



MILLOM TOWN COUNCIL – CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Reviewed by Full Council: January 2022 – Revision Date: January 2023

Introduction:

This document sets out the Policy and Procedures for Millom Town Council (MTC) relating to Safeguarding & Child Protection. The purpose is to provide a framework should any member of staff have concerns about safeguarding, or receive a report by a member of the public regarding safeguarding.

Millom Town Council owns land and maintains playgrounds throughout the Parish. These land assets are open to the public, including children, at all times. The Town Council has public liability insurance but people use the facilities at their own risk. Parents and Carers are expected to supervise their children at all times. The Town Council does not currently organise events for children.

Everyone has a duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The Town Council will review it annually.

The framework in England is described at <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/england>.

“The Department for Education (Dfe) is responsible for child protection in England. It sets out policy, legislation and statutory guidance on how the child protection system should work.

Local safeguarding arrangements are led by three statutory safeguarding partners:

- *The local authority*
- *The clinical commissioning group*
- *The police”*

This policy applies to all Councillors and Officers, anyone working for or on behalf of the Town Council, whether it is paid or voluntary or commissioned capacity, for example contracted to do a piece of work. It also applies to any individual using the Town Council facilities for the purpose of delivering any service to children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Policy Statement:

Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults is everyone's responsibility. Millom Town Council are committed to ensuring that children and vulnerable adults are protected and kept safe from harm whilst they are engaged in any activity associated with the Town Council. Millom Town Council will promote the welfare of all children, and young or vulnerable people, to keep them safe and work in a way that protects them irrespective of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Millom Town Council will respond to all concerns that are reported to it and fully support any actions by the proper authorities. Relevant but not excessive records will be maintained. As there is no in-house expertise the primary response will be to consult one of the Authorities listed in Appendix A.

Millom Town Council will provide safe facilities and carry out regular safety assessments and ensure that any users of the town's facilities are aware of the safeguarding expectations.

All Councillors, Officers and Users of Town Council facilities should:

- Ensure that communications, behaviour and interaction with users should be appropriate and professional
- Treat each other with respect and show consideration for other groups using the facilities
- Refrain from any behaviour that involves racism, sexism and bullying and in addition report any instances of such behaviour to group leaders, town councillors, the town clerk or parents and carers as appropriate

Millom Town Council recognises its responsibilities under the Terms of the Children's Act 2004, earlier Children's Acts and other relevant legislation (see reference list) to make arrangements for ensuring that its functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

The Town Council aims to do this by:

- Raising awareness throughout the Council and Town Council's beliefs
- Requiring all working on behalf of the Town Council to adhere to these beliefs
- Creating a safe and healthy environment within all its services, avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur
- Implementing the appropriate disciplinary and appeals procedures where allegations of breaches are made by its Councillors, Officers or members of the public

Procedures:

These procedures inform Councillors and Officers of what actions they should take if they have concerns or encounter a case of alleged or suspected child abuse.

For Councillors, Officers and Volunteers:

In the first instance, Officers should take care to avoid situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur.

Roles supporting this policy, i.e., 'who does what':

- Responsible for managing – Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk
- Accountable – Councillors
- Consulted – extensive use has been made of existing policies developed by other Town/Parish Councils and from organisations with detailed safeguarding experience (e.g. NSPCC)
- Implemented by – All operational Officers led by the Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk

For Contractors & those using Millom Town Council Facilities:

It is the responsibility of organisations using Town Council facilities to develop their own policies in this area, covering issues such as consent, insurance and staff training.

Contractors should also have their own policies in place.

Identifying Risks and Incidents:

Officers should be concerned by any action or inaction which significantly harms the physical and/or emotional development of a child or vulnerable adult. Abuse falls into four main categories and can include child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation:

1. Responding to a child or young person disclosing abuse, i.e., they make an allegation of abuse
2. Responding to allegations or concerns about an Officer, Councillor and Volunteers from your own observation or due to a complaint
3. Responding to allegations or concerns about any other person, i.e., parent, carer, other service user

In case of an emergency where a child is in danger phone 999 immediately.

Responding to Concerns and Allegations:

It is the duty of any Officer or Councillor to report any concerns about a child being subject to abuse, receiving a disclosure or being aware of Officers or Councillors behaving in an appropriate manner. All reports should be treated as confidential and with respect to the person raising the concern regardless of the outcome.

If an allegation is made against an Officer or Volunteer, the person receiving the allegation will immediately inform the Chair/Mayor of the Town Council. If that is not appropriate then see the whistleblowing procedure.

Record in writing all the details that you are aware of and what was said, using the child or your person's own words, immediately. In your record you should include the following:

- a. The date and time

- b. The child or young person's name, address and date of birth
- c. The nature of the allegation
- d. Your observations – a description of the child or young person's behaviour, physical and emotional state and any visible signs of injury
- e. Exactly what the child or young person said and what you said. Record the child or young person's account of what has happened as closely as possible
- f. Sign and date what you have recorded

Do not ask questions, other than the child or young person's name, address and date of birth.

Reassure the child or young person that they have done the right thing in telling you. Contact local Social Services or the Police (see Appendix A) without delay and follow their guidance. Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Social Services or the Police must be the ones to inform parents or guardian, and the person about whom allegations are being made.

Recorded information should be handed over to Social Services or the Police and any copies stored in a secure place with limited access in line with data protection laws (e.g.: that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

Millom Town Council will acknowledge the report, indicating the action that has been taken. This will usually be to inform and see advice from one of the authorities in Appendix A.

Making Records Involving Children:

This usually involves photography. Millom Town Council uses CCTV Cameras at some of its sites in order to monitor and try to eliminate anti-social or criminal behaviour. Such films are only viewed by Officers and Councillors or by the Police. They may be used as evidence in court. These records are retained as set out in Millom Town Council's documentation 'Retention Timescales for Documentation' and then deleted securely.

Other photographic records should only be made in a public space, with consent of the parent/guardian if the child is identifiable, i.e.: a facial image with sufficient resolution or a name. All photography should be made in public where young people are involved. The child or young person should be happy with having their picture taken. The names of children or young people should not be used in photographs or video footage, unless with the express permission of the child or young person's parent.

There may be occasions when photographs of groups of children are taken at public events, e.g.; at the opening of a playground. Parents and Guardians should be made aware that photographs are likely to be taken and the purposes for which they will be used. This also applies to any member of the media are present. Thus, express permission is not needed, but due notice is.

Contractors:

A copy of this Policy is given to contractors at the commencement of their working on the Council's behalf. Contractors are, therefore, aware of and should abide by the Town Council's aims and procedures outlined in this policy.

Whistleblowing:

- All officers should be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the attitude or actions of colleagues. If an officer feels that an issue is not being addressed then they should seek advice from one of the authorities in Appendix A

Office & Volunteer Recruitment:

- Officers currently do not work directly with Children and Millom Town Council does not organise children's activities. We do not require a Criminal Records Bureau check as part of the recruitment procedure

Officer & Volunteer Training:

- As Millom Town Council does not directly provide services to children or vulnerable people there is no routine training. However, all staff should be aware of the potential issues and will be reminded of this policy upon recruitment and annually as part of their Code of Conduct refresher. Specific training will be provided if the situation changes.

Record Keeping:

- Accurate records will be kept of any concern raised with Millom Town Council and of the actions taken including names, dates and times.
- As Millom Town Council does not provide specific services nor have expertise in storing sensitive records such items shall be passed to the local authority for storage at the earliest opportunity.

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/briefings/child-protection-records-retention-storage-guidance>

References & Appendices:

Appendix A Statutory Safeguarding Partners:

Local Authority: Cumbria County Council

○ For children:

- Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership
Cumbria House
117 Botchergate
Carlisle
Cumbria
CA1 1RD

Email: CSCP@cumbria.gov.uk

Tel: 0333 240 1727

For Adults:

○ **Allerdale and Copeland**

West Cumbria House
PO Box 100
CA14 9BW

Telephone: 0300 303 3589

Email: customerserviceswest@cumbria.gov.uk

Barrow in Furness

4th Floor
Craven House
Michaelson Road
Barrow in Furness
LA14 1FD

Telephone: 0300 303 2704

Fax: 01229 404054

Email: customerservicesouth@cumbria.gov.uk

Carlisle

3rd Floor
Cumbria House
117 Botchergate
Carlisle
CA1 1RD

Telephone: 0300 303 3249

Fax: 01228 226655

Email: customerservicesnorth@cumbria.gov.uk

<https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/eLibrary/Content/Internet/537/6683/179>

Appendix B – Other References:

Other relevant references:

Cumbria Safeguarding Hub

The Safeguarding Hub's only purpose is to provide a 'front door' for Children and Young People's Social Work services in Cumbria, where children's needs cannot be met at an Early Help level.

Please be aware that Cumbria Safeguarding Hub are currently working at reduced staffing levels following Government guidance.

Cumbria Safeguarding Hub is committed to the following outcomes: -

- Any action taken or recommended will be based on an analysis of available information and will have a specific focus on the safety and well-being of the child/young person;
- Ensuring that the person making a contact with the service knows what action is being proposed and the timescales for this
- Providing a timely and appropriate response to the concerns that have been raised;
- Providing a multi-agency decision making forum that values contribution from all agencies as equal partners

Aims of Cumbria's Safeguarding Hub

- To ensure that concerns raised about children and young people who are in need of protection receive a timely and effective response in determining the appropriate next steps to keep them safe
- To be the 'front door' for Children and Young People's Social Work Services
- To consider the needs of children that cannot be managed at an Early Help level, including those at risk of significant harm
- To ensure that all contacts made to the Hub are screened by multi-agency partners effectively to ensure that safe next steps decision can be made, which is made by the Children's and Young Persons Social Work team manager
- To assess risk of harm accurately and consistently
- To minimise the risk of harm to children in Cumbria by ensuring proportionate and consistent multi-agency information sharing and responses to contacts
- To make a next steps decision on all contacts into the Safeguarding Hub within 24 hours, which will include whether threshold has been met for Children and Young People's Social Work Services Intervention (at which point the 'contact' will become a 'referral'). A Children and Young People's Social Work Services Team Manager, in line with the Threshold Document, makes this decision
- To ensure that the child and family's views are captured within the work undertaken
- To undertake work utilising the Signs of Safety approach

- **NSPCC** – Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- **Childline** - Free helpline for children and young people in the UK. Children and young people can call to talk about any problem www.childline.org.uk – Telephone: 0808 500 5000 - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>
- **Cumbria Safeguarding Adults Board** - Escalation Guidance
- **Samaritans** – www.samaritans.org - Telephone 08457 909090 – Domestic Violence

Legislation:

- The Children Act 1989, Children Act 2004, Children and Social Work Act 2017, see <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-protection-system/england> & Dfe guidance

Definitions:

- Children and young people: Anyone under the age of 18-years-old
- Vulnerable adult: Anyone over 18 who is:
 - Unable to care for themselves
 - Unable to protect themselves from significant harm or exploitation
 - Or may be in need of community care services
- Staff – anyone with a contractual relationship with Millom Town Council – thus including employees, Councillors, volunteers, contractors

Resolved at Full Council:

Signed:**Mayor** **Dated:** 26th January 2022

Review Date: January 2023