



served by One Team

South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership



2025

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2028

# Safeguarding

Policy and  
Procedures

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# Introduction

This policy has been jointly developed by all three sovereign councils in the South & East Lincolnshire Council Partnership; however all three councils have adopted the policy individually. The policy is designed to provide officers and councillors with clear guidance for dealing with safeguarding concerns or incidents. There is a lot of information within this document. Please take the time to read through the information in detail and do come forward with any questions you may have.

Safeguarding encompasses a range of legal duties (The Children Act 1989 & Care Act 2014) and responsibilities designed to protect people's health, wellbeing, and human rights, and support them in preventing problems from escalating and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse, and neglect.

In practice this involves:

- Preventing harm
- Recognising signs of abuse or neglect
- Responding appropriately to concerns or disclosures, and
- Creating safe environments in organisations and communities

Key principles of safeguarding include:

- Empowerment – supporting people to make their own decisions
- Prevention – acting before harm occurs
- Proportionality – responding appropriately to the level of risk
- Protection – supporting those in greatest need
- Partnership – working with other agencies
- Accountability – being transparent and responsible

The Council has a range of statutory duties to carry out in relation to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of individuals and communities. This policy has been written to support the Council in protecting those who need safeguarding by providing a reference point and guidance for staff, elected members, volunteers, key contractors, consultants and directly commissioned providers acting on behalf of the Council. It seeks to provide practical guidance to ensure that the Council plays its full part in safeguarding and always promoting the wellbeing of its individuals and communities.

Safeguarding involves several key agencies including Children's Services, Adult Social Care, Health Agencies and Criminal Justice Agencies. Our duties do not extend to areas which would be considered the responsibility of our partners, but there are duties to cooperate and to have effective processes in place regarding collaboration.

A consistent and effective approach is needed across the Council to ensure that statutory responsibilities are met, to protect the community, and protect the reputation of the Council. Safeguarding responsibilities of the Council include:

- Having effective safeguarding policies and procedures in place;
- Recognising signs of abuse or safeguarding concerns;
- Effective training of staff, safe recruitment and capable workforce
- Referring concerns to partner agencies;
- Working closely with partners such as the police, social care, health agencies, probation and other local authorities;
- Undertaking and participating in regular audit and scrutiny for assurance.

Staff can keep up to date with Safeguarding information on the SELCP Intranet [here](#)

# Overview

## and policy commitment

It aims to:

- Ensure that the Council plays its full role in safeguarding and promoting the health, welfare and wellbeing of children, young people, and adults at risk, at all times;
- Raise awareness of the duty of care and responsibilities relating to safeguarding throughout the Council;
- Ensure a person-centred approach which puts people's own needs and wishes first, hears their voice, respects their views, and upholds their human rights;
- Achieve the best possible outcomes for all individuals, including enabling all children and young people to 'Stay Safe, Be Healthy, Enjoy and Achieve, make a Positive Contribution and Achieve Economic Wellbeing' (Children Act 1989);
- Secure stable relationships with professionals built on trust, with consistent support to meet their individual needs and with all decisions taken in line with the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) 2005;
- Ensure that everyone involved gets the support they need before a problem escalates;
- Provide a proportionate, timely, supportive, informed, and professional response to anyone experiencing abuse or neglect;
- Actively encourage good practice amongst staff and promote wider awareness where possible (for example partner organisations, service user groups and community);
- Create a safe and healthy environment within all of our services, avoiding situations where abuse or allegations of abuse may occur;
- Ensure that we safely recruit, train, supervise and support staff, elected members and volunteers appropriately and in accordance with Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) guidance.

### WHAT IS A SAFEGUARDING CAUSE FOR CONCERN?

A **safeguarding cause for concern** refers to any situation where there is reason to believe that a child or vulnerable adult may be at risk of harm, abuse, neglect, or exploitation. These concerns can arise from direct disclosures, observations, or third-party reports.

Here are some common examples of safeguarding concerns:

#### For Children:

- **Physical abuse** (e.g. unexplained injuries, bruises)
- **Emotional abuse** (e.g. persistent criticism, threats, or rejection)
- **Sexual abuse** (e.g. inappropriate sexual behaviour or knowledge)
- **Neglect** (e.g. poor hygiene, malnutrition, lack of supervision)
- **Exposure to domestic violence**
- **Online exploitation or grooming**

#### For Adults at Risk:

- **Financial abuse** (e.g. theft, fraud, misuse of funds)
- **Neglect or acts of omission** (e.g. not providing necessary care)
- **Self-neglect** (e.g. failing to care for oneself in a way that endangers health or safety)
- **Discriminatory abuse** (e.g. harassment based on race, gender, disability)
- **Institutional abuse** (e.g. poor care practices in settings like care homes)

# Overview and policy commitment

## MAKING SAFEGUARDING PERSONAL

The Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) approach puts service users' at the centre of everything we do, follows the edict of 'no decision about me without me', and means that the person, their families and carers must work together with agencies to find the right solutions to keep people safe and support them in making informed choices.

We aim to drive a cultural shift in all our organisations that will embed the principles of MSP into our structures, processes and practice.

The key focus is on developing a real understanding of what people wish to achieve, agreeing, negotiating and recording their desired outcomes, working out with them, their family or advocates how best those outcomes might be realised and then checking at the end how far their expectations have been met.

Further details can be found on the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board website, [here](#).

## CURIOSITY AND UNCERTAINTY

**Professional Curiosity** has been a recurring theme in Serious Case Reviews (SCR) across Lincolnshire. Professional curiosity is about having the capacity and communication skills to explore and understand what is happening with an individual or family. It is about enquiring more deeply and using proactive questioning and challenge. It is about challenging your own responsibility and knowing when to act rather than making assumptions or taking things at face value.

**Respectful Uncertainty** is about considering and where necessary challenging responses, looking beneath the surface and testing the facts and 'gut feelings' rather than accepting an explanation, however plausible.

# Roles and Responsibilities

## Safeguarding is everyone's business

This policy provides guidance for anyone working on behalf of the Council who may have contact with children, young people, adults with care or support needs at risk of harm, and their families. This policy affects every Council staff member, elected member, volunteer and anyone working on behalf of and / or representing the Council.

All individuals to whom this policy and procedures apply must know where and how to access it, have a clear understanding of how, why and who to contact with their concerns and complete appropriate training to fulfil their responsibility in being able to identify and respond to wellbeing concerns, abuse or alleged abuse and poor practice. All officers who visit people's homes must be particularly alert to signs of abuse or neglect. All officers must always report and respond to concerns, doing so swiftly to ensure the safety and wellbeing of anyone at risk or suspected of being at risk. All employees should discuss concerns with the appropriate person or organisation as set out throughout this policy and its associated procedures.

It is the responsibility of those who have a role in engaging services to ensure that volunteers, key contractors, consultants and directly commissioned providers acting on behalf of the Council meet these requirements.

If anyone subject to this policy finds, for whatever reason, they do not believe that they can fully comply with all requirements they must notify the Designated Safeguarding Officer or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer immediately:

### **Designated Safeguarding Officer**

Emily Spicer, Assistant Director – Communities & Housing Services [emily.spicer@sholland.gov.uk](mailto:emily.spicer@sholland.gov.uk) 07900 168280

### **Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer**

David Postle, Wellbeing Service Manager [david.postle@e-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:david.postle@e-lindsey.gov.uk) 01507 613124 / 07958 805206

### **Deputy Safeguarding Officers**

SHDC – Dee Bedford, Community Safety & Enforcement Manager [dbedford@sholland.gov.uk](mailto:dbedford@sholland.gov.uk) 07778 530 768

ELDC – Jason Oxby, Group Manager - Housing Services [jason.oxby@e-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:jason.oxby@e-lindsey.gov.uk) 01507 613120

BBC – Pete Hunn, Community Safety Manager [peter.hunn@boston.gov.uk](mailto:peter.hunn@boston.gov.uk) 01205 314245

### **Safeguarding Officer**

Iris Furst – Safeguarding Officer for SELCP [iris.furst@e-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:iris.furst@e-lindsey.gov.uk) 01507 613061

### **Safeguarding Inbox**

[safeguardingSELCP@e-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardingSELCP@e-lindsey.gov.uk)

# Roles and Responsibilities

Corporate Safeguarding Role	Overview of Responsibilities	Corporate Lead Officer(s)
Strategic Safeguarding Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting staff to report concerns.</li> <li>Developing and reviewing policies and procedures.</li> <li>Working in partnership with other organisations to develop best practice and shared learning.</li> <li>Providing, coordinating, and monitoring training for staff and elected members.</li> <li>Providing training to all new staff and elected members as part of the council's induction process.</li> <li>Ensuring engagement and compliance with audit frameworks.</li> <li>Implementing audit recommendations and changes to legislation.</li> <li>Engaging in serious case reviews and Domestic Abuse Related Deaths Reviews (DARDR).</li> <li>Hosting a corporate safeguarding group that is represented by all service areas.</li> </ul>	Designated Safeguarding Officer; Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer; Deputy Safeguarding Officers & the Safeguarding Officer.
Designated Safeguarding Officer	Has overall strategic oversight for the South & East Lincolnshire Council Partnership for safeguarding.	Emily Spicer, Assistant Director - Communities & Housing Services
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer	<p>The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer will assist the Designated Safeguarding Officer, and will:</p> <p>Represent the council on safeguarding matters at an external and strategic level and have overall responsibility for ensuring the council is meeting its safeguarding requirements.</p> <p>Represent the council in the instance of any serious case review or other strategic groups to support multi-agency working across the SELCP area.</p> <p>Be the council spokesperson in the event of any public / media enquiries.</p> <p>Review the safeguarding policy and procedures.</p> <p>Maintain communication channels with outside agencies, including attending meetings.</p>	David Postle, Wellbeing Service Manager & Safer Communities Manager (Partnership Delivery)
Deputy Safeguarding Officer – SHDC	Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officers will: Deputise for the Designated Safeguarding Officer as required.	Dee Bedford, & Safer Communities Manager (Partnership Delivery)
Deputy Safeguarding Officer – ELDC	Advise staff on responding to and referring safeguarding concerns.	Jason Oxby, Group Manager - Housing Services.
Deputy Safeguarding Officer – BBC	Ensure that all cases are collated, recorded, reported, and reviewed, and all requests for information are responded to within the required timescales to support case reviews, inspections, etc.	Peter Hunn, Community Safety Manager ELDC & BBC
Council Officers, including Councillors	Represent their council at Domestic Abuse Related Deaths Reviews (DARDR).	
Contractors	Report and respond to concerns, doing so swiftly to ensure the safety and wellbeing of anyone at risk or suspected of being at risk.	

# Roles and Responsibilities

The Council's corporate safeguarding roles and responsibilities are set out below:

Corporate Safeguarding Role	Overview of Responsibilities	Corporate Lead Officer(s)
Safer Recruitment	<p>Employers need to identify candidates who may be unsuitable for certain jobs, especially work that involves vulnerable groups including children and adults with care or support needs.</p> <p>Ensure that the Council makes safe recruitment decisions in line with the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)</p> <p>Ensure that the Council's DBS policy is up to date and reviewed in line with any legislative changes.</p> <p>HR (provided by PSPSL) will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Support safeguarding leads to identify posts that need DBS clearance.</li><li>Undertake DBS checks for all identified posts.</li><li>Advise management of strategic risks relating to people.</li><li>Maintain records to demonstrate current compliance of DBS for identified posts.</li></ul>	Group Managers & Service Managers – overseen by HR team at PSPSL.
Group Managers, Service Managers and Line Managers	<p>Group Managers, Service Managers and Line Managers are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Increasing safeguarding awareness in their services.</li><li>Dealing with abuse and neglect can be stressful and distressing and staff can be left feeling concerned about a situation or case they have experienced.</li><li>They will:</li><li>o Support and supervise staff appropriately.</li><li>o Ensure that their team members complete all relevant training requirements.</li><li>o Disseminate safeguarding information to teams, supported by the corporate safeguarding group.</li><li>o Respond promptly to requests for information regarding specific cases and maintain clear communication with the Designated Safeguarding Officer, and good working relationships with other agencies to address any difficulties between front line staff.</li><li>o Support the review of this policy and its procedures where required.</li><li>o Ensure that all concerns and cases are logged via the Council's safeguarding tracker (either reporting a concern or notifying the Designated Safeguarding Officer of assessments and action taken).</li></ul>	Group Managers & Service Managers – overseen by HR team at PSPSL.
Senior Leadership Team/Corporate Management Team	Responsibility for Safeguarding across South Holland District Council, Boston Borough Council and East Lindsey District Council	Emily Spicer Assistant Director – Communities & Housing Services Jason King - Director of Communities

# Training and Development

It is essential that everyone to whom this safeguarding policy applies can recognise and respond to possible safeguarding risks and concerns across all relevant policy areas. The level of training and knowledge required by each person is determined by their role and their level of contact with customers at risk of harm – all roles within the organisations will be categorised using the requirements of the National Competencies Framework (NCF) for Safeguarding.

All training is delivered either via e-learning or face to face, via workshops, delivered in partnership with, or endorsed by the respective safeguarding, domestic abuse, prevent boards and strategic groups. **Safeguarding training is mandatory for everyone representing the Councils.** E-Learning training is completed annually following Lincolnshire County Council's six-year rolling programme. This follows the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adult Board Safeguarding Adult Training Pathway and the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Safeguarding Children Training Pathway. E-Learning modules are reviewed and updated quite regularly as courses must be updated to meet the changing needs. The e-learning modules will be automatically rolled out through First4Learning, with completion monitored by the Strategic Safeguarding Group to ensure compliance.

The table overleaf outlines the training groups. The Safeguarding Team can be contacted at [safeguardingSELCP@e-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardingSELCP@e-lindsey.gov.uk) to answer queries around the level of training relevant to roles.

# Training and Development

Training Group	Definition for Grouping	Who is this?
1	Those with infrequent contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults who may become aware of possible abuse, neglect, or maltreatment.	All staff, volunteers, general contractors, consultants
2	Those with regular contact or periods of intense but irregular contact with children, young people, and vulnerable adults who may be able to identify concerns regarding abuse, neglect, or maltreatment.	Key contractors, housing, homelessness, public protection, community safety, communities, leisure and culture and staff involved in home visits
3	Operational Managers at all levels. Senior managers responsible for strategic management of services. Those with oversight of systems, policies, and procedures in their department.	Group Managers, Service Managers, senior officers, Management team
4	Designated lead professionals in TAC, child protection, MAPPA, and MARAC work. Those responsible for ensuring their organisation is at all levels fully committed to safeguarding and have appropriate systems and resources in place.	Named staff in housing, and community safety, safeguarding, designated safeguarding lead, deputy designated safeguarding officer, Assistant Director - Communities & Housing Services
5	Staff without IT access - All staff without IT will be trained through briefings	<a href="#"><u>Waste Crews, Parks and Grounds Team Housing Repairs</u></a>

# Training and Development

**Elected Members:** All elected members will be asked to complete safeguarding training when they are elected, as part of the induction process. They will also be required to complete the e-learning induction module 'Introduction to Safeguarding Everyone in Lincolnshire' during their first year in office. Elected Members will be offered opportunities to increase their safeguarding awareness through e-learning modules and thematic training and briefings.

**Staff without IT access:** All staff without IT access will need to attend safeguarding briefing sessions. The briefing will cover general safeguarding principles, personal responsibilities and who to contact with any concerns. These may be delivered face to face, or virtually.

## SUPPORT FOR STAFF

### SUPERVISION AND APPRAISAL

People work best when they are well informed, trained and supported. Supervision should improve the quality of practice, support the development of integrated working and ensure continuing professional development. Effective supervision involves regular face-to-face discussion with skilled managers, including reflective practice, to enable staff to work confidently and competently with difficult and sensitive situations.

This includes:

- Ensuring our customers and their carers receive a quality service
- Enabling understanding and implementation of policies and procedures
- Supporting staff to be clear about their responsibilities and accountabilities
- Giving staff opportunities to reflect on, analyse and evaluate practice
- Giving staff opportunities to discuss best practice and safeguarding concerns
- Providing personal support when dealing with difficult cases

Staff leading on Team Around the Child (TAC) cases, MARAC, MAPPA, dealing directly with complex or distressing cases, involved in case reviews or court cases, etc will need and should receive appropriate support from their manager, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy Safeguarding Officers for each of the authorities. This may include regular and ad hoc de-briefs, and opportunities to seek external support for their wellbeing if required. Appraisals should always include discussion of the safeguarding responsibilities of the role and training and development needs.

To support personal development and professional competence, managers can identify good practice through:

- Direct observation of the activity or service
- Undertaking case file audits, where appropriate
- Reviewing service user's feedback on the activities or services

Team Meetings should also include regular agenda items to share safeguarding information, concerns and best practice.

# Reporting concerns and record keeping

**If you feel that a child, young person, or an adult is at immediate risk of significant harm, then call Lincolnshire Police on 999.**

**If however, you think they are at risk but that risk is not immediate, you must take appropriate action, calling 101 if you think a crime has been committed, and by reporting the matter to the LCC Customer Services Centre (CSC) on 01522 782111 for children, or 01522 782155 for adults, or emergency out of hours 01522 782333.**

In all cases you should report the incident to the Designated Safeguarding Lead through the **Internal Safeguarding Report Form in Appendix A**.

For staff without IT access, please speak to your supervisor/line manager to report a concern.

Customer facing, front line services are most likely to come across safeguarding concerns in their day-to-day roles and will have an enhanced level of awareness. These staff groups/services will be more experienced in engaging with external agencies to report safeguarding concerns – as referrals or through multi-agency case management procedures such as Early Help, ASBRAC, VAP, MARAC. If you are aware that a case is already open, and external services are aware of the child, family or vulnerable adult you can contact the relevant officer through LCC Customer Services Centre.

If you need advice on the most appropriate course of action, please speak with your line manager, Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy Safeguarding Officer for your organisation.

**If you have concerns – share them.**

# Reporting concerns and record keeping

Records must always be made with great care. They will almost always be open to inspection by others, including those about whom they are made; they may be required as evidence in case reviews of legal proceedings. Good records are factual, accurate, legible, comprehensive and made as soon after the incident as possible. They include direct evidence, such as the words used by individuals themselves, and specific information, such as the exact location of an injury (e.g. bruising 'on the left lower forearm just above the wrist', rather than 'on the arm'). Diagrams which explain family relationships, layouts of locations, or locations of injuries are helpful.

When making records, **do not**:

- Make value judgements about those involved
- Criticise those involved for their behaviours, attitudes, beliefs or actions
- Use jargon, slang, derogatory or negative language about victims or perpetrators
- Use abbreviations which are not explained
- Speculate or make assumptions about someone's explanations or actions.

**Do** use professional curiosity to tease out concerns instead.

Always record:

- The date and time of the incident
- The person's name, address and date of birth
- The nature of the allegation or incident and, if possible, the name, address, date of birth of any others involved, including the employer of anyone alleged to have caused the harm.
- Factual observations: visible injuries, the person's behaviour / physical / emotional state, etc.
- Exactly what they said, using their own words, and exactly what you said.

Their consent to share the information.

All actions you took, who you spoke to and all resulting actions so far. Include names, addresses and telephone numbers wherever possible.

Sign and date your record and store the information securely.

Consider whether a person needs adding to the Council's Cautionary Contacts list. If you feel that staff, councillors, volunteers, contractors or consultants may be at risk of harm from the person, seek advice from your line manager or the Safeguarding Team.

Where there is a case file for the person, your record should be stored on their file. For every safeguarding incident, email a brief anonymised summary of the issue and all action taken to the Safeguarding Officer. Staff without IT access should telephone the Safeguarding Officer.

# Confidentiality and information sharing

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned. Information should be handled and disseminated on a need-to-know basis only. It is extremely important that allegations or concerns are not discussed outside of the agreed reporting process, as any breach of confidentiality could be damaging to the child, young person, or vulnerable adult, to their family and any child protection, adult safeguarding or police investigations that may follow.

Informing the parents of a child or young person you have concerns about, needs to be dealt with in a sensitive way and should be done in consultation with children's services / police. Any individual under suspicion has the right to be notified about the cause for concern. It is important that the timing of this does not prejudice any investigation.

Recorded information (both paper and electronic) should be stored in a secure place, with access limited to officers named within the corporate safeguarding structure, in line with data protection laws.

If enquiries arise from the public (including parents) or any branch of the media, it is vital that staff, elected members, volunteers and anyone working for or on behalf of the Council are briefed as required so that they do not make any comments regarding the situation. The Designated Safeguarding Officer will be the designated spokesperson in the event of any public / media enquiries. In the absence of the Designated Safeguarding Officer, the query will be dealt with by another member of the Strategic Safeguarding Group.

**Information Sharing:** The Council is signed up to the Safer Lincolnshire Partnership Information Sharing Agreement, allowing full sharing of information between signatories, with the constraints of the GDPR. The Council is also signed up to specific information sharing agreements referring to Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), Anti-Social Behaviour Risk Assessment Conference (ASBRAC), Sentinel and Assisting Rehabilitation through Collaboration (ARC, previously IOM). These agreements are updated annually.

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) data sharing is as per MAPPA guidance.

As partnership approaches evolve and new forums or referral processes are introduced, information-sharing arrangements will be reviewed and updated accordingly.

# Confidentiality and information sharing

## The Seven Golden Rules of Information Sharing

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.
2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.
4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.
5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up-to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

# Inter-Agency disputes and escalation policies

When working in the arena of safeguarding, it is inevitable that at times there will be professional disagreement. Whilst this is accepted, it is vital that such differences do not affect the outcomes for children, young people and vulnerable adults or detract from ensuring that they are safeguarded.

Disagreements could arise in a number of areas of multi-agency working as well as within single agency working, but are most likely to arise in relation to:

- **Criteria for referrals:**
- **Outcomes of assessments:**
- **Roles and responsibilities of workers:**
- **Service provision:**
- **Information sharing and communication:**

Having an Escalation Policy became a statutory requirement following a number of Serious Case Reviews.

If you are concerned or unhappy with the decisions or action/lack of action of another agency when referring a case or securing their involvement in supporting an individual, issues can be escalated through the Designated Safeguarding Lead or their Deputies, as they are required to challenge the managers within that partner agency by using the escalation policies set out by the LSCP or LSAB or other overarching body. The LSCP is the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership and LSAB is Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board which are both statutory functions made up of multi-agency partnership boards led by Lincolnshire County Council.

The LSCP escalation policy can be found [here](#).

The LSAB escalation policy can be found [here](#).

**If you feel that you need to use this process, please speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead before making a referral.**

# Inter-Agency disputes and escalation policies

## **SAFEGUARDING ALLEGATIONS AGAINST STAFF, COUNCILLORS AND CONTRACTORS**

The councils take seriously any allegations or complaints about the conduct of our officers, councillors and contractors, in respect of their contact with vulnerable adults and children. All allegations or complaints received by the councils will be investigated fully, with action taken if applicable. If you have any concerns relating to anyone acting on the council's behalf, you can contact our Safeguarding team via our [e-form](#), or by using the Councils whistle blowing process.

## **WHISTLE BLOWING**

All staff, elected members, volunteers, key contractors and directly commissioned providers acting on behalf of the Council should use the Council's Corporate Feedback and Whistle blowing polices if they are concerned about how a safeguarding issue has been dealt with. The Council is part of a whistle blowing partnership: information is available through a confidential free-phone number 0800 0853716 or at [whistleblowing@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:whistleblowing@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

The Council will always adhere to the procedures set out by the LSCP, LSAB or other overarching body in such event. In addition, the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line offers free advice and support to professionals with concerns about how child protection issues are being handled in their own or another organisation. They can be contacted on 0800 028 0285 or by emailing [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

## **AUDIT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE**

As a statutory agency, District Councils are subject to a number of internal and external audits and quality assurance mechanisms to ensure compliance and effective practices in each of the areas covered by this policy and associated procedures. All audit recommendations will be integrated into the corporate safeguarding action plan. Regular reports will be made to the Corporate Management Team and Portfolio Holders.

An annual report will be provided to Governance and Audit Committee to provide assurance that the Council continues to be vigilant on safeguarding matters, fulfilling its legal duties.

Ideas for improvement on response to safeguarding in any way, from changing the way we communicate through to adapting working practices, are always welcome. Feedback will always be taken on board and where we can make changes or improvements,

we will do so. Initial suggestions can be emailed to [safeguardingSELCP@e-lincdsey.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardingSELCP@e-lincdsey.gov.uk) for further discussion.

# Inter-Agency disputes and escalation policies

## SAFER RECRUITMENT

It is the duty of employers to identify candidates who may be unsuitable for certain jobs, especially jobs that involve working with vulnerable groups such as children. The Human Resources team offers advice and support to the Council to enable relevant officers to make safer recruitment decisions in line with the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Council officers are responsible for the recruitment and management of staff within their service areas, but the Human Resources service provides support, guidance, and direction in terms of good practice and best approach.

## DATA AND ANALYSIS

Information reported to the Council's safeguarding team will be recorded on our secure network. The information is only accessible to the strategic safeguarding group members and will be retained for as long as necessary to protect individuals and to meet our legal requirements. All records will be reviewed annually to ensure information is removed when appropriate.

The information we hold will be used to provide assurance to senior leadership, overview and scrutiny committees that we are meeting our statutory requirements. We will also use the data for audit purposes including the Section 11 the Councils regularly complete with Lincolnshire County Council.

Data will also be used to identify areas of improvement for the three councils relating to our safeguarding processes and procedures, while also allowing us to report high level data to portfolio holders, scrutiny committees and for inclusion in our annual safeguarding report.

## MONITORING AND REVIEW

This Policy and its Procedures will be fully reviewed every three years and signed off by Cabinet / Executive Board. The Policy will also be reviewed on an annual basis and updated where appropriate. If a weakness is identified in procedures or if national guidelines change between reviews, the policy will be reviewed and revised by the Designated Safeguarding Officer and signed off by the Portfolio Holder, with the decision recorded and published via a Decision Notice.

Changes to the policy or procedures will be communicated via management team and communication emails, with details placed on the intranet. Group Managers & Service Managers are responsible for ensuring the timely and accurate dissemination of information to their teams, supported by the corporate safeguarding group.

All policy revisions will be dated and recorded in the table below.

Version	Reason for change:	Amended by: (position & date)	Approved by: (position & date)	Published date:
1	Full 3 yearly review	Emily Spicer, Designated Safeguarding Officer		
2	Rationalised over the SELCP	David Postle, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer	To be approved by each Council	

# Glossary of terms

ARC	Assisting Rehabilitation through Collaboration
ASBRAC	Anti-Social Behaviour Risk Assessment Conference
BBC	Boston Borough Council
CSC	Customer Service Centre
DARDR	Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
ELDC	East Lindsey District Council
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
DSO	Deputy Safeguarding Officers
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
LCC	Lincolnshire County Council
LSAB	Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board
LSCP	Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
MCA	Mental Capacity Act (2005)
MSP	Making Safeguarding Personal
NCF	National Competencies Framework
NSPCC	National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
PSPS	Public Sector Partnership Services Ltd
SCR	Serious Case Review
SELCP	South and East Lincolnshire Partnership
SHDC	South Holland District Council
TAC	Team Around the Child
VAP	Vulnerable Adults Panel

# Appendix A

Internal Safeguarding Report Form can be accessed here;

[SELCP Safeguarding Report Form](#)

# Appendix B

## SELCP Safeguarding Policy: Useful Links

[SELCP Safeguarding Report Form](#)

[SELCP Safeguarding Intranet Link](#)

[Children Act 1989](#)

[Care Act 2014](#)

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023: Statutory Framework](#)

[Report a safeguarding concern – Safeguarding reporting for the public - Lincolnshire County Council](#)

[Report a safeguarding concern – Safeguarding reporting for professionals - Lincolnshire County Council](#)

[Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006](#)

# Appendix C

## Safeguarding Council tenants

The South & East Lincolnshire Council Partnership has several distinct groups of tenants: -

- East Lindsey District Council operates 46 properties, both owned and leased for homelessness, refugee or resettlement families.
- Boston Borough Council also operates 22 properties, for homelessness, refugee or resettlement families.
- South Holland District Council is a social landlord responsible for managing a portfolio of over 3,700 homes across the district. This portfolio includes more than 1,000 sheltered housing units, which are allocated to individuals aged 55 and above, as well as residents who may benefit from a wellbeing alarm system.

This appendix must be read alongside the Partnership's Safeguarding Policy which sets out the Council's statutory duties, responsibilities, and roles in relation to safeguarding.

The Councils work in partnership with others and aims to make sure that those using their services are listened to and protected from abuse and neglect. In the role as a landlord, Officers attend and refer into multi-agency meetings including but not limited to the following:

- Team Around the Child meetings
- Child Protection meetings
- Vulnerable Adult Panel
- Anti-Social Behaviour Risk Assessment Conference
- Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (for Domestic Abuse Cases).

Officers have regular training on Safeguarding, Modern Day Slavery and Domestic Abuse and report all incidents or concerns they have relating to the wellbeing of an individual.

## Safeguarding in housing contexts

### Cuckooing

Cuckooing is the practice where somebody's home is taken over by another person, or by a group, for criminal purposes such as dealing or storing drugs, or for illegal sex work. The experience of being "cuckooed" has a hugely negative impact on the vulnerable individual victimised, who often experience violence, psychological distress, substance addiction, and being indebted to criminal networks as a result.

Cuckooing victims are predominantly older, male, and almost always have some form of underlying vulnerability. Victims will almost always live alone and often will have either, or a combination of, substance misuse needs, learning disabilities and mental health needs.

Being professionally curious can help us to identify cuckooing, to gain clarity on the concern, and help to inform next steps.

Officers do not seek to apportion blame to the victim: we view cuckooing as abuse. Like many forms of abuse, the relationship of the victim to the abuser can be complex.

Where we believe that a vulnerable adult covered by this policy or any household with children has had their home taken over for criminal purposes, we always contact and work with the Police and at the same time make an urgent Safeguarding Referral.

In partnership with the Police, we aim to provide support to the cuckooed resident so that they get the help they need; and to prevent people entering addresses which are being used for cuckooing using formal enforcement action such as injunctions or closure orders.

Where a vulnerable resident covered by this policy has their home taken over for criminal purposes, our priority is that they are kept safe. This includes a commitment to ensure that victims of cuckooing can secure and sustain appropriate and safe accommodation – and to do so as quickly as possible.

The Council starts from the principle that safety includes having a secure, safe, and sustainable home.

Where the vulnerable victim is a Council tenant, Officers are committed to ensuring that wherever possible they can retain their security of tenure. In many situations, emergency or temporary accommodation will be provided. This may involve maintaining the existing tenancy until it is safe to return home or ending the tenancy without penalty and arranging urgent rehousing in accordance with the Council's Allocation and Lettings Policy. In other cases, it may mean that Officers support the victim to end their tenancy consensually as part of a planned move to supported, sheltered or other more appropriate accommodation.

#### Domestic Abuse & Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

As set out in the safeguarding policy, Domestic Abuse includes an incident or a pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family member regardless of gender or sexuality. Domestic abuse is not just about partners but all family relationships.

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) is defined as 'any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life'.

Being professionally curious is a key part of that proactive approach: exploring and proactively trying to understand what is happening - looking, listening, asking direct questions, checking out and reflecting on all the information received - can maximise the opportunity to identify domestic abuse and VAWG, to gain clarity on the concern, and help to inform next steps.

Domestic abuse and VAWG is also a safeguarding matter if the victim is either a child or a vulnerable adult with statutory care and support needs. We follow the Council's Safeguarding Policy and guidance if we believe a vulnerable adult or child is at risk due to an abusive relationship.

#### Financial abuse

Financial Abuse includes the unauthorised, fraudulent obtaining and improper use of funds, property, or other resources. Signs of financial abuse can include an unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills, unexplained withdrawals of money from accounts, personal possessions going missing or unusual interest by a friend/relative neighbour in financial matters.

The housing teams are in a strong position to recognise Financial Abuse. This includes:

- Conversations with the person about debt, their rent, service charges or benefits
- Seeing rent or bank statements, income and expenditure assessments, or other financial documentation which highlights something worrying.

Being professionally curious can maximise the opportunity to identify financial abuse, gain clarity on the concern and help to inform next steps.

Financial Abuse is a safeguarding matter when the victim is a vulnerable adult with care and support needs. In these cases, Officers follow the Council's Safeguarding Policy.

### Self-neglect and hoarding

The Care Act 2014 has clarified the relationship between self-neglect and safeguarding. It has made self-neglect a category of harm about which the Local Authority, in conjunction with local partners, has a duty to make enquiries and assess need with the promotion of well-being at the heart.

Self-neglect is an extreme lack of self-care that can cover a wide range of behaviours, hygiene, health, or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. Self-neglect is likely to be characterised by:

- Lack of self-care to an extent that it threatens personal health and safety
- Neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings
- Inability to avoid harm because of self-neglect
- Failure to seek help or access services to meet health and social care needs
- Inability or unwillingness to manage one's personal affairs
- Being long standing and recurring
- Frequently putting themselves and others at high risk.

Hoarding is the persistent collecting of goods, objects or animals and being unable to discard of such possessions when the quantity has become excessive. Hoarding can vary from mild to severe cases whereby it may not impact on their life at all or could seriously affect their functioning on a day-to-day basis.

Officers receive specific training, supervision and support for responding to cases of hoarding and self-neglect to help them understand the complexities of this area of work, the possibilities for intervention and the limitations.

The inclusion of self-neglect in the Care Act 2014 statutory guidance about safeguarding does not mean that every adult who self-neglects needs to be safeguarded. Likewise, not all adults who hoard need to be safeguarded.

Safeguarding duties apply only where a child's welfare is affected, or where the adult has care and support needs and they are at risk of self-neglect, and they are unable to protect themselves because of their care and support needs. Where Officers believe that an adult self-neglects or hoards and may meet those safeguarding thresholds, or that a child's welfare is affected by that self-neglect or hoarding, a Safeguarding Referral will be made. Having made that referral, Officers aim to support the adult from a housing perspective, including any relevant multi-agency approach.

The Tenancy Management Policies set out our approach to supporting residents who self-neglect and/or hoard. That approach is based on risk management.

The Councils will always try to work with tenants where hoarding occurs, however we will take immediate action where there is a fire or health and safety risk to the home or shared areas. The Councils can take injunction and possession proceedings if a tenant's action is considered detrimental to the condition of the property, or a Health and Safety risk. However, we will endeavour to work with people and keep them in their homes.

## Conclusion

Safeguarding is a fundamental responsibility embedded across all housing services provided by the three councils in the SELCP.

Our approach is rooted in professional curiosity, partnership working, and a clear understanding of our statutory duties. We are committed to ensuring that all staff are equipped with the knowledge, training, and support needed to act appropriately and compassionately. Above all, we aim to ensure that every tenant lives in a safe, secure, and supportive environment.



2025  
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2028

# Thank You For Your Attention

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*served by One Team*

South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership