

## **Safeguarding Policy Principles – Tyne and Wear Pension Fund (“the Fund”)**

Across South Tyneside Council, Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility. No matter what our job role may be, we all play a part in protecting our community.

In order to protect the people who are at risk of abuse we must act together to provide a service which is effective and alert to such risks, in the day to day running of the Fund. In order to ensure that everyone in the workplace feels able to report any inappropriate behaviour or concerns, and feels supported in doing so, we have listed below some key principals. These principals should be considered when dealing with colleagues and Scheme members.

### **What is abuse?**

There are many forms of abuse, these include:

- **Physical**  
This can include situations when someone actually hurts or threatens to hurt another person. This can also include self harming.
- **Emotional**  
This can include when someone tells a child or vulnerable adult they are unloved, unwanted or useless, or perhaps when someone tries to get them to do things that aren't right for that person.
- **Sexual**  
This can include someone developing a relationship with a child or vulnerable adult, so that they can have sex with them some time later ('grooming').
- **Neglect**  
This is when a child or vulnerable adult is denied the care they need.

### **How might you become aware of inappropriate behaviour or concerns?**

There are many circumstances where you will interact with people on a daily basis during the day to day running of the Fund. The most common will include:-

- on the telephone
- in person in the Pension Office
- Via a letter or email

You should be mindful of the actions of members of the public which trigger your concern, this might include:-

- The behaviour of people on the telephone or in person, which may be aggressive or abusive to others, including children or vulnerable adults or whilst they are responsible for children or vulnerable adults.
- There may be bruises on the arms, legs or face of children or adults who attend the Pension Office, which are sufficient to cause you concern.
- Where it appears a member of the Fund is being forced into taking action in relation to their finances or pension benefits.
- Where you feel someone acting as a Trustee/Custodian for a child or vulnerable adult who lacks capacity, is not acting, or is unlikely to act in the best interests of that child or vulnerable adult who lacks capacity.
- Where you feel someone needs medical help or may be suicidal.

**This is not an exhaustive list.** You must be alert to identify any risks to children or vulnerable adults.

## **What should you do?**

All employees need to be vigilant, and report any concerns to their line manager.

If you witness any inappropriate behaviour towards a child or a vulnerable adult, by a colleague, Scheme member or anyone you come into contact with through your work, you need to report this, no matter how insignificant you think it may be. It is always better to share your concerns than to do nothing.

There are many signs that may alert you to concerns and because we often can't put our finger directly on why we are concerned, we may not seek advice or help. It is really important to recognise concerns and share them with your line manager as soon as possible.

Your Line Manager will then take your concerns to Principal Head of Pensions, Dave Smith or Principal Investment Manager, Ian Bainbridge. They will discuss your concerns with Head of Pensions, Stephen Moore for further investigation. A detailed note of what caused your concern may be required. If so, you will need to record specifically what you heard or saw which raised your concerns.

Senior Management will then be able to report your concerns using the contact information below:-

- **Worried about an adult?**  
Phone 0845 130 4959
- **Worried about a child or young person?**  
Phone 0191 424 5010 (office hours) or 0191 456 2093 (out of office hours)

Safeguarding is an absolute priority for the Fund, the Council and its elected members. If you have concerns, you must report them. Your concerns will be addressed, and where appropriate you will be offered support or a point of contact.

## **Members Abroad**

There may be cases where you become concerned for Scheme members living outside of the UK. The principles set out above should be considered when dealing with Scheme members living abroad, but you must report any concerns direct to the Principal Pensions Manager immediately. The above process will not be appropriate in cases of Scheme members living abroad.