Adult Safeguarding and Vulnerable Persons Policy

Context

The Care Act 2014 is a major step forward in safeguarding adults who are experiencing or are at risk of abuse or neglect and are unable to protect themselves.

It is the first statutory framework for safeguarding adults and builds on almost five years of engagement, replacing the 'No Secrets' guidance published in 2000.

Having policies and procedures to safeguard adults is a legal requirement under the Care Act 2014. The policy and procedures will ensure a proportionate, timely and professional approach is taken, and that safeguarding work is co-ordinated across all relevant agencies and organisations. This is essential for the prevention of harm and abuse.

The local authority has the coordinating role in relation to adult safeguarding, and other partner agencies have legal duties regarding safeguarding adults.

Six Key Principles

- **Empowerment** People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent.

  "*I am asked what I want as the outcomes from the safeguarding process and these directly inform what happens".*

- **Prevention** It is better to take action before harm occurs.

  "I receive clear and simple information about what abuse is, how to recognise the signs and what I can do to seek help".

- **Proportionality** The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk present.

  "I am aware that the professionals will work in my interests, as I see them and they will only get involved as much as needed".

- **Protections** Support and representation for those in greatest need.

  "I *get help and support to report abuse and neglect. I get help so that I am able to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want****".***

- **Partnership** Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

  "I know that staff treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary. I am confident that professionals will work together and with me to get the best result for me".

- **Accountability** - Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

  "I understand the role of everyone involved in my life and so do they".

All safeguarding work with adults is based on the following principles (Extract -Sussex Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure 2015):

- The empowerment of adults underpins all safeguarding adults' work.
- The focus on safeguarding should always be to identify and endeavour to meet the desired outcomes of the adult.
- Every person has a right to live a life free from abuse, neglect and fear.
- Safeguarding adults is everyone's business and responsibility.
- There is a zero tolerance to the abuse of adults.
- All reports of abuse will be treated seriously.
- Every person should be able to access information about how to gain safety from abuse and violence and neglect.
- All adults safeguarding work aims to prevent abuse from taking place, and to make enquiries quickly and effectively and take appropriate action where abuse is taking place or is suspected.
- All partner agencies, organisations and partners across the community of Sussex actively work together and encourage accountability, transparency and appropriate professional challenge.
- People working or involved in supporting adults have the appropriate knowledge, skills and training to undertake their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding adults.
- Support is in place for adults to prevent abuse from occurring as well as post-abuse support.

1 A Whole Organisation Approach (People Matter)

We fully recognise our commitment to safeguarding vulnerable adults. At the same time, we recognise a wider responsibility to create a safe environment for all our clients and staff. Our safeguarding strategy outlines our whole organisation approach to ensuring a safe working environment, regarding the wellbeing, security and personal safety of all our customers and staff.

Our approach to safeguarding is based on the following measures:

- Enhanced DBS checks for all those working with customers
- Safe recruitment procedures
- A named manager responsible for safeguarding – Ann Gillard, CEO
- Formal reporting procedures for any incidents of abuse
- Risk assessment procedures
- Personal safety procedures including outreach working
- Training on safeguarding for all advisers
- Training in personal safety, equality and diversity, risk assessment and working with vulnerable adults
- Induction training for all new staff
- Company Health and Safety procedures
- Complaints procedure
- Data protection and confidentiality procedures
- Informing customers of our commitment to a safe environment
- Taking prompt action in response to staff or customer concerns
- Zero tolerance of abuse, discrimination, harassment and bullying

<u>Equality and Diversity</u>
Our equality and diversity policy is based on the belief that all people who are eligible for our service should have equality in accessing, using and progressing through the service. Each individual working for, working with, using, or considering using our service is different. We celebrate and welcome that difference and will be respectful and flexible in our contacts with differing people.

We are committed to the principles of equality and diversity throughout our service and to ensuring that no-one is subject to any abuse, discrimination, harassment or bullying whilst using or working for or with our service.

Health and Safety
We have formal reporting procedures for accidents, abuse, bullying, harassment, and health and safety incidents. These are covered in the People Matter HS and E policy.

Data Protection
Our Data Protection policy outlines the measures taken by People Matter to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and GPDR.

2 Working with Vulnerable Adults

An adult is deemed vulnerable if they meet the following three key tests:

- **The adult has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs).**
- **The adult is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect.**
- **As a result of their care and support needs, the adult is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.**

Definitions of abuse
Abuse is defined as 'a violation of an individual's human and civil rights by any other person or persons.'
There are six categories of abuse defined by the Department of Health as follows:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Psychological/emotional
- Financial or material
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Discriminatory

A fuller explanation of these categories is provided in the appendix to this strategy.

Reporting Procedures
Any allegations of abuse, or any adviser concerns should be referred immediately to the Designated Person. A written report should be completed using the safeguarding report form. The reporting procedures are outlined in the separate document 'Safeguarding Reporting Procedures' which accompanies this policy and should be referred to for all incident reports.

Lone Working
People Matter staff and volunteers should not be lone working with any client, there should always be another adult within easy calling distance. Advisers work with their doors open or ajar. A panic alarm is available in every room. Position the furniture so that it is easy for both parties to exit the room if required. Any concerns should be reported as usual safeguarding procedure

Modern Slavery
People Matter seek to draw the attention of the charity's employees and volunteers to the risks relating to modern slavery and child and forced labour, ensuring that they have access to the necessary information. Concerns would be reported, by staff and volunteers through the safeguarding referral system to the designated person who would take action according to the People Matter safeguarding policy

Evaluation & Review

- **Safeguarding is an agenda item at all regular meetings.**
- In line with company practice all policies are reviewed on an annual basis.

Next Review October 2028