

CABINET ITEM COVERING SHEET PROFORMA

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO CABINET**

**10 JANUARY 2013**

**REPORT OF CORPORATE  
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

**CABINET DECISION**

**Children and Young People – Lead Cabinet Member – Councillor Mrs McCoy**

**A SAFER PLACE FOR CHILDREN**

1. Summary

Stockton-on-Tees Local Safeguarding Children Board (SLSCB) has drawn up guidance, *A Safer Place for Children*, for member agencies to promote the safety of children in public settings such as libraries and neighbourhood centres.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is requested to:

1. Formally adopt the *A Safer Place for Children* guidance.
2. Delegate responsibility for approving amended policies covering the various public settings run by or on behalf of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council to the relevant Corporate Director and Lead Cabinet Member, in consultation with the Corporate Director, Children Education and Social Care.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations/Decision(s)

*A Safer Place for Children* guidance has been approved by SLSCB and all member agencies have therefore been requested to review current policies in the light of this.

#### 4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members) should consider whether they have a personal interest in any item, as defined in paragraphs 9 and 11 of the Council's code of conduct and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with and/or taking account of paragraphs 12 - 17 of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest, as described in paragraph 16 of the code, in any business of the Council he/she must then, in accordance with paragraph 18 of the code, consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest and the business:-

- affects the members financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code, or
- relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to the member or any person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code.

A Member with a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, may attend the meeting but must not take part in the consideration and voting upon the relevant item of business. However, a member with such an interest may make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to that business before the business is considered or voted on, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under a statutory right or otherwise (**paragraph 19** of the code)

Members may participate in any discussion and vote on a matter in which they have an interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, where that interest relates to functions of the Council detailed in **paragraph 20** of the code.

#### Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

It is a criminal offence for a member to participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest (and where an appropriate dispensation has not been granted) **paragraph 21** of the code.

Members are required to comply with any procedural rule adopted by the Council which requires a member to leave the meeting room whilst the meeting is discussing a matter in which that member has a disclosable pecuniary interest (**paragraph 22** of the code).

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**SUMMARY**

Stockton-on-Tees Local Safeguarding Children Board (SLSCB) has drawn up guidance, *A Safer Place for Children*, for member agencies to promote the safety of children in public settings such as libraries and neighbourhood centres.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Cabinet is requested to:

1. Formally adopt the *A Safer Place for Children* guidance.
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## DETAIL

1. Public settings such as libraries, neighbourhood centres and sports centres can be dynamic and exciting places for children, providing relevant and accessible services. To enable these services to flourish it is essential that they are a safe place for children who use them. Children should feel safe and secure and know that they will receive suitable help if required.
2. *A Safer Place for Children* has been produced by SLSCB to support organisations responsible for such settings to create an appropriately safe environment. The guidance has been written specifically for managers of public settings who require a framework to assist them in the development of policies and procedures to promote the safety of children.
3. A policy promoting the safety of children is one of the foundations of a well managed service. Rather than reacting to particular difficulties or threats, organisations should seek to proactively create an environment in which children feel comfortable and safe where their self confidence can grow.
4. It is important that all agencies working with children are seen to create safe public settings within the community which take the issue of children's safety seriously.
5. Such settings should also make information available to parents to ensure the safety of their children when using the facilities. This should include details of who to contact if they have concerns on a number of issues such as:
  - Child abuse and neglect
  - Bullying
  - Forced marriage
  - Sexual exploitation
  - E-safety
6. *A Safer Place for Children* must be read and used in conjunction with the policies and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards in the Tees area which can be found at <http://www.teescpp.org.uk/>

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7. There are no direct financial implications arising from this guidance.

## LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8. There are no specific legal implications as this guidance is consistent with the relevant legislative framework.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

9. This guidance has not been subject to a risk assessment at this stage. As existing council policies are reviewed in the light of this guidance, risk assessments should be undertaken in relation to the specific service area concerned.

## **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS**

10. The safeguarding of children is a key component of the children and young people theme in the sustainable community strategy. Improving outcomes for children by effective service delivery will also impact on their potential quality of life in adulthood.
11. The effective safeguarding of children and young people will also have a significant impact on the community safety agenda.

## **EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

12. This guidance has not been subject to an equalities impact assessment at this stage. As existing council policies are reviewed in the light of this guidance, equalities impact assessments should be undertaken in relation to the specific service area concerned.

## **CORPORATE PARENTING**

13. For those children affected by this guidance who are looked after, the council has a responsibility as corporate parent to ensure that their needs are appropriately met. It is considered that this guidance is consistent with this responsibility.

## **CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS**

14. No formal consultation has taken place in relation to this issue at this stage.

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Background Papers

Not applicable.

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors

Not applicable.

Property

There are no implications for Council property.