

HARMSTON PARISH COUNCIL

Safe Guarding Policy

Scope

The following procedure will be adopted for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect.

We have a duty of care and are committed to the protection and safety of everyone who attends our meetings or events run by us, including children, young people and adults at risk involved as visitors and/or participants in all activities and events.

We also have a duty to safeguard and support our Councillors and employees.

Definitions

i) Children and young people are defined as those persons aged under 18 years old. This policy will apply to all councillors, staff, contractors and volunteers and will be used to support their work.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

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

ii) Adult at risk of abuse or neglect

For the purposes of this policy, adult at risk refers to someone over 18 years old who, according to Section 42 of the Care Act 2014:

- a) has care and support needs
- b) is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect
- c) as a result of their care and support needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it. If someone has care and support needs but is not currently receiving care or support from a health or care service, they may still be an adult at risk.

iii) Persons affected

- a) All councillors, volunteers, and staff.

- b) All those attending any event or meeting that is being delivered by and is hosted and arranged by Harmston Parish Council and staff
- c) All visitors and contractors

Policy Principles

There can be no excuse for not taking all reasonable action to protect children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect. All citizens of the United Kingdom have their rights enshrined within the Human Rights Act 1998. People who are eligible to receive health and community care services may be additionally vulnerable to the violation of these rights by reason of disability, impairment, age, or illness.

Harmston Parish Council has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse.

Harmston Parish Council recognises that under the Care Act 2014, it has a duty for the care and protection of adults who are at risk of abuse. It also recognises its responsibilities for the safety and care of children under the Children Act 1989 and 2004.

Harmston Parish Council is committed to promoting wellbeing, harm prevention and to responding effectively if concerns are raised.

Harmston Parish Council is aware of the work of local safeguarding support organisations on the development and implementation of procedures for the protection of children and adults at risk. The policy is about stopping abuse where it is happening and preventing abuse where there is a risk that it may occur.

Harmston Parish Council is committed to the following principles:

- a) The welfare of the child, young person or adult at risk is paramount.
- b) All children, young people and adults at risk have the right to protection from abuse.
- c) Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part; and
- d) All suspicions and allegations of abuse must be properly reported to the relevant internal and external authorities and dealt with swiftly and appropriately.

Procedures

All members of the Harmston Parish Council read (and sign) and agree to follow the Code of Conduct (est. May 2022) in which Councillors agree:

In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:

- *I act with integrity and honesty*

- *I act lawfully*
- *I treat all persons fairly and with respect: and*
- *I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of the councillor*

All members of Harmston Parish Council will familiarise themselves with safeguarding responsibilities, undertake training where appropriate on safeguarding issues including whistleblowing where it is available and offered by local safeguarding support organisation and ensure that they understand the principle set out in this policy at 3 above.

All members of Harmston Parish Council will work together to promote a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting welfare to be addressed.

All members of Harmston Parish Council, staff, helpers or other volunteers will not have unsupervised access to children or adults at risk unless properly vetted.

The Clerk to Harmston Parish Council will be appointed to be responsible for child and adult at risk safeguarding matters. This person will have responsibility for reporting concerns that arise, as a matter of urgency, to the relevant safeguarding agency.

The named person is Helen Jones (Tel: 07969 918123) until the next Annual Meeting of the Parish Council (AMPC) to be held 1 May 2024. The named person will be appointed or reappointed by Harmston Parish Council at the AMPC.

All suspicions or allegations of abuse against a child or adult at risk will be taken seriously and dealt with speedily and appropriately. The appointed person will know who to contact and where to go for support and advice in relation to an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint. An allegation may relate to a person who works with children or adults at risk who has:

- a) Behaved in a way that has harmed a child at risk or may have harmed a child or adult at risk
- b) Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child or adult at risk; or
- c) Behaved towards a child (or children) or adult in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children or adults at risk

Harmston Parish Council will carry out an annual review of this policy.

Adopted February 2024
Approved: 20.2.24
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