

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
13TH JULY, 2022

REFERENCE FROM CABINET: 9TH JUNE, 2022

**“C13 ANNUAL CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING REPORT: 2021/22
(EL/PR) (SCRUTINY – ALL) –**

There was a Corporate responsibility to ensure that there were effective arrangements in place for safeguarding children and adults who require specific Council services.

The Annual Report 2021/22 provided an overview of the Corporate Safeguarding activities which had taken place across the Local Authority.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the work that had been undertaken to improve corporate arrangements for safeguarding and protecting children and adults be noted.
- (2) T H A T Cabinet would continue to receive six monthly reports on work carried out to improve Corporate Safeguarding arrangements and the effectiveness of relevant Policies.
- (3) T H A T the report be referred to Healthy Living and Social Care, Learning and Culture, Home and Safe Communities, Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committees for consideration and Governance and Audit Committee to ensure continued oversight.

Reasons for decisions

- (1) To ensure that Cabinet was aware of recent developments in corporate arrangements for safeguarding.
- (2) To allow Cabinet to exercise effective oversight of this key area of corporate working and be assured of effective safeguarding taking place.
- (3) To respond to requests that each Scrutiny Committee and Governance and Audit Committee are provided with update reports.”

Attached as Appendix – Report to Cabinet: 9th June, 2022

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Thursday, 09 June 2022
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	All Scrutiny Committees
Report Title:	Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report : 2021/22
Purpose of Report:	To update Cabinet on the work that has been undertaken in relation to Corporate arrangements for Safeguarding across the Council
Report Owner:	Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health
Responsible Officer:	Director of Social Services
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	This is an issue which affects all areas of the Vale of Glamorgan
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Executive decision by Cabinet
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a Corporate responsibility to ensure that there are effective arrangements in place for safeguarding children and adults who require specific Council services. • This Annual Report 2021/22 provides an overview of the Corporate Safeguarding activities which have taken place across the Local Authority. 	

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet notes the work that has been undertaken to improve corporate arrangements for safeguarding and protecting children and adults.
2. That Cabinet continues to receive six monthly reports on work carried out to improve Corporate Safeguarding arrangements and the effectiveness of relevant Policies.
3. That the report is referred to Healthy Living and Social Care, Learning and Culture, Home and Safe Communities, Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committees for consideration and Governance and Audit Committee to ensure continued oversight.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To ensure that Cabinet is aware of recent developments in corporate arrangements for safeguarding.
2. To allow Cabinet to exercise effective oversight of this key area of corporate working and be assured of effective safeguarding taking place.
3. To respond to requests that each Scrutiny Committee and Governance and Audit Committee are provided with update reports.

1. Background

- 1.1 Attached at Appendix 1 is the annual report that brings together safeguarding activity undertaken by the Social Services, Learning and Skills, Managing Directors Office and Resources and Environment and Housing. This provides a holistic representation of safeguarding activity across the Council through a composite of activity across the directorates. Scrutiny Committees should particularly consider the elements of the report in line with their portfolio areas.
- 1.2 The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 was implemented in April 2016. This brought about changes in particular in relation to the introduction of a 'Duty to Report' which required a revision of the corporate safeguarding policy to bring staff's attention to this duty.
- 1.3 The 'Working Together to Safeguard People Guidance' under Part 7 of the Act provides guidance on corporate safeguarding for the council. Guidance on handling individual cases (Volumes 5 and 6) to protect children and adults at risk was launched in 2017. The Guidance provides advice on what should happen if an individual has concerns about the well-being or welfare of a child or an adult at risk.
- 1.4 Corporate Safeguarding operates in conjunction with statutorily required Regional Safeguarding Board Arrangements. The Corporate Safeguarding group consists of officers from across all directorates (as at 21/22) of the council who work to ensure that the Council is proactively considering its individual safeguarding responsibilities.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1** A set of national safeguarding procedures, Wales Safeguarding Procedures, were launched in November 2019. They detail the essential roles and responsibilities for practitioners to ensure that they safeguard children and adults who are at risk of abuse and neglect. The procedures are designed to standardise safeguarding practice across all of Wales and between agencies. These procedures support all agencies to fulfil their statutory roles and functions to adults and children at risk. The development of these procedures was led by the Vale of Glamorgan through the Cardiff and Vale Regional Safeguarding Board. Work to update and refine the procedures continues to be led by Social Services officers in the Vale of Glamorgan.
- 2.2** The attached report highlights areas of growing demand and increased safeguarding activity, and also some of the initiatives to improve our local corporate safeguarding arrangements. For example, Human Resources have implemented an electronic transfer system for DBS checks. This will speed up the DBS checking process which forms part of the pre-employment checks. The system provides an electronic portal where applicants are able to apply for a DBS check online, allow checks to be approved and tracked by the Council, and the disclosure outcome will be available in the majority of cases within 24/48 hours.
- 2.3** The Vale of Glamorgan Council adopted the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Regional Strategy on 30th July 2018. Structures and accountability are in place to ensure that we are able to deliver positive outcomes against the overarching objectives that have been agreed.
- 2.4** The impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on service delivery and how safeguarding activity has continued during this time to ensure those most vulnerable within our communities are supported and protected.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** Long-term – Considering ability across Directorates to meet long-term demands and horizon scanning in relation to our safeguarding responsibilities.
- 3.2** Integration – Considering how the public body’s well-being objectives may impact upon each other of the well-being goals, on their objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.
- 3.3** Involvement – Ensuring voices of children and adult at risk are acknowledged and respected in all our interactions and service planning.
- 3.4** Collaboration – Cross Directorate ownership, accountability and understanding of our safeguarding roles and responsibilities.

4. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 4.1** There are no direct resource implications arising from the Corporate Safeguarding work. However, the increased awareness of safeguarding and the responsibility to respond to concerns of those who may not be eligible for our services has brought about significant pressures within social services teams, and consequently we need to review processes to ensure clarity for people raising concerns and who responds to these enquiries/notifications about individuals who are considered 'at risk' but are not known or eligible for our statutory services.
- 4.2** The other financial implication of note is the resource that will be required to implement some areas of the Corporate Safeguarding Work Plan which directorates will need to manage within their existing budgets.

Employment

- 4.3** The Safer Recruitment Policy legitimately excludes consideration for appointment of all applicants for posts within regulated activity whose criminal actions/convictions mean that they are deemed unsuitable or who are included within the barred list.
- 4.4** Any application for employment for those posts included within the definition of regulated activity by candidates who are included on the relevant barred list will be considered a criminal act and reported to the Police and relevant registration body (if appropriate).
- 4.5** In relation to DBS arrangements, key elements of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 have been implemented.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 4.6** Legislation requires the Local Authority to make arrangements for ensuring the function to discharge their duties, having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk. The Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and codes of practice issued under the Act, makes it clear that Safeguarding Children and Adults at risk of abuse and neglect is everyone's responsibility.
- 4.7** The Director of Social Services must ensure effective safeguarding arrangements are in place, both within the Local Authority and by relevant Partners. The Director of Social Services must oversee and report to Councillors, on a consistent basis regarding the operation, monitoring and improvement of child and adult safeguarding systems within the Local Authority. Defined arrangements with other Officers within the Local Authority, particularly the Head of Adult Services and Head of Children Services must be clear in relation to delegation and reporting arrangements relating to safeguarding issues

5. Background Papers

[Report to Cabinet – 7th June 2021 – Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report 2020-21](#)

Appendix 1

Corporate Safeguarding Vale of Glamorgan Council

Annual Report

April 2021 – March 2022



Cyngor Bro Morgannwg
Vale of Glamorgan Council

The purpose of this report is to reflect on safeguarding activity during 2021/22 across the Vale of Glamorgan Council. The report outlines key activities on a corporate basis for the following:

Section A: Social Services

Section B: Learning and Skills

Section C: Managing Director and Resources (Safer Recruitment)

Section D: Environment and Housing (Housing; Community Safety; Shared Regulatory Services)



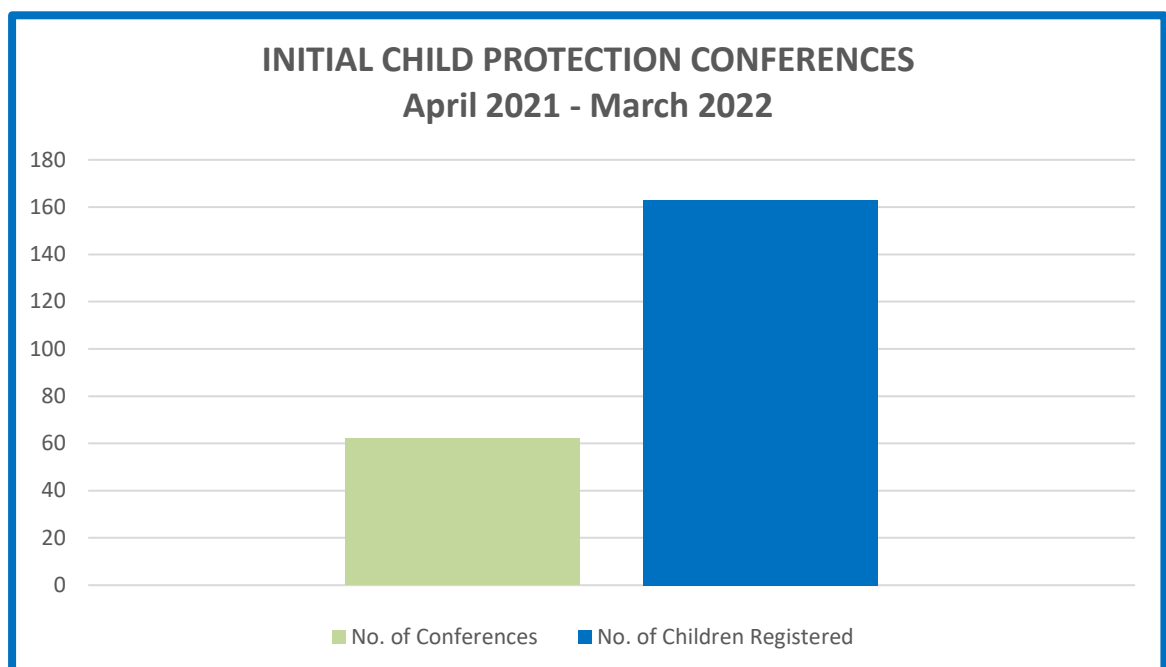
A. Safeguarding in Social Services

1. This section of the update brings together key safeguarding activity that has taken place across the three Divisions of the Social Services Directorate during the period **April 2021 – March 2022**.
2. The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on all areas of our service delivery. Safeguarding those who required care, support and protection in our communities has remained a priority.
3. The following activities will be addressed in turn:
 - Child Protection (Conferences & Registration)
 - Adult Safeguarding (Adults at Risk)
 - Allegations against Professionals and Those in Positions of Trust – Section 5 Wales Safeguarding Procedures
 - Cardiff and Vale Regional Safeguarding Board
4. **Children’s Safeguarding & Review : Child Protection**

Child Protection Conferences are multi-agency meetings that include children and their parents/caregivers and take place when Child Protection (S.47 of the Children Act 1989) enquiries have identified that a child is at continued risk of harm. The S.47 enquiries will have been conducted by a social worker within the

children and young people's team alongside an assessment. These enquiries and subsequent outcomes will have been informed by multi-agency discussion and consideration of the child's individual circumstances in the context of their wider family.

5. The child protection conference functions, chairing roles and responsibilities, are delivered by the Resource Management and Safeguarding Division of Social Services. It has a function that is independent of Children's Services, although there is close collaboration and communication. This enables a level of independence and scrutiny in ensuring that effective practice is taking place, to enable children's voices to be heard and this reflects good outcomes for children and their families. It also ensures that appropriate and effective risk management is evident for those children deemed to be at most risk within our communities.
6. During the pandemic the operating model for conferences changed to taking place via virtual platform Teams. This has not impacted on our ability for appropriate discussion and decision making for children and their families. Children and their families have also continued to participate in child protection conferences, and as a consequence we have seen increased participation from parents who previously had not engaged within this forum.
7. The table below demonstrates how many initial child protection conferences were held in 2021/2022.



8. 62 initial Child Protection Conferences were held during this period, which resulted in 115 children becoming subject to Child Protection Registration and risk planning. The difference in figures of conferences held to number of children subject to registration reflects sibling groups where there are one or more children in the family.
9. The decision for a child to be subject to registration and child protection planning indicates that they have been identified as being at risk of significant harm. There are more children than conferences taking place as the figures reflect sibling groups of children. Not all conferences result in the child becoming subject of registration, in some cases it may be decided that the child is not at continuing risk of significant harm and there may be care and support needs to consider, during this period only one child was considered at Initial Conference that did not result in them becoming subject to a child protection plan and registration. The decision for registration and what category of registration is required, is determined within the child protection conference and considered within the parameters of the risks being identified.

The categories of risk for registration are:

- Physical Abuse
 - Emotional or Psychological Abuse
 - Sexual Abuse
 - Financial Abuse
 - Neglect
10. Children can be recorded as being at risk of abuse, neglect or harm under one, or more of these categories.
 11. 2021/22 has seen the number of children becoming subject to registration and child protection planning stabilising compared, to 2020/21 where significant increases were being noted. As of end March 2022 there were a total of 85 children subject to child protection registration, planning and review.

Adult Safeguarding - Adults at Risk

12. Safeguarding duties under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWBA) apply to adult protection, as safeguarding is preventative as well as protective. Safeguarding is wider than the essential focus on those most at risk or needing protection from abuse, neglect and harm. Safeguarding includes ensuring the provision of safe and effective care; protecting from abuse, neglect and harm; optimising well-being, voice, choice and control, and preventing impairment of health and development.
13. Safeguarding is everyone’s business. However, the Act sets out particular duties for Local Authorities and relevant partner agencies e.g., Health and Police, working with adults. The Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act, places a duty to report an “adult at risk” for all relevant partners for the Local Authority. There is a duty for a Local Authority to make enquiries if it has reasonable cause to suspect that a person within its area (whether or not ordinarily resident there) is an adult at risk.
14. Where there is reasonable cause to suspect that an adult is at risk of abuse or neglect the Local Authority has a duty to undertake section 126 enquiries. These enquiries should normally be completed within seven days and enquiries should be made to determine what actions may be required to support the adult at risk and any ongoing protection planning that may be required. These enquiries should be person centred and ensure that the adult is consulted and spoken with to determine their understanding of the situation and any support needs they may have as well as considering potential risks.
15. The duties placed on the Local Authority by the SSWBA, have resulted in a significant increase in the number of safeguarding enquiries being undertaken. This has resulted in increased numbers of citizens coming to the attention of Social Services, where historically they would not have
16. The Adult Safeguarding Team (Vale of Glamorgan council) received **816** Safeguarding reports between April 2021 – March 2022. This is a **36%** increase from the previous year. The increase is likely due to the reduction in Covid-19 restrictions and incidents of abuse being more visible, also education and people’s understanding around their ‘Duty to Report’. The table below details number of reports in previous years

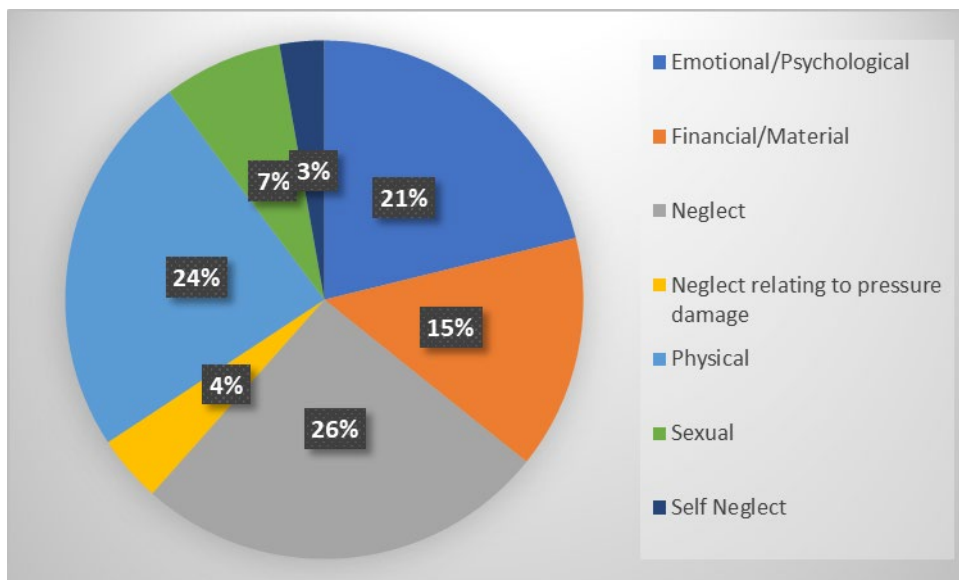
2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/19	2021/22
318	375	445	619	602	816

Of those **816** reports **597** proceeded to enquiry and of those were **75%** were completed within the seven-day time scale. Those out of timescale were usually only by a few days and were generally due to further enquiries being required.

The three Adult Safeguarding Lead Coordinators completed a combined total of 112 strategy meetings.

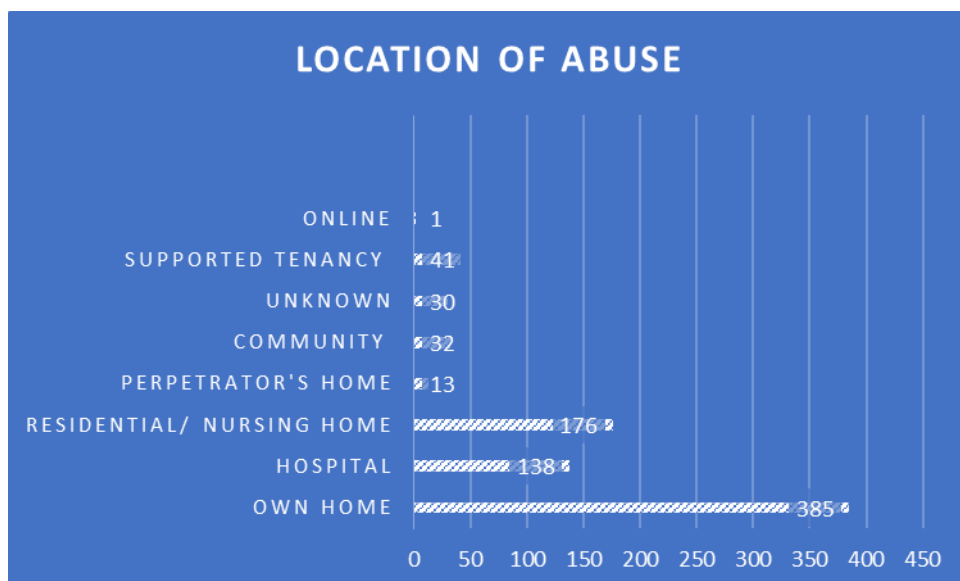
One Adult Protection Conference took place, and Protection Plans were incorporated as part of actions from strategy meeting. Both Adult Protection Conferences and Adult Protection Plans will be specific areas of development over the coming year for the Adult Safeguarding Team.

Types of abuse being reported included:



The highest three areas included (from highest to lowest) Neglect, Physical and Emotional/ Psychological abuse, although it should be noted that individuals could experience more than one type of abuse.

Location/Environment where abuse took place included:



Most of the abuse and neglect is reported as taking place in the individuals own home.

It is likely that over the next 12 months there will continue to be more referrals due to a further increased knowledge of individuals and organisations and their 'Duty to Report', as further Safeguarding training is rolled out into statutory and third sector organisations.

Over the next 12 months the cost of living crisis has the potential to impact on an increase in referrals in relation to financial abuse.

Safeguarding Allegations against Professionals/Positions of Trust

17. Early 2020 saw the implementation of a new set of national safeguarding procedures, Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019). A significant feature of these procedures has been the introduction of a combined approach (Adults & Children) to Safeguarding Allegations against Practitioners and those in Positions of Trust. The adult and children safeguarding teams have now adopted these procedures and adopted the combined approach to responding to allegations against practitioners.
18. The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) has a duty to manage allegations and concerns about any person whose work/volunteering (paid or unpaid) brings them into contact with children or adults at risk. The Operational Manager for Safeguarding fulfils the LADO role for the Vale of Glamorgan Council with some duties being delegated to the Principle Officer for Protection and Policy (Children's Safeguarding) and Adult Safeguarding Team Manager.

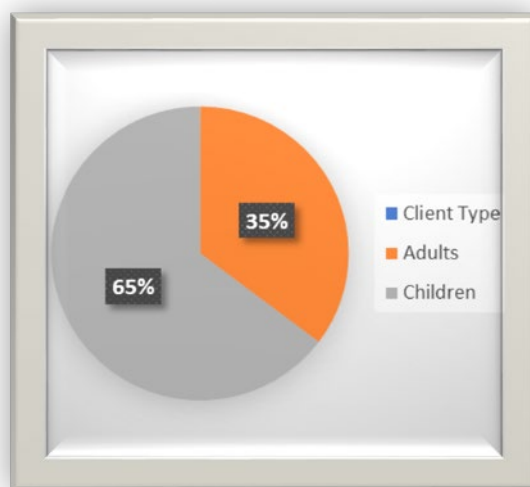
19. Managing cases under these procedures applies to a wider range of allegations than those in which there is reasonable cause to believe a child or adult at risk is suffering or is likely to suffer harm. It also applies to concerns that might indicate that a person is unsuitable to continue to work with children or adults at risk in their present position or in any capacity. It should be used in all cases in which it is alleged that a person who works with children or adults at risk has:
 - *Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child or adult at risk*
 - *May have committed a criminal offence against a child or adult at risk or that has a direct impact on the child or adult at risk*
 - *Behaved towards a child, children or adults at risk, in a way that indicates they are unsuitable to work with children and/or adults*

20. There are a number of considerations when allegations have been made, the LADO (or delegated officer for safeguarding) will co-ordinate the multi-agency meetings and monitor the process if there are any investigations taking place i.e. criminal investigations, and ensure that during this process there is appropriate risk management and support plan in place.

21. For all allegations a clear and comprehensive summary of the allegation, details of how the allegation was investigated

22. The Vale of Glamorgan council received **85** concerns in relation to practitioners working with both Children and Adults at Risk (in paid and voluntary positions) between April 2021 to March 2022. This is a **47 %** increase from the concerns received between April 2020 to March 2021.

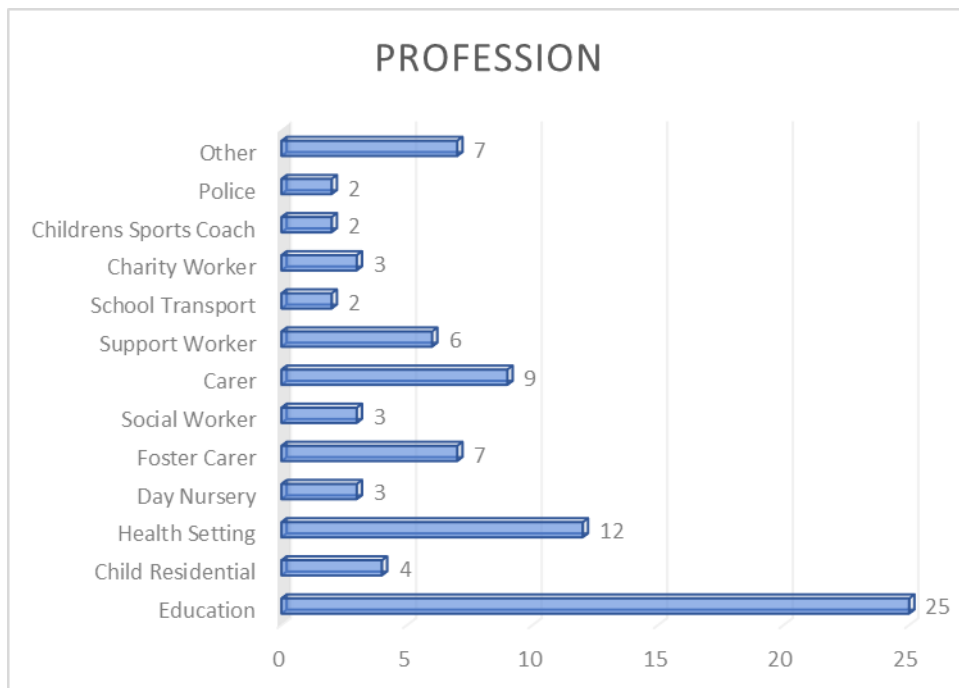
23. Of those concerns **55** were predominately working with Children and **30** were working with Adults at Risk.



14 concerns referred did not progress to strategy discussion, and of the remaining **71** a total of **97** strategy meetings were convened.

The reason for the concern not progressing to strategy meeting was either because the individual was not in a role where they were directly in post to work with Children or Adults at Risk, or it was a lower-level concern that could be managed via the employees own HR procedures.

The job roles of the individuals referred included:



Most of the concerns reported were made by the Police (either directly or through Children's services), this is to be expected as the incidents referred usually had already come to the attention of the Police. The second largest referrer was education settings.

The concerns related to Domestic violence, driving offences ('drink driving'), physical and sexual assaults of Adults, Adults at Risk and children.

10 of the referrals were subject to ongoing Police investigation.

The data showed that the highest number of concerns raised were in relation to practitioners in education settings (including teachers and learning support assistants) of incidents that occurred whilst in the workplace. This could be one reason for the rise in referrals from the previous year, as previously the schools were closed due to Covid-19 restrictions and learning was predominantly online. Domestic violence continues to be widespread across all types of employment, there is the potential that this could increase in the coming year due to the cost-

of-living crisis and the added pressure and strains this could add to families. Research has shown that woman from lower income households are 3.5 times more likely to experience Domestic Abuse.

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

24. The domestic violence MARAC is a multi-agency forum for agencies to share information with a view to identifying those at a **'high'** level of risk of serious harm and to jointly construct a management plan to provide professional support to all those at risk. This process is managed and co-ordinated via the Safer Vale Team within the Environment and Housing Directorate.
25. Following the merge of police forces in South Wales, policing in the Vale of Glamorgan is provided via the Eastern Unit which covers Cardiff and the Vale. In the Vale of Glamorgan, an effective and embedded fortnightly MARAC Meeting takes place, chaired by the South Wales Police Detective Inspector for Public Protection, with relevant staff in attendance. Representatives from both adult and children services attend these fortnightly meetings and contribute to the overall action planning.
26. The Operational Manager for Safeguarding sits on the MARAC Steering Group. This Group has a strategic role to monitor and review the progress effectiveness of the MARAC arrangements and process.

27. **Multi-Agency Public Protection (MAPPA)**

The Local Authority fulfils the duty to co-operate Section 325(3) of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 ("CJA 2003") by appropriate representation in MAPPA planning and meetings from Youth Offending Teams; Education; Housing; Social Services. The Local Authority is also represented on the MAPPA Strategic Management Board which is responsible for managing MAPPA activity across our region.

28. **Cardiff and Vale Regional Safeguarding Board**

The Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Boards ensure that effective arrangements are in place to protect children within the region who are at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation, also ensure appropriate arrangements are in place to protect adults within its area who have needs for care and support (whether or not a local authority is meeting any of those needs) and are experiencing, or are at risk of, abuse or neglect. The Board aims to prevent those adults within its area, from becoming at risk of abuse and neglect.

To achieve these aims the Boards:

- Promote the development of strategies to prevent risk effectively

- Ensure that agencies are able to challenge themselves and partners in delivering their individual and shared accountability for safeguarding effectively
- Ensure that the voice of the person is heard and recognised in its deliberations
- Promote a culture of critical analysis and review to ensure that lessons are learned when people suffer harm because of gaps in policy, systems or practice

The [Cardiff and Vale RSB Annual Business Plan 2022-2023](#) sets out the key priorities for the Board during the 2022/23.

The Director of Social Services, Vale of Glamorgan is the co-chair of the Regional Safeguarding Board. Officers from across the Vale of Glamorgan are represented at the Regional Safeguarding Boards and continue to provide consistent participation and engagement across all areas of work. This ensures there is a shared ownership, accountability and understanding of safeguarding priorities across the region.



Dysgu a Sgiliau Learning and Skills

B. Safeguarding in Learning and Skills

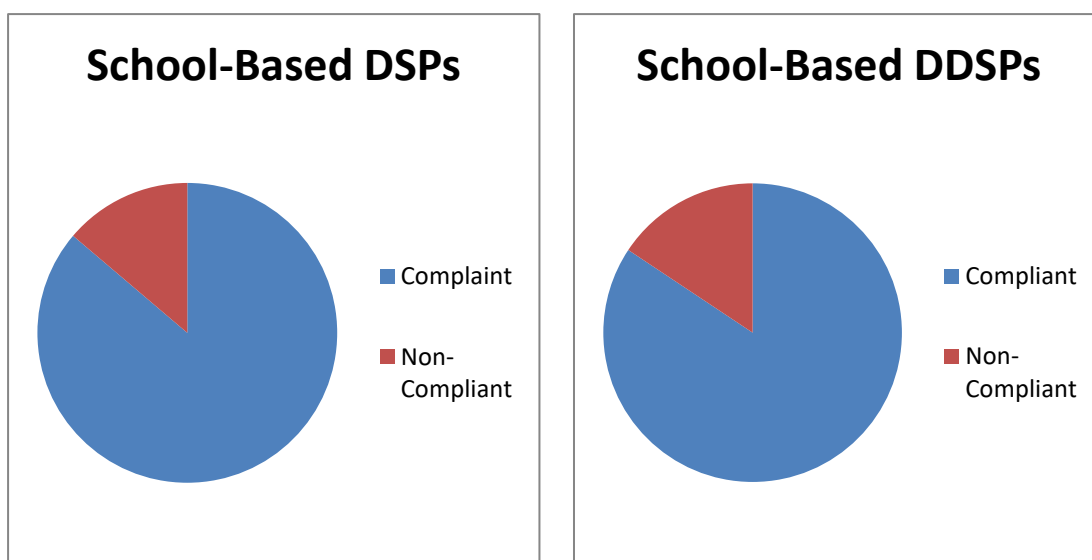
1. Safeguarding activity in the Learning and Skills Directorate continues to evolve in line with requirements of national, regional and local developments in legislation, guidance and policy.
2. The Directorate Management Team (DMT) consistently monitors operational safeguarding practice across the Directorate, this includes a standing safeguarding agenda item at monthly DMT meetings that has a particular focus on safer recruitment, safeguarding training and allegations against employees and volunteers,
3. Directorate safeguarding policies, guidance and standard forms are available to support safeguarding practice for all employees and volunteers in the Directorate, Schools, Youth Service, Libraries and Adult Community Learning (ACL) for consistency in practice across the Directorate. All Vale schools have received a revised (January 2021) Model Safeguarding Policy provided by the Directorate that is consistent with Welsh Government guidance. A further revision is under review at this time which further considers updates to the recently revised February 2022 Keeping Learners Safe guidance.

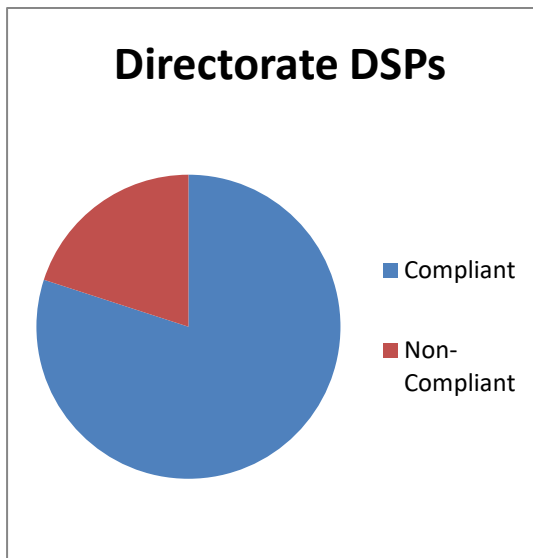
4. Mandatory annual safeguarding training is delivered consistently across the Directorate to standards set by Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Board (RSB) and all employees and volunteers are expected to comply with statutory and local guidance in relation to safeguarding children and adults. An IDEV Level 1 safeguarding package continues to be rolled out to all school and Directorate staff. This ensures a consistent and standardised approach to safeguarding training is maintained.

5. Level Two training for Dedicated Safeguarding Person (DSPs) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person (DDSPs) is delivered on-line numerous times each academic term to maximise the opportunities for attendance.. All School & Directorate-based staff, including DSPs now have access to iDev accounts that will facilitate much easier maintenance of safeguarding training and the ability to monitor in real time training compliance rates of all staff.

6. Compliance with annual safeguarding training:
 At this time school based DSPs, 50 of the 58 are in compliance, therefore compliance rate is 88%
 School based DDSPs, 70 of the 83 are in compliance, therefore compliance rate is 90%
 Directorate based DSPs, 20 out of 25 are in compliance and compliance is therefore 80%

The school based staff that are not currently compliant can be accounted for through long term sickness / absence from the workplace. Those not compliant are all booked on to training courses during summer term.





DSPs, DDSPs, Designated Safeguarding Governors (DSGs) and other staff have access to a bespoke programme of subject-specific safeguarding training delivered termly, with content developed in response to national, regional and local priorities. Current training priorities for the Learning and Skills Directorate include, Radicalisation and Extremism, Sexually Harmful Behaviour, Sexual Harassment and LGBTQ+ discrimination.

7. Schools continue to develop a recognised Safeguarding Team that includes DSP, DDSP and DSG.. Schools are encouraged to include their Designated Safeguarding Governor in development of the Safeguarding Self Evaluation Report (SER), use of the safeguarding self-evaluation Audit Tool and Guidance that accompanies Keeping learners safe, and the review of policies and compliance with training, along with safer recruitment and in monitoring the general effectiveness of safeguarding practice within the school.
8. The Directorate Safeguarding Officer in partnership with the Governor Support Unit, offer termly safeguarding training to all governors, including bespoke training for those in the DSG role. All training is evaluated and reviewed to facilitate regular development and ensure that safeguarding training is fit for purpose and meets need. Since September 2021, 32 Governors have undergone basic safeguarding training, with a further 27 DSG's undergoing bespoke Designated Safeguarding Governor training
9. The Directorate continues to demonstrate regulatory compliance in relation to licensing children in employment and entertainment, including the licensing of chaperones. The Directorate continues to participate in national discussions to achieve consistency in licensing practice across local authorities in Wales. As part of a planned inclusion team restructure there is now a post primarily dedicated to licensing and CIEE to further recognise the significance of this area of work. The inclusion Manager and dedicated CIEE licensing and data

officer are liaising closely with colleagues in Cardiff to ensure greater parity of approach for this area and have revised processes accordingly.

10. The Directorate continues to invest considerable effort in supporting schools to achieve 100% compliance with Safer Recruitment.
11. The Safeguarding Officer and other senior officers continue to represent the Directorate at the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan RSB and on all RSB sub-groups, thereby strengthening working relationships with partner agencies.
12. The Safeguarding Officer also contributes to the Wales Safeguarding in Education Group and to national and regional multi-agency working groups in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation, Modern Slavery/Human Trafficking, Children in Employment and Entertainment and Elective Home Education. The Safeguarding Officer also participates in local multi-agency activity such as the Cohesion and Engagement Steering Group, VAWDA Steering Group and Regional Channel Panel. The Safeguarding Officer continues to participate in national groups working on revised editions of key All-Wales safeguarding and child protection guidance documents. Participation in national and local groups ensures that the Directorate has access to up-to-date safeguarding information and is able to influence the development of national and local strategies and guidance.
13. The Vale of Glamorgan domestic abuse Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) continues to develop and refine its processes and the participation of a Learning and Skills officer enables appropriate information-sharing to develop robust support for children experiencing the effects of domestic abuse. Schools respond promptly and appropriately to requests for information.. The Directorate and Vale schools continue to receive Police Protection Notifications (PPNs) from South Wales Police, which significantly enhance knowledge of the child's lived experience in relation to domestic and missing person incidents and allow the development of appropriate support for the relevant child.
14. The Directorate continues to monitor the effectiveness of the Team Teach Physical Intervention model and training remains available for all schools to improve the ability of school staff to use de-escalation techniques to manage challenging behaviour. This TT training is supported by additional LA training and focus on the potential risk to learners and professionals in the use of physical restraint and is supported by the TIS trauma informed schools approaches. The training focuses on the need to record and reduce all forms of restrictive practice and to review all use of Physical intervention and highlights the recent report of the EHRC in this regard. Work continues to evaluate the safeguarding implications for children subject to fixed-term or permanent exclusions. The Safeguarding Officer also liaises with senior officers with responsibility for wellbeing and nurture, to ensure that all activity relating to child welfare is linked and supported. The Directorate continues to review the effectiveness of anti-

bullying strategies and recognises the impact of unresolved bullying on wellbeing outcomes for children.

15. With the recent publication of the ESTYN 'We don't tell our teachers' thematic review into peer on peer sexual harassment (Dec 21), along with the subsequent Welsh Government response, the Directorate is ensuring that the recommendations outlined at Local Authority level and school level are implemented with key workstreams including:

- improving data collection around bullying and prejudice incidents,
- awareness raising and staff confidence building around such topics as tackling school based sexually harmful behaviour
- the formation of a Secondary schools Wellbeing panel where topics such as bullying and the use of phobic behaviour in school settings is discussed.



Rheolwr Gyfarwyddwr ac Adnoddau Managing Director and Resources

C. Managing Director and Resources Directorate – Safe Recruitment

The Managing Director and Resources Directorate report outlines ongoing progress in relation to compliance with the Council’s Safer Recruitment Policy for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022 in comparison to the same period in the previous year.

Overall Compliance – April 2021 to March 2022 (Schools and Corporate Services)

1. Compliance with the policy for April 2021 to March 2022 for all appointments was 93% (37 breach cases), compared to 98% from the same reporting period last year (April 2020 to March 2021). A full breakdown of figures can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Compliance Rates for Corporate and Schools New Starters

Month	Number of new starters under Safer Recruitment	Number of employees with all documentation or RA in place	April 2021 to March 2022	April 2020 to March 2021
April	26	24	92%	100%
May	14	12	86%	100%
June	38	34	89%	100%
July	23	20	87%	100%
Aug	17	17	100%	90%
Sept	225	203	90%	96%
Oct	30	30	100%	97%
Nov	42	42	100%	98%
Dec	20	20	100%	100%
Jan	50	47	94%	100%
Feb	20	20	100%	100%
Mar	33	32	97%	100%
Total	538	501	93%	98%

Schools

- Compliance with the policy for April 2021 to March 2022 for school appointments was 90%, which is an increase in non-compliance from the same reporting period last year (97%).
- Members will note that for the month of September 2021 (which represents the highest recruitment activity within the school academic year), compliance was 89% which is an increase in non-compliance in comparison to September 2020 (95%). The number of new starters increased dramatically within schools – 204 in September 2021 in comparison to 62 in 2020 and 98 in 2019.
- The current escalation process requires a discussion with the Head Teacher regarding non-compliance and monitoring of repeated non-compliance by particular schools throughout the year.

5. A full breakdown of compliance rates for schools and actual figures can be found in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Compliance Rates for Schools New Starters

Month	Number of new starters under Safer Recruitment	Number of employees with all documentation or RA in place	April 2021 to March 2022	April 2020 to March 2021
April	16	14	88%	100%
May	8	6	75%	100%
June	19	15	79%	100%
July	5	4	80%	100%
Aug	0	0	100%	100%
Sept	204	182	89%	95%
Oct	15	15	100%	93%
Nov	28	28	100%	97%
Dec	9	9	100%	100%
Jan	25	22	88%	100%
Feb	12	12	100%	100%
Mar	18	17	94%	100%
Total	359	324	90%	97%

Corporate

6. The compliance rate for Corporate Services for April 2020 to March 2021 was 99%. This is the same as the previous year (99%).
7. A full breakdown of compliance rates and actual figures can be found in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Compliance Rates for Corporate New Starters

Month	Number of new starters under Safer Recruitment	Number of employees with all documentation or RA in place	April 2021 to March 2022	April 2020 to March 2021
April	10	10	100%	100%
May	6	6	100%	100%
June	19	19	100%	100%
July	18	16	89%	100%
Aug	17	17	100%	90%
Sept	21	21	100%	100%
Oct	15	15	100%	100%
Nov	14	14	100%	100%
Dec	11	11	100%	100%
Jan	25	25	100%	100%
Feb	8	8	100%	100%
Mar	15	15	100%	100%
Total	179	177	99%	99%

Return of Risk Assessments (Schools and Corporate Services)

8. Human Resources continue to monitor the return of risk assessments for both Schools and Corporate services. Over the reporting period of April 2021 to March 2022, 37 new starters commenced employment without all the required checks in place or a signed risk assessment as allowed for by the policy.
9. During the year April 2021 to March 2022, 130 new starters were recruited under a Risk Assessment. This represents 24.2 of all new starters. This is a slight increase on the previous year (21.7%).

On-going measures

10. The e-learning facility is available to all Vale of Glamorgan Council employees within corporate Directorates who have access to the Council’s StaffNet through

the new iDev system. Currently all Schools (excluding Stanwell), have access to the Council's StaffNet to enable access the Safer Recruitment and DBS policy and supporting documentation.

11. The Safer Recruitment escalation process requires Human Resources to identify and monitor outstanding documentation at the 8th, 10th and 12th calendar week following the employee taking up employment. Discussions are then held with the Head Teacher who in turn meets with the member of staff and confirms the outcome with Human Resources. The Directorate Safeguarding Officer for Learning and Skills is also informed at the 8th week. Human Resources continue to monitor weekly and also inform the Chair of Governors and Safeguarding Governor if the documentation remains outstanding at the 10th week and 12th week. At the time of reporting there are no schools appointments and one corporate appointment at the 8th / 10th / 12th week.
12. DBS Checks are undertaken through the e-Bulk system introduced in 2019 and this increases the speed of pre-employment checks. The disclosure outcome will be available in the majority of cases within 24/48 hours.
13. Communication with relevant Head Teachers where issues are identified remains in place as well as when necessary including the subject on the agenda for Head Teacher meetings, Head Teacher Steering group meetings and Designated Senior Person for child protection DSP Forum meetings attended by school safeguarding leads.
14. HR continue to look at ways to ensure applicants and Head Teachers are made aware of outstanding checks – a regular message will continue be sent to both parties to ensure all checks are in place.
15. In addition, compliance of the policy is discussed at each corporate safeguarding group meeting to continually review the effectiveness of the policy.

Conclusion

16. Compliance with the Safer Recruitment Policy remains less than the expected 100% compliance on a consistent basis. The measures outlined in this report will need to continue to be applied to support this.
17. Compliance in corporate services remains high and this will need to remain closely monitored going forward to ensure this trend continues.



Amgylchedd a Thai Environment and Housing

D. ENVIRONMENT & HOUSING (includes Housing; Safer Vale; VAWDASV; Shared Regulatory Services)

HOUSING

1. Safeguarding remains a key priority for the Housing team and a number of activities and events have taken place over the last 12 months to strengthen processes and raise awareness amongst staff, tenants and partners. The Departmental Management team monitors any safeguarding concerns regularly and these are fed down through team meetings to front line staff. Safeguarding is also standard agenda item at staff meetings and monthly 1-1s.
2. All Housing staff receive regular training in Safeguarding and related themes.
3. Staff from Housing are represented on the Cardiff and Vale Regional Safeguarding Board as well as several sub groups looking at issues around Exploitation and Child and Adult Practise Reviews, and Polices, Procedures and Practice. Members of the Housing team have now been trained to be able to undertake Child and Adult Practise Reviews, acting as the Chair or Reviewer and have since been allocated Reviews to conduct on behalf of the Board.
4. Front line staff have continued to promote Safeguarding and have attended awareness raising sessions related to Child and Adult Practise reviews during the last 12 months. In addition, Safeguarding remains a fixed agenda item on all team meeting agenda's which allows for general discussions to take place about

a range of related issues, including referral mechanisms, warning signs, shared learning and things to look out for when undertaking day to day work.

5. Front line staff have also worked closely with partners to tackle domestic abuse. This has included a nominated representative attending the MARAC meetings and sharing updates on behalf of colleagues in the Housing Management, Rents and Homelessness Teams and where appropriate support providers are also contacted to attend and to update about victims or perpetrators. Training has ensured staff remain able to identify concerns and work with partners to minimise risks and protect victims.
6. The lockdown has posed new challenges and the number of home visits has reduced significantly, however staff have carried out over 1,200 telephone welfare checks of vulnerable households in order to check on well-being and identify any cause for concerns. The need to identify and target support towards vulnerable people is being developed further by a new Tenant Profiling project. This ‘intelligence led’ approach has been designed to gather detailed personal information about tenants with a view to focussing interventions towards and maintaining close contact with, those households most likely to be experiencing difficulties.
7. Housing Services staff record all MARF and Adult Safeguarding referrals on a spreadsheet. During 2019-20, the Housing team submitted the following number of MARF’s and Adult Safeguarding referrals:

Service Area	No. of MARFs	No. of Adult Safeguarding Referrals
Housing Solutions	97	0
Supporting People	0	0
Housing Strategy	0	0
Customer Liaison Team	0	0
Accommodation Solutions Team	0	0
UKRS	0	0
Housing Management and Rents	7	6

8. The majority of referrals are made by the Housing Solutions Team which is due to the team completing and submitting a MARF for all children placed in temporary accommodation including the Council’s homeless hostel (Ty lolo).
9. When a MARF or Adult Safeguarding referral is submitted by Housing staff a response should be received to advise what action, if any, is being taken by Children’s or Adult Services. If after 48 hours this information is not received it is chased up by a phone call. If any concerns the staff member will escalate to their Manager who should contact a Senior Officer in Social Services to discuss the case and voice any concerns.

- 10 In response to the COVID 19 pandemic and lockdown in March 2020 we have focused on the provision of critical front-line services which include homelessness. The Housing Solutions & Supporting People Team introduced the following processes in respect of safeguarding:
- Establishment of fortnightly multi-agency Centralised Co-ordination Cell following Welsh Government guidance for local authorities on supporting rough sleepers during lockdown. The Cell's meeting frequency has reduced during the last 12 months and now meets bimonthly as more of the activities that altered during the pandemic become "business as usual". The Cell aims to manage the logistics for all accommodation, health and support facilities, as there is particular concern about the impact of these changes for vulnerable at risk of/homeless individuals and their families as services closed or reduced their visiting and intervention capacity in the community in order to protect the public and staff.
 - Due to the increased demands on the homelessness service following publication of the Welsh Government guidance in respect of COVID 19, the Housing Solutions Team block booked 129 rooms across 3 hotel establishments in the Vale to provide emergency accommodation for those presenting as homeless or rough sleeping.
 - The Housing Solutions Team has made regular welfare calls to hotel residents by telephone and are in contact with the B&B providers on a daily basis. Housing Solutions staff also visit the hotels on a twice weekly basis.
 - All individuals placed in temporary accommodation and B&B hotels during this period are referred for floating support via the telephone to Pobl's One Stop Shop Service who are specialist support providers commissioned by the Council. All received daily phone calls initially, reducing to every other day or twice weekly depending on the needs of the person. Pobl now provides a twice weekly drop in service at the hotels in order to give service users a variety of ways to engage with support.
 - A twice weekly drop in substance misuse service was provided by Taith at 2 of the hotels, but ended due to a lack of engagement from clients. However, during this time the Taith specialist substance misuse workers were able to speak to staff to give advice in regards to the disposal of sharps etc. and left appropriate equipment at the hotels to assist staff with the disposal of drug paraphernalia if required.

Safeguarding activity within Community Safety (Housing and Building Services) Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)

11. The Vale of Glamorgan Council continue to deliver actions against the VAWDASV Regional Strategy and work has commenced with Cardiff on the development of a revised regional strategy and the Council has actively participated in responding to the consultation for a new National VAWDASV Strategy. Structures and accountability are in place to ensure that we are able to deliver positive outcomes against the overarching objectives that were agreed.
12. There was a total of 363 MARAC cases (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) which are cases presented to a multi-agency meeting to discuss safeguarding issues for victims of domestic abuse that have been assessed as high risk during 2021/22. This was a decrease from the 2020/2021 figures which is thought to be as a result of the twice weekly discussions that were implemented throughout the course of 2020/2021. These discussions are multi-agency discussions that aim to improve safeguarding measures by offering support at an earlier opportunity rather than waiting for a fortnightly MARAC meeting. Over the course of 2021/22 413 cases were discussed during the twice weekly meetings, of which 142 were referred onto MARAC. This demonstrates that 271 cases were diverted away from the MARAC meetings, helping these meetings to be more streamlined and effective all the while providing a more rapid and effective support package to those experiencing high risk domestic abuse.
13. During 2021/22 the DARRC service received 630 Public Protection Notices (PPNs) shared from South Wales Police, this is a reduction from the previous year, which reflects the impact of a change in referring protocol from South Wales Police that has resulted in PPNs without consent no longer being shared with the DAARC service. Gaining consent at the point of incident and the issues associated with this are being considered at a South Wales Police wide level. Of these cases, 919 children had an involvement with an incident. The team have further amended data collection in order to establish the total number of children involved (as opposed to including children who may have been involved in repeats). As this data change does not cover the whole year, it is estimated (by projecting from the average numbers for the quarters where the data has been collected) that approximately 850 individual children have been affected by standard and medium domestic abuse this year. A total of 1284 referrals were made to appropriate agencies to support the victims and their families to get the support they need.
14. The Supporting People team provide funding to Community Safety to provide Target Hardening equipment for victims of domestic abuse. This service is tailored to the needs and risk of the victim, for example CCTV, intruder alarm, door locks and lighting is offered in order to make the victim feel safer and enable them to remain living in their own home. During 2021/22, 116 properties within the Vale of Glamorgan received target hardening, this was higher than the previous year which reflects the campaigns that have been run to promote target

hardening for domestic abuse victims across the Vale. During the course of the year target hardening was expanded to also provide for vulnerable victims of ASB. The majority of victims want to remain in their own home and therefore the service enables the appropriate safeguarding is in place, meet the needs of the victim and is a cost-effective service for the Council in terms of not requiring refuge provision.

15. The Local Authority are in the process of implementing Ask & Act level 2 of the National Training Framework training as directed by Welsh Government. Between March and June, 51 sessions were held in conjunction with Cardiff which was delivered to 704 attendees. Across the course of the year, 3104 staff members from the Local Authority completed level 1 training which equates to 94 % of workforce
16. Agencies have continued to respond to the new ways of working imposed by Covid and the ongoing challenges created by staff absences and responding to changing guidelines. Strong messages via social media and, television campaigns to let people know that services were still operating and were available to support people were sent throughout the year. However, for some victims it proved more difficult to access help due to them not have a safe space in which to reach out. Work across the region took place to identify ways in which safe spaces could be provided for victims to seek help, for example doctors' surgeries, pharmacists and supermarkets. Ongoing work is now taking place to ensure that agencies engage with each other and with victims to plan for a future spike (as is the trend in other countries) and to also learn from the past few months.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

17. The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 enacted new provisions aimed at reforming the anti-social behaviour rules and tools previously available. The changes have made it easier for the Vale of Glamorgan to respond swiftly to reports of anti-social behaviour.
18. The Community Safety Team within the Council co-ordinate the multi-agency Problem Solving Group (PSG) which meets monthly to discuss incidents of ASB to ensure that early identification and intervention can be offered to perpetrators and to put in place safeguarding measures for victims of ASB.
19. Within the Vale there is a 4-stage approach to managing ASB which provides the opportunity to identify wider needs and support requirements and aims to stop the behaviour turning into criminal activity. For young people the 4-stage approach is the same, however a restorative approach is adopted to maximize the opportunity of stopping any further incidents and to identify preventative support that can be offered via the Youth Offending Team.
20. During 2021/22 there were a total of 2946 incidents reported to the Community Safety Team of which 1239 referrals were processed.

21. Environmental anti-social behaviour saw a sharp decline following a reduction in the number of Covid breaches of Covid-19 lockdown measures that are recorded as environmental ASB.

Channel Panel (Prevent)

22. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The programme uses a multi-agency approach to protect vulnerable people by:
 - Identifying people at risk
 - Assessing the nature and extent of that risk
 - Developing the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.
23. There is a regional Cardiff and Vale multi agency Channel Panel that meet to discuss the referrals and to ensure that the appropriate action is taken.
24. Across the course of the year the Council established its Protective Security Preparedness Group which will provide the Local Authority's response to the new measures imposed by the Protect Duty, due to come out in 2022/2023. This will involve the Local Authority implementing additional measures to prepare for and mitigate against the threats of terrorism as appropriate to the local environment.

SHARED REGULATORY SERVICES

25. In delivering the Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Licensing functions, Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) contributes to the Council's wider Safeguarding responsibilities in several ways.

2021-22 saw another busy year regarding the **Safeguarding of older and vulnerable adults**.

Doorstep Crime and Scams

26. SRS responds to instances of doorstep crime and scams, supporting those affected and their families where possible. These crimes can have a devastating effect on the emotional as well as the financial wellbeing of residents, and the following examples give an indication of the types of interventions undertaken over the course of the year.
27. During 2021-22, the service dealt with 67 Doorstep Crime and 73 Scams cases. A total of 19 residents were identified through the year as having suffered a doorstep crime incident or as having been on the receiving end of a scam. In one case, a consumer's card details were being used fraudulently to access online services and this appeared to have started after they were conned by a white goods insurance/warranty provider. What began as a relatively low value scam

(the white goods insurance cost £80 for the insurance) resulted in further losses of over £8000.

Some £13,000 in redress was achieved for residents.

28. A number of prosecutions of doorstep criminals and rogue traders concluding in 2021-22 resulted in custodial sentences for the defendants and compensation for the victims. In one particularly nasty case, the two defendants made false representations that roofing work was needed when it wasn't and used scare tactics to suggest that there were major problems and that the roof was in danger of collapse. The court heard how the defendants would quote excessive sums for work that did not need doing and then, when consumers were at their most vulnerable as their roof was exposed, they would 'find' other urgent work which required a significant escalation in the already extortionate cost. One of the elderly residents was in poor health and unfortunately passed away while the roofing work was ongoing at his home, and so callous were the defendants that the morning after the gentleman's passing, they visited his widow to demand payment.
29. Over the course of the year, training sessions were delivered to police partners, while GP surgeries and pharmacies across the region were supplied with new awareness raising material on scams and frauds to be displayed in practices and in front windows, delivering key preventative advice.

Call blockers

30. These devices can put an end to nuisance or malicious calls. They can be installed at the homes of residents being repeatedly targeted by scams and once fitted, prevent all calls coming through other than those from recognised friends and family numbers. SRS installed a small number of call blockers during the last year in residents' homes helping to reduce nuisance and scam calls. Since 2014, SRS has installed a total of 61 call blockers to protect older and vulnerable people and each of these is estimated to block up to 5 nuisance or scam calls a day. The service has been able to apply for some additional devices recently and hope to carry out a device 'amnesty' ahead of a publicity drive to extend the offer out to residents who have fallen prey to telephone scams.
31. Turning to the **Safeguarding of young people**, SRS contributed through its compliance and enforcement activities in 2021-22 as follows:

Six underage sales operations took place during 2021-22. 48 premises were visited with the help of young volunteers who attempted to test purchase a range of goods including tobacco, alcohol and nicotine inhaling products such as e-cigarettes.

32. Last year saw the emergence of non-compliant disposable electronic cigarette products. This was reflected in an increase in intelligence and complaints received by SRS regarding the sale of these non-compliant products and also their sale to children. These products are non-compliant because the volume and strength of the nicotine are often significantly above the permitted legal limits. 28

Inspections have been conducted in response to intelligence received and this has resulted in 19 seizures comprising approximately 3200 disposable non-compliant electronic cigarettes. In January 2022, the Trading Standards team worked with BBC x-ray to highlight the non-compliant products and the risks they pose to children.

33. Finally, Shared Regulatory Services has contributed to the wider Safeguarding of residents and visitors to the area through its **licensing of taxi drivers** in 2021-22. While the vast majority of drivers are reputable and the journeys they provide take place without issue, there are occasions when the SRS has to act to protect the public, particularly the vulnerable.
34. In 2021-22 four cases were referred to Licensing Committees following conviction or alleged inappropriate behaviour.

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES AND TRANSPORT

35. From the Sports Development team point of view since the start of COVID we developed an online policy around the use of digital platforms and safeguarding young people which has included areas to consider for both staff and participants. We have introduced specific guidance around working with young people on digital platforms particularly around two staff members present, parental awareness and consent for sessions, codes of conduct for participants (ie what is / is not acceptable) etc. When team members or coaches have been able to interact face to face with young people, this has provided further opportunities to pick up on any potential safeguarding issues.
36. Play schemes have continued to operate throughout the Covid crisis and usual safeguarding procedures have been followed at all times.
37. Safeguarding continues to be continually reviewed by the section and is a regular agenda item on team meetings. All members of staff are routinely reminded of their responsibilities and the need to report any concerns. This has led to some concerns being highlighted and these has been immediately raised with relevant individuals and organisations.
38. The Leisure Centre contractor, Legacy Leisure, is also very aware of the importance placed on safeguarding by the Council and this is also a regular agenda item on Client / Contractor meetings. It is also a requirement for the contractor to provide information of any areas of concern relating to safeguarding in their annual report that is shared with the Councils Healthy Living and Social Care Scrutiny Committee.