

Agenda item OC 102/23 a)

Woughton Community Council

Human Resources Sub-Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 31st January 2023, 4:00pm at the Woughton Community Council Hub, the Council Chamber, 60, Garraways, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, MK6 5EG.

Present: Cllrs Elina Apse, Ruth McMillan, Sue Smith.

Also present: Cllr Liz Simpkins.

In attendance: One (1) member of the public.

HR 01/23 Election of Chair for the Council Year 2023/2024:

Cllr Sue Smith was nominated for Chair by Cllr Elina Apse and seconded by Cllr Ruth McMillan. There were no other nominations, Cllr Smith was duly elected.

RESOLVED

That Cllr Sue Smith is elected Chair for the Council Year 2023/2023.

HR 02/23 Election of Vice-Chair for the Council Year 2023/2024:

Cllr Ruth McMillan was nominated for Vice Chair by Cllr Liz Simpkins, seconded by Cllr Sue Smith, there were no other nominations, Cllr Ruth McMillan was duly elected.

RESOLVED

That Cllr Ruth McMillan is elected Vice-Chair for the Council Year 2023/2024.

HR 03/23 Apologies:

There were no apologies.

NOTED

HR 04/23 Declarations of Interest:

There were declarations of interest.

NOTED

HR 05/23 Chairs Announcements:

There were no Chair's announcements.

NOTED

HR 06/23 Questions from the public (Max. 10 minutes):

There were no questions from the public.

NOTED

HR 07/23 To agree the sub committee's Terms of Reference:

Alterations to the terms of reference, to be discussed and agreed at the next sub-committee meeting.

The meeting agreed that a third voting member from the Operations & Resources Committee to be co-opted on to the sub-committee, should be included in this Human Resources matter, and Cllr Liz Simpkins agreed to be co-opted and was duly elected by the sub-committee.

RESOLVED

1. Alterations to the terms of reference, to be discussed and agreed at the next sub-committee meeting.
2. That Cllr Liz Simpkins is co-opted onto the Human Resources Sub-Committee as a full voting member.

HR 08/23 To move and second and then to be put to the vote the following motion:

The motion as worded below, was moved and seconded and was put to the vote which was **AGREED**

Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

That by virtue of the provisions of Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded during discussion of the following business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

HR 09/23 To consider any relevant Human Resources Matters:

The Chair informed the meeting that the human resources issue was still ongoing.

NOTED

Date of next meeting:

To be agreed.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 5:00PM

Chair _____ Date _____

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations & Resources Committee

Monday 20th February 2023

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

Updates to policies, in line with the review process.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That the committee notes this report at the attached policy documents:**
 - a. Health and Safety Policy**
 - b. Officer Expenses and allowances**
 - c. Risk Register and Business Continuity**
 - d. Asset register**
- 2. That the committee reviews the changes made to the Menopause policy, following feedback, and, if sufficient, ratifies this policy.**
- 3. That the committee agrees to a full review of the outstanding policies at the March meeting, except for those within the 'Democracy' remit, which will be reviewed following the election in May.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

There are five (5) policies that need to be reviewed this month, plus agreement on the menopause policy that was previously discussed.

The proposed changes are:

- Health and Safety policy – no changes at this time.
- Officer expense and allowances – no changes at this time, although some consideration may be suitable for levels of allowance with rising costs (NB mileage rates are set by HMRC, so cannot be changed without tax impacts).
- Risk Register and Business Continuity – the proposal is that these are 'linked' to become one policy that covers both aspects. The Risk Register was reviewed in May 2022 and remains current. The Business Continuity was agreed in 2023, so other than linking together, no changes at this time.
- Asset register. This has been updated to reflect the changing nature of assets – the managers for each area of the council have reviewed their registers to update, whilst the 'online' version of the register is finalised.

There are also some changes to wording on the Menopause policy, following feedback at the last discussion. These changes are highlighted in yellow, but provide one new sentence about supporting those living with people who are experiencing menopause and some alternative wording around definitions.

The final recommendation is around outstanding policy reviews. The Council Manager has been looking through the website policies and around 40 are currently not updated. Whilst some of these

have been reviewed and simply not uploaded, many are overdue for review and need to be corrected. It is proposed that the full list of policies, plus any updates, are provided at the March Operations meeting, for inclusion on the website as soon as is possible. As a short term 'holding' position, it is suggested that an additional line be put on the policies page stating that they are currently being updated and will be added as soon as agreed.

This does NOT include Standing Orders, committee Terms of Reference, councillor lead roles or other policies that relate directly to councillors. These will form part of the review to take place either at the Annual Meeting or after the elections where any changes to the councillor make up can be made.

It should be noted that there were significant changes that were needed to the safeguarding policy and so an additional report has been tabled for this meeting covering that policy.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- Health and Safety Policy 2023
- Officer Expenses and allowances 2023
- Risk Register and Business Continuity 2023
- Asset register 2023
- Menopause Policy v2 Feb 2023

All relevant policies can be found at

<https://www.woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk/council-information/official-documents/>

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Woughton Community Council

Health and Safety Policy

2023

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Woughton Community Council are committed to provide adequate control of the Health and Safety risk arising from all our work activities. To consult with our employees on matters affecting their Health and Safety. To provide and maintain safe plant and equipment. To ensure the safe handling and use of substances under current legislation of COSHH. Provide information, instruction and supervision for employees. Ensure that all employees are competent to do their tasks and to give adequate training. Prevention of accidents and cases of work-related ill health. To maintain safe and healthy work conditions and to revise this policy accordingly at regular intervals.

Responsibilities

The employer has overall responsibility for Health and Safety. The responsibility for day-to-day tasks can be delegated to someone else e.g. manager or supervisor. The employer needs to be kept informed about Health and Safety matters as the matters concerning Health and Safety are still the overall responsibility of an employer. Specific tasks can be delegated to the individuals in the organization, by workplace area by topic. Responsibilities should be clearly set out so that if there are any Health and Safety concerns, they can be reported to the right person.

1. Overall responsibility for Health and Safety is that of the Council Manager, overseen by the Operations Committee of the Council.
2. Day to day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice lies with the delegated Health and Safety Officer.
3. To ensure Health and Safety standards are maintained/improved, the following people have responsibilities in the following areas
 - a. Woughton Community Council Office – Health and Safety Officer(s)
 - b. Meeting Places – Operations Manager
 - c. Fishermead Landscape Depot – Health and Safety Officer / Landscape Manager
 - d. No 95 – Youth Manager
 - e. Community Services Activities – Community Services Manager

All employees must:

- Co-operate with Health and Safety Officer and managers on Health and Safety matters
- Not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their Health and Safety
- Take reasonable care of their own Health and Safety
- Report all Health and Safety concerns to the Council Manager or Health and Safety Officer

Health and Safety Risks Arising from Work Activities

Risk assessments will be undertaken by Health and Safety officer

The findings of the risk assessments will be reported to Operations Committee

Action required to remove/control will be approved by Operations Committee

Committee and Health and Safety Officer will check that the implemented actions have removed/reduced the risks

Risk assessments will be reviewed every 6 months or when work activity changes, or following an incident, accident or near miss.

Consultation with Employees

Consultation with the staff will be provided by the Council Manager/Health and Safety Officer

Safe Plant and Equipment

Health and Safety Officer and other line managers within their teams will be responsible for identifying all equipment/plant needing maintenance

Health and Safety Officer and other line managers within their teams will be responsible for ensuring effective maintenance procedures are drawn up

Health and Safety Officer and other line managers within their teams will be responsible for ensuring that all identified maintenance is implemented

Any problems found with plant /equipment should be reported to the Council Manager, Health and Safety Officer or Manager responsible for the defective plant/equipment

Health and Safety Officer and other line managers in conjunction with contractors will check that new plant and equipment meets Health and Safety standards before it is purchased

Safe Handling and Use of Substances

Health and Safety Officer will be responsible for identifying all substances which need COSHH assessments

Health and Safety Officer will be responsible for COSHH assessments

Health and Safety Officer will be responsible for ensuring that all actions identified in the assessments are implemented

Health and Safety Officer will be responsible for ensuring that all relevant employees are informed about the COSHH assessments

Health and Safety Officer/Caretaker Manager will check new substances can be used safely before they are purchased

Assessments will be reviewed every 6 months or when the work activity changes, or following an incident, accident or near miss.

COSHH (Control of Substances Harmful to Health)

All chemicals and cleaning products that are currently in use by Woughton Community Council must have a relevant Technical Data Sheet provided. Any product not having these data sheets will not be used. These data sheets are kept in the Health and Safety folder located in the Hub Office. These data sheets contain the risk of harm of the product and treatment and control measures required, what PPE requirement that should be in place.

Information, Induction and Supervision

The Health and Safety Law poster are displayed in the Hub, Fishermead Landscape Depot and No 95

The Health and Safety information is available from:

HSE Infoline 0845 345 055

HSE website www.hse.gov.uk

HSE direct www.hsedirect.gov.uk

Health and Safety Officer and line managers within their teams are responsible for ensuring that our employees at locations under our control are given Health and Safety information

RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) is the law that requires employers, and other people in charge of work premises, to report and keep records of:

- work-related accidents which cause deaths
- work-related accidents which cause certain serious injuries (reportable injuries)
- diagnosed cases of certain industrial diseases; and
- certain 'dangerous occurrences' (incidents with the potential to cause harm)

If any of these accidents or incidents occur these must be reported to the HSE within 15 days of the accident or incident occurring.

Competency for Tasks and Training

Induction for all employees by Health and Safety Officer or by line manager

Job specific training will be provided by line managers

Specific jobs requiring training are recognised within individual teams (e.g youth, community and landscape teams)

Training records are kept at Woughton Community Council Offices by Operations Manager

Training will be identified, arranged, and monitored by Operations Manager Health and Safety Officer or line managers

Accidents, First Aid and Work-Related Ill Health

Health surveillance is required for employees doing the following jobs

- Cleaning Premises
- Patrolling Estates
- Landscaping

Health surveillance records will be kept at Woughton Community Council Office by line managers or Health and Safety Officer.

The first-aid boxes are kept in

- Main Office
- Youth Building
- Vehicles

The appointed first aiders are detailed on notices within buildings but include the majority of officers.

All accidents and cases of work-related ill health are to be recorded in the accident books provided in the Main Office, Youth building and Landscape depot.

Council Manager/Health and Safety Officer are responsible for reporting accidents, incidents (near misses) diseases and dangerous occurrences to the enforcing authorities (HSE or local authority depending upon work arrangements).

Monitoring

To check our working conditions, and to ensure our safe working practices are being followed we will

- Complete and review our risk assessments every 6 months or following an incident, accident or near miss
- Implement necessary changes to lower the risks
- Implement and update Health and safety Policy according to changes in legislation
- Provide necessary training to all our staff

Council Manager and Health and Safety Officer are responsible for investigating accidents

Council Manager and Health and Safety Officer are responsible for investigating work-related causes of sickness absences with support from Operations Manager

Council Manager and Health and Safety Officer are responsible for acting on investigation findings to prevent a recurrence

Emergency Procedures – Fire and Evacuation

Health and Safety Officer is responsible for ensuring the Fire Risk Assessments are undertaken and implemented.

Escape routes are checked every 6 months

Fire Extinguishers are maintained and checked by:

Complete Detection Systems Ltd (CDS)
The Old Rectory
46 Leicester Rd
Narborough
Leicestershire
LE19 2DF
01162 750177

Emergency evacuation will be periodically. Usually these will occur every 6 months. The fire assembly point situated in front of Christ the Vine Church next to the memorial. The nominated fire warden will ascertain that all staff have evacuated the building, if not this will be reported to the lead Fire officer when they arrive.

Last review date:	February 2023
Next review date:	February 2025
Lead:	Health and Safety Manager
Overseeing Committee:	Operations
Approved:	13th February 2023
Review cycle:	Every two years and/or as per legislation

Woughton Community Council

Officers allowances and expenses policy 2022

These procedures are provided for information only and do not form part of your contract of employment, although these procedures may be referred to in your Contract of Employment (or Terms and Conditions).

This policy provides a framework regarding expenses that are payable to officers, whilst undertaking duties related to their employment. Please see separate document for expenses and allowances for members.

Allowances and expenses policy (officers)

Expenses

Expenses are an essential element of employment and reflect the view of the council that officers should not be 'out of pocket' when undertaking duties relating to their employment. For the purposes of this document, 'duties' applies to any activities that an officer is undertaking as a result of being employed in their role / being employed by Woughton Community Council. This includes meetings, conferences, events and similar.

Travel and Subsistence

Where possible, travel and subsistence should be planned in advance and paid for via the Responsible Finance Officer. Where this isn't possible (e.g. where a private vehicle is used or a meal is bought whilst away from the offices), the following policy applies.

Officers will be reimbursed for travel at the current rates agreed by the National Joint Council (NJC) for reimbursement of council officers.

Travel

Officers will be reimbursed the full costs of travel *using the most appropriate means* at standard class, whilst carrying out approved duties. A valid receipt **MUST** be provided.

Travel is currently paid at the following rates:

- Bus, train or other public transport – standard class ticket
- By private car – 45 pence per mile (up to a maximum of 10,000 miles per annum). Any mileage over 10,000 per year will need to be agreed in advance.
- By bicycle – 20 pence per mile

Travel within the parish

There may be times where, as part of an officer's role, they travel within the parish. This may include provision of services at venues other than the Hub, travel to community centres to open / close or attendance at meetings / events.

Where possible, council vehicles should be used. If personal vehicles are used, payments are made as above. The exceptions to this are where travel is needed where personal transport is not available – in this situation, taxis can be used. An account has been set up with a local taxi firm and officers will be provided with relevant information to access this. ALL journeys must be noted, and information provided to the RFO as part of monthly reporting.

Subsistence

Officers who are undertaking duties relevant to their employment may claim for reasonable costs for meals. These are currently set at:

- Breakfast – up to £5.00 (if working away between 6am - 9am)
- Lunch – up to £8.00 (if working away between 12 noon - 2pm)
- Evening meal – up to £12 (if working away between 6pm – 10pm)

Please note that these allowances are only payable if working away throughout the duration of these hours and only if no food is provided (e.g. if on a training course that includes lunch, no additional allowance is payable).

Hotels / lodgings

It is extremely unusual for officers to require overnight accommodation, but in the event that this is essential, bookings should be made with the authorisation of the Council Manager / RFO and paid for via the Finance department.

Hotels are payable at a maximum of £150 per night (in London), £100 per night (outside London). If officers choose to stay with friends or family instead, an allowance of £25 is payable as a 'thank you' to the hosts.

Other expenses

There may be times where officers pay for equipment, services or activities relating to their role using personal means. Examples of this could include:

- Filling a works vehicle with fuel
- Buying small, consumable items (such as wiper washer fluid, ad hoc cleaning materials, etc.)
- Buying supplies for the office(s) such as milk, biscuits, etc.

Where this is done (and this should NEVER exceed £20, without prior approval), receipts can be submitted using the agreed form and repaid via the expenses system.

Time scales for claiming.

All claims for any expenses and allowances must be made within three months. Any claim falling outside this timescale can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances with the approval of the Chair of Council, Chair of Policy and Resources Committee, Council Manager or Responsible Finance Officer.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Last review date:	February 2023
Next review date:	January 2025 (or with legislative changes)
Lead:	Operations Manager
Overseeing Committee:	Operations
Approved:	20th February 2023
Review cycle:	Two yearly and/or as per legislation

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations & Resources Committee

Monday 20th February 2023

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To apprise the committee of all amendments made to the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy at the scheduled review.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That the committee notes this report.**
- 2. That the committee notes and decides on the recommendation in point 6. below. Section 4 in regard to Safer Recruitment trained officers or delegated decision to Council Manager.**
- 3. That the committee ratifies the reviewed and updated policy (at which point all versions will be updated in the WCC database and all relevant destinations as deemed necessary by the Council / Operations Manager).**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

In order to review and update this policy the DSL/DCPO has reviewed relevant policies, frameworks, legislation and MK Together Interagency Policy & Procedure, Risk Management and Decision-making tools.

Appendix B: Useful Contacts has been reviewed and updated.

Notable differences:

1. Some basic terminology has been edited to ensure terminology is up to date and in particular that the policy is equally related to our regard for vulnerable adults. All references to 'Governing body' have been simplified to state 'Committees and Councillors' as better distinguishes us from an educational setting and is clearer for the public audience.
2. Some minor changes have been made to clarify our responsibilities in order to ensure we do not commit beyond our designated responsibilities.
3. In line with NSPCC and KCSIE guidance training commitments for our DSL/ DDSLs has been updated and detail.
4. A slight re-arrangement in order of points under 'Procedures' has been made in order to prevent unnecessary duplication and a clearer flow.
5. All policies, websites, partner organisations and contact details have been reviewed and updated as necessary.
6. Additional guidance has been included within the Safer Recruitment section 4 in line with government guidance. *Committee to confirm their decision or agree to delegate to the Council manager.
7. The Adult Safeguarding Alert link and details of the new Contextual Safeguarding Team have been included in Appendix B.
8. The linked policies list has been amended.

All amendments have been highlighted in yellow for the purpose of this committee and ease of recognition (they will not be highlighted in the ratified / published document).

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

- Officer time needs to be allocated for appropriate training to be undertaken as agreed necessary by the Council Manager and the Safeguarding Lead Officer. Where possible this will always be done to minimise disruption to daily duties and commitments of officers.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection policy detailing amendments

AUTHOR: Tash Darling – Youth Manager, DSL & Designated Child Protection Officer.

Woughton Community Council

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy

Previously Policy known as: Young Persons Protection Policy. 2014. N Fulton

Reviewed: March 2015. C Hutley

Recreated as WCC Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy: 2016 T. Darling

Renewed: September 2018. T Darling

Reviewed: November 2020. T Darling. Personnel contact details updated September 21. T Darling.

Reviewed: February 2023. T Darling.

Introduction / Overarching aims

Woughton Community Council fully recognises the responsibility it has under section 11 of *The Children's Act 2004* ([Section 11](#)) of the Children Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Various other statutory duties apply to other specific organisations working with children and families) to have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and, in doing so, have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State. This includes arrangements to take all reasonable measures to ensure that risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised and take appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of a child. Alan Wood reviewed the role and function of LSCBs and found widely agreed needs for change to current local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. *The Wood review (published May 2016)* informed the *Children and Social Work Act 2017*. Significant changes to multi-agency arrangements have been established through this Act, creating new duties for police, health and local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area, as detailed in the *Working Together to Safeguard Children (published March 2015. Updated Feb 2019)*.

Through their day-to-day contact with children, young people, vulnerable adults and direct work with families, staff at the council have a crucial role to play in noticing indicators of possible abuse or neglect and referring them to Children's Social Care via the Milton Keynes Council Referral Hub (ideally designated officers to refer). Furthermore, have a duty to promote welfare.

This policy sets out how the council discharges its statutory responsibilities relating to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults accessing our services.

Our policy applies to all officers, administration, and support staff, paid and unpaid as all can be the first point of disclosure for a resident. Concerned parents/carers may also contact the council. It is consistent with the Milton Keynes Safeguarding Partnership (MKSP) framework.

Policy

There are four main elements to our policy:

1. **PREVENTION** through the provision of direct services and pastoral support offered to resident children, & young people & vulnerable adults and the creation and maintenance of a whole organisation protective ethos.
2. **PROCEDURES** for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse. The definitions of the four categories of abuse are attached (see Appendix A)
3. **SUPPORTING VULNERABLE CHILDREN (,YOUNG PEOPLE & VULNERABLE ADULTS)** who may have been abused or witnessed violence towards others.
4. **PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN (Young People & Vulnerable Adults)**

1. PREVENTION

We recognise that healthy self-esteem, confidence, supportive friends and good lines of communication with a trusted adult help to protect individuals.

The council will therefore:

- 1.1. establish and maintain an environment where children, young people and vulnerable adults feel safe in both the real and the virtual world and are encouraged to talk and are listened to actively
- 1.2. ensure children/ young people know that there are adults in the council, specifically the youth service, whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty and their concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon as appropriate
- 1.3. ~~Include in the provision~~ **Strive to include** activities and opportunities which equip children, young & vulnerable people with the skills they need to stay safer from abuse both in the real and the virtual world and information about who to turn to for help
- 1.4. ~~Include within the provision material which will help children develop realistic attitudes to the responsibilities of adult life, particularly with regard to childcare and parenting skills.~~

~~We deliver or offer PSHE based informal education which includes aspects of sexual health; Delivering part of the curriculum in the secondary schools in our parish when asked. This reinforces essential skills for every child. Self-esteem and confidence building, thinking independently and making assessments of risk based on their own judgments are encouraged throughout the provision.~~

1.4 As appropriate to each setting, offer access to sexual health information, signposting, and access to contraception. Always ensuring understanding of individual's rights, choices and consent are central to decision making. Always reinforcing essential skills for each child and young person to develop in confidence, think independently and assess their own risks, based on their own judgements.

2. PROCEDURES

2.1 We will follow the procedures set out in the Milton Keynes Safeguarding Partnership Competency Framework. A copy of these procedures can be found on the MK Safeguarding Partnership website <https://www.mktogether.co.uk/>

2.2 The (DSL/DCPO) Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated Child Protection Officer is the named **Safeguarding Lead Officer.**

2.3 The nominated Designated Safeguarding Lead & Child Protection Officer (DSL & DCPO) is **Tash Darling.**

2.4 The Deputy (DSL) Designated Safeguarding Lead officers are **Gemma Simmons & Sue Varley**

The council will:

2.4.1 Ensure there is a designated senior person who has lead responsibility for Safeguarding & child protection in the council who has undertaken the necessary training deemed competent by the MKSP

2.4.2 Ensure that ~~this training is updated every three years~~ **one full day training is undertaken initially and a refresher (usually 3.5hrs) is carried out every year** in accordance with government guidance.

2.4.3 Recognise the importance of the role of the designated person/s and ensure they have the time, training and support necessary to undertake their duties which include, providing advice and support to staff, taking part in inter-agency meetings and contributing to the assessment of children in need

2.4.4 Ensure every member of staff, paid and unpaid, the governing body knows **the committees and Councillors Know** who the designated members of staff **officers** are and the procedures for passing on concerns from the point of induction.

2.4.5 Ensure every member of staff, paid and unpaid, and the governing body knows **committees and councillors know** what the contingency arrangements are for when the designated members of staff are not available.

2.4.6 Ensure that the designated members of staff take advice from a child protection specialist when managing complex cases. The Designated Persons have access to both the MKSP and ~~Children's Social Care Referral Hub~~ **the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).** The Emergency Duty Team (out of hours) is also available (see Appendix B)

2.4.7 ~~Have a nominated deputy for safeguarding and child protection who has undertaken appropriate training~~ **MOVED & ADDED TO 2.4.5**

2.4.8 ~~ensure every member of staff and every councillor knows:~~ **MOVED & ADDED TO 2.4.4**

- The name of the designated person/s and their role
- How to identify the signs of abuse and neglect
- How to pass on and record concerns about an individual/s
- That they have an individual responsibility to be alert to the signs and indicators of abuse and for referring child protection concerns to the designated Person/s

- That they have a responsibility to provide an environment in which children, young & vulnerable people are safe.
- That they can find the Core Inter-Agency Procedures on the ~~MKSB/P website~~ **MKSP and MKCC websites**

2.4.9

2.4.7 Provide Safeguarding/ Child Protection training for **all** staff from the point of their induction which is updated regularly, every three years at a minimum, so that they are confident about:

- The council's legislative responsibility
- Their personal responsibility
- The council's policies and procedures
- The need to be alert to the signs and indicators of possible abuse, including possible child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation
- The need to record concerns
- How to support and respond to a child, young or vulnerable person who tells of abuse

2.4.10

2.4.8 Ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, recognise their duty and feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice, **within WCC or in other organisations** in regard to children, young & vulnerable people and that such concerns are addressed sensitively and effectively in a timely manner in accordance with agreed whistle-blowing policies

2.4.11

2.4.9 Ensure that parents have access to information which details the responsibility placed on the council and staff in relation to child protection by setting out these duties on the website & public documents.

2.5 LIASON WITH OTHER AGENCIES

The council will:

2.5.1 Cork to develop effective links with relevant services to promote the safety and welfare of all children, young and vulnerable people throughout the parish

2.5.2 co-operate as required, in line with '*Working Together to Safeguard Children (Feb 2019)*', with key agencies in their enquiries regarding Safeguarding/ Child protection matters and providing written reports at child protection conferences, core groups and serious case review panels

2.5.3 Notify the **MASH and / or relevant Children's Social Care Unit immediately, when it is known to WCC officers through partnership working** if:

- It should have to exclude a child/ young person from a service who is subject to a Child Protection Plan (whether fixed term or permanently);
- There is an unexplained absence of a child/ young person who is subject to a Child Protection Plan
- There is any change in circumstances to a child/ young person who is subject to a Child Protection Plan.

2.6 RECORD KEEPING

The council will:

2.6.1 keep clear, detailed, accurate records of concerns about children, young and vulnerable people (noting the date, event and action taken), even where there is no need to refer the matter to Children's Social Care immediately.

2.6.2 make every reasonable effort to ensure all records are kept securely and in a locked location or password protected in accordance with GDPR. (~~see WCC Privacy Policy~~ **GDPR & Data Protection Policy 2023 and General Privacy Statement 2020/ reviewed 23**)

2.6.3 ensure all relevant and appropriate to share safeguarding/ child protection records are shared with service providers/ partners as appropriate and agreed by Children's Social Care Child Protection Record Keeping Guidance. (GDPR. See WCC Privacy Policy)

2.7 CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

2.7.1 Child protection information will be stored and handled in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 (chapter 12) principles. The Data Protection Act does not prevent council staff from sharing information with relevant agencies, where that information may help to protect a child.

2.7.2 Child protection records are normally exempt from the disclosure provisions of the Data Protection Act, which means that children/ young people and parents do not have an automatic right to see them. If any member of staff receives a request from a child/ young person or parents to see data stored, they will refer the request to the Designated Person or senior management. The council will:

2.7.3 Ensure confidentiality protocols are adhered to and information is shared appropriately. If in any doubt about confidentiality, staff will seek advice from the Designated Officer, Children's or Adult Social Care as required. As a general rule of if a child/ young person is deemed at risk (level 4) no data will be shown to unauthorised bodies or individuals.

***Information sharing: Guidance for practitioners and managers**

(Information sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers March 2015. Update July 2018) is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-practitioners-information-sharing-advice>

2.7.4 Ensure that the Council Management or Designated Person will only disclose any information about a child/ young person to other members of staff on a 'need to know' basis, including Domestic Violence Abuse notifications.

2.7.5 Make all staff aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children/ young & vulnerable people

2.7.6 Ensure staff are clear with all concerned that they cannot promise to keep secrets.

2.8 COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/ CARERS

The council will:

2.8.1 Ensure that parents/carers are informed of the responsibility placed on the council and staff in relation to child protection by setting out its duties in this policy, E-Safety Data and Privacy Policies and website.

2.8.2 Undertake appropriate discussion with parents/carers prior to involvement of another agency unless the circumstances preclude this action. If the council believes that notifying parents could increase the risk to the child/ young person or exacerbate the situation, advice will be sought from the MASH / Children's Social Care. (Further guidance on this can be found in the Core Inter-agency Procedures of the Local Safeguarding Board MK Together Interagency Policy and Procedures – 01/01/2023)

3. SUPPORTING VULNERABLE CHILDREN/ YOUNG PEOPLE

3.1 We recognise that abuse or witnessing violence may have an adverse impact on those vulnerable children/ young people which may last into adulthood without appropriate intervention and support.

3.2 This council's staff may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children/ young people at risk. Nevertheless, when at youth clubs/ provisions their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may become withdrawn. Staff will be trained to be sensitive and respond accordingly

3.3 We recognise that some vulnerable children/ young people may develop abusive behaviours and that these children may need to be referred on for appropriate support and intervention.

3.4 The Council will support the child/ young person through:

3.4.1 Youth provision opportunities to encourage self-esteem and self-motivation

3.4.2 An ethos that actively promotes a positive, supportive and safe environment and values the whole community

3.4.3 The youth department's behaviour/ conduct will support vulnerable children/ young people. All staff will agree on a consistent approach, which focuses on the behaviour of the child/ young person but does not damage the child/ young person's sense of self-worth. Staff will ensure that the child/ young person knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, but she/he is valued and not to be blamed for any abuse which has occurred

3.4.4 Liaison with other agencies which support the child/ young person such as Children's Social Care, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Compass ARC or Children and Family Practices

3.4.5 A commitment to develop productive and supportive relationships with parents/carers

3.4.6 Recognition that children living in a home environment where there is domestic abuse, drug or alcohol abuse or mental health issues are vulnerable and in need of support and protection; they may also be young carers

3.4.7 Monitoring and supporting child/ young person's welfare, keeping records and notifying Children's Social Care in accordance with the Milton Keynes Safeguarding Board "Core Inter-Agency Procedures". Milton Keynes Safeguarding Partnership / MK Together Interagency Partnership

3.4.8 When a child/ young person who is subject to a child protection plan leaves permanently, information will only be transferred to the new service providers on request and if deemed necessary to protect the child/ young person. The lead Social Worker from Children's Social Care will also be informed

3.5 SUBSTANCE MISUSE AND CHILD PROTECTION

3.5.1 The discovery that a young person is misusing legal or illegal substances or reported evidence of their substance misuse is not necessarily sufficient in itself to initiate child protection proceedings but the DSL/ SCPO will consider such action in the following situations:

When there is evidence or reasonable cause:

- To believe the child/ young person's substance misuse may cause him or her to be vulnerable to other abuse such as sexual abuse
- To believe the child/ young person's substance related behaviour is a result of abuse or because of pressure or incentives from others, particularly adults
- To where the misuse is suspected of being linked to parent/carer substance misuse.

3.6 CHILDREN OF SUBSTANCE MISUSING PARENTS/ CARERS

3.6.1 Misuse of drugs and/or alcohol is strongly associated with Significant Harm to children, especially when combined with other features such as domestic violence.

3.6.2 When staff receives information about drug and alcohol abuse by a child's parents/carers they will follow appropriate procedures.

3.6.3 This is particularly important if the following factors are present:

- Use of the family resources to finance the parent's dependency, characterised by inadequate food, heat and clothing for the children
- Children exposed to unsuitable caregivers or visitors, e.g. customers or dealers
- The effects of alcohol leading to an inappropriate display of sexual and/or aggressive behaviour
- Chaotic drug and alcohol use leading to emotional unavailability, irrational behaviour and reduced parental vigilance
- Disturbed moods as a result of withdrawal symptoms or dependency
- Unsafe storage of drugs and/or alcohol or injecting equipment
- Drugs and/or alcohol having an adverse impact on the growth and development of the unborn child

3.7 DOMESTIC ABUSE

3.7.1 Where there is Domestic Abuse in a family, the children/young people will always be affected; the longer the violence continues, the greater the risk of significant and enduring harm, which they may carry with them into their adult life and relationships.

3.7.2 Social services, Head teachers and some other professionals may be notified of Domestic Abuse incidents where the police have been called and that involve children and young people under their duty of care and will take appropriate action to ensure children and young people are kept safe.

3.8 FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

3.8.1 Female genital mutilation includes procedures that intentionally alter or injure the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. It is a surprisingly common form of abuse in the UK.

3.8.2 FGM is carried out on children between the ages of 0–15, depending on the community in which they live. It is extremely harmful and has short and long-term effects on physical and psychological health.

3.8.3 FGM is internationally recognized as a violation of the human rights of girls and women, and is illegal in most countries, including the UK.

3.8.4 The council takes these concerns seriously and staff will be made aware of the possible signs and indicators that may alert them to the possibility of FGM. Any indication that FGM is a risk, is imminent, or has already taken place will be dealt with under the child protection procedures outlined in this policy.

3.8.5 The Designated Person will make appropriate and timely referrals to Children's Social Care if FGM is suspected. In these cases, parents will not be informed before seeking advice. The case will still be referred to Children's Social Care even if it is against the child/ young person's wishes. It is now possible to restrict the removal of a dependant from the UK if FGM is suspected to be planned.

3.9 FORCED MARRIAGE

3.9.1 Forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used.

3.9.2 In cases of forced marriage discussion with the family or any involvement of the family or local community members will often place the child or young person at greater risk of harm. Families should not be approached if forced marriage is suspected.

3.9.3 Children and young people facing forced marriage often come from very loving families where the parental capacity to provide safety, emotional warmth and stability is excellent. The children are often high achievers at

school, their health is good, they are well integrated into the local community and have good relations with the wider family.

3.9.4 It is important professionals are sensitive to differing family patterns and lifestyles and to child-rearing patterns that vary across different racial, ethnic and cultural groups. At the same time, they must be clear that child abuse cannot be condoned for religious or cultural reasons, therefore forced marriage must be responded to as a protection and safeguarding issue.

3.9.5 There is no specific offence of 'forcing someone to marry', criminal offences may nevertheless be committed. Perpetrators, usually parents or family members, could be prosecuted for offences including threatening behaviour, assault, kidnap, abduction, threats to kill, imprisonment and murder. Sexual intercourse without consent is rape, regardless of whether this occurs within a marriage or not.

3.9.6 Forced marriage is automatically handled as a child protection issue and staff should share Information quickly when a child is at risk.

3.10 CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)

3.10.1 Child Sexual Exploitation involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people receive something (for example food, drugs, alcohol, gifts or in some cases simply attention/ affection) as a result of engaging in sexual activities.

3.10.2 Sexual exploitation can take many different forms from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship to serious organized crime involving gangs and groups.

3.10.3 Exploitation is marked out by an imbalance of power in the relationship and involves varying degrees of coercion, intimidation and sexual bullying including cyber bullying and grooming.

3.10.4 It is important to recognize that some young people who are being sexually exploited do not show any external signs of this abuse and may not recognise it as abuse.

3.10.5 Young people who go missing can be at increased risk of sexual exploitation and so procedures are in place to ensure appropriate response to children and young people who go missing, particularly on repeat occasions.

3.10.6 Staff should notify the Designated Lead and should complete the MKSP Child Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Tool and refer to the Multi-Agency Referral Unit if there is a concern that a young person may be at risk.

4. PREVENTING UNSUITABLE PEOPLE FROM WORKING WITH CHILDREN

4.1 The council will operate safer recruitment practices including ensuring appropriate DBS and reference checks are undertaken according to the government guidance '2010 to 2015 government policy: helping employers make safer recruiting decisions' See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2010-to-2015-government-policy-helping-employers-make-safer-recruiting-decisions>

4.2 The following members of staff have undertaken Safer Recruitment training; Designated Safeguarding Lead: Tash Darling. It is recommended that this should be refreshed and certificated every 3 years and that the Council Manager and the Operations Manager should also complete Safer Recruitment training, so that at least two trained officers can complete every recruitment process for every role that entails working with vulnerable people.

4.3 Any allegation of abuse made against a member of staff will be reported straight away to the Designated Lead and Council Manager. In cases where the Designated Lead officer or Council Manager is the subject of an allegation, it will be reported to the Chair of Council (See Allegations flow chart Appendix C.) The council will follow the procedures set out in Part four of Keeping Children Safe.

4.4 The council will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or councillor and adhere to the relevant procedures set out in Keeping Children Safe.

4.5 All allegations are reported to the LADO within one working day. Following consultation with the LADO, he will advise on all further action to be taken. Please note that the Designated Lead officer, Council Manager or Chair of Council should **not** seek to interview the child/ren, young people, vulnerable adult or members of staff involved until advice has been sought. Doing so may compromise any police interviews that may be necessary.

4.6 The council will ensure that any disciplinary proceedings against staff relating to child protection matters are concluded in full even when the member of staff is no longer employed at the council and that notification of any concerns is made to the relevant authorities and professional bodies and included in references where applicable.

4.7 Staff who are the subject of an allegation have the right to have their case dealt with fairly, quickly, and consistently and to be kept informed of its progress. Suspension is not mandatory, nor is it automatic but, in

some cases, staff may be suspended where this is deemed to be the best way to ensure that children/ young people are protected.

4.8 Consideration must be given to the needs of the child/ young person and recognition that a child/ young person may make an allegation against an innocent party because they are too afraid to name the real perpetrator. It is rare for a child to make an entirely false or malicious allegation, although misunderstandings and misinterpretations of events do happen.

4.9 The council will ensure that all staff, paid and unpaid, are aware of the need for maintaining appropriate and professional boundaries in their relationships with children/ young people, young vulnerable adults and parents/carers. As part of the Induction process, all staff will receive guidance about how to create appropriate professional boundaries (in both the real and virtual world) with all children, especially those with a disability or who are vulnerable.

4.10 Although we are not a school setting, all staff can access *Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings* (~~May 2019~~ 15 February 2022. Update produced in consultation with representatives from CAPE, Las and Stakeholders to incorporate GSWP Covid addendum 2020 and KCSIE expectations around low level reporting) as a good guide to best practice.

4.11 The council will ensure that staff and volunteers are aware that sexual relationships with young people aged under 18 are unlawful and could result in legal proceedings taken against them under the *Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Abuse of Trust)*.

4.12 The council will ensure that communication between children/ young people and adults, by whatever method, are transparent and take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries and are open to scrutiny.

5. CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

There will undoubtedly be children/ young people who have Statements of Special Educational Needs or Education Health Care Plans. For a number there will be multi-agency planning and involvement to support integrated care.

We recognise that, statistically, children with emotional, social, behavioural and mental health difficulties and challenges, characteristic of a significant percentage of the parish's population, are particularly vulnerable to abuse. Council staff who deal with children with complex and multiple disabilities and/or emotional and behavioural problems should be particularly sensitive to indicators of abuse.

The Designated Lead Officer and signposted agencies will support staff to decide appropriate strategies that will reduce anxiety for the individual child and raise self-esteem as part of an overall behaviour support

The designated Lead Officer/ Youth Staff will endeavour to include PSHE curriculum informal education, as appropriate for each setting And staff will as (continuous) good practice, teach children & young people, personal safety skills commensurate with their ability and needs. Children/ young people will be taught personal safety skills such as telling and who to tell, good and bad touches and good and bad secrets. The content of lessons can be shared with parents/carers so that these skills can be supported at home.

We promote high standards of practice, including ensuring that children/ young people know how to raise concerns, and have access to a range of adults with whom they can communicate.

Appendix A

Four categories of abuse

Physical Abuse

This may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Neglect

This is a persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

It may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance misuse.

It may involve the neglect of or lack of responsiveness to a child's basic emotional needs.

It also includes parents or carers failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter including exclusion from home or abandonment
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger
- Ensure adequate supervision including the use of inadequate care-givers
- Ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment

Emotional Abuse

This is the persistent emotional maltreatment so as to cause severe and adverse effects on a child's emotional development.

It may involve conveying to a child that they are:

- Worthless
- Unloved
- Inadequate
- Valued only insofar as they meet another person's needs

It may include:

- Not giving the child opportunities to express their views
- Deliberately silencing them
- 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate.

It may also feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children including:

- Interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability
- Overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning
- Preventing participation in normal social interaction

It may involve:

- Seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another
- Serious bullying (including cyber bullying) causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger
- The exploitation or corruption of children
- Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment although it may occur alone.

Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

This may involve:

- Physical contact including assault by penetration (e.g. rape or oral sex)
- non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing
- Non-contact activities involving:
children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images,
children in watching sexual activities
- Encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways
- Grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).
- Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual

abuse, as can other children.

Appendix B Useful Contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead & Child Protection Officer:

Tash Darling. Youth Manager & Safeguarding Lead
tash.darling@woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk
01908 392945 / 07983 590546

Deputy Safeguarding leads:

Gemma Simmons. Youth development Officer
gemma.simmons@woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk
01908 392945

Sue Varley. Mental Health & Advice Community Officer.

Sue.varley@woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk
01908 395681

Chair of Council

Sue Smith
Sue.smith@woughtoncommunitycouncil.gov.uk

Milton Keynes Safeguarding Partnership

Telephone: 01908 254373
<https://www.mktogether.co.uk/>
Email mktogether@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Milton Keynes Council Multi Agency Referral Hub

Worried about a child, Telephone: 01908 253169/ 253170
Worried about a vulnerable adult, Telephone: 01908 253772
MKC main switchboard: 01908 691691

Multi-agency referral forms (MARF)

children@milton-keynes.gov.uk

referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) by completing the [Multi-Agency Referral Form \(MARF\)](#).

Adult-Safeguarding Alert (online referral form)

[https://mycouncil.milton-keynes.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-066f61e5-64d2-42a8-8e23-e75e3f911eca/AF-Stage-395d831e-ae03-4e68-aabc-0e4f84ddec77/definition.json&redirectLink=/&cancelRedirectLink=/&category=AF-Category-b86624e1-792f-40d5-9035-436114a13fbb&noLoginPrompt=1&accept=yes&consentMessageIds\[\]=2](https://mycouncil.milton-keynes.gov.uk/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-066f61e5-64d2-42a8-8e23-e75e3f911eca/AF-Stage-395d831e-ae03-4e68-aabc-0e4f84ddec77/definition.json&redirectLink=/&cancelRedirectLink=/&category=AF-Category-b86624e1-792f-40d5-9035-436114a13fbb&noLoginPrompt=1&accept=yes&consentMessageIds[]=2)

Emergency Duty Social Work Team

(Out of hours) Telephone: 01908 265545

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

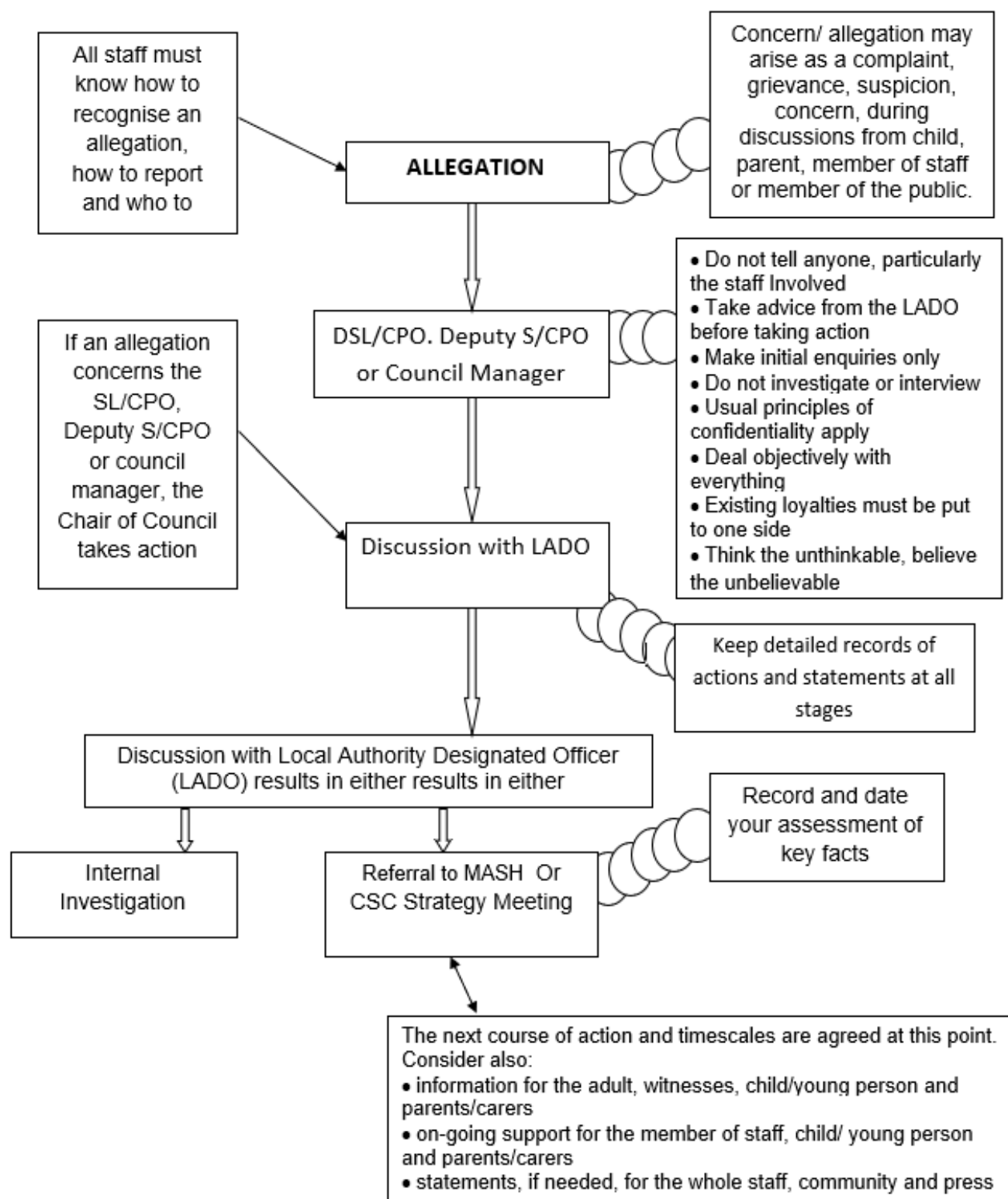
Jo Clifford *There is a team working under Jo Clifford, any one of these are representatives of the LADO and can be reported to lado@milton-keynes.gov.uk Telephone: 01908 254306
NB. If you wish to discuss any concerns and are unsure if the criteria has been met please complete and return a [LADO Notification form \(DOC, 116KB\)](#) to lado@Milton-keynes.gov.uk prior to contacting the service on 01908 254300.

Police Child Abuse Investigation Unit (CAUI)

Telephone: 101 or 01908 276140

Appendix C

Managing an Allegation against a Member of Staff in your setting



Linked policies (i.e. to be read in conjunction with).

- ~~Anti-Bullying~~
- ~~Racist Incidents~~
- ~~Equal opportunities~~
- GDPR & Data Protection Policy
- General Privacy Statement
- Equal Opportunities & Diversity Policy
- Anti-bullying & Harassment Policy
-
- Health and Safety
- ~~E-Safety~~
- Whistleblowing
- Complaints procedure

Last review date:	February 2023
Next review date:	February 2025
Lead:	Tash Darling
Overseeing Committee:	Operations & Resources Committee
Approved:	
Review cycle:	Every 2 years

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations & Resources Committee

Monday 20th February 2023

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update the committee on pension contribution rates over the next three (3) years.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That committee notes this report and the attached paper from the pension provider.
2. That committee notes that this paper and the figures within are based on current levels of officers enrolled in the scheme (i.e. some have chosen not to be members) and may increase if demand rises.
3. That the committee agrees to an annual update to all officers that aren't members of the scheme to ensure that they wish to remain outside the scheme. This to take place immediately and then each November, as part of budget planning processes.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Woughton Community Council is a member of the LGPS – the Local Government Pension Scheme, administered by Buckinghamshire Council. This is an 'opt out' scheme, where employees of WCC are automatically enrolled, unless the state that they don't want to be. The scheme has contributions levels based upon salary (higher salaries pay a higher contribution rate) and on employers individual schemes within the wider provision – the amount that WCC has within the scheme vs the liabilities the scheme has for WCC employees.

Individual contribution levels are:

Band	Actual pensionable pay for an employment	Main section contribution rate for that employment	50/50 section contribution rate for that employment
1	Up to £16,500	5.50%	2.75%
2	£16,501 to £25,900	5.80%	2.90%
3	£25,901 to £42,100	6.50%	3.25%
4	£42,101 to £53,300	6.80%	3.40%
5	£53,301 to £74,700	8.50%	4.25%
6	£74,701 to £105,900	9.90%	4.95%
7	£105,901 to £124,800	10.50%	5.25%
8	£124,801 to £187,200	11.40%	5.70%
9	£187,201 or more	12.50%	6.25%

Auto-enrolment (i.e. the default setting for new employees) is set in legislation and currently the lower earnings threshold for this is £10,000 p.a.

The second part is the employers contribution element. This is currently 25.1% but will reduce to 23.7% for the next three years. This is due to the WCC 'pot' being healthier than previously, with a deficit gradually reducing. The current budget for 2023/24 for employers pension contributions is just under £100,000. It should be noted that this doesn't include any additional contributions necessary if pay awards are made or if there any new members of the scheme.

At time of writing, there are 17 officers who are members of the scheme. There are 10 officers who are NOT members. If they were to join, would mean significant additional employer contributions (£30K plus in total, per year).

The other notable element within this report is that the overall deficit for the WCC 'pot' is stated as around £1.36million. This is the amount that the scheme believes that would be needed to meet the liabilities of WCC members, should all contributions cease (if WCC was to leave the scheme, etc.). This is a consideration that this committee and council will need to be aware of when planning suitable reserves, forward plans, etc.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

It is a legal requirement to offer a pension to all employees and, with this scheme, WCC is compliant with that demand. It is recommended that all employees who are NOT members of the scheme are asked to officially decline membership on an annual basis, with this process happening each November (to enable effective budget planning). It should, however, be noted that people can choose to join at any point.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

136 Woughton Community Council Report 07-12-2022.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations & Resources Committee

Monday 20th February 2023

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update committee on the budget position at the end of Quarter 3 (Dec 31st 2022).

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That committee notes the report.**
- 2. That the Council Manager and Accounts Assistant continue to monitor expenditure and income, working towards as close as possible to a 'balance budget'.**
- 3. That a further report is provided at the April meeting, detailing year-end figures.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

To ensure regular updates, this committee receives budget updates. This report covers the position at the end of Quarter 3 – Dec 31st 2022. This gives a reasonable overview of the potential year end situation, whilst acknowledging that there are likely to be some additional large bills that become payable over the coming quarter.

The overall position is relatively positive – despite a budget that had planned for a fairly significant deficit, this paper shows that there is a small surplus against budget – just under £16k less spent than budgeted for this point in the year. It should be noted that this is an inexact reflection, as some large costs are paid in lump sums, rather than spread across the year.

The income line also is positive, with income that is £17k ahead of budget, despite a further three months income to come. Whilst the 'big ticket' payments have been made (precept, LCTRS, landscape grant), income from community venues continues to be paid, as does 'additional income' from a variety of sources (grants, refunds, etc.). It is notable that Community Centres are exceeding planned income – this is, in part, due to a return to them being fully open after the past couple of years, but also includes some regular bookings being taken on, providing consistent income.

There are some concerns, however. Looking through the 'Flexed budget' sheet:

Cllrs

18 – Cllr Ward Fund. This looks like it is spent, but notable that £1600 of this is due to the late spending last year and therefore not being able to spend in time to make the cut off.

Overall, spend is about where it should be at this point.

CHMP

There are some coding issues to resolve, but as can be seen, some utility costs have increased ahead of budget (water and, once sorted, electricity). These issues are, in part, due to confusion

around which meter relates to which part of the building – these issues should now be resolved, and mean end of year is a better reflection.

Overall, this budget is overspent and under income.

Community

87 – Services Budget. This includes one month of salaries, so will be adjusted down, but remains high due to the unbudgeted costs of the Community Food delivery. This has a budget line in next years planned budget, but costs associated with the fridge, café and larder are all here this year.

The overall budget for Community remains in surplus – this is primarily due to the additional funding offered via the Warm Rooms. If this is taken out, balanced, but without considerable Service Plan spending.

Eaglestone MP

5 – Hire of meeting place is significantly ahead (£16K+) of where it is budgeted, which helps mitigate the additional costs that meeting places have had this year.

26 – Gas is a concern. It is over budget and since this report, costs have increased further (around £1000 a month, currently).

Other costs are also either at or over budget – this means costs are £4k+ ahead of budget and this situation is unlikely to get better.

With the additional income, costs at Eaglestone show a surplus – the additional income more than compensates for the additional costs.

Environment

Underspent across the piece, with spending at around half that expected. There are some sizable costs coming (replacement dog bins, etc.), but should be ‘on budget’ or better at year end.

HQ

1 – Bank and Investment Interest. This was budgeted as £50 for the year (as this is what was being received from the bank), but with the income from the CCLA investments, this is now around £850 a quarter coming in, so over budget.

14 – Professional services. Large overspend, due to the additional costs associated with the HR company and the investigations undertaken.

15 – Audit Fees – slightly higher than budgeted, due to the Scribe costs not being included within the original budget setting process.

58 – Communications – higher than anticipated, due to some historic bills having come to light and been paid (stretching back to 2016 / 17).

60 – HQ Electricity – reflects additional costs, but also includes the charging point for electric vehicles. Investigations ongoing into where payments for this are coming to, so should reduce significantly.

61 – HQ Cleaning Supplies – includes some organisational costs (e.g. window cleaning) and some 'bulk buying' (e.g. toilet rolls).

63 – Repairs and Equipment. Includes a range of items, including Air Con unit / oven, but mainly around repairs that needed to be made. This reflects a situation across the council.

67 – Waste disposal. Increased costs due to additional waste (food programmes) and changes to the waste management within the local centre more widely.

78 – Salaries. Looks bad but doesn't include the money in 112 (Increments and pay rises), so reflects the budget without any increases.

Some other minor issues, but overall the totals for HQ remain in surplus.

Landscape

Overspent in every area, but not by too much. This reflects the increased costs associated with delivery of this contract (fuel, repairs, etc.), but with some savings in key areas too – the provision of battery equipment means that the need for HAVS monitors is no longer, so savings there. Limited spend on the depot to this point, but this will (we hope) increase over the next few weeks.

Meeting Places

Only major cost here is staffing and an overspend has happened. This is both due to pay rises and increments, but also to do with 'backfilling' hours, where sickness absences have happened. This has been a significant issue this year within the community centre group.

Netherfield MP

6 – Hire costs. Higher than planned, which is good. Around £2k ahead of where budgeted.

50 – Gas. Reflects the significant increase in costs. Hoped that this will reduce with the replacement boiler now installed.

53 – Repairs and Equipment. As noted elsewhere, these costs reflect the aging nature of our buildings and surrounds. Big costs for NFMP include fencing for the damaged wall, new boiler, new fire alarm system. However, there are further costs that will be coming on an ad hoc basis if significant refurbishment doesn't take place.

Tinkers Bridge MP

4 – Hire charges. As with other buildings, TBMP is ahead of budget by £4k plus. This helps mitigate the significant costs elsewhere...

41 – Electricity is almost twice that which was budgeted. Reflects increased costs and usage.

45 – Repairs, etc. High, which reflect both the equipment needed to provide some elements of the provision (e.g. new cooker, new kitchen wear, etc.) but also the outstanding routine maintenance (e.g. asbestos checks, emergency alarm checks, gas servicing, electrical installation checks). There is also the large cost of the replacement roof that was not previously included in budgeting – this leads to an overall bottom line showing a £29k deficit (slightly reduced by the £4k surplus in income).

Youth

10 – Additional income. More than anticipated, with a £9k surplus over budget.

71 – Vehicles. Limited costs associated with the van and those have been coded to vehicles council wide. To be reconsidered for next year.

79 – Salaries – significantly underspent due to not appointing to vacancies.

85 – Running costs. Overspent, but includes cost of new boiler (unexpected).

101 and 128 – both HAF grants and between the two, in surplus.

Overall, youth has brought in more money than expected and is £15k underspent against budget.

Overall situation

There are some running themes across the council:

- Repairs are a challenge, and this year has been especially challenging due to both urgent, expensive repairs (two boilers, one roof) and in terms of catching up with 'planned' maintenance that has been missed previously (includes gas servicing, asbestos checks, water checks, electrical installation checks, etc. across ALL council buildings).
- Energy costs are increasing fast and look likely to continue to be a challenge for the coming year, at least.
- Income from meeting places is increasing but remains below where it was in 2019. The gradual increases are welcome, but costs are likely to outstrip these increases without significant investment in infrastructure.

Despite all the unplanned challenges, we remain within budget. This is down to a combination of the increased income noted above, difficulties in recruiting to vacant posts (or, in the case of the maternity cover, deciding not to cover) and not delivering all aspects of the Service Plan. Whilst it is likely that the situation will become less positive over the final quarter (expected expenditure in key areas – the annual IT contract cost (£20k), the depot development (£20K) and the essential electrical works needed for compliance (£6k), the outlook for year end is not as bleak as had been feared at mid-year (a deficit of around £60k was planned – it is unlikely to be that much).

As well as the 'Flexed budget' paper, there is also a 'Net Position' paper that details the actual spend against the whole budget and therefore, the amount left. These papers read together give a fair reflection on the fiscal situation.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Flexed Budget Comparison Q3

Net Position - end Dec 2022 Q3

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations & Resources Committee

Monday 20th February 2023

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To consider a training programme for the council year 2023/24, to include new councillors and experienced members.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That committee agrees to a training programme for the 2023/24 council year.**
- 2. That the sessions noted below are considered as the basics for inclusion in the programme.**
- 3. That any additional sessions can be suggested and included if agreed by committee.**
- 4. That additional training can still be accessed by councillors / officers outside this programme on an 'as and when' basis.**
- 5. That the sessions are booked and agreed prior to the start of the new council year.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

With elections happening in May 2023, it is likely that the council will have some new members. In addition to this, a formulated and agreed programme of training for all members (to include officers, volunteers, resident associations and other partners where possible and appropriate) is advised.

It is essential that if this programme is created and provided, that people attend. There have been occasions over the past year where bookings have been made and paid for and attendees simply haven't turned up.

The following sessions are proposed for inclusion in the programme:

- Introduction to Local Councils (overview of how the sector works)
- Standards in public life
- Safeguarding
- Data Protection and GDPR
- Best Practice for Chairing and facilitating meetings
- Finances in local councils
- Communication and social media
- Working with your community
- Diversity, equality and inclusion

This will sit alongside the existing offers via NALC, BMKALC, etc. that are available to councillors and are sent round regularly by the Council Manager.

It is also proposed that longer courses are provided for those that feel these would be of benefit. This would include:

- First Aid (full day)
- Mental Health First Aid Awareness (half day)
- ILCA, FILCA or CILCA (various lengths)

There are some of these sessions that are suitable only for councillors (e.g. standards in public life). Others are suitable for a wider audience (e.g. safeguarding or data protection). It is suggested that there is a fixed time / day for training (e.g. second Wednesday evening of the month) and that depending on the session, invites are extended where space allows.

It is proposed that these courses commence in May, continuing through the year with no session in August or January. If in agreement, the Council Manager will arrange facilitators for these sessions prior to the start of the new council year.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

It is likely that some of the sessions can be provided 'in house' – officer hours for development and delivery of sessions will need to be considered.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager



Woughton Community Council

Full Appraisal form

Name of appraisee:	Multiple
Job title/Dept:	Multiple
Name of appraiser:	Collated by Council Manager
Job title/Dept:	Managers
Line Manager:	Council Manager

360 appraisal document	You will be appraised by a random selection, including at least one member of your team and another colleague from Woughton. You may also be appraised by a manager other than your own. This is to ensure we collect robust feedback from your colleagues to create a well-rounded picture of how you perform on a day-to-day basis.
Role profile	You are encouraged to refer to your role profile to ensure that it is up to date and relevant to your role, if there are any amendments or changes you feel should be made you should discuss this with your manager in your appraisal.
Self-appraisal	This section is to reflect and evaluate your strengths, areas for development, to acknowledge your achievements and to note any challenges and / or lessons learned.
Manager's evaluation	This is where your manager will review all the above documentation and appraise you from the evidence provided and their own experiences with working with you, reflecting on how you are performing.
Targets	This section will set out your main expectations and goals for the upcoming year, based on the WCC service plan, strategic plans and your personal and professional development.



This is the 360 section of the appraisal please fill out the relevant boxes.

- a) This section is if you are appraising a manager. If you are not appraising a manager, please skip to section b

The questions allow for both a 'yes / no' response, but expanding on this is important, with examples of where the manager has been positive or negative in these areas.

Appraising a manager

Does this manager treat others respectfully? Please give examples

***** respects the team and my opinion. They often go out of their way to help anyone out if needed. They have been a great support to me in recent weeks, even if only to tell a joke or buy an ice-cream.

My experience is that they are always respectful towards me and always take any considerations on board. I have also noticed that they are conscientious towards their team and often takes their wellbeing into account, which is a big progression from when I first started at WCC.

Is this manager able to resolve conflict appropriately? Please give examples

I believe that even though I haven't really seen conflict, that they have in recent years dealt with difficult issues sensitively and appropriately.

I have noted huge changes in terms of conflict resolution, being able to manage situations independently and is assured of process without relying on my support. This has been part of a huge training and development opportunity that came from restructuring, where we worked collaboratively. ***** ability to independently deal with situations at a LM level now has significantly taken a lot of burden off me. I would like to congratulate them on the massive progress they have made in this area.

No, in my experience I have felt unsupported at times due to conflict and the manager not wanting to be involved would rather take a step back.

Does this manager control emotions and behaviour even when faced with high-conflict or stressful situations? Please give examples

I have seen ***** dealing with issues over the phone and he remains calm, professional and considers his responses.

Yes I believe that they are now much better at controlling emotions when it comes to conflict and stressful situations.

deals with high conflict situations with the utmost control and professionalism at the time but can be affected emotionally after the event.

Does this manager motivate others to reach goals? Please give examples

They 'muck in' where necessary which I believe to be a great motivator!

I think this can be quite difficult as they are mainly desk based in the office and much of the team are field based. There is also split expertise between his teams. Possibly some occasional spot checking on the team or some team building with his team to ensure constant communication could be something to consider.

- b) This section should be completed by everyone. If you are appraising a manager, you should still fill in this section.

Appraising a colleague

Has this colleague shown that they apply feedback they receive to learn and grow?

They are always willing to take on board other peoples opinions.

....has made big strides in terms of managing the team and nipping any conflict in the bud. Raising issues and concerns immediately instead of letting them fester. This is in part a result of work that has been done within the organisation that they have taken on board and learned from.

Has this colleague shown initiative to take the lead on team projects or tasks?

They get involved with project and make suggestions about ways that things may be carried out more efficiently.

I think some work needs to be done for ***** in terms of work they don't find particularly enthralling, so the admin/strategy side of management role. I think sometimes results in another senior manager taking on this element. It would be good to use this as a T&D opportunity (as we all have gaps we need to work on) and try and improve on this side of the role as it is equally, if not more important than the other side.

Yes, this manager shows initiative and takes the lead on challenging situations for example when dealing with challenging parishioners

Is this colleague open to receiving feedback from supervisors and peers?

I think that they listen to others and respects their views, but will also express his own in a direct way.

Absolutely they have always been open, respectful and engaging when I have offered feedback or review

Is this colleague's communication clear, concise and do they present in an organised manner?

***** will tell us when they want us to do something but also make sure we are clear on how and why. But it's always a two-way conversation and we are trusted to do our jobs.

Yes, however as per above I think written and strategic communication(s) could improve.

In my experience I have never experienced any issues with communication style. I think they present extremely well and is one of their best attributes.

Does this colleague follow instructions to achieve the desired results?

They follow instructions necessary due to the role they play. Other than that, they do as asked if it is right.

I have noticed such a turnaround in (the work) when it's been requested from me as Operations manager. I have made this feedback previously to the Council manager that I am really, really happy with ***** productivity at the moment.

This manager follows the appropriate protocols and policies to ensure all stakeholders achieve desired outcomes.

Does this colleague show compassion, empathy, and respect for others?

They seem to understand if someone is 'down' and well do what they can to help or give time and space if that is what is needed.

Yes I think there is a wonderful balance of emotional intelligence and ability to have a laugh with everybody in the office. They are well liked, and rightly so.

Can you provide a specific example of something this employee does well?

Keeps everyone smiling.

This employee provides others with the confidence, trust and materials they need in order for them to do their job well.

I think they embody Woughton ethos so well, everything they stand for, mindset and the way they are with people is everything I would hope all of our staff would aspire to be like. They are great at following a process when it is mapped out and does really well in collaborative work settings.

Can you provide a specific example of something this employee could improve?

Not really – probably the best line manager I have had.

Some training and development on strategy, operational planning and written communication (writing proposals etc)

This employee could help others to improve by providing feedback, tools and suggested training opportunities when offered or requested.

Following correct channel lines I think is something that they could improve on, there have been a few instances where things have been 'run by' or checked for permission by others, when it should have been Operations/Process/HR. This does need addressing and resolving.

needs to know when to switch off. They are so keen to ensure we provide the best service we can, they can sometimes forget to switch off and assess their own needs.