

CABINET

DATE OF MEETING: 5th August, 2021

TITLE OF REPORT: **REVISED SAFEGUARDING POLICY & PROCEDURE AND MODERN SLAVERY TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT**

Report of: **Head of Community**

Cabinet Portfolio: **Community**

Key Decision **No**

Confidentiality Non Exempt

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Safeguarding Policy & Procedure was last updated in 2018 and is due for revision and update this year to include some additional information around Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) and a new procedure for submitting referrals directly to Children's or Adult's Services, as appropriate. The Modern Slavery Transparency Statement aims to show the council's commitment to ensuring there is no Modern Slavery in the council's supply chains.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval for the revised Safeguarding Policy & Procedure and Modern Slavery Transparency Statement papers drawn up so they can be adopted and implemented.

2 OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approve the adoption of the revised Safeguarding Policy & Procedure and Modern Slavery Transparency Statement.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Local Authorities have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk. Hart Community Safety provide awareness training and knowledge of how to identify a safeguarding issue as well as how to signpost individuals or report a safeguarding concern biennially to meet this duty. The Safeguarding Policy underpins the principles of safeguarding and clearly states the procedure to follow for all Hart staff and Members to follow, should they need to raise a referral.
- 3.2 Councils are uniquely placed to be at the forefront of the fight against Modern Slavery and can demonstrate awareness and ethical leadership by voluntarily completing a Modern Slavery Transparency Statement. The

purpose of the statement is to work towards implementing year-on-year improvements and evidence progress on how Hart is tackling the risks and incidence of Modern Slavery within its operations and supply chains.

4 MAIN ISSUES

- 4.1 As safeguarding issues can sometimes shift and change, along with the introduction of potential new legislation which is designed to further protect children and adults at risk, it is important to ensure that our Safeguarding Policy & Procedure is reviewed and updated to ensure that it is current and effective.
- 4.2 Adoption of a Modern Slavery Transparency Statement provides a baseline in the way the council operations and supply chains operate and ensures that scrutiny to uphold the fight against Modern Slavery will be reviewed by the Council annually.
- 4.3 Overview and Scrutiny Committee had a useful debate about the Safeguarding Policy & Procedure and asked for an additional appendix to be considered in a second draft to clarify around safeguarding in partnership. The paper has been updated to reflect this request. There was a further suggestion to produce a Quick Guide to Safeguarding reference sheet which will be created and circulated to staff and elected members by end of September 2021. There were no changes requested to the proposed Modern Slavery Transparency Statement.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 5.1 No change to the Safeguarding Policy & Procedure was considered and rejected in favour of a more up-to-date and comprehensive policy with a more efficient and effective procedure for reporting concerns.
- 5.2 Whilst local authorities are not required at present to publish a Modern Slavery Transparency Statement, it is considered best practice and may well become a requirement in future.

6 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or The Hart Vision 2040

- 6.1.1 Whilst Safeguarding is not listed specifically in the Corporate Plan, it is one of the '**golden threads**' that link our Vision, and Strategic Priorities to each Service Plan and our day-to-day working priorities: ***There is support for the most vulnerable***

6.2 Service Plan

Is the proposal identified in the Service Plan?	No
Is the proposal being funded from current budgets?	Yes
Have staffing resources already been identified and set aside for this proposal?	Yes

7 Legal and Constitutional Issues

7.1 No direct legal or constitutional issues arising from the recommendations.

8 Financial and Resource Implications

8.1 No direct financial or resource impacts arising from the recommendations.

9 Risk Management

9.1 Risks around safeguarding are in not fulfilling our duty to report safeguarding concerns and being subject to reviews following safeguarding failures where the council's action or inaction will be scrutinised. Keeping our Safeguarding Policy & Procedure up to date and having in place a Modern Slavery Transparency Statement illustrates the positive action we are taking to ensure that we consider safeguarding across all our corporate and operational practices.

10 EQUALITIES

10.1 The principals of Safeguarding ensure that this revised Safeguarding Policy & Procedure and the Modern Slavery give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.

11 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 No direct carbon/environmental impacts arising from the recommendations.

12 ACTION

12.1 Cabinet is asked to approve the adoption of the revised Safeguarding Policy & Procedure which will be circulated to all staff and elected members and published on Sharepoint for reference. This Policy and Procedure will be reviewed again in 2024.

Cabinet is asked to approve the Modern Slavery Transparency Statement will be published on the council's website and further published at: [Modern slavery statement registry - GOV.UK \(modern-slavery-statement-registry.service.gov.uk\)](https://modern-slavery-statement-registry.service.gov.uk).

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Appendices

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 1 of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Revised Safeguarding Policy & Procedure							
B	Modern Slavery Transparency Statement							