



Halstead Town Council

Safeguarding Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect people, particularly children, at risk adults and beneficiaries of assistance, from any harm that may be caused due to their coming into contact with Halstead Town Council (HTC). This includes harm arising from:

- The conduct of staff or personnel associated with HTC
- The design and implementation of HTC's programmes and activities

The policy lays out the commitments made by HTC, and informs staff and associated personnel of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

This policy does not cover:

- Sexual harassment in the workplace
- Safeguarding concerns in the wider community not perpetrated by HTC or associated personnel

What is safeguarding?

In the UK, safeguarding means protecting peoples' health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect

Scope

- All staff contracted by HTC
- Associated personnel whilst engaged with work or visits related to HTC, including but not limited to the following: consultants; volunteers; contractors; visitors including members of the public

Policy Statement

HTC believes that everyone we come into contact with, regardless of age, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic origin has the right to be protected from all forms of harm, abuse, neglect and exploitation. HTC will not tolerate abuse and exploitation by staff or associated personnel.

This policy will address the following areas of safeguarding: child safeguarding, adult safeguarding, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

HTC commits to addressing safeguarding throughout its work, through the three pillars of prevention, reporting and response.

Prevention

HTC responsibilities

HTC will:

- Ensure all staff have access to, are familiar with, and know their responsibilities within this policy
- Design and undertake all its programmes and activities in a way that protects people from any risk of harm that may arise from their coming into contact with HTC.
- Implement stringent safeguarding procedures when recruiting, managing and deploying staff and associated personnel
- Ensure staff receive training on safeguarding at a level commensurate with their role in the organisation
- Follow up on reports of safeguarding concerns promptly and according to due process

Staff responsibilities

Child safeguarding

HTC staff and associated personnel must not:

- Engage in sexual activity with anyone under the age of 18
- Sexually abuse or exploit children
- Subject a child to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect
- Engage in any commercially exploitative activities with children including child labour or trafficking

Adult safeguarding

HTC staff and associated personnel must not:

- Sexually abuse or exploit at risk adults
- Subject an at risk adult to physical, emotional or psychological abuse, or neglect

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

HTC staff and associated personnel must not:

- Exchange money, employment, goods or services for sexual activity.

Additionally, HTC staff and associated personnel are obliged to:

- Contribute to creating and maintaining an environment that prevents safeguarding violations and promotes the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy
- Report any concerns or suspicions regarding safeguarding violations by an HTC staff member or associated personnel to the appropriate staff member

Enabling reports

HTC will ensure that safe, appropriate, accessible means of reporting safeguarding concerns are made available to staff and the communities we work with.

HTC will also accept complaints from external sources such as members of the public, partners and official bodies.

How to report a safeguarding concern

Staff members who have a complaint or concern relating to safeguarding should report it immediately to the Town Clerk, **or the Administrator**. If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to the **staff** they may report to any Councillor.

Response

HTC will follow up safeguarding reports and concerns according to policy and procedure, and legal and statutory obligations.

HTC will apply appropriate disciplinary measures to staff found in breach of policy.

HTC will offer support to survivors of harm caused by staff or associated personnel, regardless of whether a formal internal response is carried out. Decisions regarding support will be led by the survivor.

Confidentiality

It is essential that confidentiality is maintained at all stages of the process when dealing with safeguarding concerns. Information relating to the concern and subsequent case management should be shared on a need to know basis only, and should be kept secure at all times.

Sarah Greateorex

Town Clerk

Next review January 2029