



## **Safeguarding of Children and Adults at Risk Policy**

### **Introduction**

People, young and old, have a fundamental right to live a life free from harm and abuse, which is also a basic and essential requirement for their health and well-being.

The council's clerk, council volunteers and council members have access to people's homes, businesses and schools, or spend time in public with people as part of their everyday activities on behalf of the council and are therefore in a position where they may witness or see things which could raise concerns about a safeguarding issue. Those concerns may be shared with others who are in a position to take action if necessary.

### **Policy Statement**

Iden Parish Council is committed to taking all reasonable precautions to safeguard children and adults at risk that use its services and promotes a safeguarding culture and environment. All staff, volunteers, elected members and contractors will know what to do and what procedures to follow if they suspect or have any concerns about any form of abuse. The council will also work to protect its employees from the risk of any unfounded allegations.

The council will seek to implement this policy by:

- 1) Recognising that the welfare of children or adults at risk is paramount and that, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or religious belief they have a right to protection from abuse.
- 2) Making sure that staff, members, contractors and volunteers, who as part of their role, have direct or indirect unsupervised contact with children or adults at risk, are carefully selected, trained, accredited and supervised as appropriate. This will include carrying out checks with other public bodies, as necessary.
- 3) Ensuring that all suspicions and allegations of abuse are to be taken seriously and responded to swiftly.
- 4) Ensuring that staff, volunteers, members, contractors do not to deal directly with situations of abuse but follow procedure and report to the appropriate officer.
- 5) Ensuring that there is a clear complaint procedure in place that can be used if required.

Named officers: The Parish Clerk and/or the Chairman of the Council. Any information regarding

safeguarding will be passed on immediately to:

The Duty and Assessment Team (Hastings and Rother) First Floor, Ocean House

87-89 London Road

St. Leonards-on Sea

East Sussex

TN37 6DH

01424 724144

or

Adults at Risk, East Sussex County Council

Telephone: 03456080191

### Definitions

"A child" means a person who has not attained the age of 18

"Adult at Risk" means someone who is 18 years or over who may need extra support with everyday living due to physical or learning disability, or a mental health issue and who cannot protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation. Sometimes it can be difficult to establish if a person might be considered an 'adult at risk', so it should be assumed that they are covered by this policy and safeguarding procedures, unless and until information suggests otherwise.

### Responding to Abuse or Suspicions or Allegations of Abuse

Members, the Clerk and volunteers are not expected to come into contact with vulnerable people and children in the normal course of the work of the Parish Council. However, it is possible that children or vulnerable people may seek help from them, seeing them as official representatives.

Do

Do take further action and inform the Clerk or Chairman of the Parish Council immediately. In their absence inform the authorities cited above.

- 1) Do treat any allegations seriously and act at all times as if you believe what they are saying.
- 2) Do reassure them that they are not to blame
- 3) Do be honest about your own position and that you will have to tell someone else.
- 4) Do write down everything said and what was done: dates, times, facts, observations - verbatim speech if possible. Ensure correct details are available: name addresses
- 6) Do seek medical attention if necessary.

Do not

- 1) Do not make promises you cannot keep.
- 2) Do not interrogate the child or adult as it is the responsibility of the Police and Social Services.
- 3) Do not cast doubt on what is being said, do not interrupt or change the subject.
- 4) Do not say anything that makes the child or adult feel responsible for abuse.
- 5) Do not do anything further unless asked to do so by the above listed authorities.

All documents will be held in a confidential file to comply with data protection laws and will only be held as long as is reasonable. Information requests will be responded to in accordance with the current data protection and freedom of information laws.

#### Code of behaviour for Staff and Volunteers

Whilst undertaking duties in the parish, all staff and volunteers must act appropriately, treat everyone with respect and provide an example of good conduct for others to follow.