***Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy and***

***Procedure***

***General Statement of Policy***

***The purpose of this Policy is to ensure vulnerable adults attending The Aggie Café & Social Club receive the protection and support, they need if at risk from abuse and to provide clear directions to the Trustees/Committee, employees, and volunteers of The Aggie Café & Social Club of the procedures to be followed where vulnerable adult protection is required.***

***This policy is to be reviewed every two years.***

***1. Introduction***

***1.1. A vulnerable adult (aged 18 years and over) as referred to in the 1997 Consultation Paper***

***“Who Decides” is a person who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of:***

***• Mental Health.***

***• Other Disability.***

***• Age.***

***• Illness.***

***• Who is unable to take care of himself or herself.***

***• Unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.***

***2. Legal Framework***

***2.1. This Policy is written in line with the requirements of:***

***• Human Rights Act 1998.***

***• Mental Capacity ACT 2005.***

***• Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.***

***• Data Protection Act 1998.***

***• Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.***

***• Protection of Freedoms Act 2012.***

***3. What is Abuse?***

***3.1. Abuse is a violation if an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons, as***

***stated in Department of Health’s “No Secrets” Report.***

***3.2. Abuse may consist of a single act or repeated acts. It may be physical, verbal or psychological,***

***it may be an act of neglect or an omission to act, or it may occur when a vulnerable person is***

***persuaded to enter into a financial or sexual transaction to which he or she has not consented***

***or cannot consent. Abuse can occur in any relationship and it may result in significant harm***

***to, or exploitation of, the person subjected to it.***

***4. Recognizing the different types of abuse***

***4.1. The Department of Health “No Secrets” report identifies the following as the main forms of***

***abuse and that any or all these types of abuse may be perpetrated as the result of deliberate***

***intent, negligence, or ignorance:***

***• Physical abuse: including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, and misuse of medication,***

***restraint, or inappropriate sanctions.***

***• Sexual abuse: including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable***

***adult has not consented or could not consent or was pressured into consenting.***

***• Psychological abuse: including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment,***

***deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming controlling, intimidation, coercion,***

***harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks.***

***• Financial or material abuse: including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection***

***with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or***

***misappropriation of property.***

***• Neglect and acts of omission: including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to***

***provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding***

***of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition, and heating.***

***• Discriminatory abuse: including racist, sexist, that based on a person’s disability, and***

***other forms of harassment, slurs, or similar treatment.***

***5. Signs of Abuse***

***5.1. Physical Abuse:***

***• History of unexplained falls or minor injuries.***

***• Bruising in well- protected areas***

***• Finger marks.***

***• Burns of unusual location or type.***

***• Injuries found at different states of healing.***

***• Injury shape similar to an object.***

***• Injuries to head/face/scalp.***

***• History of moving from doctor to doctor, or between social care agencies, or reluctance to***

***seek help.***

***• Accounts which vary with time or are inconsistent with physical evidence.***

***• Weight loss owing to malnutrition, or rapid weight gain.***

***• Ulcers, bed sores and being left in wet clothing.***

***• Drowsiness owing to too much medication, or lack of medication causing recurring***

***crises/hospital admissions.***

***5.2. Sexual abuse signs:***

***• Disclosure or partial disclosure (use of phrases such as ‘It’s a secret’).***

***• Medical problems, g. genital infections, pregnancy, difficulty walking or sitting.***

***• Disturbed behaviour, e.g., depression, sudden withdrawal from activities, loss of previous***

***skills, sleeplessness or nightmares, self-injury, showing fear or aggression to one person,***

***inappropriately seductive behaviour, loss of appetite or difficulty in keeping food down.***

***• Unusual circumstances, g. two service users found in a toilet/bathroom area, one of them***

***distressed.***

***5.3. Psychological/emotional signs***

***• Isolation.***

***• Unkempt, unwashed, smell.***

***• Over meticulousness.***

***• Inappropriate dress.***

***• Withdrawnness, agitation, anxiety, not wanting to be touched.***

***• Change in appetite.***

***• Insomnia, or need for excessive sleep.***

***• Tearfulness.***

***• Unexplained paranoia, or excessive fears.***

***• Low self-esteem.***

***• Confusion.***

***5.4. Signs of neglect***

***• Poor physical condition.***

***• Clothing in poor condition.***

***• Inadequate diet.***

***• Untreated injuries or medical problems.***

***• Failure to be given prescribed medication.***

***• Poor personal hygiene.***

***5.5. Signs of financial or material vulnerability***

***• Unexplained or sudden inability to pay bills.***

***• Unexplained or sudden withdrawal of money from accounts.***

***• Disparity between assets and satisfactory living conditions.***

***• Unusual level of interest by family members and other people in the vulnerable persons***

***assets.***

***5.6. Signs of discrimination***

***• Lack of respect shown to an individual.***

***• Signs of substandard service offered to an individual.***

***• Exclusion from rights afforded to others, such as health, education, criminal justice.***

***5.7. Other signs of abuse***

***• Inappropriate use of restraint.***

***• Sensory deprivation g. spectacles or hearing aid.***

***• Denial of visitors or phone calls.***

***• Failure to ensure privacy or personal dignity.***

***• Lack of personal clothing or possessions.***

***• Controlling relationships.***

***6. Responsibilities***

***6.1. All Trustees, employees, and volunteers of The Aggie Café & Social Club are expected***

***to promote the welfare and safety of vulnerable adults.***

***6.2. All those working with vulnerable adults are expected to be familiar with the contents of this***

***Policy and follow the procedures in it.***

***6.3. Any hire of the hall for activities involving vulnerable adults, hirers will be asked to confirm***

***they have a suitable vulnerable adults protection policy and relevant DBS checks before the***

***first booking commences.***

***6.4. Contractors engaged to carry out work on the premises must not be allowed unsupervised***

***access to vulnerable adults.***

***6.5. The supervision of all groups remains the responsibility of the hirer.***

***7. Confidentiality***

***7.1. Trustees, employees, and volunteers of The Aggie Café & Social Club have a***

***responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of vulnerable adults with***

***other professionals.***

***7.2. Clear boundaries of confidentiality will be communicated to all.***

***7.3. All Trustees/Committee, employees, and volunteers are to act in accordance to The Aggie Café & Social Club’s Confidentiality Agreement.***

***7.4. All information stored regarding a vulnerable adult will be marked confidential and kept in a***

***locked file in accordance to the The Aggie Café & Social Club’s Data Protection Policy.***

***7.5. If an adult confides in an employee or volunteer of The Aggie Café & Social Club and***

***requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the Trustee/Committee, employee or volunteer tells the individual sensitively that he or she has a responsibility to refer cases of***

***alleged abuse to the appropriate agencies.***

***7.6. Within that context, the vulnerable adult must, however, be assured that the matter will be***

***disclosed only to people who need to know about it.***

***7.7. Where possible, consent must be obtained from the adult before sharing personal***

***information with third parties. In some circumstances obtaining consent may be neither***

***possible nor desirable as the safety and welfare of the vulnerable adult is the priority.***

***7.8. Where a disclosure has been made, Trustees/committee, employees and volunteers must let the vulnerable adult know the position regarding their role and what action they will have to take***

***as a result.***

***7.9. Trustees/Committee, employees, and volunteers must assure the individual that they will keep them informed of any action to be taken and why. The adults' involvement in the process of sharing***

***information must be fully considered and their wishes and feelings taken into account.***

***8. Training***

***8.1. All Trustees, employees, and volunteers of The Aggie Café & Social Club’s must read and***

***fully understand the The Aggie Café & Social Club ‘s Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults***

***Policy.***

***8.2. All Trustees, employees, and volunteers working with vulnerable adults will be asked to***

***complete:***

***• Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Level 1***

***• Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults (Advanced) Level 2***

***9. The Role of Key Individual Agencies***

***9.1. Adult Social Services:***

***• The Department of Health's recent 'No secrets' guidance document requires that***

***authorities develop a local framework within which all responsible agencies work together***

***to ensure a coherent policy for the protection of vulnerable adults at risk of abuse.***

***• All local authorities have a Safeguarding Adults Board, which oversees multi-agency work***

***aimed at protecting and safeguarding vulnerable adults. It is normal practice for the board***

***to comprise of people from partner organisations who have the ability to influence***

***decision making and resource allocation within their organisation.***

***9.2. The Police***

***• The Police play a vital role in Safeguarding Adults with cases involving alleged criminal***

***acts.***

***• It is the responsibility of the police to investigate allegations of crime by preserving and***

***gathering evidence.***

***• Where a crime is identified, the police will be the lead agency and they will direct***

***investigations in line with legal and other procedural protocols.***

***10. Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Procedure***

***10.1. All allegations or suspicions are to be treated seriously. No abuse is acceptable, and some***

***abuse is a criminal offence and must be reported to the police immediately.***

***10.2. Immediately contact The Aggie Café & Social Club’s Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding***

***Lead.***

***10.3. When talking to a vulnerable adult who has told you that s/he or another vulnerable adult is***

***being abused.***

***DO***

***• Make sure the individual is safe.***

***• Assess whether emergency services need to be contacted.***

***• Listen.***

***• Remain calm.***

***• Reassure the individual that making the disclosure was the right thing to do and they are***

***not to blame.***

***• Tell him/ her that you now have to do what you can to keep them or the adult who is the***

***subject of the allegation is safe.***

***• Be careful not to be deemed as putting words into the individual’s mouth, only ask***

***questions.***

***• Let the individual know what you are going to do next and who else needs to be involved.***

***• Let the individual tell his/ her whole story.***

***• Make sure you are clear about the information being told you and establish the facts.***

***• Make a full and written report of what has been said and do not delay in passing on the***

***information.***

***DON’T***

***• Promise Confidentiality.***

***• Confront the alleged abuser.***

***• Voice your own opinion.***

***• Do not investigate or interview beyond what is necessary to establish the basics.***

***• Do not quiz the person.***

***• Destroy or disturb any evidence.***

***• Ask leading questions.***

***• Assume information.***

***• Make promises.***

***• Ignore the allegation.***

***• Elaborate your notes beyond what the individual has disclosed to you.***

***• Panic.***

***10.4. It is not the role of The Aggie Café & Social Club to determine whether an individual is at risk or***

***experiencing abuse. If vulnerable persons or others are considered to be at risk of abuse,***

***where actual abuse is suspected, or there are suggestions of serious self-neglect.***

***10.5. The Aggie Café & Social Club will make a referral to:***

***• Surrey County Council Safeguarding Team on 03002001005, or evening and weekends***

***01483 517898.***

***• In an emergency 999.***

***10.6. If the individual in is in immediate danger or in need of emergency medical attention:***

***• If you are with the individual remain with them and contact Emergency Services.***

***• If the individual is elsewhere contact Emergency Services and explain the situation clearly***

***to them.***

***• If immediate medical attention is required call an ambulance and get help from the***

***The Aggie Café & Social Club’s First Aider.***

***• Unless following instruction by a qualified telephone operator from the emergency***

***services those who are not first aid trained should not treat the injured person.***

***• A decision will be made or who will contact the individual’s carers, Local Authority or next***

***of kin. If you are involved with the Emergency Services, Health services or Adult Social***

***Service, they should be part of this decision.***

***• Consider the welfare of the vulnerable adult your main priority.***

***11. Carers***

***11.1. Consideration must be taken to the rights of a carer to know (unless this would place the***

***person or someone else in danger or would interfere with a criminal investigation.***

***11.2. Consider the impact of telling or not telling the carer.***

***12. Writing a Report***

***12.1. All disclosures must be recorded on The Aggie Café & Social Club’s Safeguarding***

***Disclosure form APPENDIX 1.***

***12.2. When recording a disclosure, it is vital the person writing the report:***

***• Makes an accurate written record using The Aggie Café & Social Club’s Safeguarding Disclosure form, of what the individual has disclosed to you.***

***• Only records the exact information that was disclosed to them.***

***• Does not include their own opinion.***

***• Uses exact words and phrases spoken in their report.***

***• Dates and times are be recorded.***

***• They record the circumstances in which the disclosure was made, or any concerning***

***behaviours or actions witnessed.***

***• They record locations and who else was present.***

***• Dates and signs the report and prints their name under their signature.***

***13. What to do next***

***13.1. When considering a referral, the following should be considered:***

***• The wishes of the vulnerable adult and his/ her right to self-determination.***

***• The mental capacity of the vulnerable adult.***

***• Known indicators of abuse.***

***• Level of risk.***

***• The seriousness of the abuse.***

***• The effect of the abuse on the individual.***

***• The risk to others.***

***• If a criminal offence has been committed.***

***• The need to others to be informed.***

***13.2. Where a vulnerable adult expresses a wish for concerns not to be pursued, then this should***

***be respected wherever possible.***

***13.3. Decisions about whether to respect the person’s wishes must have regard to the level of risk***

***to the individual and others, and his/her capacity to understand the decision in question.***

***13.4. In some circumstances the vulnerable adult’s wishes may be overridden in favour of***

***considerations of safety.***

***14. Consent***

***14.1. Consent of the vulnerable adult must be obtained except:***

***• The vulnerable adult lacks the mental capacity to m a decision.***

***• A risk assessment indicates that a referral would be in their best interests.***

***• Others may be at risk.***

***• A crime has been committed.***

***The Aggie Café & Social Club’s Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Lead: Tasha Lucas***

***Associated Policies and Procedures:***

***• Adult Safeguarding Procedure.***

***• Confidentiality Policy***

***• Whistleblowing Policy***

***Last reviewed and updated by the Committee on 01/01/2025.***