

City of Wolverhampton Council

Safeguarding Statement



1. Purpose

This statement confirms the City of Wolverhampton Council's commitment to safeguarding and demonstrates a range of initiatives which reflect our safeguarding intent.

Our Council Plan (2010-2024) places safeguarding at the heart of Wolverhampton's priorities including:

- Strengthening families where children and young people are at risk
- A safer more cohesive city community
- Protecting the most vulnerable with the right care and support

The purpose of this statement is to reinforce the safeguarding message to City of Wolverhampton Council employees, Councillors and volunteers and to provide a consistent understanding of the standards we are committed to demonstrating.

In so doing, this statement supports in protecting and promoting the welfare of the children, young people and adults using or receiving services provided or commissioned by the council and supports it to fulfil its statutory responsibilities.

This Safeguarding Statement affirms for council employees, Councillors and volunteers:

- What is expected from them to protect and safeguard children, young people and adults in need of support
- That they are able to safely voice any concerns through an established procedure
- That all reports of abuse or potential abuse are dealt with in a serious and effective manner
- That appropriate training is available
- That robust 'safer' recruitment procedures are in place.

2. Legal Duties

This document reaffirms the City of Wolverhampton Council's legislative responsibilities under the:

- **Children Act 1989 and 2004**
- **Care Act 2014**
- **Counter-Terrorism Act 2015**
- **Modern Slavery Act 2015**

and supported legislative guidance.

Specific detail on the safeguarding procedures that staff must follow can be found on the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Board website:

www.wolverhamptionsafeguarding.org.uk.

3. Safeguarding Standards

The City of Wolverhampton Council is committed to:

- Safeguarding children, young people and adults requiring support from abuse and exploitation
- Providing services that are respectful and inclusive
- Enabling children, young people and adults requiring support to contribute to, and inform the safeguarding interventions they receive
- Responding promptly, sensitively and appropriately when there are suspicions of abuse or exploitation
- Acting in the best interests of the child, young person or adults requiring support whom lack mental capacity
- Preventing unsuitable people from working with children, young people and adults requiring support through robust 'safer recruitment' procedures
- Working closely with and sharing information with partner agencies to deliver services that will keep children and adults requiring support safe
- Embedding best practice to prevent abuse and create safe and healthy environments to reduce situations where abuse or allegations of abuse could occur
- Establishing appropriate governance structures, made up with delegates from appropriate departments across the council to monitor safeguarding activity and make necessary improvements
- Ensuring all employees and Councillors are aware of the potential indicators of abuse, neglect and exploitation and are clear about what to do if they have concerns
- Providing a range of safeguarding training in order to meet individual needs
- Ensuring commissioning and procurement activities and contracts with providers reflect safeguarding expectations

4. City of Wolverhampton Safeguarding Activity

The City of Wolverhampton Council has a statutory responsibility to safeguard children and adults requiring support and achieves much of this via the operational activity of Adult and Children's Services. Whilst these services provide and promote safeguarding, the council has sought to extend its safeguarding remit and demonstrate its commitment across all departments. This list is not exhaustive but provides examples of activities across the wider organisation.

Private Hire: Wolverhampton recognise the role taxi drivers have as 'the eyes and ears of the community'. This has led to proactive input with this group in raising their awareness of safeguarding. Mandatory Child Sexual Exploitation training is provided to all licenced private hire drivers within Wolverhampton and safeguarding questions are part of the final licensing test. Wolverhampton licencing representatives attend the regional licencing forum and the work they have undertaken regarding safeguarding has been adopted as best practice.

Licensed Premises: A series of joint initiatives have been progressed with Licensing and Safeguarding services wherein licensed premises checks have included the identification of potential safeguarding abuses including the employment of underage children, and the use of premises to groom potential victims. The Safeguarding Service is an active member of the Responsible Authorities Forum to ensure consideration is given to potential safeguarding matters which may impact on the decision making of the group.

People/Place Safeguarding Forum: This forum was established to ensure departments within the Place Directorate have an understanding of safeguarding developments and the potential impact on the delivery of their services. This has resulted in the creation of discreet safeguarding tools, a review of training needs for staff with limited computer access, and exploration of safeguarding thresholds and identification of risk.

Restorative Practice and Making Safeguarding Personal: Restorative Practice and Making Safeguarding Personal aims to improve safeguarding service delivery and provide input which is inclusive, transparent supportive and challenging. These approaches have been promoted across the safeguarding partnership and are recognised as positive models by which all council activity can be delivered.

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub: The council has significantly contributed to the creation of a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) which covers both children and adults requiring support. The MASH is housed in the Civic Centre and provides a secure environment for all partners and the information they hold. The MASH is the 'front door' for referrals where there are concerns about children or adults requiring support and it is here that decisions are made regarding the level of support that is required for those for whom there are concerns.

Planning: Changes in legislation have resulted in the introduction of new planning regulations and the determination of the granting of planning permissions. The council has noted the impact on the creation of new care homes and supported accommodation provision in the city and the need to support new providers in understanding their safeguarding responsibilities. This has resulted in closer working with the planning department, safeguarding and planning applicants.

Children's Accommodation Provider Forum: To promote best practice, share Wolverhampton's safeguarding expectations and encourage consistent practice, the council has worked closely with West Midlands Police to create a Children's Care Home Providers Forum.

Fraud/Financial Abuse: Safeguarding advice and awareness-raising is provided to Bank staff in the city. Banks are adept at spotting signs of abuse and have developed professional curiosity to challenge and report financial concerns. The finance and pensions departments within the Council have reported financial concerns, resulting in action being taken to safeguard adults with care and support needs.

Mandatory Training: Safeguarding training is provided in a number of guises; via advice notes, face to face training and online activity; it may be basic or specialist. City of Wolverhampton Council has determined that safeguarding training is mandatory for all officers and members and is reflective of differing roles and responsibilities.

Community Engagement: The council has promoted the creation of a series of Champions across the city who support in a variety of aspects of safeguarding by raising awareness, delivering training, offering advice and contributing to wider partnership activity. These champions come from a different departments and job roles.

