

Housing and Health Committee Meeting	
Meeting Date	7 th March 2023
Report Title	Swale Community Safety Strategic Assessment
EMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods
Head of Service	Charlotte Hudson, Head of Housing and Communities
Lead Officer	Stephanie Curtis, Community Safety Manager
Classification	Open
Recommendations	1. For the Housing and Health Committee to approve this refreshed Safeguarding Policy for 2023

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report summarises the amendments that are proposed to be made to the Safeguarding Policy and asks that the Housing and Health Committee agree the revisions made.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Safeguarding Policy was last revised in December 2021 and is subject to an annual review to ensure that it reflects any legislative or procedural changes. There was a slight delay to this year's review whilst we awaited the outcome of an external audit by the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-Agency Partnership (KCSMP) as this, along with an audit earlier in the year by the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board (KMSAB) has resulted in a couple of changes to the policy.
- 2.2 The main amendments that have been made to the previous version of the Safeguarding Policy and summarised below:
- The Foreword, if felt still needed, to be amended to reflect wording from the Chair of the Housing and Health Committee rather than previous Cabinet Member.
 - Legal duties within section 3 updated to reflect the enactment of the Police, Crime Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 and the Serious Violence Duty placed upon responsible authorities.
 - Within Section 4 (Policy Position):
 - Section 4.3 (Scope) has been amended to reference the additional Domestic Abuse policies and procedures that are being created.

- Section 4.4 (safeguarding roles, responsibilities and governance) has been amended to reflect officer role changes and the replacement of the portfolio holder reference to the Housing and Health Committee.
- Section 4.4.1 Level 2 Safeguarding Role has been split into 2a and 2b – this is to enable Housing options staff to be recommended to complete some additional training that may not be suitable for other agreed level 2 roles.
- Within Section 5 (Procedures):
 - Types of abuse has been extended (section 5.1.2)
 - Sections 5.1.3 to 5.1.6 have been added to provide extra clarity about recognition of types of abuse.
 - Section 5.6 has been created as a stand-alone type of concern (previously referenced as part of 5.2) to ensure that how to respond to self-neglect is made clearer. Appendix 2 has also been added which is a fact sheet regarding the Council's response for Self-Neglect cases.
 - Section 5.7 has been amended to emphasise the importance of recording decisions regarding consent, capacity and the wishes of any adults at risk.
 - Sections 5.8, 5.9 and 5.10 have been added following a recommendation by the external audit by the KMSAB. These discuss consent, Making Safeguarding Personal and Capacity and how these must be considered as part of our safeguarding response.
- Section 8 (escalating concerns and case reviews) has been amended to include details of the KCSMP escalation process as these were previously omitted.
- Section 10 (Safeguarding Partnership Boards) has been extended with some further information in relation to the KCSMP and KMSAB.
- Section 11 (Safeguarding contacts) has been updated with current contact details as appropriate.
- Section 12 (Safeguarding Training) has been amended as follows:
 - The training table has been split to show the difference in training required for Level 2a and Level 2b (housing options) staff. This reflects that Housing options team would benefit from some of the advisory training sessions that may not be appropriate for some of the 2a staff, as well as further mandatory training around domestic abuse
 - A number of advisory training sessions have been added for Level 1, Level 2 and 3 roles.
 - Additional mandatory sessions for Level 3 staff have been added.
 - No changes have been made for Level 0 and Level 4 staff.
 - The wording around compliance for training has also been strengthened.
 - Training required for new starters has also been included.
- Appendix 1 (Case Standards) have seen some minor operational amendments.

- Appendix 2 (Self-Neglect Fact Sheet) has been developed and added to the Policy.
- Various changes to job titles of those within the safeguarding team as appropriate

3 Proposals

- 3.1 For the Housing and Health Committee to approve this refreshed Safeguarding Policy for 2023

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 That the Safeguarding Policy is not revised. This is not recommended as although the current Policy is largely accurate in relation to legislative requirements, it is not complete; and a number of recommendations were made by internal and external audits for inclusion within the policy

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 Consultation has taken place with team managers, of those teams that identify the greater number of safeguarding concerns.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	This policy refresh will contribute to the corporate priority 3 to tackle deprivation and create equal opportunities for everyone
Financial, Resource and Property	<p>Existing staff are in place (1 FTE Community Safety Manager; 1 FTE ASB and Vulnerability Team Leader; and 1 FTE Safeguarding Officer) to manage the implementation of this policy.</p> <p>In order to deliver the proposed staff training plan, there is a financial cost for some sessions, however these are met through existing corporate training budgets or by contributions already made to the Safeguarding Partnerships.</p>
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	<p>The Children Act 1989 states that the child's welfare is paramount and that every child has a right to protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation. The Children Act 2004 specifies the statutory guidance relating to Swale Borough Council under this agenda.</p> <p>The Safeguarding Policy also highlights other legislation relating to this agenda and requirements upon the Council including The Care Act 2014, Counter Terrorism Act 2015; Modern Slavery Act 2015;</p>

	Domestic Abuse Act 2021; and more recently the Police, Crime Sentencing and Courts Act 2022
Crime and Disorder	Through the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy and addressing safeguarding concerns of vulnerable individuals, there will naturally be some cases where the individual is also supported to address crime and anti-social behavioural issues, through referrals and information sharing with other agencies.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	No air quality, or climate/ecological emergency implications have been identified at this stage.
Health and Wellbeing	The Safeguarding Policy will ensure that the Council responds appropriately to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. This also extends to welfare concerns that may not have met the thresholds for referrals to statutory services, but by addressing the needs identified, improves the community's health and wellbeing.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	This revised Safeguarding Policy details the Council's response to Safeguarding and the process by which it should be managed.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	Safeguarding has in the past been one of the risks identified in the corporate risk register, but due to the levels of controls in place as identified by this Policy is now only within the Housing and Communities Service Plan Risk Register.
Equality and Diversity	No specific equality and diversity implications have been identified at this stage. All safeguarding concerns are handled in an appropriate manner for the case in question.
Privacy and Data Protection	The safeguarding database 'My Concern' referenced within the Policy as part of the recording process, has a high level of security – all users must be approved by the safeguarding team and given an appropriate level of access. All referrals can also securely be saved here and case notes. Section 4.4.11 of the policy discusses information sharing.

7 Appendices

- 7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:
- Appendix I: Draft Swale Borough Council Safeguarding Policy 2023

8 Background Papers

None.