

Report of Discovery Team

Subject: Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority Safeguarding Statement

Purpose of Report

To provide an update on Safeguarding as it relates to the work of Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority.

Introduction/Background

The purpose of this report is to provide National Park Authority members and other stakeholders with continued assurance that the processes and systems that are in place for managing Safeguarding within Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority (hereafter referred to as the Authority) remain effective.

Comparisons

The Authority has drawn upon external support and advice in developing its policies and practices including Pembrokeshire County Council, the lead agency in managing safeguarding locally.

Financial considerations

Current cost to the Authority is largely limited to the staff time required to oversee the delivery of its safeguarding work (as outlined in the statement), this includes an internal working group which has oversight of our work in this area and the management of the DBS checking process which is overseen by the HR team.

Risk considerations

There are significant risks attached to not having a robust statement, policy, management and oversight of Safeguarding across the Authority's work areas.

Compliance

Both the Social Services and Well-being Act (2014) and Children's Act (2004) impose a clear duty on public bodies to ensure that the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is a consideration in the planning and delivery of all its activity.

Human Rights/Equality issues

The statement and guidance contribute to the wider themes of equality and the Authority's work in this area.

Welsh Language statement

The Authority's Safeguarding statement and guidance will be presented bilingually.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

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Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority

Safeguarding Annual Report 2023/24

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide National Park Authority members and other stakeholders with continued assurance that the processes and systems that are in place for managing Safeguarding within Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority (hereafter referred to as the Authority) remain effective.

The Authority is committed to providing safe opportunities for children, young people and vulnerable adults to enjoy their involvement with us, and to inform and enthuse them about the National Park and what we do. The Authority will take all reasonable steps to ensure that they do this safely. They have the right to be protected from harm.

The Authority's policies and guidance in this area aims to ensure that sound working practices are in place that put safeguarding as a priority and which are effective in managing risk for these vulnerable groups, but which will also protect staff and volunteers against wrongful or malicious allegations.

2. Authority Safeguarding Arrangements

PCNPA Safeguarding Group

Safeguarding responsibilities within the Authority are overseen by an internal group which meets on a quarterly basis. The group's members are:

Joy Arkley – Head of People Services

Tegryn Jones – Chief Executive

Graham Peake – Learning and Inclusion Team Leader

Libby Taylor – Head of Engagement and Inclusion

The Learning and Inclusion Team Leader [Graham Peake] is the safeguarding lead for the Authority and is the first point of contact for incidents and issues. In the absence of the Learning and Inclusion Team Leader, the Head of Engagement and Inclusion [Libby Taylor], or the Chief Executive [Tegryn Jones] are the first points of contact.

Policies and guidance are included in the Authority's Safeguarding Statement. This applies to all Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority Members, staff and volunteers, but especially to those employees whose duties and roles bring them into regular contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Key Policy Messages:

- All Staff, Members and volunteers have responsibilities in terms of safeguarding and should have an awareness of the issues which may lead to children, young people and vulnerable adults being harmed.
- The Authority has in place employment processes to support safeguarding across recruitment and selection, DBS checks, induction, training and support.
- There are safe working practices staff need to follow to support safeguarding.
- This policy sets out what to do if you suspect abuse or mistreatment.

- The Authority has processes in place for making and dealing with allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers.

The Authority's policies include arrangements for working with the local authority's safeguarding teams

The safeguarding policies of the Authority included processes for working with the Pembrokeshire County Council's Child Care Assessment Team (CCAT) or the Adult Safeguarding Team in the event of an accusation or concern relating to Safeguarding.

<https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/safeguarding-adults-and-children>

The details of these processes are outlined in the Safeguarding Statement, but can be summarised:

Allegations may be dealt with in one of two ways

- (i) Internally. *(Only for allegations that present no clear evidence of abuse)
- (ii) Through referral to the multi-agency CCAT or Adult Safeguarding Team

If the allegation is referred the process can be summarised in 5 key points

1. Initial discussion between PCNPA lead and local assessment team.
2. Telling the staff member(s) or volunteers concerned if appropriate
3. Managing staff or volunteers/considering suspension if appropriate
4. Strategy discussion
5. Investigation and Outcome

3. Safeguarding Policy and Statement and Awareness Raising

The policy statement is made available to all staff who join the Authority.

A direct email from the safeguarding lead includes a link to the statement alongside a 'Safeguarding Checklist' (see illustration), designed to inform employees of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

A summary of the safeguarding policy is also included as part of the Volunteer Handbook, which is given to all registered PCNPA volunteers.

The Authority's Safeguarding Group make use of opportunities to raise and maintain awareness of the importance of safeguarding by including presentations and agenda items on related topics at meetings where possible.

Safeguarding Checklist

keeping you safe



-  • Ensure that you are familiar with the Risk Assessment appropriate to the activity.
- Avoid physical contact with participants - it can be misinterpreted. It is the responsibility of a group's or organisation's staff to intervene and manage behaviour amongst a participating group
- Avoid one-to-one situations, particularly in an enclosed or isolated space. Should this happen inadvertently, send the child, young person or vulnerable adult to join the main group.
-  • Respect the wishes of a child, young person or vulnerable adult.
- Do not take inappropriate photographs of participants. 
- Communicate with children, young people and vulnerable adults in a way that is appropriate to their age and understanding.
- Recognise that children/young people see adults as role models and that your standard of behaviour is important at all times. 
- Ensure that other adults attending a group, such as volunteers and parents recognise the need for appropriate behaviour at all times.
- Don't make salacious (sexual or lewd) remarks in the presence of young people or vulnerable adults.
- If you suspect that a young person is becoming inappropriately attracted to you, ensure that you raise your concerns with your manager.
- If you feel that you are at risk of behaving unprofessionally (for instance because you are under stress or have inappropriate feelings towards a young person) you should discuss this with your manager or Personnel Manager.

Remember

Know of and follow all procedures and instructions.
Do not rely on 'your good name' to protect you.

4. Training Arrangements

All staff are required to undertake the ELMS based e-learning module on Safeguarding. This will also be a requirement for volunteers that work with vulnerable groups as part of their role.

The Safeguarding Group members, Head of Inclusion and Engagement and Team Leader (Learning and Inclusion) are required to undergo appropriate child protection/adult protection Tier 2 Training as part of their lead role in managing the Authority's Safeguarding policies and practice.

All team leaders are required to undertake Safer Recruitment training, with the aim of ensuring that all recruitment panels have a least one member who has received this training

5. Safeguarding Group

The Safeguarding Group (membership described in a previous section) meet on a quarterly basis to review the Safeguarding Action Plan and address outstanding issues relating to the policy, guidance and safeguarding practice across the Authority in general. The group will also convene at short notice should the need arise.

6. Incident reporting

There was one incident that was deemed reportable to the PCC Adult Safeguarding Team, which related to a member of Authority staff, for whom concerns were raised by colleagues. The report was made in September 2023. Following an investigation, support was provided to the individual through the Social Services team at the County Council. No other member of staff or volunteer was part of the investigation.

Report Author
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