

**Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
Equality Impact Assessment**

Title of policy:	Safeguarding Policy
Department:	Community Fire Safety & Youth Engagement
Date:	14 April 2011

1: Identify the aims and purpose of the policy

This should identify “the legitimate aim” of the policy (there may be more than one)

The aim of this policy is to ensure that Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority achieves its purpose of “Making Merseyside a safer, stronger, healthier community” through its contact with children, young people and adults throughout Merseyside.

The policy aims to clearly convey the process of raising a safeguarding concern by any member of MFRS and explain the terms used to define safeguarding issues.

This aim will accord with the need for the Authority to adhere to:

Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004.

Every Child Matters agenda

ODPM National Strategy for Children and Young People and service delivery

Safeguarding Adults Framework for Action

Safeguarding Adults (ADSS 2005)

Working Together to Safeguard Children-2010

2: Identify the individuals and organisations who are likely to have an interest in, or be affected by the policy.

This should identify the persons/organisations who may need to be consulted about the policy or procedure and its outcomes (There may be more than one)

All MFRS should be made aware of the policy. Staff who as part of their work have substantial access to children, young people and / or adults will receive face to face training and refresher training. The designated Officers will require training on how to deal with referrals and multi agency processes.

The Local Safeguarding Board's both children's (LSCB's) and Adults (LSB's) will have an interest in this policy and its implementation.

You identified this policy as needing a full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA). You should complete sections 1 – 5 below (where appropriate) before sending to DiversityTeam@merseyfire.gov.uk for inclusion on the next DAG meeting agenda.

3. Monitoring

Summarise the findings of any monitoring data you have considered regarding this policy. This could include data which shows whether the policy is having the desired outcomes and also its impact on members of different equality groups.

A new 'Safeguarding' mailbox for designated officers has been introduced. This is monitored by KIM. The Information Management System will produce a quarterly report for DAG.

Designated officers will complete a monitoring form for each referral. These will be made available to the Diversity Team.

4: Research

Summarise the findings of any research you have considered regarding this policy. This could include quantitative data and qualitative information; anything you have obtained from other sources e.g. CFA/CLG guidance, other FRSs, etc

This policy was revised using the expertise of the Knowsley Policy and Procedures steering group for good practice. This includes lead professionals on safeguarding. It draws together knowledge from the Working Together to Safeguard Children- a guide to promote inter- agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. (March 2010), Safeguarding Adults Framework for Action and the Safeguarding Adults (ADSS 2005).

5. Consultation

*Summarise the opinions of any consultation. Who was consulted and how? (This should include reference to people and organisations identified in section 2 above)
Outline any plans to inform consultees of the results of the consultation*

The policy has been reviewed by the Knowsley Policy and Procedures steering group and their feedback has been included. The Youth Engagement Management Team and Community Fire Safety have been involved in creating this policy. KIM have been involved in process mapping and monitoring of data sharing. DAG members will be consulted prior to CLT submission.

Once the policy has been approved by CLT it will be launched by Corporate Comms, located in the portal and disseminated to new and existing funders and key partners via the website.

6. Conclusions

Taking into account the results of the monitoring, research and consultation, set out how the policy impacts or could impact on people from the following protected groups? (Include positive and/or negative impacts)

6.1 Age

The safeguarding policy of MFRS will have a positive impact on both younger people and vulnerable adults as intended by legislation. Through the delivery of the Safeguarding Policy MFRS will ensure that the formalised reporting mechanisms are clearly defined and referral routes are followed as stipulated by the Safeguarding Boards for children and young people and also vulnerable adults.

MFRS will reflect this legislative commitment by effectively providing additional support and protection for both younger people and vulnerable adults. This will be achieved through a number of formalised mechanisms and include the development of clear defined referral routes with the appropriate partner agency responsible for safeguarding in the Local Authority in which we operate. Where identified issues arise we will utilise the formal mechanisms and cases will be forwarded to either the local child or vulnerable adult Safeguarding Board.

The Policy will also ensure greater protection will be afforded to vulnerable children, young people and adults by MFRS having Senior Officer representation at each of the Local Authority Local Safeguarding Boards. Through our involvement at these Boards MFRS will be able to ensure that cases are not only followed through to conclusion but also any learning and development needs for our staff are captured and effectively fed back through our own information and decision making processes.

6.2 Disability

The Policy will have a positive impact for disabled people in line with both safeguarding and Equalities Legislation which defines classified disabilities as potential vulnerability.

Disabled members of the community receiving our services will be afforded additional support and protections through the provision of the Safeguarding Policy. Through the monitoring and evaluation MFRS has been carrying out for a number of years we already know that fire discriminates and disabled members of our communities are more at risk. The vulnerability associated with disability means that through our delivery of the Safeguarding Policy we will provide additional support to this group of people. We will do this by training our staff on the Safeguarding Policy and supporting them to recognise individuals who may be vulnerable. Through the development of clearly defined referral routes we will ensure that support flows as seamlessly as possible and we act in the most expedient manner to provide this.

MFRS already have highly regarded information sharing protocols in place with Social Services for example and this Policy will dovetail with those protocols and again ensure that the most vulnerable in our communities are provided with the most appropriate support and assistance.

Through the quarterly reporting process undertaken by KIM we will be able to identify any trends that may develop and ensure that we are responding effectively to those again through training our staff and working with our partners by sharing this information and affecting policy in response to this across Merseyside

6.3 Gender

There is no differential impact for people of different genders anticipated however, by undertaking in depth monitoring of all referrals we will be able to identify and highlight if there are any emerging issues. If such issues are highlighted through the monitoring we will work with both our staff and partners to address the issues identified and ensure we respond appropriately not just as MFRS but also with our partners on the Local Authority Safeguarding Boards

Quarterly reports will be provided to DAG detailing the types of incidents we have refereed and the backgrounds of the individuals concerned. This will allow MFRS to build an accurate picture across Merseyside and through the information sharing protocols allow us to work with our partners to develop the right responses working with our diverse communities.

6.4 Race

No adverse impact is anticipated on the grounds of Race however as identified above in 6.3 actions and monitoring identified will be required to be undertaken. We also envisage any specific issues that may arise as a result of the Preventing Violent Extremism agenda to be captured from these mechanisms and reported back to DAG.

6.5 Religion or Belief

No adverse impact is anticipated on the grounds of Religion or Belief however as identified above in 6.3 actions and monitoring identified will be required to be undertaken.

6.6 Sexual Orientation

No adverse impact is anticipated on the grounds of sexual orientation however as identified above in 6.3 actions and monitoring identified will be required to be undertaken.

7. Decisions

If the policy will have a negative impact on members of one or more of the protected groups, explain how the policy will change or why it is to continue in the same way. If no changes are proposed, the policy needs to be objectively justified as being an appropriate and necessary means of achieving the legitimate aim set out in 1 above.

This policy will ensure that safeguarding concerns can be addressed and monitored more closely, and diversity information can be extrapolated for reporting purposes.

8. Equality Improvement Plan

List any changes to our policies or procedures that need to be included in the Equality Action Plan/Service Plan.

Hate Crime Incident Reporting

The procedure for recording safeguarding concerns and relevant diversity information will be addressed by the designated Officers and KIM. Quarterly reports will be provided to the DAG for consideration and action were appropriate.

Any actions considered appropriate or significant will be included within the Equalities Action Plan.

Action Planned	Responsibility of	Completed by