

This report will be made public on 4 September 2017

**Folkestone**

Hythe & Romney Marsh  
Shepway District Council



Report Number: **OS/17/03**

**To:** Overview and Scrutiny  
**Date:** 12 September 2017  
**Status:** Non-executive Decision  
**Head of Service:** Sarah Robson, Head of Communities  
**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Jennifer Hollingsbee, Cabinet Member for Communities

**Subject:** Safeguarding Activity - Annual Report 16-17

**Summary:** The Council has a statutory safeguarding role within the wider public sector, with responsibilities to children, young people and vulnerable adults. A review of safeguarding activity is presented with detail in Appendix 1. An updated safeguarding policy of the Council has been approved by CMT and will be considered by Cabinet on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2017.

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:**

CMT considered an update on safeguarding activity on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2017 and recommended that the annual report be presented to OSC for information and background.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. To receive and note Report OS/17/03.
2. To receive and note the annual report on activity demonstrating how the council is meeting its obligations to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.
3. To note that the Council has been successfully awarded full compliance on the s11 self – assessment audited by the Kent Safeguarding Children’s Board.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a statutory duty on key organisations to ensure that, in discharging their functions, they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Similar obligations apply to young people, up to the age of 21, and vulnerable adults.
- 1.2 The Council has a safeguarding policy that covers four key areas:
- (i) The responsibilities of staff and Councillors working with children, young people and vulnerable adults
  - (ii) The responsibilities of staff and Councillors to report any likely abuse of children, young people or vulnerable adults
  - (iii) Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Prevent duties
  - (iv) Third party contract advice

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 Shepway District Council has recently updated its safeguarding policy. There are no fundamental changes to approach and updates made to the new policy are listed below:
- Inclusion of vulnerable adults. Safeguarding duties on the Council have been extended beyond safeguarding children and up – to now include adults with care and support needs.
  - Duties extended to encompass domestic abuse and violence, child sexual exploitation, honour based abuse and forced marriage, female genital mutilation and Prevent (the Government's Counter Terrorism Strategy).
  - A more detailed overview of the legislative framework covering safeguarding.
  - Definition of roles and responsibilities of key officers and members.
  - An overview of key partnerships and organisations.
  - Links to the Council's corporate Plan
  - Links to outcomes and priorities.
  - Provision of contact points.
  - Inclusion of a glossary of terms.

## **3. SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS**

- 3.1 We are required to have a 'designated person' with overall strategic responsibility for safeguarding in the Council – this is currently the Head of Communities.
- 3.2 The Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer, providing an operational lead and supported by eight Designated Officers (DOs), representing teams from across the Council, who deal with incidents and referrals to children's services or social care teams.

3.3 During the financial year 2016/17, 55 safeguarding concerns were raised with the District Council's Designated Safeguarding Officers; 24 related to children and 31 to adults. These included children at risk owing to parental drug abuse, child threatening self-harm, children being left alone and physical abuse. From the above cases, 12 (9 child and 3 adult) referrals were made to the Social Services for investigation.

3.4 The Council has instilled a proactive approach towards safeguarding and the Annual Report (attached at Appendix 1) highlights some of the key activities carried out :

- Staff training has been undertaken in the past year, with all posts in the Council prioritised in line with unsupervised contact with children and young people.
- Our external contractors operate a similar policy to the Council and annual assurances are secured regarding staff checks and training for appropriate contracts, for example, Gillingham Football Club commissioned projects, relevant East Kent Housing contracts etc.
- The Shepway Safeguarding Steering Group (SSSG) is an internal steering group of key officers including DOs and council departments and helps to support activity. The SSSG has agreed a contractor's advice sheet guiding staff in what levels of safeguarding responsibilities contractors need to maintain depending on the type of contract entered into.
- An existing member of staff has been agreed as the council's Children Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Champion, in line with Kent Children's Safeguarding Board (KCSB) requirements.
- Shepway District Councils section 11 self-assessment was awarded full compliance in autumn 2016 after extensive work by the SSSG was carried out with large amounts of evidence including emails, policies, project evidence, and partnership working demonstrated. Action plans and any outstanding work was accurately reflected in the returns submitted to KSCB, which allowed full compliance to be achieved
- Four in-house staff completed training that allows them to deliver Child Protection Level 2 training, PREVENT awareness, WRAP (a Home Office initiative to stop individuals becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism) and Child Sexual Exploitation training. This has reduced external training costs and enables a more efficient and convenient way of delivering training.
- Staff requiring DBS clearance have now been checked to appropriate levels for their roles.
- The SSSG continues to support the HR team in addressing any ongoing issues around DBS checks and training needs for staff and members.
- A safeguarding contacts poster has been introduced within the civic centre to ensure staff are aware of who to refer safeguarding concerns to.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

4.1 The Council is part of the statutory safeguarding role within the wider public sector, with responsibilities to children, young people and vulnerable adults.

4.2 Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a statutory duty on key organisations to ensure that, in discharging their functions, they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Similar obligations apply to young people, up to the age of 21, and vulnerable adults.

- 4.3 The annual report presented demonstrates that the Council is dealing with safeguarding concerns appropriately and the report provides reassurance that the council is meeting legislative requirements around safeguarding issues.

## **5. CONTACT OFFICER AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

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The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report: None

**Appendices:** Appendix 1: Summary Annual Report