

Agenda Item 7

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Ward (s) affected	N/A	Key Decision	No
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Subject	Children Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
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RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to approve the Children Safeguarding Policy and Procedure attached at Appendix A.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) has legal a duty under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, to work together with other statutory and voluntary agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Children are considered as being 0-18 years of age for this purpose.

In response to this MVDC has a Child Protection Policy 2008 (Appendix B), which is in need of updating following the publication of the government's document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013'. In addition the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board recently conducted their bi-annual audit of partners with safeguarding responsibilities and it highlighted MVDC's need to update its policy.

The attached document sets out a new Policy and Procedure for MVDC and has been prepared using the recommended template from the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board. It sets out the legislative and safeguarding framework for MVDC. A Lead Officer for children's safeguarding is identified and procedures are detailed for dealing with incidents, concerns and allegations.

The Policy and Procedure is designed to apply to employees and elected members of MVDC and to give partners and the public confidence that MVDC is a responsible safeguarding authority.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

ACCESS TO SERVICES

The purpose of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure is to protect children and will need to be applied to all MVDC's services where children may be included or affected.

ENVIRONMENT

Maintaining the character and environment of Mole Valley

This priority is not applicable.

VALUE FOR MONEY

Delivering value for money services

Implementation of the Policy will require expenditure on training and awareness raising. This will ensure that employees and elected members act appropriately when working with children, their parents and carers and know how to deal with incidents, concerns and allegations. It is well known from high profile cases that there is significant financial and reputational risk to statutory organisations if they do not have a Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and an informed work force equipped to deal with potential situations involving children.

The Executive has the authority to determine the recommendation.

1.0 BACKGROUND

MVDC has legal a duty to work together with other statutory and voluntary agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Children are considered as being 0-18 years of age for this purpose.

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on:

- local authorities, including district and borough councils that provide children's and other types of services, including children's and adult social care services, public health, housing, sport, culture and leisure services, licensing authorities and youth services; and
- a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The government's document Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013, states that effective safeguarding arrangements in every local area should be underpinned by two key principles:

- safeguarding is **everyone's responsibility**: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part; and
- a **child-centred approach**: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

In response to this Mole Valley District Council (MVDC) has in place a Child Protection Policy 2008 (Appendix B), that is in need of updating following the publication of the Working Together document 2013. In addition Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) recently conducted their bi-annual audit of partners with safeguarding responsibilities and it highlighted the MVDC's need to update its policy. The new policy and procedure attached at Appendix A replaces the existing Child Protection Policy 2008, which is attached at Appendix B for comparison. The new policy is fundamentally different to Appendix B and is why a tracked change copy has not been provided. It has been prepared using the recommended template from the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board.

The new Children's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure 2014, is significantly changed from the previous Child Protection Policy 2008, in a number of aspects.

- The expectations from the Working Together 2013 guidance places increased responsibility on all agencies, including districts and boroughs, to share information and communicate children's safeguarding concerns.
- The Children Safeguarding Policy and Procedure 2014, establishes MVDC's links with and responsibilities towards the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board and reference to its procedures and reporting requirements.
- The Policy updates MVDC's responsibilities in relation to Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), checks which have superseded Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks for employees and volunteers.
- MVDC's procurement process is clarified and relevant contractors are expected to have a safeguarding policy that includes recruitment process, staff training arrangements, reporting procedure for incidents, regular updating and risk assessment.
- The new Policy and Procedure also updates the good practice guidelines for working with children and in receiving and reporting concerns about children's safeguarding.

It also sets out the legislation and safeguarding framework for MVDC. A Lead Officer for Children's safeguarding is identified and procedures are detailed for dealing with concerns and allegations. The Policy is designed to apply to employees and elected members of MVDC and to give partners and the public confidence that MVDC is a responsible safeguarding authority.

The Surrey Safeguarding Children Board detailed Procedures Manual is referred up to in the new Policy and all partners are required to use this Manual to ensure consistency. MVDC's relevant local policies are referred across to in the Policy and footnotes that refer to these policies are referenced in the document. Some of these policies are on MVDC's public website and others are on the intranet. The Safeguarding Lead Officer will provide copies of local policies on the intranet to elected members as required. Appendices in the document provide forms that may need to be used and provide further procedural information. The appendices appear in numerical ascending order, however,

some are referred to more than once throughout the document for ease of reference and for this reason later in the document may appear to be out of sequence.

The Surrey Safeguarding Children Board was established in 2006, as a statutory requirement on upper tier and unitary authorities to ensure the co-ordination of a number of key organisations activities related to children's safeguarding. It seeks to ensure that these agencies safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the services they deliver and provides strategic oversight. It also plays an advisory, monitoring and training role for partner agencies.

Having a robust policy and procedure in place including up to date best practice from the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board and ensuring that the professional practices are embedded across employees and elected members is essential to minimising the risk of harm and abuse towards children accessing MVDC's services.

MVDC's services which carry more risks in relation to safeguarding include housing services, human resources, leisure services including parks and partnership activities of working with Mole Valley Youth Council and Junior Youth Council. Officers who visit people in their homes across MVDC, as well as those officers who work within the communities of MVDC all need to be aware of how to identify concerns and how to report them. The audit that was recently carried out for the Safeguarding Board identified the need for MVDC to update its safeguarding training for employees and elected members. The training plan in Appendix 3 of the Policy and Procedure reflects this and will be rolled out once approved. The frequency of training is in keeping with the SSCB recommendations.

The Policy and Procedure also applies to members of Council. Training for members is detailed in Appendix 3 of the new policy and will also be rolled out once approved.

Fortunately MVDC has not been involved in any recent Serious Case Reviews that look into a serious incident involving a child, so whilst there is no local learning it is possible to learn from other Surrey reviews that are published by Surrey County Council. It is the housing service that has the greatest contact with the County's Children's Services and it is embedded in their day to day work that safeguarding concerns are reported through either the Early Help or Child Protection process. Housing staff are regularly invited and attend core group and team around the family meetings and child protection conferences. They currently receive training in accordance with the training schedule attached at Appendix 3 of the Policy and Procedure.

Financial Implications

Implementation of the Policy will require ongoing training for staff and members and this expenditure will be met from existing budgets.

Legal Implications

MVDC has a legal duty under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to work together with other statutory and voluntary agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The attached Policy and Procedure sets out MVDC's approach and processes for safeguarding children.

2.0 OPTIONS

There are three options the Executive are asked to consider.

Option 1

Approve the attached Children Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

Option 2

Do not approve the attached Children Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and ask for further work to be undertaken.

Option 3

Do not approve the attached Children Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.

3.0 CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Monitoring Officer Commentary

The Monitoring Officer is satisfied that all relevant legal implications have been taken into account.

S151 Officer Commentary

The s151 Officer confirms that all relevant financial risks and implications have been taken into account.

Risk Implications

MVDC has a legal duty to have an up to date Children's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure that staff and members are aware of. Its purpose is to protect and safeguard children and there is a significant reputational and financial risk if MVDC has not put in place a Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.

Each Business Unit Manager is responsible for risk assessments of their services. This includes assessment of safeguarding risks and ensuring that mitigations are in place to control those risks such as appropriate training of employees.

Equalities Implications

The Policy and Procedure reflects the principles of MVDC's Equality Strategy and provides guidance for dealing with children and incidents where there are specific circumstances, for example forced marriage or young carers. The Equality Impact Assessment for the Policy and Procedure is attached at Appendix D.

Employment Issues

The Policy and Procedure sets out MVDC's approach to safe recruitment and dealing with disclosures and allegations about staff in order to protect and safeguard children.

Training will be rolled out to staff and members in accordance with the training schedule attached to the Policy and Procedure in Appendix 3, during the New Year.

Sustainability Issues

There are no sustainability implications to this report

Consultation

Surrey Safeguarding Children Board has been consulted and is satisfied overall with the Policy and Procedure. The Board has recently submitted further comments on sections of their template these are section 8.0 Good Practice for Working with Children and section 13 Managing Allegations Against Staff, Carers and Volunteers. These changes have been made and are also shown in the tracked change version at Appendix C.

MVDC's Scrutiny Committee was consulted on 4 November and their comments have been incorporated into Appendix A and these are highlighted in the tracked change copy at Appendix C. The Wellbeing Working Group has also considered this report and all attached documents.

Communications

The Policy and Procedure will be placed on the MVDC's website and intranets for employees and elected members. Training will be rolled out to staff and members in accordance with the training schedule attached to the Policy and Procedure in Appendix 3, during the New Year.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Policy template provided by Surrey Safeguarding Children Board and documents contained on their website.

Children Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

November 2014

DRAFT



This policy and procedures are for you if you are a Mole Valley District Council employee, an elected member, a volunteer or anyone working on behalf of, delivering a service for, or representing the Council.

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1.0 Introduction

Mole Valley District Council has legal a duty to work together with other statutory and voluntary agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. For the purposes of this document children should be considered as being 0-18 years of age.

The Policy and Procedure is for the employees, members and volunteers of the Council. The Council has safeguarding expectations of services that it has procured from contractors and these are set out in section 7.0 below.

In 2008 the Council approved a Child Protection Policy and this Policy and Procedure replaces it.

2.0 What does 'Safeguarding' Mean?

Every child and young person has the right not to be abused. The government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013, defines safeguarding children and promoting their welfare as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

To achieve this, children need to be loved and valued and be supported by a network of reliable and affectionate relationships. If children are denied this, they are at an increased risk of an impoverished childhood, but also at an increased risk of disadvantage and social exclusion in adulthood. Abuse and neglect pose particular problems. Further information can be found on neglect, abuse and the categories of significant harm at Appendix 1.

Effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by putting children at the centre of the system, and by every individual and agency playing their full part, working together to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children.

Effective safeguarding arrangements in every local area should be underpinned by two key principles:

- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part; and
- a child-centred approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

3.0 Legislative Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with the following legislation and procedures:

- **Children Act 2004**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013**

The legal obligations concerning children are underpinned by Section 11 of the Children Act 2004.

It is a statutory duty under the Children Act 2004, for each local authority to have a safeguarding board. In Surrey this sits with the County Council as an advisory and monitoring board with an independent chair. The Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) was established as a statutory board under Section 13 of the Children Act 2004 in April 2006. The SSCB provides a strategic framework for partner agencies in order to maintain a focus on their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of all children and young people.

Section 14 of the Children Act sets out the objectives of the Board to co-ordinate and ensure the effectiveness of each person's or organisation's activities that are represented on the Board. It is also to ensure the effectiveness of what the member organisations do individually and together by developing interagency policies and procedures including:

- training of those working with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children; and
- investigation of allegations concerning persons working with children.

It is very important that local safeguarding arrangements are strongly led and promoted at a local level, specifically by:

- a strong lead from local authority members, and the commitment of chief officers in all agencies; and
- effective local coordination and challenge by the four local area SSCBs and the umbrella SSCB.

All district and borough councils in Surrey are partner agencies on the SSCB along with other statutory and voluntary agencies. The district and borough councils have a nominated representative made by the Surrey Chief Executives Group on the SSCB. There are four local SSCBs and the Mole Valley Lead Officer for Safeguarding (their role is described below in section 4.4) attends the local South East Surrey Safeguarding Children Board.

4.0 The Role of Districts and Boroughs

District and borough councils have a crucial role to play in the safeguarding of children in their areas. The relevant legislation and guidance is detailed below.

4.1 Section 11 of the Children Act 2004

The Act places a duty on:

- local authorities, including district and borough councils that provide children's and other types of services, including children's and adult social care services, public health, housing, sport, culture and leisure services, licensing authorities and youth services; and
- a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others are discharged having regard to the need to safeguarding and promote the welfare of children.

4.2 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013

This statutory guidance states that effective safeguarding arrangements in every local area should be underpinned by two key principles:

- safeguarding is **everyone's responsibility**: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part; and
- a **child-centred approach**: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

4.3 The SSCB Procedures Manual

The SSCB Procedures Manual is comprehensive and this Policy and Procedure document refers up to the SSCB manual from time to time for more detailed information and guidance.

The manual specifically refers to the duties of:

- housing authorities to share information that is relevant to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children; and
- leisure services departments and leisure contractors to ensure that their leisure facilities safeguard children and that all casual and temporary members of staff are aware of safeguarding children issues and know how to report concerns.

The manual can be found on the SSCB website¹.

¹ <http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/>

This Policy and Procedure also refers across from time to time to the Council's own local policies. Most of the local policies are internal documents for the purpose of assisting employees and are only published on the Council's intranet. These documents are available for elected members from the Lead Children's Safeguarding Officer. The appendices in this document provide forms and useful procedural information. They appear in the document in numerical ascending order. Some appendices are referred to more than once later in the document, which is why it might appear that they are out of numerical sequence.

4.4 Mole Valley District Council Lead Officer for Safeguarding

The Council's Lead Officer for Children's Safeguarding is a Corporate Head of Service and the Executive Member for Wellbeing is the lead elected member. The lead officer role is to ensure that:

- this Council has a Children's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure that is regularly reviewed and updated;
- employees, members and volunteers of the Council are aware of the Policy and Procedures, which are easily accessible on the Council's website and intranet;
- employees, members and volunteers receive the appropriate level of training for their role;
- employees and volunteers are recruited in accordance with this policy;
- employees, members and volunteers are aware of how to seek advice on concerns and how to report concerns;
- the Council deals with allegations in accordance with this Policy and Procedure and the SSCB Procedures Manual;
- when services are procured from contractors the Council's specification sets out its expectations for safeguarding (see section 7.0 below);
- inter-agency issues are resolved;
- they attend the local South East SSCB and links with the umbrella SSCB are maintained.

Contact details for the Council's Safeguarding Lead Officer and designated staff to deputise as the lead in their absence can be found in Appendix 2.

5.0 Policy Statement

Mole Valley District Council accepts the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures, to provide a duty of care for children, safeguard their well being and protect them from abuse when they are engaged in services organised and provided by the Council. We aim to do this by:

- respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and feelings of children and young people;
- raising the awareness of the duty of care responsibilities relating to children and young people throughout the Council;
- promoting and implementing appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children and young people to protect them from harm;
- ensuring all staff receive safeguarding training at a relevant level, as advised by the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB)²;
- creating a safe and healthy environment within all our services, avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur;
- recruiting, training, supporting and supervising staff, elected members and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children and young people from abuse, and minimise risk to themselves;
- ensuring that relevant commissioned services are compliant with safeguarding expectations as set out by the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB);
- responding to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children or young people in line with this Policy and Procedure and SSCB guidance as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures;
- requiring staff, elected members, volunteers and contracted services to adopt and abide by the this Council's Children's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure; and
- reviewing and evaluating this Policy and Procedure document on an annual basis.

6.0 Recruitment and Training of Staff who will Work with Children

It is important that recruitment procedures are thorough in order to ensure **that employees and volunteers who will be working with children** are suitable and do not pose a risk to children. Recruitment paperwork should refer to the need to be committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

The Council will follow recruitment procedures that are in accordance with the national Baseline Personnel Selection Standard, this includes the request of references with accurate dates of employment.

² <http://new.surreycc.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/childrens-social-care/information-for-child-social-care-professionals/surrey-safeguarding-children-board>

The Council will seek references that request information on disciplinary action, known convictions and other grounds for disquiet and information regarding current investigations or disciplinary action in relation to allegations of a child protection nature.

6.1 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

DBS checks are sought when employees will be working regularly and unsupervised with children. This Council can only request a DBS check if the position is designated as a regulated activity and meets the frequency criteria, which is detailed in this Council's DBS policy. DBS checks will indicate any spent and unspent convictions, cautions, formal reprimands and final warnings and will contain non-conviction information from local police records, which may be relevant to the position sought. Minor offences will no longer be included in DBS checks.

If a DBS check reveals that a person who has applied for or is employed in a position designated as a regulated activity is prohibited from work with children, it is an offence to employ them and this Council must inform the SSCB and the police of their attempt to seek employment³.

6.2 Training

All new employees and members will be provided with induction training, which includes safeguarding information and good practice guidelines for working with children, awareness of the Council's safeguarding policy and procedures, how to seek advice, refer concerns and handle disclosures.

Once every three years the Council's existing staff and members will receive awareness training of the Council's safeguarding policy and procedures, how to seek advice, refer concerns and handle disclosures.

Staff who may have regular contact (eg through home visits), or have a period of intense, but irregular contact, with children and/or their parents/carers, who may be in a position to identify concerns about maltreatment will attend half day training once every three years.

Staff working with children will receive further training in child protection and information regarding procedures relating to safeguarding, once every three years.

Those who may be required to attend child protection conferences such as housing or safeguarding officers, will be required to undertake further training provided by the SSCB once every three years.

Line managers will need to consult with the Council's Lead Officer for Safeguarding to ensure an appropriate level of safeguarding training is provided for volunteers, who may be recruited from time to time to work with children.

³ <http://molly/index.cfm?articleid=16606>

Appropriate safeguarding children courses will be provided through e-learning, the Surrey Training Officers Group and the SSCB's multi-agency training programme in line with its published strategy.

The training requirements for the Council's employees, members and volunteers are detailed in Appendix 3.

When we commission services we will expect the contracted service provider to have in place an appropriate safeguarding policy and procedure that details the training arrangements and frequency for their staff.

7.0 Procurement of Commissioned Services

When the Council commissions services it will require the contracted service provider to have in place an appropriate safeguarding policy and procedure that details their recruitment process, training arrangements, reporting procedure for incidents, regular updating, and risk assessment.

The Council will ensure when commissioning services that they are compliant with safeguarding expectations, as set out in this Policy and Procedure and by the SSCB.

8.0 Good Practice for Working with Children

It is important to follow the good practice outlined below, when working with children.

- Adults must not behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children, or act as a role model.
- Adults must not work on their own with children. If a situation occurs when this arises, due to sickness or an emergency, always inform colleagues or parents/carers to ensure that someone can be present or nearby.
- It is inappropriate to offer lifts to a child or young person. There may be occasions where the child or young person requires transport in an emergency situation or where not to do so may place a child at risk. If circumstances permit, the parent/carer or line manager must be informed before the lift is provided and wherever possible two people should accompany the young person. The event must always be recorded and reported to a senior manager and parents/carers.

Students, who are under 18, and are on a work placement with the Council, should be accompanied by two members of staff when given lifts for outside visits.

- Physical contact is discouraged and must only take place when it is absolutely necessary and in a safe and open environment i.e. one easily observed by others.
- Always report any accidents/incidents or situations where a child becomes distressed or angry to a senior colleague.

Photography should not cause a problem providing that reasonable steps are taken to follow safe practice guidelines. Photographs must not be taken without permission of the children and their parent if they are under 18. Photographs of children with their family, class or club, are generally a source of pleasure and pride, which can enhance the self-esteem of children. Personal phones, cameras or other recording devices must not be used. Policies should be in place to cover the safe storage of photographs. In no circumstances can photographs be published without prior written consent.

Staff must remain sensitive to any children who appear uncomfortable or feel threatened by photography and must recognise the potential for misinterpretation.

A photograph consent form can be found in Appendix 4. Parents retain the right to withdraw consent at any stage but they need to do so in writing. Specific consent should be sought in advance for use of a photograph in a planned publication that should detail when and for how long the photograph will be displayed.

- Staff must always be aware of E-safety and maintain professional boundaries when communicating with children and young people. Employees, members and volunteers should not telephone, text or use social networking sites to communicate with children. The Council's Information Technology Security Policy must be observed and can be found at the intranet link below⁴.

8.1 Employees Aged 16 and 17 Years Old and Work Placement Students who are under 18

The good practice described above on working with children must be applied by Council employees when their colleagues are aged 16 and 17 or are work placement students who are under 18.

Regard must also be given to Young People at Work Procedure in the Council's Health and Safety Manual - General Workplace Safety 14⁵.

9.0 Information Sharing

Information sharing between agencies is vital to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Early sharing of information is the key to providing effective early help where there are emerging problems. A key factor in many serious case reviews regarding children who have been harmed has been the

⁴ http://molly/media/pdf/t/n/IT_Security_Policy_Nov_2013_-_V4.1.pdf

⁵ <http://molly/index.cfm?articleid=17143>

failure to record information, to share it, to understand the significance of the information shared and to take appropriate action in relation to known or suspected abuse or neglect. Often it is only when information from a number of sources has been shared that it becomes clear that a child is at risk of, or is suffering, harm.

To enable information sharing the Council is signed up to the Surrey Multi-Agency Information Sharing Protocol⁶.

Professionals who work with, or have contact with children, parents or adults should always share information with Surrey's Children's Services where they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child may be suffering or may be at risk of suffering significant harm. The Seven Golden Rules for Information Sharing in section three of the SSCB Procedures Manual provides detailed guidance and can be found at Appendix 5.⁷

If there is any doubt about sharing information cases should be discussed in confidence the Council's Lead Officer for Safeguarding or a designated safeguarding officer at the Council. In their absence the case should be discussed with the Surrey Children's Services South East Referral Assessment and Intervention Service (0300 123 1620).

10.0 Reporting and Managing Incidents and Concerns

It is the duty of officers, members, volunteers and commissioned services of Mole Valley District Council to **report** any incidents and concerns relating to safeguarding or welfare of a child or family. The process on how to respond to concerns and incidents is detailed below.

It is **not** the duty of officers, members, volunteers and commissioned services of Mole Valley District Council to **investigate** suspicions or concerns, other agencies are trained to do this.

If there is a concern about the safety or welfare of a child or young person it is imperative that:

- these concerns and the reasons for them are noted using the incident report form at Appendix 6;
- you speak to your line manager;

⁶ <http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/surrey-children-and-young-peoples-partnership/information-sharing-for-professionals/information-sharing-protocol-for-multi-agency-staff>

⁷ http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_info_sharing.html#seven_rules_of_Information_Sharing.

- you report your concern or incident to the Council's Lead Officer for Children's Safeguarding, their contact details can be found at Appendix 2; and
- ensure confidentiality is maintained.

Do not undertake further investigations.

When there are ongoing concerns regarding a parent or carer in relation to the alleged abuse of a child or young person, the parent or carer should not be contacted about the allegation of abuse. Surrey County Council's Children's Services and/or the Police will do this at an appropriate time. The referral process to Children's Services is described below and in the flow chart at Appendix 7.

Do not delay when reporting concerns as a child's welfare or safety may be imminently at risk.

11.0 Referrals to Surrey County Council's Children's Services

It is important that employees make a referral to Children's Services if it is believed or suspected that:

- a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm - see the categories of significant harm at Appendix 1;
- a child's health or development may be impaired without the provision of services; or
- with the agreement of the person with parental responsibility, a child would be likely to benefit from family support services.

Referrals regarding significant harm should be made as follows:

- By calling 0300 123 1620 and speaking to the local Children's Services', South East Referral Assessment and Intervention Service. The conversation should be followed up in writing/email as appropriate within 48 hours, using the Multi Agency Referral Form attached at Appendix 8⁸.
- As with all emails including personal details, it is crucial that the information is sent from one secure email account to another. The Council provides employees with secure email accounts known as GCSX and colleagues at SCC have the same type of accounts. Employees who do not have a GCSX account should speak to their line manager and the IT Team. Elected members should contact the Lead Officer for Children's Safeguarding if they need to send a secure email.

⁸ http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/client_supplied/multi_agency_referral_form.doc.

- Receipt of a referral to the County's South East Area Team will be acknowledged within 24 hours.
- In an emergency outside office hours, contact the Emergency Duty Team on 01483 517898 or the Police.
- The Council's Lead Officer for Children's Safeguarding should be kept informed during the process and be given all the documentation to keep in a secure place.

The full referral process is detailed in the flow chart at Appendix 8.

12.0 Identifying Children and Families who would Benefit from Early Help

Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 requires each local authority to make arrangements to promote co-operation between the authority, each of the authorities' relevant partners and such other persons or bodies working with children in the local authority's area.

If there is a concern about a child, but the child is **not** at risk of significant harm, it can be dealt with by Children's Services using the Early Help Assessment process. Most enquiries about children's welfare relate to concerns regarding children with additional needs. These needs may require a multi-agency response. The Early Help Assessment will help to clarify the child's specific needs and in collaboration with parents, ensure appropriate actions including the identification of a lead professional to continue to assist the family if necessary.

The procedures for an Early Help Referral and Assessment can be found on the SSCB Procedures Manual website. To make a referral parental/carer consent is needed. To discuss a possible referral call 0300 123 1620 and speak to the local Children Services - South East Referral Assessment and Intervention Service⁹.

13.0 Managing Allegations Against Staff, Carers and Volunteers

An investigation by an appropriate body is required if there is an allegation or concern that any person who works with children, whether in their employment or as a voluntary activity, has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

⁹ http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/g_safeg_levels_need.html

Whilst some behaviours may not constitute a criminal offence, consideration will need to be given as to whether they may indicate unsuitability to work with children. These include concerns relating to inappropriate relationships between members of staff and children such as:

- having a sexual relationship with a child under 18 in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if consensual;
- 'grooming' i.e. meeting a child under 16 with intent to commit a relevant offence;
- other 'grooming' behaviour giving rise to concerns of a broader child protection nature eg inappropriate text/email messages or images, gifts, socialising etc.; and/or
- possession of indecent photographs/pseudo-photographs of children.

An allegation against a member of staff, volunteer or elected member may arise from a number of sources e.g. a report from a child, a concern raised by another adult in the organisation, or a complaint by a parent or carer.

The person to whom an allegation or concern is first reported should treat the matter seriously and keep an open mind.

They should

- make a written record of the information (where possible in the child/adult's own words), including the time, date and place of incident(s), persons present and what was said; using the form at Appendix 6.
- sign and date the written record;
- immediately report the matter to the Council's Lead Safeguarding Officer whose contact details can be found at Appendix 2 who will then make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

When informed of a concern or allegation, the Lead Safeguarding Officer should not investigate the matter or interview the member of staff, child concerned or potential witnesses. They should:

- obtain written details of the concern/allegation, signed and dated by the person receiving (not the child/adult making the allegation);
- countersign and date the written details;
- record any information about times, dates and location of incident(s) and names of any potential witnesses; and
- record discussions about the child and/or member of staff, any decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions.

The Council's Lead Officer should contact the County's Local Authority Designated Officer (0300 200 1006) within one working day of the allegation coming to their attention.

Further information can be found in the SSCB Procedures Manual¹⁰.

If the Council decides to remove an individual (paid worker, unpaid volunteer) from work (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children, the Council's Lead Officer undertake a risk assessment and make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service. It is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason.

Where an allegation has been received about an elected member the Lead Officer for Children's Safeguarding will refer the matter to the Chief Executive and Corporate Head for Democratic Services for consideration by the Standards Committee.

They should not:

- investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification;
- make assumptions or offer alternative explanations; and/or
- promise confidentiality, but give assurance that the information will only be shared on a 'need to know' basis.

14.0 Serious Case Reviews

Serious Case Reviews are undertaken by the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board where there is a serious incident involving a child. If this occurred in the district MVDC would be asked to participate and would co-operate fully.

15.0 Equality and Diversity

This Policy and Procedure will be implemented in accordance with the principles of the Council's Equality Strategy 2013-2018¹¹.

It may be necessary to consult the SSCB Procedures Manual on Procedures for Specific Circumstances where there is a child and or incident presenting special circumstances, for example forced marriage or young carers¹².

16.0 Whistle Blowing

¹¹ <http://www.molevalley.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=9693>

¹² http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/contents.html#specific_circumstances

The Council has in place a Whistle blowing Policy to ensure serious concerns are reported, investigated and dealt with. The policy sets out how to raise serious concerns. It also clarifies the legal protection under the Public Interest Disclosure Act against reprisals¹³.

If a member of staff believes that a reported allegation or safeguarding concern is not being dealt with appropriately by the Council they can contact the designated officers detailed in the policy. If they are not satisfied with any action taken internally and they would prefer to take the matter outside the Council they can approach the SSCB. There are also a number of external organisations listed in the policy that can be contacted, for example Public Concern at Work¹⁴, which is a whistle blowing charity.

17.0 Monitoring, Review and Risk Assessment

The Council's Lead Officer for Safeguarding Children is responsible for monitoring and reviewing this Policy and Procedure. It will also be monitored and reviewed from time to time by the Senior Management Team and Scrutiny Committee. The Council will participate in the audit undertaken by the SSCB of the Council's safeguarding activities, as required.

Each Business Unit Manager is responsible for risk assessments of their services. This includes assessment of safeguarding risks and ensuring that mitigations that are place to control those risks such as appropriate training of employees.

¹³ <http://molly/index.cfm?articleid=10781>

¹⁴ <http://www.pcaw.org.uk/>

Appendix 1

Categories of Significant Harm

Physical abuse

This is a form of significant harm which may include 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 or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

The following are often regarded as indications of concern:

- an explanation which is inconsistent with an injury;
- several different explanations provided for an injury;
- unexplained delay in seeking treatment;
- the parents/carers are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury; and/or
- reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is a form of significant harm which involves the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or not valued. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may also feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capabilities, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Staff should also be aware and report concerns relating to Domestic Abuse. The definition of Domestic Abuse was changed by Government in September 2012, and is now defined as:

- any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family member regardless of gender or sexuality.

This can encompass, but is not limited to the following types of abuse:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is a form of significant harm which involves forcing or enticing a child or young person 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 or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in a 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.

Staff should also be aware of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) as an emerging, high priority concern. CSE is defined as:

“involving exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive ‘something’ (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of their performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. It can occur through the use of technology without the child’s immediate recognition; e.g. being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child’s limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.”

Sexual exploitation can have a serious long term impact upon every aspect of a child or young person’s life, health and education. It also damages the lives of families and carers and can lead to families breaking up.

It is a multi-agency responsibility of partner agencies to identify those children and young people at risk of exploitation, to protect them and safeguard them from further risk of harm and to prevent children from becoming victims of this form of abuse.

Neglect

Neglect is a form of significant harm which involves 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 involve a parent or carer 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;
- be unresponsive a child's basic emotional needs.

DRAFT

Appendix 2

Safeguarding Lead Officer Details

Safeguarding Lead Officer

Rachel O'Reilly Corporate Head of Service

rachel.o'reilly@molevalley.gov.uk 01306 879 358 07917 328895

Designated Safeguarding Officers

Alison Wilks Strategic Housing Manager

alison.wilks@molevalley.gov.uk 01306 870 645 07774 821 420

Kirsty Jones Housing Options Manager

kirsty.jones@molevalley.gov.uk 01306 879 210 07769 651 914

Surrey County Council's Lead Designated Officer

0300 200 1006 select option 4 for safeguarding then option 3

Appendix 3 Training Schedule

Training and Awareness	Provider	Participant
<p>Induction</p>	<p>E-Learning module</p> <p>A senior manager at remote sites (these managers to receive training).</p> <p>Lead Safeguarding Officer for new member induction training</p>	<p>All new employees and members</p>
<p>Awareness training once every three years on safeguarding information and good practice guidelines for working with children, awareness of the Council's safeguarding policy and procedures, how to seek advice, refer concerns and handle disclosures.</p>	<p>Lead Safeguarding Officer or alternative appropriate training provider</p>	<p>All staff and members</p>
<p>Half day Safeguarding Children Training</p> <p>To be refreshed once every three years</p>	<p>Surrey Training Officers Group or alternative appropriate training provider</p>	<p>Employees who come into contact on a regular basis with children, and adults who are parents or carers (eg home visits), who may be in a position to identify concerns about maltreatment.</p>
<p>Modules 1, 2 and 3</p> <p>Specialist SSCB courses as required</p> <p>To be refreshed once every three years</p>	<p>Surrey Safeguarding Board</p>	<p>Employees working with children, housing officers and designated safeguarding children officers.</p>
<p>Modules 1, 2 and 3</p> <p>Specialist SSCB courses as required, including supervision for managers</p> <p>To be refreshed once every three years</p>	<p>Surrey Safeguarding Board</p>	<p>Housing officers that attend child protection conferences and designated safeguarding children officers.</p>

Appendix 4

Photograph Consent Form

Name of Child/Young Person

.....

Name of Event or Activity

.....

I give my consent for my child's photograph(s) and name to be used by Mole Valley District Council

- Mole Valley District Council's website

From date.....To date.....

- Name of publication/leaflet.....

From date.....To date.....

Name of Parent/Carer

.....

Signed

.....

Date

.....

Address

.....

.....

.....

Telephone Number

.....

.....

Appendix 5

The Seven Golden Rules for Information Sharing

The HM Government guidance **Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers** 2008, provides seven golden rules for Information Sharing;

- Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately;
- Be open and honest with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so;
- Seek advice if you are in any doubt without disclosing the identity of the person where possible;
- Share with consent where appropriate and where possible respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case;
- Consider safety and well being: Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well being of the person and others who may be affected by their actions;
- Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure: Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, it is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up to date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely;
- Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it - whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

Appendix 6

Children's Safeguarding Incident Report Form

Please use this form to report children safeguarding incidents and concerns.

Full description of concern/incident and location.

Date.....Time.....

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Action taken

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Completed By

Signed.....

Name.....

Job title

Date.....

Countersigned by the Children's Safeguarding Lead Officer

Signed.....

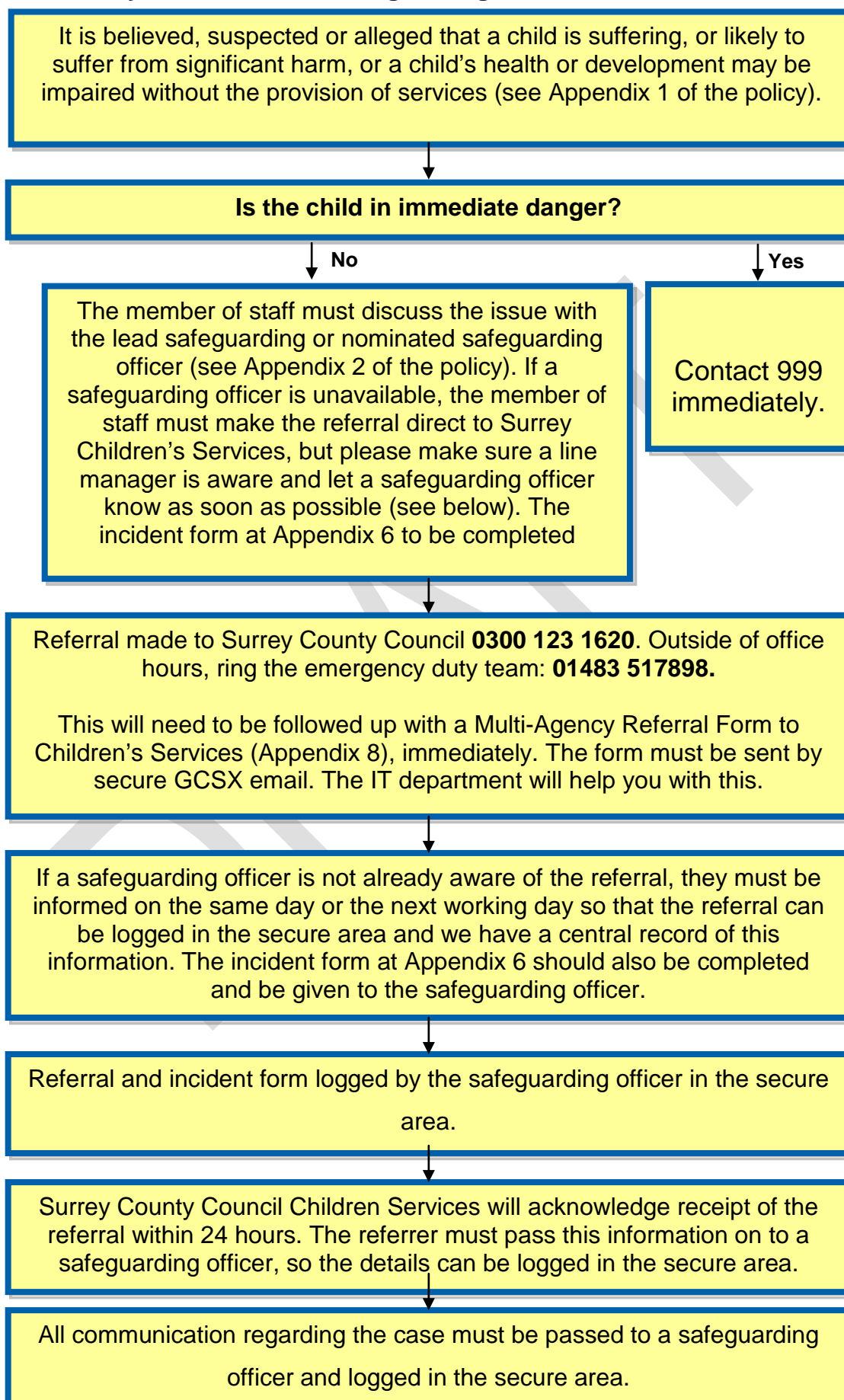
Name.....

Job title

Date.....

Appendix 7

Mole Valley District Council Safeguarding Children Referral Process



Referral Completed by: (details of person taking the referral)						
Name of referrer:			Job title:		Agency:	
Address:			Email:		Telephone:	
Date of Referral:		Time of referral:		Date and time MARF form completed:		

1. CHILD/YOUNG PERSON DETAILS/SIBLING DETAILS						
Last Name	First Name	Age/DOB/EDD	M/F	Ethnicity/Language	Religion	Address and telephone number

2. HOUSEHOLD DETAILS (including extended family)						
Last Name	First Name	Age/DOB/EDD	M/F	Ethnicity/Language	Relationship to child	Address and telephone number

Give details of principal carers and those with Parental Responsibility (if their address is different from the child):						
Last Name	First Name	Age/DOB/EDD	M/F	Ethnicity/Language	Relationship to child	Address and telephone number

Are there any communication/interpreting needs for the child and/or family?	Does the child and/or family have a disability or special needs?
---	--

3. Other professionals involved (to include GP, school and details of any voluntary agencies involved)			
Name	Job Title	Address	Telephone/email

4. Reason for Referral	
What was the date and time of presentation? If NO, please give details of where the child was at the time of referral and who they were with:	Was the child/young person present? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

Why are you worried about this child/these children?	
What has happened? What are these concerns based on? Why is Children's Services involvement needed now?	
What are the known views of parents/child?	
5 . Previous involvement	
Has an Early Help Assessment been completed?	
<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes , please attach
If No, please say why not:	
What services have already been offered by your agency and/or other agencies and what were the outcomes?	
Are you aware of any previous social work involvement with this family? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
If YES, please give details, including approximate dates:	
6. Consent (Please note that parents/carers have to consent to this referral unless obtaining this consent will place the child at further risk of harm)	
Have parents/carers(s) given consent for this referral? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Has the child given consent for this referral? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If consent has not been obtained, please give reason.	
7 . Are there any issues we should be aware of when contacting parents/carers?	

APPENDIX B

Child Protection Policy

2008

SECTION A

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document sets out the District Council's policy on protecting children and young people. It is necessary to achieve the highest standards of service delivery in our work with children and young people aged 0-18years. This Policy covers all employees (NB employees includes councillors) who come into contact with children and young people while carrying out their duties regardless of where those duties are carried out. The Council will need to assess against set criteria whether a member of staff should be subject to a Criminals Record Bureau Standard (CRB) check, an enhanced CRB check, whether they should be offered specific child protection training or whether it is sufficient to make them aware of the content and implications of the policy. By adopting this Policy the Council have committed to regulate certain practices including recruitment, selection and training.

2. WHY A POLICY?

2.1 This policy has been produced to provide a framework for employees who come into contact with children and young people whilst carrying out their duties in recognition of the fact that such staff have a duty to protect and promote their welfare.

2.2 Every week hundreds of thousands of children and young people happily and safely take part in a wide variety of activities through the care of dedicated people. However, there is a growing recognition that the actions of some individuals can be harmful to children and young people. To ensure that this good practice continues in a safe environment, organisers, coaches, parents and children should be aware of child protection issues.

3. THE AIM OF THE POLICY

3.1 It is the aim of this policy to put in place set procedures and to offer guidance for all those working to protect children and young people. This policy highlights key issues and provides recommended actions. Those key issues include recruitment policies for those working with children and young people,

their induction and training, how to respond to suspicions or allegations of abuse and effective communication of this policy and its aims.

- 3.2 These procedures are designed to provide a framework for good practice and to promote commitment to the task of protecting children. It is recognised that no set of procedures can cover every possible eventuality or alter the ultimate personal and professional responsibility of those in direct contact with children and families. No set of procedures can be substituted for good professional practice.

4. PROMOTING GOOD PRACTICE IN MOLE VALLEY

- 4.1 All children and young people have the right to be safe and to be treated with dignity and respect. The following key issues and recommendations are important procedures in order to promote good practice and to help safeguard children, young people, staff, volunteers and the organisation concerned.

Recruitment and Employment

- 4.2 Anyone may have the potential to abuse children or young people in some way and it is important that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and young people. To ensure that a standard approach is adopted with regard to recruitment and employment of paid and voluntary staff, who will or may come into contact in the course of their duties with children and young people it is imperative that a number of specific procedures are undertaken to assist in the protection of children and young people.

Procedures for recruitment and employment:

- Write relevant job descriptions and person specifications and issue along with an application form.
- All staff/volunteers should complete an application form.
- All staff/volunteers should be interviewed and if relevant within the interview child protection awareness will be discussed.
- Request and check qualifications and details of competence.
- References will be sought including if possible at least one which involves working with children and young people.

- In order to promote good practice and help to safeguard children, young people, staff and volunteers and all adults working directly with children or young people will undergo checks through the Criminal Records Bureau. The following checklist will be applied:
 - (a) Does the post require the member of staff to have 1:1 contact with children and young people.
 - (b) Does the post require the member of staff to work with organised groups of young people, (eg Youth Council) and visit schools or frequently bring them into contact with children and young people eg leisure centre staff, entertainment staff.
 - (c) Is the post covered by Ofsted requirements?

If (a), (b) or (c) above apply then the minimum standard should be a standard CRB clearance, child protection training and the requirement to sign to confirm that they have read the Council's Child protection Policy.

- (d) Does the post or contract bring staff into contact with young people on an adhoc basis, eg parks staff.

If the post complies with (d) then the minimum standard is for the post holder to attend child protection training.

- (e) Does the post come into contact with young people, eg work experience students, on an adhoc basis where the contact is limited, in a populated environment and infrequent.

If the post complies with (e) then the minimum standard should be that the post holder is aware of and has access to the Council's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

- Staff/volunteers will have renewal of CRB check every three years.

Training and Education

- 4.3 The provision of quality training and information is an essential process in raising awareness and addressing child protection issues for the education of staff and volunteers so they are aware and sensitive to potential situations.

- New staff should attend an appropriate induction programme to familiarise them with their role and that of the organisation/department in general and with specific reference to child protection issues.
- Provide and promote an ongoing programme of Child Protection training opportunities.
- All Council staff are kept updated on current information and policies regarding Child Protection.
- All staff will be given a copy of the Child Protection Policy or advised to access it via the Intranet.
- Children and young people should not be photographed unless their parent/carer have given written permission with the sole exception of photographs being taken for official Identification Cards.

Communication

4.4 To ensure that this child protection policy is effective, it is essential that the issues and recommendations are communicated and adopted by Mole Valley's community.

- Mole Valley in partnership with partner agencies is:
 - (i) Taking responsibility for raising awareness of Child Protection issues at a local level; and
 - (ii) will encourage and support the development of Child Protection policies in local clubs and organisations.

Mole Valley will also need to designate a Council Child Protection Officer and within certain departments a Departmental Child Protection Officer.

Good Practice

4.5 The following are indicators of good practice:

- Staff and volunteers should not spend excessive amounts of time alone with children and young people away from others. Meetings with individual children or young people should take place as openly as possible. If privacy is needed, the door should be left partly open and other staff and volunteers informed of the meeting.

- Staff and volunteers should be advised not to have unnecessary physical contact with children and young people. There may however, be occasions when physical contact is unavoidable or positively desirable or necessary, such as providing comfort and reassurance for a distressed child, or physical support, for example when working with a disabled child. Physical contact should only take place with the consent of the child or young person and the purpose of the contact should be clear.
- It is not good practice to take children or young people alone in a car or to travel with them alone however short a journey may be. Where this is unavoidable, it should be with the full knowledge and consent of the child or young person and of the parents or carers, and someone in charge of the organisation. Staff should be able to state the purpose and anticipated length of the route. Check insurance liability.
- Staff and volunteers should not meet with children or young people outside organised activities, unless it is with the knowledge and consent of parents and the person in charge of the organisation.
- It must be recognised that whilst becoming a volunteer or taking part in work experience can be a most positive experience for a young person, s/he will need adequate supervision and monitoring and should not be given responsibilities beyond his/her age and capabilities.
- Staff and volunteers should never:
 - (i) Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games, including horse-play
 - (ii) Allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged or use inappropriate language themselves.
 - (iii) Make sexually provocative comments in front of, about, or even to a child, even in fun
 - (iv) Let allegations made by a child go without being addressed and recorded
 - (v) Deter children from making allegations through fear of not being believed
 - (vi) Do things of a personal nature for children that they can do themselves
 - (vii) Share a bedroom with a child or young person

- (viii) Invite or allow a child or young person to visit you or stay with you at home unsupervised
- (ix) Jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- (x) Rely on their own good name to protect them.

Relationships of Trust

- 4.6 'The inequality at the heart of a relationship of trust should be ended before any sexual relationship begins.' *Caring for Young People and the Vulnerable? Guidance for preventing abuse of trust (Home Office, 1999)*
- 4.7 This statement recognises that genuine relationships do occur between different levels of volunteers and participants in a group but that no intimate relationship should begin whilst the member of staff or volunteer is in a 'position of trust' over them. The power and influence that an older member of staff has over someone attending a group or activity cannot be underestimated. If there is additional competitive aspect to the activity and the older person is responsible for the young person's success or failure to some extent, then the dependency of the younger member on the older will be increased. It is therefore vital for volunteers to recognise the responsibility they must exercise in ensuring that they do not abuse their positions of trust. Young people aged 16-18 can legally consent to some types of sexual activity; however, in some provisions of legislation they are classified as children.

5. RESPONDING TO AN ALLEGATION OF ABUSE

- 5.1 The way in which an allegation of abuse is responded to depends on whether the allegation is made by a child, a young person or by others including parents/adults.

Responding to a child making an allegation of abuse

- 5.2 If a child or young person makes an allegation of abuse:
- Stay calm and do not show your emotions.
 - Listen carefully to what is said.

- Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – do not promise to keep secrets.
- Allow the child/young person to continue at his/her own pace.
- Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Reassure that child that they have done the right thing in telling you and continue to provide a warm and friendly relationship with the child.
- Tell them what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.
- Keep all information on child protection matters completely confidential, apart from informing social services which is the responsibility of the designated person.
- Record in writing on an incident form what was said using the child's or young person's own words as soon as possible – note date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.

Responding to others making allegations of abuse

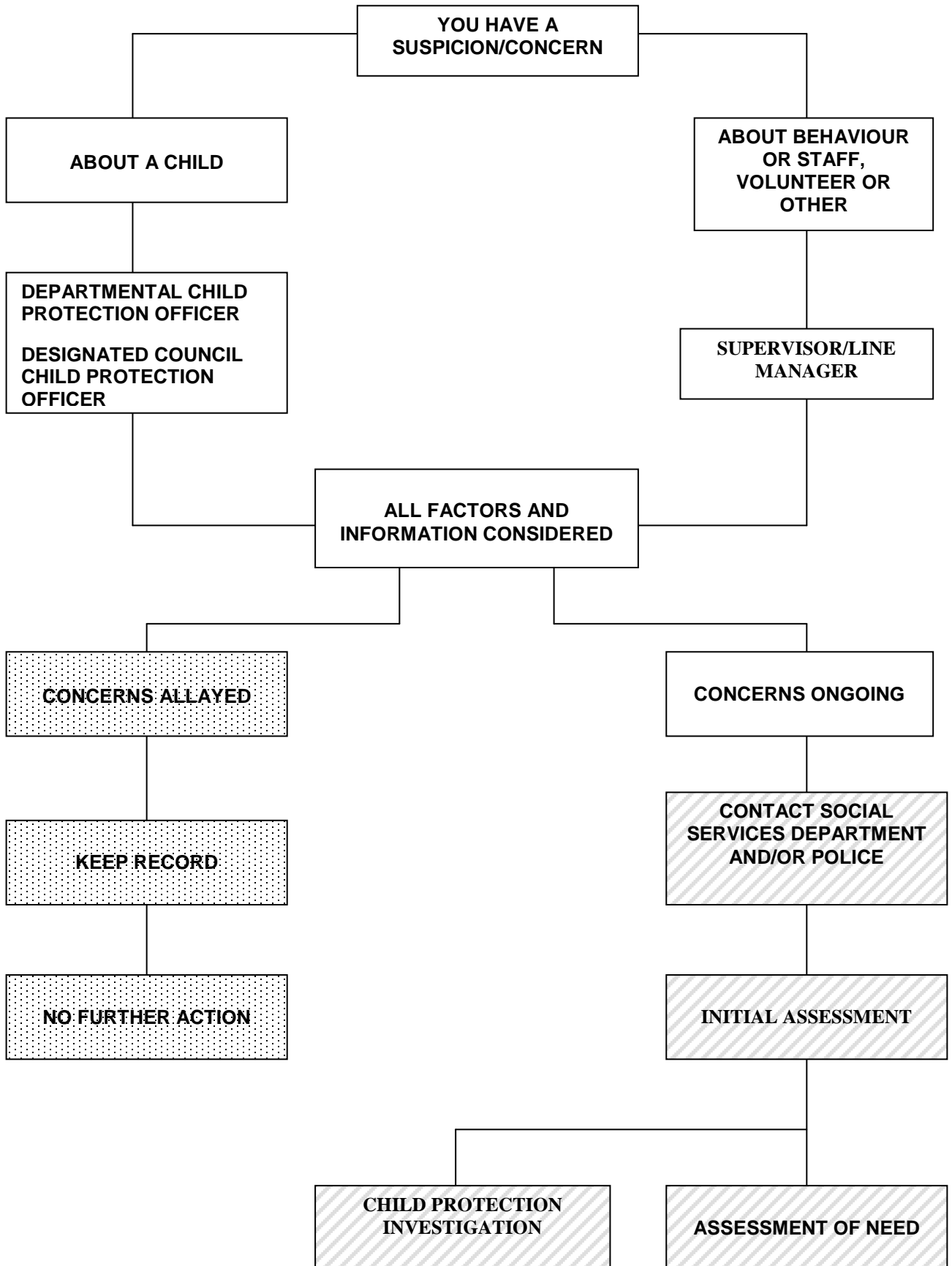
5.3 If a parent or adult makes an allegation of abuse:

- Stay calm and try not to show your emotions.
- Listen carefully to what is said.
- Inform the parent or adult at the earliest opportunity that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with the appropriate people in line with this document and advise them of the Council's formal complaints procedure.
- Ask questions for clarification only, and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Keep all information on child protection matters completely confidential, apart from informing the line manager, or the designated person.
- Record in writing on an incident form what was said using the person's own words as soon as possible – note date, time, any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the record is signed and dated.

Staff response if suspect abuse

- 5.4 If at any time you suspect that a child or young person is being abused:
- Inform the project leader or the most senior member of staff available without delay who will then inform their line manager or the designated person
 - Do not discuss the matter with any other person.
 - Record your observations in detail, on an incident form carefully noting the relevant dates.
- 5.5 Whoever first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not the person responsible for deciding whether abuse has occurred. That is the task for the professional child protection agencies following a referral to them of concern about a child or young person.

REPORTING CHILD PROTECTION CONCERNS



SECTION B

6. DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE

6.1 The term child abuse is used to describe ways in which children and young people are harmed, usually by adults. It refers to damage that has been or may be done to a child's or young person's physical or mental health.

6.2 Abuse may take many forms and these can be broadly separated into five main categories: Physical, Neglect, Emotion, Sexual and Bullying. Defining child abuse is made more difficult because of each person's different values and ideas about what constitutes abuse. It is not the responsibility of those involved to decide whether certain actions (or lack of action) constitute abuse, rather to be aware of possible indicators of abuse in order to inform others appropriately.

Physical Abuse

6.3 Physical abuse may occur, where adults physically hurt or injure children or young people by –

- Hitting
- Shaking
- Squeezing
- Burning
- Biting
- Giving them alcohol
- Drugs or poison
- Attempted suffocation or drowning

Physical abuse, as well as being a result of a deliberate act, can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect. In sports situations, physical abuse might occur when the nature and intensity of training exceeds the capacity of the child's immature and growing body.

Neglect

6.4 Neglect is where adults fail to meet a child's or young person's basic physical and/or psychological needs. This includes:

- Food
- Shelter
- Warm clothing
- Love
- Affection
- Attention
- Appropriate medical care and treatment

Emotional Abuse

6.5 Emotional abuse may occur where there is persistent:

- Lack of love and affection
- Shouting or threatening behaviour
- Taunting
- Neglect
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse

This may also take the form of constant criticism, humiliation, bullying, or unrealistic pressure to perform to high expectations consistently. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child, though it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

6.6 Sexual abuse might occur where adults, both male and female, use children or young people to meet their own sexual needs. This could include:

- Full sexual intercourse
- Masturbation
- Oral sex
- Anal intercourse
- Fondling
- Inappropriate exposure by an adult, or of a child or young person and inappropriate sexual conversation and photography.

Activities which involve physical contact with children could potentially create situations where sexual abuse may go unnoticed. Boys and girls can also be sexually abused by other young people from all walks of life.

Bullying

- 6.7 Bullying, racism and other types of discrimination, although not formally recognised are forms of child abuse, even though those responsible are often children and young people. Bullying by adults is also a form of child abuse and can harm children and young people both physically and emotionally. It is important to recognise the impact and extent of bullying and discrimination in their lives. It involves an imbalance of power in which the powerful attack the powerless, and occurs over time rather than being a single act. Bullying can include deliberately embarrassing or humiliating a child or young person, treating them unfairly or verbally abusing them, or deliberately ignoring them.

7. ABUSE OF DISABLED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 7.1 Any child or young person with a disability is by definition a 'child in need' and may be vulnerable to physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect as any other child or young person, though the level of risk may be raised given that they may also find it more difficult to recognise and report abuse, and to be believed. For example, if their disability means that they:

- Have not developed the social skills needed to work out what the behaviour and attitudes of others mean resulting in them less able to understand what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.
- Are afraid to challenge potentially abusive situations because of fear of the consequences. It is often easier to be compliant and pleasing rather than risk angering an authority figure and getting into trouble.
- May not be able to report abuse either because there is no-one they can report it to or because they do not have the appropriate language to use.
- May not be able to recognise that abuse has taken place.
- Feel powerless because they have to depend on others for personal support.
- May not be able to physically remove themselves from abusive situations.
- Are not believed because their authority figures cannot accept that anyone would abuse a disabled child.

- May feel guilt or shame about the abuse which prevents them from reporting it.
- May not have a sense of ownership of their own bodies because they are so used to being examined physically by others as part of their medical and physical care.
- Lack of access to 'keep safe' strategies available to others

8. RECOGNISING CHILD ABUSE

8.1 Recognising child abuse is not easy and it is not a member of staff's responsibility to decide whether or not child abuse has taken place or if a child is at significant risk. However, staff do have a responsibility to act if they have a concern. The following information will help staff become more alert to the signs of possible abuse.

Physical Abuse

8.2 Most children and young people will collect cuts and bruises in their daily lives. These are likely to be in places where there are bony parts of their bodies like elbow, knees and shins. Some bruising can be caused almost only non-accidentally. An important indicator of physical abuse is where bruises or injuries are unexplained or the explanation does not fit the injury or when it appears on parts of the body where accidental injuries are unlikely e.g on the cheeks or thighs.

Physical signs of abuse may include:

- Unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body
- Bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching)
- Cigarette burns
- Bite marks
- Broken bones
- Scalds

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate physical abuse:

- Fear of parents being approached for an explanation
- Aggressive behaviour or severe temper outbursts

- Flinching when approached or touched
- Reluctance to get changed, e.g wearing long sleeves in summer
- depression
- Withdrawn behaviour running away from home

Neglect

8.3 Neglect can be a difficult form of abuse to recognise, yet have some of the most lasting and damaging effects on children. Evidence of neglect is built up over a period of time and can cover different aspects of parenting.

Physical signs of neglect may include:

- Constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from other children
- Constantly dirty or smelly
- Loss of weight, or being constantly underweight
- Inappropriate dress for the conditions

Changes in behaviour which can also indicate neglect may include:

- Complaining of being tired all the time
- Not requesting medical assistance
- Having few friends
- Mentioning their being left alone or unsupervised
- Child thrives away from home environment

Emotional Abuse

8.4 Emotional abuse can be difficult to measure, and often children and young people who appear well cared for may be emotionally abused by being taunted, put down or belittled. Emotional abuse can also take the form of children not being allowed to mix/play with other children. The indicators of emotional abuse are often also associated with other forms of abuse.

8.5 Physical signs of emotional abuse include:

- A failure to thrive or grow, particularly if the child puts on weight in other circumstances, e.g. in hospital or away from their parents' care

- Sudden speech disorders
- Developmental delay, either in terms of physical or emotional progress

8.6 Changes in behaviour which can also indicate emotional abuse include:

- Neurotic behaviour, e.g hair twisting, rocking
- Being unable to play
- Fear of making mistakes
- Self harm
- Fear of parent being approached regarding their behaviour
- Low self esteem and lack of confidence
- Withdrawn or seen as a 'loner' – difficulty relating to others

Sexual Abuse

8.7 Boys and girls of all ages may be sexually abused and are frequently scared to say anything due to guilt and/or fear. Recognition can be difficult, unless the child discloses and is believed. There may be no physical signs and indications are likely to be emotional/behavioral. In all cases, children and young people who talk about sexual abuse do so because they want it to stop so it is important that children are listened to and taken seriously.

8.8 Physical signs of sexual abuse may include:

- Pain/itching or bruising/bleeding in the genital/anal areas.
- Sexually transmitted disease.
- Vaginal discharge or infection.
- Stomach pains.
- Discomfort when walking or sitting down,
- Pregnancy

8.9 Changes in behaviour which can indicate sexual abuse include:

- Sudden or unexplained changes in behaviour.
- Fear of being left with a specific person or group of people.
- Having nightmares.
- Running away from home.

- Sexual knowledge which is beyond their age or developmental level.
- Sexual drawings or language.
- Bedwetting
- Eating problems such as overeating or anorexia.
- Self harm sometimes leading to suicide attempts.
- Saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about.
- Substance or drug abuse.
- Suddenly having unexplained sources of money.
- Not allowed to have friends (particularly in adolescence).
- Acting in a sexually explicit way towards adults.

Bullying

8.10 Bullying can be psychological, verbal, or physical in nature. It involves an imbalance of power in which the powerful attack the powerless, and occurs over time rather than being a single act.

8.10 Examples of bullying behaviour may include:

- Name calling, insulting remarks or verbally abused.
- Physical assault or threatened with violence.
- Having possessions taken and thrown around.
- Having rumours spread about.
- Being ignored and left out.
- Being forced to hand over money or possessions.
- Being attacked because of your religion or colour.

8.11 Bullying by adults is less common than bullying by children and young people but some of example of this behaviour may include:

- Being deliberately embarrassed or humiliated.
- Being unfairly treated or verbally abused.
- Being ignored or not spoken to.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 Child abuse is a distressing issue that cannot be ignored. It is necessary to increase the concern in a non-alarmist way for the welfare and protection of children and young people.

- 9.2 This document will be reviewed and updated regularly to comply with national and international developments in legislation and guidance.

Children Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

November 2014

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This policy and procedures are for you if you are a Mole Valley District Council employee, an elected member, a volunteer or anyone working on behalf of, delivering a service for, or representing the Council.

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2. What Does 'Safeguarding' Mean?
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Appendix 1 Categories of Significant Harm

Appendix 2 Safeguarding Lead Officer Contact Details

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1.0 Introduction

Mole Valley District Council has legal a duty to work together with other statutory and voluntary agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. For the purposes of this document children should be considered as being 0-18 years of age.

The Policy and Procedure is for the employees, members and volunteers of the Council. The Council has safeguarding expectations of services that it has procured from contractors and these are set out in section 7.0 below.

In 2008 the Council approved a Child Protection Policy and this Policy and Procedure replaces it.

2.0 What does 'Safeguarding' Mean?

Every child and young person has the right not to be abused. The government guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013, defines safeguarding children and promoting their welfare as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

To achieve this, children need to be loved and valued and be supported by a network of reliable and affectionate relationships. If children are denied this, they are at an increased risk of an impoverished childhood, but also at an increased risk of disadvantage and social exclusion in adulthood. Abuse and neglect pose particular problems. Further information can be found on neglect, abuse and the categories of significant harm at Appendix 1.

Effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by putting children at the centre of the system, and by every individual and agency playing their full part, working together to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children.

Effective safeguarding arrangements in every local area should be underpinned by two key principles:

- safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part; and
- a child-centred approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

3.0 Legislative Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with the following legislation and procedures:

- **Children Act 2004**
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013**

The legal obligations concerning children are underpinned by Section 11 of the Children Act 2004.

It is a statutory duty under the Children Act 2004, for each local authority to have a safeguarding board. In Surrey this sits with the County Council as an advisory and monitoring board with an independent chair. The Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) was established as a statutory board under Section 13 of the Children Act 2004 in April 2006. The SSCB provides a strategic framework for partner agencies in order to maintain a focus on their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of all children and young people.

Section 14 of the Children Act sets out the objectives of the Board to co-ordinate and ensure the effectiveness of each person's or organisation's activities that are represented on the Board. It is also to ensure the effectiveness of what the member organisations do individually and together by developing interagency policies and procedures including:

- training of those working with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children; and
- investigation of allegations concerning persons working with children.

It is very important that local safeguarding arrangements are strongly led and promoted at a local level, specifically by:

- a strong lead from local authority members, and the commitment of chief officers in all agencies; and
- effective local coordination and challenge by the four local area SSCBs and the umbrella SSCB.

All district and borough councils in Surrey are partner agencies on the SSCB along with other statutory and voluntary agencies. The district and borough councils have a nominated representative made by the Surrey Chief Executives Group on the SSCB. There are four local SSCBs and the Mole Valley Lead Officer for Safeguarding (their role is described below in section 4.4) attends the local South East Surrey Safeguarding Children Board.

For more information on the umbrella SSCB go to:

www.surreycc.gov.uk/safeguarding

4.0 The Role of Districts and Boroughs

District and borough councils have a crucial role to play in the safeguarding of children in their areas. The relevant legislation and guidance is detailed below.

4.1 Section 11 of the Children Act 2004

The Act places a duty on:

- local authorities, including district and borough councils that provide children's and other types of services, including children's and adult social care services, public health, housing, sport, culture and leisure services, licensing authorities and youth services; and
- a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others are discharged having regard to the need to safeguarding and promote the welfare of children.

4.2 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013

This statutory guidance states that effective safeguarding arrangements in every local area should be underpinned by two key principles:

- safeguarding is **everyone's responsibility**: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part; and
- a **child-centred approach**: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of children.

4.3 The SSCB Procedures Manual

The SSCB Procedures Manual is comprehensive and this Policy and Procedure document refers up to the SSCB manual from time to time for more detailed information and guidance.

The manual specifically refers to the duties of:

- housing authorities to share information that is relevant to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children; and

- leisure services departments and leisure contractors to ensure that their leisure facilities safeguard children and that all casual and temporary members of staff are aware of safeguarding children issues and know how to report concerns.

The manual can be found on the SSCB website¹.

<http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/>

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This Policy and Procedure also refers across from time to time to the Council's own local policies. Most of the local policies are internal documents for the purpose of assisting employees and are only published on the Council's intranet. [These documents are available for elected members from the Lead Children's Safeguarding Officer. The appendices in this document provide forms and useful procedural information. They appear in the document in numerical ascending order. Some appendices are referred to more than once later in the document, which is why it might appear that they are out of numerical sequence.](#)

4.4 Mole Valley District Council Lead Officer for Safeguarding

The Council's Lead Officer for Children's Safeguarding is a Corporate Head of Service and the Executive Member for Wellbeing is the lead elected member. The lead officer role is to ensure that:

- this Council has a Children's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure that is regularly reviewed and updated;
- employees, members and volunteers of the Council are aware of the Policy and Procedures, which are easily accessible on the Council's website and intranet;
- employees, members and volunteers receive the appropriate level of training for their role;
- employees and volunteers are recruited in accordance with this policy;
- employees, members and volunteers are aware of how to seek advice on concerns and how to report concerns;
- the Council deals with allegations in accordance with this Policy and Procedure and the SSCB Procedures Manual;
- when services are procured from contractors the Council's specification sets out its expectations for safeguarding (see section 7.0 below);
- inter-agency issues are resolved;

¹ <http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/>

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- they attend the local South East SSCB and links with the umbrella SSCB are maintained.

Contact details for the Council's Safeguarding Lead Officer and designated staff to deputise as the lead in their absence can be found in Appendix 2.

5.0 Policy Statement

Mole Valley District Council accepts the moral and legal responsibility to implement procedures, to provide a duty of care for children, safeguard their well being and protect them from abuse when they are engaged in services organised and provided by the Council. We aim to do this by:

- respecting and promoting the rights, wishes and feelings of children and young people;
- raising the awareness of the duty of care responsibilities relating to children and young people throughout the Council;
- promoting and implementing appropriate procedures to safeguard the well-being of children and young people to protect them from harm;
- ensuring all staff receive safeguarding training at a relevant level, as advised by the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB)²;

<http://new.surreycc.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/childrens-social-care/information-for-child-social-care-professionals/surrey-safeguarding-children-board>

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- creating a safe and healthy environment within all our services, avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur;
- recruiting, training, supporting and supervising staff, elected members and volunteers to adopt best practice to safeguard and protect children and young people from abuse, and minimise risk to themselves;
- ensuring that relevant commissioned services are compliant with safeguarding expectations as set out by the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB);
- responding to any allegations of misconduct or abuse of children or young people in line with this Policy and Procedure and SSCB guidance as well as implementing, where appropriate, the relevant disciplinary and appeals procedures;

² <http://new.surreycc.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/childrens-social-care/information-for-child-social-care-professionals/surrey-safeguarding-children-board>

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- requiring staff, elected members, volunteers and contracted services to adopt and abide by the this Council's Children's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure; and
- reviewing and evaluating this Policy and Procedure document on an annual basis.

6.0 Recruitment and Training of Staff who will Work with Children

It is important that recruitment procedures are thorough in order to ensure **that employees and volunteers who will be working with children** are suitable and do not pose a risk to children. Recruitment paperwork should refer to the need to be committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

The Council will follow recruitment procedures that are in accordance with the national Baseline Personnel Selection Standard, this includes the request of references with accurate dates of employment.

The Council will seek references that request information on disciplinary action, known convictions and other grounds for disquiet and information regarding current investigations or disciplinary action in relation to allegations of a child protection nature.

6.1 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks

DBS checks are sought when employees will be working regularly and unsupervised with children. This Council can only request a DBS check if the position is designated as a regulated activity and meets the frequency criteria, which is detailed in this Council's DBS policy. DBS checks will indicate any spent and unspent convictions, cautions, formal reprimands and final warnings and will contain non-conviction information from local police records, which may be relevant to the position sought. Minor offences will no longer be included in DBS checks.

If a DBS check reveals that a person who has applied for or is employed in a position designated as a regulated activity is prohibited from work with children, it is an offence to employ them and this Council must inform the SSCB and the police of their attempt to seek employment³. ~~The policy can be found at the intranet link below.~~

<http://molly/index.cfm?articleid=16606>

6.2 Training

All new employees and members will be provided with induction training, which includes safeguarding information and good practice guidelines for working with children, awareness of the Council's safeguarding policy and procedures, how to seek advice, refer concerns and handle disclosures.

³ <http://molly/index.cfm?articleid=16606>

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Once every three years the Council's existing staff and members will receive awareness training of the Council's safeguarding policy and procedures, how to seek advice, refer concerns and handle disclosures.

Staff who may have regular contact (eg through home visits), or have a period of intense, but irregular contact, with children and/or their parents/carers, who may be in a position to identify concerns about maltreatment will attend half day training once every three years.

Staff working with children will receive further training in child protection and information regarding procedures relating to safeguarding, once every three years.

Those who may be required to attend child protection conferences such as housing or safeguarding officers, will be required to undertake further training provided by the SSCB once every three years.

Line managers will need to consult with the Council's Lead Officer for Safeguarding to ensure an appropriate level of safeguarding training is provided for volunteers, who may be recruited from time to time to work with children.

Appropriate safeguarding children courses will be provided through e-learning, the Surrey Training Officers Group and the SSCB's multi-agency training programme in line with its published strategy.

The training requirements for the Council's employees, members and volunteers are detailed in Appendix 3.

When we commission services we will expect the contracted service provider to have in place an appropriate safeguarding policy and procedure that details the training arrangements and frequency for their staff.

7.0 Procurement of Commissioned Services

| When the Council commissions services it will require expect the contracted service provider to have in place an appropriate safeguarding policy and procedure that details their recruitment process, training arrangements, reporting procedure for incidents, regular updating, and risk assessment.

The Council will ensure when commissioning services that they are compliant with safeguarding expectations, as set out in this Policy and Procedure and by the SSCB.

8.0 Good Practice for Working with Children

It is important to follow the good practice outlined below, when working with children.

- Adults must not behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children, or act as a role model.
- Adults must not work on their own with children. If a situation occurs when this arises, due to sickness or an emergency, always inform colleagues or parents/carers to ensure that someone can be present or nearby.

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- It is inappropriate to offer lifts to a child or young person. There may be occasions where the child or young person requires transport in an emergency situation or where not to do so may place a child at risk. If circumstances permit, the parent/carer or line manager must be informed before the lift is provided and wherever possible two people should accompany the young person. The event must always be recorded and reported to a senior manager and parents/carers.

Students, who are under 18, and are on a work placement with the Council, should be accompanied by two members of staff when given lifts for outside visits.

- Physical contact is discouraged and must only take place when it is absolutely necessary and in a safe and open environment i.e. one easily observed by others.
- Always report any accidents/incidents or situations where a child becomes distressed or angry to a senior colleague.

Photography should not cause a problem providing that reasonable steps are taken to follow safe practice guidelines. Photographs must not be taken without permission of the children and their parent if they are under 18. Photographs of children with their family, class or club, are generally a source of pleasure and pride, which can enhance the self-esteem of children. ~~Photography should not cause a problem providing that reasonable steps are taken to follow safe practice guidelines.~~ Personal phones, cameras or other recording devices must not be used. Policies should be in place to cover the safe storage of photographs. In no circumstances can photographs be published without prior written consent.

Staff must remain sensitive to any children who appear uncomfortable or feel threatened by photography and must recognise the potential for misinterpretation.

A photograph consent form can be found in Appendix 4. Parents retain the right to withdraw consent at any stage but they need to do so in writing. Specific consent should be sought in advance for use of a photograph in a planned publication that should detail when and for how long the photograph will be displayed.

- Staff must always be aware of E-safety and maintain professional boundaries when communicating with children and young people. Employees, members and volunteers should not telephone, text or use social networking sites to communicate with children. The Council's Information Technology Security Policy must be observed and can be found at the intranet link below⁴.

- http://molly/media/pdf/t/n/IT_Security_Policy_Nov_2013_-_V4.1.pdf

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8.1 Employees Aged 16 and 17 Years Old and Work Placement Students who are under 18

The good practice described above on working with children must be applied by Council employees when their colleagues are aged 16 and 17 or are work placement students who are under 18.

Regard must also be given to Young People at Work Procedure in the Council's Health and Safety Manual - General Workplace Safety 14⁵. ~~The intranet link is given below.~~

<http://molly/index.cfm?articleid=17143>

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9.0 Information Sharing

Information sharing between agencies is vital to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Early sharing of information is the key to providing effective early help where there are emerging problems. A key factor in many serious case reviews regarding children who have been harmed has been the failure to record information, to share it, to understand the significance of the information shared and to take appropriate action in relation to known or suspected abuse or neglect. Often it is only when information from a number of sources has been shared that it becomes clear that a child is at risk of, or is suffering, harm.

To enable information sharing the Council is signed up to the Surrey Multi-Agency Information Sharing Protocol⁶. ~~that can be found at the link below.~~

~~<http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/surrey-children-and-young-peoples-partnership/information-sharing-for-professionals/information-sharing-protocol-for-multi-agency-staff>~~

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Professionals who work with, or have contact with children, parents or adults should always share information with Surrey's Children's Services where they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child may be suffering or may be at risk of suffering significant harm. The Seven Golden Rules for Information

⁴ http://molly/media/pdf/t/n/IT_Security_Policy_Nov_2013_-_V4.1.pdf

⁵ <http://molly/index.cfm?articleid=17143>

⁶ <http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/surrey-children-and-young-peoples-partnership/information-sharing-for-professionals/information-sharing-protocol-for-multi-agency-staff>

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Sharing in section three of the SSCB Procedures Manual provides detailed guidance ~~and can be found at Appendix 5. and can be found at the link below and Appendix 5⁷.~~

~~[http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_info_sharing.html#seven_rules_of_Information_Sharing.](http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_info_sharing.html#seven_rules_of_Information_Sharing)~~

If there is any doubt about sharing information cases should be discussed in confidence the Council's Lead Officer for Safeguarding or a designated safeguarding officer at the Council. In their absence the case should be discussed with the Surrey Children's Services South East Referral Assessment and Intervention Service (0300 123 1620).

10.0 Reporting and Managing Incidents and Concerns

It is the duty of officers, members, volunteers and commissioned services of Mole Valley District Council to **report** any incidents and concerns relating to safeguarding or welfare of a child or family. The process on how to respond to concerns and incidents is detailed below.

It is **not** the duty of officers, members, volunteers and commissioned services of Mole Valley District Council to **investigate** suspicions or concerns, other agencies are trained to do this.

If there is a concern about the safety or welfare of a child or young person it is imperative that:

- these concerns and the reasons for them are noted using the incident report form at Appendix 6;
- you speak to your line manager;
- you report your concern or incident to the Council's Lead Officer for Children's Safeguarding, their contact details can be found at Appendix 2; and
- ensure confidentiality is maintained.

Do not undertake further investigations.

When there are ongoing concerns regarding a parent or carer in relation to the alleged abuse of a child or young person, the parent or carer should not be contacted about the allegation of abuse. Surrey County Council's Children's Services and/or the Police will do this at an appropriate time. The referral process to Children's Services is described below and in the flow chart at Appendix 7.

⁷ [http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_info_sharing.html#seven_rules_of_Information_Sharing.](http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_info_sharing.html#seven_rules_of_Information_Sharing)

Do not delay when reporting concerns as a child's welfare or safety may be imminently at risk.

11.0 Referrals to Surrey County Council's Children's Services

It is important that employees make a referral to Children's Services if it is believed or suspected that:

- a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm - see the categories of significant harm at Appendix 1;
- a child's health or development may be impaired without the provision of services; or
- with the agreement of the person with parental responsibility, a child would be likely to benefit from family support services.

Referrals regarding significant harm should be made as follows:

- By calling 0300 123 1620 and speaking to the local Children's Services', South East Referral Assessment and Intervention Service. The conversation should be followed up in writing/email as appropriate within 48 hours, using the Multi Agency Referral Form attached at Appendix 8⁸; ~~and available at:~~
http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/client_supplied/multi_agency_referral_form.doc.
- As with all emails including personal details, it is crucial that the information is sent ~~from one~~ via secure email ~~account to another~~. ~~The Council provides employees with secure email accounts known as GCSX and colleagues at SCC have the same type of accounts, from one GCSX account to another.~~ Employees who do not have a GCSX account should speak to their line manager and the IT ~~Team~~. ~~Elected members should contact the Lead Officer for Children's Safeguarding if they need to send a secure email.~~
- Receipt of a referral to the County's South East Area Team will be acknowledged within 24 hours.
- In an emergency outside office hours, contact the Emergency Duty Team on 01483 517898 or the Police.
- The Council's Lead Officer for Children's Safeguarding should be kept informed during the process and be given all the documentation to keep in a secure place.

• The full referral process is detailed in the flow chart at Appendix 8.

⁸ http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/client_supplied/multi_agency_referral_form.doc.

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12.0 Identifying Children and Families who would Benefit from Early Help

Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 requires each local authority to make arrangements to promote co-operation between the authority, each of the authorities' relevant partners and such other persons or bodies working with children in the local authority's area.

If there is a concern about a child, but the child is **not** at risk of significant harm, it can be dealt with by Children's Services using the Early Help ~~Assessment process~~ [Assessment process](#). Most enquiries about children's welfare relate to concerns regarding children with additional needs. These needs may require a multi-agency response. The Early Help Assessment will help to clarify the child's specific needs and in collaboration with parents, ensure appropriate actions including the identification of a lead professional to continue to assist the family if necessary.

The procedures for an Early Help Referral and Assessment can be found on the SSCB Procedures Manual website. To make a referral parental/carer consent is needed. To discuss a possible referral call 0300 123 1620 and speak to the local Children Services - South East Referral Assessment and Intervention Service. ~~For more information go to the link below~~⁹.

http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/g_safeg_levels_need.html

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13.0 Managing Allegations Against Staff, Carers and Volunteers

An investigation by an appropriate body is required if there is an allegation or concern that any person who works with children, whether in their employment or as a voluntary activity, has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

Whilst some behaviours may not constitute a criminal offence, consideration will need to be given as to whether they may indicate unsuitability to work with children. These include concerns relating to inappropriate relationships between members of staff and children such as:

- having a sexual relationship with a child under 18 in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if consensual;

⁹ http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/g_safeg_levels_need.html

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- 'grooming' i.e. meeting a child under 16 with intent to commit a relevant offence;
- other 'grooming' behaviour giving rise to concerns of a broader child protection nature eg inappropriate text/email messages or images, gifts, socialising etc.; and/or
- possession of indecent photographs/pseudo-photographs of children.

An allegation against a member of staff, volunteer or elected member may arise from a number of sources e.g. a report from a child, a concern raised by another adult in the organisation, or a complaint by a parent or carer.

The person to whom an allegation or concern is first reported should treat the matter seriously and keep an open mind.

They should

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- make a written record of the information (where possible in the child/adult's own words), including the time, date and place of incident(s), persons present and what was said; using the form at Appendix 6.
- sign and date the written record;
- immediately report the matter to the Council's Lead Safeguarding Officer whose contact details can be found at Appendix 2 who will then make a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

When informed of a concern or allegation, the lead safeguarding officer should not investigate the matter or interview the member of staff, child concerned or potential witnesses. They should:

- obtain written details of the concern/allegation, signed and dated by the person receiving (not the child/adult making the allegation);
- countersign and date the written details;
- record any information about times, dates and location of incident(s) and names of any potential witnesses; and
- record discussions about the child and/or member of staff, any decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions.

The Council's Lead Officer should contact the County's Local Authority Designated Officer (0300 200 1006) within one working day of the allegation coming to their attention.

Further information can be found in the SSCB Procedures Manual¹⁰.

If the Council decides to remove an individual (paid worker, unpaid volunteer) from work (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children, the Council's Lead Officer must ensure all decisions are recorded, undertake a risk assessment and make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service. It is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason.

Where an allegation has been received about an elected member the Lead Officer for Children's Safeguarding will refer the matter to the Chief Executive and Corporate Head for Democratic Services for consideration by the Standards Committee.

They should not:

- investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification;
- make assumptions or offer alternative explanations; and/or
- promise confidentiality, but give assurance that the information will only be shared on a 'need to know' basis.

They should:

- ~~make a written record of the information (where possible in the child/adult's own words), including the time, date and place of incident(s), persons present and what was said; using the form at Appendix 6;~~
- ~~sign and date the written record;~~
- ~~immediately report the matter to the Council's Lead Safeguarding Officer whose contact details can be found at Appendix 2.~~

~~When informed of a concern or allegation, the lead safeguarding officer should not investigate the matter or interview the member of staff, child concerned or potential witnesses. They should:~~

- ~~obtain written details of the concern/allegation, signed and dated by the person receiving (not the child/adult making the allegation);~~
- ~~countersign and date the written details;~~
- ~~record any information about times, dates and location of incident(s) and names of any potential witnesses; and~~
- ~~record discussions about the child and/or member of staff, any decisions made, and the reasons for those decisions.~~

The Council's Lead Officer should contact the County's Local Authority Designated Officer (0300 200 1006) within one working day of the allegation coming to their attention.

Further information can be found in the SSCB Procedures Manual:

http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_alleg_staff.html#initial_action

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If the Council decides to remove an individual (paid worker, unpaid volunteer) from work (or would have, had the person not left first) because the person poses a risk of harm to children, the Council's Lead Officer must make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service. It is an offence to fail to make a referral without good reason.

They should not:

- investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification;
- make assumptions or offer alternative explanations; and/or
- promise confidentiality, but give assurance that the information will only be shared on a 'need to know' basis.

14.0 Serious Case Reviews

Serious Case Reviews are undertaken by the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board where there is a serious incident involving a child. If this occurred in the district MVDC would be asked to participate and would co-operate fully.

15.0 Equality and Diversity

This Policy and Procedure will be implemented in accordance with the principles of the Council's Equality Strategy 2013-2018¹¹.

<http://www.molevalley.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=9693>

It may be necessary to consult the SSCB Procedures Manual on Procedures for Specific Circumstances where there is a child and or incident presenting special circumstances, for example forced marriage or young carers¹².

http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/contents.html#specific_circumstances

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¹¹ <http://www.molevalley.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=9693>

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¹² http://sscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/contents.html#specific_circumstances

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16.0 Whistle Blowing

The Council has in place a Whistle blowing Policy to ensure serious concerns are reported, investigated and dealt with. The policy sets out how to raise serious concerns. It also clarifies the legal protection under the Public Interest Disclosure Act against reprisals¹³. [The policy is available on the Council's intranet.](#)

<http://molly/index.cfm?articleid=10781>

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If a member of staff believes that a reported allegation or safeguarding concern is not being dealt with appropriately by the Council they can contact the designated officers detailed in the policy. If they are not satisfied with any action taken internally and they would prefer to take the matter outside the Council they can approach the SSCB. There are also a number of external organisations listed in the policy that can be contacted, for example Public Concern at Work¹⁴, which is a whistle blowing charity.

<http://www.pcaw.org.uk/>

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17.0 Monitoring, Review and Risk Assessment

The Council's Lead Officer for Safeguarding Children is responsible for monitoring and reviewing this Policy and Procedure. It will also be monitored and reviewed from time to time by the Senior Management Team and Scrutiny Committee. The Council will participate in the audit undertaken by the SSCB of the Council's safeguarding activities, as required.

Each Business Unit Manager is responsible for risk assessments of their services. This includes assessment of safeguarding risks and ensuring that mitigations that are place to control those risks such as appropriate training of employees.

Appendix 1

¹³ <http://molly/index.cfm?articleid=10781>

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¹⁴ <http://www.pcaw.org.uk/>

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Categories of Significant Harm

Physical abuse

This is a form of significant harm which may include 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 or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

The following are often regarded as indications of concern:

- an explanation which is inconsistent with an injury;
- several different explanations provided for an injury;
- unexplained delay in seeking treatment;
- the parents/carers are uninterested or undisturbed by an accident or injury; and/or
- reluctance to give information or mention previous injuries.

~~If you notice that a child or young person has injuries such as bruising, bite marks, burns and scalds, or scars and are concerned about the cause, it should be reported using the procedures below.~~

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is a form of significant harm which involves the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or not valued. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may also feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children.

These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capabilities, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another, serious bullying (including cyber bullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children.

Staff should also be aware and report concerns relating to Domestic Abuse. The definition of Domestic Abuse was changed by Government in September 2012, and is now defined as;

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have

been intimate partners or family member regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to the following types of abuse:

- Psychological
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial
- Emotional

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is a form of significant harm which involves forcing or enticing a child or young person 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 or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in a 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.

Staff should also be aware of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) as an emerging, high priority concern. CSE is defined as:

“involving exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive ‘something’ (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of their performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. It can occur through the use of technology without the child’s immediate recognition; e.g. being persuaded to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child’s limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.”

Sexual exploitation can have a serious long term impact upon every aspect of a child or young person’s life, health and education. It also damages the lives of families and carers and can lead to families breaking up.

It is a multi-agency responsibility of partner agencies to identify those children and young people at risk of exploitation, to protect them and safeguard them from further risk of harm and to prevent children from becoming victims of this form of abuse.

Neglect

Neglect is a form of significant harm which involves 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 involve a parent or carer 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;
- be unresponsive to a child's basic emotional needs.

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[Appendix 2](#)

Safeguarding Lead Officer Details

Safeguarding Lead Officer

Rachel O'Reilly Corporate Head of Service

rachel.o'reilly@molevalley.gov.uk 01306 879 358 07917 328895

Designated Safeguarding Officers

Alison Wilks Strategic Housing Manager

alison.wilks@molevalley.gov.uk 01306 870 645 07774 821 420

Kirsty Jones Housing Options Manager

kirsty.jones@molevalley.gov.uk 01306 879 210 07769 651 914

[Surrey County Council's Lead Designated Officer](#)

[0300 200 1006 select option 4 for safeguarding then option 3](#)

Appendix 3 Training Schedule

Training and Awareness	Provider	Participant
Induction	E-Learning module A senior manager at remote sites (these managers to receive training). Lead Safeguarding Officer for new member induction training	All new employees and members
Awareness training once every three years on safeguarding information and good practice guidelines for working with children, awareness of the Council's safeguarding policy and procedures, how to seek advice, refer concerns and handle disclosures.	Lead Safeguarding Officer or alternative appropriate training provider	All staff <u>and members</u>
Half day Safeguarding Children Training To be refreshed once every three years	Surrey Training Officers Group or alternative appropriate training provider	Employees who come into contact on a regular basis with children, and adults who are parents or carers (eg home visits), who may be in a position to identify concerns about maltreatment.
Modules 1, 2 and 3 Specialist SSCB courses as required To be refreshed once every three years	Surrey Safeguarding Board	Employees working with children, housing officers and designated safeguarding children officers.
Modules 1, 2 and 3 Specialist SSCB courses as required, including supervision for managers	Surrey Safeguarding Board	Housing officers that attend child protection conferences and designated safeguarding

To be refreshed once very three years		children officers.
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Appendix 4

Photograph Consent Form

Name of Child/Young Person

.....

Name of Event or Activity

.....

I give my consent for my child's photograph(s) and name to be used by Mole Valley District Council

- Mole Valley District Council's website

From date.....To date.....

- Name of publication/leaflet.....

From date.....To date.....

I give my consent for my child's photograph(s) and name to be used by Mole Valley District Council for publicity purposes in all media (e.g. newspapers, leaflets, websites etc).

Name of Parent/Carer

.....

Signed

.....

Date

.....

Address

.....

.....

.....

Telephone Number

.....

.....



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Appendix 5

The Seven Golden Rules for Information Sharing

The HM Government guidance **Information Sharing: Guidance for Practitioners and Managers** 2008, provides seven golden rules for Information Sharing;

- Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information but provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately;
- Be open and honest with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so;
- Seek advice if you are in any doubt without disclosing the identity of the person where possible;
- Share with consent where appropriate and where possible respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case;
- Consider safety and well being: Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well being of the person and others who may be affected by their actions;
- Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure: Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, it is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up to date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely;
- Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it - whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

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Appendix 6

Children's Safeguarding Incident Report Form

Please use this form to report children safeguarding incidents and concerns.

Full description of concern/incident and location.

Date.....Time.....

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Action taken

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Completed By

Signed.....

Name.....

Job title

Date.....

Countersigned by the Children's Safeguarding Lead Officer

Signed.....

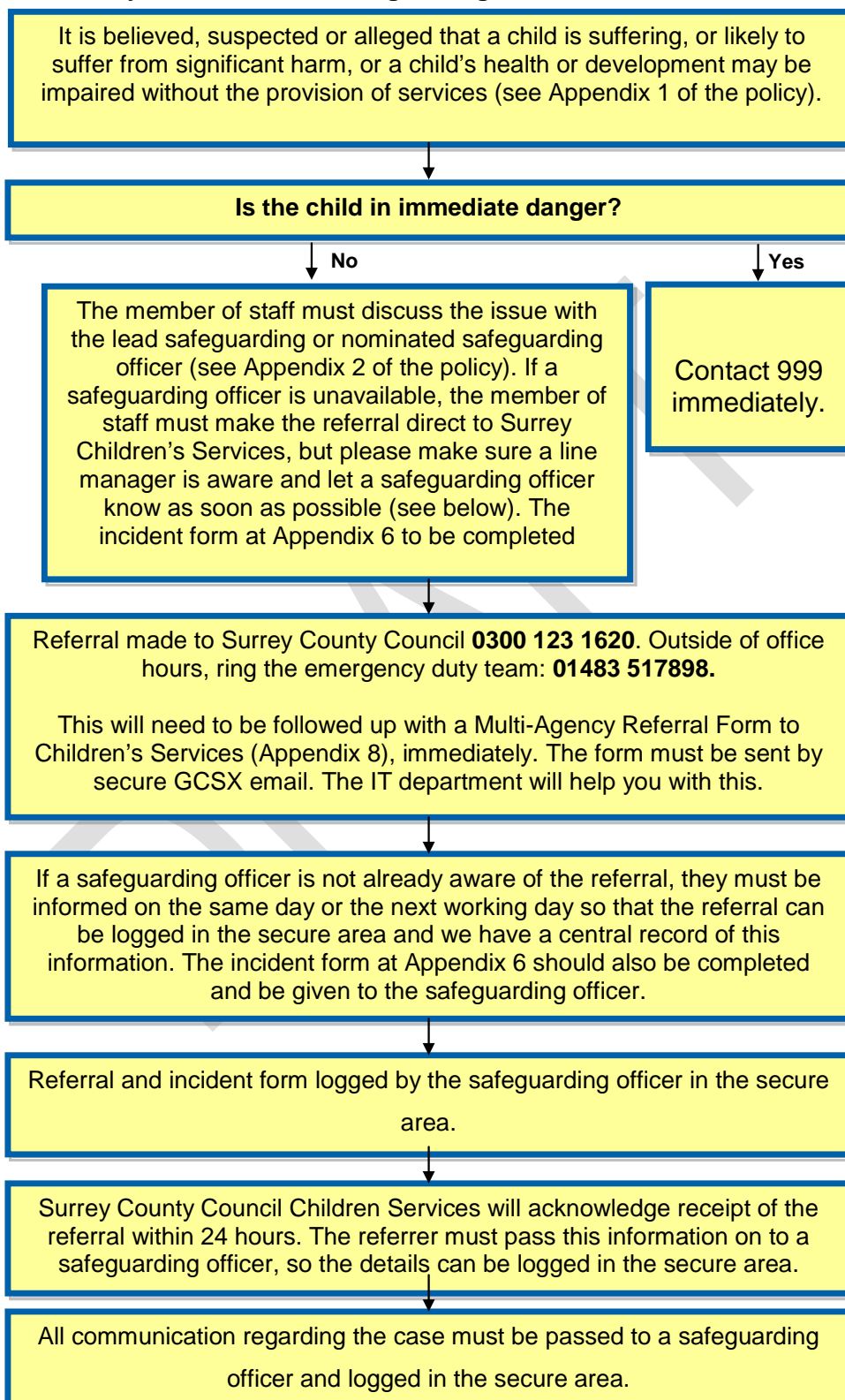
Name.....

Job title

Date.....

Appendix 7

Mole Valley District Council Safeguarding Children Referral Process



Referral Completed by: (details of person taking the referral)			
Name of referrer:		Job title:	Agency:
Address:		Email:	Telephone:
Date of Referral:	Time of referral:	Date and time MARF form completed:	

1. CHILD/YOUNG PERSON DETAILS/SIBLING DETAILS						
Last Name	First Name	Age/DOB/EDD	M/F	Ethnicity/Language	Religion	Address and telephone number

2. HOUSEHOLD DETAILS (including extended family)						
Last Name	First Name	Age/DOB/EDD	M/F	Ethnicity/Language	Relationship to child	Address and telephone number

Give details of principal carers and those with Parental Responsibility (if their address is different from the child):						
Last Name	First Name	Age/DOB/EDD	M/F	Ethnicity/Language	Relationship to child	Address and telephone number

Are there any communication/interpreting needs for the child and/or family?	Does the child and/or family have a disability or special needs?
---	--

3. Other professionals involved (to include GP, school and details of any voluntary agencies involved)			
Name	Job Title	Address	Telephone/email

4. Reason for Referral	
What was the date and time of presentation?	Was the child/young person present? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
If NO, please give details of where the child was at the time of referral and who they were with:	

Why are you worried about this child/these children?	
What has happened? What are these concerns based on? Why is Children's Services involvement needed now?	
What are the known views of parents/child?	
5 . Previous involvement	
Has an Early Help Assessment been completed?	
<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes , please attach
If No, please say why not:	
What services have already been offered by your agency and/or other agencies and what were the outcomes?	
Are you aware of any previous social work involvement with this family? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	
If YES, please give details, including approximate dates:	
6. Consent (Please note that parents/carers have to consent to this referral unless obtaining this consent will place the child at further risk of harm)	
Have parents/carers(s) given consent for this referral? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Has the child given consent for this referral? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If consent has not been obtained, please give reason.	
7 . Are there any issues we should be aware of when contacting parents/carers?	

Appendix D

Equality Impact Assessment

Children Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
November 2014



What is being assessed?	
Department	Housing
Name of assessor	Alison Wilks
Strategic Management Lead	Rachel O'Reilly
Date of assessment	2 October 2014
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	Replaces the former policy 2008

Please note that guidance (revised in March 2014) for completing this template is available on the intranet. This template was also revised in March 2014.

Section 1: Introduction and background (see p.10 of the guidance)

Please describe your service or function. This should include:

- **The aims and scope**
- **The main beneficiaries or users**
- **The main equality, accessibility, social exclusion issues and barriers, and the 'protected characteristics'¹ they relate to (not all assessments will encounter issues relating to every protected characteristic)**

If this EIA is part of a project it is important to focus on the service or policy the project aims to review or improve.

The Children Safeguarding Policy and Procedure sets out the legislative and safeguarding framework for the Council to undertake its responsibility to protect children. A Lead Officer for Children's Safeguarding is identified and detailed procedures are provided for the Council's employees in dealing with incidents, concerns and allegations. The document has been prepared using the recommended template from the Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB).

Now describe how this fits into the Council's Corporate Priorities, Sustainable Community Strategy or other local, regional or national plans and priorities.

Mole Valley District Council has legal a duty under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, to work together with other statutory and voluntary agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and has a responsibility to safeguard children. The Policy and Procedure is the Council's response to this requirement and replaces the Council's Child Protection Policy 2008.

¹ More information and definition of protected characteristics can be found [here](#)

If you are not carrying out an equality impact assessment, briefly summarise reasons why you have reached this conclusion, the evidence for this and the nature of any stakeholder verification of your conclusion.

Not applicable.

Section 2: Analysis and assessment (see pp. 10-13 of the guidance)

Given available information, what is the actual or likely impact on minority, disadvantaged, vulnerable and socially excluded groups?

Indicate for each 'protected characteristics' whether there may be a positive impact, negative impact, a mixture of both or no impact.

Protected characteristics	Positive	Negative	No impact	Reason
Age	x			The purpose of the policy is to protect children
Disability	x			The policy covers the protection of children in specific circumstances.
Gender reassignment			x	
Marriage and civil partnership			x	
Pregnancy and maternity			x	
Race	x			The policy covers the protection of children in specific circumstances.
Religion or belief	x			The policy covers the protection of children in specific circumstances.
Sex	x			The policy covers the protection of children in specific circumstances.
Sexual orientation	x			The policy covers the protection of children in specific circumstances.
Other aspects to consider	Positive	Negative	No impact	Reason
Carers			x	
Rural/urban issues			x	
HR issues (how will staff with protected characteristics be affected?)	x			The policy and procedure covers safe recruitment, young workers and allegations made about employees

What can be done to reduce the effects of any negative impacts? Where negative impact cannot be completely diminished, can this be justified, and is it lawful?

There are no identified negative impacts of the policy and procedures.

Where there are positive impacts, what changes have been or will be made? Who are the beneficiaries? How have they benefited?

The purpose of the Policy and Procedure is for the benefit of children. The implementation will ensure that Council employees have training and awareness of the issues. They will also know how to deal with incidents, allegations and concerns.

Section 3: Evidence gathering and fact-finding (see p.14 of the guidance)

What evidence is available to support your views above? Please include:

- A summary of the available evidence
- Identification of where there are gaps in the evidence (this may identify a need for more evidence in the action plan)
- What information is currently captured with respect to usage and take up of services.
- What the current situation is in relation to equality and diversity monitoring (where relevant)

The purpose of the Policy and Procedure is to proactively protect children in Mole Valley.

How have stakeholders been involved in this assessment? Who are they, and what is their view?

Surrey Safeguarding Children Board, appropriate Mole Valley officers, Youth Voice and Junior Youth Voice.

Recommendations

Please summarise the main recommendations arising from the assessment. NB If it is impossible to diminish negative impacts to an acceptable or even lawful level the recommendation should be that the proposal or the relevant part of it should not proceed.

There are no recommendations resulting from this assessment, however, the Policy and Procedure will be monitored and reviewed from time to time by the Lead Safeguarding Officer, Senior Management Team and Scrutiny Committee. The Council will also participate in the audit undertaken by the SSCB of the Council's safeguarding activities, as required.

Section 4: Action Plan (see pp.15-16 of the guidance)

Actions needed to implement the EIA recommendations

Issue	Action	Expected outcome	Who	Deadline for action

Sign off

Who will be responsible for reviewing this EIA?	Alison Wilks
Review date(s) i.e. when will this EIA be reviewed – see p.9 of guidance	2017
Strategic Management Lead signed off	Rachel O'Reilly

- Signed off electronic version to be kept in your team for review
- Electronic copy to be forwarded to the Policy and Performance Team for publishing