

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 21 November 2022

Report Title

Corporate Safeguarding Protocol

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Jo Brown, Assistant Chief Executive

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

A new Corporate Safeguarding Protocol has been developed which acts as a framework for the Council to ensure that safeguarding is embedded across all services and that all staff and Councillors are aware of their responsibilities.

The report also references the outcome from the recent Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services which demonstrates the effectiveness of safeguarding practice in the Council.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet approve the updated Corporate Safeguarding Protocol.
2. To note the outcome of 'Good' from the recent Ofsted Inspection of Children and Young People Services.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Corporate Safeguarding Protocol November 2022

Appendix 2 Equality Screening

Appendix 3 Carbon Impact

Background Papers

Ofsted report of Children's Services August 12 2022

[Children's Services: Ofsted report – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council](#)

Corporate Safeguarding Policy 2016

[Corporate Safeguarding Policy](#)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

No

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Corporate Safeguarding Protocol

Corporate Safeguarding Protocol

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council has a duty to make appropriate arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults. The Council believes that every child, young person and adult, regardless of their background, age, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, ethnicity or religious belief should be able to live and participate in a safe society without any fear, violence, abuse, bullying, discrimination or exploitation.
- 1.2 Safeguarding is everyone's business and everyone at the Council shares a responsibility, both corporately and individually, to ensure that every person is treated with dignity and respect and protected from others who may abuse them. All Council employees, elected members, contractors, and volunteers, have a duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of the most vulnerable people in Rotherham, young or old.
- 1.3 A range of development interventions, procedures and good practice are in place to ensure that every service and employee can demonstrate that they understand their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people, and adults.
- 1.4 An Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) took place on the week beginning 20 June 2022, which considered the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements for children. On 12 August the Council were notified that Ofsted judged Children's Services overall effectiveness to be Good.

Inspectors found services to be judged as:

- The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families – Good
- The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection – Good
- The experiences and progress of children in care and care leavers – Good. This is an improvement on the previous judgment given in 2018, which was Requires Improvement.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The Council continues to challenge itself to be at the forefront of national and international best practice in safeguarding children and young people. The previous Safeguarding Policy which has been in place for five years is proposed to be superseded by this protocol based on current good practice.

2.2 The new Corporate Safeguarding Protocol at Appendix 1 demonstrates a corporate framework which sets out how all services across the Council work to deliver the Council's statutory safeguarding duties and responsibilities.

2.3 The proposed statement is aligned to the Care Act (2014) and the Working Together to Safeguard Children Statutory Guidance (2018), corporate responsibilities, the Council Plan and Year Ahead Delivery Plan.

2.4 Senior Safeguarding Officers across the Council have been consulted over the changes and the Statement has been agreed by the Safeguarding Champions Group.

2.5 To support awareness raising across the Council, the previous e-learning module has been updated to reflect current good practice, a safeguarding toolbox talk is being delivered by managers to their teams across the Council and updated information (z-card) has been distributed to Council staff. Awareness of safeguarding procedures is regularly featured in corporate communications and a whole Council approach is taken to key safeguarding events such as safeguarding awareness week.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approve the Corporate Safeguarding Protocol. The recent 'Good' judgement from the Ofsted ILACS inspection demonstrates that there is a Council wide approach to safeguarding and the Corporate Safeguarding Protocol builds on this approach.

3.2 The alternative option is not to update the Corporate Safeguarding Protocol. This has been rejected as it would not provide a wider framework on how all services across the Council work to deliver the Council's statutory safeguarding duties and responsibilities.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 In addition to senior safeguarding officers across the Council, the Strategic Director for Adult Care, Housing and Public Health and Strategic Director for Children and Young People's Services have been consulted during development of the updated statement.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 The Statement will be published internally following Cabinet in November.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications due to the recommendations in the report. The procurement considerations associated with this report as included in section 8.3 of the Corporate Safeguarding Protocol.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 The Corporate Safeguarding Protocol is consistent with relevant legislation in particular the Care Act 2014, Children Act 1989 and 2004, and the Statutory Guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018). Otherwise, there are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendation within this report.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 A range of development interventions are in place to ensure all staff understand their responsibilities in regard to safeguarding and the key contact information for raising any concerns. The staff development offer will be kept under review and regularly refreshed.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 The updated Corporate Safeguarding Protocol will have a positive impact on safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults across the borough. The statement provides an overview of the Council's corporate commitment on the safeguarding agenda and will ensure all staff are aware of their role and responsibilities in identifying and reporting potential safeguarding concerns.
- 9.2 The outcome of the ILCAS visit provides evidence that Rotherham MBC Children and Young Peoples Services continue to safeguard children, whilst also improving the outcomes for children in need of help and protection.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 Officers have had regard to equalities and human rights implications throughout development of the safeguarding statement. The safeguarding statement makes clear that everyone should be able to live and participate in a safe society without any fear, violence, abuse, bullying, discrimination or exploitation, irrespective of their background or protected characteristics.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 There are no direct implications resulting from the recommendations in this report

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1. The Rotherham Together Partnership has a Safeguarding Partnership Protocol in place, which sets out how strategic partnership bodies work in a coordinated manner, working collaboratively to avoid duplication and ensure consistency. This includes Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership, Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board, Rotherham Health and Wellbeing Board, Rotherham Children and Young People's Partnership and the Safer Rotherham Partnership.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 As referenced in the statement, safeguarding is everyone's business. The statement sets out roles and responsibilities for all Council Officers and includes key information on how to report any concerns.
- 13.2 In order to maintain a working knowledge of their roles and responsibilities, there will be review of the development interventions to support safeguarding awareness across the Council as well as regular corporate communications on the subject.

14. Accountable Officers

Jo Brown, Assistant Chief Executive
Lee Mann, Assistant Director HR & OD

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

| | Named Officer | Date |
|---|----------------------|-------------|
| Chief Executive | Sharon Kemp | 07/11/22 |
| Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer) | Judith Badger | 03/11/22 |
| Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer) | Phillip Horsfield | 03/11/22 |

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