

# AXMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL

Policy adopted on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2024 Minute Reference FC24/167

## SAFEGUARDING POLICY

### PART ONE: Safeguarding culture

Axminster Town Council is committed to a safeguarding culture, which protects children and those who come into contact with them. It also applies to vulnerable adults.

Council's commitment to safeguarding is based around the following principles:

- 1) Children must be protected from harm at all times and all children should be safe, happy and valued. Children should feel able to tell us if this is not the case.
- 2) Children using our services and facilities should be able to use our facilities in safety.
- 3) We want to support parents, children and carers using our playgrounds and recreation grounds and participating in our events; promoting safety and wellbeing.
- 4) If we discover or suspect a child is suffering from harm, we will notify the relevant safeguarding authority for the Devon area, or the police or social services so any necessary, appropriate and timely action can be taken.
- 5) This applies to all staff, councillors and volunteers at Axminster Town Council. It also applies to those 3<sup>rd</sup> parties working for us (contractors) and any persons using our premises, be that buildings or land.

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## **PART TWO: Safeguarding operations**

### **1) Internal procedures**

a) All staff, Councillors and volunteers to be provided with a copy of, and agree to read and understand, the Council's Safeguarding Policy.

b) *See something = say something. Report it.*

The Town Clerk is the first point of contact for any such reports. If however, the issue relates to the Town Clerk, then the next point of contact is the Town Mayor (presiding Chair of the Council).

The Town Clerk will report to the correct team (see below) and decide what information must be shared.

### **2) Situation / Location**

a) Using our property / buildings / facilities / land

- Organised groups working unsupervised with children/young people and vulnerable adults must have the necessary DSB safety checks.

b) **Events**

- Hirers for hires, functions, events and performances must have a responsible adult present at all times.

c) **Out of hours protocol**

- Any safety concerns must be reported to the Town Clerk, or if the Town Clerk is unavailable, to the Police.

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## **PART THREE: Safeguarding definitions**

### **Child Safeguarding information**

The legal definition of a child according to the Children Act 1989 is “ a person under the age of 18, except in relation to certain applications under Schedule 1 to the CA 1989 ”

### **Adult safeguarding (vulnerable adults) information**

The Care Act 2014 established a statutory framework for care and support including adult safeguarding, which is designed to prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs.

- The Town Council’s corporate responsibility is to identify abuse.
- Axminster Town Council staff and Councillors do not ordinarily have regular / substantial unsupervised contact with children and adults with care & support needs.

Should this situation change, the relevant Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks would be undertaken.

## **PART FOUR: The role of community partners in safeguarding**

The Devon County Safeguarding Guidelines outline the basic safeguarding procedures, which must be followed by all local authorities in Devon.

There may also be occasions when agencies in another county have to be contacted to report a safeguarding concern, for example, if an incident occurs at an ATC activity/facility but the child or vulnerable adult lives in a neighbouring county. A duty to co-operate exists between local authorities in all cases.

Devon County Council is the Children’s Services Authority and provider of Adult Social Care for Devon. It has a duty to conduct enquiries where it is suspected that a child who lives in, or is found in a local authority area, is suffering from, or likely to suffer significant harm in the form of physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect. Axminster Town Council has a duty to support any enquiries.

### **Devon Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (DSCP)**

DSCP is a multi-agency organisation, which brings together agencies who work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

### **Torbay and Devon Safeguarding Adult Partnership (TDSAP)**

TDSAP oversees and leads adult safeguarding across the locality and has jurisdiction over a range of matters that contribute to the prevention of abuse and neglect.

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## **PART FIVE: Safeguarding reporting procedures**

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and anyone can raise a safeguarding concern.

If a member of staff, a Councillor or a volunteer sees something that worries them, they have a duty and a responsibility to report it (but not to investigate it).

- All safeguarding concerns must be sent to the Town Clerk in the first instance, who will direct the concern to an appropriate partner.
- Employees must not discuss any allegations of abuse, substantiated or not, with anyone other than the person they are reporting it to formally.
- All officers must retain all safeguarding records in accordance with GDPR and as per the Town Council's Retention of Records Policy. The Town Clerk will determine what information is shared. This will be done on a case-by-case basis in conjunction and liaison with the safeguarding leads at the higher authorities.

## **PART SIX: Reporting contact details**

The Town Clerk will report any safeguarding concerns to:

**Senior Safeguarding Officer EDDC: Tracy Hendren Tel: 01404 515616**

General email for all safeguarding concerns/enquiries: [safeguarding@eastdevon.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding@eastdevon.gov.uk)

**Immediate danger or risk, call Devon & Cornwall Police on 999 including domestic abuse. If not an emergency, then the call must be directed to the Police via 101 service.**

Contact the Police via their website: <https://www.devon-cornwall.police.uk/contact/af/contact-us-beta/contact-us/>

Modern Day Slavery Helpline on 0800 0121 700.

Threats of suicide and self-harm?

Call the Salvation Army Helpline on 0300 3038 151 or The Samaritans on 116 123 (24 hours a day, seven days a week).

If children or young people are involved, contact Devon Safeguarding Children's Partnership (DSCP) on 0345 155 1071

If adults or vulnerable adults or adults with care needs are involved, contact Torbay and Devon Safeguarding Adult Partnership (TDSAP) on 0345 155 1071

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**PART SEVEN: Risk Protocol Cascade**

- 1) Immediate: Call 999 (give as much detail as possible)
- 2) No immediate risk: contact the relevant people (as above)
- 3) Allegations against staff or Town Councillors: Town Clerk will contact EDDC's senior Safeguarding team lead (as above)

**Approved: 8<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

**Date to be reviewed: July 2025 (unless legislation requires sooner)**

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