elected members and volunteers must feel confident to report concerns or worries about other staff members, elected members or volunteers to the appropriate person in authority, i.e. the Child Protection Co-ordinator, or directly report to Children's Services and/or the Police if the Child Protection Co-ordinator cannot be contacted.
- If a child or young person is accidentally injured as the result of a staff member, elected member or volunteers actions, seems distressed in any way, appears to be sexually aroused by your actions, misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, always report such incidents as soon as possible to your Line Manager and make a written report.
- If a child or young person arrives at the activity or service showing any signs or symptoms that give you cause for concern you must act appropriately and follow the procedures outlined in this document under section 6.
- The Child Protection Co-ordinator must be informed of all potential Child Protection incidents or concerns at the earliest opportunity. Parents/Carers will be contacted through the relevant Children's Services Department and not by any Officer from the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk.

It is **not** good practice for staff, elected members and volunteers to:

- Spend unreasonable amounts of time alone with children or young people away from others.
- Take children or young people alone on a car journey, however short.
- Take children or young people to your home where they will be alone with you.
- Arrange to meet children or young people outside an organised activity or service.

If these situations are unavoidable, they should only occur with the full prior knowledge and consent of your line manager and the child or young person's parents/carer. Written consent may be desirable.

Staff, elected members and volunteers should **never**:

- Engage in rough physical games including horseplay.
- Engage in sexually provocative games.
- Allow or engage in inappropriate touching of any form.
- Allow children or young people to use inappropriate language unchallenged, or use it yourself.
- Make sexually suggestive comments about or to a child or young person, even in fun.
- Let any allegation a child or young person makes be ignored or go unrecorded.
- Do things of a personal nature for children and young people that they can do for themselves, e.g. assist with changing.



NB. It may sometimes be necessary to do things of a personal nature for children or young people, particularly if they are very young or are disabled. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of the parents. In an emergency situation that requires this type of help, you should endeavour to have someone present and fully inform the parents as soon as it is reasonably possible. In such situations it is important that you ensure that all staff etc. are sensitive to the child or young person and undertake personal care tasks with the utmost discretion.

- Share a room with a child or young person.
- Enter areas designated only for the opposite sex.
- Use the internet to access child pornography sites.
- Should not take a child to the toilet, unless this is an emergency and a second, same sex member of staff is present.
- Use a mobile phone in changing areas, as most modern phones also have a camera built into them.

## **7.2 Good Practice for the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk**

Children can be subjected to abuse by those who work with them in any and every setting and it is important that all reasonable steps are taken by the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and young people.

### **Use of Contractors**

The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk has a legal responsibility to ensure that those priority services to children and families are compliant with the duties set out in Section 11 of the Children Act 2004. Executive Directors/ Services Managers will ensure that this expectation is built into all such contracts the Council has with external contractors and the Council will reserve the right to audit the contractor's compliance procedures at any time.

### **Funding**

Where the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk is providing funding or grants to organisations whose work involves children, there is an expectation that the organisation will have relevant child protection procedures in place. The Council will build this into the eligibility criteria.

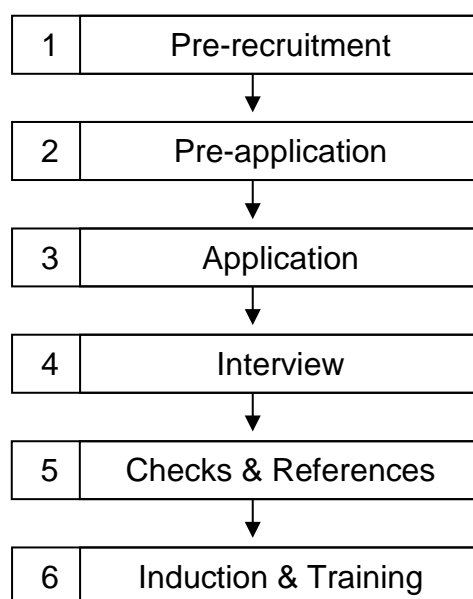
### **Whistleblowing Policy**

Council employees are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within the Council. Any serious concerns that you have about any aspect or service provisions or the conduct of officers or Members of the Council or others acting on behalf of the Council, can be reported under the Council's Whistleblowing Policy.

## **8 Recruitment and Selection of Staff**

It is important that all staff working or having contact with children and young people, whether they are full time, part time, paid or unpaid, have the same recruitment and selection procedures applied to them, and that these procedures are used to obtain as much information as possible about the person's previous experience of, and suitability for, working with children.

The fundamental stages of the procedure for recruiting and selecting staff are illustrated in the following diagram:



### **Stage 1: Pre-recruitment**

It is essential that the need to work with children is clearly identified from the outset of the recruitment process for any post. When preparing paperwork for the position (job description, personal specification etc) clear reference should be made to this requirement. If such a post requires the successful candidate to be checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service, it is essential that this is agreed with Personnel Services prior to any job advertisement being placed. This is in accordance with the Council's procedure for dealing with DBS checks (as set out in Appendix E).

If any form of advertising is used to recruit staff, it should reflect:

- The aims of the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
- The responsibilities and duties of the role
- The level of experience or qualifications required (e.g. experience of working with children is an advantage)
- The Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk's Equal Opportunities Policy for Employment
- Any requirements for disclosure checks via the Disclosure and Barring Service

It is noted that potential employees seeking casual work may approach the Council direct. All such enquirers are asked to formally express their interest in working for the organisation by registering their details via the recruitment pages on The Councils website. Applications for any positions are only progressed once such details have been registered in this manner.

It is noted that often volunteers may approach or be approached by the Council to become involved in a particular event/initiative, rather than in response to an advertisement. In these cases, when discussing the requirements of the role, the Manager leading the process must explain the checks that will be required (see below).

## **Stage 2: Pre-application information**

Information on all Council job opportunities are published on the recruitment pages of the Council's web-site. Such information will be:

- A job description detailing the roles and responsibilities of the position
- A person specification (e.g. stating qualifications or experience required)
- An online application form
- A copy of the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy for Employment
- A Rehabilitation of Offenders Act Disclosure Form (as part of the main application form)
- An equal opportunities monitoring form (as part of the main application form)
- The Council's Policy on the Employment of Ex-Offenders (Appendix F)
- The Council's policy on the use and storage of Disclosure and Barring Service checks (if relevant) (Appendix G)

## **Stage 3: Applicant information**

Information that will be requested from applicants for vacancies will include:

- Name and address and
- Past career, including duties undertaken within previous posts and reasons for leaving
- Relevant experience, educational qualifications, job specific qualifications and training
- Details of any criminal record or disciplinary history with previous employers, in accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions Order) 1979 (via the Council's Rehabilitation of Offenders Disclosure form)
- The names of at least two people (not relatives) willing to provide written references who are able to comment on the applicant's previous experience of and suitability for the job applied for. One of the provided referees must be the applicant's current or most recent employer, and one referee must be the most recent employer for whom the applicant worked in a capacity that involved working with children. Therefore at least one of the referees will have knowledge of the applicants previous experience of, and suitability for, working with children and young people
- Completion of a equal opportunities monitoring questionnaire

By highlighting the need for a Disclosure and Barring Service check (where appropriate) in the paperwork relating to a post the Council is fulfilling it's obligation to make applicants aware of the need for such a check, should they be successful in their application.

Managers engaging volunteers should request equivalent information relating to career history, previous offences and referees are supplied.

## **Stage 4: Interview**

At least two people must conduct any job interview, and at least one member of the interview panel must have attended the Council's in-house recruitment and selection training course. This training course covers all the Council's requirements with regards to recruitment and selection, including issues relating to posts working with children. Ideally at least one member of the interview panel should have also received basic training in child protection issues.

During the interview the interview panel should explore information contained in the application form against the qualities and skills needed in the post. Any areas of

concern, such as frequent job changes, gaps in candidates' career history or changes in career path, should also be explored during the interview.

Having completed interviews and determined the successful candidates, interview panels must always discuss their choice with Personnel Services prior to making an offer of employment. This enables Personnel Services to check confidential information held on the Rehabilitation of Offenders Disclosure Form and Equal Opportunities Monitoring form.

All offers of employment are made subject to the receipt of two written references considered satisfactory by the Authority (and in the case of posts working with children, which comply with the requirements outlined above) and receipt of a satisfactory medical enquiry form. A check is also completed to ensure that the candidate is legally entitled to work in the UK.

In cases where a Disclosure and Barring Service check is required the post must also be made subject to receipt of a satisfactory disclosure check.

Any start date agreed for a new recruit is only made on a provisional basis pending completion of the above checks being satisfactory completed. Written provisional offers of employment issued by Personnel Services will reflect these conditions.

### **Stage 5: Checks and References**

All staff and volunteers recruited to work in services for children and young people must be checked for any possible irregularities, which may give reason for concern.

- **Disclosure and Barring Service**

- The Council is registered with the Disclosure and Barring Service for the purpose of undertaking 'disclosure' checks for employees and volunteers engaged in the delivery of Council services / projects. As outlined above, it must be made clear from the outset if a disclosure is required for a particular post. Queries regarding the eligibility of a post for a disclosure check should be discussed with Personnel Services. For posts where a check is deemed necessary:
  - paperwork issued during the recruitment process will reflect this fact and any offer of employment will be made subject to a satisfactory check.
  - Once a provisional offer of employment has been made on these grounds, Personnel Services or an officer nominated to deal with disclosure checks within the relevant service (NB. All such nominated officers, including relevant Personnel staff, have themselves been subject to a DBS check), will issue a disclosure application form.
  - Once completed, this form must be returned to Personnel Services/the nominated officer within the service together with original personal documentation (such as a passport, driving licence, birth certificate – a list of acceptable documents, as determined by the Disclosure and Barring Service, is supplied with the application form).
  - The officer receiving this paperwork is then required to undertake a number of checks, which are also recorded on the disclosure application form.
  - The disclosure application form is then forwarded to the Personnel Services Manager who reviews the information contained on the form and may then authorise the check, despatching the form to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

- New recruits to posts which require a disclosure to be undertaken will not commence their new job until the disclosure has been received and Personnel have confirmed that it is acceptable.
- A minimum of two references must be taken up, and these should meet the conditions outlined above. Where relevant queries arising from the reference must be discussed with Personnel Services and followed up by letter or telephone.
- **Working with volunteers.** When appointing volunteers Managers should request references in accordance with the requirements of this policy. It is the responsibility of Managers to take up and check these references – Personnel Services can supply a standard form to assist with this process.

### **Stage 6: Induction and Training**

It is important that the recruitment and selection process is followed by relevant induction and training in order to further protect children and young people from possible abuse. Appropriate training will enable individuals to recognise their responsibilities with regard to their own good practice and the reporting of suspected poor practice and concerns or allegations of abuse. The induction and training will include:

- Initial awareness raising relating to child protection is included in the Councils standard induction e-learning package, including a link to this policy
- Basic awareness of the signs and indicators of abuse and an understanding of their responsibility to act swiftly and sensitively when concerns arise.
- All staff and volunteers need to be aware of the procedures they need to follow in response to any concerns that they have.
- Line Managers should ensure that this policy document is read and understood by all new and existing staff and volunteers
- Clarification of the job expectations, roles and responsibilities (e.g. through a formal or informal work programme / objectives).
- Child protection procedures explained and training needs established.

## **9 Useful Links and Further Information**

**Norfolk LSCB**      [www.norfolkscb.org](http://www.norfolkscb.org)    01603 223409

The Norfolk LSCB has a comprehensive website detailing its protocols and procedures, as well as information on training, guidance and recent updates. It also hosts a number of useful leaflets and guidance which are available to download.

**Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015):** A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

**What to do if you're worried a child is being abused -**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419595/Working\\_Together\\_to\\_Safeguard\\_Children.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf)

# Appendix A

## The Legal Framework

The **Children Act 2004** places responsibilities on organisations and individuals, including this authority. These include:

- the duty under section 10 for local authorities (in this context, county level or 'children's services' authorities) to promote inter-agency co-operation between named agencies (including district councils)
- the reciprocal duty on those agencies (including district councils) to co-operate with the local authority (a duty which is accompanied by budget pooling powers and is the key provision that underpins children's trust arrangements)
- the requirement under section 11 to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, on which statutory guidance was published in August 2005 and came into effect from 1 October
- representation on, and participation in, Local Safeguarding Children's Boards under section 13
- entitlement to be consulted on the production of the local authority's Children and Young People's Plan under section 17 and subsequent regulations

The **Children Act 1989** provides county councils (children's services departments) and others with powers and duties to protect children whilst at the same time providing safeguards for both children and parents against excessive or unwarranted intervention.

There are a number of general principles which need to be borne in mind when considering any part of the legal framework. The child's welfare is of paramount importance. Under section 47 of the Children Act, Children's Services must make enquiries regarding a child's welfare (investigate) where they:

- are informed that a child who lives, or is found, in their area:
  - is the subject of an emergency protection order; or
  - is in Police protection; or
  - has contravened a ban imposed by a curfew notice made under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998; or
- the Authority has reasonable cause to suspect that a child living or found in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm.

The enquiries will enable Children's Services to decide whether they should take any specific action to safeguard and/or promote the child's welfare. It is very important that all investigations into such matters are conducted in accordance within laid down procedures and in a manner that will not prejudice any further action such as a criminal prosecution. For this reason, if you become aware of something that may need further investigation, **do not attempt to investigate the matter yourself.**

The **Protection of Children Act 1999** has four principle objectives:

- to place the previous Department of Health's Consultancy Index (a list of people who are considered to be unsuitable to work with children) on a statutory basis and to require certain child care organisations to refer the names of anyone considered unsuitable to work with children for inclusion on the new list (called the Protection of Children Act List)
- to provide rights of appeal against the Protection of Children Act List and the Department for Education and Skills List 99

- to require regulated child care organisations to check the names of anyone they propose to employ involving regular contact with children against both departmental lists and not to employ them if they are listed
- to allow the Criminal Records Bureau to act as a central access point for criminal records information and the above two lists.

**Guidance notes for recording concerns and allegations and example child protection concerns/allegations form.**

**LS3 GUIDANCE NOTES FOR RECORDING CONCERNS & ALLEGATIONS**

<b>Box</b>	<b>Notes</b>
1	Only fill in the details you have, do not question the child.
2	Only complete if details are known.
3	Complete details
4	Complete details.
5	Remember to remain calm and listen to the child. You may ask open questions to clarify a statement. i.e. "How did that happen?" It is important to write down as far as you can remember the exact words that were used including your questions if any. Do not write up notes in presence of person disclosing. Where appropriate do be honest with the person disclosing, and inform them of what you will do next. <b>Remember do not promise to keep secrets.</b>
6	Do not investigate further to find this information. Only use it where it has been included in dialogue.
7	Each location should have an incident log. Refer to this to reference.
8	It is important not to discuss serious concerns with anyone else other than the designated officer for child protection as this may jeopardise any investigation by the Police or Children's Services.
9	It is vital that consultation with the designated child protection officer takes place as soon as possible and records made. In the absence of the designated child protection person, delay must be avoided; consult with your line manager. However, this should not delay any referral to Children's Services.
10	Remember to sign, time & date.
11	Complete job/role title & contact number.



## FORM FOR RECORDING CHILD PROTECTION/VULNERABLE ADULTS CONCERNS and/or ALLEGATIONS

Recordings must be made as soon as possible after the event. **Do not delay.** Any additional information should be recorded on a separate sheet and attached. **REMEMBER – DO NOT INVESTIGATE; Children’s Services will undertake this role.**

1	Details of Child (name, age, address, telephone number (if known))	
2	Details of Parents/Carer (if known)	
3	Is the family aware of this referral	
4	Details of person reporting concern/allegation to you (this may be the child)	
5	Details of concerns & any supporting evidence you/others have observed	
6	When & where did the incident occur? <b>Do not investigate; only if known through disclosure</b>	
7	Have any previous concerns been logged?	
8	Details of anyone else who may have witnessed/have relevant information. <b>Do not discuss details with an alleged perpetrator of abuse</b>	
9	Record who has been made aware of the concern, time & date.	
10	Date	Time
Signed		
11	Job Title	Contact Number

**PASS THIS FORM TO THE DESIGNATED CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER IMMEDIATELY IN AN ENVELOPE MARKED CONFIDENTIAL. DO NOT DELAY**

CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER NOTIFIED BY	Date	Time

## Example Consent Form for the use of Cameras and other Image Recorders

Venue	
Description of Equipment	
Surname	
Forename	
Address & Postcode	
Telephone Number	
Fax Number	
Mobile Number	
Email Address	
Name(s) of the subject(s)	
Relationship of the photographer & subject(s)	
Reason for taking photographs & uses the images are being or intended to be put to (e.g. family record, advertising etc)	
<p>I declare the information provided is true and correct and that the images will only be used for the purposes stated.</p> <p>Signed: _____ Date: _____</p>	
Authorised by	
Date	
Job Title	

Under the Data Protection Act 1998 the information that you have provided will be used only for the purposes monitoring camera and image recorder use and will be destroyed at the end of a year.

## Example Consent Form

All information will be treated in strict confidence

Please use block capitals and print clearly

Event/Activity	
Date	
Name of Child	
Age	
Date of Birth	
Address & Postcode	
Telephone Number	
Mobile Telephone Number	
Medical Conditions (if any) e.g. asthmas, diabetes, allergies etc	

I confirm that my son/daughter is in good health and I give consent for my son/daughter to participate in the above event/activity.

I consent to any emergency treatment required by my son/daughter during the course of the event/activity.

I give consent for my son/daughter to be photographed during the course of the above event/activity and I consent to the photographs being used by the Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk for bona fide promotional purposes. This also includes the use on the World Wide Web (internet).

The information you provide will be used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, to ensure the safety of all participants and may be shared with other people/organisations involved in the delivery of the above event/activity, if appropriate. By signing this form you are consenting to the Council using the information, which you have supplied in the manner stated above.

Name of Parent/Guardian	Signed	Date

## recruitment procedure for posts where 'Disclosure' (formally police checks) are required

Stage	Action	Who's Responsibility
Before the job advert is placed	Evaluate the need for Disclosure	Line Manager
	If Disclosure required, advise Personnel Manager as soon as possible	Line Manager
	Determine at what level (Standard or Enhanced) Disclosure required	Personnel in discussion with Line Manager
Formulating recruitment paperwork	Advert – must state that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the post requires a Disclosure and should state that</li> <li>the successful candidate will be asked to apply for a Disclosure</li> <li>the level of the Disclosure required</li> </ul>	Personnel
	Application Form/Job Description/Personal Specification – must include a statement that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the successful candidate will be asked to apply for a Disclosure</li> <li>the level of the Disclosure required</li> <li>that further information about the Disclosure scheme can be found at <a href="http://www.disclosure.gov.uk">www.disclosure.gov.uk</a></li> </ul>	Personnel
Selection process	Confirm candidate's identity and evaluate qualifications, skills and experience	Interview panel
	Make final selection on candidate subject to references and Disclosure	Person making job offer
	Formal offer of employment to state subject to references and Disclosure	Personnel
Disclosure Application	Contact CRB to request Disclosure	Personnel
	Disclosure application completed and returned to CRB	Successful candidate
	Disclosure undertaken and results notified to successful candidate and organisation	CRB
	Line manager notified of Disclosure results	Personnel
	Candidate contacted to arrange start date	Line Manager
	Candidate contacted in writing to confirm satisfactory Disclosure received	Personnel

## **POLICY STATEMENT ON THE RECRUITMENT OF EX-OFFENDERS**

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to help assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, the Borough Council complies fully with the Code of Practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

- The Borough Council can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that it is legally entitled to know about. Where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can be legally requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended and where appropriate Policy Act Regulations as amended), the Borough Council can only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected.
- The Borough Council is committed to the fair treatment to its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background.
- This written policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders is made available to all persons applying for a position which requires a DBS check at the outset of the recruitment process.
- The Borough Council actively promotes equality of opportunity for all with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.
- A DBS check is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a criminal record check is identified as necessary all job adverts and job details will contain a statement that a Disclosure check will be request in the event of the individual being offered the position.
- We ensure that all managers within the Borough Council who are involved in the recruitment process have been suitably trained to identify and assess the relevant and circumstances of offences. We also ensure that they have received appropriate guidance and training in the relevant legislation relating to the employment of ex-offenders, e.g. the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974.
- At interview, or in a separate discussion, we ensure that an open and measured discussion take place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position. Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to the withdrawal of an offer of employment.
- We made every subject of a criminal record check submitted to the DBS aware of the existence of the Code of Practice and make a copy available on request.
- We undertake to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment

Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working for the Borough Council. This will depend on the nature of the position and the circumstances and background of your offences.

Agreed by Cabinet March 2008, Updated December 2012 to reflect change to DBS service. Updated version confirmed as still current September 2015

# **POLICY STATEMENT ON THE SECURE STORAGE, HANDLING, USE, RETENTION AND DISPOSAL OF DISCLOSURES AND DISCLOSURE INFORMATION**

## General Principles

As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checking service to help assess the suitability of applicants for positions of trust, the Borough Council complies fully with the Code of Practice regarding the correct handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates and certificate information. It also complies fully with its obligations under the Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation pertaining to the safe handling, use, storage, retention and disposal of certificates information and has a written policy on these matters, which is available to those who wish to see it on request.

## Storage and Access

Certificate information is never kept on an application's personnel file and is always kept separately and securely, in lockable, non-portable, storage containers with access strictly controlled and limited to those who are entitled to see it as part of their duties.

## Handling

In accordance with section 124 of the Police Act 1997, certificate information is only passed to those who are authorised to receive it in the course of their duties. We maintain a record of all those to whom certificate or certificate information has been revealed and we recognise that it is a criminal offence to pass this information to anyone who is not entitled to receive it.

## Usage

Certificate information is only used for the specific purpose for which it was requested and for which the applicant's full consent has been given.

## Retention

Once a recruitment (or other relevant) decision has been made, we do not keep certificate information for any longer than is absolutely necessary. This is generally for a period of six months, to allow for the consideration and resolution of any disputes or complaints. If, in very exceptional circumstances, it is considered necessary to keep certificate information for longer than six-months, we will consult the DBS about this and will give full consideration to the Data Protection and Human Rights individual subject before doing so. Throughout this time, the usual conditions regarding safe storage and strictly controlled access with prevail.

## Disposal

Once the retention period has elapsed, we will ensure that any DBS certificate information is immediately suitably destroyed by secure means, i.e. by shredding, pulping or burning. While awaiting destruction, certificate information will not be kept in any insecure receptacle (e.g. waste bin or confidential waste sack). We will not keep any photocopy or other image of the certificate or any copy or representation of the contents of a certificate. However, notwithstanding the above, we may keep a record of the date of issue of a certificate, the name of the subject, the type of certificate requested, the position for which the Disclosure was requested, the unique reference number of the certificates and the details of the recruitment decision taken.

Agreed by Cabinet March 2008

Updated December 2012 to reflect change to DBS service

Updated version confirmed as still current September 2015