

Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy framework

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service recognises that it has a duty to act on reports or suspicions of abuse or neglect. It also acknowledges that taking action in cases of adult abuse is never easy. It is important to remember that it can be more difficult for some vulnerable adults to report their concerns than for others. Vulnerable adults who have experienced prejudice and discrimination may have little reason to trust those they see as authority figures. Vulnerable adults with a disability may have to overcome additional barriers before disclosing abuse e.g. they may well rely on their abuser for their daily care and have no knowledge of alternative sources.
- 1.2 Abuse may be carried out deliberately or unknowingly. Abuse may be a single act or repeated acts. People who behave abusively come from all backgrounds and walks of life. They may be doctors, nurses, social workers, advocates, staff members, volunteers or others in a position of trust. They may also be relatives, friends, neighbours or people who use the same service as the person experiencing the abuse.
- 1.3 North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Authority aims to ensure that an individual, or group of people, will be treated according to their needs. The Authority is committed to incorporating into all aspects of its Service the statutory equality duties as contained in the Sex Discrimination Act, the Race Relations Act, (as amended) the Disability Discrimination Act, and Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, The Equal Pay Act, The Equality Bill as well as the various Codes of Practice, issued from time to time.

2. AIMS

- 2.1 In the course of delivering the Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), service personnel will have frequent contact with vulnerable adults. Safeguarding Adults National Framework of Standards for good practice and outcomes states: "All persons have the right to live their lives free from violence and abuse. This right is underpinned by the duty on public agencies under the Human Rights Act (1998) to intervene proportionately to protect the rights of citizens".
- 2.2 This policy has been designed to protect and ensure the welfare of any adult who accesses services provided by North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service. The policy recognises that adult abuse can be a difficult subject for service personnel to deal with. North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service is committed to the belief that the protection of adults from harm and abuse is everybody's responsibility and the aim of these procedures is to ensure that all workers and volunteers act appropriately in response to any concern around adult abuse.

3. OBJECTIVES

3.1 North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service is committed to zero tolerance of abuse and neglect and this policy and procedure has been drawn up to enable:

- The implementation of processes which enables NYFRS to meet the requirements of the Multi-agency Safeguarding Adults policy and procedures for York and North Yorkshire
- The promotion of good practice to prevent harm, abuse and coercion
- Any allegation or disclosure of abuse is dealt with appropriately
- A person who is experiencing abuse is supported
- Stop that abuse occurring

4. PRINCIPLES

4.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures, which are available on the NYFRS intranet.

4.2 In order to implement the policy North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service will:

- To promote safety and prevent abuse
- To promote the freedom and dignity of the person who has or is experiencing abuse
- To promote the rights of all to live free from abuse and coercion
- To ensure the safety and well being of people who do not have the capacity to decide how they want to respond to abuse that they are experiencing

4.3 North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue:

- Will ensure that all management and staff are familiar with this policy
- Will work with other agencies within the framework of the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Adult Policy and Procedures
- Will act within its confidentiality policy and will usually gain permission from service users before sharing information about them with another agency
- Will inform service users that where a person is in danger, a child is at risk or a serious crime has been committed then a decision may be taken to pass information to another agency without the service users consent
- Will endeavour to keep up to date with national developments relating to preventing abuse and welfare of adults
- Will ensure that the names person understands his/her responsibility to refer incidents of adult abuse to the relevant statutory agencies (Police/Adult Protection Unit)

4.3 This means that in providing a service to the community, in recruitment and selection, in the policies and procedures for managing workers,(whether employees or agency staff) or in the hiring of contractors, or in the purchasing of goods and services we are committed to a policy of preventing discrimination, to any of the protected groups, on the grounds of age, colour, disability, gender, ethnicity, nationality, national origin, marital/parental status, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, transgender or any other reason which can not be shown to be justified.

4.4 Preventing Abuse

4.5.1 North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service is committed to putting in place safeguards and measures to reduce the likelihood of abuse taking place within the service it offers

4.5.2 Therefore this policy needs to be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service Working with Young People Policy and Guidance
- North Yorkshire Safeguarding Adults Multi Agency Policy and Procedures
- No Secrets, Department of Health (2000)
- Standards in Safeguarding Adults, ADSS (2005)

4.5.3 North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service is committed to safer recruitment policies and practices. This includes Criminal Records Bureau (CRB/ ISA?) disclosures for staff, ensuring references are taken up and adequate training on Safeguarding Adults is provided for staff.

4.5.4 Where appropriate, employees will be required to have an enhanced CRB/ISA disclosure in line with the CRB/ISA policy.

4.5.5 The organisation will work within the current legal framework for reporting staff that are abusers. The York and North Yorkshire Multi Agency Policy and Procedures are based on the Department of Health document 'No Secrets' and the 2005 ADSS paper 'Standards in Safeguarding Adults' and are available from Community Risk. Information about abuse, the Complaints Policy and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Policy will be available to service users.