

Harlow Council

Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy

2018/19 – 2020/21

DRAFT

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1. Introduction

1.1 With regard to children, this policy is based on the Council's responsibilities under Sections 27 and 47 of the Children Act 1989 and Sections 10, 11 and 13 of the Children Act 2004 which place a duty on public bodies, including District Councils, to make arrangements to promote co-operation between the authority and its partners in respect of Safeguarding matters; to ensure that their functions are discharged with regard to the need to Safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to participate in the work of local Safeguarding Children Boards.

1.2 With regard to adults, this policy acknowledges a number of new requirements placed on a range of agencies following introduction of the Care Act 2014 and in particular recognises the introduction of the term 'adult with care and support needs' as oppose to the term 'vulnerable adult' which has been used in the past. The Council also notes the introduction of a new category of adult abuse known as 'Self Neglect' which includes Hoarding behaviour.

1.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Southend Essex and Thurrock (SET) Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures and the SET Safeguarding Adult Guidelines

1.4 This policy commits all Harlow Council Staff, elected Members, volunteers and those working for and on behalf of the Council, regardless of their role, to report any concerns they may have about the safety of any child or adult with care and support needs by following internal and external reporting procedures. The policy further commits those people mentioned above to participate in a single or multi-agency working approach to provide support to children and adults with care and support needs where possible and appropriate.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 Harlow Council believes that all children and adults with care and support needs have the right to be safe, happy and healthy and that they deserve protection from abuse and exploitation. The Council is committed to safeguarding from harm all children and adults with care and support needs in receipt of its services and/or when involved in any of its activities and to treat them with respect during their dealings with the Council.

2.2 Harlow Council will –

- Take seriously and respond appropriately and promptly to safeguarding concerns, incidents and allegations
- Ensure staff, elected Members and those working for and on behalf of the Council are trained in child and adult safeguarding at a level appropriate to their role and responsibility
- Ensure that all staff, elected members and those people working for and on behalf of the Council know how to report safeguarding concerns both internally and externally
- Ensure that Safer Recruitment guidelines are in place and that these are implemented and monitored in order to prevent unsuitable people from working with children and/or adults with care and support needs.

- At all times have an elected Member's Safeguarding Champion and Designated Safeguarding Officer in place
- Where relevant and appropriate, work in partnership with both statutory and non-statutory agencies to ensure a robust and effective multi-agency approach to support children and adults with care and support needs that have suffered, or are at risk of suffering, abuse or exploitation.

3. Aim of the Policy

3.1 The aim of the policy is to:

- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of all parties included in the scope of the policy – see 4 below
- Support the promotion of a safe working environment and a culture of care in which the rights of all children and adults with care and support needs are protected and respected
- Promote and embed clear guidance and procedures for all employees, but in particular those working directly with children and adults with care and support needs, and ensure they are able to effectively implement them.
- Provide a framework for partnership working with relevant agencies through which policy, procedure and good practice in safeguarding will be developed and maintained to ensure the policy consistently reflects legislation and best practice requirements in respect of safeguarding children and adults with care and support needs.

3.2 Harlow Council takes its safeguarding responsibilities seriously and has included some relatively new areas of safeguarding responsibilities in this policy - for example Child Sexual Exploitation, Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation, Modern Slavery, Human Trafficking, Domestic Abuse, and Radicalisation.

3.3 While the Council does not intend to introduce individual policies and procedures for each of these safeguarding themes there is a clear expectation that, through this policy and other associated activity and training and development opportunities, council staff and elected Members will be aware of these themes and know how to identify and report concerns appropriately (see section 8, page 14 of this policy). Additional information around these important safeguarding themes is available to all staff and Members via a link on the Council's Infonet system <http://infonet.harlow.gov.uk/infonet/safeguarding> and direct to members of the public via the Council's external website at <http://www.harlow.gov.uk/safeguarding>

4. Scope of the Policy

4.1 The policy is in respect of the Council's responsibility towards:

- Children - legally defined as any person under the age of 18, or up to the age of 25 where the person has a disability. The term 'child' or 'children' will be used to refer to this group. Reference will not be made to 'young people' as they are included within the definition of children.
- Adults with care and support needs (previously referred to as vulnerable adults) as defined by the Care Act 2014, includes any person aged 18 or over who has needs for care and support (regardless of the level of need and whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs); is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect **and** as a result of those needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.
- This policy and any related procedures and guidance applies to all Harlow Council employees (including casual staff, agency workers, interims, consultants and people working for and on behalf of the Council), elected Members and volunteers who have contact with children or adults with care and support needs. It also applies to people working on behalf of the Council where they are not bound to comply with their own organisation's Safeguarding policies (children and adults) i.e. sports coaches or alternative partner providers.

4.2 The policy covers all the functions and services of the Council, its elected Members, staff and contractors.

4.3 The policy should be read and implemented in conjunction with:

- Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures
- Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) Adult Safeguarding Guidelines
- Care Act 2014

and the following Harlow Council Policies, procedures and guidance documents:

- Disciplinary Procedure, Grievance Procedure and Whistle Blowing Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- IT Acceptable Use
- Equalities Framework
- Corporate Complaints procedure
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Domestic Violence and Abuse Policy
- Health & Safety at Work guidance
- Officers' Code of Conduct
- Employee Good Practice in Safeguarding can be found at Appendix C of this policy

4.4 The Southend Essex and Thurrock (SET) Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures and SET Safeguarding Adult Guidelines are available to staff and elected

Members via the Council's Infonet or via the Essex safeguarding board websites - <http://www.escb.co.uk> (children) and <http://www.essexsab.org.uk> (adults).

4.5 The policy does not cover health and safety issues related to safeguarding children such as use of play equipment or provision of food at events etc.

5. Roles and responsibilities of Harlow Council staff and elected Members

5.1 The responsibility for safeguarding children and adults with care and support needs in line with this policy lies with all staff at all levels of the Council. This includes the identification of risk and reporting concerns via internal and external reporting pathways.

5.2 Elected Members also have a responsibility to protect children and adults with care and support needs. This includes identifying risk and reporting concerns via internal and external pathways. Members are also responsible for ensuring that the Council has a Member's Safeguarding Champion; Designated Safeguarding Officer and Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy in place at all times.

5.3 Heads of Service, in conjunction with Service Managers and Human Resources, are responsible for:-

- Identifying those services and posts that are likely to have involvement with children and/or adults with care and support needs and that employees appointed by them, whose normal duties involve caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children or adults with care and support needs are screened via the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) at the appropriate level prior to appointment and are appropriately qualified and/or trained in working with these groups.
- Ensuring that Safer Recruitment guidelines are adhered to at all times and that employees and others do not undertake direct work with children or adults with care and support needs without a DBS check at the relevant level - except under skilled supervision and where approval has been given by the Head of Service or Designated Safeguarding Officer prior to commencement of the role. (See also Section 9, page 15)
- Ensuring that all necessary procedures and practices are in place to provide adequate protection for children and adults with care and support needs and that relevant policies and procedures are also in place to protect employees working with these groups.
- Ensuring that employees, volunteers and other workers dealing with these groups are adequately trained in safeguarding to a level appropriate to their role and responsibility within the organisation.
- Ensuring that external contractors and other bodies delivering Council services are aware of the Council's Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy and abide by the same processes and standards of behaviour expected of Council employees.
- Ensuring that parents/carers of children are aware that in providing Council services, staff are not acting in loco parentis (in the place of a parent).

- Ensuring that this policy is made available to parents/carers of children and adults with care and support needs to whom the Council is providing services. This may be via the Council's website or in hard copy and where relevant and possible in large font and/or translated to another language.
- Ensuring that proper records are kept of any concerns or incidents occurring within their service and that these are held in line with General Data Protection Regulation and shared with the Designated Safeguarding Officer (and Human Resources if the concern or incident involves a member of staff). The Harlow Council Safeguarding Process Flow Chart and the Safeguarding Record form can be found on the Infonet at <http://infonet.harlow.gov.uk/infonet/safeguarding> Copies can be seen at Appendix A and Appendix B.
- Working with other relevant agencies to ensure the safe and secure transfer of information relating to safeguarding concerns for children and adults with care and support needs where necessary and ensuring appropriate officer attendance at multi-agency meetings, Child Protection Conferences and Core Group meetings etc.
- Where appropriate, service managers will aim to ensure that staff within their teams endeavour to support adults with care and support needs, particularly those living in Council supported housing schemes, to make positive and informed choices about whom they might invite into their homes to provide direct support services such as domestic help and/or personal care. This support could include recommending that residents request references in writing and/or a DBS check before engaging such services.

5.4 Designated Safeguarding Person

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Person was specified in the Children Act 2004 and aims to ensure that every organisation has a named person for safeguarding children. The Designated Safeguarding Person has a responsibility at both a strategic level within the organisation as well as on a day-to-day operational basis. Harlow Council's Designated Safeguarding Person is responsible for both child and adult safeguarding.

Note: Within Harlow Council the Designated Safeguarding Person is known as the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO).

Key Aspects of the Council's Designated Safeguarding Officer role include:

- Ensuring there is a safeguarding policy and reporting procedure in place
- Ensuring staff are aware how to raise safeguarding concerns
- Supporting staff to refer concerns to child or adult social care
- Maintaining an accurate and secure central child and adult safeguarding record
- Completing the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB) and Essex Safeguarding Adult Board (ESAB) annual safeguarding audits

- Assisting service managers to ensure their staff are trained in safeguarding at a level appropriate to their role and responsibility within the organisation
- Assisting to ensure that elected Members receive appropriate safeguarding training
- Encouraging and supporting a workplace culture of listening to children and adults with care and support needs and, wherever possible, taking in to account their wishes and feelings in any steps the Council may take in order to protect them
- Leading on a Third Tier Managers Safeguarding Group and representing the Council across a range of external multi-agency safeguarding meetings, forums and networks

5.5 Contractors

- In the event of the Council entering in to a contract for the delivery of services to children and/or adults with care and support needs, it is the designated Contract Manager's responsibility to ensure that the contracted agency has robust child and adult safeguarding policies and procedures in place. Alternatively, the designated Contract Manager should ensure that the contracted agency adopts Harlow Council's Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy and, as part of this arrangement, gives an undertaking to report concerns to relevant child and/or adult services in a timely and efficient manner.
- The Council is committed to doing what it can to combat Modern Slavery and prevent Human Trafficking within its business and supply chain and expects its contractors to share in this vision by declaring that 'they are not involved in modern slavery or human trafficking and have not been subject to any investigation in connection with any offences involving slavery and human trafficking'.
- It is the designated Contract Manager's responsibility to ensure that the arrangements for Safeguarding and Modern Slavery are monitored and evaluated as part of the contract review process.

5.6 Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB)

The Essex Safeguarding Children Board acts as a mechanism for agreeing how relevant organisations in Essex co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The aim of the Board is to improve outcomes for children by co-ordinating the work of local agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and ensuring the effectiveness of that work. The ESCB works with Essex County Council, Essex Police, Essex Community Rehabilitation Company, Education Services, Health Services, City, Borough and District Councils, and the Voluntary Sector as well as the Southend and Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Boards

5.7 Essex Safeguarding Adult Board (ESAB)

The Care Act 2014 placed a statutory requirement on local authorities to have a multi-agency Safeguarding Adult Board in place. The ESAB is committed to protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is being promoted including having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. ESAB membership comprises both statutory and non-statutory agencies as well as community and voluntary sector representation.

6. Definition and Categories of Child and Adult Abuse

6.1 A person may abuse a child or adult with care and support needs by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Children and adults with care and support needs can be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them, by people working with them, by people they are in a relationship with or perceive themselves to be in a relationship with or, more rarely, by a stranger.

6.2 The SET definition of child abuse and neglect -

'Child abuse and neglect' is a generic term encompassing all maltreatment of children. Children may be abused or neglected through the infliction of harm, or through the failure of the adults around them to act to prevent harm.

The term 'child abuse and neglect' therefore includes the impact on children from serious physical and sexual assaults through to situations where the standard of care for the child from their parent or carer does not adequately support the child's health or development.

Abuse and neglect can occur in a family or an institutional or community setting. The perpetrator of abuse may or may not be known to the child.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 defined four broad categories of abuse which are used by professionals working in child protection. These are: neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse. These categories overlap and a child may suffer more than one type of abuse.

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 fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces illness in a child.

Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent effects on the child's emotional development, and may involve:

- Conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only

insofar as they meet the needs of another person;

- Imposing age or developmentally inappropriate expectations 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;
- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another e.g. where there is domestic violence and abuse;
- Serious bullying, causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, including online;
- Exploiting and corrupting children.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child 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 (e.g. rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing.

Sexual abuse includes non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, including online and with mobile phones, or in the production of pornographic materials, watching sexual activities or 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.

In addition; sexual abuse includes abuse of children through sexual exploitation. Penetrative sex where one of the partners is under the age of 16 is illegal, although prosecution of similar age, consenting partners is not usual. However, where a child is under the age of 13 it is classified as rape under s5 Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Sexual abuse includes sexual exploitation of children. See also Section 8, page 13 of this policy.

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 misuse, maternal mental ill health or learning difficulties or a cluster of such issues. Where there is domestic abuse and violence towards a carer, the needs of the child may be neglected.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;
- Ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers);
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment.

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional, social, health and educational needs.

6.3 Definition of Adult Safeguarding

The purpose of adult safeguarding is to prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs. The statutory framework introduced under the Care Act 2014 applies to any person aged 18 or above who:

- Has needs for care and support (regardless of the level of need and whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, and
- As a result of those needs, is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

Physical abuse

Assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, misuse of medication, restraint, inappropriate physical sanctions.

Domestic violence

Psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so-called "honour" based violence and forced marriage.

See also Domestic Abuse on page 14 of this policy.

Sexual abuse

Rape, sexual assault, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, sexual act to which the adult has not consented or was pressured into consenting.

Psychological abuse

Emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber-bullying, isolation, unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.

Financial or material abuse

Theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.

Modern slavery

Encompasses slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.

See also page 14 of this policy.

Discriminatory abuse

Harassment, slurs or similar treatment because of race, gender and gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

Organisational abuse

Neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting, such as a hospital or care home, or in relation to care provided in someone's own home.

Neglect and acts of omission

Ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

Self-neglect

Includes a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

Note: Harlow Council recognises that Hoarding is a complex problem and therefore requires a sensitive and appropriate response, most often by working with relevant partner agencies to ensure appropriate support is delivered. The Council is informed in its response to Hoarding cases by the SET Hoarding Guidance.

7. Recognising and reporting signs of abuse

7.1 Although the number of roles within the Council that require direct contact with children and/or adults with care and support needs is fairly limited, it is vital that all staff and Members are aware of the potential indicators of abuse, as set out above, and know how to report concerns.

7.2 It is not the intention of this policy to list all possible indicators of child and adult abuse as these are covered comprehensively in the SET Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures and SET Safeguarding Adult Guidelines. When staff or Members have concerns about a child or adult with care and support needs in relation to any of the categories of abuse above they should consult the SET documents for more information about signs, symptoms and indicators of abuse to inform a discussion with their manager about what action should be taken and/or to ensure an appropriate referral to children or adult services.

7.3 Staff working directly with children and families should also be aware of and consult the 'Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex' guidance document when they are unsure about the level of support and/or intervention a child or family may require. This guidance is available to staff via the Council's Infonet at -

<http://www.escb.co.uk/Portals/67/Documents/professionals/EffectiveSupportBooklet2017v5-FINAL.pdf>

7.4 The Council has an internal process for responding to safeguarding concerns and this should be followed at all times unless a child or adult with care and support needs is at immediate risk of danger or harm, in which case the police should be called immediately by dialling 999 (or 101 internally). The Council's safeguarding process chart can be seen at Appendix A and the 'Safeguarding Record Form' can be seen at Appendix B. Further Safeguarding resources can be found on the Infonet at

<http://infonet.harlow.gov.uk/infonet/safeguarding>

7.5 All staff and Members have a responsibility to report safeguarding concerns, incidents or allegations but are not responsible for investigating individual cases – this is the responsibility of Essex County Council Children and Adults Social Care. Harlow Council employees and Members are however required to assist Social Care with their enquiries and share relevant information appropriately in a secure and timely manner in order to support such enquiries.

8. Additional areas of safeguarding responsibility

8.1 In addition to the above categories of abuse, Council staff, elected Members and those employed to work for and on behalf of the Council should also be aware of the following relatively new areas of work in which they are required to have at least a basic knowledge and understanding of how to identify and report concerns or to know who to go to in the Council or within their own organisation for advice and guidance in this respect. Where Harlow Council staff require assistance in this respect they should consult their line manager or the Council's Designated Safeguarding Officer.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity in exchange for (a) something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

The Southend Essex and Thurrock CSE Toolbox for professionals can be found at <http://cse-toolbox.uk>

Domestic Abuse

The government definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to: Psychological, Physical, Sexual, Financial, Emotional, Controlling behaviour.

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim (this is not a legal definition).

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

A form of abuse which can have devastating physical and psychological consequences for girls and women. The World Health Organisation (WHO) describes FGM as "procedures that involve partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons" (WHO, 2013).

FGM is sometimes also known as 'female circumcision' or 'female genital cutting' and is mostly carried out on young girls.

Forced Marriage (FM)

A forced marriage is a marriage in which one or both spouses do not (or, in the case of some adults with learning or physical disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and duress is involved. Duress can include physical, psychological, financial, sexual and emotional pressure.

There is a clear distinction between a forced marriage and an arranged marriage. In arranged marriages, the families of both spouses take a leading role in arranging the marriage but the choice whether or not to accept the arrangement remains with the prospective spouses.

Honour Based Abuse (HBA)

HBA is an international term used by many cultures for justification of abuse and violence. It is a crime or incident committed in order to protect or defend the family or community 'honour'.

Honour based abuse will often go hand in hand with forced marriages (see below), although this is not always the case. Honour crimes and forced marriages are already covered by the law, and can involve a range of criminal offences.

Honour Based Abuse is often the collective term used to include Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage (see above).

Modern Slavery (encompassing slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour; and human trafficking).

This is a serious crime which demeans the value of human life. It involves the recruitment and movement of the most vulnerable men, women and children to exploit them in degrading situations for financial rewards for their traffickers. Trafficking often takes place across international borders; but it can also happen within the United Kingdom. Victims might be foreign nationals, but can also include British Citizens. It has a devastating effect not only on the individuals trafficked but also their families who may themselves be subjected to threats or be in debt to traffickers.

The Council's Modern Slavery Act 2015 Statement can be seen at <http://www.harlow.gov.uk/modern-slavery>

Radicalisation

Radicalisation is the action or process of causing someone to adopt radical positions on political or social issues. This process can include 'grooming' children and adults with care and support needs.

'Prevent' is the multi-agency set of arrangements in Essex aimed at preventing individuals and groups from engaging in violent extremism. Prevent is not aimed at suppressing freedom of thought and expression. Harlow Council has a Prevent Action Plan in place and this assists the Council's work with partners to protect children and adult with care and support needs in this respect.

Self Neglect – Hoarding

Hoarding is the excessive collection and retention of any material to the point that it impedes day to day functioning (Frost & Gross, 1993). Pathological or compulsive hoarding is a specific type of behaviour characterised by:

- Acquiring and failing to throw out a large number of items that would appear to hold little or no value and would be considered rubbish by other people
- Severe cluttering of the adults home so that it is no longer able to function as a viable living space
- Significant distress or impairment of work or social life (Kelly 2010).

The Southend Essex and Thurrock (SET) Multi-agency Hoarding Guidance can be found on the Essex Safeguarding Adult website at www.essexsab.org.uk

Harlow Council promotes a multi-agency approach to engaging and supporting residents who display hoarding behaviour to ensure their needs are being met by relevant services and the hoarding behaviour is addressed in the longer term. As part of this work the Council also takes into consideration the health, safety and wellbeing of neighbours that may be adversely affected by hoarding behaviour.

9. Safer Recruitment

9.1 The Council aims to ensure that only the most suitable people are employed to work with children and adults with care and support needs and as such operates robust Safer Recruitment practices.

9.2 All managers with recruitment responsibilities must ensure that the following steps are taken during the recruitment process -

- Confirmation of work history since leaving education and clarification regarding any gaps in work history
- Safeguarding questions are asked at interview to establish knowledge and understanding of the importance of safeguarding
- Receipt of two satisfactory references in writing from the two most recent employers
- Check eligibility of the applicant's right to work in the UK
- Request a Disclosure and Barring Service check for posts where the Council has identified a legal right to ask for the applicant's criminal history to be disclosed

9.3 Where there are any queries or concerns during the recruitment process, these should be discussed and resolved with the recruiting manager's Head of Service and/or the Human Resources Manager.

10. Training

10.1 Harlow Council will ensure that staff are adequately trained in Safeguarding at a level appropriate to their role and responsibility within the organisation. This will be achieved by –

- Ensuring the combined Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy is made available to all new staff by the recruiting manager on the first day of employment
- All new employees completing mandatory child and adult safeguarding e-learning modules as part of the induction procedure
- Identification of training needs as part of annual staff Personal Performance Plan (PPP) interviews
- Regular dissemination of safeguarding training opportunities across the organisation by the Designated Safeguarding Officer

10.2 The Designated Safeguarding Officer will keep abreast of and engage in regular safeguarding training and development opportunities in order to ensure the Council is aware of new guidance, legislation and good practice in safeguarding at all times.

11. Information sharing

In order to keep children and adults with care and support needs safe from harm, professionals may be required to share relevant information across geographical and professional boundaries.

When there is reasonable cause to believe that a child, young person or adult with care and support needs may be suffering or is at risk of suffering harm, consideration should always be given to referring these concerns to the relevant authorities.

Information about children, families and adults at risk should be shared appropriately and in accordance with the Council's internal policies and procedures, General Data Protection

Guidelines and the Whole Essex Information Sharing Framework (WEISF) of which the Council is a signatory.

Relevant information should also be shared appropriately upon request to Essex Safeguarding Adults and Safeguarding Children Boards, in line with requirements of the Care Act 2014 and the Children Act 1989 and 2004.

It is the service manager's responsibility to ensure his/her staff are adequately trained in information sharing and that appropriate information sharing protocols are in place.

12. Audit; Quality Assurance and Review

12.1 Safeguarding activity and performance against this policy will be audited as part of the Council's internal audit programme.

12.2 The Council will participate in Essex Safeguarding Children Board and Essex Safeguarding Adult Board bi- annual audits and continually strive to achieve high compliance with ESCB and ESAB requirements across all service areas.

12.3 Service improvement in safeguarding matters is a continuous process and the Designated Safeguarding Officer, with the Head of Community Wellbeing and the Members Safeguarding Champion will regularly review performance in this area of work.

12.4 The Child and Adult Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed annually and updated where necessary to reflect changes in legislation, policy, procedure and good practice. This is the responsibility of the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

13. Useful sources of further information

Action on elder abuse – www.elderabuse.org.uk 080 8808 8141

Ask SAL – www.essexsab.org.uk/asksal Helpline 03452 66 66 63

Age UK - www.ageuk.org.uk Information and advice – 0800 678 1174

Childline – www.childline.org.uk 0800 1111

Domestic Violence Helpline www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk 0800 2000 247

Essex Safeguarding Children Board - www.escb.co.uk

Essex Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Board - www.essexsab.org.uk

NSPCC - www.nspcc.org.uk.

Stop The Traffik - Metropolitan Police reporting hotline for victims or to report suspected trafficking 0800 783 2589 (24 hour hotline)

Appendix A

Harlow Council process for dealing with safeguarding concerns for children and adults with care and support needs.

Applicable to Staff, Volunteers, Members and Contractors working for and on behalf of the Council



Step 1 - Initial action

Complete the Council's 'Safeguarding Record Form' and discuss your concerns with your line manager. If your line manager is unavailable contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) as soon as possible – see also Step 2 below for other sources of support/guidance.

If it is clear that the person is in immediate danger call the police straight away on 999.

Note: The DSO is Christine Howard, Youth and Citizenship Manager, 01279 446192. If your concern is about an adult you can also contact Viv Hales, Supported Housing Manager on 01279 446317.



Step 2 - Is further advice and guidance required?

No - Agree an appropriate course of action with your line manager or the DSO (See steps 3 and 4 below)

Yes - Refer to the 'Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex' booklet to assist you **or** speak to the DSO for advice and guidance **or** call the Children and Families Hub on 0345 6037627 and ask for the **Consultation Line**.

If you have an **urgent** child safeguarding concern contact the Children and Families Hub on 0345 6037627 and ask for the **Priority Line**. Qualified advisors will assist you with your enquiry and advise you on next steps.

If your concern is about an adult with care and support needs, contact Social Care Direct on 0345 6037630.

Be prepared to discuss whatever you know about the person you are concerned about i.e. **Who** are they? **Where** do they live? **Who** do they live with? **How** old are they? **Why** are you concerned? (be specific) **What** have you personally seen and/or heard that has led to you be concerned? Or, **What** information has been passed to you that has led to you be concerned and **when** and from **whom** did you receive the information?

Agree an appropriate course of action with the Advisor. Update your line manager and the DSO.



Step 3 – Do you need to submit a formal referral?

No – No further action need be taken but your concerns must still be recorded on the Council's 'Safeguarding Record Form' and copied to the DSO (see step 4 below)

Yes - If the concern is for a child and is not urgent your referral should be made via the Essex Effective Support website at <https://www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk> You will need the parent/carers consent to make a referral via the website. If consent is absent contact the Children and Families Hub for advice on next steps.

If the referral is for an adult with care and support needs; complete form SET SAF1 and send it by secure email to essexsocialcare@essex.GCSX.gov.uk or by non-secure email to socialcaredirect@essex.gov.uk unless otherwise advised.

Referral forms and additional accompanying information should be copied to the DSO for inclusion on the Council's central safeguarding record. (See also step 4 below).

Note: If you do not receive acknowledgement of your referral within 7 days, follow this up with the Hub or Social Care Direct and request written acknowledgement of your referral as well as notification of what action is going to be taken (if any). Update your line manager and the DSO.



Step 4 - Recording concerns - keeping managers and the DSO updated

Always complete the Council's 'Safeguarding Record Form' and send a copy to your line manager and the DSO regardless of whether you seek further advice and/or make a referral.

Note: All forms and guidance documents are available to Harlow Council staff via the Infonet. If you are a Volunteer or Contractor, guidance is available via the DSO or Viv Hales. More information about safeguarding can be found on the Essex safeguarding board websites <http://www.escb.co.uk> (children) and <http://www.essexsab.org.uk> (adults)

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Harlow Council Safeguarding Record

To be completed immediately by Staff, Volunteers, Members and Contractors working for and on behalf of the Council when there are Safeguarding concerns in relation to a child or adult with care and support needs.

Date and time:	
Name and contact details of person reporting the concern:	
Manager/Supervisor's name and contact details:	
Service and location:	
Name, address and D.O.B of the person you are concerned about (if known):	
Is the address a council tenancy?	Yes / No
Reason for concern: (To include source of information and contact details where relevant and possible. Continue on separate sheet if necessary)	
Action taken: (To include names and contact numbers of anyone else you have spoken to in respect of your concerns) N.B It is not an option to do nothing!	
Is a referral to Social Care required? Whenever possible this should be discussed and agreed with your line manager and/or the Designated Safeguarding Officer before referring.	Yes/No
If a referral is required please give details of when and how the referral was made:	
Date and time your Manager/Designated Safeguarding Officer was notified of concern/action:	

Updated October 2017

Appendix C

Employee Good Practice

Employees that have contact with, or provide services directly to, children or adults with care and support needs should be clear about what is expected of them and what might constitute unacceptable behaviour on their part. Observing strict professional boundaries will help staff protect themselves from false allegations being made against them and also helps to create a positive culture around children and adults with care and support needs.

Employees should:-

- Always work in an open environment and aim to avoid private or unobserved situations whenever possible
- Notify a colleague or manager when, to work effectively with the child or adult the above point cannot be observed and ensure a risk assessment is undertaken
- Always listen to what children and adults with care and support needs have to say as they are more likely to discuss issues of concern if they know that they will be listened to and taken seriously
- Treat all children and adults with care and support needs equally and with respect and dignity at all times
- Always put the welfare of the child/adult with care and support needs first and foremost
- Ensure that assistance with any form of manual or physical support required is provided openly and appropriately - this applies particularly to children and adults with a disability
- Aim to establish a good working relationship and communication with parents/carers wherever possible and appropriate
- Always set a good example – be a good role model for children and act in a professional, responsible and trustworthy manner at all times
- Always be prepared to act upon information which may indicate that a child or adult with care and support needs is being abused or is at risk of being abused and report concerns to the line Manager or the Designated Safeguarding Officer as soon as possible
- Know how to appropriately record, store and share information regarding safeguarding concerns in line with General Data Protection Guidelines
- At all times, be aware of and act in accordance with any Harlow Council policy and/or procedure that is necessary and relevant to the job role and associated responsibilities

Employees should not:-

- Divulge their personal details to a child or adult with care and support needs - including home address, personal telephone number and email address
- Add or accept friend requests on social media networking sites from service users, in particular children and adults with care and support needs

- Make arrangements to meet a child or adult with care and support needs socially outside of the working environment without their line manager's knowledge and agreement
- Take a child or adult with care and support needs to their home unsupervised; without parental consent (children) or without the line managers knowledge and agreement
- Use inappropriate language (swearing, sexual innuendo etc.) in the company of service users, in particular children or adults with care and support needs
- Allow access to inappropriate literature or images via, books, magazines, television, video, DVD or IT
- Use physical chastisement under any circumstances
- Engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games with children or make sexually suggestive comments to a child or adult with care and support needs even if it is thought to be in fun or good humour
- Behave in such a way that their behaviour could make a child or adult with care and support needs feel, or actually be, vulnerable. Or behave in such a way that the behaviour could be misconstrued by a child, adult with care and support needs or other observer
- Administer medication unless professionally trained to do so and, in the case of a child in receipt of direct council services, have parental consent to do so
- Take a child or adult with care and support needs to the toilet unsupervised or do things of a personal nature for them when s/he is capable of doing it for themselves
- Transport children or adults with care and support needs without an escort. Where it is appropriate to provide transport, a risk assessment must be undertaken and, in the case of a child, parental consent should be obtained to transport the child
- Allow allegations made by a child or adult with care and support needs to go unrecorded or not acted upon
- Take photographs of children or adults with care and support needs without consent from the subject or if it is a child, the parent/carer
- Divulge confidential or other information about a child or adult with care and support needs to unauthorised personnel

The above guidance regarding good practice is not exhaustive and staff should always consult their line manager or the Designated Safeguarding Officer if they have any doubt about the appropriateness of their own actions or that of their colleagues.

Reviewed August 2017