

TOLLER PORCORUM PARISH COUNCIL

Full Parish Council meeting | Wednesday 11 September 2024

Appendix J – new Safeguarding Policy

Minute reference: 24/09-11 i

An update from DAPTC in the newsletter dated 23 August 2024, describes new reporting responsibilities for Town and Parish Councils and clerks in the event of concern about the safety of a child. Upon reviewing Toller Porcorum Parish Council's (TPPC) current Child Protection policy and Safeguarding policy it was discovered changes needed to be made.

It is possible to combine the Child Protection policy and Safeguarding policy into one. This document lays out the changes recommended to meet new reporting responsibilities and combining the 2 policies. The proposed amended policy document starts on page 2.

~~RED~~ indicates removed wording

GREEN indicates new wording

BLUE indicates a note on changes

To consider:

All references to 'child', 'children' etc have had 'vulnerable adult(s)' added.

Child Protection policy (2022) refers to volunteers only. The following document changes all references of volunteers to 'TPPC members (councillors), employees and volunteers'.

2.2 g): explains duties of 'Designated Person'.

2.3: policy now complies with responsibilities as laid out by DAPTC.

Section 4 – Safe Recruitment (of volunteers)

- It's highly unlikely volunteers will be DBS checked as it costs money and time – should this be removed?

Section 5 – Designated Person

- Neil Farmer is registered as 'designated person' with the Clerk as second contact – is this appropriate?

Forms start on page 9 of document – they are in basic format at the moment

- 3 forms are stated in the Child Protection policy but there are only 2: checklist and Record of Concern
- Checklist – is this necessary as not mentioned in policy and repeats information from Record of Concern
- 2 Volunteer forms exist in the Child Protection policy: these have been made into 1

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Toller Porcorum Safeguarding Policy and forms

v2 adopted 11.09.24 | Next review date: September 2025 | Last review date: September 2024

~~Section 1 — Policy Statement~~

- ~~1.1 — We in the Toller Porcorum Parish Council are committed to a practice that protects children from harm. Volunteers in this organization accept and recognize our responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues, which cause children harm.~~
- ~~1.2 — We will endeavour to safeguard children by:~~
- ~~a) Adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for volunteers;~~
 - ~~b) Sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents and carers, staff and volunteers;~~
 - ~~c) Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately.~~
 - ~~d) Following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of volunteers;~~
 - ~~e) Provide effective management for volunteers through supervision, support and training.~~
- ~~1.3 — We are also committed to reviewing our policy and good practice at regular intervals.~~
- ~~1.4 — For the purposes of this policy, a child is deemed to be any person under the age of eighteen years.~~
- ~~1.5 — The welfare of the child is of paramount consideration.~~
- ~~1.6 — All children, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religious belief and sexual identity have a right to protection from harm or abuse.~~

Purpose

Toller Porcorum Parish Council (TPPC) believes all children and vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, racial or ethnic origin, religious belief and sexual identity have a right to protection from harm or abuse. TPPC, including its members (councillors), employees and volunteers at facilities of, or at events and any other activity organised by TPPC, will endeavour to safeguard children and vulnerable adults by:

- a) Implementing the procedures and code of conduct of this policy
- b) Sharing information about safeguarding and good practice with children and vulnerable adults, their parents, guardians and carers
- c) Sharing information about concerns with relevant agencies and involving parents, guardians, carers and children and vulnerable adults appropriately
- d) Following carefully the procedures for recruitment and selection of volunteers
[needs to be considered as per notes on page 1]
- e) Provide effective management for members, employees and volunteers through supervision, support and training

For the purposes of this policy, a child is deemed to be any person under the age of eighteen years.
For the purposes of this policy, a vulnerable adult is deemed to be any person over the age of

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eighteen years meeting the criteria as defined in The Police Act 1997 (Enhanced Criminal Record Certificates) (Protection of Vulnerable Adults) Regulations 2002.

TPPC is committed to reviewing this policy and good practice at regular intervals.

Section 2 – Procedures

Section 1 – Definitions of Abuse

1.1 Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child or vulnerable adult.

Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer feigns the symptoms of, or deliberately causes ill health to a child whom they are looking after. This situation is commonly described as factitious illness, fabricated or induced illness in children or ‘Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy’, after the person who first identified this situation. A person might do this because they enjoy or need the attention they get through having a sick child.

Physical abuse, as well as being a result of a deliberate act, can also be caused through omission or the failure to act to protect.

1.2 Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill treatment of a child or vulnerable adult such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s or vulnerable adult’s emotional development and/or state. It may involve making a child or vulnerable adult feel of believe they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

Emotional abuse may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children or vulnerable adults. It may also cause children or vulnerable adults to frequently feel frightened or in danger, ~~or the~~ and may include the exploitation or corruption of a child or vulnerable adult.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill treatment of a child or vulnerable adult, though it may occur alone.

1.3 Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child, a young person or vulnerable adult to take part in sexual activities, whether the child, young person, or vulnerable adult is aware of, or consents to, what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative acts such as rape, buggery or oral sex or non-penetrative acts such as fondling. Sexual abuse may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children, young people, or vulnerable adults in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways. ~~Males and/or females, by adults and by other young people,~~ Males, females, adults and other young people can sexually abuse boys and girls. This includes people from all different walks of life.

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1.4 Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's or vulnerable adult's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the or vulnerable adult's health or development. It may involve a parent or carer failing to provide adequate food, shelter and clothing, leaving a young child at home alone or the failure to ensure that a child or vulnerable adult receives adequate and appropriate medical care and treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's or vulnerable adult's basic emotional needs.

1.5 It is accepted that in all forms of abuse there are elements of emotional abuse, and that some children and vulnerable adults are subjected to more than one form of abuse at any one time.

These four definitions do not minimize other forms of maltreatment.

Recent inter-agency guidance draws attention to other sources of stress for children, vulnerable adults and families, such as social exclusion, domestic violence, and the mental illness of a parent or carer, or drug or alcohol abuse. All these areas may have a negative impact on a child's or vulnerable adult's health and development and may be noticed by an organisation caring for a child or vulnerable adult. If it is felt that a child's or vulnerable adult's well-being is adversely affected by any of these areas, the same procedures should be followed.

~~1.6—Response to Abuse Allegations~~

Section 2 – Procedure

2.1 [Text in this section taken from Child Protection policy, section 6 – Whistleblowing policy]

It is the intention of ~~the Committee~~ TPPC that any child, ~~young person~~ or vulnerable adult attending ~~Maiden Newton Parish Council~~ TPPC events or facilities is encouraged to inform the ~~supervisory and/or the volunteers~~ person in charge of the event or facility and/or another person present in an official capacity if ~~he or she~~ they wishes ~~to express~~ to confide ~~in the volunteers on~~ an issue which concerns them personally, whether that issue involves an activity that took place within the Parish Council organisation or not.

The individual may be concerned, for instance, about ~~a level of~~ bullying ~~that is~~ taking place within the confines of ~~the~~ Parish Council activities or ~~may be concerned~~ about a problem at school or at home. All TPPC members, employees and volunteers are therefore to be aware ~~that this policy exists~~ of the procedures that exist and be prepared to act accordingly should a child, ~~young person~~ or vulnerable adult make an approach.

~~2.2—In responding to a child making an allegation of abuse, the following points should be borne in mind:~~

- ~~a) Stay calm~~
- ~~b) Listen carefully to what is being said~~
- ~~c) Find an appropriate early opportunity to explain that it is likely that the information will need to be shared with others – others do not keep secrets.~~
- ~~d) Allow the child to continue at his/her own pace.~~

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- e) ~~Ask questions for clarification only and at all times avoid asking questions that suggest a particular answer.~~
- f) ~~Reassure the child that they have done the right thing in telling you.~~
- g) ~~Tell the child what you will do next and with whom the information will be shared.~~
- h) ~~Record in writing as soon as possible what was said using the child's own words. Note date(s), time(s) any names mentioned, to whom the information was given and ensure that the statement is dated and signed.~~

2.2 [Text taken from Child Protection policy, section 5 – Disclosure Procedures]

In the event that a TPPC member, employee or volunteer helper is approached by a child or vulnerable adult expressing concerns about how they have been treated, either at a Parish Council event or elsewhere, the following procedures should be followed:

- a) Stay calm, tell and show the child or vulnerable adult that you have listened to them and have taken what they have told you seriously. ~~If possible, give them some time immediately to listen to their concerns.~~ If this it is not possible to listen to them immediately, tell the child or vulnerable adult that you will listen to their concerns as soon as is practically possible and ensure ~~that~~ you do this
- b) Keep questions to a minimum but make sure ~~that~~ you have enough information to be clear about what the child or vulnerable adult is telling you
- c) ~~Make sure that you are clear about what the child is telling you. Just~~ Repeat facts that you have been told back to the child or vulnerable adult for clarification
- d) Reassure the child or vulnerable adult that what has occurred, or believed to have occurred, is not their fault and that they have done the right thing in telling you
- e) Emphasise ~~that~~ you realise how difficult it has been to bring the matter to your attention
- f) Explain ~~that~~ you will have to tell someone else who is better qualified than you ~~to handle~~ about their situation. Explain that ~~even though you have to tell someone else, the~~ all information remains in strict confidence.
- g) As soon as possible you must inform the Designated Person whose name and contact details can be found at the end of this document. If this is not possible immediately and you have concerns that by returning home or ~~to another outside~~ leaving the current environment, ~~that~~ the child or vulnerable adult would be in immediate danger, ~~then~~ you should seek advice from Dorset Council's Children's Advice and Duty Service (ChAD), Social Services, the Police, ~~the Child Protection Unit~~ or the NSPCC as a matter of urgency. Contact numbers ~~are given~~ can be found at the end of this document.
- h) Record carefully what the child or vulnerable adult has told you and what action has been taken as a result on a Record of Concern form (found on page ?? at the end of this document and available from the Clerk) ~~Forms are shown at the end of this document and are available from the secretary.~~
- i) Return the completed Record of Concern to the TPPC Clerk

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NOTE: It is important ~~that~~ everyone in the organization is aware that the person who first encounters a case of alleged or suspected abuse is not responsible for deciding whether ~~or~~ ~~not~~ abuse has occurred. That is a task for the professional child protection agencies following a referral to them of a concern about a child or vulnerable adult.

~~Samples of forms to be used in cases of suspected or alleged cases of child abuse and those for recording concerns about children and young people can be found at the end of this document. These forms are also available from the club secretary.~~

- 2.3 A completed Record of Concern form is passed to the TPPC Clerk who will send it to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within 1 working day. The LADO is available to discuss concerns and to assist the Clerk in deciding whether they need to make a referral and take any immediate action to protect a child or vulnerable adult.

Section 3 – Code of Conduct

3.1 Positive Actions

~~All volunteers working with Toller Porcorum Parish Council~~ TPPC members, employees and volunteers must observe the following;

- a) All children and vulnerable adults must be treated with respect
- b) Your own behaviour and conduct must set an example that you wish others to follow
- c) At all times ~~there is to be~~ more than one person must be present during activities involving young children and young people vulnerable adults or that any one ~~supervisor~~ TPPC member, employee or volunteer is within sight and/or hearing of others
- d) A ~~young person's~~ child's and a vulnerable adult's right to personal privacy is to be respected
- e) ~~Young people and~~ Children and vulnerable adults should be encouraged to feel comfortable in each other's company in order ~~that young people~~ they do not feel inhibited about reporting attitudes or behaviour that they find unacceptable or objectionable
- f) Be aware that your intentions and/or actions might be misrepresented, no matter how well intentioned
- g) Be aware that any physical contact with a child or ~~a young person~~ vulnerable adult may be misinterpreted
- h) Take special caution when discussing sensitive issues with children and ~~young people,~~ vulnerable adults
- i) Instances of unacceptable behaviour are to be challenged and all allegations/suspicions of abuse are to be reported.

3.2 Negative Actions

~~All volunteers working with Toller Porcorum Parish Council~~ TPPC members, employees and volunteers must avoid the following:

- a) Inappropriate physical or verbal contact with children or ~~an young people~~ vulnerable adults

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- b) Being drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour or make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or ~~young people~~ vulnerable adults
- c) Jumping to conclusion without checking facts
- d) Exaggerating or trivializing issues of child or vulnerable adult abuse
- e) Showing favouritism to any individual within a group
- f) Reliance on the good name of ~~the Parish Council to protect~~ TPPC for protection in the event of unseemly behaviour or actions
- g) Taking a chance when common sense, policy or practice suggests another more prudent approach

Section 4 – Safe Recruitment

4.1 Recruitment Policy

All TPPC volunteers ~~and helpers~~ are subject to careful selection by the following means:

- a) All volunteers ~~and helpers~~ are required to complete ~~an application~~ Volunteering form (found on page ?? at the end of this document and available from the Clerk), a requirement of which is to read this Safeguarding Policy and to sign indicating understanding and acceptance of this policy. ~~(references to be sought at the discretion of the Council)~~ References provided will be sought at the discretion of TPPC.
- b) All volunteers will undergo checks by the ~~Criminal Records Bureau~~ [now the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) – see notes on page 1]
- c) Any volunteers ~~and helpers~~ under the age of 18 years must be supervised by an adult and should not be involved in any disclosures/claims made by ~~young person~~ children or vulnerable adults
- d) ~~All volunteers and helpers are required to read and sign this Child Protection Policy.~~

~~Examples of the appropriate forms for application can be found on pages at the end of this document.~~

[Text in section 5 have been used elsewhere]

~~Section 5 – Disclosure Procedures~~

~~5.1 – In the event that a volunteer helper is approached by a child expressing concerns about how they have been treated, either at a Parish Council event or elsewhere, the following procedures should be followed:~~

- ~~a) – Stay calm, tell and show the child that you have listened to them and have taken what they have told you seriously. If possible, give them some time immediately to listen to their concerns. If this is not possible, tell the child that you will listen to their concerns as soon as is practically possible, and ensure that you do this.~~
- ~~b) – Keep questions to a minimum but make sure that you have enough information to be clear about what the child is telling you.~~

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~~e) — Make sure that you are clear about what the child is telling you. Just repeat facts that you have been told back to the child for clarification.~~

~~d) — Reassure the child that what has occurred, or believed to have occurred, is not their fault and that they have done the right thing in telling you.~~

~~e) — Emphasise that you realise how difficult it has been to bring the matter to your attention.~~

~~f) — Explain that you will have to tell someone else who is better qualified than you to handle the situation. Explain that even though you have to tell someone else, the information remains in strict confidence. As soon as possible you must inform the Designated Person whose name is given at the end of this document. If that is not possible immediately and you have concerns that by returning home, or to another outside environment, that the child would be in immediate danger then you should seek advice from Social Services, the Police, the Child Protection Unit or the NSPCC as a matter of urgency. Contact numbers are given at the end of this document.~~

~~g) — Record carefully what the child has told you and what action has been taken as a result. Forms are shown at the end of this document and are available from the secretary.~~

[Text in section 6 have been used elsewhere]

~~Section 6 — Whistle blowing Policy~~

~~6.1 — It is the intention of the Committee that any child or young person attending Maiden Newton Parish Council events or facilities is encouraged to inform the supervisory and/or the volunteers should that individual feel that, at any time, he or she wishes to express to confide in the volunteers on an issue which concerns them personally, whether that issue involves an activity that took place within the Parish Council organisation or not. The individual may be concerned for instance about a level of bullying that is taking place within the confines of the Parish Council activities, or may be concerned about a problem at school or at home. All volunteers are therefore to be aware that this policy exists and be prepared to act accordingly should a child or young person make an approach.~~

~~Section 7 — Designated Person~~

Section 5 – Designated Person

5.1 At the time of writing the ~~Principle~~ Designated Person referred to within ~~this policy~~ is:

Neil Farmer, email: neilfarmertollerpc@gmail.com

~~If Neil Farmer is not available Parish Clerk, Mrs Michele Harding, West Elworth Farm, Portesham, Weymouth Dorset DT3 4HF~~ contact the TPPC Clerk:

clerk@tollerporcorumparish.org

5.2 If you are unable to contact the above and/or have serious concerns, you should contact one of the agencies listed below for direct advice:

~~Dorset Council's Children's Advice and Duty Service (ChAD): 01305 228866~~

Social Services: 01305 251034

Dorchester Police Station: 01305 251212

NSPCC Child Protection Helpline: 0808 800 5000

~~5.3 Any allegations or suspicions of abuse must be reported to the designated person in the first instance~~

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Checklist for reporting suspected abuse (1 of 2)

CONFIDENTIAL WHEN COMPLETED

Name of child or vulnerable adult

Age and Date of Birth

Religion

Disability

Ethnicity

First Language

Any special factors

Parent's/Carer's name(s)

Home address (and telephone number if available)

Are you reporting your own concerns or passing on those of somebody else? Give details.

Brief description of what has prompted the concerns: include dates, times etc. of any.

Any physical signs? Behavioural signs? Indirect signs?

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Record of Concern (2 of 2)

CONFIDENTIAL WHEN COMPLETED

Name of child or vulnerable adult

Address:

Telephone No:

Parent/Carers details:

What is said to have happened or what was seen?

When and where did the incident occur?

Who else, if anyone, was involved and how?

Was the incident disclosed by an affected child or by a third party?

What was said by those involved?

Were there any obvious signs e.g. bruising, bleeding changed behaviour patterns?

Was the child able to say what happened? If so, how did the child describe it?

Who has been told about the incident and when?

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As far as you are aware, do the parents/carers know of the incident?

Any further information not included above

Name

Signed:

Date:

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Volunteering form

CONFIDENTIAL WHEN COMPLETED

Declaration from all volunteers working with children **and young people** and/or vulnerable adults:

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a Caution or of a Bound over Order?

You are advised that under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (UK wide) (1974) (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendments) Order 1986 (UK wide) you should declare all convictions, including 'spent' convictions

Yes

No

If Yes, please state below the date(s) and nature of the offence(s)

Signed

Date

Print full name:

Print Surname

Any **other** surname previously known by? **If yes, list below:**

Address

Telephone Number:

Date of Birth

Place of Birth

[Text below used above]

~~You are advised that under the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (UK wide) (1974) (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendments) Order 1986 (UK wide) you should declare all convictions, including 'spent' convictions.~~

I have been given and read a copy of the Council's Child Protection Policy TPPC's Safeguarding Policy. I ~~have understood~~ **understand and accept** the policy and know what is expected of me as a volunteer ~~helper~~.

Signed

Date

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I agree to ~~the Council~~ **TPPC** requesting references before accepting me as a volunteer ~~helper~~. This could be in the form of verbal or written, at the discretion of ~~the committee~~ **TPPC**.

Please give details of a person you would be willing for us to be contacted to give you a reference.

~~Please state relationship.~~

Name

Address

Phone number

Relationship