



COMHAIRLE CEANTAIR
AN DÚIN

**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULT
POLICY AND PROCEDURES
2014**

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

DOCUMENT	VERSION	APPROVED BY	LEAD OFFICER	DATE
DDC/SCYP&VA Page 1 to 53	3		Macartan Bryce	

REVIEW DATE: YEARLY, IN JUNE [MUST BE BY JUNE 10TH EACH YEAR]

REVIEW BY: THE CHILD PROTECTION AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

STEERING GROUP

FOREWORD BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

This Safeguarding Children ,Young People and Vulnerable Adults[SCYP&VA] Policy and related Codes of Conduct, is designed to afford protection to children and vulnerable adults using the extensive and diverse range of facilities and services provided by Down District Council.

The Policy is also intended to afford protection to Council staff whilst carrying out directly related duties or indirectly working in close proximity to children and vulnerable adults. Down District Council has an important role to play in the protection of all such groups, therefore I see the review of this Policy as central to our continued commitment to ensuring the appropriate levels of duty of care is maintained.

With training, our staff and volunteers will be given the appropriate skills to deal with any potential abuse.

This Policy covers a wide range of services in a multitude of buildings, facilities and outdoor amenities, which operate throughout the course of the year.

The Policy is for all who work or come in close contact with children and vulnerable adults. This includes all staff, irrespective of their employment status, full time, and part time, seasonal, agency, on call staff, student placements and volunteers as well as external service providers appointed by the council.

I know that both Elected Members and staff will collectively play their part in the protection of our children and vulnerable adults by ensuring we provide a safe environment for the general public but especially those susceptible groups.

John Dumigan
C& CE

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PART 1

COUNCIL APPROACH

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

Down District Council recognises its legal and moral responsibilities to keep children, young people and vulnerable adults safe whilst they are in our care. We are committed to the creation and maintenance of a safe and secure environment for all those who use its facilities and amenities. It is especially committed to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults who avail of these services.

This policy details the procedures to be followed by Councillors, employees and groups or individuals acting on behalf of the Council, in providing a duty of care for such vulnerable groups, safeguarding their well-being and providing protection from all forms of abuse or harm when using services organised or provided by the Council.

2. AN ORGANISATIONAL WIDE POLICY

Down District Council has a variety of services which involve contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults. The list is not intended to be exhaustive but is an aide memoir to remind staff of the role they have when working directly or near these user groups as part of their normal duties.

- Chief Executive Department, Recreation and Community Services Department
- Sports Development, Leisure Services, Grounds Maintenance, Parks and Beaches, Cultural and Economic Development
- Arts, Major Events, Environmental Health, Corporate Services, Building Control, Environmental Services

3. HOW THE DOWN DISTRICT COUNCIL SCYP&VA POLICY AFFECTS YOU

This policy applies to Members, Employees and all personnel, irrespective of their status, who work for or supply services for the Down District Council.

This includes contractors and anyone sub contracted to undertake work for the council.

This includes full time, part time and seasonal employees, work experience students and volunteers, tutors and visiting artists/performer. In simple terms anyone under Council jurisdiction or sphere of influence who comes into contact with children/young people /vulnerable adults. It covers a wide spectrum of service areas provided by the council. The following aims to provide a framework that meets the needs of all sections and functions within the Council. Particular circumstances may apply to specific departments which may appear not to be reflected in the document. These will be written as an addendum to this policy, by the particular service, which will enhance but not dilute the corporate policy herein.

4. STEERING GROUP AND DESIGNATED OFFICERS

- The Steering Group will take responsibility for the Management of the SCYP&VA Policy and Procedures. It will ensure adherence to all developments including changes to legislation as well as attendance to relevant working groups such as the SEHSC Trust's Child Protection Panel and the local Child Care Partnership.
- On an annual basis the Group will review both Policy and Procedures.
- Integral to this review will be an update to any legislation that has changed or amended.
- The Designated Officer[s] is responsible for dealing with child protection/vulnerable adult concerns, disclosures and allegations. Their role is to make contact with statutory agencies such as Social Services or Police and to report any allegations/disclosures to the relevant agencies.
- It is important that there is a quick response to such issues and for this reason Designated Officers may be required to work outside normal office hours.

5. POLICY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This policy demonstrates a commitment by our Council to providing and maintaining services which protect children and vulnerable adults as well as our staff.

Aims

1. The primary aim that underpins this policy is to ensure the correct balance between protecting our children and vulnerable adults while simultaneously promoting and maintaining an open orientated environment in our services
2. All users both, individuals and groups, will be made aware of the Council's SCYP&VA Policy and their role in compliance.
3. All personnel are trained and required to adhere to the policy
4. All staff are recruited with full adherence to best practice for regulated posts
5. It is designed to promote an organisational culture of sharing information in an open yet protective manner while fully observing legislative requirements.
6. Protect the Council staff and the reputation of the organisation by ensuring children and vulnerable adults are made safe when using council property

Objectives

1. This revised Policy is implemented by **1/8/2014.??????**
2. All current staff receives the required training by 1/12/2014.
3. Beginning on 1/6/2014 the policy is reviewed annually by June 30.

6. COUNCIL COMMITMENT

In meeting its commitment, Council will ensure the following standards are met:

- The adoption and implementation of protection guidelines, procedures and policies for children and vulnerable adults
- Sharing information and concerns with the appropriate statutory bodies.
- Sharing and dissemination of information about protection and good practice in these 2 areas: Providing effective management through good supervision and support.
- Introduction of a regime of on-going training for staff, volunteers and contracted providers of services
- Taking appropriate and effective action in response to issues concerning child protection and protection of vulnerable adults which occur on council property, council functions and/or involve council staff, volunteers or contracted providers
- By nominating Designated officers, who will be responsible for the co-ordination, implementation and overseeing of the SCYP&VA
- By the registration of all relevant facilities with the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust and by undergoing regular checks
- By following a strict recruitment and hiring policy which ensures that candidates for posts involving supervision or contact with children and vulnerable adults are properly vetted and appropriately qualified for the post
- By taking appropriate steps to ensure that all organisations, coaches, entertainers etc, who are engaged by Council or use Council facilities adhere to and are conversant with the Council's Policy.
- By implementing a Code of Conduct for adults, who may be co-users of facilities with children and vulnerable adults- this Code will incorporate Council's present Code of Practice in relation to use of mobile phones in Council facilities, particularly where they have a camera facility, it will also incorporate our Policy on the use of camera and photography on Council property.
- Down District Council's Policy is supported by and linked to other organisational policies and procedures aimed at promoting safe and healthy work practices, including;
recruitment and selection, learning and development, grievance and disciplinary, code of conduct, equal opportunities, health and safety, dealing with comments, suggestions and complaints, support and supervision, and a volunteer policy.

7. DEFINITION OF TERMS

There are a number of related terms through the document. The definition of these terms is contained in **Appendix 1**.

8. LEGAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

The policy provides assurance that the welfare of groups at risk is paramount. The policy has also been produced to support staff and volunteers by providing information and guidance to increase confidence in what they do.

Down District Council has developed this policy in line with the following legislation and good practice guidelines.

Legislation:

- The Children (NI) Order 1995
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Mental Health (NI) Order 1986
- The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012)
- The Sexual Offences (NI) Order 2008
- Criminal Law Act

For further information on safeguarding legislation please visit www.opsi.gov.uk.

Good Practice Guidelines:

- Our Duty of Care: Standards and Guidance for Keeping Children and Young People Safe (2014), Volunteer Now.
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults, A Shared Responsibility (2010), Volunteer Now.

To access the above good practice guidelines please visit www.volunteernow.co.uk.

In addition to legal, policy and procedural guidance, Down District Council has framed this policy within the following rights and values:

Key principles flow from the respect for the rights of vulnerable people who are entitled to:

- ❖ Privacy
- ❖ Be treated with respect and dignity
- ❖ Lead an independent life and be enabled to do so
- ❖ Be able to choose how to lead their lives
- ❖ The protection of the law
- ❖ Have their rights upheld regardless of ethnic origin, gender, sexuality, impairment or disability, age and religious or cultural background
- ❖ Have the right to fulfil personal aspirations and realise potential in all aspects of daily life

This includes human rights considerations, particularly in relation to

Article 2 “The Right to Life”;

Article 3 “Freedom from Torture” (including humiliation and degrading treatment) and

Article 8 “Right to Family Life” (one that sustains the individual).

9. INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

These principles assume that vulnerable adults have the right to:

- Be accorded the same respect and dignity as any other adult
- Recognition of their uniqueness and personal needs
- Be given access to knowledge and information which they can understand to help them make informed choices
- Have information about,, and practical help in keeping themselves safe and protecting themselves from abuse
- Live safely without fear of violence or abuse in any form
- Have their money, goods and possessions treated with respect and to receive equal protection for themselves and their property under the law
- Guidance and assistance in seeking help as a consequence of abuse

- Be supported in making their own decisions about how they wish to proceed in the event of abuse and to know that their wishes will only be over-ridden if it is considered necessary for their own safety or the safety of others
- Be supported in bringing a complaint under any existing complaints procedure
- Be supported in reporting the circumstances of any abuse to independent bodies
- Have alleged, suspected or confirmed cases of abuse investigated urgently
- Receive appropriate support, education, counselling, therapy and treatment following abuse
- Seek legal advice or representation on their own behalf
- Seek redress through appropriate agencies
- Have their rights respected and to have their family and informal carers or advocates act on their behalf as appropriate

10. A UNIVERSAL APPROACH

In 1991 the UK Government ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which is an international convention signed by all but two countries in the world.

The UN Convention sets the minimum standards for children and young peoples' civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights under the interrelated categories of 'participation', 'protection' and 'provision'.

For example:

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.

Article 19 - The State has a responsibility to protect children from violent and harmful treatment. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

11. The Children NI Order 1995

What is it?

The Children (NI) Order 1995 which came into force in November 1996 deals with the care, upbringing and protection of children. It reforms, consolidates and harmonises most of the public and private law relating to children in a single coherent statutory framework. The definition of a child in this context is a person under the age of 18.

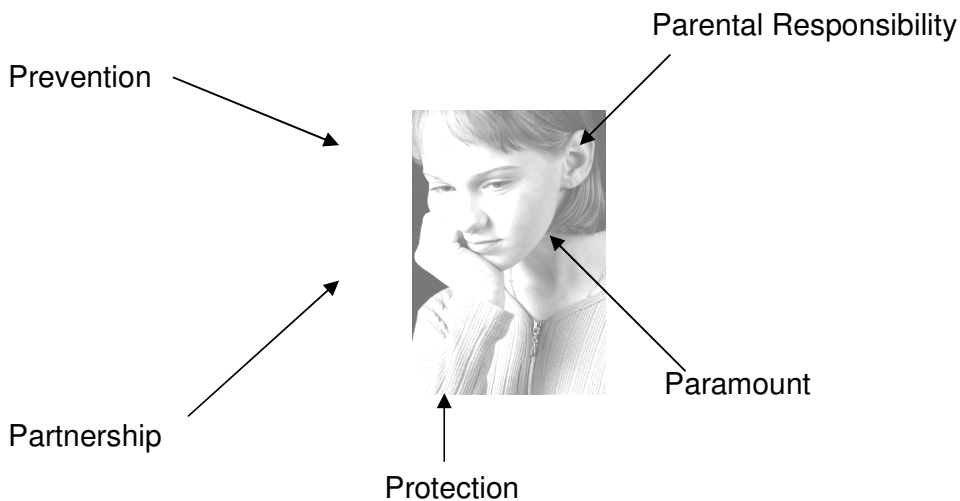
The Aims of the Child Order are:

To simplify the law and make it more accessible to users.

To set balances between:

- The rights and responsibilities of parents/guardians
- The duties of the State to safeguard the Welfare of children
- The child's own view of how his or her own needs can be met.

The key PRINCIPLES “the five P’s” are



Paramount

The fundamental principal that applies in child care law and practice is that the welfare of the child must always be the paramount consideration in decisions taken about him or her.

Parental Responsibility

This principal is that parents have responsibility to children rather than rights over them. Under the Order parents never lose their responsibility even when children are taken into care. There may also be other situations where a number of adults share this parental responsibility with one or both parents.

On occasion, for the duration of activities, Down District Council staff, coaches, teachers, summer scheme leaders etc may stand or act in loco parentis. However, this does not override the primacy of parental/guardian responsibility

Prevention

This principal is about preventing situations arising where children are separated from their families.

It is also about the State providing services to keep children within their families and to promote their health or welfare. This principal in the Down District Council context is about preventing situations arising where children could be subject to abuse.

Partnership

The basis of this principal is that the most effective way of ensuring that a child's needs are met is by working in partnership with their parents or carers. This means that the provision of services for children must take account of parents' views and that decisions made about children must be made with parents.

Protection

There will always be situations where children are in need of protection. The principal is that children should be safe and should be protected by intervention if they are in danger. This is the basis of the South Eastern Trust's responsibility to investigate where there are concerns about a child suffering 'significant harm.'

Prejudice

The Order makes specific requirements about provision of services to children which relate to paying due consideration to a child's race, religion culture and language. This will include reflecting the needs of children from different communities of origin. The council Policy follows the legislation definition and thereby refers to all young people under the age of 18 years.

Involving children

One of the aims of the Order is that children should have a say in the making of decisions which affect them. There are a number of provisions in the order, for example, those which provide for the establishment of complaints procedures including advocacy schemes for children, a Guardian-ad-Litem service for children involved in court proceedings and Independent Visitor Schemes for children in residential care, which give effect to this aim.

11.1 THE CHILDREN ORDER -NORTHERN IRELAND

The Children Order sets out the framework for protecting children including legal Powers and responsibilities of agencies like the police, social services and other bodies. It is complemented by other laws and guidance which taken together provides a comprehensive approach to the protection of children. These include specifically:

1. The Criminal Law Act 1967

Section 5 creates a duty to report arrestable offences and information in relation to the offence to the police.

2. Co-operating to Safeguard Children Guidance

The Department of Health & Social Services for Public Safety (DHSSPS) sets out the overall procedural framework for the management of child protection. In addition to setting out the roles and responsibilities of agencies, Co-operating to Safeguard Children details the process and steps to be followed on the detection, reporting and management of child abuse. In regard to the functions of local government

Section 3.80 states:

“Councils carry out a range of functions and services in Northern Ireland that directly and 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. Protocol for joint investigation by social workers and police officers of alleged and suspected cases of child abuse.

This document sets out the steps and joint actions to be taken by each agency in investigating suspected or actual child abuse.

12. VULNERABLE ADULTS

While the requirements for the protection of Children were widely recognised and implemented previously the abuse and exploitation of vulnerable adults are issues that have become prominent in recent years. Our organisation has written this Policy to incorporate the requirements for Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults.

In recognising there are common requirements in both groups it is not the intention to dilute the requirement of either as it is recognised that with adults there is a requirements to ensure their rights to live a life free from abuse and exploitation are protected. This Policy outlines the organisation’s commitment to uphold those rights and is explicit about the Council’s proactive approach to protect all vulnerable groups.

The Council recognises that the SCYP&VA Policy must be owned at all levels within the organisation.

The Policy has been developed by the Council’s Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Steering Group with the support of expert advice.

Like the Child Protection element of the SCYP&VA Policy it applies to all employees and volunteers irrespective of their function, remit or role.

13. Recruitment and Selection of Staff and Volunteers

Down District Council operates transparent and clearly defined recruitment and selection procedures in line with legislative requirements and best practice. Thorough procedures help to screen out those who are not suitable to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

AccessNI is a criminal history disclosure service in Northern Ireland. It supplies criminal history information to organisations and individuals on three levels of criminal record check (sometimes called disclosures)

The level of checks will be determined at recruitment and the related processes will be managed by the Councils Human Resource Department.

An Access NI Enhanced Disclosure with Barred List Check is required for staff and volunteers in regulated activity (as defined under the SVG (NI) Order 2007 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012)).

Therefore, before advertising a post or a volunteering role, Down District Council will decide if it falls into the category of regulated activity.

Down District Council's recruitment and selection procedures for staff and volunteers include the following:

- Defining the post through clear job descriptions and personnel specifications for staff and clear role descriptions and volunteer specifications for volunteers. These identify the key skills, qualities, abilities and qualifications required to fill the post. The job/role description indicates whether the post constitutes regulated activity under the SVG (NI) Order 2007 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012); or if the post meets the pre-September 2012 definition of regulated activity;
- An open recruitment process;
- Completion of an application form/registration form, which will cover past work/volunteering experience;

- Completion of a declaration and consent form. The applicant must declare any past criminal convictions, cautions and bind-overs which are not protected and any cases pending against them. The applicant must provide information on any investigation that has been carried out in relation to child or vulnerable adult abuse in which they have been the alleged perpetrator. They must also give consent for the relevant level of Access NI Disclosure Check to be requested if they are considered the preferred candidate for a post, and have been conditionally offered the job/role subject to the results of appropriate checks;
- Interview (or meeting in the case of a volunteer) appropriate to the job/role with at least two representatives of Down District Council. Photographic identification and, where required, documentary evidence of qualifications and any accredited training should be produced by the candidate at the interview or meeting.

Following a conditional offer of employment/volunteering the following procedures apply:

- Request for two written references, which may be followed up orally as necessary;
- Appropriate checks will be undertaken where required. An Access NI Enhanced Disclosure with Barred List Check will be requested on the preferred candidate if the job/role constitutes regulated activity. Where the post meets the former definition of regulated activity (pre- September 2012) an Enhanced Disclosure without Barred List check will be requested. If required, a registration check with an appropriate Professional Body will also be required;
- All posts are approved by management.

Down District Council ensures that all information relating to recruitment and selection is securely and confidentially stored.

Handling and storage of criminal history information complies fully with Access NI's Code of Practice for the storage, retention and disposal of disclosure information.

Copies of Down District Council's policy on the handling of AccessNI information; the security policy regarding disclosure information; and the policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders are available on request.

14. Effective Management of Staff and Volunteers

Effective management of staff and volunteers ensures that everyone in Down District Council is clear about what we are trying to achieve and what their particular job/role is. Down District Council wants to prevent harm to the children, young people and vulnerable adults we support and the provision of appropriate training and support and supervision of staff and volunteers helps to achieve this. We also want staff and volunteers to feel valued and listened to.

Down District Council's management procedures for staff and volunteers include the following:

- Induction, which covers;
 - Down District Council's ethos, activities, policies and procedures.
 - The job/role and the staff member/volunteer's area of responsibility.
 - What is expected of staff and volunteers and the boundaries within which they may operate.
 - Support available to the staff member/volunteer.
 - Meeting fellow colleagues and volunteers.
 - Written acknowledgement of completion. The staff member/volunteer and their manager/coordinator sign off the induction.

- Probationary period for staff and trial period for volunteers
 - All appointments are conditional on a satisfactory period of employment or volunteering, the timeframe for which will be agreed.
 - Following an agreed probationary/trial period, the post will be confirmed in writing.

15. Training Policy

In addition to induction, all staff and volunteers in Down District Council will receive training appropriate to their need and their job/role. In relation to safeguarding:

- All staff and Members shall receive awareness training in child protection and the protection of vulnerable adults. This training will include familiarisation with the SCYP&VA Policy. The training will commence at induction, for all staff.
- Training will include all full time, part time, seasonal and on call staff, agency staff, student placements and volunteers, line managers, supervisors and policy makers.

Training will be provided at three levels:

LEVEL	TYPE	PERSONNEL	FREQUENCY
Level 1	Introduction and Awareness	ALL STAFF AND MEMBERS	ONCE EVERY 3 YEARS
Level 2	Full child protection training	SERVICE STAFF AS REQUIRED	ONCE EVERY 3 YEARS
Level 3	Full Designate Officer Training	DESIGNATED OFFICERS	ON-GOING AS REQUIRED

Where appropriate, DDC will link in house training with certified training from NIASP and SBNI Training.

Training Management

- The Council will keep written records of all training completed by staff and volunteers.
- Additional training needs identified will be discussed with their line manager/coordinator.

- Support and Supervision
 - Support and supervision is provided for staff and volunteers through regular one-to-one meetings and team meetings.

- Annual appraisal for staff and annual review for volunteers
 - This is provided to assess and give feedback to staff and volunteers on their general performance and to help identify future support and training needs.

Written records are maintained for all areas of staff and volunteer management, development and support including records of team meetings, support and supervision, annual appraisal/review, training needs identified and training completed.

16. VULNERABLE ADULTS

LEGAL CONTEXT

Whilst there is no specific legislation or body of common law relating to the abuse of vulnerable adults, there is however several related laws which seek to provide some protection to this particular group. Vulnerable adults are protected in the same way as any other person against criminal acts.

Where there is reasonable suspicion that a criminal offence has occurred it is the responsibility of the police [PSNI] to investigate and make a decision about any subsequent action.

There is a range, therefore, of legislation which is directly applicable to the protection of vulnerable adults and this includes:-

- Health and Personal Social Services (Northern Ireland) Order 1972
- Mental Health (Northern Ireland) Order 1986
- Police & Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Public Interest Disclosure (Northern Ireland) Order 1998
- Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1999
- Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008

The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) in March 2010 issued policy guidance that details the new safeguarding partnership bodies which will be required to be set up within Northern Ireland.

From a Council perspective it identifies the need to participate in a **Local Adult Safeguarding Partnership** that will oversee the implementation of guidance and operational policy for adult protection within each locality.

Case law shows there has been a growing awareness of the nature, extent and complexity of the abuse of vulnerable adults.

In 2006, the DHSSPS launched 'Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Regional Adult Protection Policy & Procedural Guidance' on behalf of the Regional Adult Protection Forum.

The DHSSPS published in March 2010 the 'Adult Safeguarding in Northern Ireland: Regional and Local Partnership Arrangements'. This document was produced jointly by the Northern Ireland Office and the DHSSPS and places a clear requirement of the Regional Health Board, Trusts and a wider range of partner organisations, including local Councils, and groups to work together to protect and safeguard vulnerable adults. This document mandates the establishment of the NI Adult Safeguarding Partnership (NIASP) supported by Local Adult Safeguarding Partnerships (LASPS) in each Local Commissioning Group area. Local Councils such as DDC are members of all these partnerships, recognising the importance of working together to safeguard all vulnerable groups.

17. AWARENESS OF ABUSE (CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE)

What is abuse...?

The DSHSS states that good child protection practice means ensuring that staff and volunteers know how to recognise child abuse. The DHSS also say that this does not mean that they are responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has occurred but that they do have a responsibility to be alert to behaviour by children or workers and in the Down District Council case – the public, which suggests something may be wrong.

It is important that all Down District Council staff and volunteers are aware that, essentially abuse occurs when the behaviour of someone in a position of greater power causes harm. The common denominator of all forms of abuse is that it makes the person feel bad and worthless. Because a person can be abused in a number of ways the harm caused cannot always be easily categorised, however there are four main forms of abuse. The four main forms and indicators are outlined in Appendix 2.

Bullying can also be added to the four main forms of child abuse

Not unique to the underage persons Bullying is the repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an *Imbalance of Power*. Bullying can be physical (hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (racist, sectarian, sexist or homophobic remarks) or psychological/emotional (isolating an individual from the activities, taunting, shouting or screaming threats and gestures). It can happen face to face or through cyberspace.

www.bullying.co.uk

For assistance call Childline: 0800 1111

18. AWARENESS OF ABUSE (ADULTS)

What is abuse...?

Definition of Abuse

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Regional Adult Protection Policy September 2006, states that abuse is

“The physical, psychological, emotional, financial or sexual maltreatment or neglect of a vulnerable adult by another person. The abuse may be a single act or repeated over a period of time. It may take one form or a multiple of forms. The lack of appropriate action can also be a form of abuse. Abuse can occur in a relationship where there is an expectation of trust and can be perpetrated by a person/ persons in breach of that trust, who have influence over the life of the dependent whether they be formal or informal carers, staff or family members or others. It can also occur outside a relationship.”

Forms of abuse can be categorised as follows:

- ❖ Physical abuse (including inappropriate restraint or use of medication)
Sexual abuse
- ❖ Psychological abuse
- ❖ Financial or material abuse
- ❖ Neglect and acts of omission
- ❖ Institutional abuse
- ❖ Discriminatory abuse
- ❖ Domestic Violence
- ❖ Human Trafficking

Any or all types of abuse may be perpetrated as a result of deliberate intent and targeting of vulnerable people, negligence or ignorance.

PART 2

19. REPORTING PROCEDURES

It is fundamentally important that if any employees have concerns about a vulnerable adult young person or child that they report these concerns to their line manager who will in turn report the matter to the Designated Officer and follow the steps laid down in this policy.

This will help protect employees and the wellbeing of the individual concerned.

Employees must remember that they are not responsible for deciding whether or not abuse has taken place; rather they are responsible for reporting their concerns to the relevant person.

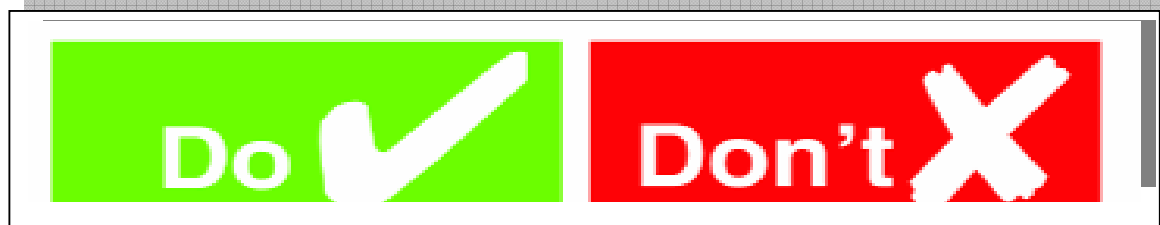
REPORTING PROCEDURE

HOW TO REACT AND WHAT TO DO IN REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE

Every incident, no matter how insignificant must be reported on the DDC SCYP&VA 1 Form. The following [procedure](#) should be adhered to when reporting a case of alleged abuse or similar

The SCYP&VA Form, Appendix 3 can also be used in the case of Lost Children at major Council events. Relevant Departments/Sections should put in place appropriate SCYP&VA, NOP s and/or EAPs for such events.

20. GENERAL REPORTING GUIDELINES



STAY CALM

LISTEN AND HEAR
GIVE THE PERSON TIME TO SAY
WHAT THEY WANT TO SAY

REASSURE THEM THAT THEY HAVE
DONE THE RIGHT THING IN TELLING
YOU

RECORD IN WRITING WHAT WAS
SAID AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

REPORT the matter to a Designated
Officer

RECORD you report

PANIC

ASK LEADING QUESTIONS
(QUESTIONS THAT INFLUENCE
THE PERSON TO GIVE A
PARTICULAR ANSWER

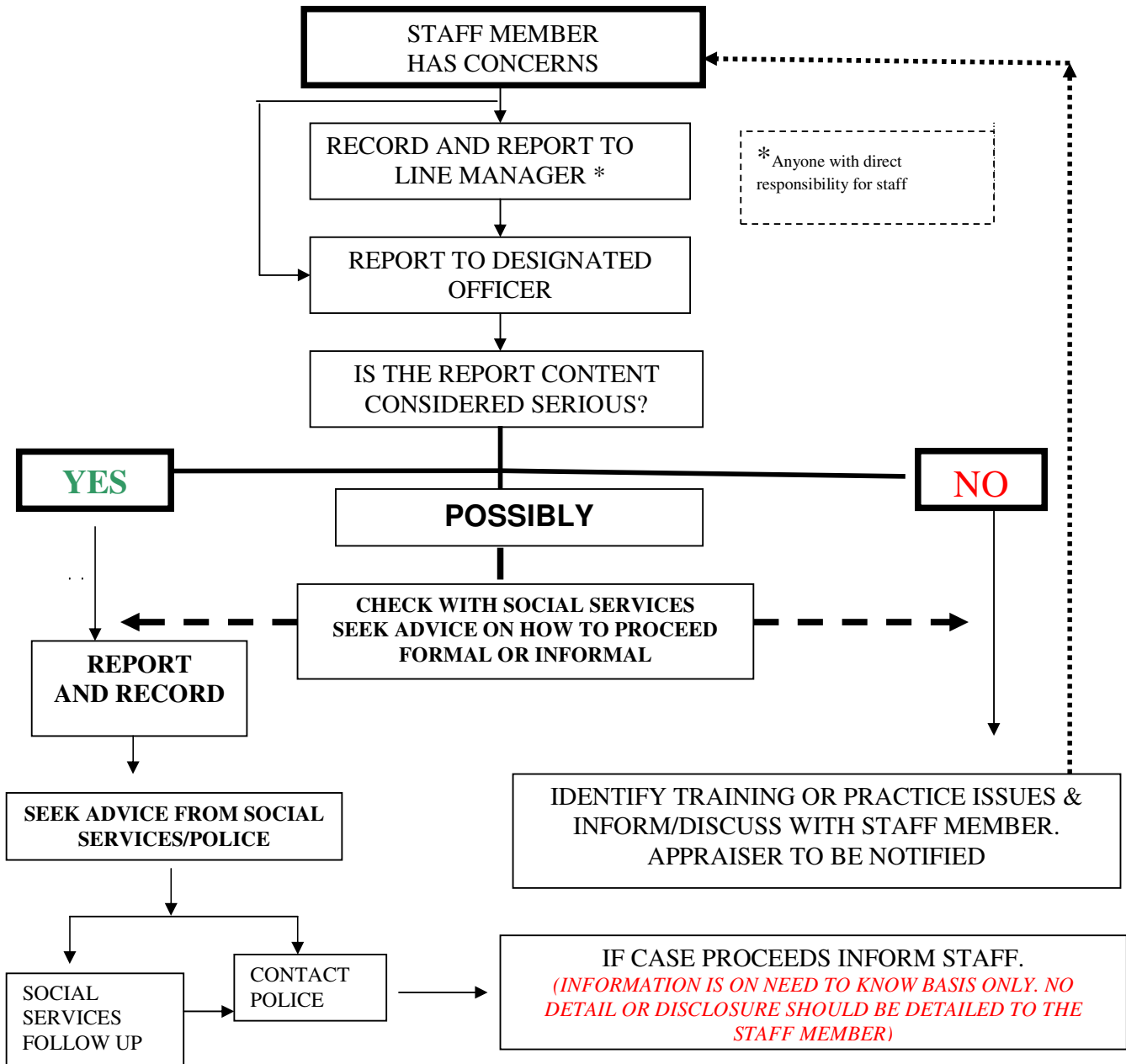
PROMISE TO KEEP SECRETS

ASK FOR DETAILS OF THE
ABUSE

MAKE A CHILD YOUNG
PERSON OR VULNERABLE
ADULT REPEAT THE STORY
UNNECESSARILY

21. PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING -SUMMARY

The following represents the procedure for reporting abuse. DDC/ SCYP&VA Forms [Appendix 3] must be completed at every stage. In **all** cases the Designated Officer should be informed. At all times it should be remembered that it is **not** our role to investigate –our role is to report to Social Service and/ or Police.



REMEMBER

IF IN DOUBT, GET SOCIAL SERVICES TO SORT IT OUT!

22. PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING-VARIOUS CASES

Given the wide range of activities provided by Down District Council and in turn the amount of customers attending, allegations or suspicions of abuse are indeed highly probable. How these allegations or suspicions come to your attention may vary.

All detail is to be recorded on Form DDC-SCYP&VA

Child reporting abuse to Staff

A child may approach you in a facility or on council grounds, parks or playing fields and tell you directly.

You must:

- ❖ Stay calm
- ❖ Encourage the child to remain with you;
- ❖ If necessary calm and reassure the child (be careful of your own actions)
- ❖ Where possible get another staff member to obtain a pen and a DDC- SCYP&VA 1. Form then act as witness. Where C/AB 1. forms are not close at hand use blank paper and record on DDC-SCYP&VA 1 form as soon afterwards
- ❖ Listen and hear the child and give him/her time to say what s/he wants.

At this point depending on the nature, severity and time period of abuse it may be necessary to alert the Duty Officer/Manager immediately with a view to identifying the alleged abuser and contacting the police yourself if deemed appropriate. (See list of contact numbers) **Appendix 4.**

- ❖ Complete all relevant sections of the DDC-SCYP&VA 1. Form and record in writing what was said then sign.
- ❖ Report to the Supervisor /Duty Officer/Manager on duty and present him/her with the report as soon as possible.
- ❖ The Duty Officer/Manager must make a decision based on the facts presented to him/her as to the next appropriate line of action i.e. no action deemed necessary, contact parents, contact police. Contact Council Designated Officer/Duty Social worker etc.
- ❖ Complete and sign report and pass on to Line Management or Designated Officer as appropriate.

Public to Staff re: Suspicions

A child or an adult may approach you with their suspicions of abuse of a child based on what they observed, believe or from what a child has disclosed to them;

- ❖ Follow as laid out in SCYP&VA 1 form.

Suspicions by Staff

Your suspicions may be aroused due to witnessing one or more of the physical or behavioural Indicators presented in the Policy.

- ❖ Bring your suspicions to the Duty Officer/Manager giving all the relevant details leading to those suspicions.

PART 3

23. ROLE OF THE COUNCIL'S DESIGNATED SCYP&VA OFFICER

The Council has identified Designated SCYP& Officers on a service basis. This is an important role as the officer plays a pivotal role in such matters.

The appointed officers will liaise with line management which includes supervisors, foremen, duty officers, all management grades etc.

They will assist these staff who may be the first point of contact helping with the initial reporting and giving support if required. The Designated Officers are key to the policy working in practice. If a Designated Officer is not available line management/supervisor will decide if the matter is to be passed to Social Services and /or Police.

At the earliest opportunity they will report the matter to the Designated Officer.

Specifically the role and responsibilities of the Designated Officers include:

Referral of Concerns

- Monitoring the implementation of the Council's Safeguarding Policy, procedures and guidelines and specifically to inform Social Services/PSNI within the appropriate Trust area of any concerns about a child, young person or vulnerable adult.

- Ensuring that any referral made by telephone is confirmed in writing and any documentation related to concerns is passed to Social Services/PSNI.
- Ensuring that an individual case record is maintained of concerns about abuse and the action taken by the organisation, the liaison with other agencies and the outcome and keeping Senior Management of the Council apprised of any developments.

South Eastern Trust/PSNI

- Establish contact with the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust and Police Liaison Officer in the PSNI responsible for acting as a source of advice on vulnerable adult safeguarding matters.
- Within the Council actively participating in the Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Steering Group and taking the lead role in raising and maintaining awareness about vulnerable adults in the Council.
- Acting as a source of advice and assistance on vulnerable adult matters in the Council.
- Assisting functions within the Council to develop additional and supplementary vulnerable adult procedures and the promotion of good practice.
- Advising the Council in conjunction with the Training Officer of any Vulnerable Adult training needs.

24. DUTIES OF DESIGNATED OFFICER

1. To record a disclosure of abuse of any kind made by a child or other to a Council employee or any suspicions detailed by a third party.
2. To record all reports of suspicions of abuse against a child/vulnerable adult on DDC-SCYP&VA
3. In all circumstances seek advice from relevant agencies acting as the liaison officer for all related activities and ensuring appropriate line management and directors are kept informed.
4. To record all actions and where appropriate, advise line management while keeping all the appropriate council personnel informed on a need to know basis.
5. To act as custodian for all SCYP&VA protection records ensuring security and confidentiality.

6. To establish contact with the relevant Social Services Officers maintaining those lines of communication.
7. With the Steering Group review the council policy as required and/or every 3 years in association with representatives from the various departments.
8. In liaison with the Training and Development Officer ensure that all council employees receive the appropriate level of training including identifying staff who will undertake the role of trainers in Child Protection.

Designated Officers for the District Council are listed in **Appendix 5**

25. CONFIDENTIALITY

Observing the principle of confidentiality would mean that information is only passed onto others with the consent of the service user. However it should be recognised that in order to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults it may be necessary to share information that might normally be regarded as confidential.

All vulnerable adults, children and young people, and where appropriate, their carers, parents and/or representatives need to be made aware that the operation of multi disciplinary and interagency procedures will, on occasion, require the sharing of information in order to protect a vulnerable person or others or to investigate an alleged or suspected criminal offence.

26. WHAT IF A CONCERN IS NOT TAKEN SERIOUSLY?

If a Councillor/ staff member/volunteer raises a safeguarding concern but feels it is not being taken seriously or there is a reluctance to pass it on, you should discuss the concern with a Designated Officer. If, at this stage, you still feel there is a reluctance to pass on the information you should discuss the concern with the Chief Executive Officer (or most senior person within the Council).

If you still feel that the matter should be referred and has not been, you have the option to raise concerns outside of line management structures and access confidential advice from an independent source.

You should contact the local HSC Trust or the PSNI. Full record keeping is essential.

Down District Council takes poor/malpractice seriously and anyone, who have passed on a genuine concern which has not been appropriately acted upon in accordance with reporting procedures, can pass information on as outlined above.

Down District Council considers it a disciplinary matter to victimise a staff member/volunteer or other for raising a genuine concern.

Similarly, maliciously making a false allegation will be a disciplinary matter.

PART 4

27. ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AGAINST STAFF MEMBER

Allegations of abuse may also be made against members of staff, work experience or volunteers.

It is of utmost importance that all allegations of abuse are taken seriously and appropriate action taken no matter how uncomfortable you as a recipient of information may feel. In some circumstances the allegations may be about poor practice rather than abuse. (Poor practice relates to any action etc which contravenes the Code of Conduct.) A complaint of abuse against staff, work experience students or a volunteer may result in three types of investigation:

- 1. A CHILD PROTECTION INVESTIGATION**
- 2. A CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION**
- 3. A DISCIPLINARY OR MISCONDUCT INVESTIGATION**

28. DEALING WITH THE ALLEGATION:

- ❖ It may be discovered on any of the above that the suspicion/allegation points to a member of staff, work experience student or a volunteer. If so follow the procedure through but include the following points.
- ❖ The identity of the staff member etc must remain confidential, disclosed only to the relevant Officer in charge. The Officer must inform the staff member that an allegation has been made against him/her and conduct an investigation.

- ❖ If the relevant officer in charge is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the service's manager must be immediately informed who will in turn carry out an investigation.
- ❖ If a service manager is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the suspicion/allegation must be reported to the Director of the service.
- ❖ If the Director is the subject of the suspicion/allegation, the report will go to Chief Executive,
- ❖ If it's against the Chief Executive, the Chair of Council will be informed and an independent investigator appointed.
- ❖ Where an allegation involves coach/teacher/Instructor whether employed by DDC or independent but using/hiring the service's facilities, the Executive Officer of the relevant governing body should be informed.
- ❖ Work experience students who are under the age of 18 years that have been accused of abuse are also protected by the Child Protection Laws. Therefore it is imperative that Social Services are contacted immediately.

29. ALLEGATIONS OF PREVIOUS ABUSE

An allegation of previous abuse may surface when for example an adult who was abused as a child by a member of staff who is still currently working with children, can no longer carry this burden.

In such a case, carry out the procedures as given above.

N.B

Social Services must be contacted where there is doubt in making a judgement of the validity of an allegation and especially where it is conclusive or has been admitted by the abuser.

The parents or carers of the child will be contacted as soon as possible following advice from the Social Services Department. It is they who will decide to involve the police.

30. POSSIBLE OUTCOMES OF INVESTIGATION

As a result of an investigation, the allegation may or may not be substantiated.

There are 4 possible investigation outcomes as outlined below:

- Allegation of harm/risk of harm substantiated – individual removed from regulated activity
If the investigation finds that the allegation is substantiated, that is harm or risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult has occurred and the individual is removed from regulated activity. Under these circumstances the organisation will be under a statutory duty to refer to the DBS under the SVG (NI) Order 2007, as amended by The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.

It should be at the point that a determination of harm/risk of harm is made and a decision taken to remove an individual from regulated activity that the duty to refer to the DBS is triggered; this may happen at any stage during the disciplinary process and not necessarily when the process concludes.

If the staff member/volunteer resigns or retires at any point during the investigation process, the investigation should nevertheless be concluded and a referral should be made to the DBS if the investigation concludes that harm or risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult has occurred. If the individual is registered with a Professional Regulatory Body, the organisation should also make a referral to that body.

- Allegation of harm/risk of harm substantiated - individual reinstated to regulated activity
If the investigation finds that the allegation is substantiated but the circumstances of the case are such that the individual can be reinstated to the post/role subject to appropriate disciplinary sanctions, training/retraining being undertaken and support and supervision arrangements being put in place. Despite the finding that harm/risk of harm has occurred, the decision to return the individual to the post/role means that a referral to the DBS is not required.

- Allegation of harm/risk of harm unsubstantiated - ongoing concerns
The investigation finds that the allegation is unsubstantiated, that is the individual has not harmed or placed at risk of harm a child or vulnerable adult. However, the organisation has ongoing concerns about the conduct of a staff member/volunteer. The organisation may conclude that the individual can be reinstated with additional support, supervision and training/retraining.
- Allegation of harm/risk of harm unsubstantiated - no ongoing concerns
The investigation finds that the allegation is unsubstantiated, that is, the individual has not harmed or placed at risk of harm a child or vulnerable adult. The staff member/volunteer may be reinstated and provided with support, training and supervision if necessary.

Allegations against members of staff or volunteers can be traumatic and unsettling for any organisation. For this reason, staff and volunteers should have a clear understanding of how allegations will be handled and expect the organisation's disciplinary procedure to be consistently implemented. If, for example, the organisation's policy is to suspend without prejudice when an allegation of abuse or harm is made, all members of staff and volunteers should be aware of the policy. There is an onus on organisations to ensure that the investigation is handled sensitively from initiation to conclusion and to manage any anxieties expressed or demonstrated by any child, vulnerable adult, parent, carer, family member, advocate or any other member of staff or volunteer.

31. Assessing and Managing Risk

It is the responsibility of each directorate to carry out related Risk Assessments and Action Plans connected to this key policy.

Assessing and managing risks to children, young people and vulnerable adults should be integral to each department's risk management strategy.

Assessment of risk is the process of examining what could possibly cause harm to a child, young person or vulnerable adult, to the staff or volunteers or any other person in the context of the activities and services of the organisation.

Risk of harm can be posed by actions and inactions in many different situations for example:

- intimidation and other threatening behaviours
- behaviours resulting in injury, neglect, abuse, and exploitation by self or others
- the misuse of drugs or alcohol
- aggression and violence
- suicide or self-harm
- a person's impairment or disability
- accidents, for example, participating in an event or activity.

No endeavour or activity, or indeed interaction, is entirely risk free and even with good planning it may be impossible to completely eliminate risks from any activity, service or interaction.

However, each Department should have in place risk assessment and management practice to reduce the likelihood of it occurring and to minimise the impacts of abuse by responding effectively when it does occur.

For the organisation, the primary aim is to manage the risk of abuse to children, young people and vulnerable adults by establishing an organisational culture in which the rights of vulnerable groups are fully respected and by putting in place a range of procedures which support that culture.

Establishing a culture, which is mindful of and has a 'zero tolerance' of abuse wherever it occurs and whoever causes it, and putting in place robust procedures are all part of an organisation's risk-reducing armoury. The Policy has the potential to reduce both the likelihood and impact of abuse of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Down District Council will adopt the following in order to reduce and manage related risks:

- Preventing unsuitable people from joining the organisation through good recruitment and selection practice
- Making staff and volunteers aware of the indicators of vulnerability and risk and the possible signs of abuse and equipping them to respond quickly to concerns about actual, alleged or suspected abuse

- Ensuring that staff and volunteers are properly inducted, trained, supported and supervised in their work with vulnerable groups
- Ensuring that staff and volunteers know what constitutes acceptable behaviours and good practice and that they are supported when they challenge poor practice
- Promoting a culture of inclusion, transparency and openness throughout the organisation and its services and activities
- Making staff and volunteers aware of how information about vulnerable adults should be handled
- Having in place good overall organisational management and practice supported by a range of organisational policies and procedures.

RISK REGISTER

- All risks and risk-reducing measures are recorded in the form of a Risk Register. A section of this organisation's risk register deals specifically with safeguarding risks and this is kept under regular review. A risk review is carried out annually and additionally during any change management process.

32. Receiving Comments and Complaints

The Council's Complaints and Comment Policy should be strictly adhered to if there is any matter connected to an issue of Children, Young People or Vulnerable Adults abuse. Where a service user has a concern or complaint about some aspect of the organisation, they should have access to the organisation's complaints procedure. The standard complaints procedure for Down District Council is to be applied.

What about serious incidents?

If there is a complaint in relation to a particularly serious incident, for example, where abuse or exploitation is suspected, then the reporting procedure takes precedence over the complaints procedure.

As well as the complaints procedure being outlined in the Policy, it should be displayed on the premises and in material relating to the organisation. If necessary, it should be provided in alternative formats, and one-to-one explanations should be provided if required. While volunteers should use the complaints procedure, members of staff should have access to the organisation's grievance procedure.

There is also a whistleblowing policy for staff and volunteers where there are concerns about malpractice in the organisation.

MANAGING RECORDS AND DATA PROTECTION

While all such matters are confidential officers should, at all times, adhere to the Council guide lines on the Management of records including the requirements of Data Protection.

While information about children, young people and vulnerable adults is confidential, it may be disclosed to external agencies to ensure the care and safety of an individual or of others or where a crime is suspected.

This includes the disclosure of information to the HSC Trust or PSNI for such purposes.

THE CASE DETAIL,

- **ALL FORMS, WILL BE RETAINED WITH THE HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT,**
- **NO COPIES TO BE RETAINED BY DEPARTMENTS.**
- **CLEARLY MARKED STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**
- **STATING ON A NEED TO KNOW BASIS WHO HAS ACCESS**

PART 5

CODES OF CONDUCT

1. HIRING DDC FACILITIES AND GRANTS CODE

Groups/Individuals hiring Council facilities for use by the groups, covered in this Policy, will provide, at the time of application, an up to date Policy covering the protection of both Children and Vulnerable Adult Groups. The Council Policy can be adapted by the potential hirer if they do not have a relevant policy. Council prefer that hirers have their own policy as its evidence to a proactive approach to the issues related to protection .All hirers are responsible for conducting their pre-employment checks, where appropriate, and any related training, of their staff.

The requirements also relates to Contractors, Sub Contractors, Groups working as part of a Council Sponsored Events as well as Franchisees or similar in any council outlet.

GRANTS

All Departments awarding or facilitating grants should ensure that the recipients, where applicable, have in place, full Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policies along with all relevant up to date procedures.
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2. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR USERS OF FACILITIES

The use of arts, cultural, recreational and leisure facilities brings members of the public, including children and vulnerable adults into contact with each other.

In areas such as swimming pools, concert halls, changing rooms or where there are concerts or other activities where there is contact between adult users and children and vulnerable adults sharing the same facility. These areas present the opportunity in which acts of abuse to children and vulnerable adults may take place through selecting targets, grooming children; etc, and vigilance is required.

Furthermore in these circumstances where people come together in social interaction situations are created in which there may well be accidental or innocent incidents involving members of the public, sharing the facility with children and vulnerable adults, which could be interpreted erroneously as acts of abuse. To this end it is vital that there be in place a set of rules to guide members of the public when sharing facilities with children and vulnerable adults; raising their awareness of safeguarding issues and the standard of behaviour which Council expects of them towards children and vulnerable adults in such circumstances. Such a code presents staff with guidance as to what is acceptable and what is unacceptable behaviour in Council facilities and allows them to deal more effectively with instances of poor or bad behaviour on the part of members of the public when the need arises.

2.1 COUNCIL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR USERS:

This Code will be displayed in all Council facilities and will be enforced by all members of staff.

- These facilities have been created or provided for the use and / enjoyment of all Residents of and visitors to Down District.
- Down District Council anticipates and expects all users to have maximum Enjoyment of these facilities. In order to do so it is necessary that all users have mutual respect for their fellow users and the staff who are there to assist them in their use.
- To this end all Members of the public using these facilities must be made aware of the following:
 - At all times you should be aware of the presence of children and vulnerable adults and we would ask that you adhere to the following basic rules for the safety and enjoyment of all users of our facilities:
 - At no time will Council permit without consent photography on its premises.
 - Consent in this instance means not only the consent of Council but also parental/guardian consent being obtained.
 - At no time will Council permit without authority or consent the use of mobile phones in its recreation or leisure facilities particularly those phones and devices which have a photographic facility.

- At all times we would ask adult users to act with proper decorum in dressing rooms, toilets etc.
- At all times we would ask adult users to refrain from using vulgar or abusive language or language of a sexual nature including innuendo whilst in the presence of or within earshot of children.
- Adult users should also refrain from horseplay with children or other adults whilst using council facilities.
- We would ask that adults should not engage in horseplay particularly with children or vulnerable adults whilst using council facilities.

Any person contravening this code will be asked to leave the premises or facility and may be refused admission on future occasions.

3. CODE OF BEHAVIOUR FOR STAFF/VOLUNTEERS

All staff/volunteers /Members working with vulnerable groups are required to adhere to the following Codes of Conduct

ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR CODE:

- ✓ Treat all children with respect
- ✓ Encourage children to participate in the organisation's activities
- ✓ Be good role models for the children
- ✓ Listen to children
- ✓ Use common sense in selecting subjects to demonstrate on when teaching/coaching.
- ✓ Respect a young person's right to privacy.
- ✓ Avoid situations where you and individual children are completely unobserved.
- ✓ Always be publicly open when working with children.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR CODE

- ✘ Allowing or engaging in inappropriate touching of any form.
- ✘ Allowing children to use inappropriate language unchallenged.
- ✘ Embarrassing a child especially in front of other children
- ✘ Do not engage in rough, physical, sexually, provocative games, including horseplay.
- ✘ Do not embrace a child in order to console as it may project the wrong image.
- ✘ Do not make sexually suggestive comments to a child even in fun.
- ✘ Do not let allegations a child makes go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted on.
- ✘ Do not do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves.
- ✘ Do not show favouritism to any individual
- ✘ Do not where possible administer first-aid to a child of the opposite sex to you. If you must, ensure another member of staff is present and/or a parent/guardian/teacher/leader/team coach etc act as witness.

Do encourage parents/guardians to take responsibility for their own children at all times. Where classes or groups have to be supervised always ensure that you have another member of staff or the teacher/leader present while you are there.

It is preferable that mixed groups are supervised by a male and a female.

4. RESTRAINING CHILDREN/VULNERABLE ADULT CODE OF CONDUCT

Never physically restrain a child or other unless it is to:

- Prevent injury to the child/vulnerable adult, to others , to visitors or staff or to yourself.
- Prevent damage to property.
- Prevent or stop a child or young person committing a criminal offence.

In **all circumstances**, physical restraint must be appropriate and reasonable.

If not, your action can be defined as assault and you will not be covered by Council Insurance and a resulting investigation could lead to the Disciplinary Code being invoked.

5. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TRANSPORT/TRAVEL

Do not transport a child/children/vulnerable adult to competition etc without another adult present in the car. It is preferable that children of mixed gender travelling in the car or bus are supervised by a male and female member of staff.

Do not transport anyone to their homes, arrange a pick-up point with the Parents e.g. at the local centre's reception area, or a well lit public area such as a garage, library etc.

Do not transport anyone to competitions etc without another adult present in the car. It is preferable that children of mixed sex travelling in the car or a bus are supervised by a male and female member of staff.

Do not transport anyone to their homes, arrange a pick-up point with the Parents e.g. at the local centre's reception area, or a public area such as a garage, library etc.

Do not allow anyone, including those groups covered in this policy, into a Council vehicle.

An emergency situation, where it is deemed to be an appropriate action, to permit non staff into a council vehicle, must be cleared by the staff member's line manger, preferably, in advance.

6. CODE FOR SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

One the best ways to minimise risks to children in our care is to establish procedures for adequate supervision of activities and facilities. Each location/section will determine Adult/Child ratios and outline these in the relevant Normal Operating Procedure. (NOP).

6.1 FACILITIES CODE

Council facilities are currently supervised in accordance with best practice in visitor security and safety. This ensures the security of our staff, buildings, resources and collections. This will apply in all circumstances.

If required specific ratios of adult to children will be introduced in accordance with best practice.

A full Risk Assessment should be undertaken prior to any underage children or Vulnerable Adult activity. Managers should check with governing, regulatory or advisory bodies to inform Risk Assessments.

7. SUPERVISION OF ACTIVITIES CODE

The variety of activities on offer in council facilities requires differing levels of supervision. For example, sporting activities may require higher levels of supervision than information giving based exercise. Similarly younger children may require more supervision than older children.

The key principle is that adequate supervision will be provided for all activities. Risk Assessment should be applied where necessary

Where activities are available and booked by schools groups and community groups, teachers and leaders from these groups will be required to accompany their groups at all times.

Details of recommended levels of supervision for activities in council facilities will be clearly stated.

This will include for e.g., school sessions or craft sessions at the museum, birthday parties in any facilities, classes at arts centre, swimming, different sporting activities, crèches if provided, soccer fun weeks, summer schemes but to name but a few.

8. ADMINISTRATION OF FIRST AID CODE

Where First Aid is required which appears to be as a result of abuse:

Treat child appropriately in the presence of a witness if possible and obtain assistance if necessary i.e. back-up staff, members of the public if working alone or an ambulance if more serious.

- ❖ The Officer and the witnessing staff member must complete and sign a SCYP&VA 1. Form. Appendix 1
- ❖ The Officer must make a decision based on the facts presented to him/her as to the next appropriate line of action i.e. no action deemed necessary, contact parents, contact police or contact social services.
- ❖ Pass form on to line Managers or Directors for final examination, signature and filing.

10. CODE FOR DEALING WITH SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOUR AND ALLEGATIONS

Suspicious behaviour by public

A member of the public may act in such a way that may alert your suspicions

e.g. a gentleman who is lingering in changing room/ public toilets/parks and has no apparent guardian or parental duties, where for a lengthy period of time children are in attendance – such as schools swimming program, the summer schemes or pavilion changing rooms, beaches and parks etc.

An adult attending a performance or show alone which is targeted for children's entertainment.

- ❖ Immediately supervise that area in order to protect the children.
- ❖ If possible alert the scheme leaders, teachers, or coaches of the nature of your suspicions and inquire as to their knowledge of the persons identity i.e. parent etc.
- ❖ If unknown identity, approach him/her on the bases of providing general information and to be of assistance. (Remember this could be an innocent person just being inquisitive or possible in need of help themselves.
- ❖ Remain in the area if necessary until either the person leaves the area or the children leave the area and if you can contact staff for support.

11. CODE FOR FIRST CONTACT MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS/ DUTY OFFICERS/ STAFF ETC.

1. To act as the first point of contact supporting staff and children vulnerable adult as appropriate.
2. To record all incidents or disclosures of alleged abuse.
3. To record all suspicions of child abuse.
4. To manage both staff and the public with any matter related to abuse.
5. To report **ALL MATTERS** to the Designated Officer as soon as practical. Keeping the Designated Officer informed of any follow up actions.
6. Reporting any incident DIRECTLY to Social Services if the Designated Officer is not available. Seeking advice from any of the statutory bodies in the absence of the Designated Officer.
7. Ensure that all detail is secured and confidentially is maintained through the process.
8. To keep up to date with all relevant child protection issues including the legislation
9. To liaise with the Designated Officers to ensure the Council policy is implemented reviewed and updated as appropriate.
10. Ensure DDC –SCYP&VA form, appendix 3 is completed.

PART 6

1. PHOTOGRAPHY EQUIPMENT USE

BACKGROUND

The following policy draws on a number of sources and is a response to the modern technology that facilitates recording of events etc via inconspicuous means such as mobile phones, miniature digital cameras or camcorders.

Nowadays it is a simple process to record images and transfer them to the Internet or other mobile phones.

Historically some photography and video use has always taken place in the Councils facilities to record events such as children's birthday party's concerts shows as well as sporting competitions. These are mainly in door events. The application of this policy also examines the use in parks and other outdoor council facilities and events. However any such attempt at being all embracing and comprehensive will pose particular difficulties with enforcement in such general outdoor areas.

Currently it is custom and practice that photography only takes places within services with managements permission. To date this has been adequate for equipment that was easily visible but the modern miniscule sophisticated technology has meant a complete rethink.

2. POLICY

The proposed policy will supersede any such arrangements and is driven by '**Allow only with Permission**' as a complete ban could not be enforced across such a diverse range of facilities and amenities within the Council.

3. GUIDELINES OUTLINED

Notices will be placed throughout all facilities clearly stating that photography and the recording of images of any kind is only allowed with the written authorisation of the Management. Individual services will determine if complete prohibition is required in certain areas.

A written request must be received at least 1 week prior to the event.

The detail required from the request letter is outlined in **Appendix 6**

It will be necessary to ban the use by the **general public** of such equipment in certain areas. These will be determined by service but the following in Leisure Services are typical.

- All changing areas including Swimming pool
- Sports facilities/Team changing facilities
- Health suite/Sauna areas/Steam rooms
- Fitness suite and gyms
- Toilet areas
- Aerobic/fitness classes
- Crèche/Play schemes
- Special events/Concerts /Shows etc.

The individual services will determine the areas in question and photography in such areas will only take place under the strict supervision of a Duty Officer/ Line Manager after written permission has been granted.

The member of public will be given a signed letter that must be presented to staff on duty. The letter will be clearly date/day/time bound.

Emergency services personnel, who are on call while using facilities, may be granted blanket approval for mobile phones etc via the same application procedure.

There will be a general requirement on the person given approval that if any customer complains or expresses concern they must respect the rights of other people and stop taking photographs, filming etc.

Appropriate signage will be set out in order to encourage assistance from the general public. They will be encouraged to alert staff of any suspicious activity, particularly where children may be involved and encouraged to report any such incidents at the earliest opportunity to the duty manager/officer /staff member.

4. GENERAL ADVICE ON THE PHOTOGRAPHY OF UNDER AGE CHILDREN

- No personal detail of children to be listed in any promotional or editorial material or photography.
- Ensure content of the photo cannot be used or adapted for inappropriate use on child pornography sites.
- Avoid the use of the first name and surname of individuals in a photograph.
- Consider will be given to using models, illustrations, staff or Members if promoting an activity
- If the child sporting person is named, their photograph will not be used.
- If a photograph is used, the person will not be named.
- Permission must be obtained to use an image. This will ensure that they are aware of the way the image is to be used to represent the activity/ sport etc. Parental/Guardian permission must be obtained to use the image.
- Images of individuals in suitable dress only will be used to reduce the risk of inappropriate use.
- Some activities present the potential for easy misuse such as – swimming, gymnastics and athletics. With any such activity the content of the photograph will focus on the activity not on a particular child and should avoid full face and body shots. For example shots of children in a pool would be appropriate or if on poolside from the waist or shoulder up.

5. GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF PHOTOGRAPHIC FILMING EQUIPMENT AT EVENTS

- Every one attending such events will be given a clear brief about the expectations of them in relation to child protection and have obtained permission for photography in writing.
- Every one will be given a clear brief about what is considered appropriate in terms of content and behaviour.
- Everyone will be informed including parent's guardians etc concerned that a photographer will be in attendance at the event and ensure they consent to both the taking and publication of films or photographs.
- Unsupervised access to anyone or one to one photo sessions at events is strictly not allowed.
- No photography filming etc will take place at someone's home.
- Anyone wishing to take photographs etc must obtain permission in writing.

In the case of council photography of children, all care will be taken to ensure that the photography will not be used on websites and cannot be used for illegal or pornographic purposes.

APPENDIX 1

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The definitions are as follows:

- A **'child or young person'** refers to anyone under the age of 18.
(Children (NI) Order 1995)

- A **'vulnerable adult'** refers to anyone aged 18 years or over who is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself or who is unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. This may be because he or she has a mental health problem, a disability, a sensory impairment, is old and frail, or has some form of illness. Because of his or her vulnerability, the individual may be in receipt of a service in his or her own home, in the community or be resident in a residential home, nursing home or other institutional setting.'
(*'Adult Abuse – Guidance for staff'*, DHSSPS)

- A **'parent'** refers to those who have parental responsibility for a child:
 - Natural mother always has parental responsibility (except when an adoption order is made).
 - Natural father has parental responsibility if he is married to the child's mother at the time of the child's birth.
 - An unmarried father has parental responsibility if he is named, or becomes named, on the child's birth certificate from 15 April 2002.

 - If the natural father marries the mother after the child's birth, he has parental responsibility if he lives in Northern Ireland at the time of the marriage.
(Children (NI) Order 1995)

- An **'advocate'** refers to someone who speaks up on behalf of the vulnerable adult and takes action to ensure their voice is heard. An advocate supports and facilitates the vulnerable adult's involvement in services and activities and ensures their interests are represented (whether legal, independent, peer or self-advocate).

- **'Regulated activity' with children** includes:
 1. Unsupervised activities: teaching, training, instructing, caring for or supervising children, providing advice/guidance on well-being, driving a vehicle only for children.

 2. Work for a limited range of establishments (specified places) with opportunity for contact with children for example schools, children's homes, childcare premises, children's hospital. Work undertaken by supervised volunteers in these places is not regulated activity.

Work under 1 or 2 is regulated activity if undertaken regularly. Regular means carried out by the same person frequently (once a week or more) or on four or more days in a 30 day period or overnight.

 3. Relevant personal care, for example washing or dressing, or health care by or supervised by a professional (even if carried out once).

4. Registered child-minding and foster care.

(Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012))

- **'Regulated activity' with adults** includes:

1. Providing health care - the provision of health care to an adult by or under the supervision of a health care professional.

2. Providing personal care – providing physical assistance, prompting and supervision, training, guidance or instructions to an adult eating, drinking, toileting, washing, bathing, dressing, oral care or care of the skin, hair or nails because of the adult's age, illness or disability.

3. Providing social work - The provision of social work by a social care worker in connection with any health or social services, including assessing or reviewing the need for these services, and providing ongoing support to clients.

4. Assistance with general household matters – providing day to day assistance to an adult because of their age, illness or disability, where that assistance includes managing the person's cash, paying bills and/or shopping on their behalf.

5. Assistance in the conduct of a person's own affairs.

6. Conveying - transporting an adult, who requires it because of their age, illness or disability, to or from a place where they have received or will receive health care, personal care or social care (healthcare, personal care or social care are outlined above).

(Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups (NI) Order 2007 (as amended by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012))

Appendix 2

FORMS OF CHILDREN ABUSE AND INDICATORS

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is where adults physically hurt or injure child/vulnerable adult by hitting, shaking, squeezing, biting or by giving children alcohol, inappropriate drugs or poison. In a sports situation physical abuse might occur when the nature and intensity of training disregard the capacity of the child's immature and growing body

Sexual Abuse

Girls and boys are abused by adults, both male and female who use children to meet their own sexual needs. This could include full sexual intercourse, masturbation, oral sex, anal intercourse and fondling. Showing children pornographic material is also a form of sexual abuse. There may be situations where physical contact is integral to a particular activity.

For example in swimming, dance classes and similar activities, which might involve physical contact with children, situations where sexual abuse might go unnoticed could be created. The same could be said of any kind of tutoring.

It is important to recognise the power of coaches, tutors or instructors over young people which can, if misused lead to abusive situations developing.

The nature of the services we provide and the type of facilities we offer could attract an offender for the purpose of committing such an act especially in an area such as the changing rooms, toilets or special eve.

Emotional Abuse

Persistent lack of love and affection, where a child/vulnerable adult may be constantly shouted at, threatened or taunted which may make the child very nervous and withdrawn. Emotional abuse in sport might include situations where participants are subject to unrealistic pressure by the parent or coach, or bullied in order to consistently perform to high expectations.

Neglect

Where adults/carers fail to meet basic needs like food or warm clothing.

Children/vulnerable adults might also be constantly left alone or unsupervised. Adults may also fail to, or refuse to give them love and affection and this could be seen to be emotional neglect. Neglect in a sports situation could include a teacher or coach not ensuring participants are safe or exposing them to undue cold.

INDICATORS OF CHILD ABUSE

Identifying Signs of Abuse

Signs of abuse include

- Unexplained or suspicious injuries such as bruising, cuts or burns, particularly if situated on a part of the body not normally prone to such injuries.
- An injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent;
- The child describes what appears to be an abusive act involving him/her;
- Someone else – a child or adult, expresses concern about the welfare of another child;
- Unexplained changes in behaviour – e.g. becoming very quiet, withdrawn, or displaying sudden outbursts of temper;
- Inappropriate sexual awareness;
- Engages in sexually explicit behaviour in games
- Is distrustful of adults, particularly those whom a close relationship will normally be expected.
- Has difficulty in making friends;
- Is prevented from socialising with other children;
- Displays variations in eating patterns including overeating or loss of appetite;
- Loses weight for no apparent reason;
- Becomes increasingly dirty or unkempt.

Common Sites for non-accidental injury

Bruises likely to be:

- ❖ Frequent
- ❖ Patterned e.g. finger and thumb marks
- ❖ Old and new same place (note colour)
- ❖ In unusual position (see chart)

Consider:

- ❖ Development level of the child and their activities
- ❖ May be more difficult to see on darker skins

Burns and scalds likely to have:

- ❖ Clear outline
- ❖ Splash marks around burn area
- ❖ Unusual position e.g. back of hand
- ❖ Indicative shapes e.g. cigarette burns, bar of electric fire.

Injuries suspicious if:

- ❖ Bite marks
- ❖ Fingernail marks
- ❖ Large and deep scratches
- ❖ Incisions e.g. from razor blades

Fractures likely to be:

- ❖ Numerous – healed at different times.

Consider:

- ❖ Age of child, always suspicious in babies under two years old, delay in seeking treatment.

Sexual abuse may result in:

- ❖ Unexplained soreness, bleeding or injury in genital or anal area
- ❖ Sexually transmitted diseases e.g. warts, gonorrhoea.

Common sites for accidental injury

Bruises likely to be:

- ❖ Few but scattered
- ❖ No pattern
- ❖ Same colour and age

Consider:

- ❖ Age and activity of child e.g. learning to walk
- ❖ May be confused with birthmarks or other skin conditions

Burns and scalds likely to be:

- ❖ Treated
- ❖ Easily explained

- ❖ May be confused with other birthmarks or other skin conditions e.g. impetigo, nappy rash.

Injury likely to be:

- ❖ Minor or superficial
- ❖ Treated
- ❖ Easily explained

Fractures likely to be:

- ❖ Of arms and legs
- ❖ Seldom on ribs except for road traffic accidents
- ❖ Rare in very young children
- ❖ May rarely be due to brittle bone syndrome.

Genital area:

- ❖ Injury may be accidental (seek expert opinion)
- ❖ Soreness may be nappy rash or irritation e.g. from bubble bath
- ❖ Anal soreness may be due to constipation or threadworm infestation.

APPENDIX 3

REF: DDC – SCYP&VA :

SCYP&VA PRINTABLE FORM CONTINUED ON THE NEXT PAGE.

**INCIDENT REPORT FORM FOR ALLEGATIONS OR SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE
CHILD OR VULNERABLE ADULT**

[to be sequentially numbered]

Facility/Location		SCYP&VA NUMBER: DDC/SCYP&VA 1	
Area where incident occurred			
If possible draw an outline map of location on a separate page.			
Time of incident:	Date:	Time Reported:	
Child/Vulnerable adult Name:			
Surname:			
Age:			
Address:			
Postcode		Contact number	
Parent/Guardian First name:			
Surname			
Age			
Address:			
Postcode		Contact number	
Contact of other Adults if accompanying Child.			
Name:			
Age			
Address:			
Postcode		Contact number	
Victims Account: (continue on a separate page if necessary)			
Witness Name:			
Address:			
Postcode		Contact number	

Witness Statement: (continue on a separate page if necessary)	
Any other information: (continue on a separate page if necessary)	
Action taken by officer in charge:	
Staff Attending incident:	Designation:
Name:	
Signed:	
Report Completed by:	Designation:
Name:	
Signed:	

DESIGNATED OFFICERS REPORT

Date of Notification:

Action Recommended:

Referred to Social Services/other:

CONTACT IN SOCIAL SERVICES: REF

CONTACT IN POLICE:

SIGNED DDC NAME [BELOW] PRINT: DATE

ALL RELATED DETAIL MUST BE BOLDLY MARKED:
THIS COMPLETED SCYP&VA REPORT IS STRICTLY PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL,
IT SHOULD BE MARKED FOR [INSERT NAME] EYES ONLY
ALL ELECTRONIC CORRESPONDENCE SHOULD BE PASSWORD PROTECTED OR ENCRYPTED

APPENDIX 4

CONTACT NUMBERS

Social Services

Family and Childcare Gateway Team (9am-5pm): 0300 100 0300
(Children)

Disability Resource Centre Downshire Hospital (9am-5pm): 028 4461 6915
(Adults)

Out Of hours Regional Emergency Social Work Service: 028 9504 9999
(Children and Vulnerable Adults)

Police Service NI

Emergency: 999

Non Emergency: 0845 600 8000/ 101

Down District Council

Internal **Council Emergency Contact Numbers** can be obtained from the Council
Emergency Plan.

APPENDIX 5

THE CHILD PROTECTION AND VULNERABLE ADULTS STEERING GROUP AND DESIGNATED OFFICERS

THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS ARE THE STEERING GROUP:

- Macartan Bryce
- Pat Power
- Patrick Green
- HUMAN RESOURCE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE COUNCIL DESIGNATED OFFICERS

- Karen Halliday
- Macartan Bryce
- Joe Parkes
- Gregory Bradley
- Brain Cunningham
- Pat Power
- Linda McKenna
- Rachel Kennedy

APPENDIX 6

INFORMATION REQUIRED FROM PERMISSION LETTER FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC USE

- ✓ The name, address and phone numbers of the person using the camera
- ✓ The name/s of the subject
- ✓ The relationship of the photographer and subject
- ✓ The reason or use the images are being or intended to be put to (family record/child's party special event etc)
- ✓ Date and time of event
- ✓ A signed declaration from both photographer and parent/guardian that the information provided is valid and that the images will only be used for the reasons given
- ✓ A sequential number to enable a date order log to be kept

