

Readers may note that some information within these documents have been omitted / redacted.

Some information has been omitted / redacted as disclosure may prejudice the commercial interests of Irvine Housing Association trading as Riverside Scotland.

We recognise that the commercial sensitivity of information may decline over time and the harm arising from disclosure may be outweighed by the public interest in openness and transparency. We commit to review the redaction of any such information from time to time.

Some information has been redacted as it contains personal data which identifies an individual. Disclosure of this information would place Irvine Housing Association t/a Riverside Scotland in breach of the Data Protection Act 2018.

**249th Board Meeting of Irvine Housing Association Ltd:
 Thursday 30 June 2022 at 5.30 p.m. via MS Teams video conference**

AGENDA

		Data Class
1.	Apologies for Absence	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
3.	Previous Minutes – Minutes of the 248 th Board Meeting held on Thursday 26 May 2022	Public
4.	Matters Arising	
5.	Substantive Business	
5.1	Draft Financial Statements	Confidential
5.2	Succession Planning	Public
5.3	Policies Review	Public
6.	Any Other Business	
7.	Date of Next Meeting – Thursday 18 August 2022 at 5.30 p.m. – 250 th Board Meeting, (location tbc)	

5. Substantive Business

5.2. Succession Planning

Title: Succession Planning	Date: 30 June 2022
Author: Donna Boyle [REDACTED]	Sponsor: Diana MacLean
Action: For noting	Confidential: No
Appendices: Appendix 1 – Board Member Election / Re-election Schedule	Reading Room:
Reg. Standard: Standard 6 The governing body and senior officers have the skills and knowledge they need to be effective.	ORP ref: xx
Strategic Risk ref: R6 Governance & Regulation	
Consultation: This report is not subject to consultation	

Purpose and Action:

This paper highlights the requirements in accordance with our Rules with regard to the Election of Board Members at our Annual General Meeting (AGM) in September this year.

The Board is asked to note the Board Members required to stand down at the AGM as a third of the Board (in the absence of voluntary stand downs) and as a co-optee.

Executive Summary:

One third of the Board are required to stand down at the AGM together with any Board Member co-opted to the Board or who has filled a casual vacancy during the year.

If there are no voluntary stand downs as part of this process, the Board Members due to stand down will be those who served the longest on the Board since they were last elected.

This paper identifies those Board Members who are required to stand down at the AGM (in the absence of voluntary stand downs).

1. Introduction

The Association's Annual General Meeting is scheduled to take place in September this year. In accordance with Rule 39 of the Association's Rules, as part of the Election of Board Members proceedings, one third of the Board are required to stand down at the Annual General Meeting.

Unless any Board Member voluntarily stands down from the Board, the retiring Board Members to be selected should be those who have served the longest on the Board since the date of their last election.

Board Members who have been co-opted to the Board or who have filled a casual vacancy on the Board since the previous Annual General Meeting are also required to stand down.

Any Board Member standing down due to serving the longest since their previous election or having served as a co-optee or filling a casual vacancy are eligible to stand for re-election without nomination, provided they have not exceeded 9 continuous year's service on the Board.

2. Discussion

The attached schedule details each Board Member's previous election / re-election date. If no Board Member voluntarily stands down from the Board, the 3 Board Members scheduled to stand down from the Board at the AGM are Mrs M. Crearie, Mrs M. Burgess and Mr G. Darroch (having been previously elected / re-elected in 2019).

Mr S. Easton will also require to stand down at the AGM as a co-optee to the Board. In line with the Rules, this is in addition to the third of the Board required to stand down.

No Board member highlighted above has exceeded 9 years continuous serve on the Board and are therefore eligible to stand for re-election without nomination should they wish to.

3. Risk

There is a risk that the 3 Board Members who are due to stand down choose not to stand for re-election to the Board. This would result in there being 5 vacancies on the Board (3 who stand down plus 2 current vacancies). If there were no other nominations to the Board at the AGM, this would result in the Association's Board falling below its minimum composition requirement of 8. The Riverside Group (as parent), do however, have powers to appoint and dismiss to the Association's Board and could nominate Officers to serve on the Board until such times as new Board Members were recruited to fill casual vacancies on the Board.

4. Conclusion

If there are no voluntary stand downs by Board at the AGM, Mrs Crearie, Mrs Burgess and Mr Darroch shall be the third required to stand down at the AGM together with Mr Easton as a co-optee. All Board Members identified for stand down will be eligible to stand for re-election to the Board at the AGM.

5. Next Steps

The Chair will discuss with all Board Members their intentions with regard to standing down at the AGM as part of the Board appraisals discussions taking place during July.

Board Member Election / Re-election Schedule

Board Member	Election / Re-election Date	Co-opted / Cas Vacancy / Grp Nominated	Length of Service at AGM
Mr J. Strang	22/9/21		1
Mr R. Hill	22/9/21		4
Mr T. McInnes	22/9/21		1
Mrs S. Petrie	22/9/21		1
Mr S. Stewart	22/9/21		1
Ms F. Fox	22/9/21		N/A
Mr S. Easton*		22/9/21	N/A
Mr P. New	N/A	7/12/21	N/A
Mrs M. Crearie	21/8/19		3
Mrs M. Burgess	21/8/19		6
Mr G. Darroch	21/8/19		6
Mrs J. Galbraith	16/9/20		5
Vacancy			
Vacancy			

Due to stand for election or re-election at 2022 AGM if no voluntary stand downs: Mrs M. Crearie, Mrs M. Burgess and Mr G. Darroch. Mr S. Easton, as a co-optee, also requires to stand down.

Eligible for Re-election: Mrs M. Crearie, Mrs M. Burgess and Mr G. Darroch.

Reached length of service:

Not standing for re-election:

* Co-optee

5.3. Policy Updates

Title: Policy Updates	Date: 30-06-2022
Author: Pamela Adrain, Anne-Marie Fox-Smith, Riverside Equalities Team, Riverside Safeguarding Services.	Sponsor: Heather Anderson
Action: To approve and adopt	Confidential: No
Appendices: Appendix 1 – Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Appendix 2 – Adult Support and Protection Policy Appendix 3 - Child Protection Policy	Reading Room: None
Reg Equalities and Human Rights.	Requirement: ORP ref: People at our Heart
Strategic Risk ref: R1 Customer Experience, R7 Culture & Change, R3 Safety First	
Consultation: There has been consultation with customers through the Riverside Scotland Customer Panel and Registered Tenant Organisations for the Equality and Diversity Policy, and with local partner agencies and Riverside Safeguarding colleagues for the Child and Adult Support and Protection policies.	

Purpose and Action:

The following policies have recently been reviewed in line with the Association's standard three-year review policy cycle:

- Riverside Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&I) policy.
- Riverside Scotland Child Protection policy.
- Riverside Scotland Adult Support and Protection policy.

The review process is now complete, and the updated versions are attached as Appendices to this report. Board is asked to adopt the updated ED&I policy, which is applicable across the whole of the Riverside Group including Riverside Scotland and was approved by Group Board on 12th May 2022.

Board is asked to approve the Child Protection and Adult Support and Protection policies which are specific to Riverside Scotland and reflect Scottish legislation and Guidance.

Executive Summary:

- The ED&I policy has been reviewed by Riverside's Equalities Team, Legal Services and Equalities Best Practice Working Group. The review process was also supported by the Housing Diversity Network. This review has also involved consultation with the Riverside Scotland Customer Panel and Registered Tenant's Organisations. The updated policy is attached to this report as Appendix 1.
- The Riverside Scotland Child Protection and Adult Support and Protection policies have been reviewed by the Riverside Scotland Head of Service in consultation with our Local Authority Partners and Riverside Safeguarding colleagues. These revised policies are attached to this report as Appendices 2 and 3.

1. Introduction

The following policies have recently been reviewed in line with our three-year policy cycle:

- Riverside Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy.
- Riverside Scotland Child Protection policy.

- Riverside Scotland Adult Support and Protection policy.

The purpose of reviewing these policies as standard every three years is to ensure they remain reflective of current legislation and Good Practice and support continuous improvement across the organisation. The ED&I policy is a Group wide policy which is applicable to all Group subsidiaries, including Riverside Scotland and was approved by Group Board in May 2022. Riverside Scotland colleagues, customers, and our Registered Tenant Organisations have been consultees to the development of this policy.

The Riverside Scotland Child and Adult Support and Protection policies have been developed by Riverside Scotland colleagues, are specific to Riverside Scotland customers, and reflect Scottish legislation and Guidance.

2. Summary of Policy Changes

The review process has resulted in the following policy changes:

ED&I Policy

- devise an overarching Group-wide strategy, reviewed annually, with appropriate performance measures – there has been a commitment to developing this later in 2022 as part of the merger Transition Plan with One Housing Group.
- publishing an annual report (externally) summarising Group performance and activities.
- adopting a positive approach to addressing any significant underrepresentation in the profiles of our governance community and colleagues.
- putting in place support for the development of colleagues with protected characteristics to improve representation across all levels of the organisation.
- providing resources for ED&I through a Best Practice Group, a dedicated manager role and Executive sponsorship for colleague groups.
- participating in sector-wide initiatives.
- Explicit commitment against any form of discrimination, harassment or bullying against customers or colleagues (previously implicit).
- taking active steps to involve a diverse range of customers in shaping our policies and activities.

Child Protection Policy

- Document updated from 'Irvine Housing Association' to 'Riverside Scotland' and includes link to updated Scottish Government Child Protection Guidance published in 2021. This Guidance has been updated as part of the Scottish Government Child Protection Improvement Programme, and places further emphasis on the following fundamental principles:
 - The most effective protection of children involves early support within the family before urgent action is needed.
 - The Scottish approach to child protection is based upon the protection of children's rights embedded through the 'Getting it Right for Every Child' policy and practice model.
 - Children's views should be heard and inform every assessment process, plans, and actions.
 - Partnership is promoted between those who care about and have responsibilities for the child – it entails a collaborative approach between professionals, carers and family members.

- Proactive and persistent partnership and collaboration between agencies and with the family.
- Every child has the right to safety and support online.
- Safe practice is more likely to arise from a culture of leadership that has an evaluative focus on outcomes and promotes systematic learning from mistakes and good practice.

Adult Support and Protection Policy

- Document updated from 'Irvine Housing Association' to 'Riverside Scotland'.

3. Risk

These policies are relevant to the following Riverside Scotland Strategic risks:

- **Risk 3: Safety First** – The Association has no appetite for a risk of harm to our customers, colleagues or others coming from the provision of our services and no appetite for a breach of regulation in our role as landlord or employer.
- **Risk 1: Customer Experience** – There are many factors which affect our customer's experience of the services we provide, and where these are within our control, we will not tolerate the risks they pose and will put in place plans and interventions to improve the service.
- **Risk 7: Culture and Change** – The Association has limited tolerance for the risk of low well-being of staff insofar as it might contribute to shortfalls in the customer experience or an increased risk of harm to customers and others.

4. Conclusion

Whilst the revised ED&I policy does not represent a significant change in direction for Riverside, it represents a more comprehensive and explicit statement of our commitment to promoting and achieving equality, diversity and inclusion in our dealings with colleagues and customers. The updated Child and Adult Support and Protection policies ensure that Riverside Scotland will continue to manage safeguarding risks in accordance with national and local legislation and Guidance.

5. Next Steps

- a. These policies will be updated on the Riverside Scotland policy schedule and website and communicated to all colleagues.

EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy



1. Purpose

This policy sets out how The Riverside Group is committed to supporting and promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I). This commitment is embraced by our governing boards and committees and informs all our activities and their impact on our customers, colleagues and other stakeholders.

2. Scope

Our policy applies to everyone who receives a service from us, forms part of our governance, is employed and contracted by us or volunteers their services. We will also seek to ensure that anyone who works on our behalf demonstrates commitment to ED&I.

The policy will help us deliver our vision and uphold all our values. It underlines our commitment to develop as an open and inclusive organisation, a key priority set out within our Corporate Plan.

It aims to ensure that we comply with all our legal and regulatory responsibilities; current requirements are set out principally in the Equality Act 2010, Human Rights legislation, Scotland Act 1998 and any subsequent legislation and by the English and Scottish Housing Regulators. It helps us to ensure we comply with the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance 2020.

It also aims to ensure we are mindful of our duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012) so far as it should apply to our organisation as a Registered Social Landlord in Scotland.

As a Group wide policy, it has been the subject of consultation with customers, board members, colleagues and colleague networks and sets out to reflect their requirements and priorities.

3. Principles

Riverside aims to:

- Prevent discrimination, eliminate prejudice, promote inclusion and celebrate diversity within the organisation.
- Be fair in our dealings with all people - board members, colleagues, customers, volunteers and partners - with whom we have relationships, taking into account the diverse nature of their culture and backgrounds.
- Ensure that ED&I is embedded in everything we do.

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Our policy covers all aspects of equality including race, religion or belief, sex, age, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity, as specified as protected characteristics by the Equality Act 2010.

Policy

The policy will help us deliver our vision and uphold all our values. As an employer and service provider we promote, value and respect ED&I and our commitment is explicitly set out in our Corporate Plan.

We will:

- Develop a strategy owned by the relevant Boards.
- Collect performance data and report against it.
- Embed delivery through policies, processes and procedures.
- Actively support our governance community, colleagues and contractors through training, guidance, advice and establishing support networks such as colleague groups.
- Provide the resources needed to support our activities.
- Comply with the law and regulatory standards.

To achieve this, we will:

Adopt clear strategies and use information and analysis to drive strategy and action

- Devise an overarching group-wide strategy and action plan which addresses customers, the governance community and colleagues, and review it each year, reporting the outcomes to Group Board, Executive Team, ED&I Best Practice Group, colleague networks and Unite.
- Develop a Scottish equalities strategy and action plan to meet all legal and regulatory obligations and provide assurance and evidence to the Board of Riverside Scotland as necessary.
- Use ED&I demographic modelling to establish the profile of our customers, governance community and colleagues compared to national and local benchmarks, using this information to enable local and departmental action planning and customer engagement.
- Consider positive action where we identify significant underrepresentation of groups with protected characteristics within our wider base of customers, board/committee members or colleagues.
- Carry out equality impact assessments on all policies and significant change programmes, making changes where necessary to ensure they deliver our ED&I objectives.

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- Collect, review, and measure data on a regular basis to inform us on ED&I performance and outcomes including lettings, complaints, satisfaction, governance, recruitment, colleagues, pay (though pay gap reporting).
- Summarise the data gathered, within a demographic context where relevant, and report to Executive Directors, Group Board and the Board of Riverside Scotland (as required) with appropriate recommendations to support assurance and management of risk.
- Identify where positive action is required to address a different customer or colleague experience across protected characteristic.
- Provide a full explanation of why information is collected and what we use it for, treating sensitive personal data confidentially and only for the purposes of promoting and ensuring equality and fairness and improving outcomes.
- Publish a report each year summarising relevant data and activities relating to ED&I and publish pay gap reports as required by law.

Embed best practice

- Recruit and retain a diverse governance community and workforce, reflecting the makeup of the communities we serve.
- Ensure that Group Board, the boards of any subsidiaries and the Leadership Team are accountable for the embedding of our ED&I approach in our policies, procedures and practices and for monitoring our performance and decision making.
- Ensure that all board and committee members, colleagues and volunteers receive regular, relevant and up to date training and support to enable them to champion and meet the organisation's policy objectives
- Promote equality through all our activities as an employer, a service provider, a partner and an influencer.
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure our partners, contractors, suppliers (including trainers) and groups connected to us are actively committed to ED&I principles.
- Help colleagues understand how to address prejudice and unconscious bias.
- Put in place training and support, such as mentoring programmes, to assist the development of colleagues with protected characteristics. This will help ensure that the profile of colleagues at all levels of the organisation reflects the makeup of the communities in which we work.
- Ensure that through our procurement processes we appoint partners and suppliers with a robust and compliant approach to ED&I.
- Establish and maintain an ED&I Best Practice Group of colleagues from across the Group (including customer representation) to act as a forum to exchange good practice and identify improvements.
- Support and promote a network of ED&I colleague groups, allocating resources which are sufficient for their remit and ensuring they have Executive level sponsorship.

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- Provide guidance and support on all aspects of ED&I through a dedicated Equality and Diversity Manager, supported by the ED&I Best Practice Group.
- Celebrate diversity by supporting initiatives marking key cultural events and embedding this in our communications.
- Ensure our communications, including the images we use, reflect the diverse makeup of our colleagues and customers.
- Support individual commitment to and ownership of ED&I objectives by ensuring that appraisal conversations focus on Riverside's values.
- Participate in sector-wide best practice forums and initiatives.

Have in place reasonable and accessible procedures and approaches to support ED&I

- Provide a range of ways for customers to access our services and contact us, shaped to customers' requirements, including effective use of digital services.
- Make a clear commitment to customers on how we meet service requirements
- Involve a diverse range of customers in shaping our policies and activities by putting in place actions which encourage those from under-represented groups to participate in ways which reflect and meet their preferences.
- Ensure that no current or potential customer is discriminated against by letting or selling a property on less favourable terms due to a protected characteristic.
- Have procedures in place to ensure our properties comply with our legal obligations to meet requirements arising from disability and other protected characteristics including Aids and Adaptations procedures for customers.
- Ensure we make reasonable adjustments to the way we deliver services to customers based on their protected characteristics.
- Not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or bullying against customers or colleagues, including that based on a protected characteristic, making it easy for victims to report incidents, ensuring we investigate promptly and take appropriate action where required.
- Have up to date and recognised procedures for the management of incidences of domestic abuse, hate crime and harassment and other forms of abuse and discrimination.
- Recognise that some vulnerable groups of people may need support and address this by having robust procedures in relation to Safeguarding/Adult Support and Protection, Child Protection and Modern Slavery.
- Ensure that colleagues comply with our policies on hate crime and harassment, promoting community cohesion in our neighbourhoods.
- Ensure that our workplace is both compliant with legislation and welcoming to those with requirements regarding accessibility and that this extends to use of other venues and conduct of meetings.
- Ensure that all policies and procedures conform with the ED&I Policy.

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- Have procedures in place to ensure reasonable adjustments are provided when required by colleagues with disabilities to enable them to work, recognising that disability includes mental health and that not all disabilities are visible.
- Ensure that all people services and recruitment procedures reflect the principles in this policy including equality of opportunity; this includes flexible working arrangements to help maximise the potential of all current and potential colleagues and relevant procedures for board and committee members.

Definitions

Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents and believing that no one should have poorer life chances because of where, when or whom they were born, or because of other characteristics. Promoting **equality** is about behaving in a way that tackles inequalities, aiming to ensure that all colleagues and service users are treated fairly, and do not experience discrimination.

Promoting **diversity** is about recognising that everyone is different and creating a working environment that values each customer and colleague, ensuring that services are delivered that suit all sections of the community.

Inclusion is about positively striving to meet the needs of different people and taking deliberate action to create environments where everyone feels respected and able to achieve their full potential.

Protected characteristics within the Equality Act 2010 are: race, religion or belief, sex, age, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity, as specified by the Equality Act 2010.

Equal Opportunities within the Scotland Act 1998 refers to the elimination, regulation and prevention of discrimination across a number of areas: sex, marital status, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, language, social origin or other personal attributes, including beliefs or opinions, such as religious beliefs or political opinions.

Section 39 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 requires social landlords, when performing housing services, to: “... *act in a manner which encourages equal opportunities and in particular the observance of the requirements of the law for the time being relating to equal opportunities.*”

We are committed to championing diversity in its widest sense and challenging discrimination based on a variety of social and cultural characteristics. Whilst not explicitly covered by this policy this includes:

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- Socio-economic background
- Class
- Appearance
- Language
- Accents
- Education
- Learning styles
- Political affiliation
- Trade Union affiliation

4. Further Information & Support

Further information and support can be obtained from the Equality and Diversity Manager and the Director of Strategy and Public Affairs.

Associated policies include:

- Hate Crime and Harassment Policy and procedures
- Domestic Abuse Policy and procedures (for both staff and customers)
- Aids and Adaptations Policy and procedures
- Safeguarding/Child Protection and Adult Support and Protection Policies
- Modern Slavery statement
- Recruitment Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Code of Conduct for Colleagues

5. Roles and Responsibilities

<p>Group Board and Executive Directors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing overall leadership, championing ED & I across the organisation and approving the policy • Setting the overall ED&I strategy and monitoring our approach and performance against agreed objectives
<p>Director of Strategy and Public Affairs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading the implementation of the policy and the strategy, ensuring there are clear expectations for colleagues • Ensuring adequate resources are made available to enable policy and strategic objectives to be met
<p>Equality and Diversity Manager</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting the delivery of the key policy objectives and associated actions • Monitoring legislative and regulatory changes and ensuring they are reflected in Riverside's policy, strategy and actions • Providing advice and support to colleagues, and servicing the Best Practice Group
<p>Colleague network Chairs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Championing the policy with network group members • Working with their colleague groups to ensure that group activities support the delivery of Riverside's strategy.
<p>All colleagues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking responsibility for delivering positive ED&I outcomes, by being aware of the policy and knowing how it affects their relationships with other colleagues and their work and service delivery to customers

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6. Risk Thresholds

Riverside’s risk appetite in relation to ED&I is low. It is fundamental to our values and the reputation of the organisation, and the risks associated with breaking the law or failure to meet regulatory standards are significant.

This policy helps mitigate these risks by setting out requirements:

- To develop a strategy owned by the Board.
- Collect performance data and report against it.
- Embed the delivery of this strategy through policies, processes and procedures.
- Actively support our governance community, colleagues and contractors through training, guidance, advice and establishing support networks such as colleague groups.

7. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Riverside is committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. We strive to be fair in our dealings with all people, communities and organisations, taking into account the diverse nature of their culture and background and actively promoting inclusion.

This policy has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.

Note: Document control boxes to be completed by Strategy & Planning Team

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Adult Support and Protection Policy

Date Effective: June 2022

Date of Review: June 2025



Policy:	Adult Support and Protection
Date Approved:	June 2022
Approved by:	Riverside Scotland Board
Policy Owner:	Heather Anderson
Lead Officer:	Pamela Adrain
Applicable to:	All Riverside Scotland employees
In consultation with:	North Ayrshire Council Child Protection Committee, Riverside Group Safeguarding Team.
Review date:	June 2025
Associated Documents:	Adult Support and Protection Policy, Child Protection Procedures.

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1. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Our commitment to equality is central to everything we do at Riverside Scotland. We want our services to be available to as many people as possible and we will not restrict access to anyone on the grounds of race, gender, sexuality, age, culture, disability, and faith

2. INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out:

- The definition of Adult Support and Protection (ASP) and relevant legislation and Guidance which the Association will apply.
- The strategic context for preventing and dealing with Adult Support and Protection issues which the Association will reflect.
- The responsibilities of the Association and local partner agencies in relation to identifying and dealing with adult support and protection concerns.
- How the Association will ensure effective links are made into Multi Agency Adult Support and Protection Procedures.
- The approach that will be taken to the sharing of sensitive information and confidentiality.
- How the Association will ensure that staff have the relevant knowledge, skills and understanding to respond and deal effectively with any concerns.

This policy is supported by the Association's Adult Support and Protection Operational Procedures.

3. LEGISLATION AND DEFINITIONS

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 – this Act imposes duties on, and assigns functions to, local authorities in respect of making inquiries, the conduct of investigations, the application for protective powers in respect of adults defined by the legislation to be at risk of actual or suspected harm. This Act also brought about the creation of Adult Protection Committees in every local authority area.

Harm is defined in the legislation as all harmful conduct including:

- Conduct which causes physical harm;
- Conduct which causes Psychological harm (for example, by causing fear, alarm or distress);
- Unlawful conduct which appropriates or adversely affects property, rights or interests (i.e theft, fraud, embezzlement or extortion); and
- Conduct which causes self-harm.

This list is not exhaustive. In general terms, behaviors that constitute 'harm' to others can be physical (including neglect), emotional, financial, sexual or a combination of these.

Harm can be a single or repeated act or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is the expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an adult. It can take the form of physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or domestic abuse, acts of neglect or omission, financial and material abuse and the withholding of information. The abuse can involve some or all of the above.

Harm can occur in any setting and also when an adult lives alone or with a relative. Staff will be aware that vulnerable adults using Riverside Scotland services might disclose they have been subject to harm:

- In their own home.
- In the community.
- Having been abused by a relative, friend or acquaintance:
- In Riverside Scotland premises, as adults might be at risk of harm when they are using our service, for example from another person. If the alleged perpetrator of harm is a member of staff, an internal investigation will not take precedence over reporting concerns to allow an investigation by the Health and Social Care Partnership and or/Police.

4. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

All agencies that work with vulnerable adults have a shared responsibility for protecting and safeguarding their welfare. Each has a different contribution to this common task. These include – identifying concerns, submitting Adult Support and Protection referrals, sharing relevant information, contributing to risk assessments and Adult Protection Plans.

The key strategic objective is for all services and professional bodies to have clear policies in place for identifying concerns and acting upon them, to ensure the safety and well-being of vulnerable adults within our communities.

Riverside Scotland is committed to ensuring that adult protection concerns are identified and acted upon through the delivery of our day-to-day operations. We will participate fully in local multi agency partnership processes as required, and work to achieve the above objective to secure the well-being and safety of all vulnerable adults we come into contact with.

5. AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

No single agency has a monopoly in the identification and management of abuse. All agencies that work with vulnerable adults have a shared responsibility for protecting and safeguarding their welfare. Each has a different contribution to make

Riverside Scotland does not act as a lead agency and in most situations the Association's role will be to: identify concerns, submit Adult Support and Protection referrals, share relevant information, contribute to risk assessments and Adult Protection Plans as needed, and implementing actions following agreement with lead agencies, for example, following an inter-agency case conference. A key role for the Association will be to proactively identify initial risks. Staff must always be aware of risk factors, ensuring all necessary referrals are made to lead/specialist agencies.

It is important for all employees to know the limit of their knowledge and expertise and that they must seek the skills and expertise of others or specialist services to ensure the protection of vulnerable adults.

It is the responsibility of Local Authorities to undertake ASP inquiries and if necessary, formal ASP investigations to establish:

- Whether or not an adult is at risk from harm or suspected harm; and if so,
- Which supports might be necessary for the adult
- Which, if any, of the protective measures available in terms of the legislation are most appropriate to an adult at risk's individual circumstances.

If there has been criminal activity, the Health and Social Care Partnership will also notify Police Scotland. Health and Social Care Partnerships may also convene Adult Support and Protection Case Conferences to ensure a robust multi-agency response to providing support and protection to adults.

6. ADULTS WHO MAY BE AT RISK OF HARM

Illness, or disability can make an individual reliant upon others for help and support. In some cases, reliance can increase vulnerability to abuse and exploitation when trust is abused. People over the age of 16, who fall into this group, are sometimes referred to as adults at risk of harm. They could be someone who, through mental or physical disability:

- Are unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests.
- Are at risk of harm

- and because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected.

It is important to stress that all 3 elements of this definition must be met. The presence of a particular condition does not automatically mean an adult is an 'adult at risk'. Someone could have a disability but be able to safeguard their well-being etc.

7. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

As an allegation of harm can come to the notice of any member of staff at any time, all staff members will receive training in relation to Adult Support and Protection, relevant local procedures and their responsibilities in relation to Adult Support and Protection, including the necessary Disclosure Scotland Protection of Vulnerable Groups checks.

Staff responsible for implementing this policy directly will have training appropriate to their needs and to the needs of Riverside Scotland.

Riverside Scotland will appoint a key individual in relation to Adult Support and Protection and they will undertake Adult Support and Protection Training Level 2 and refresh this training every two years.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is a clear requirement across agencies to co-operate in relation to the protection of adults seen to be at risk of harm. Riverside Scotland will ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place for staff to submit Adult Support and Protection referrals to the Health and Social Care Partnership and or report criminal activity to the Police.

To ensure appropriate protective measures can be put in place, it is recognized that confidential information will need to be shared with other workers, managers and agencies on a need to know basis.

Where an adult is seen to be at risk of harm, this will always override a professional or organisational requirement to keep information confidential, subject to the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulations. However, the disclosure should be limited to the relevant parties only.

9. PRINCIPLES OF REPORTING AND SHARING INFORMATION

The protection of adults at risk of harm is placed above all other operating principles and supersedes the principle of confidentiality. Any concerns a member of Riverside Scotland staff may have regarding the safety and well-being of an adult at risk of harm should be brought to the attention of the Line Manager immediately.

Although it is recognized that a person's privacy must be protected at all times, in situations where harm is suspected, there must be free communication between participating agencies throughout an Adult Support and Protection Inquiry and or investigation. If a staff member is given any information relating to adult harm 'in confidence' they must make clear that any information must be passed on to the H&SCP and or the Police.

In all cases of suspected adult harm, it must be recognized that children involved in the situation might also be at risk and that Child Protection Procedures might have to be invoked.

If interpreter services are needed these should be provided but this should not delay the submission of an Adult Support and Protection referral or making police aware of criminal activity. Using a member of the adult's family as an interpreter or communication support worker should be avoided.

10. REVIEW AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Riverside Scotland will carry out a review of this policy every three years and aim for continuous improvement in order to reflect the national guidelines, changes in legislation, and developments in joint working. The Association's named person will be responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented in full and monitor the effectiveness of this policy and recommend policy changes as needed. This policy will be made available to members of the public upon request.



Child Protection Policy

Date Effective: June 2022
Date of Review: June 2025



Registered Scottish Charity No: SC042551

Policy:	Child Protection
Date Approved:	June 2022
Approved by:	Riverside Scotland Board
Policy Owner:	Heather Anderson
Lead Officer:	Pamela Adrain
Applicable to:	All Riverside Scotland employees
In consultation with:	North Ayrshire Council Child Protection Committee, Riverside Group Safeguarding Team
Review date:	June 2025
Associated Documents:	Adult Support and Protection Policy, Child Protection Procedures.

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1. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Our commitment to equality is central to everything we do at Riverside Scotland. We want our services to be available to as many people as possible and we will not restrict access to anyone on the grounds of race, gender, sexuality, age, culture, disability, and faith.

2. INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out:

- The definition of Child Abuse and relevant Child Protection legislation and Guidance which the Association will apply.
- The strategic context for preventing and dealing with Child Protection issues which the Association will reflect.
- The responsibilities of the Association and local partner agencies in relation to identifying and dealing with child protection concerns.
- How the Association will ensure effective links are made into local Multi Agency Child Protection Procedures and case conferences.
- The approach that will be taken to the sharing of sensitive information and confidentiality.
- How the Association will ensure that staff have the relevant knowledge, skills and understanding to respond and deal effectively with any concerns.

3. LEGISLATION AND DEFINITIONS

The Scottish Government is responsible for Child Protection in Scotland. It sets out policy, legislation and statutory guidance on how the child protection system should work. The key guidance for anyone working in Scotland is <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-guidance-child-protection-scotland-2021/>

Abuse and neglect are forms of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting, or by failing to act to prevent, significant harm to the child. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional setting, by those known to them or, more rarely, by a stranger. Assessments will need to consider whether abuse has occurred or is likely to occur.

The following shows some of the ways in which abuse may be experienced by a child but are not exhaustive, as the individual circumstances of abuse will vary from child to child:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Parental Mental ill Health
- Parental drug and/or alcohol abuse
- Non engaging Families
- Neglect
- Emotional Abuse
- Domestic Abuse

The West of Scotland Child Protection Guidelines sets out the agencies involved, policy and approach that should be taken for Child Protection concerns and cases arising in the West of Scotland, which will be directly applicable to Riverside Scotland customers:

<http://childprotectionnorthayrshire.info/cpc/professionals/introduction/>

4. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Child protection must be seen in the context of the wider Getting it Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) approach, the Early Years Framework and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. GIRFEC promotes action to improve the wellbeing of all children and young people in eight areas. These wellbeing indicators state that children and young people must be: healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible, included **and, above all in this context, safe**. The primary indicator for child protection is to keep a child **safe** and, in so doing, attention is given to other areas of wellbeing as appropriate.

GIRFEC has a number of key components:

- A focus on improving outcomes for children, young people and their families based on a shared understanding of wellbeing.
- A common approach to gaining consent and sharing information where appropriate;
- An integral role for children, young people and families in assessment, planning and intervention;
- A co-ordinated and unified approach to identifying concerns, assessing needs, agreeing actions and outcomes, based on the wellbeing indicators;
- Streamlined planning, assessment and decision-making processes that result in children, young people and their families getting the right help at the right time;
- Consistent high standards of co-operation, joint working and communication, locally and across Scotland;
- A Named Person in universal services for each child and a Lead Professional to co-ordinate and monitor multi-agency activity where necessary; maximising the skilled workforce within universal services to address needs and risks as early as possible;

The Association is committed to ensuring that child protection concerns are identified and acted upon through the delivery of our day-to-day operations. We will participate fully in local multi agency partnership processes as required, and work to achieve the above objectives to ensure the well-being and safety of all children we come into contact with.

5. AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

No single agency has a monopoly in the identification and management of child abuse. Agencies must work together to assess the level of risk and arrive at appropriate decisions.

Local Authority Housing Services

Local Authorities have a statutory responsibility to house children and young people. Housing applicants with children and young people may be given priority because of their potential vulnerability and will be given priority when fleeing domestic abuse. A range of housing accommodation and related support services is available which provides assistance to children, young people and families. Local Authorities, Registered **Social**

Landlords and a number of voluntary sector organisations all offer a range of responses to the needs of families, children, and young people.

Riverside Scotland

Every staff member has an important part to play in protecting children and young people. All staff must be aware of the Association's Child Protection policy, be alert to indicators of concern in children and young people we come into contact with and respond to any concerns we have about a child.

Frontline employees engage with parents/carers, children and young people in a variety of circumstances, for example, through their responsibilities for addressing tenancy related matters; anti-social behaviour, and property conditions. Children of adults, who misuse alcohol or drugs, can be seen as potentially being in need or at risk. An unborn child of a pregnant woman who is a substance abuser is also deemed as being potentially in need or at risk.

It is not just frontline colleagues who can identify risks or possible abuse, concerns may also be raised through external agencies such as contractors. All staff and contractors therefore have a responsibility in relation to child protection. Riverside Scotland does not act as a lead agency and in most situations the Association's role will be to: identify concerns, submit Child Protection referrals, share relevant information, contributing to risk assessments as needed, and implementing actions following agreement with lead agencies, for example, following an inter-agency case conference. A key role for the Association will be to proactively identify initial risks. Staff must always be aware of risk factors, ensuring all necessary referrals are made to lead/specialist agencies as per the Riverside Scotland Child Protection Procedure.

The Association will appoint a key individual who will coordinate and be the key point of contact within the Association for all Child Protection concerns and issues.

It is important for colleagues to know the limit of their knowledge and expertise and that they must seek the skills and expertise of others or specialist services to ensure the protection of children and young people.

Local Authorities/Social Services

Social Services' role is to promote a child's right to be brought up in safety and security. The welfare and safety of the child is Social Services paramount consideration.

Social Services should always take seriously any information received regarding the welfare of a child. Action taken will be informed and in the best interests of the child. In all aspects of child protection, Social Services are committed to working closely with other agencies.

Social Services has a legal responsibility to enquire into the circumstances of children and young people who may require compulsory measures of supervision, who may have been abused or be at risk of being abused, and to take all reasonable measures to protect them from further harm. This responsibility extends to all children and young people, whether they are in the community with their parents, in the care of others or being looked after by the local authority. It is the responsibility of Local Authorities to undertake Child Protection inquiries and if necessary, formal Child Protection investigations in order to establish:

- Whether or not a child is at risk from harm or suspected harm; and if so,
- Which interventions might be necessary for the child.

- Which, if any, of the protective measures available in terms of the legislation are most appropriate to a child at risk's individual circumstances?

Police

In the majority of cases of child abuse a criminal offence may have been committed. The Police have a statutory duty to investigate the circumstances and, where evidence of a crime exists, to report the facts to the Procurator Fiscal.

Police involvement in cases of child abuse stems from their primary responsibilities to protect children and to bring offenders to justice. The overriding consideration is the welfare of the child.

The Police should be informed as soon as possible when a criminal offence has been committed, or is suspected, against a child.

6. CHILD PROTECTION CASE CONFERENCE

A Child Protection Case Conference is an inter-agency meeting where information relevant to concerns about abuse, or risk of abuse, is shared and considered, and decisions are made regarding the future protection of children. The roles and tasks of key agency personnel are clarified at a Child Protection Case Conference. A Child Protection Case Conference will be arranged, where it appears there may be risks to children within a household and there is a need to share and assess information and if it is felt that a child or young person would benefit from an inter-agency Child Protection Plan. It is the Conference that decides whether the children's names are placed on the Child Protection Register.

Child Protection Case Conferences play a key role in the management of child abuse and it is therefore important that all Case Conferences are given a high priority by personnel in the respective agencies involved in child protection. It is extremely important that these meetings are attended by staff identified, as they may be able to provide factual and good quality information which may have an impact on the decision making process.

Social Services are responsible for maintaining a Register of all children who are the subject of an inter-agency Child Protection Plan, which provides a point of enquiry for professionals who are concerned about a child's well-being or safety.

A child's name will remain on the Child Protection Register until such times as the risk to the child or young person is significantly reduced.

Riverside Scotland will ensure that appropriate staff attend all Child Protection Case Conferences as required to inform case management and decision making.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is a clear requirement across agencies to co-operate in relation to the protection of children seen to be at risk of harm. Riverside Scotland will ensure appropriate mechanisms are in place for staff to submit Child Protection referrals to the Health and Social Care Partnership and or report criminal activity to the Police.

To ensure appropriate protective measures can be put in place, it is recognized that confidential information will need to be shared with other workers, managers and agencies on a need to know basis.

Where a child is seen to be at risk of harm, this will always override a professional or organisational requirement to keep information confidential, subject to the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulations. However, the disclosure should be limited to the relevant parties only.

8. PRINCIPLES OF REPORTING AND SHARING INFORMATION

All professionals and service providers have a responsibility to act to make sure that a child whose safety or welfare may be at risk is protected from harm.

Inter-agency work is central to effective child protection practice. Sharing information with other agencies is essential to the success of child protection enquiries and to ensuring the ongoing protection of children who may be at risk. The underlying presumption is that sharing information leads to a more effective service to children and information should be shared unless there are sound reasons not to do so.

However, whilst communication and information sharing between professionals should be open there must be due regard to the professional responsibility and legal obligations of both those in possession of and those giving and receiving what is often sensitive personal information. All decisions to disclose information, or decisions not to disclose, should be fully recorded with the reasons behind the decision noted. A copy of this should also be sent to the party requesting the information where appropriate. If the information is intended to be shared, the person who provided the information must be told, unless to do so would place a child or others at greater risk of harm.

Riverside Scotland will ensure that the reporting and sharing of information is implemented in accordance with Good Practice and the above guidance.

9. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

As an allegation of harm can come to the notice of any member of staff at any time, all staff members will receive training in relation to Child Protection, relevant local procedures and their responsibilities in relation to Child Protection, including the necessary Disclosure Scotland Protection of Vulnerable Groups checks.

Staff responsible for implementing this policy directly will have training appropriate to their needs and to the needs of Riverside Scotland. This includes mandatory training provided by Riverside as well as training provided by our Local Authority partners.

Riverside Scotland will appoint a key individual in relation to Child Protection and they will undertake appropriate Child Protection Training and refresh this training every two years or following any changes in Guidance or legislation.

10. REVIEW AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Riverside Scotland will carry out a review of this policy every three years and aim for continuous improvement in order to reflect the national guidelines, changes in legislation, and developments in joint working. The Association's named person will be responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented in full and monitor the effectiveness of this policy and recommend policy changes as needed. This policy will be made available to members of the public upon

request.

6. Any Other Business

7. Date of Next Meeting - 5.30 p.m. on
Thursday 18 August 2022 at the Gailes
Hotel, Irvine (tbc)