

**NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET – 19 NOVEMBER 2013**

Title of report	<b>CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULT SAFEGUARDING POLICIES UPDATE</b>
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community Yes
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Purpose of report	To update the Council's Safeguarding policies for Adults, Children and Young People.
Reason for Decision	To comply with the Council's statutory duty to ensure compliance with safeguarding duties as detailed in the Children Act 2004 and Working Together 2013
Council Priorities	Homes and Communities
Implications:	The district council is a partner of the Local Safeguarding Board and has to monitor safeguarding practice through the Safeguarding Board's Performance and Assessment Framework. The policies form the basis of a training plan delivered to all staff  The policies are adopted by all District and Borough Councils in Leicestershire who work collaboratively on ensuring good practice and procedures for Safeguarding.  The Children's Services Coordinator is the lead professional for the Council. There are a further nine members of staff who act as Designated Safeguarding Officers within their substantive roles and manage concerns, help develop and promote good safeguarding practice.
Financial/Staff	
Link to relevant CAT	Supporting North West Leicestershire Families CAT
Risk Management	Risk assessments will be completed as appropriate

Equalities Impact Assessment	Equality Impact Assessment already undertaken which has been discussed at the Fairer CAT, any issues identified have been actioned.
Human Rights	None discernible
Transformational Government	Not applicable
Comments of Head of Paid Service	The report is satisfactory.
Comments of Section 151 Officer	The report is satisfactory.
Comments of Monitoring Officer	The report is satisfactory.
Consultees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The District Councils Implementation Group</li> <li>- The Leicestershire District And Boroughs Safeguarding Officer Group</li> <li>-The Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Boards</li> <li>- National Society Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)</li> </ul>
Background papers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the Children Act 2004 <a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents</a></li> <li>-Working Together 2013 <a href="http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/statutory/g00213160/working-together-to-safeguard-children">http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/statutory/g00213160/working-together-to-safeguard-children</a></li> <li>-No Secrets 2012 <a href="http://www.leics.gov.uk/safeguarding_no_secrets.pdf">http://www.leics.gov.uk/safeguarding_no_secrets.pdf</a></li> </ul>
Recommendations	<p><b>CABINET IS REQUESTED TO</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1) APPROVE THE UPDATED 2013 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS SAFEGUARDING POLICIES</b></li> <li><b>2) DELEGATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANNUAL UPDATES TO THE DIRECTOR OF SERVICES</b></li> </ol>

## 1.0 CONTEXT

- 1.1 *Children's Safeguarding Legislation* - District and Borough Councils are statutory safeguarding partners as identified by Sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004. All partners are required to ensure that "*their functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children*"
- 1.2 *Adult Safeguarding Legislation* - "No Secrets 2010" is a document written by the Department of Health and adopted by all Health, Social Work and other statutory organisations, states that

*“ all agencies and individuals that have contact with adults in need of safeguarding have a duty to protect them from abuse”*

- 1.3 The Leicestershire Districts and Boroughs are a partner of the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Board who oversee, monitor and audit safeguarding practices in the two counties. Districts and Boroughs must regularly refresh and update policies in line with national legislation or changes to local good practice guidance.
- 1.4 The Leicestershire districts and boroughs set up the District Implementation Group, (DIG), in 2008 to focus on implementing stronger safeguarding practices. The group rewrote the policies and set up a small training development group who wrote the “Safe in our Hands” gold, silver and bronze level safeguarding courses, mapped front line officer safeguarding training requirements and developed a comprehensive incident referral form and data capture systems.
- 1.5 However, the safeguarding agenda is subject to frequent change as changes in practice identified through Serious Case Review recommendations are required to be implemented by all partners in a timely fashion. During the past year, there has been a major legislative change with the updating of the “Working Together to Protect Children” document, rewritten as a result of the findings of Professor Eileen Munro, after the Peter Connolly tragedy. This document has gone from 400 plus pages to under 100 with a greater emphasis on local service setting and on professional judgments and a move away from the paperwork and tick box approach of safeguarding.

## **2.0 2013 UPDATE – PRIORITIES AND THEMES**

- 2.1 To update and evaluate the Council’s 2013 policy, information was considered from The Local Safeguarding Children Board, (LSCB), the Safeguarding Adult Board (SAB), NSPCC, the District Implementation Group (DIG) and Leicestershire Districts and Boroughs. This data gathering highlighted a need to include emerging areas of concern, e.g. Child Sexual Exploitation and Domestic Abuse, and also the inclusion of clear routes for staff to access services directly whilst still using the internal reporting structure.
- 2.2 Consideration was given to the most recent Safeguarding figures and trends in North West Leicestershire and the priorities of The Local Safeguarding Children Board and the Safeguarding Adults Board.
- 2.3 From these three clear priorities have been identified within the refreshed policies;
  - 1) Report ALL concerns – we do not ask members of staff to investigate concerns for welfare or possible abuse; agencies such as the police or social care perform that function. We ask staff to report all concerns to Designated Safeguarding Officers who have received further training through the NSPCC. These officers will decide how the concern should be taken forward.
  - 2) How to deal with a disclosure of abuse – some members of staff are likely to have information disclosed to them that concerns the welfare or safety of a child or adult in need of safeguarding. They need to be appropriately skilled to deal with that disclosure, record all that has transpired and pass on the information. The officers particularly likely to be in this situation are those in direct contact with the public, e.g. housing officers, customer services staff, leisure centre employees.
  - 3) How to report a member of staff – over the past few years there has been a national focus on staff or volunteers who either abuse children or who are involved in unsafe

practice and with that has come recognition that agencies require robust internal reporting mechanisms. Within North West Leicestershire District Council we have a clear Whistle Blowing Policy that is managed through Human Resources. There is also a county structure and officer in place to deal with any issues relating to staff or volunteers on children. All staff are encouraged through training to report any concerns regarding other staff. The policy recognises that it is difficult to report a colleague and is clear in its offer of support for this situation.

2.4 Two cross-cutting themes have also been identified;

- 1) Staff training – there are a number of training courses available to staff internally and externally. All districts and boroughs offer the same training with the same key themes to ensure consistency across Leicestershire.
- 2) Raising awareness of Safeguarding – it is important to ensure that staff maintain awareness of how, what and who to report. This is done through internal campaigns, a strong internal web page and regular updates to teams.

### **3.0 POLICIES TO PRACTICE**

3.1 The Safeguarding work at the council is led by the Children's Services Coordinator who coordinates a group of Designated Safeguarding Officers who meet regularly to discuss implementing policies, to react to any local and national changes, to maintain an overview of cases and to highlight and promote training needs of staff.

3.2 This work is monitored by the Corporate Leadership Team with quarterly reports of incident statistics, an overview of training and planned activity for the next quarter. The Children's Services Coordinator also regularly meets with the Chief Executive to highlight trends and any areas of concern.

3.3 The Council began to record Safeguarding Incidents in 2006 as a result of the Children Act 2004. During the first years of recording, 2006 to 2009, there were approximately 5 cases per year. After the tragic events of Baby Peter Connolly and the Pilkington case, the awareness of the safeguarding agenda became a national issue and all agencies improved policies and focused on training and raising awareness. Reported cases are now rising year on year with 49 cases reported to the Council's Designated Safeguarding Officers in 2012/13 broken down as follows;

- 28 Adult cases
- 21 Children and Young People cases

3.4 The Council is continuing to deliver Safeguarding Training with the following achieved in 2012/13:

- Over 60 officers receiving Bronze Level training
- 19 officers undertook Intermediate (Silver) training
- 11 officers undertook Adult Safeguarding training delivered by the County Council
- 8 Designated Safeguarding Officers undertook specific training delivered by the NSPCC

3.5 The Leicestershire structure for safeguarding is shown at Appendix 1. This shows how district and borough councils fit into the structure within the Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Boards and how the Council's safeguarding incidents are referred.

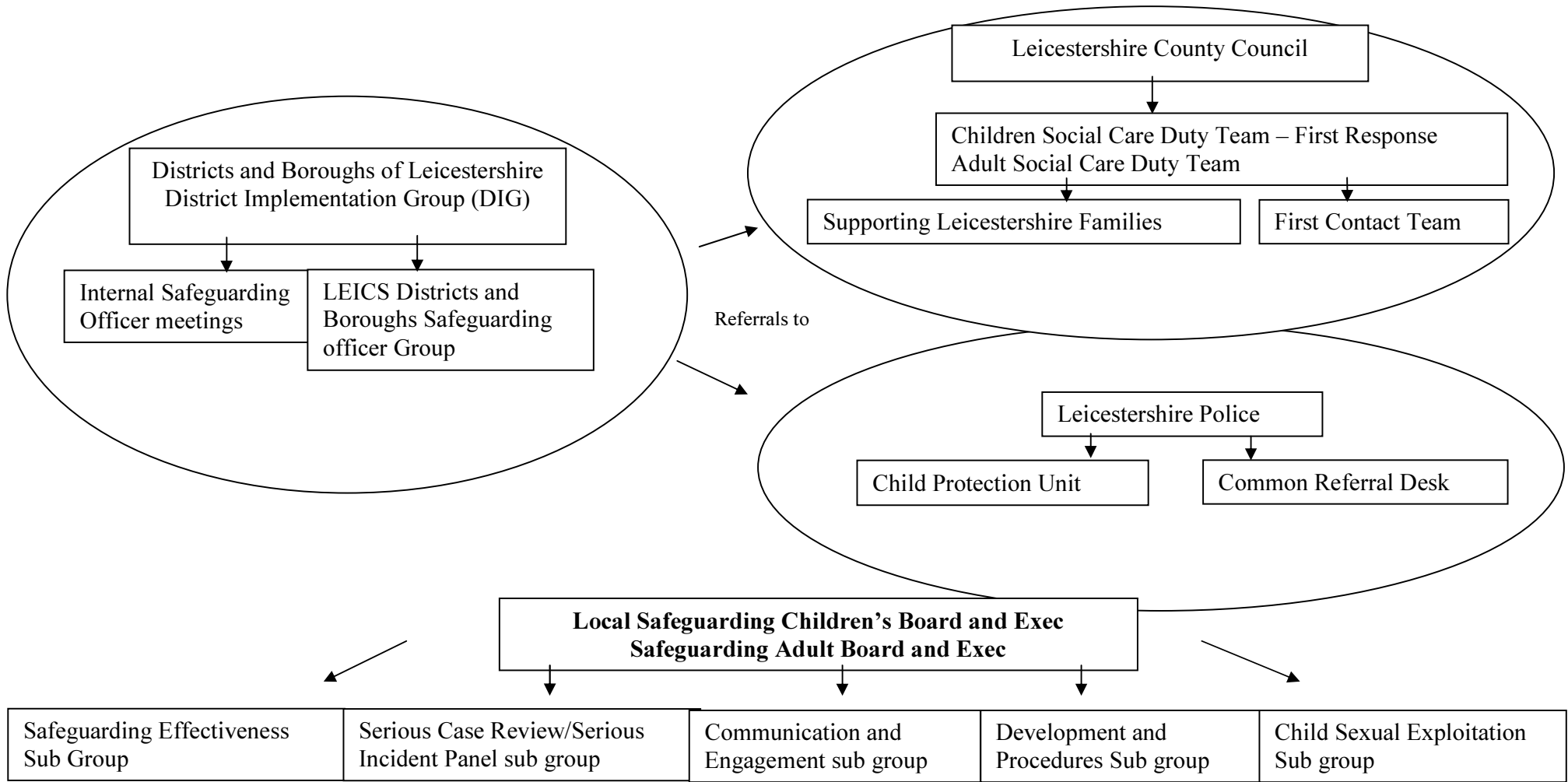
3.6 The Structure for Safeguarding at North West Leicestershire District Council is shown in Appendix 2. This demonstrates our internal safeguarding structures, responsibilities and case management practices.

#### **4.0 NEXT STEPS**

4.1 The updated Safeguarding Policies will be made available on the intranet and promoted to staff through future training courses and staff bulletins. An internal communication plan will be developed by the Childrens Services Co-ordinator and Designated Safeguarding Officers.

4.2 As updates are frequently required through legislative and best practice developments Cabinet are requested to delegate approval to the Director of Services for annual updates to the two policies in conjunction with Portfolio Holder.

**Safeguarding in Leicestershire for Districts and Borough Councils**



**Local Safeguarding Children Board**  
**Safeguarding Communication and Accountability Flow Chart**

