

# CWC Safeguarding Statement

## 1. Introduction



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

Our Corporate Plan (2015–2019) places safeguarding at the heart of Wolverhampton's Stronger Communities focus. To 'support adults and children at times of need' we must:

- Safeguard people in vulnerable situations
- Strengthen families where children are at risk.

The City of Wolverhampton Council believes that, irrespective of individual difference, the residents of Wolverhampton have the right to participate in society and live in an environment which is safe and free from violence, fear, abuse and discrimination, and that they have the right to be protected from harm, exploitation and abuse.

To embed and deliver effective safeguarding the council works in partnership with residents and other agencies in Wolverhampton.

In undertaking its safeguarding responsibilities, the council ensures the needs and interests of children, young people and adults requiring support are considered by all elected members, employees, volunteers and contracted services, when taking decisions in relation to service provision.

This statement reaffirms the City of Wolverhampton Council's legislative responsibilities under the Children Act 2004, the Care Act 2014, the Counter Terrorism Act 2015, the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and supported guidance. Furthermore, it is aligned to the 'Safeguarding Adults, Children and Young People – Guidance notes for Councillors, 2017' and the individual directorate safeguarding policies and procedures which are currently in force.

Specific detail on the safeguarding procedures that staff must follow can be found on the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Board website:  
[www.wolverhamptionsafeguarding.org.uk](http://www.wolverhamptionsafeguarding.org.uk).

## **2. Purpose**

The purpose of this statement is to reinforce the safeguarding message to City of Wolverhampton Council employees, elected members and volunteers and to provide understanding of current and proposed safeguarding activity across the council.

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, elected members and volunteers:

- What is expected from them to protect and safeguard children, young people and adults requiring 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.

## **3. Legal Duties**



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. Section 10, 11 and 13 of the Children Act 2004 specifies what is required of the City of Wolverhampton Council to fulfil its safeguarding duties. This includes:

- Senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare
- A clear statement of the council's responsibilities to children, available to staff
- Clear lines of accountability for work on safeguarding and promoting well being
- Using the views of children and young people to help shape services
- Safer recruitment procedures for those coming into contact with children and young people
- Appropriate training for staff
- A duty to promote inter-agency cooperation between named agencies
- Representation on, and participation in, local safeguarding partnerships
- Effective working relations within the council and with other agencies to safeguard and promote well-being and to share information effectively.

Under the **Care Act 2014** councils must make sure that people who live in their areas:

- receive services that prevent their care needs from becoming more serious, or delay the impact of their needs

- can get the information and advice they need to make good decisions about care and support.

To do this, councils need:

- to work with their communities and provide or arrange services that help to keep people well and independent; including services which are aimed at reducing needs and helping people regain skills, for instance after a spell in hospital
- Promote how people can raise concerns about the safety or wellbeing of someone who has care and support needs
- Provide information and advice in formats that help people to understand, regardless of their needs
- Have a multi-agency Safeguarding Adults Board which oversees the effectiveness of adult safeguarding across the partnership
- Develop a market that delivers a wide range of sustainable high-quality care and support services
- Ensure commissioning processes promote the wellbeing of people receiving those services
- Ensure local providers understand what services are likely to be needed in the future, authorities should engage with local people about their needs and aspirations.

The **Counter-Terrorism Act 2015** states that councils are vital to the Prevent work which exists to reduce the risk of people being drawn into terrorism. Councils must:

- use the existing counter-terrorism local profiles to assess the risk of individuals being drawn into terrorism
- incorporate the Prevent duty into existing policies and procedures to fulfil safeguarding responsibilities ensuring there are clear and robust policies to identify and safeguard children at risk
- Develop a Prevent action plan should there be a risk to identify interventions to be actioned
- Ensure that appropriate frontline staff, including those of it's contractors, have a good understanding of Prevent and are trained to recognise vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism and are aware of available programmes to deal with the issue.

Under the **Modern Slavery Act 2015** the City of Wolverhampton Council has a statutory duty to:

- report and provide notification to the National Crime Agency about any potential victims of modern slavery or trafficking that we encounter
- To co-operate with the National Referral Mechanism



## Safeguarding Statement



The City of Wolverhampton Council is committed to:

- Safeguarding children, young people and adults requiring support from abuse
- Providing services which 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
- Acting in the best interests of the child, young person or adults requiring support
- 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 which 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 staff and Members aware of the potential indicators of abuse and neglect and be clear about what to do if they have concerns
- Providing a range of safeguarding training in order to meet individual needs
- Ensuring contracts reflect safeguarding expectations.

## 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 Social Care and the Safeguarding Service. Whilst these services provide, and promote safeguarding, the council has sought to extend its safeguarding remit and demonstrate its commitment across the departments.

**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 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:** Originally introduced within Children Services, Restorative Practice aims to improve safeguarding service delivery and provide input which is inclusive, transparent supportive and challenging. This approach has been promoted across the safeguarding partnership and is recognised as a positive model 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.





**Mandatory Training:** Safeguarding training is provided in a number of guises; via advice notes, face to face training and online activity; and may be basic or specialist. The City of Wolverhampton 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.

### **Future Initiatives**

#### **Use of visual technology to embed safeguarding messages**

Work has begun to develop a suite of videos ranging from 30 seconds to three minutes, which use a storyline to promote the safeguarding message.

It is expected that the use of short, sharp visual messages will have greater impact than is currently achieved via online training packages which target cerebral ability. Evidence shows that visual images help generate an emotional response; and emotional responses help individuals to change perceptions.

The aim is to ensure that all employees are aware of potential risks, understand possible safeguarding scenarios and to confidently discuss and refer concerns.



### **Training for staff who work in Public Areas**

There are key employees who work across the city during early mornings and late evenings – key times when risky behaviours and criminality against others could go unnoticed. To address this, a bespoke safeguarding training package is to be created and delivered to refuse collectors and maintenance crews which will encourage to ask questions when scenarios arise.

### **Leisure Watch**

Leisurewatch is a registered charity which offers training and advice to public spaces such as leisure centres and shopping malls regarding the identification of and referral of sex offenders in a bid to protect children and adults. The council is rolling out Leisurewatch within the three WV Active sites by January 2019. Learning from this will inform safeguarding awareness raising across all of Wolverhampton's community centres.