

Swanley Town Council

Civic Centre, St Marys Road, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7BU

Tel: 01322 611663

www.swanleytowncouncil.gov.uk

PERSONNEL

Date 15th June 2017

Dear Member

A meeting of the above committee will be held at the Council Chamber, Civic Centre on **Wednesday 21st June 2017 from 7:30pm** or at the conclusion of the public participation session.

Mr S Nash
CEO / Town Clerk

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

If required, the meeting will be preceded by a public participation period of up to 15 minutes from 7:30pm. Members of the public are also entitled to speak, during the meeting, on agenda items with the permission of the Chairman / Mayor

RECORDING (AUDIO AND / OR VIDEO OF COUNCIL MEETINGS AND USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

During this meeting the public are allowed to record the Committee and Officers from the front of the public seating area only, providing it does not disrupt the meeting. Any items in the exempt Part of an agenda cannot be recorded and no recording device is to be left behind. If another member of the public objects to being recorded, the person(s) recording must stop doing so until that member of the public has finished speaking. The use of social media is permitted, but all members of the public are requested to switch their mobile phone devices to silent for the duration of the meeting.

MOBILE PHONES

Member of the public are reminded that the use of mobile phones (other than on silent) is prohibited at Town Council and Committee meetings.

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

To approve as correct the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 22nd February 2017

4. CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURE

To agree the Child Protection Procedure (please note this does not include operational matters which are covered by Risk assessment)

5. PROBATION PERIOD PROCEDURE

To approve the attached procedure for use.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 20th September 2017

If you would like further information on any of the agenda items, please contact Mr Steve Nash, on 01322 611663 or snash@swanleytowncouncil.gov.uk

Council Members:

(Chair) Cllr Dyball, (Vice Chair) Cllr Scott, Cllr Willingale, Cllr C Barnes, Cllr Komolafe, Cllr S Gaire, Cllr L Gaire

**Taking action when a child is, or
may be suffering harm**



Child Protection Procedures and Reporting

1.1 What is significant harm?

The Children Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention in the family life in the best interest of the children. However even when this threshold has been reached it emphasised that parents or carers should be informed of and if possible give consent to this intervention unless it is clear that to do so would increase it is clear that to do so would increase the risk to the child.

Once it is clear that a child may be or is suffering from significant harm, the Local Authority is under a duty to make enquires as to the legitimacy of this concern. This will be addressed in Chapter 2.

Defining exactly what significant harm means is difficult, and “Working Together to Safeguard Children” shies away from arriving at a clear definition. However, the following guidance taken from Working Together is helpful.

“Consideration of the severity of ill treatment may include the degree and extent of physical harm, the duration and frequency of abuse and neglect and the extent of pre-meditation, degree of threat and coercion, sadism, and bizarre or unusual elements in child sexual abuse. Each of these elements has been associated with more severe effects on the child, and/or relatively greater difficulty in helping the child overcome the adverse impact of the ill treatment. Sometimes a single traumatic event may constitute significant e.g. a violent assault, suffocation or poisoning. More often, significant harm is a compilation of significant events both acute and longstanding, which interrupt, change or damage the child’s physical and psychological development. Some children live in family and social circumstances, where their health and development are neglected. For them it is the corrosiveness of long-term emotional, physical or sexual abuse that causes impairment to the extent of constituting significant harm. In each case it is necessary to consider any ill treatment alongside the family’s strengths and support.” P.7. Working Together to Safeguard Children.

1.2 In making your own judgement about whether or not the concerns which you have about a child and their family meet the criteria for likely or actual suffering of significant harm, the chances of you having the whole picture about this child and the family are remote.

This is why the government has introduced the **Assessment Framework** which provides the way in which all agencies who have involvement with the family can contribute their information and their understanding to the whole picture of whether a child is in need and/or whether a child is in need of protection.

1.2 In deciding what to do then about the concerns, which you have about a child, you need to be able to answer three questions:

What information and understanding can I contribute to a whole picture, which will help identify whether a child is in need and/or in need of protection.

Have I recorded this information in a way, which evidences my concerns?

How much do the parents or carers know about my concerns? If I have not informed them can I still justify this on the basis that to do so would place the child at increased risk of significant harm?

Taking these points in turn:

1.3 What information and understanding can I contribute to a whole picture, which will help me identify whether a child is in need and/or in need of protection?

This question is important for two reasons:

Firstly, you may be so concerned about what you see or hear from a child or their parents that you believe the criteria for significant harm has been met and action should be taken. However, it may be that when all aspects of the picture are put together the family is considered to be in need of support rather than compulsory intervention.

Secondly, the piece of information, which you have, may give you cause for some concern but not enough to meet the criteria of significant harm. However, when all aspects of the picture are put together it may become apparent that this child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm and action does need to be taken.

Your responsibility therefore is not to make a judgement about whether or not the threshold of significant harm has been reached; it is to provide the best information possible in order to ensure that this judgement is made on the basis of as a full picture as possible about the family.

There are a number of different ways in which your concerns may have arisen:

1.4.1 A child tells you that they have been hurt in some way

The possibility of this happening can cause anxiety both because the child's story of abuse is difficult to hear and there is a fear of getting in wrong some way for the child. There are three important points to remember:

- The child has chosen to tell you and is likely to have worked out in their head what they were going to say. Your task then is to let the child tell their story in their own words.
- Carefully record what the child says in its own words. If it has not been possible or appropriate to do that while the child is talking ensure that you do so at the earliest opportunity

- Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you and explain that you or someone else within your agency will now need to take action to ensure that the child is safe. Never promise confidentiality and remember that the children almost always tell an adult about what is happening to them because they want it to stop. Reassurance that they can be kept safe is often enough to help a child feel ok about you telling someone else. Tell the child what action you have taken and what will happen next if you know.

1.4.2 Injuries observed on a child

All children receive bumps and bruises in the course of day-to-day activity. Injuries which may give concern, includes the following:

- Bruises on parts of the body which are not normally affected by falling over, bumping into things etc.
- Burns and scalds.
- Other unusual marks/injuries.

Your responsibility in any of these circumstances is to try to ascertain whether or not there is a satisfactory explanation either from the child directly or from the parent/carer if appropriate (see discussions under Question 3 below) remember that your task is to contribute information, not to make a judgement about significant harm. It is therefore important that if you have any doubt whatsoever about the injuries or the explanation given, a referral should be made to Social Services as soon as possible.

1.4.3 A Childs Behaviour or Appearance Gives Causes for Concern

This is potentially the most difficult area in which to decide whether a Childs is or may be suffering significant harm. However, there are some basic points to bear in mind:

- Remember that your concerns are only part of the picture. Passing these concerns on to Social Services may make an important contribution to an assessment about whether this is a child in need and/or in need of protection.
- Your concerns should increase if the way the child presents persists over a period of time, worsens over time or changes radically
- The information which you are able to contribute to an assessment will be much more useful if you have been able to share your concerns with the child's parents or carer as early as possible. (See discussions under 1.6 below)

1.4.3 Your involvement with a parent or carer may give rise to concern about their parenting capacity.

This is likely to be of particular relevance to staff working in services for adults. EG: Adult Mental Services, Drug and Alcohol Advisory Services, etc. Working Together to Safeguard Children and the Assessment Framework emphasise the importance of Adult Services “keeping the child visible when working with parents who are vulnerable, under stress or temporarily incapacitated in some way”.

The information which you have about an adult’s attitude to parenting or capacity to parent adequately in light of their own difficulties may contribute significantly to an assessment of whether their children are in need and/or in need of protection. The family is much more likely to receive services which provide relevant support if all agencies involved with the family communicate with each other and build up a full picture of the needs of both children and the adults.

1.4.4 You are concerned that a professional might be involved in abuse.

If you have concerns then it is important to take action. In such circumstances staff should be expected to report concerns as per their own agencies reporting/ whistle blowing policies. A protocol on Allegations of Abuse against professionals is being developed.

1.5 Have I recorded this information in a way, which evidences my concerns?

Reference has already been made above to the importance of carefully recording the concerns that you have about the child and all their family. This is important for two reasons.

1.5.1 Firstly, it ensures that the information is accurate and comprehensive. This is particularly relevant in cases of neglect and emotional abuse where the concerns are likely to accumulate over time and where a chronology of significant events can be critical to an assessment of need and risk.

1.5.2 Secondly, good practice, which now underpinned by European Convention on Human Rights, requires that the reasons for decisions regarding intervention in a person’s life are able to be evidenced and justified. This is particularly the case when compulsory intervention is required and all of us are accountable for our decisions, and the actions which we take as a result. This process is given much more clarity by careful recording.

1.6 **How much do the parents or carers know about my concerns? If I have not informed them can I justify this on the basis that to do so would place the child at increased risk.**

1.7 Contact numbers for help and assistance are;

Steve Nash
CEO
Civic Centre
St Marys Road
Swanley

2. Actions to be taken

If you suspect any child is being abused then you should immediately contact of the Officers listed above to report the incident. The Officer may decide then that it is a matter for the Police or Social Services or you as an individual may choose to do this. If the abuse in any way relates to incidents which have occurred at the club YOU MUST inform the manager or one of the officers listed above.

3. Equal Opportunities

1. Policy Statement

1.1 Swanley Town Council is committed to the principle of equal opportunities in employment and opposes all forms of discrimination on the grounds of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, disability, religion, age, sex, marital status or sexual orientation. Every reasonable step will be taken to ensure that individuals are treated equally and fairly and that decisions on recruitment and terms and conditions of employment are based solely on objective criteria.

2. Responsible for Policy

2.1 The overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation rests with CEO.

2.2 The CEO will advise the Council of changes to legislation which may affect this policy.

2.3 Each employee and volunteer will have a duty, both morally and legally, not to discriminate against individuals or groups in the provision of services and equally to challenge any discrimination.

3. Consultation

3.1 Consultation on the development and review of the policy will take place with the experts and organisations when deemed necessary.

4. Communication

- 4.1 A copy of the Policy will be given to all employees, volunteers and members.
- 4.2 Copies of the policy will be available and provided to all new members and volunteers upon request.

5. Training

- 5.1 Training and guidance will be arranged for those involved in dealing with members and volunteers.

6. Advertising & Selection

- 6.1 All advertisements will carry the statement ‘Swanley Town Council’ is working towards and is committed to effective implementation of an Equal Opportunities Policy and welcomes volunteers and members from all sectors of the Community.
- 6.2 No methods of recruitment that might unfairly exclude any potential applicant from being recruited will be used.

7. Monitoring & Review

- 7.1 The Committee is anxious to emphasise that the information is treated in confidence and is in no way intended to infringe employees, volunteers or members Civil Liberties or human rights;

8. Grievance & Discipline

- 8.1 Any employee, volunteer or member who believes they have a grievance can pursue it through the Chair or senior member of the committee.

**Reporting Form
Concerns over Child Safety**

Person Reporting _____

Organisation / Dept _____

Contact Number _____

Time / Date of incident _____

Location of incident _____

Name of witnesses (if applicable) _____

Outline details (to include name of child if possible) _____

(Continue on separate sheet if needed)

Actions Taken _____

Sheet No _____ of _____

Signed _____ **Date** _____

Attention: When Completed this form must be placed in a sealed envelope marked 'strictly confidential' and handed to senior worker

Some Safety Considerations

- Staffing:
- Are staff DBS checked?
 - Do staff have experience of working with children?
 - Do staff have an illness or condition which may be of concern?
 - Do staff have recognised qualifications?
 - What training have staff had if not qualified.
 - Are there sufficient staff to child ratios?
 - Has a responsible officer / adult been nominated?
- Location:
- Has the location been visited before the children arrive?
 - Has a risk assessment been carried out for the location?
 - Is the site insured and run by an established organisation?
 - Is the site accessible by other members of the public?
 - Is there vehicle access to the site?
 - Does traffic have access to the site / right of way?
 - Is the site fit for purpose?
 - Are there hazards which are known about?
 - Is the site available for the duration needed?
 - What facilities are available at the site?
 - Has permission been sought and obtained to use the site?
- Transport:
- Hire or self drive?
 - Reputable company from County Council approved list?
 - Qualified County Council mini bus driver?
 - Seat belts and staff on board?
 - Facilities needed on board?
 - Duration of travel & rest stops?
 - Parking available at destination?
- Activity:
- Is activity aimed at right age group?
 - Are appropriately qualified and experienced staff in charge?
 - Run by group or run by providers?
 - Insurance cover by activity provider?
 - Health & Safety Policy of activity provider?
 - Method of operation?
 - Appropriate managers informed?
 - Sufficient notice for activity to potential users?
- Children:
- Do any of the group have special needs?
 - Have parental consent forms been obtained?
 - Number of children involved?
 - Staffing ratios adopted for age group?
 - Contact details and medical requirements?
 - Comfort breaks?
 - Refreshments and feeding arrangements for children?
 - What clothing are children required to wear or take?
 - Activity as group, individual, rotation?
 - Minimum / Maximum numbers needed?

NOTICE OF ACTIVITY

To be completed by all Swanley Town Council staff organising their first activity or taking young people away from STC run premises.

Activity	Location	Date	Duration	Detail
Officer Responsible	Staffing Required	Risk Assessments	Parental Consents	Medical Questionnaires
		Attach to this form	Attach copies to this form	Attach copies in sealed envelop to this form
Method of Travel	Approved provider	Cost	Contingency	Contact Details
i.e. coach, car, taxi				Mobile. Location of activity. Other staff mobiles
Insurance	Manager	Manager Signature	Signature	BOX 1
All activities must be covered by insurance. A copy of the STC policy is available	Your line manager must be informed of all activities. Failing that the Senior Worker must be notified		Sign & date Box 1. This indicates that you have complied with all the above information.	

SWANLEY TOWN COUNCIL

PROBATIONARY PERIOD PROCEDURES

1. Introduction

All permanent and temporary employment with Swanley Town Council is subject to the satisfactory completion of a probationary period; the length of which is determined by the terms of the employment contract;

- 3 month period for temporary contracts (12 months)
- 6 month period for permanent contracts of over 12 months

2. Reviews

The purpose of probationary period reviews are to:

- Clarify the expectations of the job with reference to the job description and performance standards
- Provide feedback and recognition to the new employee
- Strengthen the employee / manager relationship
- Make a decision on the employee's suitability in the post

For **3 month probationary periods** reviews should be carried out:

- i) after 6 weeks
- ii) 2 weeks prior to completion (final review)

For **6 month probationary periods** reviews should be carried out:

- i) after 6 weeks (interim appraisal)
- ii) at the end of 3 months
- iii) 2 weeks prior to completion (final review)

Completion of the attached forms must be undertaken to formally record the outcome of the review meetings. The records can then be used as reference for both the employee and the Council.

New employees and their reviewers are encouraged to complete forms electronically providing as much information as possible. **All electronic copies must be saved to the employees/reviewers personal E:drive to ensure the information remains confidential.**

As the Officer responsible for HR the Civic Manager must be consulted if any difficulties are anticipated and should, if appropriate, be given the opportunity to attend the final review meeting.

The result of the final review meeting must be reported back to HR at least one week before the final day of the probationary period. This is to enable written confirmation of the outcome to be issued before the end date; failure to meet this requirement will result in individuals automatically becoming employed.

3. Responsibilities

- The **Civic Manager** will prompt line managers when reviews are due and issue appropriate assessments forms to both line manager and employee. They will also arrange the preparation and issuing of letters following review meetings.

- The **Employee** must take responsibility for completing the review pre-assessment form and returning it their line manager prior to the review meeting.
- The **Line Manager** must arrange for the reviews to be undertaken within the given timescales and the completed and signed review forms to be returned to HR. They must also consult the Finance Officer before a review meeting if they are considering extending or failing a probationary period.

APPENDICES

Probationary Period Review: Pre-Assessment

Probationary Period Review: Performance Assessment

Steve Nash – CEO & Proper Officer

Signed:..... Date:.....

Unless the size and nature of the Council changes the date of the next review is June 2020

Probationary Period Review:– Line Manager to complete and discuss with the employee during the review meeting.

Please tick in the appropriate rating for each of the areas of assessment.

Key: **E = Excellent:** performance exceeds the requirements of the job
G = Good: performance fully meets the requirements of the job
P = Poor: performance needs improvements

Assessment Area	E	G	P	Comments
Quality of Work Standard of completed work				
Quantity of Work Volume of work completed to acceptable standard				
Time Management Use of time				
Flexibility Shows willingness and ability to handle all duties				
Initiative Takes effective action without being told.				
Interpersonal Skills Gets on well with others				
Timekeeping				
Absence levels				

**<NAME>: Probationary Period Review – <Final / Interim Review>
Performance Assessment: From <date> to < date>**

Managers Comments:

Employees Comments:

Possible areas for training / development:

Manager Signature:

Name:

Date:

Employee Signature:

Name:

Date:

FOR COMPLETION AT FINAL REVIEW MEETING ONLY

Has the employee successfully completed their probationary period?

YES / NO

If **NO**, does it need extending (note: probationary periods should only be extended once)

YES / NO / N.A

If **YES** for how long (note: - specific targets are to be agreed and regular meetings held to discuss progress)

If **NO** reasons for failure must be discussed with the employee and HR notified immediately.

Manager Signature:

Name:

Date: