

West Suffolk Safeguarding Policy Update 2022

Report number:	CAB/WS/22/001	
Report to and date:	Portfolio holder decision	20 January 2022
Cabinet member:	Councillor Robert Everitt Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities Tel: 01284 769000 Email: robert.everitt@westusffolk.gov.uk	
Lead officer:	Jill Korwin Strategic Director Tel: 01284 757252 Email: jill.korwin@westsuffolk.gov.uk	

Decisions Plan: **Notice of Intention providing the purpose of the decision and the date in which the decision is expected to be made has been published on 12 January 2022.**

Wards impacted: **All**

Recommendation: **It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities approves the proposed amendments to the West Suffolk Safeguarding Policy, as set out in section 2.1 and Appendix 1 to Report number: CAB/WS/22/001.**

1. Context to this report

- 1.1 West Suffolk Council (WSC) places safeguarding at the centre of the services provided within the community. One of the council's key priorities is to develop and support "Resilient families and communities that are healthy and active" and commits to "work with partners to build resilience in families and communities, so that problems can be prevented at the earliest opportunity". The Council's approach to safeguarding meets not just the statutory duty, but our own commitment to families and communities.
- 1.2 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If an employee, volunteer or councillor has grounds to be concerned about the welfare of a child, young person or vulnerable adult, they should act immediately. Full information is provided in the council's published Safeguarding Policy, which was last updated in March 2020. The policy has been reviewed and some further changes are proposed that under the Council's Constitution can be the decision of the Portfolio Holder (Families and Communities).
- 1.3 This paper summarises the changes and Appendix 1 contains the full updated policy.
- 1.4 Further information and guidance for officers and Councillors can be found on the Council's intranet [Safeguarding \(westsuffolk.gov.uk\)](https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk) and this is supported with training to officers and members and a network of safeguarding leads.

2. Proposals within this report

- 2.1 The amendments to the Policy do not change the intent or direction, but rather ensure that the Policy remains valid and reflects learning from events in Suffolk and nationally. In summary, the changes are:
 - a. Make clearer reference to the Care Act 2014
 - b. Make it clear responsibility extends to contractors and volunteers working with the council, as well as Officers and Councillors, together with our wider focus on vulnerable people (who may not have reached a safeguarding threshold)
 - c. Note the Families and Communities service will undertake measures to ensure safeguarding practices are implemented when working with community groups and/or locality budgets
 - d. Make explicit how we take on learning from reviews
 - e. Introduce ongoing monitoring of contractors for safeguarding practice
 - f. Make clearer the roles of lead Safeguarding officers in the council
 - g. Update references to the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership and policies.

3. Alternative options that have been considered

- 3.1 The amendments proposed will ensure that West Suffolk Council follows best practice in regard to Safeguarding, so no alternative options are proposed.

4. Consultation and engagement undertaken

- 4.1 The amendments reflect discussions with the Suffolk Safeguarding Partnership.

5. Risks associated with the proposals

- 5.1 Failure to implement these changes could mean that the Council's Safeguarding Policy is not robust and could impact on training and practice in this critical area.

6. Implications arising from the proposals

- 6.1 Financial – None.
- 6.2 Legal Compliance - These updates ensure the Council's ongoing legal responsibilities in regard to safeguarding, both for Adults and Children and Young people.
- 6.3 Personal Data Processing - Strict data protection protocols exist for the handling of any safeguarding issue.
- 6.4 Equalities - Considered as part of the original policy and unchanged.
- 6.5 Crime and Disorder - Considered as part of the original policy and unchanged.
- 6.6 Environment or Sustainability – None.
- 6.7 HR or Staffing – None.
- 6.8 Changes to existing policies – As detailed.
- 6.9 External organisations (such as businesses, community groups) - The policy extends to volunteers/voluntary groups and contractors and clear guidance is provided to officers working with such groups and our Procurement policy will be updated in line with this.

7. Appendices referenced in this report

- 7.1 Appendix 1 - Updated West Suffolk Council Safeguarding Policy 2022

8. Background documents associated with this report

- 8.1 None