

## Colchester Borough Council

### Equality Impact Assessment Form - An Analysis of the Effects on Equality

#### Section 1: Initial Equality Impact Assessment

**Name of policy / decision to be assessed:**

Safeguarding Policy

**1. What is the main purpose of the policy?**

- To ensure that the Council meets its statutory duties with regard to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults
- To ensure that the needs and interests of children and 'adults with needs for care and support' (or 'adults at risk' for short) are considered by employees in the provision of services and in its decision-making.

**2. What main areas or activities does it cover?**

- Contacting the Police when a child or adult at risk is in immediate danger
- Referring children or adults at risk to Essex Social Care when staff or Councillors witness or suspect abuse/ neglect
- Sharing information, confidentiality and data protection
- Specific responsibilities of key safeguarding post-holders
- The Council's relationship with the Safeguarding Boards

**3. Are there changes to an existing policy being considered in this assessment? If so, what are they?**

Yes. This assessment refers to a new version of the Safeguarding Policy (Version 7) produced in January 2020. Version 7 supersedes all previous versions of the Safeguarding Policy (originally produced 2013).

**4. Who are the main audience, users or customers who will be affected by the policy?**

- Council employees
- Councillors
- Customers
- Public

**5. What outcomes do you want to achieve from the policy?**

The safeguarding of children and adults at risk from all types of abuse and neglect

**6. Are other service areas or partner agencies involved in delivery? If so, please give details below:**

- Essex County Council/ Essex Social Care
- Essex Police
- Essex Safeguarding Adults Board
- Essex Safeguarding Children Board
- Essex-wide agencies and carers' signed up to the 'Information Sharing Protocol'

**7. Are you aware of any relevant information, data, surveys or consultations<sup>1</sup> which help us to assess the likely or actual impact of the policy upon customers or staff?**

The Council maintains records of concerns and 'alerts'/ referrals to Essex Social Care. These are reviewed to help assess the effectiveness safeguarding procedures.

**8. The 'general duty' states that we must have "due regard" to the need to:**

- (a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic'<sup>2</sup> and those who do not<sup>3</sup>
- (c) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not<sup>4</sup>

Not all policies help us to meet the 'general duty', but most do.

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<sup>1</sup>Click on [surveys or consultations](#) for more information. The Council's surveys and consultations include 'equality monitoring information' to help us identify any particular concerns or views expressed by any particular group or 'protected characteristic'. It can also help us to assess how representative of our customers the respondent group is. Local Data on the Protected Characteristics is available [on this page](#) of the Hub.

<sup>2</sup> The Equality Act's 'protected characteristics' include age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex and sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnerships, but not for all aspects of the duty.

<sup>3</sup> This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to: (a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic; (b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it, and (c) encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

<sup>4</sup> This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) tackle prejudice, and (b) promote understanding.

Where applicable, explain how this policy helps us to meet the ‘general duty’:

The policy helps us to ‘eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation’ in the following way(s):

- Older people and are more likely to fall into the Care Act 2014 definition of an ‘adult with needs for care and support’. The policy helps to protect children from harassment and abuse.
- The policy helps to protect people with a variety of disabilities from discrimination, harassment and abuse.
- Women are more likely than men to be victims of domestic violence. This group are more likely to fall into the Care Act 2014 definition of an adult with needs for care and support. Victims of domestic violence are safeguarded through the policy which can help to eliminate discrimination and harassment.

The policy helps us to ‘advance equality of opportunity...’ in the following way(s):

- The policy helps to identify and prevent abuse against older people who are more likely to be adults at risk, and against children.
- This may help to “advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.”
- The policy helps to identify and prevent abuse against people with disabilities who are more likely to be adults at risk.

The policy helps us to ‘foster good relations...’ in the following way(s):

There are clear statements contained within this policy, and on the Council’s website, that adults at risk of abuse have a right to protection from all forms of abuse. This can help to tackle prejudice, where it exists, against this group. Older people, children, and people with disabilities are more likely to be at risk of abuse than other groups.

**9. This section helps us to identify any disproportionate impacts. Please indicate in the table below whether the policy is likely to particularly benefit or disadvantage any of the ‘protected characteristics’.**

‘Protected characteristic’ group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could disadvantage the group
Age	Older people (60+)	X	The policy helps to safeguard adults with needs for care and support. Older people are more likely to fall into this category.		None identified
	Younger people (17-25) and children (0-16)	X	The policy helps to safeguard children. The legal definition of children includes young people aged 16-18.	X	Children may be less able than adults to access relevant information, and take the right steps, to report and stop abuse towards themselves or others.

'Protected characteristic' group		Positive Impact	Explain how it could benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could disadvantage the group
Disability	Physical	X	This group is more likely to fall into the Care Act definition of 'adults with needs for care and support'.		None identified
	Sensory	X	As above		None identified
	Learning	X	As above		None identified
	Mental health	X	As above		None identified
	Other – <i>please specify</i>				
Ethnicity	White		None identified		None identified
	Black		None identified	X	Black Minority Ethnic (BME) groups may be less likely to have English as a first language. See below.
	Chinese		None identified	X	As above
	Mixed Ethnic Origin		None identified	X	As above
	Gypsies/ Travellers		None identified		None identified
Other – <i>please state</i>					
Language	English not first language	X	The policy helps to safeguard adults with needs for care and support. This group may be more vulnerable to exploitation.	X	People who do not have English as a first language may be less able to access relevant information, and take the right steps, to report and stop abuse towards themselves or others.
Pregnancy and Maternity	Women who are pregnant or have given birth in last 26 weeks		None identified		None identified
Religion or Belief	People with a religious belief (or none)		None identified		None identified
Sex	Men		None identified		None identified
	Women	X	Women are more likely to suffer domestic abuse than men. The policy is particularly concerned with safeguarding vulnerable adults whose definition includes those who are victims of domestic abuse.		None identified

'Protected characteristic'		Positive Impact	Explain how it could benefit the group	Negative Impact	Explain how it could disadvantage the group
	Transsexual / gender reassignment		None identified		None identified
Sexual Orientation	Lesbian, gay and bisexual		None identified		None identified
Marriage and Civil Partnership	People who are single, married or in a civil partnership		None identified		None identified

10. If you have identified any negative impacts (above) how can they be minimised or removed?

X	Children may be less able than adults to access relevant information, and take the right steps, to report and stop abuse towards themselves or others.
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The Council website includes a page titled 'Safeguarding children and adults with needs for care and support' [here](#) which includes information and links to the NSPCC and Childline websites. The Council works with partner agencies through the Local Child Safeguarding Board to help safeguard and children from abuse and neglect. The Council takes every opportunity to communicate appropriate safeguarding messages to children in schools, including through its annual 'Virtual Crew' interactive online teaching programme, coordinated by Council staff and offered to all primary schools throughout the Borough.

X	People who do not have English as a first language may be less able to access relevant information, and take the right steps, to report and stop abuse towards themselves or others
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All of the Council's webpages can be translated via 'Google Translate' into over 60 languages. This includes this policy and the 'Safeguarding children and adults with needs for care and support' page which provides key information on safeguarding, as well as specific advice on what to do and who to contact "if you or someone you know needs help". In addition, professional text translation, as well as 'face-to-face' and instant telephone interpretation services are available to staff to assist customers.

11. Could the policy discriminate<sup>5</sup> against any 'protected characteristic', either directly or indirectly<sup>6</sup>?

No

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<sup>5</sup> The Council has a general duty to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation'. Direct discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another in a comparable situation because of their 'protected characteristic' whether on grounds of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, ethnicity; religion or belief; sex (gender), sexual orientation, or marriage and civil partnership. Indirect discrimination occurs when an apparently neutral provision or practice would nevertheless disadvantage people on the grounds of their 'protected characteristic'.

<sup>6</sup> If you answer 'yes' to question 11 (above) you will need to complete this section *and* go on to complete Section 2 in order to conduct a full Equality Impact Assessment.

## Summary and findings of Initial Equality Impact Assessment

12. Please put a tick in the relevant box to confirm your findings, and what the next step is:

Findings	Action required
No negative impacts have been identified <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and finish.
<b>Negative impacts have been identified but have been minimised or removed X</b>	<b>Sign off screening and finish.</b>
Negative impacts could not be minimised or removed <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.
There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement. <input type="checkbox"/>	Sign off screening and complete a full impact assessment – Section 2.

13. Name and job title of person completing this form:

Sonia Carr (Safeguarding Co-ordinator)

14. Date of completion:

January 2020

15. Date for update or review of this screening:

January 2025