



Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy

Full Council Approved: December 2019
Reviewed: February 2026
Due for next Review: February 2029

1. Introduction and Purpose

Fleet Town Council is committed to taking all reasonable steps to safeguard the welfare of children and adults at risk who use its facilities or are present on Council premises. The Council seeks to promote a safe, respectful and inclusive environment and to foster a culture in which safeguarding concerns are recognised, taken seriously and acted upon appropriately.

This policy sets out the Council's safeguarding principles, responsibilities and procedures. It reflects relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- The Children Act 1989 and 2004
- The Care Act 2014
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government, 2023)
- Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Prevent Duty)

2. Scope and Application

This policy applies to:

- All Fleet Town Council employees, elected Members and volunteers.
- Contractors and consultants working on behalf of the Council.
- External organisations and individuals hiring or using Fleet Town Council facilities.

Fleet Town Council does not directly provide services to, or employ, children. Where children or adults at risk are involved in activities taking place on Council

premises, the primary responsibility for safeguarding rests with the organisation or individual delivering the activity.

The Council's role is that of a facility provider and duty-holder, and includes:

- Requiring appropriate safeguarding arrangements from hirers and contractors.
- Responding to safeguarding concerns arising on Council premises.
- Reporting concerns to the appropriate statutory agencies where required.

3. Policy Statement and Aims

Fleet Town Council will:

- Endeavour to keep children and adults at risk safe from abuse, harm and neglect.
- Respond promptly and appropriately to any safeguarding concerns.
- Act in the best interests of the child or adult at risk.
- Promote equality, inclusion and respect for all individuals.
- Work in accordance with relevant safeguarding legislation and guidance.

4. Definitions

Children

A child is any person under the age of 18, in accordance with the Children Act 1989.

Adults at Risk

An adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over who:

- Has care and support needs.
- Is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- As a result of those needs, is unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect.

External Bodies

An external body is any organisation, club, business, trustee or authorised representative hiring or using Fleet Town Council facilities.

5. Types of Abuse

Abuse may take many forms, including but not limited to:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional or psychological abuse

- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Financial or material abuse (adults at risk)
- Discriminatory abuse
- Modern slavery
- Domestic abuse
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Radicalisation and extremism

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Overall Responsibility

Overall responsibility for safeguarding within Fleet Town Council lies with the Executive Officer.

Safeguarding Officer

The Council will appoint a designated Safeguarding Officer, with appropriate training, to:

- Act as the main point of contact for safeguarding concerns.
- Provide advice and guidance to staff and Members.
- Ensure concerns are recorded and, where appropriate, referred to statutory agencies.

A deputy Safeguarding Officer will be appointed to provide cover in the absence of the designated officer.

Staff, Members and Volunteers

All staff, Members and volunteers have a duty to:

- Be alert to safeguarding concerns.
- Act in accordance with this policy.
- Report concerns promptly to the Safeguarding Officer.

7. Reporting and Responding to Concerns

Safeguarding concerns must be reported as soon as possible. In an emergency, where there is immediate risk of harm, call 999.

It is not the responsibility of Council staff or Members to investigate concerns, but to report them appropriately.

Responding to a Disclosure

Staff and Members should:

- Listen carefully and remain calm.
- Take the concern seriously.
- Reassure the individual that they have done the right thing.
- Avoid making promises of confidentiality.
- Record information accurately and promptly.
- Report the concern to the Safeguarding Officer.

8. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

Information relating to safeguarding concerns will be shared on a **need-to-know basis** and in accordance with data protection legislation.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, the need to protect a child or adult at risk may override normal confidentiality requirements.

9. Third Party Services

Third party services hiring Fleet Town Council facilities are required to:

- Have an appropriate and up-to-date safeguarding policy, where children or adults at risk are involved.
- Provide a copy of their safeguarding policy at the time of booking.
- Ensure suitable safeguarding procedures, supervision and staff training are in place.
- Comply with all relevant safeguarding legislation and guidance.

The Council reserves the right to refuse or cancel bookings where safeguarding arrangements are considered inadequate.

10. Recruitment, Vetting and Training

Fleet Town Council will adopt proportionate safer recruitment practices.

DBS checks will be undertaken where required by law and appropriate to the role. The use of the DBS Update Service may be considered.

Safeguarding training will be provided as follows:

- Basic safeguarding awareness for all staff and Members.
- Enhanced training for the Safeguarding Officer and deputy.
- Refresher training at appropriate intervals.

11. Use of Photography and Video

The use of images of children and adults at risk will be managed carefully to prevent misuse.

Images will not be used without appropriate consent from parents, guardians or the individual concerned.

12. Prevent Duty

Fleet Town Council recognises its responsibilities under the Prevent Duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Concerns relating to radicalisation or extremism should be reported in accordance with this policy.

13. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if there are changes in legislation or statutory guidance.