

**Body:** Cabinet

**Date:** 5 February 2013

**Subject:** Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

**Report Of:** Senior Head of Communities

**Ward(s):** All Wards

**Purpose:** To update Members in relation to the Council's approach to safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults.

**Decision Type:** Adoption of the revised Policy.

**Recommendation:** Cabinet is recommended to agree and adopt the Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy.

In addition, Cabinet is recommended to note the content of the East Sussex Safeguarding Annual Report and Business Plan 2013/14.

**Contact:** Lucy Wooler, Snr Allocations Officer, Telephone 01323 415333 or internally on extension 5333.  
E-mail address: Lucy.wooler@Eastbourne.gov.uk

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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Improving the way key people and bodies safeguard and promote the welfare of children is crucial to improving outcomes for children and vulnerable adults. The Council's policy incorporates safeguarding for the both children and vulnerable adults.
- 1.2 This report also advised Cabinet on the work undertaken by the East Sussex Local Safeguarding Board in 2012/13 and outlines the business plan for 2012-15.

## **2.0 Summary of Action – Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy**

- 2.1 The first policy review was carried out in 2008/9. A further review was carried out in December 2012.

In November 2013 a planned Internal Audit report was undertaken to provide both an assurance test and learning opportunity. The Audit report concluded that the Council's approach was found to have:

*'Major strengths with minor recommendations and a good example of internal control. Low risk.'*

- 2.2 Whilst the Council's approach was found to have major strengths,
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amendments to the Council's policy/practice have been made and the report seeks approval for the updated policy. In addition, an action plan has been developed to progress minor amendments/improvements suggested within the audit review. This plan is being worked on and progress will be reported on within the normal audit and governance cycle.

- 2.3 The Policy has been updated to incorporate minor updates and/or changes and is attached at appendix A. Cabinet are asked to adopt the revised Policy.

### **3.0 East Sussex Local Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report and Business Plan**

- 3.1 The East Sussex Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) has recently agreed their Annual Report and Business Plan. A copy of the report can be found at:  
[www.eastsussex.gov.uk/socialcare/aboutus/keydocuments/safeguarding.htm](http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/socialcare/aboutus/keydocuments/safeguarding.htm)

via East Sussex County Council's web site.

- 3.2 The Annual Report reflects back over the period 2012/13 and the business plan sets out action for the period to 2015.

- 3.3 The key issues addressed by the LSCB in 2012/13 are highlighted in the report's introduction together with the key achievements, future challenges and priorities for 2013/14, including:

- Full engagement across agencies with the THRIVE agenda and early intervention
- The Safeguarding Children Continuum of Need enabling practitioners from across different agencies to use a common language and providing clarity about thresholds for children in need and the importance of information about these children
- Evidence of increased numbers of families being helped at an early stage, being worked with as children in need; and gradual but maintained reduction in numbers of children with a child protection plan, from 665 to 545 children during the year
- Greatly increased investment in data collection and analysis shared with staff
- Section 11 self assessments have been completed by all agencies with agencies fully compliant, the next step will be peer review
- Clear evidence of changes in practice as a result of QA findings
- Interventions supporting children who have been exposed to domestic abuse demonstrate changed behaviour in adults and children being more aware of how to keep themselves safe
- Child sexual exploitation is recognised as requiring a well coordinated multiagency response
- Missing children are given very high priority locally. Sussex Police, Children's Services and Catch 22, a national charity, work effectively together to offer a very quick response
- E-safety has remained highly featured on the LSCB partners' agenda
- The new Ofsted inspection regime sets high standards for LSCBs and there are increased expectations of the LSCB with no additional resources

- Five internal management reviews were commissioned by the LSCB and unusually this year has also seen East Sussex commission three Serious Case Reviews with a fourth commissioned in April 2013. Very sadly, two of these reviews are as a result of child deaths.

#### **4.0 Consultation**

5.1 The Local Safeguarding Children's Board was consulted during the development of the Policy and during the 2012 review.

#### **6.0 Resource Implications**

6.1 There are no significant staffing or financial resource implications arising from the review of the Council's Safeguarding Policy or S.11 Audit.

#### **7.0 Other Implications – Environmental, Human Rights, Community Safety**

7.1 The review of the Council's Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy is designed to ensure the policy remains robust and is implemented effectively. The policy is designed to ensure it covers all areas in which the council is involved and minimise the risks to those using Council services, resources and premises and to Council staff, volunteers, contractors and other partners.

#### **8.0 Youth and Anti-Poverty**

8.1 None.

#### **9.0 Conclusion**

9.1 Cabinet is recommended to agree and adopt the amended Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy.

In addition, Cabinet is recommended to note the East Sussex Local Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report (12/13) and Business Plan 2013/15

#### **Background Papers**

The Background Papers used in compiling this report were as follows:

- Eastbourne Borough Council Child and Vulnerable Adult Policy and Appendices

**Ian Fitzpatrick**  
**Senior Head of Community**

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