

# Hartlepool Borough Council's Community Hubs Service



HARTLEPOOL  
COMMUNITY HUBS

## Safeguarding including Prevent Policy & Procedure

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## Section 1 – Safeguarding Policy Statement and Principles

### 1.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF POLICY

This document outlines the policy of Hartlepool Borough Council's Community Hubs Service on identifying and responding to concerns regarding the safeguarding and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Although the legislative and policy base is different when responding to the safeguarding needs of adults, the principles for staff remain the same as those for children and young people. This policy has been developed incorporating key legislation such as the Children's Act 2004, Care Act 2014, Equality Act 2010 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023.

With the associated procedures, this policy provides guidance for all staff who may come across concerns of this nature within the context of their work for the Service. This policy and procedures will apply but are not restricted to:

- Staff Members
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Employers providing Work Placements
- Agency or Supply Staff
- Individuals/Learners

The Service recognises that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of individuals is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with an individual, their families or carers has a role to play in safeguarding.

### 1.2 POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose and scope of this policy statement is:

- To protect children, young people and adults at risk who receive services from Hartlepool Borough Council's Community Hubs Service.
- To provide staff and volunteers, alongside children/young people, their families and adults at risk with principles that guide our approach to safeguarding.

This policy applies to and should be read by anyone working on behalf of the Community Hubs Service, including managers, staff, casual workers and volunteers.

We endeavour to provide a safe and welcoming environment where children, young people and adults at risk are respected and valued. We believe that children, young people and adults should never experience abuse of any kind and we have a responsibility to promote their welfare. To keep them safe and to practice and have procedures in place which protect them. We will act quickly and follow our procedures to ensure that children and young people and adults at risk receive effective protection and support if necessary. Our overarching procedures align to

and we work together with Hartlepool and Stockton-On-Tees Safeguarding Children's Partnership and Tees Safeguarding Adults Board.

## 1.3 DEFINITIONS

### **Safeguarding Children:**

In England a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. Child protection guidance points out that even if a child has reached 16 years and is:

- Living independently;
- In further education;
- A member of the armed forces;
- In hospital; or
- In custody in the secure estate.

They are still legally children until the age of 18 years old and they should be given the same protection and entitlements as any other child. The term also includes those aged 18-20 who have been looked after by a Local Authority from 16 or who have a Learning Difficulty and/or Disability.

### **Safeguarding Adults:**

Similar standards of protection are also applied to vulnerable adults under the Care Act 2014. This places responsibility on professionals to report and prevent abuse or neglect and then stop it quickly when it happens. The main categories covered by this definition of an adult include people aged 18+ with:

- Learning Difficulty and/or Disability;
- Physical or sensory impairments;
- Mental illness, including dementia;
- Detained in custody or under a probation order;
- Considered at risk due to problems with substances or vulnerable due to other circumstances such as asylum seekers.

The Care Act 2014 describes safeguarding as a means of protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect while at the same time ensuring that an adult's well-being is promoted.

### **All Individuals:**

Whilst it's important to recognise certain groups who are legally defined as at risk, the Council's Community Hubs Service has inclusive and integrated 'safer' practices that apply to everyone. This creates a safe environment for all and ensures no one is left out, which is imperative for the Service.

## 1.4 CORE SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES

The Service recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people, vulnerable adults and all individuals accessing the Service. Our core principles are:

- The welfare of children, young people and adults at risk is paramount.
- All children, young people and adults at risk have equal rights to protection.
- All staff and volunteers have an equal responsibility to identify and act on any suspicion or disclosure that may suggest that a child, young person, or adult at risk, is at risk of harm.
- The Service has a culture of transparency, openness and, if required, challenge to maintain high standards in safeguarding.

The Service will ensure that robust internal arrangements are in place with respect to the responsibilities and duties under this safeguarding policy.

## 1.5 FORMS OF ABUSE

The Service acknowledges that within this context, abuse can take many forms, which include but are not restricted to:

- Physical abuse: This includes assault, hitting, slapping, pushing, and misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.
- Sexual abuse: This includes rape, indecent exposure, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the individual has not consented or was pressured into consenting.
- Psychological or emotional abuse: This includes emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.
- Financial or Material Abuse: This includes theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- Modern slavery: This encompasses slavery, human trafficking, and forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of servitude.

- Discriminatory abuse: This includes forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment; because of race, gender and gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.
- Organisational abuse: This includes neglect and poor care practice within an institution, care setting or in relation to care provided in a person's own home. This may range from one off incidents to on-going ill-treatment which can be through neglect or poor professional practice.
- Neglect or acts of omission: This includes ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.
- Self-neglect – includes a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding with no other perpetrator.
- Domestic violence and abuse: This includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse; so called 'honour' based violence.
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and County Lines: This includes abuse that occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of a child, young person or vulnerable into taking part in criminal activity.
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM): This includes all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia, or other injury to the female genital organs. FGM is a form of child abuse and illegal in the UK.
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE): This includes an individual or group taking advantage of a child or young person for sexual activity in exchange for something the victim needs, wants or financial advantage or increased status.

Although not categorised as a type of abuse, this policy recognises responsibilities under the PREVENT Duty which is part of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The aim is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This includes violent and non-violent extremism creating atmospheres conducive to terrorism and views terrorists exploit.

## Section 2 – Raising a Concern

### 2.1 PROCEDURES

Our procedures are in line with Hartlepool and Stockton-On-Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership and Tees Safeguarding Adults Board.

Staff and volunteers are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen' where safeguarding is concerned. Remember, doing nothing is never an option and you should always remain professionally curious. If there are any concerns, they should be acted on immediately and reported to a Manager or the Safeguarding Team.

Staff responsibilities or the 5 R's are summarised as:

1. Recognise
2. Respond
3. Record
4. Report
5. Refer

All staff and volunteers must adhere to the following procedure when dealing with a safeguarding concern:

- If an emergency, then any necessary action should be taken including calling 999 for the Police or Ambulance.
- All concerns should be reported to a member of the Safeguarding Team or alternatively a Manager.
- A Safeguarding Incident Form must always be completed either online or paper-based and submitted to the Safeguarding Team.

As soon as a concern is reported, the Safeguarding Team, or in their absence a Manager, will where necessary refer the concern to the Local Authority Safeguarding Team and, if necessary, the Council's Level 3 Designated Safeguarding Officer:

- In relation to concerns about children and young people aged under 18 years, contact 01429 284284 or [childrenshub@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:childrenshub@hartlepool.gov.uk)
- In relation to concerns about adults aged over 18 years, contact 01429 523390 or [dutyteam@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:dutyteam@hartlepool.gov.uk)
- If the concern is outside of normal office hours or during Bank Holidays, then contact should be made with the Council's Emergency Duty Team for both adults and children, who can be contacted 24 hours at 01642 524552.

Please note that a concern may be something you have been told about or something you have witnessed such as changes in a person's behaviour, or how they are treated by others.

It is important that any concerns are raised in line with the procedures within the Safeguarding Policy.

## 2.2 REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

It is important when reporting a concern that you are clear about the immediate cause for concern including retaining accurate record of anything that has been told, shown or witnessed. This information will be important if a concern needs to be raised to the Council's Safeguarding Adults or Safeguarding Children Team.

The key points you consider when completing a report includes:

- Why you suspect abuse or what you have been told, and the extent to which the individual would appear to be at risk of harm.
- If you suspect that a crime has been committed, then you should be aware of the need to preserve evidence e.g., not touching or moving anything.
- Where possible, you should include full information about the individual at risk including name(s), address, gender, date of birth (or approximate age), name(s) of person(s) with parental responsibility(child at risk) and primary carer (adults at risk)

If you do not have this information then you should still inform your Manager or the Safeguarding Team, as it may provide an additional piece of information to an already emerging picture. If you speak to your Manager, they will immediately act on this or pass the information onto a Safeguarding Officer (Appendix 2).

As a minimum include the following information in a factual record, which must be recorded on the Safeguarding Incident Report Form (Appendix 1):

- Date, time, and location of the incident and/or disclosure
- exactly what you have been told (record the individual's own words) and/or exactly what you have witnessed
- the appearance and behaviour of the individual at risk and any injuries observed

It may also be that you don't have any details at all about the child, young person or adult being harmed but this must not stop you from getting them help. If you have seen, or heard, or been made aware of any situation that alarms and worries you then you must tell your Manager or a member of the Safeguarding Team.

## 2.3 DEALING WITH DISCLOSURES

It takes a lot of courage for someone at risk to disclose that they are being abused and they may have lost all trust.

Basic guidelines to follow when dealing with disclosures are:

- Stay calm and actively listen, let the individual at risk guide the pace;
- Do not show shock at what you are hearing;
- Do not investigate, if you need to clarify what is being said, use open questions;
- Reassure the individual that they have done the right thing talking to you;
- Never promise to keep a secret as you have a duty to report on the information;
- Record factually what you have been told or observed as soon as possible.



Victims should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report. The individual should be acknowledged, taken seriously and listened to. Reassure the individual but tell them that a record of the information given will be made. It is important not to ask too many questions as you must not under any circumstances investigate accusations. Allow the individual to freely recall significant events, keeping questions to the absolute minimum necessary to ensure a clear and accurate understanding of what has been said. Record the factual details of what has been told to you, and you can send through attachments such as Physical Notes.

## **2.4 CONFIDENTIALITY**

If a child, young person or adults makes a disclosure then staff and volunteers should manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the Safeguarding Team.

The Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 states that fears about sharing information should not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and protect those at risk from abuse or neglect. You do not necessarily need the consent of the individual to share their personal information; when necessary if there is a risk of harm information can be shared legally without consent to raise concerns. Wherever possible, you should seek consent whilst being open and honest about why, what and how and with whom their information will be shared.

The Data Protection Act 2018 does not forbid the collection and sharing of personal information, it provides a framework to ensure personal information is shared appropriately in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

All matters relating to safeguarding and child protection are confidential but information will be disclosed on a 'need to know' basis. It should be noted that all staff and volunteers have a professional responsibility and legal duty to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

It should be noted by staff and volunteers that promises of confidentiality cannot be given as the matter may develop in such a way that these might not be able to be honoured due to the legal requirements in line with this Safeguarding Policy.

## Section 3 – Organisational Responsibilities

### 3.1 SAFER RECRUITMENT

The Community Hubs Service follows the Hartlepool Borough Council policies in relation to safer recruitment and reserves the right to deny employment to individuals where disclosure and barring (DBS) checks suggest that they might pose a danger. It also reserves the right, in accordance with its employment procedures, to suspend and/or dismiss staff or volunteers from their role or from undertaking a specific element of their role. This may be in circumstances where the individual acquires or extends a relevant criminal record or where they have withheld information about their criminal record at the point of employment.

The Service obtains enhanced DBS disclosures for all staff and volunteers who are in a job or role which involves regulated activity as defined within the Council's DBS Policy. The Council has established procedures to evaluate information about any staff member's criminal record and make sensible, fair and consistent judgements about whether the individual is safe to engage (or remain engaged) in the employment role.

The Service adheres to and follows Hartlepool Borough Council's Safer Recruitment Policy.

### 3.2 WHISTLEBLOWING

If an allegation is made against a staff member or volunteer, then it must be dealt with following the Council's Whistle Blowing Policy. If necessary, the staff member or volunteer will be suspended but will receive a named contact within the Council. The policy confirms that it is essential for any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff or volunteers to be dealt with very quickly, in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection and, at the same time, supports the person who is the subject of the allegation.

The procedures for dealing with allegations are led by the Council's HR Team and will be applied with common sense and judgement. The following definitions should be used when determining the outcome of allegation investigations:

- Substantiated: there is sufficient evidence to prove the allegation;
- Malicious: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation, and there has been a deliberate act to deceive;
- False: there is sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation;
- Unsubstantiated: there is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove the allegation. The term, therefore, does not imply guilt or innocence;
- Unfounded: to reflect cases where there is no evidence or proper basis which supports the allegation being made.

It is extremely important that when an allegation is made, the Services makes every effort to maintain confidentiality while an allegation is being investigated or considered. It will be investigated by the Council's HR Team or a Senior Manager.

### **3.3 ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA**

The Service has a responsibility to safeguard staff members and volunteers alongside individuals. It is imperative that everyone adheres to the Safeguarding Policy and the following key points:

- It is not appropriate for staff to have non-work-related contact with any children, young people or vulnerable adults that they work with, including electronic communication, such as Social Media.
- Staff should only use electronic communication for reasons relating to working with children, young people and vulnerable adults. It is not for general socialising, and they should not add children, young people or vulnerable adults to their Social Media Pages such as Facebook. Staff should not use their own social media to conduct Council business unless authorised to do so by the Head of Service.
- If a child, young person or vulnerable adult discloses information or anything of a concerning matter through electronic communication; the staff members must follow the Safeguarding Procedure. Staff should not respond to the email and should report this matter to a member of the Safeguarding Team.
- Staff should seek to ensure that their personal profiles or any social networking sites should be set to the highest form of security to prevent children, young people or vulnerable adults from accessing personal information or seeing pictures of a personal nature.
- The guidance for texting, calling and email contact is the same as Social Media. Staff should not give individuals their personal numbers and should use their work phones as their contact for all work-related matters. Staff should not make disparaging or inappropriate comments about colleagues, individuals or the Council.
- Staff should not post remarks on Social Media that are or could be considered as harassment or bullying, defamatory, obscene, pornographic or sexually explicit, or likely to bring the Council, our partners, stakeholders, or colleagues into disrepute.

### **3.4 VOLUNTARY PLACEMENTS**

The Service has a responsibility to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all individuals undertaking external voluntary placements.

The Service will ensure that employers are aware of this policy and their responsibilities for compliance in relation to Safeguarding and the Prevent Duty for any individual who is placed with them and that arrangements are in place to ensure that an individual's well-being is safeguarded. There will be due diligence checks undertaken which will incorporate checks to ensure any external placement has appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place. All placement providers will receive and sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

For internal voluntary placements, the Community Hubs Service will adhere and follow the Council's Volunteer Procedure.

### **3.5 UNSUPERVISED CHILDREN**

Children under the age of 8 years should be accompanied by a responsible adult when visiting any of the Community Hubs buildings.

If a child is found under the age of 8 years unaccompanied staff or volunteers should:

- Ask the child if they are waiting to be collected. It is good practice for a child to be approached by two staff members or volunteers if possible so that one can go and get help if required while the other stays with the child;
- Ask if the child's parent/ carer/responsible adult (16 years and over) is in the facility or if not then attempt to contact the parent/carer;
- Avoid being alone with the child and remain in public view and make a clear record of any response from the parent/carer;
- Encourage the child to remain in the building until somebody collects them and under no circumstances take the child home or offer them a lift anywhere.

If all attempts to contact parents/carers/responsible adults fail then the safeguarding procedures should be followed in line with Section 2.

It should always be clear that children under the age of 8 remain the responsibility of their parents/guardians within any of the buildings across the Community Hubs.

### **3.6 SECURITY INCLUDING EXTERNAL SPEAKERS**

Staff members and volunteers must clearly display their ID card at all times when in any of the Community Hubs buildings which includes:

- Community Hub Central
- Community Hub South
- Seaton Library
- Headland Library
- Throston Grange Library
- Waverley Outdoor Hub
- Centre for Independent Living.

In addition, ID cards should also be displayed when delivering activities or programmes within any other community facility within Hartlepool.

All contractors and external guests will be given a Visitors Badge, which must be worn whilst on the premises. It should be noted that the Community Hubs are openly accessible buildings for members of the public but access to rooms is restricted via digital and lockable entry systems. Spot checks are regularly carried out to ensure all contractors and external guests are visibly wearing their ID or Visitors' Badges. All staff and volunteers are encouraged to challenge any staff not visibly wearing their ID badge whilst in the building. All external guests are expected to sign in at the reception/welcome areas, and wait to be escorted by the member of staff whom you have come to visit. All internal Council staff should clearly display their HBC ID Badge. These measures are in place for safety and safeguarding.

Please note that when large numbers of visitors are within the buildings, such as Open Days and other events, there will be staff members available in all openly accessible rooms. All external guests will be provided with the location of the emergency exits that they should use in the event of the alarms sounding and any other protection/security information.

There is a set framework in place for all visiting speakers to adhere to the Prevent Duty Statutory Guidance:

- All visiting speakers must be formally invited and they need to provide a clear outline of their presentation in advance of their visit, and approval must be received from a Manager.
- The Service will undertake appropriate suitability and background checks on the speaker and any organisation they represent, including an internet search and the use of Social Media.
- All speakers will agree with the Council's commitment to Equality and British Values. If the presentation has content which proves unsuitable in line with our policies, then the speaker will be brought to an early end.
- There will always be staff present during the visit who will monitor the speech to ensure it aligns with the values and ethos of the Council and British Values.
- It will be made clear to all visiting speakers that there will be no attempt to raise funds without the prior written permission of the Council.

The due diligence checks on visiting speakers must be reviewed and authorised by either Scott Campbell (Service Manager), Jamie Kelly (Community Hubs Manager) or Marnie Ramsay (Head of Service).

### **3.7 FIRE, BOMB AND TERRORIST EVACUATION**

The Service has a comprehensive evacuation procedure which is clearly displayed for all users, staff, volunteers and visitors, providing information on:

- How to raise the alarm in the event of a fire, gas leak or bomb scare;
- What to do if you hear the fire alarm;

- The route you should take – including a plan of the route from each room or area in the building and;
- The nearest assembly point.

There will be regular testing and evacuation drills to ensure the procedures are being followed by all users, staff, volunteers and visitors across Community Hub Buildings.

### **3.8 TRANSPORTATION OF INDIVIDUALS AND VISITING THEIR HOMES**

The Service acknowledges that there are occasions when children, young people and vulnerable adults may need to be transported due to the nature of their activity. In these cases, staff should always seek to utilise approved transport arrangements e.g. Council's Taxi Supplier. Where these travel arrangements are not possible, and a member of staff is utilising their own transport, it is imperative that consent to transport the individual has been given in writing from parents/carers. In such cases, the member of staff must have permission from their Manager. The Service also requires a minimum of two staff to be present during transportation and hold appropriate business insurance as outlined by the Council.

Sometimes visits to individuals in their homes or to businesses are necessary but these should only be undertaken by a paid member of staff who has received permission from a manager. The relevant manager will ensure a risk assessment is undertaken before each visit and appropriate precautions are taken to reduce the risk of violence and aggression; including ensuring visits are completed in pairs with colleagues, other agencies or, in certain circumstances the presence of the Police. As a minimum the Employee Protection Register (EPR) system must always be checked before visits are undertaken; this should help inform whether or not lone working is appropriate for a particular visit. If an individual or address is flagged, re-assess the situation and consider if the contact can be undertaken in a different way, perhaps over the telephone or at another Council location with a dedicated room.

As well as implementing the guidance above for home/business visits managers should discuss exit strategies that could be used during the visit if they start to feel threatened. Some key guidelines are:

- Conduct an unwritten risk assessment on the door step before entering and if feeling uncomfortable or unsure, make an excuse to leave and trust instincts.
- On entry try to make a note of how the door opens/closes; and the route to the door from the room they are in, so that staff can leave quickly, if necessary.
- Give the individual an idea of how long the visit will take, the fact the office is aware and if it overruns they will need to contact the office to let them know.
- If meeting an individual for the first time they should consider asking their "buddy" to call 10 minutes into any visit to check they are ok and feel comfortable (have a predetermined code word ready in case help needs to be summoned).

There is further information and all staff and volunteers should adhere to the Council's Employee Protection Policy and Lone Working Policy.

### 3.9 ONLINE SAFETY

Being online is an integral part of the lives of all individuals, including children, young people and vulnerable adults. Social media, online games, websites and apps can be accessed through mobile phones, tablets, computers, and laptops which all form part of an individual's online world.

The internet and online technology provide new opportunities for learning and growth, but it can also expose people to new types of risks. E-safety is, therefore, a fundamental part of the safeguarding and child protection measures. Government guidance highlights the importance of safeguarding individual from harmful and inappropriate online material. The Service takes a whole organisation approach to online safety, which helps ensure that staff, volunteers and individuals understand online safety.

The Service has a dual responsibility when it comes to e-safety; to ensure the online procedures keep users safe and to teach them about online safety both inside and outside the Service. The Community Hubs Service, therefore, fosters an open environment in which individuals are encouraged to ask any questions and participate in an ongoing conversation about the benefits and dangers of online world.

The breadth of issues classified within online safety is considerable but can be categorised into three areas of risk:

- Content: being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material; for example, pornography, fake news, racist or radical and extremist views;
- Contact: being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users; for example, commercial advertising as well as adults posing as children; and
- Conduct: personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm; e.g. making, sending and receiving explicit images or online bullying.

The Service has a duty to limit exposure to the above risks from the IT system. As part of this process, the Service has an appropriate filtering and monitoring system in place, which is controlled by NEC, which is the Council's ICT Provider. The sites are carefully monitored by the Council to ensure that it is not 'over-blocking' and therefore does not lead to unreasonable restrictions.

The Service understands its responsibility and provides the following:

- All individuals receive information on e-safety such as through posters, leaflets and websites. In addition, resources are in place for specific services such as those studying with Jobs & Skills via their Learner Handbook.
- All staff and volunteers receive continuous professional development, such as annual Safeguarding Training alongside updates such as bulletins from Hartlepool and Stockton-On-Tees Safeguarding Children's Partnership.
- All publicly accessible computers and tablets have firewall software installed by the Council to block offensive content, including sexual content, gambling sites and materials which may promote terrorist/radicalisation.

- The Social Media platforms used by the Service have e-safety mechanisms to ensure any offensive content or bullying/harassment is reported following the Safeguarding Policy.
- All users of IT systems accept the IT Acceptable Use Statement when logging onto its machines, and misuse is flagged to the Council's ICT Team who will then quickly inform the Service.
- All users must:
  - Not gain unauthorised access or make unauthorised modifications to computer materials (hacking);
  - Take all reasonable care not to distribute copyright materials in breach of copyright law;
  - Take all reasonable care not to distribute any materials which could be classed as defamatory and;
  - Not display, access, modify, view, extract, store, distribute, print or otherwise process information which contravenes the law.

The above guidance aims to ensure that everyone will feel safe both on and offline within all activities and services delivered by the Community Hubs Service.

### **3.10 EXPECTED BEHAVIOURS AND POLICE DISCLOSURES**

The Service provides a safe and welcoming environment and it is expected that staff, volunteers and members of the public treat each other courteously and with understanding and respect. The majority of people who access our services behave in an appropriate manner but there are occasions when staff and volunteers will be faced with individuals whose behaviour towards them or others is unacceptable.

The Service does not expect staff and volunteers to tolerate unacceptable behaviour from individuals and will take action to deal with it in a fair, consistent and transparent manner. The expected behaviours of staff, volunteers and members of the public are set out in our Community Hubs Charter. If these behaviours are not adhered to then individuals will be asked to leave and depending on the severity of the incident further action may be taken by the Council including referral to the Police.

Further information and guidance for staff and volunteers can be found within the Council's Staff Safety Policy.

If individuals are subject to any court orders/restrictions which may impact on their usage of the resources within or access to the Community Hubs then they have a duty to inform a member of staff. This will ensure that alternative arrangements can be discussed and to ultimately safeguard staff, volunteers and member of the public accessing the Community Hubs Service. Failure to comply with this will result in immediate action being taken by the Council and notification to the Police.



## Section 4 – PREVENT Duty

### 4.1 WHAT IS THE PREVENT DUTY

The PREVENT Duty, introduced as part of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, came into effect for key bodies, including schools, education providers, health bodies, local authorities and the Police.

The aim of the PREVENT Strategy is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. In the Act, this has simply been expressed as the need to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This includes not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists exploit.

Individuals are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting individuals from other forms of harm and abuse, protecting them from this risk is part of the Service’s safeguarding approach. Where deemed appropriate, the Service will seek external support through referrals to the Channel Programme. This programme aims to work with the individual to address their specific vulnerabilities and prevent them from becoming further radicalised.

### 4.2 PREVENT DEFINITIONS

#### **What is Extremism?**

Extremism is defined as any vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces. PREVENT covers international and domestic terrorist threats and includes the activities of far-right groups and animal rights groups.

#### **What is Radicalisation?**

Radicalisation refers to the process by which an individual comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

#### **What is Terrorism?**

Terrorism is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people, causes serious damage to property, or seriously interferes with or disrupts an electronic system. The use of threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

### 4.3 RADICALISATION

There is no single way of identifying whether an individual is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to an individual’s vulnerability. Similarly,

radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home).

The following indicators identify factors that may suggest a young person, adult, or their family may be vulnerable to being drawn into extremism:

- Identity crisis - distance from culture, religious heritage, and uncomfortable with their place in the society around them.
- Personal crisis - family tensions, sense of isolation, adolescent low self-esteem, disassociation from existing friendship groups and becoming involved with a new and different group of friends searching for answers to questions about identity, faith and belonging.
- Personal circumstances, e.g. migration, local community tensions, events affecting the Country and region of origin, alienation from UK values having a sense of grievance that is triggered by personal experience of racism or discrimination or aspects of Government policy, unmet aspirations, perceptions of injustice feeling of failure, rejection of civic life, criminality, experiences of imprisonment, poor resettlement, reintegration, previous involvement with criminal groups.

The process of radicalisation is different for every individual and can take place over an extended or short period. Potential indicators of radicalisation are listed below:

- Use of inappropriate language
- Possession or accessing violent extremist literature
- Behavioural changes
- The expression of extremist views
- Advocating violent actions and means
- Association with known extremists
- Articulating support for violent extremist causes or leaders
- Using extremist views to explain personal disadvantage
- Joining or seeking to join extremist organisations
- Seeking to recruit others to an extremist ideology

## **4.4 LOCAL PROFILE**

Nationally, in the 12 months to 30 June 2024, there were 242 terrorist related arrests, which was 80 more than the previous 12 month period with 75 (31%) of those arrests resulted in a charge, at the time of publication, of which 65 were for terrorism related offences. The majority of charges and convictions were for 'Dissemination of Terrorist Publications' which is an offence under Section 2 of the Terrorism Act 2006.

A breakdown of the arrest data:

- As in previous years, and similar to other types of crime, the vast majority of those arrested for terrorism related activity were males (86%).

- As in previous years, those aged 30 years and over accounted for most arrests (49%) with the 21 to 24 age group, increasing from 13 to 33 arrests.

In the year ending 31 March 2023, there were 6,817 referrals to PREVENT, an increase of 6.4% compared to the year ending March 2022. It is the third highest number of referrals since the data started being collected in 2015/16. The education sector made the most referrals at 2,684. A breakdown of the referral data:

- As in previous years, most referrals were males at 90% and those aged 15 to 20 again accounted for the largest proportion at 32% but those aged under 15 account for an increased proportion of referrals at 31%.
- The category called 'Vulnerability present but no ideology or CT risk' was the largest proportion at 37%. For the third year, the referrals for Extreme Right Wing concerns was second highest at 19%.

The primary threat to the North East remains Islamist Terrorism but there continues to be a growing threat from Extreme Right Wing radicalisation alongside emerging threats such as 3D-Printed Firearms, Drones and Cryptocurrency.

## 4.5 PREVENT REFERRAL AND CHANNEL PROCESS

If anyone identifies that they need to complete a PREVENT referral or are in need of general advice around PREVENT Duty then they first need to inform and take advice from the Safeguarding Team. The

The Hartlepool Borough Council PREVENT Lead is:

- Philip Hepburn  
Tel: 01429 523258  
Email: [philip.hepburn@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:philip.hepburn@hartlepool.gov.uk)

In addition, due to the Community Hubs Service incorporating Jobs & Skills, the Service has a PREVENT Lead who is also part of the Community Hubs Safeguarding Team and can be contacted on:

- Scott Campbell  
Tel: 01429 284487 | Mob: 07773474725  
Email: [scott.campbell@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:scott.campbell@hartlepool.gov.uk).

If you are still concerned, or you are advised to, you should make a Police PREVENT Referral which is available online via Cleveland Police [www.cleveland.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/t/prevent/prevent/](http://www.cleveland.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/t/prevent/prevent/).

Following a referral, the case will be assessed by the Police and may then be subject to the Channel Process. Channel is a key element of the PREVENT Strategy. Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It is a multi-agency approach to protect people at risk from

radicalisation using collaboration between local authorities, statutory partners and the police to:

- Identify individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism.
- Assess the nature and extent of that risk.
- Develop the most appropriate support plan for the individual concerned.

Channel is a voluntary, confidential support programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to individuals identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Any prejudice, discrimination or extremist views, including derogatory language will always be challenged and, where appropriate, will be dealt with in line with our policies and procedures. Staff should use their professional judgement and discuss with the Safeguarding Team if they have any concerns. Once assessed, and if appropriate, this will be referred to the Channel Panel Process.

## **4.5 FURTHER INFORMATION**

To ensure compliance with the PREVENT Duty, all staff must make sure that they:

- Undertake training in the PREVENT Duty as identified by the Service to ensure they have an understanding of the factors that make individuals vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and that they are able to recognise this vulnerability and are aware of what action to take.
- Exemplify British/Community Values in their work and practice and that opportunities are used to promote these values.
- Refer any concerns in relation to extremism or potential extremism to the Safeguarding Team or PREVENT Lead.

You will find shown below alternative key contacts for PREVENT Duty:

- Department for Education Helpline: 020 7340 7264.
- Cleveland Police PREVENT Team: 01642 302028.
- If a crime is being committed or there is a threat to life, contact 999.

You can also continue to report any concerns through a Safeguarding Incident Form.

## **Section 5 – Key Roles and Responsibilities**

Due to the sensitive nature of issues which can arise, everyone involved in, or with knowledge of, potential issues relating to the associated policies and procedures must conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and treat all information in accordance with their role. In the interests of fairness and equality, all parties must ensure that no conflicts of interest occur with the responsibilities of managers, staff and volunteers highlighted below:

### **5.1 STAFF AND VOLUNTEER RESPONSIBILITIES**

All staff members and volunteers are responsible for:

- Adhering to and fully understanding all policies and procedures of the Community Hubs Service and Council, including this Safeguarding Policy.
- Complying with all safer recruitment processes and checks, including DBS checks conducted by the Council.
- Co-operating and participating fully with all stages of the procedure and being alert to signs and symptoms of possible abuse.
- Undertaking their duties in accordance with the behaviours and attitudes set out in the Council's Code of Conduct.
- Knowing the standards of work performance expected and seeking clarification if unsure, including matters of safeguarding.
- Recognising problems with meeting the standards required and bringing this to the attention of their manager at an early stage.
- Taking ownership of their own personal development by identifying their own development needs.
- Dealing with any disclosures of abuse by following the procedure, informing the Safeguarding Team and providing a written account.
- Wearing their Council ID Badge at all times and challenging any staff, volunteers, external guests or contractors who do not have a Badge.
- Adhering and promoting the e-safety procedures and reporting any concerns to the Safeguarding Team.
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns immediately by following the procedure.

This is not an extensive list, and all staff members should follow procedures to identify, respond and notify any concerns regarding the safeguarding and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All staff members and volunteers will receive annual safeguarding training alongside monthly updates from the Safeguarding Team.

### **5.2 MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES**

All managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring their staff have access to and awareness of policies and procedures, including the Safeguarding Policy.
- Ensuring that all staff members are recruited through the Council's Safer Recruitment Procedures, including Right to Work in the UK, DBS Check, two references and a comprehensive Service Induction.
- Regularly communicating these policies and any updates so they have a clear understanding of the standards expected within the Service.
- Ensuring attendance from all staff members on annual training relating to Safeguarding, Equality & Diversity, Prevent, and any other training.
- Ensuring that all staff members have access to report concerns in relation to Safeguarding/Pastoral Support.
- Providing all staff members with badges following the existing Council Procedure available on the Intranet.

It is accepted by all parties that managers play an important role in the day-to-day supervision of their staff, and they should seek initially to rectify problems through informal discussions without invoking formal procedures.

### **5.3 SAFEGUARDING TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Safeguarding Officers are appointed within the Community Hubs Service and they will be given training, support, and resources to have the skills and knowledge required to carry out the role. There must be enough resource within the Safeguarding Team to ensure coverage in line with the operation of the Community Hubs Service.

Members of the Safeguarding Team are responsible for:

- Providing a point of contact for staff and volunteers who require advice and support about safeguarding concerns.
- Liaising with the relevant safeguarding agencies for advice and direction and take the lead responsibility for safeguarding.
- Monitor, manage and record incidents or concerns in line with procedures for the Council's Community Hubs Service.
- Refer cases of suspected abuse or when a crime has been committed to the relevant authority, i.e. Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, Police etc.
- Act as a PREVENT lead and refer cases where there is a concern about radicalisation in line with the PREVENT Duty.
- Consult with HR regarding allegations against staff or volunteers and provide any information requested by the Council.
- Actively promote the safeguarding policy and procedures across all activities, services and buildings within the Community Hubs Service.

The training for the Safeguarding Team will be in addition to that of other staff and volunteers and should be updated at least every two years.

### **5.4 MONITORING AND REPORTING**

The policy and associated procedures will be monitored and reviewed regularly and systematically in line with the requirements of the Service.

It should be noted that non-observance of the policy should be reported immediately to the Safeguarding Team. This will result in immediate action as all staff and volunteers should be aware of and adhere to the Safeguarding Policy.

## **5.5 FURTHER POLICIES & GUIDANCE**

There are further documents that feed into the Safeguarding Policy & Procedure which provide further guidance and should be read in conjunction with this policy, including:

- Modern Slavery Policy
- Prevent Handbook
- Prevent Risk Assessment & Action Plan
- Hartlepool and Stockton-On-Tees Safeguarding Children's Partnership ([www.hsscp.co.uk](http://www.hsscp.co.uk))
- Tees Safeguarding Adults Board ([www.tsab.org.uk](http://www.tsab.org.uk))

## APPENDIX 1 – REPORTING FORM

It is vital to record any cause for concern and deal with safeguarding matters in an appropriate manner, with all concerns reported immediately to Safeguarding Team.

### Section 1 – Contact Details

Name of Individual:

Date of Birth:

Address:

### Section 2 – Incident/Concern:

Please provide details of the incident or concerns you have, including times, dates or other relevant information if you can confirm how the concern was raised alongside factual observations about the individual.

What the individual has reported (in their own words) and any other relevant information

Proposed / Referral actions by the appointed DSO:

### Section 3 – Staff Details

Name of Staff Member:

Position:

Contact Details:

In addition to completing and submitting this form, you should also contact a member of the Safeguarding Team.



## APPENDIX 2 – SAFEGUARDING TEAM

Safeguarding concerns are discussed at management meetings in order to monitor, review and develop the work of the Community Hubs Service.

The Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO), who have operational responsibility and carry out a co-ordination role, are:

- Sandra McKay  
Tel: 01429 401784 | 07988897357  
Email: [sandra.mckay@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:sandra.mckay@hartlepool.gov.uk)
- Donna Stone  
Tel: 01429 242901  
Email: [donna.stone@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:donna.stone@hartlepool.gov.uk)
- Andrea Willingham  
Tel: 01429 284369 | 07929832134  
Email: [andrea.willingham@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:andrea.willingham@hartlepool.gov.uk)
- Tracey Wilson  
Tel: 01429 284056 | 07929832141  
Email: [tracey.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:tracey.wilson@hartlepool.gov.uk)
- Malcolm Yorke  
Tel: 01429 284035 | 07970172019  
Email: [malcolm.yorke@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:malcolm.yorke@hartlepool.gov.uk)

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), who has overall responsibility for safeguarding groups at risk is:

- Scott Campbell  
Tel: 01429 284487 | 07773474725  
Email: [scott.campbell@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:scott.campbell@hartlepool.gov.uk)

The Level 3 Designated Safeguarding Officers for Hartlepool Borough Council are:

- John Lovett (Assistant Director – Adult Services), Telephone 01429 401978 (DSO for Adults)
- Laura Gough (Assistant Director – Children & Families), Telephone 01429 525380 (DSO for Children and Young People)

In instances where members of the Safeguarding Team are unavailable, staff should report any concerns to a manager who will be able to advise on appropriate action and/or ring the relevant numbers shown in the Safeguarding Policy.