



Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy

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Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy

Policy Statement

Newton Abbot Town Council recognises its responsibility and duty of care to protect all individuals using its facilities or attending Council-organised events. The Council is committed to taking all reasonable steps to prevent abuse, and to respond promptly, effectively, and sensitively to any concerns or reports of abuse.

The Council believes that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All councillors, staff, volunteers, and partners have a duty to safeguard the welfare of children, young people, and vulnerable adults who come into contact with the Council's services, facilities, or events.

This Policy sets out the principles of good safeguarding practice to ensure that all users of Town Council facilities and participants in Council events are protected from harm, treated with respect, and supported in a safe and secure environment.

This policy applies to all councillors, staff, volunteers, contractors, and any external organisations delivering services or events on behalf of the Council.

Introduction

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and all Councillors and Council Officers who during the course of their employment have direct or indirect contact with children and vulnerable adults, or who have access to information about them, have a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare. There is a duty on the Town Council (and through organisations that it contracts to deliver services) to make and ensure appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults are in place in the delivery of public events.

Definition:

- Children and young people - anyone under the age of 18 years.
- Vulnerable Adult - anyone over 18 who is:
 - Unable to care for themselves
 - Unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation
 - Or may be in need of community care services

Legislation

Newton Abbot Town Council does not have a statutory role in safeguarding or promoting the welfare of children as defined in Chapter 3 of the statutory guidance to the Children Act 2004 "[Working Together to Safeguard Children](#)" (2023 version).

However, the Council recognises that, as a local authority organisation which works closely with the community, including children, young people, and families—particularly through the

provision of public facilities and the organisation of community events, it has an important role to play in promoting awareness and good safeguarding practice.

While Newton Abbot Town Council is not a statutory safeguarding body, it acknowledges its responsibility to take all reasonable measures to protect and support those who may be at risk, and to ensure that staff, councillors, and volunteers understand how to respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns. The Town Council has a legal obligation to share information with relevant organisations where appropriate, as part of our duty of care.

The Town Council undertakes to work in compliance with [No Secrets](#) (the Department of Health guidance on multi-service policies and other national policy documents and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse) as well as observing the relevant sections of the CQC's Essential Standards.

Scope of the Policy

This Policy applies to all individuals working for or on behalf of Newton Abbot Town Council, whether in a paid, voluntary, or commissioned capacity - for example, those contracted to deliver a specific service or piece of work.

It also applies to any individual, group, or organisation using Newton Abbot Town Council facilities to deliver activities or services involving children, young people, or vulnerable adults.

The Town Clerk is the designated person with overall responsibility for safeguarding within the Council. Any safeguarding concerns, allegations, or disclosures should be reported immediately to the Town Clerk. In their absence, concerns should be raised with the Deputy Safeguarding Officer:

Designated Safeguarding Officer – Phil Rowe, Town Clerk

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer – Joanna Eccles, Curator (maternity cover)

Promoting A Safe Environment

In order to promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults, Newton abbot Town Council will:

- a) Provide safe facilities and do regular safety assessments.
- b) The Council will ensure that staff have the most appropriate DBS check for their role, and that those working with children or vulnerable adults have an enhanced DBS check.
- c) Ensure that employees, councillors and leaders of activities in/on Town Council facilities, are aware of the safeguarding expectations.
- d) Ensure that the policy for users of Town Council facilities includes a requirement that they are safe to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults (e.g. any adults who have regular unsupervised contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults during the course of their duties should undergo appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service checks).

- e) Ensure that attendees at functions are aware that parents are responsible for their children's safety and the location of a dedicated safe place for lost children is clear.

Recognising Abuse

The council expects its staff to be vigilant regarding the welfare of service users. It provides staff training so that they can recognise the risks and signs of abuse. It acknowledges that abuse may take any of the following forms and more than one might be present in an abusive situation:

- physical abuse
- domestic abuse
- modern slavery
- organisational abuse
- neglect and/or self-neglect
- psychological abuse
- financial or material abuse
- sexual abuse
- racial, discriminatory, religious or cultural abuse
- failure to prevent self-harm
- inhuman or degrading treatment.

Reporting Abuse

Any member of staff who knows or believes that abuse is occurring has an obligation to report it as quickly as possible to the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Safeguarding Officer. If the victim requests that the matter should not be reported, the staff member should inform them that they have a duty to report the matter. The staff member should then reassure the service user that the matter will not be taken further than the manager without their consent unless we are required to share this information. The service will take vigorous action against anyone trying to suppress a possible report of abuse.

Anyone who has concerns about poor care standards and neglect in any setting may raise these within the Council. All safeguarding concerns must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Safeguarding Officer immediately and referred to the Devon Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) or relevant authority as appropriate.

Action in Emergency Situations

If the situation is an emergency, with a service user in immediate danger, staff are instructed to call for assistance immediately. They should give any necessary first aid and contact appropriate emergency services if necessary. If the abuser remains present and poses a threat to any service staff present as well as the victim, staff are not expected to put themselves at risk of violence or other harm. They should then put into action service procedures on how to respond to abusive, aggressive or violent behaviour (See policy on dealing with [Potentially Abusive or Violent Persons](#))

If the suspected abuser is a member of the council's staff, the manager takes appropriate steps under the disciplinary procedure. The council expects its staff to take all possible steps to co-

operate with further investigations by the local authority safeguarding unit, CQC investigating inspectors and the police if involved.

Working Practice

All users of Town Council facilities or providers of Town Council events must follow the Town Council Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adult's Policy and procedures at all times. For example, they should:

- a) Plan activities to involve more than one person being present or at least in sight or hearing of others. Alternatively, record, or inform others of their whereabouts and intended action.
- b) Where possible, have male and female leaders working with a mixed group.
- c) Ensure that photos or videos of individuals are not taken without written permission from parents/carers.
- d) Ensure access to a first aid kit and means of communication (e.g., mobile phone) is available at all times. Ensure that where a child, young person or vulnerable adult needs assistance with toilet trips and when first aid is required, that this is carried out in pairs or in the latter case, that it is carried out where they can be seen.
- e) When working outside, ensure activities, breaks and clothing are suitable for the weather conditions and that shelter is available where possible.

Training

All staff will receive training in recognising abuse and carrying out their responsibilities under this policy as part of their induction programme and within six months of their employment. Training should be regularly updated in line with national safeguarding policies.

Recruitment

The council takes great care in the recruitment of staff, carries out all possible checks on recruits to ensure that they are of a high standard, and co-operates in all Government initiatives regarding the sharing of information on care workers who are found to be unsuitable to work with vulnerable people.

Expectations Of Behaviour

All users of Town Council facilities or delivery of Town Council events should:

- a) Ensure that communications, behaviour and interaction with users be appropriate and professional.
- b) Treat each other with respect and show consideration for other groups using the facilities.

- c) Refrain from any behaviour that involves racism, sexism and bullying and in addition to report any instances of such behaviour to group leaders, the Town Clerk or parents and carers, as appropriate.

Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers

The Town Clerk will act as the Council's Designated Safeguarding Lead and liaise with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where allegations involve staff or volunteers.

All staff, councillors and volunteers should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child or vulnerable adult. If an allegation is made against a member of staff, councillor or volunteer, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Town Clerk.

Newton Abbot Town Council should consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) authorities before attempting to investigate or take action.

Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Confidentiality needs to be discussed and fully understood by all those persons who come into contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults, particularly in the context of child protection.

Promises of confidentiality must not be given as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the individual.

If a Council officer becomes concerned that a child/young person may be at risk of significant harm, then the Council has a duty to refer their concerns to the relevant agencies / Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (contact details below).

Officers should always make children aware that if they disclose information that may be harmful to themselves or others, then certain actions will need to be taken. Wherever possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information with third parties.

The Council has an obligation to disclose if someone discusses an intention to harm another person.

Recording and Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Accurate and timely record-keeping is an essential part of safeguarding practice. Newton Abbot Town Council recognises that maintaining clear, factual, and secure records of all safeguarding concerns and incidents is vital for ensuring that individuals at risk are protected and that appropriate action is taken.

Recording Safeguarding Concerns

- All safeguarding concerns, disclosures, or incidents whether involving young people, or vulnerable adults must be recorded as soon as possible after the concern arises.
- Records should be factual, concise, and objective, detailing:
 - The nature of the concern or disclosure

- Date, time, and location of the incident or disclosure
- Names and contact details of those involved or present
- The exact words used by the individual where possible
- Any actions taken, including who was informed and when
- Personal opinions or assumptions should not be included.

Confidentiality and Storage

- All safeguarding records will be stored securely and confidentially in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.
- Records will be accessible only to authorised personnel, namely the Designated Safeguarding Officer and where necessary, the Deputy Safeguarding Officer or relevant authorities.
- Electronic records will be password protected, and any paper records will be kept in locked storage.

Retention and Review

- Safeguarding records will be retained for a minimum of six years or in accordance with statutory or insurance requirements, whichever is longer.
- Records will be reviewed periodically to ensure all actions were completed and to identify any recurring issues or patterns of concern.

Useful Contacts

Torbay and Devon Safeguarding Adults Partnership –
www.devonsafeguardingadultspartnership.org.uk/

Devon Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) - www.dcfp.org.uk/ or telephone 0345 155 1071 or email mashsecure@devon.gov.uk

Emergency: 999 for immediate risk

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Devon Children's Safeguarding Partnership: www.dcfp.org.uk

If you need to contact Devon's LADO, please consider all the [guidance for organisations](#) first. For **any** requests for advice, please complete the [LADO contact form](#) or email childsc.localauthoritydesignatedofficersecure-mailbox@devon.gov.uk