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ADULTS AT RISK (SAFEGUARDING) POLICY

Adopted on 29 June 2020
at the Finance & General Purpose Committee meeting (item 6 iii)
Reviewed: 30th January 2023 (F23 /50)
Reviewed 23rd February 2026 at the Finance & General Purpose Committee meeting (item F26 27 iii)
Next review February 2029

Aim

In our work we may come into contact with adults who are potentially at risk for a variety of reasons. We aim to ensure that we exercise our duty of care to safeguard such adults, and that we behave appropriately when we become aware that a vulnerable person may be at risk. This policy applies to Staff, Parish Councillors and Volunteers.

Adults at Risk

Adults at risk of abuse are people aged 18 years or over who:

- identify themselves as unable to take care of themselves or protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation; or
- are understood to be at risk, which may be due to frailty, mental or physical health problems, learning or physical impairments, homelessness, and/or impacted by disasters or crises.

Any adult anywhere can become at risk as a result of abuse of many different types, or may be at risk as a result of a temporary or permanent situation. In the context of the Parish Council, adults at risk may include customers using our services or facilities, participants in our work, users or beneficiaries of assets or projects that we manage, users of our online or social media services, and users of services we manage or support in partnership with other local agencies.

Appropriate Lead Authorities

The appropriate lead authorities for investigating and responding to abuse are the Police and/or the local authority, Buckinghamshire Council.

Principles

The Parish Council will adopt the following principles:

- The Parish Council requires all staff, Parish Councillors and volunteers to observe this policy and ensure their behavior is consistent with it.
- Any suspected abuse should be reported as soon as practically possible to the **designated persons** for safeguarding within the Parish Council.
- It is not the responsibility of anyone working for, or volunteering with, the Parish Council to investigate or decide whether or not abuse has taken place.

- The **designated persons** within the Parish Council with lead responsibility for safeguarding shall be the Parish Clerk and in the Clerk's absence, the Chair of the Parish Council.
- The designated persons will have the contact details of the appropriate lead authorities.
- If a vulnerable adult makes a disclosure of abuse or neglect, care should be taken to explain that a report will be made to the designated person and onwards to the appropriate lead authority
- If a vulnerable adult is in immediate danger then the police should be contacted without delay and a report made to the Parish Clerk and/or Chair.
- If any volunteer is suspected of abuse this must be brought to the immediate attention of the designated persons who will alert the appropriate agency. The Chair may suspend or remove from active service the volunteer pending the outcome of an investigation.
- If one of the designated persons is suspected of abuse this should be reported to the second designated person; and ultimately if appropriate to the local authority's Safeguarding Manager.
- The Parish Council will support and assist the lead authorities in investigating abuse.
- The Parish Council will include this policy in the induction of new staff, Parish Councillors and volunteers.
- The Parish Council will minimise and manage situations where abuse could occur through planning, risk assessment, training and other measures.
- Confidentiality and data protection must be respected at all times.

Review

The Parish Council will review this policy statement as needed to reflect new legal and regulatory developments and promote good practice.