

Report of	Meeting	Date
Corporate Director (People) (Introduced by the Executive Member for Health, Leisure and Well Being)	Executive Cabinet	14/02/2008

CHILD AND YOUNG PERSON PROTECTION POLICY

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To present the Child and Young Person Protection Policy, explaining the context for the production of the policy, the wider implications of the policy and the proposals for implementing its requirements.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. That the Child and Young Person Protection Policy be approved for implementation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. Children and young people have the right to be safe in the services provided for them and the activities they choose to participate in. Chorley Council is committed to delivering services for children that promote good practice and protect children from harm.
4. This policy sets out guidance on best practice in dealing with children and young people. It establishes protection procedures and specifies the roles and responsibilities of the Council's representatives for whom this policy is mandatory.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

5. The introduction of the policy will enable Chorley Council to promote good practice, providing children and young people with appropriate safety/protection whilst involved in activities of the Council and will allow Council representatives to make informed and confident responses to specific Child Protection issues.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

6. None.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

7. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Put Chorley at the heart of regional economic development in the central Lancashire sub region		Improved access to public services	
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Improving equality of opportunity and life chance	X	Develop the character and feel of Chorley as a good place to live	
Involving People in their Communities	X	Ensure Chorley is a performing Organisation	

BACKGROUND

8. Chorley Council provides a wide variety of services and activities for children and young people, mainly centred in the field of sport, art and culture. There are however also activities involving children and young people in areas that may not immediately be as obvious, for example the junior environmental warden scheme, community centre bookings, home visits by planning officers/benefits officers, recreation ground attendants, young persons consultation groups, eg Youth Council etc.
9. Currently the Council do not have a child protection policy but aim to operate along best practice guidelines, but not surprisingly this has led to a wide variance of practices and procedures operating across the Council.
10. The Children Act 2004 puts a duty on key statutory agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Act embodies five principles that are key to well being in children, young person or vulnerable adulthood and later life:

- being healthy
- staying safe
- enjoying and achieving
- making a positive contribution
- achieving economic well being.

10. In practical terms this means that the Council has a responsibility to provide a safe environment for children and young people, in which their welfare is of paramount importance.
11. The Child and Young Person Protection Policy, is a statement of intent that demonstrates a commitment to safeguard the children we are involved with from harm. It sets out procedures and systems and gives clear guidance on what to do in different circumstances.
12. The elements included in the child protection policy are outlined below:
 - a) All children, without exception, have the right to protection from abuse regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs;
 - b) All representatives have a responsibility to report concerns of suspected abuse or poor practice to a Designated Officer;
 - c) All incidents of poor practice and allegations or suspicions of abuse shall be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
 - d) A commitment to safe recruitment, selection and vetting;
 - e) Reference to principles, legislation and guidance that underpin the policy;
 - f) Arrangements for policy and procedures review;
 - g) Reference to all associated policies and procedures which promote children's safety and welfare, eg with regard to health and safety, anti-bullying, protection of children online, and photography.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE POLICY

13. The policy will apply to:
- all staff (including permanent, fixed term and short term temporary appointments)
 - members
 - contractors/sub contractors
 - volunteers.
14. There is a requirement to appoint a Designated Child Protection Officer, who will provide a point of contact for staff who want to test concerns about child and young person protection or take forward a Child and Young Person Protection disclosure. This has been included in the job description of the new post of Active People Manager (Leisure and Inclusion) as the majority of dealings with children and young people are likely to come within the remit of this post.
15. Managers will be responsible for making sure that all their staff are aware of and understand the importance of this policy and related guidance.
16. It is the responsibility of the Council to make sure that any contractors, agents or other representatives whom they engage to undertake duties on their behalf, which involve contact with children or young people, understand and comply with the policy.
17. It will be necessary to ensure that members of staff, contractors/sub contractors and volunteers who have substantial access to children and young people are subject to an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check prior to appointment and that this check is repeated every 2 years. We will include appropriate training in the Corporate Training Programme and ensure that child and young person protection training is part of the induction programme for all new staff with substantial access to children and young people.
18. We will maintain a record of all staff that have completed a CRB check and are considered suitable for work involving substantial access to children and young people.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

19. The child protection policy and procedures will be reviewed every 3 years in the light of new legislation or new areas of risk or barriers. Good practices should also be reviewed for their relevance and success in protecting children.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

20. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Corporate Directors' comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources	X	Equality and Diversity	X
Legal	X	No significant implications in this area	

COMMENTS OF ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION)

21. The cost of introducing the Policy is likely to be in the region of £3k annually based upon the fact that CRB checks will need to take place for more officers and members than are undertaken currently. The annual sum is already factored into the 2008/09 draft budget.

COMMENTS OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

22. The introduction of the policy will enable Chorley Council representatives to make informed and confident responses to specific Child Protection issues.

COMMENTS OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE

23. The introduction of this policy will assist the Council in meeting its obligations under the "Children Acts."

JAMIE CARSON
CORPORATE DIRECTOR (PEOPLE)

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Lorraine Cross	5814	14 January 2008	

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Child and Young Person Protection Policy	January 2008		Report attached