

THAKEHAM PARISH COUNCIL

CHILD PROTECTION AND VULNERABLE PERSONS POLICY

1. Introduction

Thakeham Parish Council is committed to maintaining the welfare of people whilst they are using the village facilities described within this policy (see section 4). The Council recognises its own responsibilities to take all reasonable steps to protect and safeguard children and to safeguard vulnerable adults from harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. The Council also expects its partner organisations, which manage or use village facilities, to recognise their own responsibilities, to comply with this policy and to ensure they have arrangements in place to protect and safeguard children and to safeguard vulnerable adults.

2. Safeguarding

The Council will endeavour to safeguard children and vulnerable persons, in that:

- The welfare of the child and vulnerable adult is paramount
- All children and vulnerable adults have the right to protection from abuse
- All suspicions and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately
- All staff, volunteers and elected members of the Council have a responsibility to report concerns to the appropriate officer
- Staff, volunteers and members of the Council are not to deal with situations of abuse or to decide if abuse has occurred

3. Duty of care

- 3.1 Thakeham Parish Council has a duty of care to protect others from harm; this includes a range of processes including risk assessment and health & safety practices.
- 3.2 Where appropriate, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks will be carried out in accordance with the eligibility criteria in the Rehabilitations of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975.
- 3.3 Allegations or suspicions of inappropriate behaviour by a member of staff or Councillor must be referred immediately to the Clerk who will refer the matter to Social Services at West Sussex County Council for investigation.

4.0 Local context

This policy applies specifically to the Council's limited responsibilities for the following facilities:

- The Council has a sub-committee that oversees the use of the High Bar Lane playing field (which it owns) and the Furze Common Road toddler play area (which is owned and maintained by Horsham District Council). These play areas are open to all members of the public. The Council has no direct contact with any children or young people using these facilities
- Pre-School building, for which the Council is the freeholder but is leased to Thakeham Pre-School, which is responsible for the day-to-day running and educational provision of this facility, including all child protection aspects.
- Thakeham Village Hall, for which the Council is Custodian Trustee. The Village Hall has a Management Committee, which is responsible for the day to day running of the hall and its long term viability.
- The Appendix to this paper contains an excerpt from the Council's current corporate Risk Register containing relevant information relating to risk management of its play facilities.

5.0 Policy

5.1 In developing this policy, Thakeham Parish Council has drawn upon the pan-Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures and the pan-Sussex Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults, which are based on, and comply with, all contemporary legislative and policy frameworks and are regularly updated. They provide guidance for anyone who has a concern and seeks advice or wishes to raise a concern with the appropriate authority. These documents can be found at:

<https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/> (Children)

<https://new.eastsussex.gov.uk/socialcare/worried/sab/> (Adults)

5.2 Thakeham Parish Council has no specific person, either Councillors or staff members who are involved in the care of children or adults at the facilities listed above, but will ensure that, should a concern arise, the correct procedures related to this policy are followed.

5.2 The Chairman of the Council, or another Councillor delegated by the Chairman, and the Clerk are the Council's nominated representatives for child protection and the safeguarding of vulnerable adults. The nominated representatives can be contacted via the Clerk (contact details at the end of this document).

5.3 If concerns are raised with the Council's nominated representatives a 'record of concern' will be initiated. This will be kept in a confidential file in a locked cabinet and only shared with other individuals and agencies in line with the information sharing protocols set out in the pan-Sussex child and adult procedures. However, the Council abides by the principle that the protection of a child or vulnerable adult is always paramount.

5.4 The Council requires that any group using its facilities will have a policy in place covering child protection and safeguarding and the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and provide the Council with written assurance to this effect on an annual basis.

Adopted **January 2018**

Next review: September 2018 (after expected delivery of Abingworth Community buildings)
Thereafter: annually, at May TPC meeting.

Contact person: Parish Clerk, The Parish Office, Thakeham Parish Council, Storrington Road,
Thakeham, Pulborough, West Sussex RH20 3EJ
Telephone: 01798 815305
Email: clerk@thakehamparish.co.uk

Appendix: relevant excerpts from Parish Council corporate Risk Register 2018.

| | What are the hazards? | Who might be harmed? | Risk H/M/L | What are we doing already? | Residual risk and further mitigating action | Further immediate action, if any | Action by when? | Status |
|--------------------|---|--|------------|--|---|------------------------------------|-----------------|--------|
| Assets | | | | | | | | |
| Land/Play areas | Poor maintenance of land or equipment leading to accident hazards. Falling tree branches Dead tree branches that might fall | Public using TPC-owned sites. Council budget affected by insurance or | M | Ensuring adequate insurance Playgrounds inspected weekly (litter picker), quarterly (HDC) and annually (RoSPA); action on reports by Environment Cttee Tree risks reported urgently to Highways/landowner, or TPC grounds contractors. | Arrangements will require review if/when TPC becomes freeholder of Abingworth community assets. (Nb. need for liaison with Abingworth Homes management entity.) | Review insurance Clerk, Council | May 18 | |
| Other Areas | | | | | | | | |
| Safety –general | Health & safety awareness | Staff, visitors, Users | L | Ensuring adequate public liability insurance is in place. Training for Clerk, Cllrs, Village Hall Trust - as appropriate. | Arrangements to be reviewed if/when TPC becomes freeholder of Abingworth community assets. Liaison with VHT | Clerk | June 18 | |