

# ACKLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

## PROTECTION OF CHILDREN & VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

The Designated Safeguarding Officer as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 is Clair Lewis, Parish Clerk of Acklington Parish Council

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*The designated Safeguarding Officer is to attend training in July 2020*

### Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to identify procedures, roles and responsibilities for ensuring that staff, volunteers and trustees working for Acklington Parish Council deal with safeguarding in relation to the protection of children & vulnerable adults appropriately and promptly.

### Context

For the purpose of this procedure a child is a person under the age of 18 and a vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 years or over, who is less able to protect themselves than others and some have difficulty making their wishes and feelings known.

### Definition of abuse

Abuse is a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.

Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological, it may be an act of neglect or it may occur when a vulnerable person is persuaded to enter into financial or sexual transactions to which they have not consented. Abuse can occur in any relationship and it may result in significant harm to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.

The main types of abuse are:

- **Physical abuse**- including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.
- **Sexual abuse**- including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable adult has not consented, or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.
- **Psychological abuse**- including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.

- • **Financial or material abuse**- including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- • **Neglect and acts of omission**- including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- • **Discriminatory abuse**- including racist, sexist, that based on a person's disability, age or sexuality and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

### **The role of staff, volunteers and councillors**

All staff, volunteers and trustees working on behalf of Acklington Parish Council have a duty to promote the welfare and safety of children and vulnerable adults.

Staff, volunteers and trustees may receive disclosures of abuse and observe children and vulnerable adults who are at risk. The policy will enable staff/volunteers to make informed and confident responses to specific protection issues.

Training in safeguarding will be provided to staff, volunteers and councillors once every 3 years.

### **Procedure in the event of a disclosure**

A full record shall be made as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation and any other relevant information.

This should include information in relation to the date, the time, the place where the alleged abuse happened, your name and the names of others present, the name of the complainant and, where different, the name of the child or adult who has allegedly been abused, the nature of the alleged abuse, a description of any injuries observed, the account which has been given of the allegation.

Any concern to be reported as soon as possible to the named Safeguarding officer, who will advise and liaise as necessary.

Promises of confidentiality should not be given as this may conflict with the need to ensure the safety and welfare of the individual.

Any incidents should be reported to Northumberland County Council as soon as possible through the OneCall number.

OneCall number 01670 536 400

In an emergency, i.e. if someone's safety is under immediate threat, dial 999 and then report to safeguarding officer.

**The Designated Safeguarding Officer as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 is the Parish Clerk of Acklington Parish Council contactable by 07809205548**

It is important to remember that it is not the responsibility of the person who encounters a case of alleged abuse to make a decision as to whether the abuse has occurred.

### **Confidentiality**

Child and vulnerable adult protection raises issues of confidentiality, which should be clearly understood.

Staff, volunteers and trustees have a professional responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children & vulnerable adults with other professionals, particularly investigative agencies and social services.

All personal information regarding a child or vulnerable adult will be kept confidential. All written records will be kept in a secure area for a specific time as identified in data protection guidelines.

Where possible, consent should be obtained before sharing personal information. The safety and welfare of the individual is the priority therefore in some circumstances obtaining consent may not be possible.

### **Role of Designated Safeguarding Officer**

The role of the Designated Safeguarding Officer is to deal with all instances involving child and adult protection that arises within Acklington Parish Council and they will respond to all protection concerns and enquiries. The designated safeguarding officer is the Parish Clerk and any concerns or suspicions should be reported to them in the first instance. In their absence or if the allegation involves the Designated Safeguarding Officer concerns should be reported to the Chairman or Vice Chairman.

Parish Clerk – Clair Lewis

Chairman – Jeff Newton

Vice Chairman – Sharin Ingleby

Policy adopted (07/07/2020) - To be reviewed at each AGM