



# Wivenhoe Town Council

## Safeguarding Policy

### Introduction

Everyone has a duty to safeguard children and young people and adults in need of care and protection. This policy outlines practice that will promote the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults using town council facilities. The policy will be reviewed by the Town Council annually.

### Definitions

1. Children and young people: Anyone under the age of 18 years
2. Adult in Need of Care and Protection: Anyone over 18 who:
  - Has needs for care and support (regardless of the level of need and whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
  - Is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse or neglect, and
  - As a result of those needs, is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

### To whom this policy applies

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

### Promoting a safe environment

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

- Provide safe facilities and undertake regular safety assessments.
- Ensure that employees, and councillors are aware of the safeguarding expectations.
- Make available on public notice boards and to employees and councillors, the contact details of the following:
  - I. For concerns about children - Essex County Council Tel. 0345 603 7627 [Report a concern about a child: Report a concern about a child - Essex County Council](#)
  - II. For concerns about Adults - Essex County Council Adult Social Care Tel. 0345 603 7630 [Report abuse or neglect: Report a concern about an adult - Essex County Council](#)
  - III. Out of Hours - The Social Care Emergency Duty Team Tel. 0345 606 1212

### Responsibilities

- Employees, councillors and volunteers working with the council all have a duty to protect children, young people and adults in need of care and protection but are not responsible for deciding whether abuse is taking place. The responsibility of staff, councillors and volunteers if they have any concerns

is that they pass them on, via the Reporting Officer, to the appropriate authority as soon as possible. The Procedure Flowchart sets out the required process.

Staff, councillors and volunteers must:

- Follow the safeguarding policies and procedures at all times, particularly if concerns arise about the safety or welfare of a child or adult in need of support and protection.
- Participate in safeguarding training as required and maintain current working knowledge.
- Discuss any concerns about the welfare of a child or adult with the Town Clerk or the Chair of the Personnel Committee or the Chair of the council in the absence of the Town Clerk.
- Contribute to actions required including information sharing and attending meetings.
- Work collaboratively with other agencies to safeguard and protect the welfare of people in the premises and activity areas.
- Remain alert at all times to the possibility of abuse.
- Recognise the impact that diversity, beliefs and values of people can have.

#### Allegations against staff and volunteers

- All staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child or adult in need of care or attention (as defined above). It is always advisable for contact with individual children (or parents) or vulnerable adults to be conducted in view of other adults.
- No attempt should be made to investigate or act on any allegation regarding staff or volunteers behaviour with children or young people before consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), 03330 139 797
- The Town Council should follow the ESCB and ESAB procedures (SET procedures) for managing allegations against staff/volunteers, a copy of which can be found on the ESCB ([www.escb.org.uk](http://www.escb.org.uk)) and ESAB ([www.essexsab.org.uk](http://www.essexsab.org.uk)) websites -[Home \(escb.co.uk\)](http://www.escb.co.uk)

#### Whistleblowing

All staff and 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 LADO or Safeguarding Teams.

#### What should be a cause for concern: Children and young people

Staff and Volunteers should be concerned by any behaviour, action or inaction, which significantly harms the physical and/or emotional development of a child. A child may be abused by parents, other relatives or carers, professionals and other children, and abuse can occur in any family OR in any other area of society, regardless of social class, wealth or geographical location.

Abuse falls into four main categories:

1. Physical Abuse
2. Emotional Abuse
3. Sexual Abuse
4. Neglect

All staff 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).

Ideally, staff and volunteers who engage with children will have accessed appropriate child protection training through the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB) but further information about types of abuse, signs to look for and what to do if you are concerned are also available on the ESCB website [Home \(escb.co.uk\)](http://escb.co.uk). All agencies, whether statutory, voluntary or other are obliged to follow the procedures laid out on the ESCB website.

### Adults in Need of Care and Protection

Staff and volunteers should be aware of the possibility of abuse to vulnerable adults from the community, relatives, carers or professionals in the areas of:

1. Physical abuse
2. Domestic violence
3. Psychological abuse
4. Emotional abuse
5. Financial or material abuse
6. Modern slavery
7. Organisational abuse

Information is available on the ESAB website [Home \(escb.co.uk\)](http://escb.co.uk)

### Confidentiality

Employees have a duty to share information relating to suspected abuse with Essex Social Care and Essex Police. Employees must not:

- Discuss any allegations, substantiated or not, with anyone from Wivenhoe Town Council other than with the Town Clerk or the Chair of Personnel.
- Discuss any allegations, substantiated or not, with any member of an external agency (excluding Essex Social Care and Essex Police), other than as part of a referral or investigation,
- Discuss any allegations, substantiated or not, with any other interested party, including parents, carers, and relatives of the child, without the express permission of the person with overall responsibility for the investigation. This does not exclude the employee from the need or right to consult with a solicitor, trade union representative or other bona fide legal adviser.

### Consent

Consent is not required to breach confidentiality and make a safeguarding referral where:

- a serious crime has been committed
- the alleged perpetrator may go on to abuse others
- the child is deemed to be at serious risk of harm
- the adult with needs for care and support is deemed to be at serious risk of harm (unless the individual has capacity, and the concern is around 'self-neglect')

- there is a statutory requirement such as Children's Act 1989, Mental Health Act 1983, Care Standards Act 2000
- the public interest overrides the interest of the individual
- a member of staff or volunteer is the person accused of abuse

#### Data Protection

All copies of Referral Forms to the Children and Families Hub and Essex Social Care should be retained by the Town Clerk in a secure location to ensure confidentiality. This information will be retained in accordance with data protection periods. No other copies should be kept.

#### Training

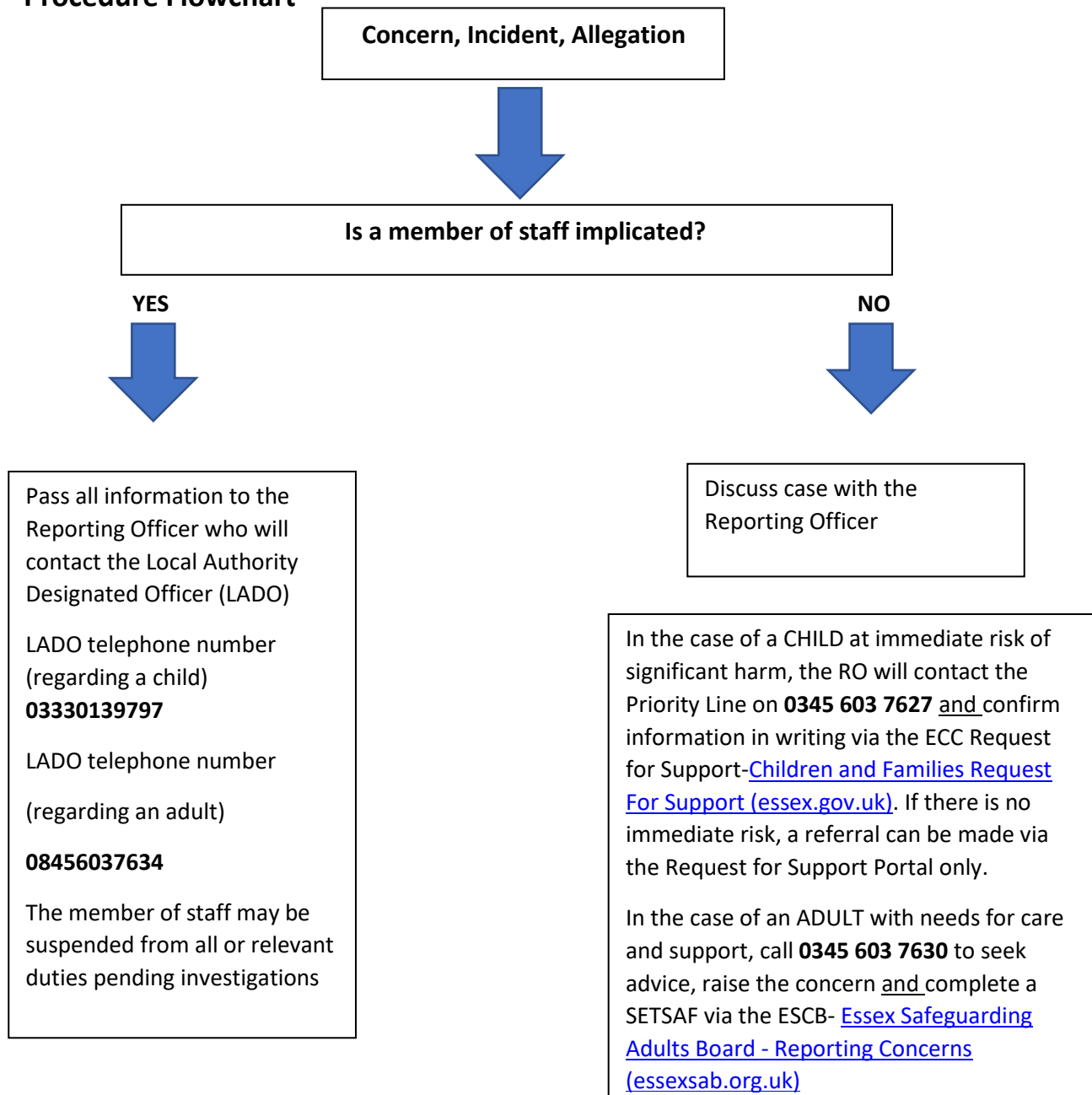
All staff are required to complete the following e learning courses -

<https://www.escb.co.uk/learning-and-development/safeguarding-children-level-1-basic-awareness/>

<https://www.essexsab.org.uk/learning-development/esab-safeguarding-adults-basic-awareness-e-learning/>

It is recommended that councillors and volunteers working with Wivenhoe Town Council complete them.

## Procedure Flowchart



Police – **999**: Requiring an emergency response to anyone’s immediate safety

Children and Families Hub - **0345 603 7627**: Request the Priority Line where a child is at immediate risk of significant harm. Request the Consultation Line for advice only.

Adult Social Care - **0345 603 7630**: To seek advice on an ‘adult with needs for care and support’

- Emergency Out of Hours (Child or Adult) - **0345 606 1212**

**The Reporting Officer is the Town Clerk. In the absence of the Town Clerk, the Chair of Personnel or the Chair of the council will act as Reporting Officer.**