



Charlbury Town Council

Safeguarding Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Everyone has a duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

1.2 This policy outlines practices that will promote the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults using Charlbury Town Council services.

1.3 This policy will be reviewed regularly.

2. Definitions

2.1 Safeguarding is the action taken to promote the health and well being of children, young persons and vulnerable adults by actively preventing harm, abuse and neglect.

2.2 Children and young people: anyone under the age of 18 years.

2.3 Vulnerable adult: anyone over 18 who is unable to care for themselves; unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation; or may need community care services.

3. To whom this policy applies

3.1 This policy applies to anyone working for or on behalf of Charlbury Town Council whether in a paid, voluntary or commissioned capacity.

4. Designated Safeguarding Contact

The Town Clerk is the main contact for:

- Identifying if a council activity involves the need to consider safeguarding
- Identifying sources of info or, if they are developed, TC procedures
- Being informed on behalf of the council if a concern arises

5. Promoting a safe environment

5.1 In order to promote a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults, Charlbury Town Council wishes to promote a safeguarding culture in its premises and activity areas. In order to achieve this, Charlbury Town Council will:

- provide safe facilities and undertake regular safety assessments;
- ensure that employees, councillors and volunteers are aware of safeguarding expectations;
- make available on public noticeboards and to employees and councillors relevant contact details.

5.2 Employees, councillors and volunteers all have a duty to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults but are not responsible for deciding whether abuse is taking place. If they have concerns, these should be passed on to the authorities as detailed below as soon as possible.



6. Allegations against employees, councillors and volunteers

6.1 All employees, councillors and volunteers should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child, young person or vulnerable adult. It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or young people and their parents or vulnerable adults to be conducted in view of other adults.

6.2 No attempt should be made to investigate or act on any allegation. Contact the following agencies who are trained to deal with concerns.

For children and young persons:

Oxfordshire MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) is the front door to Children's Social Care for all child protection and immediate safeguarding concerns. If there is an immediate safeguarding concern where a child or young person is deemed at risk or has potentially suffered significant harm, the MASH team should be contacted immediately: **0345 050 7666** during office hours (8.30am – 5pm, Monday to Thursday, 8.30am – 4pm, Friday)

Outside office hours call the Emergency Duty Team on **0800 833 408**

If you have an urgent concern for a child or young person **call 999 or 101.**

You should always call 999 in an emergency – for example when someone's life is at risk or someone is seriously injured or critically ill.

For vulnerable adults:

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB) is a group of statutory, private, voluntary, and independent organisations across Oxfordshire who work together to empower and protect some of the most vulnerable members of our community.

You can raise a concern over the phone by calling **0345 050 7666** during office hours or the Emergency Duty Service number (**0800 833 408**) outside of those hours.

Or report your concerns via this website: <https://www.osab.co.uk/how-to-report-concerns/>

Safeguarding is not an emergency service so if someone requires immediate protection because they are being harmed, call the Police on 999

7. Whistleblowing

7.1 We recognise that children, young people or vulnerable adults cannot be expected to raise concerns in an environment where employees, councillors and volunteers fail to do so.

7.2 All employees, councillors volunteers should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues and appropriate advice will be sought from the Safeguarding Team at Oxfordshire County Council.

8. What should be a cause for concern

8.1 Employees, councillors and volunteers should be concerned by any behaviour, action or inaction, which significantly harms the physical and/or emotional development of a child, young person or a vulnerable adult. A child, young person or vulnerable adult may be abused by parents, other relatives



or carers, professionals and their peers, and abuse can occur in any family OR in any other area of society, regardless of social class, wealth or geographical location.

8.2 Abuse falls into five main categories:

- physical abuse
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse
- financial abuse
- neglect

8.3 All employees, councillors and volunteers need to have an awareness that there are many other forms of abuse ranging from Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) through to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

8.4 Ideally, employees, councillors volunteers who engage with children, young persons or vulnerable adults will have accessed appropriate training.

8.5 Further information about types of abuse, signs to look for and what to do if you are concerned are also available on the Oxfordshire County Council website:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/business/information-providers/multi-agency-safeguarding-hub>.

And the West Oxfordshire District Council website:

<https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/communities-and-leisure/community-safety/protecting-vulnerable-children-and-adults/>

Adopted: 18th October 2023