

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults**

*Paper from: Bob Twigger
Paper prepared by: Jim Davey
For the meeting on: 18th March*

Background:

1. The policy and policy statement follow recommendations in the Barnardo's Safeguarding Review of the Parliamentary Estate. The review was considered by the Commission in December 2015. The Commission noted the findings of the Barnardo's report and endorsed the proposals for its implementation.
2. The policy and policy statement were drafted by Barnardo's in consultation with staff in DHR&C to reflect both the findings of the review and the particular circumstances of the two Houses. It has been shared with members of the putative safeguarding board resulting in minor amendments. The House of Lords Management Board will be taking a similar take note paper. The TUS will be formally consulted thereafter.
3. The policy will be owned by the Safeguarding Board who will have the responsibility for ensuring it remains up to date and relevant.

Action:

4. The Executive Committee is asked to take note.

HOP Simplified Safeguarding Policy Statement: Version 1

Houses of Parliament

Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults

Policy Statement

'Safeguarding is everyone's business'.

Within the Houses of Parliament, we take seriously our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, both during visits to the Parliamentary Estate, and when our staff engage with them in the community. We are committed to providing a safe environment and ensuring that we can confidently and competently fulfil our safeguarding responsibilities.

HOP Simplified Safeguarding Policy Statement: Version 1

Introduction

Within the Houses of Parliament, we take seriously our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults, both during visits to the Parliamentary Estate, and whenever our staff engage with people in the community. We are committed to providing a safe environment and ensuring that we can confidently and competently fulfil our safeguarding responsibilities.

Our management and governance arrangements are necessarily complex, but our line management structures are plain, robust and well understood, and good practice in relation to safeguarding cuts through any complexity, by making safeguarding a line management responsibility.

This document sets out Parliament's policy for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults including the responsibilities and arrangements for putting it into effect. The Policy should be read alongside the following:

- Combined Health and Safety Policy, July 2014.

Definitions:

'Safeguarding' means:

- The actions taken to promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and protect them from harm.

'Children' refers to:

- children up to the age of 18 years.

'Vulnerable adults' refers to:

- a person aged 18 years or over, who is in receipt of or may be in need of, support or care services by reason of learning or physical disability, age or illness and who may be unable to take care of him or herself, against exploitation or harm.

Policy Commitment

It is the policy of the responsible authorities to:

- Ensure that all adults who work for or on behalf of the Houses of Parliament including those adults who use the facilities provided on site, are clear about their responsibility to safeguard and

HOP Simplified Safeguarding Policy Statement: Version 1

promote the well-being of all children and vulnerable adults who visit the Parliamentary Estate, whenever and wherever they are in a position to do so.

- Ensure that all adults who work for or on behalf of the Houses of Parliament and undertake work within the wider community outside the Parliamentary Estate are also clear about their responsibility to safeguard and promote the well-being of all children and vulnerable adults, whenever and wherever they are in a position to do so.
- Act in accordance with the relevant legislation and statutory guidance for the protection of children and vulnerable adults, taking this into account whether it strictly applies to them or not.
- Ensure that all working practices are regularly reviewed from a safeguarding perspective to ensure that the welfare and safety of all children and adults is not compromised.

The commitment to fulfill our safeguarding responsibilities will be achieved by:

- a) Establishing a Safeguarding Board.
- b) Identifying named Safeguarding Leads.
- c) Ensuring the Safeguarding Board has access, as required, to independent advice and guidance.
- d) Implementing clear procedures.
- e) Ensuring that adults are clear about expected codes of conduct where contact with children or vulnerable adults is concerned.
- f) Implementing an effective system for recording and management of information.
- g) Providing effective management, support or supervision, and training of staff and volunteers in relation to safeguarding.

The safeguarding policy is supported by other organisational policies and procedures aimed at promoting safe and healthy working practices.

People and Their Responsibilities:

The policy will apply to the following:

- *The Clerk of the Parliaments and the Clerk of the House*

HOP Simplified Safeguarding Policy Statement: Version 1

- *The House of Lords Management Board and the House of Commons Executive Committee*
- *Directors (in the Commons and the Digital Service) and Heads of Office (in the Lords)*

- *Director of Parliamentary Procurement and Commercial Services*
- *Security Personnel*
- *Managers*
- *Safeguarding Lead(s)*
- *All staff, (especially those who have contact with children and/or vulnerable adults)*

Safeguarding Arrangements

The effective management of identified or emerging risks to children or vulnerable adults requires a systematic approach and a strong supportive culture. The policy is underpinned by links to appropriate authorities with guidance & legislative frameworks to support its implementation.

Checking and Reviewing the Effectiveness of this Policy

The Clerk of the Parliaments and the Clerk of the House together with the Safeguarding Board need to be assured that this Safeguarding Policy remains fit for purpose, has been implemented, and is achieving the right level of response to identify, respond to and manage risks in practice.

Safety, Health, and Wellbeing Central Services

These central advisory and support services are part of the Department for Human Resources and Change (DHRC) (Commons) and their membership on the Safeguarding Board will help ensure the implementation of the policy.