

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

HOMES AND SAFE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 6TH DECEMBER 2023

REFERENCE FROM CABINET: 16TH NOVEMBER 2023

**“C158 CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING SUMMARY REPORT (SCH)
(SCRUTINY – ALL) –**

The Cabinet Member presented the report, the purpose of which was to provide a summary on the activity that has been undertaken in relation to Corporate arrangements for Safeguarding across the Council and to provide assurance around safeguarding activity taking place across the Council.

Councillor Williams said that everyone was responsible for safeguarding, and it was important to be able to recognise and be vigilant on behalf of vulnerable people and people at risk due to the complexity of some of the issues that they faced.

Councillor Birch added that schools took their roles and responsibilities regarding safeguarding very seriously as they saw children every day and were able to spot difficulties, changes in behaviours etc., and worked with Social Services where required and appropriate.

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 monitor Corporate Safeguarding arrangements and its effectiveness.
- (3) T H A T the report be referred the following Scrutiny Committees for consideration:
 - a. Healthy Living and Social Care;
 - b. Corporate Performance and Resources;
 - c. Environment and Regeneration;
 - d. Homes and Safe Communities; and
 - e. Learning and Culture.

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.
- (3) To ensure that there was a wide-reaching level of Member oversight regarding this important area.”

Attached as Appendix: Report to Cabinet: 16th November, 2023

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Thursday, 16 November 2023
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	All Scrutiny Committees
Report Title:	Corporate Safeguarding Summary Report
Purpose of Report:	To provide a summary on the activity that has been undertaken in relation to Corporate arrangements for Safeguarding across the Council. To provide assurance around safeguarding activity taking place 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
Executive Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is Corporate responsibility to ensure that there are effective arrangements in place for safeguarding children and adults at risk. ○ This report provides a mid-year update on the effectiveness of those arrangements and the developments to date. ○ A Corporate Safeguarding Group (CSG) ensures that there is scrutiny and assurance of corporate safeguarding arrangements.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet considers 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 monitor Corporate Safeguarding arrangements and its effectiveness.
3. That the report is referred the following Scrutiny Committees for consideration:
 - a. Healthy Living and Social Care;
 - b. Corporate Performance and Resources;
 - c. Environment and Regeneration;
 - d. Homes and Safe Communities; and
 - e. Learning and Culture.

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.
3. To ensure that there is a wide-reaching level of Member oversight regarding this important area.

1. Background

- 1.1 This update provides a composite of activity across the Council. Scrutiny Committees should particularly consider any 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 has brought about changes in particular relating to the introduction of a 'Duty to Report' which has meant 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.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1 The work of the Corporate Safeguarding Group (CSG) continues to take place with a focus on the strategic overview of safeguarding activity across the Local

Authority and conduit for exploring emerging issues and priorities that are cross

- A suite of safeguarding data has been collated and developed to form a dashboard to allow the CSG to monitor the key activity within the council.
- A review of safeguarding training and accompanying materials has been completed. The Council's IDeV system now provides the key mechanism to deliver safeguarding training with the added facilities of reminders for staff and monitoring of completion for managers. Further work is on course for front line staff without access to the system.
- A working group has been developed to focus on areas of learning from reviews; progressing developments in response to audit; and considering any wider quality assurance activity that can support the work of the Corporate Safeguarding Group
- The Local Authority Designated Officer for Safeguarding (LADO) supports and influences the work of the Corporate Safeguarding Group.

cutting.

2.2 The CSG meets on a quarterly basis and representatives have shared areas of priority and emerging themes. The work of the Regional Safeguarding Board and priorities have been shared with Members and practice reviews that have been published and associated learning has been shared and noted by the CSG.

2.3 Safer recruitment data is regularly reported to the CSG group with any areas of note being actioned and discussed.

2.4 Following the annual report of 2022/23, the following areas have been progressed:

2.5 Corporate Leadership & Accountability

There is appropriate cross directorate representation within the Corporate Safeguarding Group, attendance and participation is monitored.

The Lead Member for Safeguarding is represented within the Corporate Safeguarding Group.

Membership and areas of responsibility for those within the CSG is available on the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Page. This includes recent changes of membership of the Corporate Safeguarding Group due to new appointments and changes in personnel.

2.6 Corporate Policy

The role of corporate safeguarding is expected to be known and understood throughout the Local Authority with a shared understanding that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

All employees, volunteers including school governors, elected Members, contractors and partners are informed through induction and training of their responsibility to comply with the Safeguarding Policy.

The profile of good safeguarding practice is a core part of the work of the Council. There has been a review of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy this year and an updated policy is currently in draft format, the revised policy is expected to be in place for January 2024. This will strengthen and further promote our corporate safeguarding responsibilities.

2.7 Scrutiny & Assurance

There are identified leads within each directorate. The LADO role is fulfilled by the Operational Manager for Safeguarding and Service Outcomes (Social Services).

Local Authority directorates, employees and volunteers are compliant with Safeguarding Policy and practice. All Local Authority employees, volunteers and contractors are made aware of the consequences of non-compliance with Safeguarding Policy.

The CSG will focus on developing safeguarding data in a dashboard style report to support this area of activity and provide oversight of key areas of business.

2.8 Safer Recruitment

The CSG monitors recruitment and is able to provide assurance that all relevant Council appointments are compliant with the Safer Recruitment Policy that covers all services that come into contact with children and adults at risk.

2.9 Training

Employees, volunteers and agency staff are all required to complete mandatory Group A safeguarding awareness training. Review of IDev mandatory training has taken place, training module has been replaced with the new national Group A training module. Compliance with the mandatory training will be monitored on a quarterly basis via the revised CSG data dashboard. This will enable scrutiny and follow up where required. There will also be a review of our safeguarding training requirements and matrix following the launch of the new National Safeguarding Training Standards.

Schools & Governor training is supported by the Education Safeguarding Team with regular reporting of compliance and training offer shared. There has been oversight and suggested areas of development supported by the CSG.

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. Our processes and

procedures take account of the voice of the child and/or adult at risk. Corporately there is a commitment across the Local Authority and representatives in relation to the safeguarding agenda and priorities.

- 3.4** Collaboration – Cross Directorate ownership, accountability and understanding of our safeguarding roles and responsibilities.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 4.1** There are no Climate and Nature Implications as a direct result of this report.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 5.1** 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. Consequently, there is a 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 the Council's statutory services.
- 5.2** 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

- 5.3** 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.
- 5.4** 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).
- 5.5** In relation to DBS arrangements, key elements of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 have been implemented.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 5.6** 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.

6. Background Papers

Report to Cabinet: [7th September 2023](#), [17th November 2022](#); [22nd November 2021](#).