

THRAPSTON TOWN COUNCIL

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SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

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Everyone, including children, young people and vulnerable adults, has the right not to be abused. At Thrapston Town Council we recognise the need to ensure their welfare when they come into contact with the services we provide.

1. Scope

Children and young people are defined as those aged under 18.

A vulnerable adult is defined as someone aged 18 or over; who is, or may be, in need of community services due to age, illness or a mental or physical disability; who is, or may be, unable to take care of himself/herself, or unable to protect himself/herself against significant harm or exploitation.

2. Types of abuse

- Physical: causing physical harm, including hitting, shaking, biting, grabbing, withholding food or drink, force-feeding, wrongly administering medicine, unnecessary restraint, failing to provide physical care and aids to living.
- Sexual: including sexual assault, rape, inappropriate touching/molesting, forcing or enticing someone into sexual acts they don't understand or feel powerless to refuse; grooming a child or young person in preparation for abuse.
- Emotional or psychological: persistent emotional ill treatment or rejection, including verbal abuse, shouting, swearing, threatening abandonment or harm, isolating, taking away privacy or other rights, bullying/intimidation, blaming, belittling, silencing, controlling or humiliating.
- Financial or material: illegal or improper use of an adult's property, money or other assets without their informed consent or where the consent is obtained by fraud.
- Neglect: persistent or severe failure to meet a person's basic physical and psychological needs. It will result in serious impairment of their health or development, and can include withholding shelter, food, drink, heating and clothing, failing to provide access to health, social and educational services, ignoring physical care needs, exposing a person to unacceptable risk, failing to ensure adequate supervision or unresponsiveness to the basic emotional needs of a child.
- Discriminatory abuse: including slurs, harassment and maltreatment due to a protected characteristic (Equality Act 2010).
- Institutional abuse: including the use of systems and routines which neglect a person receiving formal care e.g. in a children's home.

The above list is not exhaustive

3. Safeguarding

Safeguarding children from abuse and promoting their welfare means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Safeguarding vulnerable adults means protecting them from maltreatment, and preventing injury or significant harm.

A safeguarding concern arises if abuse is suspected or disclosed. Abuse can happen anywhere – at home, in a residential or nursing home, a hospital, in the workplace, at a day centre or educational establishment or in the street.

4. Reporting safeguarding concerns

We all have a responsibility to report any safeguarding concerns over the welfare of children, young people or vulnerable adults. This extends to the identification of signs of abuse; poor practice by staff, Councillors and others acting for or on behalf of the Council, and allegations brought to our attention by a member of the public. Reporting safeguarding concerns can prevent serious abuse or harm from happening, or from escalating.

Staff and Councillors must not attempt to investigate abuse themselves; neither must they confront anyone who is allegedly responsible for abuse nor tell them that allegations have been made about them.

The officer responsible for receipt of concerns and forwarding them on is the Clerk. If the Clerk is absent do not wait for him/her to return to work.

Report safeguarding allegations or concerns to Northamptonshire County Council Children's or Adults Services at the earliest possible opportunity, and at least within 24 hours. If it is outside working hours contact the Northamptonshire County Council Emergency Duty Team.

Dial 999 if a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be in imminent danger or a criminal offence may have been committed.

5. Confidentiality, record keeping and sharing information

Information about safeguarding concerns should be regarded as confidential. The information is not secret, however, and Thrapston Town Council will co-operate with investigations by Northamptonshire County Council Children's or Adults services, or the Police as applicable, and follow their advice to ensure that any risk to the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults is addressed.

6. Allegations against a Councillor or member of staff

If someone witnesses behaviour by a Councillor, member of staff, contractor or partner, or an allegation is made about them that indicate that they have, or may have: harmed a child, young person or vulnerable adult, or put them at risk of harm; possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, young person or vulnerable adult or behaved in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, young people or vulnerable adults, they must report it as a safeguarding concern to the Police and/or Northamptonshire County Council's Children's or Adults Services at the earliest possible opportunity.

A Councillor or member of staff must report any allegation made against them to the Clerk or Chair of the Council.

Safeguarding concerns and allegations relating to staff will be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure (including in instances where the member of staff resigns or leaves). However, investigations by the responsible authorities will take precedence over internal council procedures relating to conduct. The Clerk or Chair of the Council will liaise with the responsible authorities to agree the appropriate course of action.

Safeguarding concerns and allegations relating to Councillors will be referred to the Clerk and dealt with in accordance with the Code of Conduct of Members of the Council.

The Town Council reserves the right to amend and update this policy from time to time.

Adopted by Thrapston Town Council
11th August 2020

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Chairman

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Town Clerk