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## Annual Safeguarding Report and Audit 2019-2020

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### SYNOPSIS

To inform members of Annual Safeguarding data in line with audit recommendations.

#### 1. Relevant Background Details

- 1.1 Corby Borough Council recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults, by a commitment to a practice which protects them. The Council has in place a robust Safeguarding Children and Young People's policy and an Adults Safeguarding Policy. All Safeguarding Officers are trained to work with the appropriate authorities to ensure the safety and wellbeing of anyone accessing the Council's services and facilities.
- 1.2 Corby Borough Council is not an investigative or intervention agency for Safeguarding. However, the Council does report cases of abuse or suspected abuse to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) and Northamptonshire Adults Safeguarding Board (NASB). The Council also works with other agencies such as the Police, Social Services and Schools to ensure a multi-agency approach to Safeguarding.
- 1.3 It is not the responsibility of anyone working, or those working with or, for Corby Borough Council, in a paid or unpaid capacity, to take responsibility or to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. However, there is a responsibility to act on any concerns through contact with the appropriate authorities. The Council recognises that all concerns that a child, young person or vulnerable adult has been harmed or is at risk must be reported effectively and at the earliest opportunity.
- 1.4 An internal audit was carried out in December 2019 on the adequacy and efficiency of the Council's Safeguarding procedures. The audit outcome evidenced that there was sufficient assurance that procedures and reporting methods were in place and effective with a rating of Good. However, areas of improvement were identified.

#### 2. Report

##### 2.1 Cases:

The number of child safeguarding cases that the Safeguarding children officers have dealt with annually has increased over the last few years. In 2013 there were only 2 cases compared to 22 cases in 2019. In 2020 January – September, there have been 19 cases.

- 2.2 In 2019, 15 out of the 22 child Safeguarding cases reported were referred to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) team for further investigation by the Council Safeguarding Officers. In 2020, 14 cases out of the 19 to date were referred onto MASH. Several of these cases during 2019 and 2020 were of a serious nature.
- 2.3 There were 21 cases referred onto Northamptonshire Adult Social Services during 2019.
- 2.4 The responsibility for Safeguarding Children and Young People is covered by 2 officers based in the Culture and Leisure Team and the responsibility for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults is covered by 1 officer based in the Housing team. Safeguarding takes

priority status over all other work and with more serious and complex cases being reported, an increase in officer time has been required to deal with cases.

## 2.5 Training:

All Council employees and volunteers that work on a regular basis with Children, Young People and Adults are required to undertake Safeguarding training and need to renew all training within two years. The training is available for staff every 3-4 months and in 2019, specific courses were held for Housing and the Depot.

2.6 A Safeguarding presentation and quick guide on reporting Safeguarding concerns is being offered within the Council Induction training to all new Council employees. An online video will be created to send to all new employees to cover Safeguarding Induction training in 2020.

2.7 The Council in house Safeguarding training package was updated and re-evaluated in December 2019 by the NSCP. This included sections on Radicalisation, Forced Marriage and Honour Based Crime, Criminal Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Domestic Violence, Gangs and County Lines and Modern Slavery and Trafficking. The training package was approved in January 2020 and is valid for 2 years. This training package combines both Children and Adults Safeguarding as identified in the previous audit.

2.8 During 2020, an online Safeguarding training refresher course has been developed which began rolling out in September. This training is to be completed 18 months after the face to face training to ensure that staff remain up to date on safeguarding issues. The refresher training consists of a power-point presentation and an online test that affirms staff's knowledge and understanding of Safeguarding.

2.9 Before December 2020, the first CBC online Safeguarding training course will be held virtually over Zoom, to allow all CBC staff to access the training.

2.10 The Children's Safeguarding Officers have completed several training courses during in the last 12 months including; Self harm and Suicide, Safer recruitment, Domestic Violence, Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) and Prevent (Anti-Crime and Terrorism) training.

2.11 All Safeguarding policies, procedures and training will be reviewed and brought in line with Future Northants strategies.

## 2.12 Audit improvement plan:

An internal safeguarding audit was completed between October 2019 and December 2019. The audit outlined several actions for which a working group was formed in December 2019 to complete the actions. As highlighted in the internal audit, areas of improvement were

- Develop safeguarding section on the CBC website with guidance on how to report safeguarding concerns.
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy should be revised to include contact details of Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs) and the reporting form. Once this is done it should be made available to all staff on the Intranet.
- Annual Safeguarding reports should be formally discussed at Audit and Governance Committee / Council meetings.
- A Safeguarding Online refresher training package for staff and members requires developing and rolling out for all staff and members.
- Action should be taken to review right to work status for the samples identified and all existing drivers where there is insufficient documentation on file to evidence the driver's right to work status.

- The date on which the right to work check was conducted should be recorded. This date may be written on the document copy as follows: *'the date on which this right to work check was made: [insert date]'*
- Officers to ensure that no licences are issued prior to receiving Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) outcome. Evidence of the DBS being checked prior to licence issue must be retained.
- Officers to ensure that CSE training is completed prior to new licence being issued or the renewal being granted.

All actions have now been fully completed or progressed.

### **3. Options to be considered (if any)**

There are no options to be considered.

### **4. Issues to be taken into account;-**

#### ***Policy Priorities***

The Safeguarding Children and Young People policy is currently in place and will be reviewed and updated by December 2020.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults policy will be reviewed again in 2021.

#### ***Financial***

There are no financial implications for consideration.

#### ***Risk***

Reducing the risk of abuse or continued abuse of any kind is paramount within the Councils Safeguarding policy and procedures.

#### ***Legal and Data Management***

The Council has a legal requirement to ensure robust and effective policies and procedures are in place for Safeguarding to ensure the safety and welfare of all Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults.

All Safeguarding data is stored securely in line with Data protection procedures.

#### ***Best Value***

The Council's Safeguarding procedures and policies are in effect and robust.

#### ***Equalities and human rights***

The Councils Safeguarding policies and procedures take into account and action equalities for vulnerable children and adults.

#### ***Sustainability***

There are no sustainability issues to consider

#### ***Community safety***

Safeguarding is the prevention of criminal acts. The Council Safeguarding training raises awareness of criminal acts and government legislation.

### **5. Conclusion**

The overall conclusion is that based upon the work undertaken by the audit, there is an opinion of sufficient assurance and that Council practices are well established and operating efficiently.

The audit highlights the importance of Safeguarding which the Council recognises.

The identified improvements from the audit have been completed or progressed, thus ensuring robust and effective Safeguarding practices.

**6. Recommendation**

It is recommended that Members note the Annual Safeguarding and Audit report.

**Background Papers**

Internal Safeguarding Audit 2019 report

**External Consultations**

N/A

**List of Appendices**

N/A

**Officer to Contact**

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