



'CHILD PROTECTION AND VULNERABLE ADULTS' POLICY

October 2007

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Contents Page	2
List of Appendices	3
Chief Executive's Foreword	4
1 Aim of the Policy	5
2 Introduction	7
3 Background	8
4 Policy Statement	11
5 Definitions of Abuse	12
6 Recognising Abuse	13
7 Does This Policy Affect Me?	15
8 Hiring Council's Facilities	18
9 The Role of Council's Designated Officers	19
10 Recruitment and Selection Procedures, and Contractors/Groups/Franchisees	21
11 Code of Behaviour	26
12 Guidance on Incident Handling	28
13 Allegations Against Employees, Volunteers or Individuals/Groups Hired by Council	31
14 CPVA Structures and Training	33

Appendices

- A Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Incident Report Form**
- B Flowchart Showing Internal Reporting Process**
- C Planning Activities/Supervision Ratios**
- D Recording Images of Children and Vulnerable Adults**
- E Lone Working**
- F Register of Regulated Posts (Sept 2007)**
- G Register of 'At Risk' Posts (Sept 2007)**
- H Form for Contractors, Groups or Franchisees**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S FOREWORD

All children, young people and vulnerable adults who live in, or visit the Borough of North Down should be supported in order to fulfil their potential in life. That is Council's fundamental aim in producing this updated policy for the protection of children and vulnerable adults who enter the Council's *realm*.

Through this policy and relevant Services we will strive to produce improved outcomes for all children, young people and vulnerable adults who come into contact with Council. This will mean the provision of high quality, safe and inclusive service activity.

This updated document reflects recent policy and best practice developments in the area of protecting children and vulnerable adults from harm.

Through this policy and associated publications we aim to inform and assure parents, guardians and carers of children, young people and vulnerable adults, that Council takes its responsibilities as a public service provider seriously.

We will work hard to ensure that everyone who avails of our services will have an enjoyable time in a safe and secure environment, and in the knowledge that Council's employees are trained to respond to the special requirements presented by children and vulnerable adults, and that these employees are prepared to deal with incidents in an appropriate and timely manner.

Council's approach to the protection of children and vulnerable adults espouses an ethos that encourages preventative action and proactivity. History has shown how inaction can have terrible consequences.

Finally, for Council's employees, this policy is also patently about supporting and keeping you safe from harm. Through training and well-documented procedures, Council will ensure that you are equipped with the skills to carry out your job effectively, and to ensure that you will be able to proactively strive to protect children and vulnerable adults from harm.

IMAGE

SIGNATURE

1 AIM OF THE POLICY

1.1 Keeping children¹ and vulnerable adults² safe while in our care is a shared responsibility. North Down Borough Council is committed to practice, which protects children and vulnerable adults from harm. This ethos is demonstrated within this Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults (CPVA) Policy.

1.2 This CPVA policy covers all functions of the Council where employees, volunteers and hired³ persons work directly and indirectly, or come into contact with, children and/or vulnerable adults within the context of Council activity. These services include:

Community Services

Community Halls
Affiliated Community Group Activity
Activity Schemes: for Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults
Summer Schemes
Parent and Toddlers Facilities

Cultural Services

Museum and Arts Programmes
Educational Programmes, Craft Classes and Tours

Environmental Services

Environmental Health
Enforcement Activity

Leisure Services

Sports Facilities
Summer Schemes
Crèche and Play Facilities

Tourism Services

Events Activity
Tourist Information Centres

Amenities and Technical Services

Parks and Refuse Collection

Corporate Services

Human Resources
Health and Safety

1.3 This policy applies equally to all employees that work for the Council regardless of their contract, including:

- Permanent Employees (full or part Time)

¹ Defined in the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order (2003) as a person below the age of 18 years.

² Defined in the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order (2003) as an individual aged 18 years or over to whom:

(a) Accommodation and nursing or personal care are provided in a residential care/nursing home;
(b) Any prescribed service is provided in their own home under arrangements made by a domiciliary care agency or a prescribed person;

(c) Prescribed services are provided by a health services body or at a private hospital.

³ For a definition of a 'hired' person within the context of this policy see Para 10.4.

- Temporary Employees (full or part time including seasonal work)
- Casual Employees

1.4 Additionally, volunteers (full or part time including those on work, school or other placement) that are within the *care* of Council are subject to this policy.

1.5 Clubs/organisations/individuals using Council's facilities will be made aware of the Council's CPVA policy. In the absence of their own policy they will be required to adopt this policy as a condition of booking.

1.6 In addition to the above, contractors, sub-contractors, external individuals or groups hired or commissioned by Council for service provision purposes will also be made aware of the Council's CPVA policy. In the absence of their own policy they will be required to adopt this policy as a condition of contract to work on Council's behalf.

1.7 North Down Borough Council recognises its responsibilities to protect children and vulnerable adults in line with current legislation as detailed in Chapter 3.

1.8 **Aim.** The Aim of this policy is:

- To protect children and vulnerable adults
- To protect Council employees, volunteers and hired persons
- To protect the Council itself

1.9 To achieve this aim Council will endeavour to ensure that employees, volunteers and hired persons are carefully selected, trained and made familiar with the Council's policy regarding working with children and vulnerable adults.

1.10 Through pre-employment checks Council will also endeavour to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to prevent unsuitable people from working with or around children and/or vulnerable adults within the context of Council activity.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 In creating this CPVA policy North Down Borough Council is committing itself to good practice regarding working with children and vulnerable adults. Through the policy and training Council's employees accept and recognise their responsibilities in relation to developing awareness of the issues that can cause children and vulnerable adults harm.

2.2 The Council will endeavour to protect the safety of children and vulnerable adults through providing a safe environment, and by following careful procedures for the recruitment and selection of employees. Additionally, Council will carry out the appropriate pre-employment checks for those employees and volunteers *recommended* for appointment to those Regulated⁴ positions that are identified by Council as having substantial access to children and/or vulnerable adults.

2.3 The Council will ensure that appropriate training is given to relevant employees, volunteers and hired persons to raise the awareness of relevant issues and to familiarise them with the Council's CPVA policy.

2.4 It must be made explicitly clear that the Council is also committed to supporting employees, volunteers and hired persons if presented with a child and/or vulnerable adult protection incident. This support will be offered and provided for as long as the employee, volunteer or hired person requires.

2.5 For employees, volunteers or hired persons who breach the CPVA Policy the Council will provide additional training and/or follow Disciplinary Procedure, depending on the nature of the incident. Where a criminal act is alleged or is suspected to have taken place the relevant authorities will be informed.

2.6 Council employees and volunteers are personally responsible for ensuring they conduct themselves appropriately at all times, and that they operate within the terms of the Council's CPVA policy having received the appropriate training.

⁴ As defined in the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order (2003), Article 31. See **Appendix F**.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. In 1991 the UK Government ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This Convention sets the minimum standards for children and young people's civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights under the interrelated categories of: Participation, Protection and Provision. Key articles include:

- **Article 3** - In all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child shall be the primary consideration
- **Article 19** - The state has a responsibility to protect children from violent and harmful treatment

3.2 The Children (NI) Order 1995. This was the most comprehensive piece of legislation ever enacted in Northern Ireland in relation to children. It reformed and consolidated much of the law relating to the public sector and children. The Order embodies five key principles:

- **Paramountcy** - in all childcare practice the welfare of the child is paramount in considerations affecting them
- **Parental Responsibility** - parents have responsibility for their children rather than rights over them. Where parents have rights in respect of children these only last so long as is necessary given the child's age and understanding. In some circumstances parents will share parental responsibility with others such as the carers or the State
- **Partnership** - this recognises that the most effective way of ensuring that a child's needs are met is through working in partnership with parents, other professional and disciplines.
- **Prevention** - this principle is about preventing children from being abused. It is about the state's obligation to provide support services to keep children safely within their families and to promote their health and welfare
- **Protection** - children should be safe from abuse and should be protected by the State when they are in danger. The

Children's (NI) Order sets out a framework for protecting children including legal powers and responsibilities of agencies including the police, social services and other bodies

3.3 Co-Operating to Safeguard Children (May 2003). The Department of Health and Social Services for Public Safety (DHSSPS) developed a procedural framework for the management of child protection. In section 3.87 to 3.89 it identifies the roles and responsibilities for local councils stating:

- “Councils carry out a range of functions and services in Northern Ireland that directly or indirectly involve children. Staff employed by councils may become involved in child protection cases either because of suspicions or allegations in respect of their own conduct with children or because, during their duties, they have become aware of the possibility of abuse having been perpetrated by others. It is essential that councils should have clear policies and procedures for dealing with such circumstances...”

3.4 Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order 2003. The Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adult (NI) Order 2003 (POCVA) commenced on the 1st April 2005, in order to replace the existing Pre-Employment Consultancy Service (PECS) checking protocols.

This legislation makes checking employees and volunteers working with children and vulnerable adults a statutory requirement rather than voluntary good practice. It introduces new criminal offences including 'Disqualification' Orders. It created two new lists that replaced the previous PECS Register:

- A Disqualification from Working with Children List
- A Disqualification from Working with Vulnerable Adults List

Unlike the PECS system it makes it a statutory requirement for organisations to refer individuals for possible inclusion on the 'Disqualification from Working with' lists if they are found guilty of inappropriate conduct, not amounting to a criminal offence, within the organisation. The Child Care Policy Directorate of the DHSSPS is responsible for implementation of the 2003 Order.

3.5 Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act received Royal Assent in November 2006. The Act was a cross-jurisdictional/cross governmental response to the Bichard inquiry in the aftermath of the Soham incident. Its full implementation relevant to Council in the form of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order will take place during 2008.

The Act provides a route map for systems improvements that have UK wide applicability and are largely aimed at reducing the prevalence of fear of abuse in the workplace for those working with children and vulnerable adults. At the time of writing the full details of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order are not known.

What is clear however, is that a new body titled Access Northern Ireland will be established as a result of the Order that will be solely responsible for the disclosure of someone's criminal history. This service will replace the existing services provided by the Criminal Records Office, POCVA, and the DHSSPS.

3.6 The Council aims to follow the legislative requirements detailed in the Children (NI) Order 1995, the POCVA (NI) Order 2003, and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 which set essential standards by way of good practice.

Additional key reference documents are:

- *Getting it Right* - Volunteer Development Agency 'Our Duty to Care' (August 2005)
- *Choosing to Protect: a Guide to the Protection of Children (NI) Service* - DHSSPS (2005)
- *Area Child Protection Committees' Regional Policy and Procedures* (April 2005)
- *Child Protection Policies and Procedures, Volume 6* - EHSSB (2005)

4 POLICY STATEMENT

"North Down Borough Council is committed to practice, which protects children and vulnerable adults from harm"

To this end North Down Borough Council will endeavour to protect children and vulnerable adults by:

- Following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of employees, volunteers and hired persons
- Adopting guidelines through a 'Code of Behaviour' for employees and volunteers
- Ensuring that employees are trained appropriately
- Sharing information about good practice with children, parents, carers, employees and volunteers wherever possible
- Providing effective management for employees and volunteers through supervision and support
- Appointing a Designated Officer(s) to implement and co-ordinate the Council's CPVA policy
- Encouraging clubs/organisations/individuals who use Council's facilities, or who are hired by Council for service delivery purposes, to have their own policy where appropriate, and where there is none, requiring them to follow Council's policy as a condition of booking the facility, or hire

5 DEFINITIONS OF ABUSE

5.1 The common denominator for all forms of child⁵ abuse is that it makes children feel bad and worthless. Child abuse can occur in a number of ways so the actual harm caused cannot always be easily categorised. Children may suffer more than one type of abuse. *Co operating to Protect Children*, Volume 6 of the Children (NI) Order Regulations and Guidance gives four broad definitions:

- **Physical abuse** - is the deliberate physical injury to a child or the wilful or neglectful failure to prevent physical injury or suffering. This may include hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning or suffocating. For children with disabilities it may include confinement to a room or cot, or incorrectly given drugs to control behaviour
- **Emotional abuse** - is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person. It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corrupting of children
- **Sexual abuse** - involves forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways
- **Neglect** - is the persistent failure to meet a child's physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in significant harm. It may involve failure to provide adequate foods, shelter and protection from physical harm or danger, and

⁵ Referenced from *Co-operating to Safeguard Children* (2003). Note that children are the subject of these definitions. North Down Borough Council recognises that these definitions apply similarly to vulnerable adults who come into contact with Council, as defined in the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

failing to ensure adequate medical care in case of injury and a lack of stimulation and supervision

6 RECOGNISING ABUSE

6.1 Abuse can occur from:

- Parents
- Others with parental responsibility
- Adults in a position of trust
- People within the wider family circle or neighbourhood
- Complete strangers
- Other children

6.2 Abuse can occur from omissions and lack of protection as well as from commission of actual acts of abuse. Protection processes should always consider the wider needs of the child, vulnerable adult and family; broad-based family support services should always be alert to potential indicators of abuse or neglect.

6.3 The particular and varied needs of disabled children may make initial recognition more difficult. Disclosures of abuse may be less likely to come from disabled children because of communication difficulties, isolation, or lack of awareness. Signs may be subtler, more confusing, or explained away as a result of the child's disability.

6.4 In identifying the characteristics of potential abuse we may observe physical indicators and/or behavioural indicators.

6.5 With reference to behavioural indicators, all children are different. In identifying behavioural indicators one needs to understand how a child's behaviour has changed e.g. a quiet child may become disruptive where a noisy child may become withdrawn.

6.6 Some of the identifying characteristics of potential abuse may include:

- Changes in mood: sudden outbursts / temper
- Demeanour changes: becomes quiet, withdrawn or noisy and disruptive
- Emotional distress or different patterns of behaviour

- Fear of a particular adult or child
- Inappropriate sexual awareness or language
- Children who are reluctant to go home
- Sudden weight loss
- Nervousness when touched
- Other children may tell you their concerns for another child

THE FUNDAMENTAL RULE OF THUMB IS:

Leave the investigating to the Social Services. The role of employee and volunteers (or others) in **normal circumstances** is only to report any concerns or direct disclosures to your line manager or the Council's Designated Officer(s) who have the contacts and training to assess the situation. In abnormal instances where the child or vulnerable adult's **immediate safety** is actually or potentially in danger, contact the Police directly before informing your line manager or the Council's Designated Officer(s).

7 DOES THIS CPVA POLICY AFFECT ME?

- **I don't directly work with children or vulnerable adults; does this CPVA policy affect me?**

YES! You may not directly work with children and/or vulnerable adults but all employees and volunteers still have a responsibility to understand and implement this CPVA policy and the procedures contained therein in relevant circumstances. You may hear something second hand, or you may see something untoward in or around Council property. As highlighted in the Chief Executive's Foreword the Council's approach to the protection of children and vulnerable adults espouses an ethos that encourages preventative action and proactivity. History has shown how inaction can have terrible consequences.

- **But I haven't been given detailed training in child protection!**

YES, THE POLICY STILL AFFECTS YOU! If you hold a Regulated position (**Appendix F**) it is your line manager's responsibility to ensure that you have received adequate training regarding CPVA before you undertake your role. For every other employee or volunteer, regardless of your job or role, you will receive information in written form when you join the Council to highlight the organisation's CPVA policy⁶, and you will receive induction training regarding the Council's Code of Behaviour at the earliest opportunity from a Designated Officer. Those employees holding 'At Risk' positions (**Appendix G**) will also be given additional awareness training.

- **We/I hire Council's facilities for group activity but don't have a CPVA policy**

YES! As part of registration or booking you will be required to sign a Consent Form stating that you/your club/organisation has in place a CPVA policy that follows best-practice guidelines. If you/your club/organisation does not have such a policy in place you will be required to sign the Consent Form to accept that you will abide by Council's policy. You will also be accepting

⁶ The responsibility to provide written information regarding Council's CPVA Policy to new employees rests with HR; for volunteers and hired persons it rests with line management and the sponsoring Department.

responsibility to familiarise yourself with the policy, which is available through the Council's web site, or in other formats on request.

- **Will Council provide my club/organisation/me with CPVA training if we/I use Council's Facilities?**

NO! CPVA training is available for organisations and individuals who run group activities from many sources including the Volunteer Development Agency, many Sporting Bodies, and the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust. Some of these organisations may charge a fee, however many are free. Council is not responsible for your training. You will however be responsible for following the procedures, information and advice detailed in the Council's policy if you do not have your own. The reporting of potential issues relating to CPVA is of particular note.

- **I am an individual user of Council's facilities i.e. the pool or gym?**

NO! You are responsible for your own behaviour. Council is however reasonably responsible for those children and vulnerable adults using its facilities; if an employee or a Council volunteer has a concern about your behaviour they will report it. Council will not tolerate inappropriate behaviour on its premises and will take immediate action to address it.

- **We have been hired/commissioned by Council to assist with an event/project/contract. We will not be working directly with children and/or vulnerable adults but they may be there, does this CPVA policy affect us?**

YES! All contractors hired/commissioned by Council must have a clear organisational policy on the protection of children and vulnerable adults with whom they come into contact in the workplace. This must also cover companies sub-contracted by the contractor. You will be required to complete and sign the form at **Appendix H** to this document to confirm this. If the contractor does not have such a policy they will be made aware of Council's CPVA policy by way of written information, and they will be expected to familiarise their employees with the Council's document. The responsibility for contractors and CPVA rests with the sponsoring Council Department. The reporting of potential

issues relating to CPVA, and the code of behaviour, are of particular note.

- **We/I will want to record images of children and/or vulnerable adults within our group/activity on Council's premises on occasions such as prize days, when Santa visits, sports days etc, does this CPVA policy affect us?**

YES! All groups/organisations/clubs/individuals that wish to record images of children and/or vulnerable adults whilst using Council's facilities **MUST** follow Council policy on this subject regardless of their own policy or procedures (see **Appendix D** to this document).

8 HIRING COUNCIL'S FACILITIES

8.1 **Groups Hiring Council Facilities.** Groups or individuals engaged in organised activity involving children and/or vulnerable adults who wish to use Council's facilities (community centres, halls, leisure facilities etc) must confirm at the time of booking that they/their organisation has a CPVA policy. Where no policy is in place they will be required to follow the guidelines and procedures contained within Council's policy.

8.2 In practice this primarily means that concerns or direct disclosures must be forwarded to a Council Designated Officer. **Groups/individuals remain responsible for conducting their own pre-employment checks where appropriate and to train relevant employees.**

8.3 Relevant Departments are to encourage groups/individuals that do not have a policy, and that hire facilities regularly for activity that involves children and/or vulnerable adults, to create one within a six-month timeframe.

8.4 Departments are to ensure that the following statements are written on to all relevant booking forms:

- I/we confirm that our 'organisation' has a current policy regarding the protection of children and vulnerable adults that follows current best practice guidelines (available from the Volunteer Development Agency)

Tick as appropriate.

- I/we do not have a current policy regarding the protection of children and vulnerable adults relevant to our 'organisation'. We therefore agree to adopt Council's CPVA policy whilst using the facility as a condition of booking. I/we accept responsibility for ensuring that the Council's policy is adhered to (this particularly - but not exclusively - relates to the 'code of behaviour' at page 26, the guidance on incident handling at page 28, and the supervision ratios at **Appendix C**)

Tick as appropriate.

9 THE ROLE OF NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL'S DESIGNATED OFFICER(S)

9.1 North Down Borough Council maintains a minimum of one, but normally two Designated Officers at any one time. One of these takes lead responsibility for policy development and coordinates issues relating to the CPVA.

9.2 At the time of writing the Council's two Designated Officers hold the following positions:

Role	Community and Cultural Services Manager (Lead Designated Officer)	Borough Inspector
Contact Details	North Down Borough Council Town Hall The Castle Bangor Co. Down BT20 4BT Tel No: 028 9127 8024 Mobile: 07734580486	North Down Borough Council Town Hall The Castle Bangor Co. Down BT20 4BT Tel No: 028 9127 0371 Mobile: 07712839732

9.3 The lead Designated Officer should be the first point of call for all referrals by individuals or line managers. If he or she is not available i.e. due to illness or leave etc, the alternate Designated Officer should be contacted. If neither is contactable the referral must be passed to a relevant line manager.

9.4 The lead Designated Officer is responsible for

- Taking the lead role in raising and maintaining awareness regarding child and vulnerable adult protection in the Council
- In conjunction with the Council's Human Resources Section advising the Council in the development of child protection and vulnerable adult protection training needs
- Developing additional and supplementary child and vulnerable adult protection procedures and the promotion of good practice where appropriate

- Monitoring the implementation of the Council's CPVA Policy and procedures, and informing Social Services/PSNI of any concerns about children and vulnerable adults
- The lead Designated Officer is a member of the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust's Child Protection Panel, and the local Child Care Partnership (N.B. these structures may change as a result of the Review of Public Administration)

9.5 Both Designated Officers are responsible for:

- Acting as a source of advice and assistance on child and vulnerable adult protection matters
- Liaising with the local Social Services Response Team and other agencies about suspected or actual cases of child and vulnerable adult abuse following the report of any incident
- Ensuring that all telephone referrals are confirmed in writing and any related documentation is held securely, and if appropriate forwarded to either the Social Services and/or the PSNI
- In conjunction with line management conducting investigatory follow-up to reported incidents
- Ensuring that Senior Management Team and Council is briefed accordingly regarding any incident
- Securing case material and keeping Senior Management of the Council apprised of case-related developments

9.6 Designated Officers must ensure that they are knowledgeable on child and vulnerable adult protection, and must attend relevant training in this regard.

9.7 Designated Officers must maintain a link with relevant members of the local PSNI Child Abuse and Rape Enquiry (CARE) Team and the local Social Service's Response Team, in order to seek additional support, advice and training.

10 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURES, AND CONTRACTORS/GROUPS/FRANCHISEES

10.1 Employees.

10.1.1 Responsibility for recruitment and selection for all permanent and temporary posts in North Down Borough Council is centralised within the Human Resources Section, which administers the recruitment process on Departments' behalf.

10.1.2 All recruitment exercises are carried out in accordance with the Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection as outlined by the Local Government Staff Commission. These are inherently designed to assist best practice regarding POCVA.

10.1.3 Applicants are requested to supply the details of two references, at least one of which must be the present or most recent employer, and both of which when taken up must be satisfactory to Council, before an applicant is appointed to a post.

10.1.4 Applicants to Regulated positions will also be required to provide a form of photographic identification, and to sign a consent form authorising the Council to undertake pre-employment checks *on* them. It must be noted that no person can take up a Regulated position without providing photographic identification, and without such a check being conducted.

10.1.5 Pre-employment checks are undertaken *on* candidates recommended to take up Regulated positions within Council. The list of these positions continually evolves and is held by the Human Resources Manager with input from the lead Designated Officer. The list at **Appendix F** is accurate as at October 2007. No applicant can take up a Regulated position before a pre-employment check has been carried out, the results of which must be acceptable to Council.

10.1.6 Applicants are required to provide written clarification of past convictions or cautions for any offence, and of any prosecutions pending. An officer within the Human Resources department requests checks from the relevant body(s) to verify criminal records for any individual applying for a Regulated position.

10.1.7 Information provided in the course of seeking pre-employment checks is treated in a confidential manner.

10.2 **Volunteers.**

10.2.1 This CPVA policy is also relevant to those people who are classed as 'Council Volunteers' i.e. those that are under the direct supervision of a sponsoring Council Department, but are not employees. In such cases it is the responsibility of Council to ensure their safety, and the safety of children and/or vulnerable adults within the Council's realm.

10.2.2 Council engages with volunteers through many activities ranging from community schemes, work placement, to tourism events. It is the responsibility of sponsoring Departments to conduct a risk assessment to establish whether the volunteer could have substantial access to children and/or vulnerable adults that are under the supervision of Council.

10.2.3 It should be noted that volunteers can be given responsibility for children and/or vulnerable adults within the Council's realm, however the adult/employee supervision ratios detailed at **Appendix C** must be adhered to. Departments must ensure that volunteers understand and abide by the Council's Code of Behaviour.

10.2.4 In some cases i.e. community schemes that encourage volunteering, it will be patently appropriate to conduct pre-*employment* checks on potential volunteers before they take up their volunteering role. This is because the risk assessment will have shown that these individuals could have substantial access to children and/or vulnerable adults.

10.2.4 The responsibility for undertaking pre-*employment* checks on potential volunteers sits with the Council's lead Designated Officer for CPVA. He/she should be consulted regarding any volunteering position as part of the risk assessment process. If the decision is taken to undertake checks on such potential volunteers a consent form will be required from the individual; checks normally take 2-4 weeks from the date of application. In cases where a pre-employment check is to be carried out on a potential volunteer, two character references should also be sought; these must be satisfactory to Council.

10.3 **Casual Employees.**

10.3.1 Casual employees are recruited in exactly the same way as permanent employees. This will include undertaking pre-employment checks where appropriate.

10.4 **Hired Contractors, External Individuals and Groups.**

10.4.1 On occasion the Council may engage the services of a contractor, external individual or group for service provision purposes. This engagement may be through open advertisement or through an agency. An example of this would be a self-employed individual providing instruction for a public Leisure Services activity i.e. gymnastics. Such contractors, external individuals or groups are to provide a copy of their own CPVA policy, which must satisfy Council. Where no policy exists they are to adhere to Council's CPVA Policy.

10.4.2 Departments responsible for hiring should conduct a risk assessment before a contractor, external individual or group is engaged to provide a service. This should be conducted with advice from relevant officers where required.

10.4.3 Where this assessment establishes that the company, person or group will have substantial access to children and/or vulnerable adults that are under the supervision of Council pre-employment checks should be conducted before they take up post. This will always be the case where the company, person or group is to carry out a role(s) designated as Regulated. Departments should contact the lead Designated Officer in this regard. Additionally, two references should be requested and taken up; these must be satisfactory to Council.

10.4.4 Agency Staff. The responsibility for conducting pre-employment checks *on* Agency Workers rests with the Employment Agency concerned. Evidence of these checks (by way of a confirmatory statement from the Agency) will be required for any worker due to take up a Regulated position. The responsibility for ensuring compliance with this requirement rests with respective Departments.

10.4.5 Council may provide appropriate training for hired persons dependent on the nature of their engagement.

10.4.6 Tender Documentation. Where the Tender Process is to be followed relevant to Para 10.4 the following statement should be included in the information to tender:

"North Down Borough Council is committed to practice which protects children and vulnerable adults from harm. Companies, organisations and individuals recommended for appointment to work on behalf of North Down Borough Council will be required to provide evidence that they have an extant policy in place regarding the protection of children and vulnerable adults that follows current best practice guidelines. Where a policy is not in place the respective company, organisation or individual will be required to adhere to guidelines set out in the Council's Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Policy as a condition of appointment. A copy of this can be found on the Council's web site or in other formats on request. Additionally, where a company, organisation or individual is recommended to work directly with children or vulnerable adults pre-employment checks may be conducted, and references taken up, as a condition of appointment; the results of these must be satisfactory to Council"

10.5 **Contractors Working in, or Building, Council's Facilities.**

10.5.1 Where contractors or sub-contractors are working in, or are building, Council's facilities where children and/or vulnerable adults may be present i.e. Leisure Centre changing rooms, respective parent companies will be required to confirm in writing that their company has a policy in place regarding the protection of children or vulnerable adults (see form at **Appendix H**).

10.5.2 Where a company does not have such a policy they will be required to adopt Council's CPVA policy whilst working in, or building, the facility as a condition of contract. This must be confirmed in writing (**Appendix H**). Particular attention should be drawn to the Council's Code of Behaviour and reporting procedures. Respective Departments are responsible for the adherence to this requirement; the full extent of a sponsoring Department's engagement with the respective contractor should be determined through a risk assessment.

10.5.3 Tender Documentation. Where the Tender Process is to be followed relevant to Para 10.5 the following statement should be included in the information to tender:

"North Down Borough Council is committed to practice which protects children and vulnerable adults from harm. Contractors appointed to

work in, or to build, Council facilities, will be required to provide evidence that they have an extant policy in place regarding the protection of children and vulnerable adults that follows current best practice guidelines. This policy must also extend to cover the activity of sub-contractors hired or appointed by the contractor engaged by Council. Where a policy is not in place the respective contractor will be required to adhere to best-practice guidelines set out in the Council's Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Policy as a condition of appointment. A copy of this can be found on the Council's web site or in other formats on request.

10.5.4 Where contractors or sub-contractors are commissioned at short notice to work at a Council facility it may not be practical to comply with the requirements of 10.5.1 to 10.5.3. In these circumstances a risk assessment should be carried out by the sponsoring Department and appropriate action taken. An example of appropriate action could include a member of Council staff being detailed to accompany the contractor or sub-contractors for the duration of their task.

10.6 Groups Working at Council Sponsored Events.

10.6.1 Where groups (i.e. companies, charities, constituted groups etc) are invited to work at any Council sponsored event where children or vulnerable adults may be present the protocols laid out in Para 10.5 must be followed. This is particularly applicable to public events.

10.7 Franchisees Operating Council Owned Premises.

10.7.1 Franchisees operating Council owned premises that are open to the public will be required to confirm in writing that they have an extant policy in place regarding the protection of children and vulnerable adults that follows current best practice guidelines. Departments should request and retain a copy of this policy.

10.7.2 Where a policy is not in place the respective company, organisation or individual will be required to adhere to best-practice guidelines set out in the Council's CPVA policy as a condition of appointment following selection from tender.

10.7.3 Tender documentation should detail this requirement explicitly, and the form at **Appendix H** should be included within information packs.

11.0 CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

11.1 North Down Borough Council recognises that the child/vulnerable adult is a priority in all matters and endeavours to listen to him or her, valuing and respecting them as an individual, and involving them in the decision making process on issues concerning them, as appropriate.

11.2 Having a Code of Behaviour minimises the opportunity for children and vulnerable adults to suffer harm and seeks to protect employees/volunteers from false allegations.

11.3 Council promotes good practice guidelines when working with children and vulnerable adults, providing a safe environment and offering protection and enjoyment. Employees must understand the value of operating within these Code of Behaviour guidelines as it protects them and allows them to safely develop positive relationships with children and vulnerable adults.

11.5 Employees must:

- Implement the Council's CPVA policy and associated procedures at all times as relevant

11.6 Employees must never:

- Spend excessive amounts of time alone with children/vulnerable adults, away from others
- Engage in sexually provocative or rough physical games, including horseplay - apart from structured sports activities
- Allow children/vulnerable adults to use inappropriate language unchallenged; this includes inappropriate attention-seeking behaviour
- Make sexually suggestive comments about, or to, a child/vulnerable adult, even in fun
- Let allegations that a child/vulnerable adult makes, go without being addressed/recorded

- Do things of a personal nature for children/vulnerable adults that they can do for themselves
- Engage in close physical contact with a child/vulnerable adult that could be considered inappropriate
- Share a room alone with a child/vulnerable adult, except in exceptional situations (see Para. 11.7)
- Invite children/vulnerable adults to their home
- Physically restrain a child or vulnerable adult unless to:
 - Prevent physical injury to the child/vulnerable adult, other children/vulnerable adults, visitors, or employees, or yourself
 - Prevent damage to property
 - Prevent or stop the commission of a criminal event

11.7 Employees should not, except in exceptional⁷ situations:

- Allow children/vulnerable adults into a Council vehicle; in situations where a child/vulnerable adult must enter a Council vehicle, parents and a line manager must be notified
- Spend time alone with a child/vulnerable adult. If a situation arises where you **MUST** speak to the child/vulnerable adult in an office or room, make sure another employee is aware of this, and the door left open

11.8 Breaching the Code of Behaviour

- Employees who breach this Code may be subject to disciplinary procedure. Additional training or supervision will be provided for minor incidents where required
- If an allegation against an employee has occurred then an investigation will be carried out in accordance with the procedure for dealing with allegations against employees

⁷ Personal judgement must be applied to determine what is an exceptional situation.

12 GUIDANCE ON INCIDENT HANDLING

12.1 Anyone who knows or suspects that a child or vulnerable adult has been or is being harmed, or is potentially or actually at risk, has a duty to convey this concern to their line manager immediately who will then contact a Designated Officer.

12.2 All incidents must be recorded, no matter how small, on the form at **Appendix A**. These are to be forwarded to a Designated Officer as quickly as possible for further consideration.

12.3 Managers have a duty to report the incident directly to a Council Designated Officer rather than continue through line management, as this would delay proceedings and lead to a potential loss of confidentiality.

12.4 Once an individual becomes aware of, or suspects a case of abuse or other relevant concern, she/he should ensure in so far as possible that the child or vulnerable adult is protected from the situation of potential or actual danger. This may in **exceptional cases** mean contacting the PSNI directly in the first instance thereby initially circumventing the normal reporting procedure.

12.5 The individual should however not normally intervene directly but should follow the reporting procedure unless not to intervene could potentially lead to a more serious situation. A flow chart relating to the Council's reporting procedure is at **Appendix B**.

12.6 Once an individual becomes aware of, or suspects a case of abuse or other relevant concern it is imperative that they record the details leading to this suspicion immediately. A copy of the appropriate recording form is at **Appendix A**.

12.7 To assist in dealing with a situation where a child or vulnerable adult has made a disclosure, a series of do's and don'ts are shown below.

12.8 Guidance On Disclosure And How To Deal With It

DO'S

and

DON'TS

Stay calm

Do not panic/frighten the individual

DO'S

and

DON'TS

Listen and hear

Do not ask leading questions or speculate

Give the individual time

Do not promise or agree to keep secrets

Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling; they are not to blame

Do not inquire into details of the abuse

Record in writing what was said as soon as possible

Do not make a child repeat the story unnecessarily

Report to someone else in the organisation

Do not approach or confront the alleged abuser

Record your report

12.9 Guidance on Lost Children

12.9.1 This guidance is relevant to all Council activity however it is particularly applicable to larger Council events where the public will be present. Departments should draw up their own detailed protocols as applicable to their activity where required.

12.9.2 At large Council events where the public will be present there should be a clearly identified 'area' for information/lost children which should be manned at all times. Departments should seek advice from a Council Designated Officer if they are unsure whether this is applicable to a particular event.

12.9.3 All those working at such events should be fully appraised of the procedure for dealing with lost children. A relevant Officer should be designated as Lost Children Co-ordinator for the duration of the event.

12.9.4 No employee should ever be alone with a lost child. In the first instance the Officers should ascertain if the child knows a contact number for his or her parent, carer or guardian. If so, a call should be made to that person. If this is unsuccessful the PSNI should be contacted to seek advice. Relevant information

should be provided to the police concerning the lost child. This may (for example) be a description of the family member that can be circulated to those working at an event, or an address if a lost child is found during routine Council activity.

12.9.5 Should all the above avenues be unsuccessful at a public event an announcement should be made over the public address system informing those present of the existence and location of the event information point. No reference to a lost child should be made at this point and the child's name should never be given out publicly.

12.9.6 If a child is reluctant to go with the parent, carer or guardian claiming to have responsibility for the child in question a second opinion must be sought from the PSNI. In all instances proof of identity and a signature from the parent, carer or guardian **must** be obtained.

12.9.7 At public events, once a lost child has been reunited with their parent, carer or guardian, stewards and police should be informed immediately if they have been involved.

12.10 **Additional Points**

12.10.1 Under no circumstances should any individual employee or volunteer, or the organisation itself, attempt to deal with an incident involving children or vulnerable adults alone.

12.10.2 The person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional agencies following a referral to them, expressing concern, about a child or vulnerable adult.

12.10.3 The primary responsibility of the person who first suspects or is told of abuse is to report it and to ensure that their concerns are taken seriously.

13 ALLEGATIONS AGAINST COUNCIL EMPLOYEES, VOLUNTEERS OR INDIVIDUALS/GROUPS HIRED BY COUNCIL

13.1 Allegations of child abuse can potentially be made about any employee, volunteer or hired person (especially those in direct contact with children, vulnerable adults or the general public). It is critical however that all employees, volunteers and hired persons are aware of 'abuse' issues and how to deal with allegations of abuse. Training will be provided where relevant to ensure that awareness is at an appropriate level.

13.2 In all circumstances any allegation should be reported to the relevant line manager, where it will be recorded and passed to a Council Designated Officer. If however, the allegation involves the manager, a report should be made to either the next level of management or directly to a Council Designated Officer.

13.3.1 **Investigation.** Where there is a complaint of abuse against an employee, volunteer or individual/group hired by Council there may be three possible types of investigation:

- Criminal
- Child Protection
- Disciplinary

13.3.2 As a result of any allegation being received the matter will be the subject of a preliminary investigation to clarify the key facts. The matter will be referred initially to a Council Designated Officer by line management who in conjunction with Management Team and Human Resources will decide on the type of investigation required. Advice (informal or formal) may be taken from the Social Services and/or Police during this consideration phase.

13.3.3 Following the preliminary investigation consideration will be given to:

- Whether or not the person(s) concerned should be 'suspended' from work while a full investigation is carried out

N.B. a hired individual or group will be asked to cease their work for Council until the matter is resolved

- Whether or not there is a need to carry out a full investigation into the allegation(s)
- Whether the police should be informed

13.3.4 Should there be no innocent explanation in respect of allegation(s) against an employee, volunteer or hired person, and the allegation(s) constitute possible acts(s) of gross misconduct, the individual(s) concerned if employees will be suspended from work on full pay. Volunteers and hired individuals or groups will be asked to cease their work for Council until the matter is resolved.

13.3.5 The relevant Head of Department will appoint two independent investigating officers who will carry out a full, formal investigation in respect of the allegation(s). The investigating officers will report to the Head of Department on completion of the investigation, as to whether or not the allegation(s) has been substantiated.

13.4.1 **Disciplinary Procedure.** Any allegation made against a Council employee will be thoroughly investigated. On the basis of the findings of such an investigation, disciplinary action may take place in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Procedure.

13.4.2 Any volunteer, hired individual or group found to be in breach of the code of conduct present in this policy, in a way not amounting to a criminal offence, may have their engagement terminated at the discretion of the Chief Executive and Town Clerk. This will be conveyed in writing at the end of the investigation and following a final representation from the volunteer, hired individual or group concerned.

14 CPVA STRUCTURES AND TRAINING

14.1 STRUCTURES

14.1.1 **CPVA Steering Group.** This group meets bi-annually, or as required. It comprises the following eight post holders:

- Borough Inspector (Designated Officer)(Environmental Services)
- Client Officer Ground Maintenance (Amenities and technical Services)
- Corporate Communications Officer (Chief Executive's Office)
- Human Resources Manager or Assistant Human Resources Manager (as available)
- Manager Community & Cultural Services (Designated Officer)
- Manager Leisure Services (Leisure, Tourism and Community Services)
- Union Representative
- Co-opted Member (when available from local Health Trust)

14.1.2 The Steering Group reviews the Council's CPVA policy noting changes due to evolving legislation and/or best practice. Additionally it is empowered with reviewing all CPVA incidents for the purposes of identifying training requirements, and it reviews developments in best practice relevant to keeping children and vulnerable adults safe from harm.

14.1.3 **Designated Officers.** See Para 9 of this policy.

14.1.4 **CPVA Trained Personnel.** Post holders of the majority of Regulated positions within Council will receive a nine-hour training package on the protection of children and vulnerable adults. This category of training is also given to a number of such

posts' Line Managers (**ELMTs**⁸) who, having completed the CPVA training, will receive additional 'enhanced training' separately that will enable them to deliver a two-hour package of interim CPVA awareness training to 'new starts' who are taking up Regulated posts, and to those posts identified as 'At Risk'. **No one can take up a Regulated position unless they have been given at least this two-hour package of training beforehand.**

14.1.5 **CPVA Aware Personnel.** As detailed above, all 'new starts' taking up a Regulated position must be made aware of the CPVA concept through this two-hour package of awareness training before taking up post, and when practical and where applicable, must attend the full CPVA training package. Following the awareness package these employees will be classed 'interim trained'.

14.1.6 Additionally, certain employees in identified positions may come into contact with children and vulnerable adults within their daily work, but not to the extent that their post is Regulated (i.e. it does not require a pre-employment check). These posts are titled 'At Risk' positions (see **Appendix G**). They will also receive this Awareness Package as a minimum at the earliest opportunity following appointment to post.

14.1.7 **CPVA Policy Aware Employees.** As part of induction training all new post holders within Council will be given a thirty-minute overview of CPVA as a concept, including a brief on the Council's 'Code of Behaviour' for Employees. A pocket booklet will be produced as part of this process and issued regularly (updated) to all personnel.

14.1.8 **Coordination Function.** Human Resources will carry out the coordination function for Council with regards to CPVA. This will include the collation of a personnel CPVA training database; identification of training needs; organisation of training; facilitation of Steering Group.

⁸ **ELMT** - Enhanced Line Management Trained.

14.2 TRAINING

14.2.1 **Designated Officer Training.** This is a one day tailored package that is delivered by the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust (known as Level 2 training).

14.2.2 **CPVA Training.** This is a nine-hour package (spread over 2 days, or three evenings) that will be delivered to Council normally on a six-monthly basis by an appropriate person. The training is designed specifically for those personnel in Regulated positions (where applicable) and covers the Council's CPVA policy in practical detail. It will be based on the Volunteer Development Agency's Keeping Safe package where possible, which has been adopted by the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust as good practice.

14.2.3 **Enhanced Line Manager CPVA Training.** This is a half-day package to be delivered by an appropriate trainer for identified line managers of Regulated and 'At Risk' post holders enabling them to deliver CPVA Awareness Training.

14.2.4 A variety of line managers within key relevant Services (including Leisure, Community & Culture, Tourism, Amenities and Technical, and Enforcement) will undertake this training. Each person must have completed the nine-hour CPVA training package beforehand.

14.2.5 For efficiency purposes CPVA Awareness Training packages will be delivered by ELMTs centrally for relevant new starts dependent on numbers. Human Resources will initiate this. ELMTs will be asked to conduct the training dependent on their availability and on a rotational basis.

14.2.6 **CPVA Awareness Training.** This is a two-hour package as mentioned at Para 14.2 to be delivered as required by an ELMT. It is based largely around the Council's 'Code of Behaviour' for employees, and reporting procedures.

14.2.7 **CPVA Policy Awareness Training.** This is a thirty-minute presentation within each Council Induction Training Day that highlights Council's CPVA policy statement, and the employee 'Code of Behaviour'. A Council Designated Officer delivers this training.

14.2.8 **Refresher Training.** All employees in both Regulated positions and 'At Risk' positions must attend their respective training packages **three-yearly** for refresher purposes. This will ensure that new concepts, changes in legislation, and best practice relating to CPVA can be passed on to employees and volunteers. Employees and volunteers will also be able to share information relating to CPVA at refresher seminars. All other employees will receive relevant update information via literature as and when required.

14.2.9 **Other Specialist Training.** The training schedule detailed in this policy is to be considered the basic minimum that Council will undertake in order to meet both statutory and good practice requirements. Departments may wish to organise additional CPVA training specific to their operational role. An example of this is the Leisure Watch scheme specific to Leisure Services personnel. Any training of this nature should only be given to employees that have received the relevant baseline package as detailed in this policy, and detailed records of all such training must be passed to the Human Resources Section for inclusion on the CPVA database.

**CHILD PROTECTION AND VULNERABLE ADULT (CPVA)
INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

CPVA INCIDENT REPORT FORM	
(Questions should be answered fully. This report must remain confidential and be kept in a secure place)	
Name of person filing report:	
Department:	
Work location/centre:	
Name of child or Vulnerable Adult:	
Age:	
Parent/carer's name:	
Home address:	
Post code:	
Phone no:	
INCIDENT	
Please complete the boxes below after <u>all</u> incidents/disclosures	
When did the incident occur? (Include date/time)	

Where did the incident occur?	

What were the circumstances leading to the incident

Were there other people present at the time of the incident?

Yes No

If Yes, please state names/positions

What was the nature of the incident?

Describe any signs of physical injury evident on the individual(s)

Describe any observed emotional or behaviour signs or changes in the individual(s)

Has anyone been named or implicated as part of the allegation(s) (if so, please record details)?

What future course of action has been agreed/decided upon?

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Referred to:

Date: _____

Line Manager/Designated Officer (delete as appropriate)

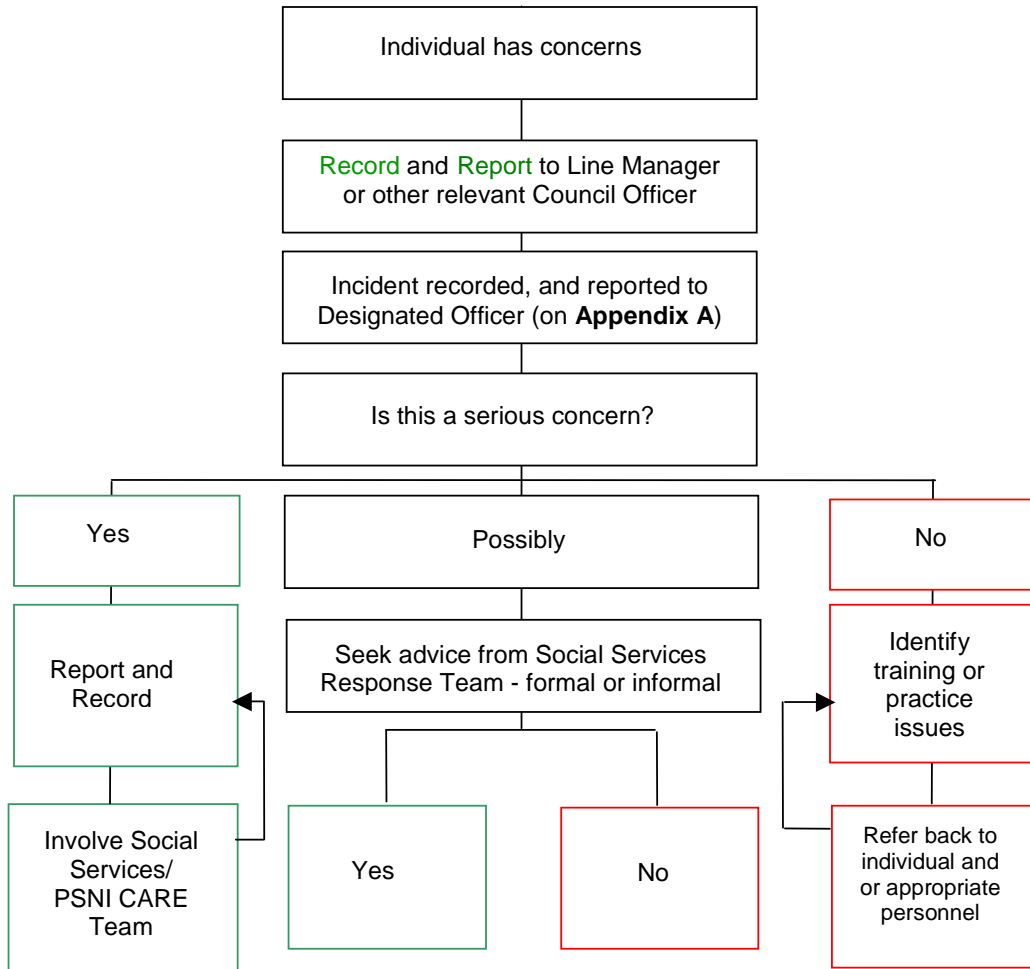
Action taken post reporting:

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Designated Officer

FLOWCHART SHOWING INTERNAL REPORTING PROCESS

See footnotes ⁹ and ¹⁰.



⁹ It should be noted that any person e.g. an employee, a member of the public, a volunteer, a contractor working on Council premises etc, could report a relevant incident.

¹⁰ See Paras 12.4 and 12.5. In exceptional cases i.e. where a criminal act is suspected, an incident may be reported directly to the PSNI. The normal reporting procedure should however subsequently be followed.

PLANNING ACTIVITIES AND SUPERVISION RATIOS

1 PLANNING ACTIVITIES

1.1.1 **Welfare.** Council employees are responsible for the welfare and safety of children and vulnerable adults for the whole time that they have been left by their parent, carer or guardian at a relevant activity or event. Activity planners are to ensure that they are satisfied as to the competency of all supervising personnel.

1.1.2 Information relating to drop offs and pick ups **MUST** be clearly detailed to parents, carers or guardians, by activity planners where relevant so as to avoid children or vulnerable adults being left alone without supervision. This should be provided in writing.

1.1.3 Information relating to special dietary or health requirements, and emergency contact details, **MUST** be requested from parents, carers or guardians of children or vulnerable adults who are to be left in the charge of Council employees where relevant. This should be provided in writing.

1.2.1 **Out of Centre Trips.** The organisers of journeys/visits should plan and prepare a detailed programme of activities for the children or vulnerable adults involved in the project.

1.2.2 Leaders should give consideration to the nature of the venue/site to be visited and any associated risks or special requirements posed by the location. A formal risk assessment must be carried out for all out of centre activity. This will be particularly important and more elaborate where a venue has not been visited before.

1.2.3 Children or vulnerable adults **MUST NEVER** be left alone, i.e. to their own devices in, for example, a town for the evening, or on shopping expeditions.

1.2.4 Organisers should obtain, in writing, parental consent for children or vulnerable adults joining an organised trip. Parents, carers or guardians should be given full relevant details about trips

including a programme of scheduled events and activities to be undertaken.

2 SUPERVISION RATIOS

2.1.1 Standard minimum ratios for work with children. The standard minimum supervision ratios for all planned activity involving children (below the age of 18 years) are to be:

- 0 to 1 years: 1 employee to 3 children
- 2 to 3 years: 1 employee to 4 children
- 4 to 7 years: 1 employee to 8 children
- 8 to 17 years: 1 employee to 10 children. There should be one additional employee for every 10 (or part thereof) extra children and/or young people

2.1.2 Risk Assessment. These are guidelines. Activity leaders must conduct a risk assessment for each planned activity that considers issues relating to child protection. Factors should include the ages of participants, the 'venue' (e.g. whether 'in centre', or 'out of centre'), and potential associated risks.

2.1.3 Where it is felt that ratios should be increased then a manager should be informed. Standard minimum ratios must not be reduced without authority from a Designated Officer.

2.2 Special Needs. The ratio of employees to children or adults with special needs should be assessed on an individual 'case-by case' basis regardless of the setting, in conjunction with that individual's parent, carer or guardian.

2.3.1 Supervisors. No Council activity involving the supervision of children or vulnerable adults can be undertaken without a minimum of two adults in attendance, one of who must be an adult employee/hired person.

2.3.2 Adult employees/hired people will be aged 18 years and over. It is acknowledged that North Down Borough Council occasionally employs young people aged 16 and 17 years, however they are not to be considered adult employees within the

context of this policy and must not therefore be taken into account when considering levels of supervision. It should be noted that such young people are technically children themselves, and therefore they must be included in calculations regarding supervision ratios.

2.3.3 Similarly drivers are not to be taken into consideration when planning levels of supervision during journeys to 'out of centre' activity. Clearly once the driver has dismounted from the vehicle they can become a supervisor.

2.3.4 Where a party consists of children or vulnerable adults of both gender it is a practical necessity that both male and female supervision should be provided.

2.4.1 **Swimming.** Where Council personnel arrange an activity that involves the supervision of children in a swimming setting, the level of adult supervision must be in compliance with the supervisory rules stated by the swimming facility provider. If none are stated, the activity leaders should adhere to the ratios at paragraph 2.1.1, cognisant of the responsibility to conduct a risk assessment and the unique environment present in a swimming setting.

2.4.2 Individual children using Council's swimming facilities must adhere to supervisory rules relevant to that facility. Lifeguards present in all pools will enforce these rules and will follow reporting guidelines detailed in this document if they are concerned about a child protection issue.

2.4.3 Children's organisations (i.e. swimming clubs/schools) using Council's swimming facilities must adhere to their own policy-based supervision ratios. Where no policy on supervision ratios exists Council's ratios must be followed.

2.4.4 Organisations must confirm at the time of booking that they have a child protection policy in place, or that they will adhere to the principles laid out in Council's policy. Those supervising any swimming activity must remain poolside throughout.

2.4.5 For employees planning swimming activity for children or vulnerable adults with special needs Para 2.2 must be adhered to.

RECORDING IMAGES OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

This Appendix is produced in the form of a flyer that will be publicly available in all Council centres and public buildings.

CUSTOMER CONTRACT

North Down Borough Council is committed to providing a range of quality activities, facilities and services that children and vulnerable adults can enjoy, in a safe and secure environment.

This leaflet summarises the good practice guidelines regarding photographing and filming children and vulnerable adults engaged in any form of Council activity and/or in any activity using Council's facilities.

It applies to **EVERYONE** using council facilities and services and covers all functions of Council where children/vulnerable adults are present.

'IN THE PICTURE' - PROTOCOLS

THE RECORDING OF IMAGES IN ALL CHANGING AND TOILET AREAS IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED - SIGNAGE WILL REFLECT THIS.

THE RECORDING OF IMAGES IN/AT LEISURE FACILITIES WITHOUT PRIOR APPROVAL FROM A RELEVANT MANAGER IS ALSO STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

Where appropriate, consent should be sought from parents/guardians before photographing, videoing or filming children and vulnerable adults at any Council sponsored event or activity, and certainly before using any of the images taken.

This particularly applies to small group or a 'closed' activity where it will be more apparent that an image is being recorded. Employees will challenge the unauthorised or inappropriate recording of images where necessary.

Where it is practical and possible, those wishing to use photographic, film or video equipment at any event or activity should obtain permission from the organisers prior to the event or activity.

Where the recording of images at an event or activity is pre-planned, all materials promoting the event or activity will state clearly that accredited photographers will be present ('accredited' is defined as belonging to or working for a relevant organisation).

Accredited photographers will be required to carry a visible form of identification (badge, sticker or pass) at all times on the day of the activity/event. The event or activity organiser should determine the format of this identification.

No unsupervised access or one-to-one photographic sessions with accredited photographers should be permitted with children and/or vulnerable adults unless it is with the prior approval of the parent, guardian or carer **AND** the event organisers.

Particular care must be taken in publishing photographs, video, film footage of 'vulnerable' children (those with learning, communication or language disabilities), as they could be particularly susceptible to abuse.

SUITABLE DRESS

It is possible for the content of any photograph to be manipulated or adapted for inappropriate use. Only images of children and vulnerable adults in suitable dress should be taken, to limit potential 'inappropriate use'.

The nature of what is 'suitable dress' is difficult to define, however certain sports such as athletics, gymnastics and swimming may lend themselves to potential greater misuse. With these sporting activities, the content of the photograph/filming should be focused on the activity and not the particular individual. Photographs should avoid full face-body shots for example.

Another example could be in swimming, where a pool shot should be waist or shoulder up where possible. The age of the photographic subject may also determine what is considered appropriate.

Departments should also ensure that appropriate dress is worn at all times by relevant employees, hired people, and volunteers, as well as contractors and groups engaged to work at a Council sponsored event or activity.

GENERAL

North Down Borough Council reserves the right to prohibit the use of photography, videoing or filming at any event or activity with which it is associated. If you have any concerns or questions regarding photographing or filming children and vulnerable adults please contact us:

**The Lead Designated Officer
North Down Borough Council
Town Hall, The Castle
Bangor, Co Down
BT20 4BT**

Tel No: 028 9127 0371

Website: www.northdown.gov.uk link - contact us

LONE WORKING

1.1 **Definition.** This policy defines lone workers as personnel (whether employees or hired persons) who routinely work by themselves without immediate managerial support. They are found in a range of situations and can face a number of risks.

1.2 It is important to recognise that while risks do exist, realistically they are low, and by adopting good working practices they can be reduced even further. Within Council examples of lone working could include general operatives (street cleansing) engaged in cleaning duties along a coastal area, or an enforcement officer conducting a house visit.

2. **Responsibility.** Line managers and personnel are jointly responsible for identifying system(s) that will best meet the specific safety needs of particular lone workers. Using this policy as a guide, relevant Departments that engage personnel who can operate alone must produce a written statement that sets out the practices they will use to meet safety requirements relevant to both the public and employees alike. This statement should be copied to relevant personnel with a copy held centrally by the Department.

3. **Requirements.** Whatever system(s) are implemented they should achieve all of the following where practical:

- Any reasonably foreseeable risks associated with a client, environment, task or journey, have been identified and assessed
- If anything untoward were to happen, employees or hired persons would know how to access assistance
- If employees or hired persons were unable to access assistance their absence would be noted, their whereabouts traceable and appropriate emergency action taken or initiated by a relevant person

4. **Procedure.** The following checklist of good working practice should be used as a guide for relevant Departments in

conducting assessments of needs in relation to lone working for relevant personnel:

- Personnel should receive a form of Personal Safety training appropriate to their role and/or environment; this may be as simple as relevant CPVA training, but it should be determined jointly through a risk assessment by the Department and lone worker concerned, and it should relate to the role routinely undertaken. New starts must receive adequate training relevant to their role before undertaking duties alone, dependent on a risk assessment
- Lone working statements should consider issues including:
 - Risk assessing new clients for safety risks to personnel
 - Personnel checking in and out of base during the day
 - Ensuring the whereabouts of personnel are known/traceable
 - Access to appropriate use of communications devices
 - Making personnel aware of incident reporting requirements
 - Access to out of hours management support for personnel
 - Emergency procedures for personnel thought to be missing
 - Sharing information about specific known risks with other employees/services/agencies (as appropriate)
 - Ensuring all relevant personnel understand the Council's CPVA Code of Behaviour, with particular emphasis placed on not being alone with a child or vulnerable adult in order to prevent allegations of abuse

REGISTER OF REGULATED COUNCIL POSTS (SEPT 2007)

The following Council positions are designated as 'Regulated positions' (whether part or full-time, or casual). This is a legal term under the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (NI) Order (2003), and within the Council's field of work is defined as:

*"A 'Regulated' position is a position whose **normal duties** include: caring, training...supervising or being in sole charge of children¹¹, unsupervised contact with children in arrangements made by a responsible person [i.e. parents, schools, social services]; the supervision or management of an individual in a Regulated position".*

Council will use this definition as a guide to meet minimum requirements, however discretion may be applied regarding the checking of other posts.

Potential Regulated post holders will be subject to pre-employment checks before they are formally offered employment, the results of which must be satisfactory to Council. The most recent iteration of all post titles has been used where possible. The register is a working document to be reviewed bi-annually by the Council's CPVA Steering Group.

Department/Service	Position	Remarks
Leisure, Tourism & Community Development - Community & Cultural Services	Community Development Officer Programme Coordinator Programme Worker Crèche Worker All Summer Scheme Employees All Community Service Instructors/Coaches Administrative Officer All Community Volunteers	ELMT Qualified & Unqualified Only two-hour training required Training dependent on risk assessment Activity/Summer Scheme locs Activity/Summer Schemes - Only two hour training required
Leisure, Tourism & Community Development - Leisure Services	Duty Officer Sports Programme Development Officer	ELMT

¹¹ Within this definition the term children is also deemed to include vulnerable adults.

	Sports Development Officer (SDO) Assistant SDO Sports Specific Officers Senior Recreation Attendant Recreation Attendant Crèche Worker All Summer Scheme Employees All Leisure Instructors/Teachers	ELMT Only two-hour training required Only two-hour training required Only two-hour training required Training subject to risk assessment
Environmental Services	Mobile Cleansing Attendant Cleansing Attendant	
Corporate Services	Senior Administrative Officer Administrative Assistant Member Services Coordinator Member Services Officer	For purposes of supervising vulnerable adult volunteer placements

APPENDIX G TO NORTH DOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL'S
CHILD PROTECTION AND VULNERABLE ADULTS POLICY

REGISTER OF 'AT RISK' COUNCIL POSTS (SEPT 2007)

In addition to those Regulated posts listed in **Appendix F**, the following posts are designated as 'At Risk' i.e. those contracted posts (whether part or full-time, or casual) that **could** experience a regular pattern of contact¹² with children or vulnerable adults within their operational role. Post holders will be given appropriate training during the course of their employment but will not be subject to pre-employment checks before taking up their appointment. The most recent iteration of all post titles has been used where possible. The register is a working document to be reviewed bi-annually by the Council's Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Steering Group.

Department/Service	Position	Remarks
Council	All Elected Members	
Chief Executive's/Corporate Services	Human Resources Manager Assistant Human Resources Manager Good Relations Officer DPP Manager Health and Safety Officer Corporate Communications Officer Mayor's Secretary Town Hall Supervisor Senior Attendant Attendant Mayor's Driver Harbour Master Assistant Harbour Master	SG ¹³ SG/ELMT SG/ELMT
Leisure, Tourism & Community Development - Community & Cultural Services	Manager Community & Cultural Services Community Safety Officer Multi-Media Production Officer Arts Officer Arts Assistant Art of Regeneration Officer Arts Marketing Officer Heritage Education Officer Administrative Assistant (Museum) Weekend Receptionist (Museum) Museum Attendant	Designated Officer/SG

¹² Commonly termed 'substantial access'.

¹³ SG - Steering Group. Member of Council's Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Steering Group.

	Halls Caretaker/Cleaner	
Leisure, Tourism & Community Development - Leisure Services	Manager Leisure Services Manager - BCLC Manager - QLC Receptionist Sports Ground Caretakers/Kiosk Employees Plant Employees Cleaner in Charge General Duties	SG ELMT ELMT All leisure centres, incl casual employees
Leisure, Tourism & Community Development - Tourism Services	Tourism Manager Tourism Administrator Clerical Officer Tourist Information Supervisor Tourist Information Advisor Visitor Services Officer Events Officer Events Assistant Marketing Officer Assistant Marketing Officer Marketing Administrator	ELMT
Leisure, Tourism & Community Development - Gen	Countryside and Recreation Officer	
Environmental Services	Borough Inspector Assistant Borough Inspector Enforcement Officer Borough Warden Principle Environmental Health Officer Senior Environmental Health Officer Environmental Health Officers Technical Assistant Administrative Officer (Environment) Principle Building Control Officer Senior Building Control Officer Building Control Officer Market Superintendent	Designated Officer/SG SG/ELMT
Amenities & Technical Services	Recycling Officer Manager Grounds Maintenance Grounds Maintenance Supervisor Grounds Maintenance Working Supervisor Parks Labourer Refuse and Street Cleansing Manager General Operative (Street Cleansing) General Operative (Refuse Collection) FIDO Operator	SG ELMT ELMT Dependent on individual risk assessment

FORM FOR CONTRACTORS, GROUPS OR FRANCHISEES

Organisation:

I/We confirm that the above named organisation has an extant policy for the protection of children and vulnerable adults that follows current best practice guidelines.

Tick as appropriate.

If your organisation does not currently have in place an extant policy for the protection of children and vulnerable adults that follows current best practice guidelines, your organisation is required to adhere to the Council's Policy for the duration of the relevant activity with Council. Please complete the following.

We have received a copy of the Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Policy as set out by North Down Borough Council and agree to adhere to the policy throughout the duration of the relevant activity.

Tick as appropriate.

Activity:

Activity Date:

Signed:

Position:

For and on behalf of:

Date: