

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

LEARNING AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 10<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2022

REFERENCE FROM CABINET: 22<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER, 2021

**“C746 CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING MID TERM REPORT (SCH)  
(SCRUTINY – ALL) -**

The Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health presented the report, which provided a summary on the activity that had been undertaken in relation to Corporate arrangements for Safeguarding across the Council and to provide assurance around safeguarding activity taking place across the Council.

There was a Corporate responsibility to ensure that there were effective arrangements in place for safeguarding children and adults who required specific Council services. The report provided a mid-year update on the effectiveness of those arrangements and the developments to date. The Corporate Safeguarding Group (CSG) ensured that there was scrutiny and assurance of corporate safeguarding arrangements.

The CSG group had maintained regular meetings since April 2021 and representatives shared areas of priority and emerging themes.

Of note, was the considerable support that the Council gave to local schools around safeguarding and that all Council employees, volunteers including school governors, elected members, contractors and partners within the Vale were informed through induction and training of their responsibility to comply with the Safeguarding Policy.

It was also agreed that an extra recommendation be made to thank the Corporate Safeguarding Group (CSG) and the associated officers for the work they continued to do in safeguarding children and adults.

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 has been undertaken to improve corporate arrangements for safeguarding and protection of children and adults be considered and noted.

(2) T H A T Cabinet continues to receive six monthly reports on work carried out to improve Corporate Safeguarding arrangements and its effectiveness.

- (3) T H A T the report be referred to all Scrutiny Committees for consideration.
- (4) T H A T the Corporate Safeguarding Group (CSG) and the associated officers be thanked for the work they continue to do in safeguarding children and adults.

Reasons for decisions

- (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 of oversight regarding this important area.
- (4) To acknowledge the work undertaken by the Corporate Safeguarding Group (CSG) and the associated officers in safeguarding children and adults.”

Attached as Appendix – Report to Cabinet: 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2021

Meeting of:	<b>Cabinet</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>Monday, 22 November 2021</b>
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	All Scrutiny Committees
Report Title:	Corporate Safeguarding Mid Term 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, 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"> <li>• There is a Corporate responsibility to ensure that there are effective arrangements in place for safeguarding children and adults who require specific Council services.</li> <li>• This report provides a mid-year update on the effectiveness of those arrangements and the developments to date.</li> <li>• The Corporate Safeguarding Group (CSG) ensures that there is scrutiny and assurance of corporate safeguarding arrangements.</li> </ul>

## **Recommendations**

1. That Cabinet considers the work that has been undertaken to improve corporate arrangements for safeguarding and protection of children and adults.
2. That Cabinet continues to receive six monthly reports on work carried out to improve Corporate Safeguarding arrangements and its effectiveness.
3. That the report is referred to all Scrutiny Committees for consideration.

## **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 of 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 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 cutting.
- 2.2 The CSG group have maintained regular meetings since April 2021 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. There are plans for a focus on dissemination of

learning and recommendations being undertaken by a work group reporting into the main Corporate Safeguarding Group.

**2.3** Connections with the new Wales-wide DBS representative has been made with a presentation being made to the group around their roles, responsibilities and areas where they can support LAs in terms of DBS barring and referrals.

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

**2.5** Priority areas of work for 2021/22 have been identified these being: development of safeguarding data that is regularly reported to CSG; review of safeguarding training and accompanying materials; development of work group to focus on areas of learning from reviews; progressing developments in response to audit; considering wider quality assurance activity that can support the work of the Corporate Safeguarding Group.

**2.6** The Local Authority Designated Officer for Safeguarding (LADO) supports and influences the work of the Corporate Safeguarding Group.

### **2.7 Corporate Leadership and Accountability**

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

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.

### **2.8 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.

### **2.9 Scrutiny and 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 performance style report to support this area of activity and provide oversight of key areas of business.

#### **2.10 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.

All Local Authority recruiting managers are made aware of the consequences of non-compliance with Safer Recruitment Policy.

#### **2.11 Training**

Employees, volunteers and agency staff are trained to fulfil a safeguarding function relevant to their role in the Local Authority. Contracted services are expected to comply with safeguarding requirements outlined within all contracts.

Recommendations from audit activity to the Corporate Safeguarding Group will strengthen the Corporate Safer Recruitment Policy. This is monitored through the CSG to ensure consistent and effective implementation of the Corporate Safer Recruitment Policy across all the Directorates and school appointments.

### **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, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020.](#)