

## Equality Impact Assessment: Review of Safeguarding Policy

The Equality Act 2010 includes a general duty which requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate discrimination**, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

In order to comply with the general duty authorities must assess the impact on equality of decisions, policies and practices. These duties do not prevent the authority from reducing services where necessary, but they offer a way of developing proposals that consider the impacts on all members of the community.

Authorities which fail to carry out equality impact assessments risk making poor and unfair decisions which may discriminate against particular groups and worsen inequality.

<b>Committee name and date:</b>	<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Decisions being recommended:</b>	<b>People with protected characteristics potentially impacted by the decisions to be made:</b>
Executive 22 January 2024  Council 20 February 2024	Corporate Safeguarding Policy Revised August 2023	Adoption and Implementation of the revised policy	Older people, young people, those with disabilities, people from ethnic minority backgrounds

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**Factors to consider in the assessment:** For each of the groups below, an assessment has been made on whether the proposed decision will have a **positive, negative or neutral impact**. This must be noted in the table below alongside brief details of why this conclusion has been reached and notes of any mitigation proposed. Where the impact is negative, a **high, medium or low assessment** is given. The assessment rates the impact of the policy based on the current situation (i.e. disregarding any actions planned to be carried out in future).

**High impact** – a significant potential impact, risk of exposure, history of complaints, no mitigating measures in place etc.

**Medium impact** – some potential impact exists, some mitigating measures are in place, poor evidence

**Low impact** – almost no relevancy to the process, e.g. an area that is very much legislation led and where the Council has very little discretion

Protected characteristic/ area of interest	Positive or Negative Impact	High, Medium or Low Impact	Reason
Race and ethnicity (including Gypsies and Travellers; migrant workers; asylum seekers).	Positive	High	The Policy includes actions to protect people experiencing cultural issues such as forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation which tend to affect young people from ethnic minority backgrounds disproportionately. The Policy covers Modern Slavery which can affect migrant workers.
	Negative	High	When using the Protocol On Dealing With Extremist Speakers and Events, if: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. staff making decisions about whether to research an individual or organisation making a booking, and</li> <li>2. staff making decisions about whether to accept a booking</li> </ol> do not have clear criteria for doing so and are not fully aware that they may make biased decisions, there is a danger that individuals and organisations could be racially or religiously profiled. Training on Prevent, race and religion awareness and unconscious bias for staff involved in making both these decisions would help to mitigate this impact.

<p><b>Disability:</b> as defined by the Equality Act – a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse impact on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.</p>	Positive	High	The policy has two key purposes, one of which is to demonstrate the Council's commitment to safeguarding from harm all adults with care and support needs using any council services and involved in any of their activities, and to treat them with respect during their dealings with the councils, our partners and contractors.
	Negative	Medium	Staff with some mental health issues or who have experienced abuse themselves, may find the policy and associated training triggering. The policy states that where this is the case Managers and the HR Adviser Team Leader will need to find an alternative method of ensuring that the staff member understand the basic principles of safeguarding and how to refer cases without going into the detail. The Employee Assistance Programme is also available to staff which may help them work through some of these issues.
	Negative	Medium	If staff making decisions about whether to research an individual making a booking for an event do not have clear criteria for doing so and are not fully aware that they may make biased decisions, there is a danger that some individuals who have certain disabilities such as mental health or neurodevelopmental conditions may appear suspicious whereas their behaviour is simply a result of their condition. The process within the Protocol On Dealing With Extremist Speakers and Events along with disability awareness and Prevent training should help to mitigate this impact.
<b>Sex/Gender</b>	Positive	High	The policy covers domestic violence and abuse which has a disproportionate impact on women.
<b>Gender reassignment</b>			
<b>Religion and belief</b> (includes no belief, some philosophical beliefs such as Buddhism and sects within religions).	Negative	High	When using the Protocol On Dealing With Extremist Speakers and Events, if: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. staff making decisions about whether to research an individual or organisation making a booking, and</li> <li>2. staff making decisions about whether to accept a booking</li> </ol>

			do not have clear criteria for doing so and are not fully aware that they may make biased decisions, there is a danger that individuals and organisations could be racially or religiously profiled. Training on Prevent, race and religion awareness and unconscious bias for staff involved in making both these decisions would help to mitigate this impact.
<b>Sexual orientation</b> (including heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual).			
<b>Age</b> (children and young people aged 0-24; adults aged 25-50; younger older people aged 51-75/80; older people 81+; frail older people; people living with age related conditions. The age categories are for illustration only as overriding consideration should be given to needs).	Positive	High	The purpose of the policy is to demonstrate the council's commitment to safeguarding from harm all children, young people and adults with care and support needs using any council services and involved in any of their activities, and to treat them with respect during their dealings with the council, our partners and contractors.
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b> including new and breast feeding mothers			
<b>Marriage and civil partnership status</b>			
<p><b><u>Actions identified that will mitigate any negative impacts and/or promote inclusion</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While the policy's intent is overwhelmingly positive, there could be situations where unconscious bias leads staff to make assumptions about who may need safeguarding. The development of training on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Unconscious Bias as well as Safeguarding will help to address this.</li> </ul>			

**Officer: Melinda Pogue-Jackson**

**Date: 26 September 2023**