

## Lichfield District Council Executive Summary for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

### SCOPE

This policy seeks to fulfil Lichfield District Council's responsibilities under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, as well as a raft of other legislation in this area, and in particular:

*“The Children’s Bill places a Duty on key statutory agencies to discharge their normal functions having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. They must also ensure that the same approach is followed by any other body providing services on their behalf.”*

This policy applies to:

- all staff (including permanent, temporary, full-time, part-time, casual, seasonal, coaching and contract staff)
- volunteers
- Elected Members
- our partner organisations, contractors, grant recipients and other organisations providing services on our behalf or using our facilities. We would expect that they either confirm that they have a policy and procedure for working with children/vulnerable adults or they agree to act in accordance with the spirit and intent of this policy as part of any commissioning or contractual agreement.

This policy seeks to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse. It is important to understand that abuse can take many different forms – physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, it is important that we respond to and report all forms of abuse.

### POLICY

Lichfield District Council accepts and takes seriously its responsibility to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm. Employees, volunteers, Elected Members and those working on behalf of the District Council, whether paid or unpaid, accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues that cause children and vulnerable adults harm.

This policy acknowledges the importance of protecting children and vulnerable adults, both to the individuals concerned and to Lichfield District Council employees. The Council will ensure this policy is included in the standard induction processes for all staff and that copies are readily available from the personnel section and on the Council's intranet.

### STAFFORDSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN’S BOARD

Lichfield District Council is a member of the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board, which brings together representatives of each of the main agencies and professionals responsible for helping to protect children from abuse and neglect. It is an inter-agency forum for agreeing how the different services and professional groups should co-operate to safeguard children throughout Staffordshire and for making sure that arrangements work effectively in bringing about better outcomes for children.

Lichfield District Council is committed to working with the Board and other agencies in order to deliver these outcomes.

### HOW WE ENDEAVOUR TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

We will endeavour to safeguard children and vulnerable adults by:

- Adopting protection policies and guidelines which safeguard the children, young people and vulnerable adults with whom we work.
- Adopting robust procedures for the recruitment and selection of staff, including the taking up of appropriate references.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies that need to know.
- Ensuring that the Criminal Record Bureau, in accordance with their guidelines, checks all staff, volunteers and Elected Members who require a disclosure due to the nature of their work with children / vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring that all staff receive appropriate training in protecting children and vulnerable adults.
- Making all new staff aware of our policies and procedures for protecting children and vulnerable adults.
- Reviewing our policy annually, as a minimum, to ensure good practice is observed.
- Actively promoting the well-being and safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults in all of our services.

It is important to understand that as a member of Lichfield District Council's team you may come into contact with children and vulnerable adults in a wide range of situations and may be in a position to identify families in need or individuals at risk.

It is important that this policy is applied and the guidelines followed in all situations in which you have contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults. Your team may also apply policies and procedures relating to the protection of children and vulnerable adults that are specific to your area of work. These must be consistent with this corporate policy and will be produced in consultation with the *Designated Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer*.

### KEY PRINCIPLES

The guidance given in this document is based on the principle that:

- The welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults is the primary concern and that all children, young people and vulnerable adults have the right to protection from abuse or exploitation
- It is the responsibility of child and vulnerable adult protection agencies to determine whether or not abuse has taken place and It is everyone's responsibility to report concerns to an appropriate authority.

### DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy and associated procedures, the following definitions should apply:

**“Child”** means any child or young person up to the age of 18, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or religion.

## Appendix A

**“Vulnerable adult”** means person aged 18 years and above, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or religion, and over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation’. Law Commission (1995)

**“Staff”** means employees, volunteers, Elected Members and those working on behalf of the council, whether paid or unpaid. The designated *Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer* will be responsible for dealing with all allegations and suspicions of abuse. The *Designated Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer* for Lichfield District Council is the Community & Partnership Manager assisted by the Children Trust Partnership Manager<sup>1</sup>.

**“Consent”** is the permission given by the child/vulnerable adult and/or parent or carer of the child/vulnerable adult to take part in the requested activity.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Lichfield District Council has a duty of care to the children and vulnerable adults we provide activities or services for and to make every effort to ensure their safety and enjoyment. The Council has a responsibility to ensure that all employees and others covered by the scope of the policy have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities when working with children / vulnerable adults.

### EXTERNAL AGENCIES AND GRANT FUNDING

Partnerships with other agencies are an important part of our everyday working and it is important that those agencies which have contact with children or vulnerable adults adopt the same commitment to their protection as we do. For example, coaches running sessions; sports clubs using Council facilities; entertainers; contractors; consultants or volunteers.

In agreeing to utilise the services of these other agencies, allowing them to use Council facilities and where organisations receive a Service Level Agreement or Grant Aid funding from Lichfield District Council, staff should request signed confirmation that they have a policy and procedure for working with children and/or vulnerable adults. If they do not have a child/vulnerable adult protection policy a copy of this policy should subsequently be made available to them.

### FILMING AND PHOTOGRAPHING

It is not illegal to take photographs of children during activities run by Lichfield District Council, but such photographs and video images staff are classed as personal data under the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Therefore such images for publicity purposes will require the consent of either the individual concerned, or in the case of children (aged under 18), their legal guardians (consent forms are available on the Lichfield District Council Intranet or from the Communications team). Where registration/booking forms are used for activities and

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<sup>1</sup> It is also recommended that each service area whose work brings staff into contact with children or vulnerable adults have a designated officer who maintain up to date knowledge of this area and provide a local and easily accessible source of general advice and guidance.

events a statement on photography and filming should be included along with an option to confirm or refuse consent.

This means that Lichfield District Council should not display images of children on websites, in publications or in a public place without such consent. This also applies to large group shots where the photograph is to be used to celebrate the activity taking place. Photography or filming should focus on the activity rather than a particular young person and personal details, e.g. their address, will never be revealed.

Indeed, anyone wishing to take photographs or film at a specified Lichfield District Council event or activity must have a valid reason for doing so and seek the discretion of the manager or person in charge and completing a registration form.

### **OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Individual departments and teams within Lichfield District Council will also implement policies and procedures relating to the protection of children and vulnerable adults that are specific to their area of work. For example, it is necessary for robust procedures to be applied in relation to the Summer Activity Programme organised by the Leisure Services Unit and the Lichfield Garrick have specific procedures and practice guidance due to the unique nature of their work with children and young people. The Child Protection in Sport Unit also has guidance related to working with children in sport and links to National Governing Bodies of Sport. Such individual team procedures will be consistent with the overall corporate policies detailed in this document and will need to be ratified by the *Designated Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer*.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other Lichfield District Council policies, such as whistle blowing, disciplinary / grievance, recruitment and selection and health and safety which are available on the Council's intranet.

### **CLEARANCE FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

CRB checks are a key element of the council's policy for the protection of children and vulnerable adults and are based on the principles that, checks should only be carried out on positions exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (listed on the Exceptions Order maintained by the Home Office), all appointments to posts which involve working in a 'regulated position' with children or supervision or caring for vulnerable adults, as defined within the Exceptions Order, should be CRB checked.

A satisfactory disclosure certificate from the CRB must be received before a post holder takes up a post (except in exceptional circumstances beyond the control of Lichfield District Council Lichfield District Council will **not** accept a 'current' CRB certificate carried out in relation to previous employment. Standard disclosures take approximately two weeks and enhanced disclosures up to six weeks, both disclosures last for three years.

### **RECOGNITION OF ABUSE AND TRAINING FOR STAFF**

Even for those experienced in working with child abuse it is not always easy to recognise a situation where abuse may occur or has already taken place. It is acknowledged that employees are not expert at recognising such situations. The Council therefore encourages and expects employees to discuss any concerns that they may have about the welfare of a child immediately with their line manager or the *Designated Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer*.

Any staff who work directly with children or whose work may involve any form of contact with them or manage staff and/or programmes that involve children will undertake training relevant to their level of work. The Personnel department will arrange for appropriate training programmes and will seek advice from agencies including the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board, NSPCC, the Child Protection in Sport Unit and the Staffordshire Adult Protection Partnership. All staff should receive appropriate training in safeguarding to raise their awareness of the District Council's Corporate Policy for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults.

The Policy will form part of the induction process for all new staff employed by Lichfield District Council, including permanent, temporary, casual and volunteers.

### **RECRUITMENT AND EMPLOYMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE**

Lichfield District Council often employs young people, particularly in Leisure Services and The Lichfield Garrick. However, any employment of a school aged child (up to the end of year 11 – the last Friday in June) in such paid work is illegal without a licence from the Education Authority. Some work cannot be licensed at all and cannot be legally done by school-age children, including any work in transport, serving alcohol, sorting refuse or working with food in commercial kitchens.

Recruiting managers must complete an application form, available from the Education Welfare Service or contact personnel department within one week of the child commencing work. Temporary permission for the child to start work will usually be given if the legal requirements are met. The form needs the signature of a parent as well as the employer, so your child cannot have a legal job without knowledge or consent of parent. These rules are intended to protect children from exploitation, ensure that their education does not suffer and keep them safe.

### **REVIEW OF CORPORATE POLICY**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the *Designated Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer* and amended as appropriate, particularly in response to legislative changes and good practice guidance. The first review will take place twelve months after its formal adoption. The review will also monitor the number of cases reported to the *Designated Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer* and the number of referrals made to other agencies. Recommendations will be made for any positive action required to support the policy and this will be reported to Employment Committee for approval and/or comments.

The *Designated Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer* will explore ways in which the views of children, young people and vulnerable adults are considered. This will link to involvement and engagement programmes locally, such as that of the Lichfield Locality Children's Trust Board.

To view a copy of the full document, please visit

<http://intranet.lichfielddc.gov.uk/protectingchildren>