

**CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

**3 SEPTEMBER 2009**

**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF RECREATION AND HEALTH AND HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

**1 Introduction and Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To approve the Council's new Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, Procedures and Self Assessment Action Plan.

**2 Wards Affected**

None

**3 Effect on Policy**

- 3.1 Following consultation the changes will require some policy changes

**4 Contact Officers**

- 4.1 Anne Marie Scott, Head of Human Resources ext 1731  
Paul Marston-Weston, Head of Recreation and Health ext 7095

**5 Background**

**5.1 The Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB)**

The Children Act 2004 requires each authority to establish a Safeguarding Children Board. The OSCB is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in Oxfordshire will cooperate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the County, and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.

- 5.2** The OSCB coordinates and ensures the effectiveness of its member organisations with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Oxfordshire. It is not a service delivery organisation, nor a commissioning body. It has close links with the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Trust (OCYPT).

- 5.3** Cherwell District Council is a member organisation and is currently represented on the OCYPT by Councillor Daniel Sames. The Head of Recreation and Health is the lead officer on operational matters and attends the OSCB on a rotation basis with other district officers and the Head of Human Resources is the lead officer for Human Resource issues.

The policy and procedure functions of the OSCB include:

- Developing policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- Recruitment, selection and supervision of people who work with children.
- Investigating allegations concerning people who work with children.
- Safety and welfare of children who are privately fostered.
- Cooperation with neighbouring children's service authorities.

- Monitoring of policies.
- Involvement in domestic violence and bullying.

Additional functions include:

- Training
- Communication and awareness
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Participating in planning and commissioning
- Serious case conference reviews
- Unexpected child deaths reviews

- 5.4** As a member of the OSCB the Council has a duty to ensure that it carries out its responsibilities as a Board member and that it effectively contributes to the above functions. As a part of this the Council is required to ensure staff and the public are aware of the Council Safeguarding Children Procedures and that these effectively cover all of the above functions.
- 5.5** The Council had previously adopted a Child Protection Policy and a Criminal Records Bureau checks procedure and these now need incorporating into the proposed procedures and policy. In particular the procedures need to include information in relation to child death reviews and allegations made to staff and volunteers working with children.
- 5.6** A copy of the revised draft safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures is provided in Appendix A.
- 5.7** Once the Draft Council Safeguarding Children Procedures have been agreed they will be put on the Council intranet and web site. The Head of Human Resources is in the process of developing a Safeguarding Children Training Programme that will be rolled out to staff as appropriate for their professional and service needs. The new Safeguarding Children Procedures will form a core part of that training programme.

Following a recent Joint Area Review Inspection a number of actions were required to be implemented in relation to the functioning of the Safeguarding Children Board. One of these actions is that the Board need to be reassured that the partner agencies are compliant with the requirements of the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' HM Government 2006.

As a result each partner agencies has been required to complete a Self- Assessment Tool and Action Plan. The draft Self- Assessment and Action Plan and draft training plan for Cherwell District Council are set out in Appendix B & C.

## **6 Risk Assessment, Financial Effects and Contribution to Efficiency Savings**

6.1 The following details have been approved by Karen Muir, Service Accountant ext 1545 and Rosemary Watts – Risk management and insurance officer ext 1566 .

### **6.2 Risk Assessment**

The risk associated with not implementing the policy, procedures and action plan is non compliance with legislation (Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006). The Council is required to develop Safeguarding Children policies and procedures as part of its obligations under the Children Act 2004. Adopting and implementing this new policy and procedures will further strengthen the Council position with regard to safeguarding children and young people and staff

6.3 **Financial Effects**

There are no financial implications in relation to the development and promotion of the new Safeguarding Children Procedures. These have been absorbed within existing resources.

6.4 **Efficiency/Savings**

There are no efficiency savings arising from this report

**7 Recommendations**

- 7.1 The Committee is **RECOMMENDED** to approve the Council's new Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, Procedures and Self Assessment Action Plan.

Background Papers:

Annex A Policy and Procedures

Annex B Safeguarding Self Assessment and Action Plan

Annex C Training Plan