

Corporate Safeguarding Annual Report

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1.

1.1 Legislation

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 offers a clear expectation that the child/young person/adult must be at the centre of any safeguarding response and remain as much in control of decision making as possible. The basic right of a child/young person/adult to be heard throughout the safeguarding process is a critical element in the drive to ensure more personalised support that can only be offered by staff who fully recognise their roles and responsibilities concerning safeguarding.

One of the most significant changes from a safeguarding perspective is the definition of an “adult at risk” and the legal duty to report where there are concerns identified for either a child or adult. This legal duty to report is of significance and clearly illustrates how safeguarding is everybody’s business, hence the establishment of a corporate safeguarding report of this nature to assure members of the pro-active arrangements which the local authority are undertaking in safeguarding provisions and service planning. The data within the report continues to evidence a rise in referrals to all front door pathways. The rise relates to better communication with and reporting from health partners, provider agencies and our own social work teams, therefore, the rise in referrals is suggestive of a more robust system which protects our citizens and again is a positive improvement in respect of safeguarding practices within Newport.

Newport City Council remains an active member of the “Gwent Safeguarding Board”, which is an amalgamation of the two former specific regional boards. Newport continues to host the regional Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) team and work closely with the regional Partnership Board (VAWDASVB).

Newport officers are involved at all levels of the work of the boards. Heads of Children and Adult services are members at both Board’s, the Head of Corporate Safeguarding for Newport is deputy chair of the Business Planning meeting for both boards and also chairs the local safeguarding network meetings in Newport. The local safeguarding practitioner network meet in Newport bimonthly and is attended by all partner agencies working across Newport for Adults, Children and specialist services. The local safeguarding network also arranges 2 practitioner events per year, which is open to all practitioners in Newport. The events update practitioners on all local and regional developments such as learning/messages from Child/Adult practice reviews, new services and local developments, as well as introducing updated policies and/or procedures. There is a National Independent Safeguarding Board which will work alongside the regional boards to secure improvements in safeguarding policy and practice throughout Wales. All regional boards have duties and responsibilities to submit information to the National Independent Safeguarding Board.

Members were advised in the previous report of the Children Wales Act (2020). The Act is to help protect children's rights by prohibiting the physical punishment of children by parents and those acting in loco parentis within Wales, including visitors to Wales. In doing so, children in Wales now have the same legal protection from physical punishment as adults. In practice this might typically involve a smack given as a telling-off to a child (whether on the child's bottom, legs or other part of the body). The definition is not limited to smacking. Shaking or poking a child in the chest or pulling their hair for example is also an offence. The change brought clear duties on local authorities to ensure that not only practice is in place to manage and support citizens in relation to these changes but also in relation to our recording/ reporting duties being in place in advance (safeguarding specific quality performance indicators). The NCC performance team ensured that the new reporting requirements are built into the WCCIS system to capture the required data in relation to this required data, e.g.:

CH/ 005a Of those contacts received during the year: The number where physical punishment by a parent or care was a factor
CH/ 005b The number where physical punishment by a parent or carer was the only factor

We are undertaking a Gwent wide analysis of the impact of this legislation now that it has been in force for a year. Early indications show that this legislation has not led to an increase in criminal prosecutions or safeguarding interventions for parents but more an education and signposting intervention where this is deemed to be safe and appropriate. More data and analysis will be available soon.

1.2 Scrutiny Recommendations (2021/2022)

The Committee felt that more specific data was needed throughout the report to contextualise information given, such as percentages so Members can have a clearer picture of comparison. Members also queried if it could be possible to find out in the percentages of how many children in the figures are the same child being safeguarded, and how many are single incident children.

The Committee asked that the area of focus regarding whether “the structure for the Newport Safeguarding Unit Structure and Individual Teams Key Priority Plans is appropriate to meet the Council’s responsibilities for safeguarding matters” be removed as it was outside of the Committee’s expertise.

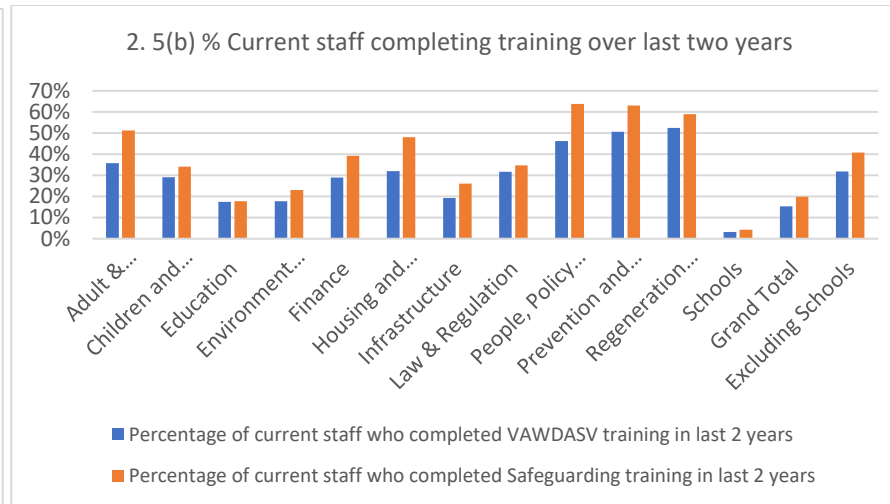
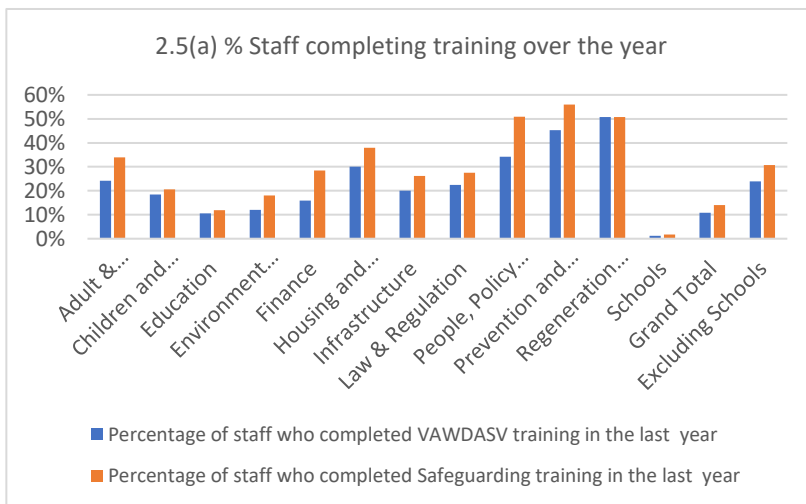
The Committee asked for an update regarding training progress be given to committee including more specific data to contextualise any information given, such as percentages to how many staff members have completed the training.

Members also queried if it would be possible to have update on figures such as training and referrals received, on a half yearly basis.

2. Safeguarding Training Data and Outcomes

- 2.1** Compliance rates with Mandatory Safeguarding Training for ALL employees, as well as elected members and volunteers, remains low this year. There are 3 specific mandatory courses with associated regulatory requirements for council employees to complete, these are the General Data Protection Regulations Training (GDPR); Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence and “Safeguarding Involves Us All- Awareness Training”.
- 2.2** It is important to continue to stress that there are ongoing mitigating factors for training figures being low in this period which must be taken into account. These factors have also been given due regard by regulatory bodies as they have not issued fines/ regulatory actions during this period, however, this continued acceptance will rightly not be continually extended. The ongoing effects of the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on many of the workforce itself being affected in some way (directly with caring responsibilities; in shielding; family losses; illness and so on) resulting in their work patterns changing and reducing the number of staff physically working over the period. The pandemic has prevented the opportunity to provide face to face learning resulting with a number of service areas being unable to access the mandatory training as they have limited/ no e-learning opportunity. It is to be noted that the circumstances have prompted positive consideration to training delivery and how these can be more accessible and flexible. There has been a gradual return to face-to-face training as the workforce have been able to safely return to the workplace. There are continued developments in the training calendar and roll out as we begin to implement the National Safeguarding Training, Learning and Development Framework which was launched in National Safeguarding week in November 2022.
- 2.3** The “Safeguarding Involves Us All- Awareness Training” e-learning module was launched in May 2020. Face to face sessions have recommenced following the pandemic. National Safeguarding weeks in November 2021 and 2022 were used to promote the mandatory requirement by a campaign utilising staff communications such as newsletters, bulletins and announcements. The Safeguarding Champions have continued to provide targeted communications to their service area, including informing team managers of those who cannot access staff intranet facilities e.g. some school staff. We have lost a key member of staff in the budget cuts this year, this has led to a reconfiguration of the Safeguarding team and some new responsibilities for staff.
- 2.4** It is respectfully acknowledged that Scrutiny Committee members requested half yearly updates in the training figures and that these were requested in percentage format. The reporting cycle for this report was brought forward at the request of the Strategic Director to better align with the Director’s Report. This report therefore follows some 7 months from the last meeting with the Scrutiny Committee and the data is updated within.

2.5



The data table at 2.5(a) shows the completion of the two of the mandatory courses over the year for e-learning as a % for the service area workforce. However, these figures do not reflect those who have had the training previously and therefore there would be no expectation that they would complete the training. To reflect this 2.5(b) gives the percentage of staff in post 31/3/23 who have had the training over the last two years. This period was chosen as after two years there is an expectation that the training will be refreshed. It should be born in mind that of the percentage not completing the training in the last two years a proportion will have done the training over two years ago but are in need of the training being refreshed. Figures in 2.5(a) and (b) are not exactly analogous as 2.5 a includes all staff trained in year, including leavers, while 2.5(b) contains only leavers. Following the review of this annual data capture, an action is to evaluate how to target those services areas with lowest completion rates, with quarterly reviews while continuing to seek the ambitious 90% completion rate across all services with campaigns.

2022/2023 E-Learning Information Security Training
(Via Teams) by staff number

Adult & Community Services	28%
Children and Young People Services	21%
Education	12%
Environment and Public Protection	14%
Finance	22%
Housing and Communities	33%
Infrastructure	28%
Law & Regulation	22%
People, Policy and Transformation	39%
Prevention and Inclusion	53%
Regeneration and Economic Development	44%
Schools	1%
Grand Total	12%
Excluding Schools	27%

The Information Management Training benefited from the positive impact the launch made in 2020/21, however figures for the last year are broadly similar to VAWDASV and Safeguarding matters. The team deliver the training via several methods, have increased their face to face and teams training programme and participant numbers. This provides flexibility and availability for staff to complete their training. Information Management also recommends as part of policy that if a data breach is made, the staff members involved attend a Teams or face to face session within the next quarter, as part of constructive action. These steps initially increased take up and this learning may be helpful in promoting take up of all e-learning programs.

Overall compliance for the entire workforce for both courses is at 41% for Safeguarding training and 32% for VAWDASV excluding schools. This evidence from previous years shows that the campaign during National Safeguarding week, prompting VAWDASV and bulletin to Safeguarding Champions had impact. The evidence is that take up from schools is significantly less. Therefore the emphasis needs to be on utilising these campaigns, as well as concentrating on areas where take up is low, particularly schools, to look at those who had completed the training more than two years ago and encouraging staff members to refresh.

The training numbers for education are not a true reflection of the completed Safeguarding training numbers. This interrogation of data has highlighted issues around where this data is stored and who is able to ensure that it is a true reflection of the completed mandatory training.

All schools are up to date with their whole-school safeguarding training (2-3 years) and this includes an element on domestic abuse and the impact on children. In addition to this, all DSPs receive regular input from the VAWDASV team (Helen Gordon) during termly safeguarding meetings and it is part of the DSP training. Currently, all DSPs are undertaking 'Operation Encompass' training that has to be completed by end of May. There is a DSP meeting on 22nd May and schools will be reminded then that the training needs to be updated every 3 years. The Elearning safeguarding module data for central education staff is currently collated on a spreadsheet and is ragged as Green for completion.

Currently data for completion is stored in at least three different ways. This has led to some early but helpful conversations about centralising this data in a dashboard on MiHub for transparency and ease. This would enable compliance to be easily monitored and information being in one place for analysis.

From the Safeguarding Champion's work, the Safeguarding team are aware of which service areas require in-person training and these sessions will be launched as part of the ongoing schedule. In lieu of the training, those team managers have been asked to remind their remote workers of their corporate responsibilities for safeguarding, where the safeguarding policies can be accessed and the name of their Safeguarding Champion if they have any questions. City Services have highlighted to the Safeguarding team that they require in person sessions to reach all remote workers and staff with limited access to IT equipment during their working day, this is an area addressed through the self-assessment audit feedback and work plan (2021/2022). Refresher training for the Safeguarding Champions was held over two virtual sessions in National Safeguarding Week in November 2022 and were very well attended. Identified Safeguarding Champions from each Directorate meet biannually and the next meeting is on the 18th May 2023.

2. 6 The VAWDASV team have stated that their specialist additional training has had a low uptake across 2022/23 period however there was attendance by Newport employees to all courses offered, with 26 people completing the Ask and Act Group 2 sessions.

Specialist Syllabus Training

Understanding Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control – 3

Risk and MARAC – 7

Domestic abuse and the Affect on Children and Young People – 8

Understanding Sexual Violence – 6

Understanding Perpetrators – 5

Understanding HBA, FM and FGM – 4

Understanding and Working With Male Victims – 2

Vicarious Trauma and Wellbeing – 4

Perpetrators in the Workplace – 1

Trauma bonding – 1

National Training Framework

Ask and Act Group 2 – 26

Ask and Act Group 3 – 3

**Newport City Council NTF Response
5930**

NTF Group		Year Total	Year Staff %	Live / Roll out Total	Total Staff %	Comments / Notes
eLearning	Group 1	824	13.9%	2702	45.6%	This number is the total number of current staff in NCC with Group 1 training. This is what WG have as a 100% Staff requirement under the NTF Statutory Guidance.
Ask and Act Awareness	Group 2	78	1.3%	510	8.6%	This training is recommended for anyone who has a public facing role. I would like to argue that as employees that interact with one another, this number should reflect also interactions with the public within the work environment moving forward. The rolling total here is a total of staff trained from September 2016 - April 2023.
Ask and Act Champions	Group 3	2	0.0%	81	1.4%	Much as the above needs to be noted. With the exception that the NTF guidance states that any Group 3 staff should be 10% of the number of Group 2 trained staff to function as a support service. That needs to be considered moving forward also. The rolling total here is a total of staff trained from September 2016 - April 2023.
Senior/Strategic Leaders	Group 6	30	0.5%	70	1.2%	This is solely aimed at the those in senior and strategic leadership positions. These numbers represent the number of leaders who have attending organised sessions by the Gwent VAWDASV Team. These is additional resources for this Group via online YouTube videos, but these cannot be tracked.

- 2.6** This continued trend in the low uptake in mandatory training across the workforce requires collective oversight by the council. Regulatory bodies have accepted mitigating factors to date and there have been improvements seen across the service areas for some courses, however, the council requires a corporate steer from People and Business Change to ensure that “Mandatory Safeguarding Training” is completed for all new starters and current employees which is formally tracked, and appropriate review/ action taken when not complied with. Colleagues from within People and Business Change can reassure that the ‘on boarding’ process of completing all mandatory training for every new starter, including volunteers is now in place.
- 2.7** As part of the training schedule under construction for a September 2022 launch, a review of the Safeguarding Involves Us All e-learning module has been completed. This had included a revised version to prevent duplication with the Welsh Government module within the All-Wales Basic Safeguarding Training pack, which is a single consistent safeguarding training module launched for public and voluntary sector staff across Wales in November 2022. Newport City Council’s module will continue to include the specific policies and supporting documents to ensure employees are not only aware of their duty to be vigilant for the signs of abuse/harm but their corporate responsibilities including duty to report and the safeguarding expectations upon them when working for the council.
- 2.8** The Council now has mandatory ‘safeguarding involves us all’ provision. Managers of individual employees are responsible for ensuring staff undertake all mandatory training. The HR team will regularly provide managers with reports on those needing to undertake any mandatory training. These reports are to be shared with the Head of Corporate Safeguarding to further monitor compliance and look at any themes arising from non-compliance across the Local Authority.

3 Developments this year

3.1 Volunteers/ Chaperones Register for Newport City Council

A piece of work has been undertaken to create a central register of volunteers in our HR people management/payroll system – iTrent. Managers across the Council were contacted to provide details of their current volunteers, where upon receipt of these details they were added to the central register. Our volunteer onboarding process has now been centralised and therefore once volunteers are engaged by a manager, they must complete an online form which adds their details to the central register and also ensures that they complete the mandatory training courses in Safeguarding, GDPR and VAWASV. For those volunteers requiring DBS checks, these will also be identified via the onboarding process. Finally, our Volunteer policy has also been reviewed in-line with these new processes and is now live on our intranet.

In summary we have done the following:

- Created a central volunteer register in iTrent where all volunteer information will be stored
- Collated current volunteer details and added them to register
- Created an onboarding process for volunteers to complete their details online via our NCC jobs page once there placement has been agreed with a relevant manager
- Reviewed and published our Volunteers policy to reflect these changes

3.2 Newport Safeguarding Hub update

The Newport Safeguarding Hub is the authority's 'front door' process with the co-location of Police and Social Services personnel enabling sharing of immediate information and improved and timelier decision making for safeguarding children and adults. It remains clear that the safeguarding Hub, would be further enhanced with an improved interface between Health and Education representatives which goes beyond single points of contact (SPOC). There has been a particular challenge in resourcing a greater presence. Wider partnership co-location in the hub such as the Early Intervention Team responding to PPN's (police notifications) and joint agency decision making remains effective.

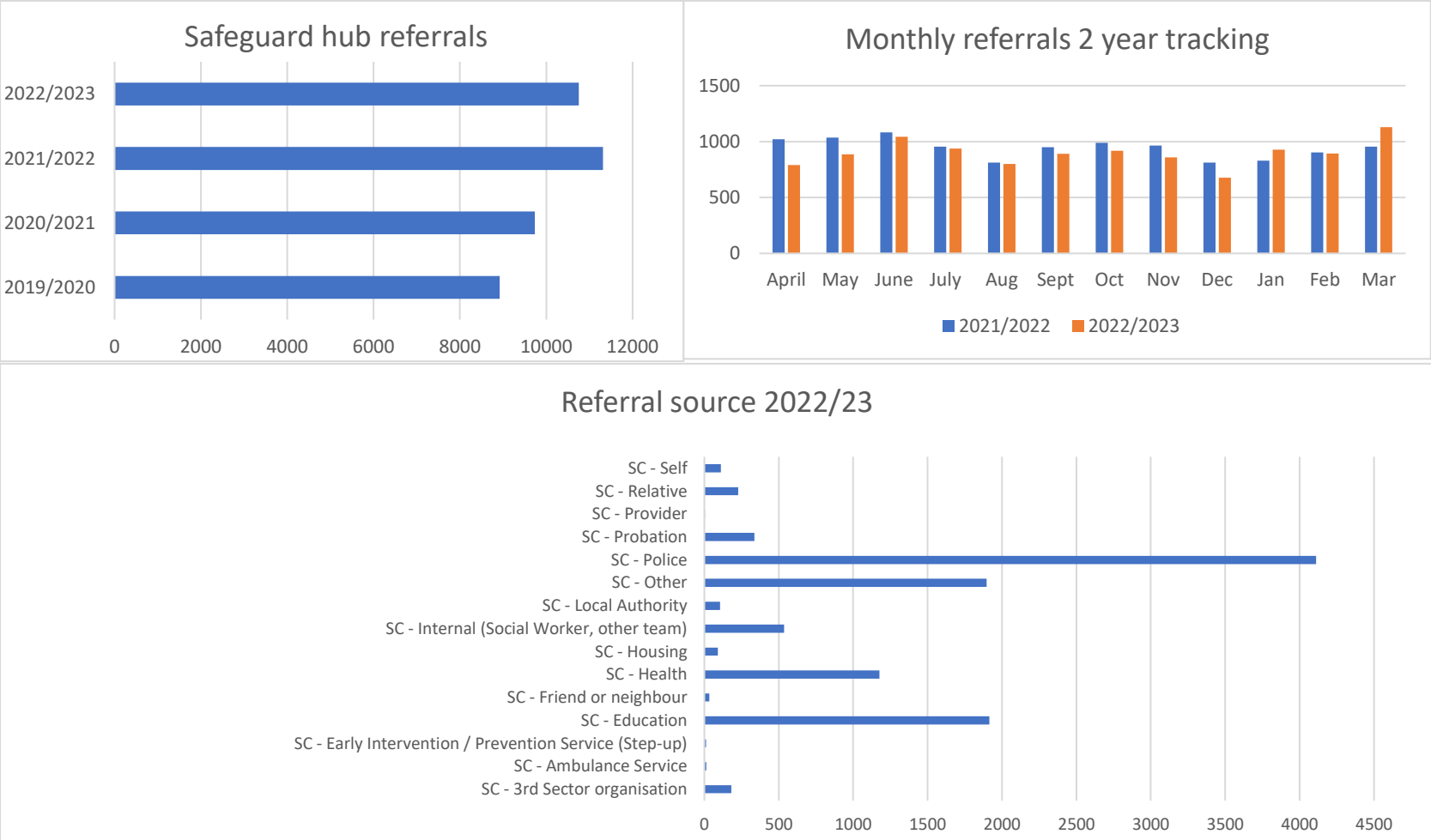
The Newport Safeguarding hub model and its successes has resulted in the model being adopted regionally. There are now 2 Safeguarding Hubs in Gwent split East and West, with the East covering Newport and Monmouthshire while the West covers Caerphilly, Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent. Although the two areas have slight differences in terms of structure, the vision of the Safeguarding Hub is the same, and that is to have Police and Children's Services co-located at the Front door to allow for timely decision making, improved quality of referrals and improved early intervention.

The "adult at risk" safeguarding pathway process has been under review and will shortly launch as an 'Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA)' front door. The single pathway for all adults at risk (duty to enquire referrals) will to be managed through one point of access and determine the initial action requires further work and remains an outstanding area of stress/ risk. This means the reliability of data will come from one referral point. Having one streamlined process would alleviate any discrepancies. This is work in progress and an updated service proposal will be available in imminently.

The quality measures (performance indicators) for the Newport Safeguarding Hub are now clearly the reporting responsibility of the Annual Director's Report for Social Services. However, as discussed there are safeguarding performance measures captured at The Safeguarding Hub which will be presented for Member's awareness to assure them of the authority's performance in terms of statutory

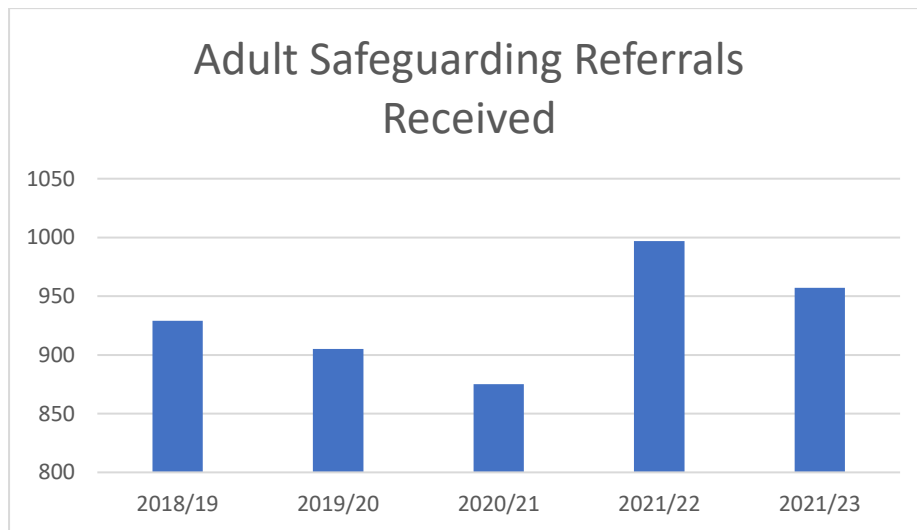
responsibilities; Children’s safeguarding processes (contacts/strategy discussions/ initial conferences); Adults at Risk (duty to enquire); which will be presented here. Members are also directed to Section 5 for additional Key Data for Safeguarding

There was a significant downturn in referrals (Children’s Services) in April 2020 due to the initial pandemic lockdown, this would be expected. However, since then the number of referrals that have progressed through the Hub has significantly grown.



Referrals to the Safeguarding Hub (Children's Services) have overall increased by 13.9% compared to 2020/21. Police referrals are the most frequent referral source. The current resource provision of early intervention support with a step up- step down model via the prevention service and children's duty team is the correct practice model in place to address the needs of families in acute stress, responding to need and escalating only those families where thresholds are appropriate. The data suggests that there are effective controls within the safeguarding HUB, that there is compliancy and effective safeguarding arrangements in terms of children's decision making and the statutory responsibilities for timely decision making.

The total number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk received in 2021/22 was 997. This fell slightly to 957 in 2022/23. It is to be noted that 753 Adults were the "victims" reported via the 957 DTR's, hence some Adults reported more than once. Health professionals and care providers accounted for 54% of the referrals, evidencing strong multiagency working.



Total Adult Duty to Reports received	957
Total No. of Adults at risk	769
From which Adult suspected of being at risk (of the 997 DTR's 783 required enquires to be made)	725
Breakdown of non-criminal investigations	152
Breakdown of criminal investigations	91
Breakdown of ABUHB Adult Safeguarding cases **DTR cases owned by Health DLM	63

3.3 National Referral Mechanism pilot for young people. Newport are piloting devolved decision making around the NRM referral process for children on behalf of The Home Office. Newport is leading on this for the Gwent region. This enables us to dovetail cases of modern slavery/trafficking/exploitation with safeguarding of children and young people at a local level. This is one of twenty UK pilots that will run until March 2024. It is highly likely that this devolved decision making will be a duty for all Local Authorities in the future as local responses to presenting local issues better safeguard children and young people. The national figure for referral breakdown is 78% UK nationals 22% Non-UK nationals. Referrals are mostly young males and the primary reason for referral is criminal exploitation (2nd May 2022)

4 Reviewed Annual Corporate Safeguarding Work Plan 2020/2021

What outcomes do we want to achieve? (objectives to achieve)	How will we make this happen?	When will we achieve this?	How will we know it's making a difference? (performance measures)	RAG status	Reviewed Status
<p>1. Mandatory safeguarding training compliance to be corporately addressed by People and Business Change urgently via new ways of working for both new starters to the authority (via on-boarding process) and for current employees (via I-Trent tracking and employee check ins and if necessary, capability procedures for non completion) in order to avoid fines/ regulatory action for continued non-compliance.</p>	<p>People and Business Change to ensure that Mandatory Safeguarding Training is addressed as part of their priority planning for 2021/2022.</p> <p>New starters- via on-boarding process: Project currently being reviewed by Jane Westwood (PBC April 2021)</p> <p>Current Employees- via I-trent/ employee check-ins. Proposed by Rachael Davies (PBC April 2021)</p>	<p>Proposed for PBC to progress as a matter of urgency</p>	<p>Compliancy rates for mandatory safeguarding training will improve across all service areas and the council will not receive fines or regulatory action.</p> <p>The council will be able to easily track compliance with mandatory training and address with service areas where there are issues with low up take and identify if barriers exist and address these swiftly.</p> <p>Completion of mandatory safeguarding training for all employees will result in a work force that is aware of its duties and responsibilities.</p>	<p>RED</p>	<p>AMBER</p> <p>People and Business Change had Mandatory Safeguarding Training as part of their priority planning for 2021/2022. PBC are finalising the mandatory training booklet including safeguarding (to replace the employee version via NHS portal due to challenges of access/IT skills).</p> <p>The onboarding process is in place where the mandatory training is to be completed. Further structures need to be in place to review impact of onboarding process and regular re-training schedule monitoring.</p> <p>Work within I-Trent ongoing.</p>
<p>2. Re- Launch e-learning basic safeguarding training for ALL employees and members- ensure</p>	<p>- E-learning side of module successfully launched; implementation of face to face (F2F) facilitation to be established</p>	<p>- F2F training date tbd in relation to endemic situation</p>	<p>All new employees will have completed basic safeguarding awareness training and know their council duties and responsibilities prior to commencing their position.</p>	<p>AMBER for Face to Face learning and on-</p>	<p>AMBER</p> <p>Face to face learning schedule to launch September 2022.</p>

<p>compliance across all service areas within the first year for course completion is as close to target 90%</p>	<p>as soon as pandemic relaxation will allow action</p>	<p>- On boarding process tbc by PBC by July 2021</p>	<p>Target completion rate of existing employees and members will be met and be up to date with basic safeguarding awareness and their council duties and responsibilities.</p> <p>This can be scrutinised and tracked through the data within the annual figures within Corporate SG report and where non-compliance is identified the service area can be challenged.</p>	<p>boarding process for new starters</p>	<p>Launch complete but staff cuts have left this less resourced.</p> <p>Onboarding process for new starters in place as for July 2022.</p> <p>Overall completion rate since launch is 46%.</p> <p>Revisions of the package required to reflect All Wales Basic Safeguarding Training pack from Welsh Government</p>
<p>3. Develop a corporate register of volunteers/ chaperones/ mentors (paid/ unpaid) for all Council Service areas</p>	<p>Creation of a register where Volunteers, etc. may be used within service areas and what training/ checks would be required for their role- this requires to be linked to the Volunteers Policy and then publicised; cascaded to staff through varying forums. (to be completed in collaboration with POD & training).</p>	<p>- PBC to collate the details of the current list of volunteers/ chaperones across the organisation (May 2021)</p> <p>- PBC (with support of SG Unit) to update</p>	<p>There will be a centrally located register held by POD of all volunteers used across all council service areas. Should information be required about a volunteer (ie. their training/ safeguarding check status) then this information can be quickly accessed.</p>	<p>AMBER</p>	<p>GREEN</p> <p>The 'central register' has been set up in I-Trent (and we have populated volunteer details where they have been provided by service areas)</p> <p>Combined application form/on-boarding to capture details of any agreed volunteer (which will include sign-off that they've read</p>

		<p>Volunteers Policy to ensure new processes reflect requirements and Corporate SG requirements regarding mandatory training (July 2021)</p> <p>- Campaign/ dissemination/ SG champ forum of revamped Volunteers Policy in August 2022</p>			<p>and understood the mandatory training) in final stage. The volunteer will be issued with a 'contract' setting out principles/expectations of volunteering for NCC</p> <p>Update the final version of the Policy/Guidance for Volunteers to be completed July 2022, with a planned campaign of promotion across Council to ensure managers are signposting their volunteers to complete all our processes</p> <p>An item on the council jobs page to ask any speculative enquiry about volunteering for NCC so PBC can review and send to relevant service area for consideration</p>
<p>4. Develop a tiered safeguarding training framework for all roles across the organisation (including volunteers) to be clear on the level of safeguarding training and safeguarding check</p>	<p>Early stages of the project with Social Services training department, identifying roles within services areas. Collaboration with POD is being arranged to develop this project.</p>	<p>Arrange project meeting with Safeguarding Unit; Training Department and PBC- lead officers Claire Broome (SS Training) and Lynsey</p>	<p>There will be a clear safeguarding training framework which staff/ managers from all council service areas can access to identify what level of safeguarding training is required for their employment role (including volunteers) to ensure compliancy in terms of safeguarding training.</p>	<p>AMBER due to roll over from previous work plan task</p>	<p>AMBER</p> <p>Initial project meetings held with Safeguarding Unit; Training Department and PBC- lead officers. Due staff changes and circumstance this project has been paused.</p>

they must have in order to undertake their role		Thomas (Safeguarding Unit) – July 2021	This tiered training framework could also be developed as a future project to be linked to the clear review and personal development plans of employees.		Within July and August 2022, this wider project will be discussed when creating a face to face training schedule for Safeguarding training.
<p>5. Improve how “safeguarding” information is communicated externally to the citizens of Newport in order to ensure that our citizens know who to contact if they need information, advice or assistance and to promote the Council’s commitment to safeguarding by communicating essential information and highlighting where changes have or will be made (ie. legislation/ policy/ council procedures).</p> <p>“Communicating Information to Citizens about the Children-Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment Law” in 2022 is</p>	Review the current Newport.gov webpages to ensure that the information is up to date/ useful/ engaging	<p>1) Content development of pages and ratification of content by CSMT by August 2021</p> <p>2) Dissemination strategy to be agreed with Comms & Marketing department upon agreement of information content IT web page content development and launch by September 2021)</p>	Citizens of Newport report that they can access information, advice and assistance and feel that the information is communicated to them clearly.	AMBER	<p>AMBER</p> <p>Content development undertaken however due to additional streamlined resources developed by the Welsh Government, how want a cross Wales approach, additional work has begun to reflect this requirement. Proposed pages will be submitted to CSMT by end of September 2022 with proposed launch of November 2022 to coincide with National Safeguarding week.</p> <p>Meetings with Comms and Marketing team to be arranged for August 2022.</p> <p>Work delayed do to staff cuts and reconfiguration and training of staff new to this responsibility.</p>

promoted on Newport.gov website.					
6. Child Protection Conference Process quality assurance review and audit	Audit and evaluation of the process changes and feedback from practitioners/ partners/ service users.	<p>1) Virtual conference change occurring early summer (June/ July 2021), therefore, 1st audit review within 3 months approx. October 2021</p> <p>2) Case file audit of WCCIS form development for Child Protection Conference to assure quality to coincide with virtual conference changes at 1.</p> <p>3) Practitioner/ child/ agency feedback on process changes to inform review</p>	Child Protection Conferences in Newport are a collaborative process which engage all of those participants involved, promoting the voice of the child and central to the process.	Green	<p>1) Blended Case Conferences working well with 90% parents attending the meetings face to face. Blended meeting have also helped with meeting attendance and quoracy.</p> <p>2) This is ongoing. Case Conference forms were simplified. This has led to them being completed more fully. Parents understand the form.</p> <p>3) Positive feedback on the form</p>

		and audit-findings to CSMT December 2021			
7. Campaign Promoting the role of the “Designated Safeguarding Lead/Officer” (<i>ie. person responsible for making child/ adult at risk referrals</i>) and the differences with the “Safeguarding Champion” for the Service Area (<i>ie. person who disseminates information about Safeguarding and takes a corporate lead for information sharing</i>)- it is vital employees know who to report their concerns to and that those with DSL/O responsibilities and duties have the adequate training/ resources/support to fulfil these obligations.	A clear need for a new campaign on identifying who the DSL/O is for every team in every service area is needed and ensuring that those people are adequately trained for the role/ supported and that they are known and promoted to their teams/ service areas as the person responsible for making child/adult at risk referrals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual service area feedback from self evaluations commencing June 2021 - SG Champions forum highlighting information (September 2021) - DSL/O Campaign September 2021 	<p>Within the 2022 annual corporate safeguarding self assessments there will be a more informed knowledge base and response across the entire service area that it is the role of the “DSL/O” as the person who makes child/ adult at risk referrals.</p> <p>Improved knowledge across all service areas in safeguarding terminology/ language.</p> <p>Every employee knows who to report their concerns to if they have concerns for a child or adult at risk and the names of designated safeguarding leads/ officers are known/ displayed amongst teams/ departments.</p>	GREEN	<p>GREEN</p> <p>Safeguarding Champions to be addressed by directorates due to staffing changes</p> <p>Refresh completed and meetings now set up</p>
8. Liberty Protection Safeguard training across Newport adult and children services		Regional consortium training calendar tbc	Adequately skilled workforce who have received the specialised regional training who are able to adapt to the	GREEN	<p>GREEN</p> <p>Completed within Adult Services, with new starters</p>

prior to regulation changes in 2022			transition from DoLs to LPS when it is applied in 2022. (No date set for implementation yet due to consultation of the new Code of Practice to be completed across the UK, possibly 2023)		receiving the support for adaption from DoLs to LPS.
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5 Key Data for Safeguarding

5.1 This section comprises the data required. Thus Members will be routinely provided with the performance data regarding referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer (DOS/LADO); the performance figures provided to Welsh Government relating to the number of children named on Newport’s Child Protection Register as at 31st March each year; the number of children “looked after” as at 31st March and the number of children accommodated during the course of the year. The adults at risk (duty to enquire) statistics and reporting in relation to child assessment through to child protection processes will also be routinely provided.

5.2 Professional concerns

	Total PSM (Cases)	Substantiated	Un-substantiated	Unfounded	Deliberately invented or malicious	Threshold not met / Awaiting outcome
2019	93	33	22	5	0	40
2020	90	22	17	10	0	51
2021	81	31	11	5	1	52
2022	95	33	30	6	0	26

The table and graph at 5.2 provide data on the number of professional strategy meetings convened by the LADO, their outcomes, and over the past 3 years. Members are advised that there has been a change in the outcome category introduced by the Wales Safeguarding Procedures. Thus, malicious, and demonstrably false are no longer used and a new category, “deliberately invented or malicious”, has been introduced from 2020. Referral reduced in 2020 and 21 (particularly in education, alongside an increase in health referrals) during the pandemic. However, trends have now reverted to pre-pandemic levels.

5.3 The number of children named on Newport’s Child Protection Register as at 18.4.23 was 137.

Members are advised this is a low/medium average with other Gwent Local Authorities. There is a continued commitment to collaborative working with families and risk reduction.

5.4 The number of children “looked after” as at 18.4.23 was 379, an increase from 341 previously.

There were 115 episodes of CLA that ceased in the period 01.04.2022 to 31.03.2023 note there were 2 children who BLA and ceased twice so the 115 episodes relates to 113 children. Members are reminded that ceasing “Child Looked After” status can be favourable for a number of reasons including “Turned 18 years old and continuing to live with foster parent/s in a ‘When I Am Ready arrangement’; Adoption; returned home to live with parents, relatives, or other person with parental responsibility (not under a residence order or special guardianship order); Special guardianship order made to former foster carers; Transferred To Care Of Adult Social Services).

As at 31 March 2023 there were 377 CLA compared to 370 on the 31.03.2022. Comparatively to last year’s Child Looked After figures numbers have remained stable and not increased significantly. The per 10,000 rate of children who are looked after continues to be the lowest in Gwent and below the Wales average.

50 % of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children last year arrived via the mandatory NTS (National Transfer scheme) – the Home Office’s dispersal mechanism for under 18’s. There have been 21 spontaneous arrivals in the last year. We receive funding from the Home Office for these young people. Welsh Government discounted CLA UASC numbers from mainstream CLA numbers when they are analysing CLA numbers nationally as they represent a different cohort of children. The Strategic Migration Partnership link for Wales regards Newport as leading the way in this work.

Very generally speaking this cohort of young people are receptive of help and support and compliant with attending education/training. There was some concern in the press about this cohort going missing. We are aware of one young person who is over 18 and believed to have gone to Cardiff. There is a very low rate of absconding. Nationally the figures are that 75% of UASCs get right to remain via The Home Office. This figure is likely do decrease significantly with the incoming Illegal Migration Bill.

Housing developments:

We continue to use private rented accommodation for many over 16's due to the lack of local foster placements. Young people are supported through Children's Services and co working with the third sector e.g. Gap Centre and Barnardos. The creation of a specialist UASC team in Newport has led to a step change in the amount of support that young people receive. We are developing a specialist residential provision on a Gwent wide basis and looking to integrate this into how we are working. Other developments include investigating the development of supported accommodation that can operate within the cost envelope provided by the Home Office.

The Home office has been slow to process asylum applications over the last few years and this means that young people are unable to claim housing benefit or access services that are funded by the Housing Support Grant in Newport. This has placed most costs for their accommodation in the Childrens services budget.

A Gwent wide plan for UASC is being developed now.

Children Looked After accommodation

Significant work with our early intervention and prevention services to support families to stay together anticipates a further drive in safely reducing the child looked after population and returning "out of authority" placements to in-house provisions. Newport continues to develop our in-house residential services working on at a Gwent level to increase emergency provision. Newport has a short breaks home for children with disabilities, 3 x four bed children's home which also have 1 emergency bed available for up to 6 weeks. There is also a smaller home which accommodates one young person. Newport has developed, in partnership with health, a 4 bed regional children's home which is short term provision to step down or prevention escalation for those children with high level emotional/behavioural needs. Newport is also developing regional emergency accommodation, 4 annexes that can accommodate 1 or 2 children depending on need. Newport is also working in partnership with Action for Children to develop a home for 4 children with disabilities on a regional basis. Newport is also developing its own disabled children's home. Newport has approximately 130 foster carers. Newport's children placed with private/independent foster carers numbers continue to remain stable as the teams work hard to return children to Newport or prevent them from leaving the authority by providing alternative care. The Programme for Government elimination of profit agenda has had a significant impact on external private providers and will mean that Newport will need to continue to build in house provision and plan to return children from private provision.

6 Annual Review of Newport City Council Corporate Safeguarding Self -Assessment Audit

6.1 Review period

We are reviewing the self-assessment tool following the issuing of the Welsh Government guidance on Corporate Safeguarding. We are working Gwent wide with Safeguarding Service Manager counterparts to merge existing forms to reflect the shared issues. This will enable benchmarking and commonality of approach. We are including the audit recommendations into this work. In Newport, we are keen to establish a reporting cycle for corporate Safeguarding to ensure that all colleagues are aware of the timescales for Case file audits, Safeguarding Self Assessments, and the annual report.

6.2 Quality of returns

Service areas have returned self assessment with various approaches. It has been useful to capture positive practices that are already fully embedded across the council. The process has highlighted to managers areas of improvement to refine safeguarding practices for their staff and the citizens who use their services. The method of completion was varied and resulted in different quality returns. Corporate Safeguarding will need to provide tailored support and guidance for the next completion of returns, to ensure there is deep level of scrutiny across all teams, to gain accurate insight and to help improve practices. Individual feedback with specific goals for each service area has been provided to colleagues leading on this. Corporate Safeguarding have plans to work in partnership with the Gwent Safeguarding Board and neighbouring local authorities to create a South East Wales regional self-assessment tool for safeguarding. This will enable common themes and gaps to be identified and tackled across the region as well as sharing good practice.

6.3 Themes per Standard

Standard 1 Policy & Practice (Robust) How robust are your safeguarding practices in your service area?

Strengths

All service areas report they utilise the suite of corporate safeguarding policies, including the Safer Recruitment process and recognise the responsibility for the associated training for all employees to be completed. Services were able to reference specific service area policies that relate to safeguarding, which further evidence a commitment to embedding these within their processes. Service areas were able to clearly respond to questions regarding checks and volunteers, demonstrating an understanding of each topic. 76% of service areas confident in this standard, with 10% amber and 5% red and needing attention/training.

Actions

Training – All areas are aware of the mandatory requirement of the training packages for all employees. Service areas confirmed that the onboarding process for new starters ensured applicable staff completed the courses in the first stages of employment. Tracking training and refresher completion of existing colleagues is an improvement most service areas identify. Managers are keen to address training gaps during team meetings or supervisions, to ensure safeguarding is prioritised and monitored regularly. Suggestions included regular reports for each service area to be issued by the training host or integrating training records and reminders with iTrent.

Actions: Delivery of in person training to be arranged as a priority for employee's who have limited access to e-learning packages. Training tracking to be discussed with HR partners and implemented.

DBS Checks – Service areas reported DBS checks are completed for roles where regulated activity occurs.

Actions – refresher training for managers to ensure all are aware of what constitutes regulated activity and how frequency of activity requires different levels of checks.

Designated Safeguarding Lead/Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSL/DSO) – Although individuals are made aware of their Duty to Report, most service areas were unsure who their DSL/DSOs were. This lack of clarity has been addressed as a priority to ensure the Duty to Report process is clear, to prevent any referrals being missed or delayed.

Actions: A regularly updated list of DSL/DSO's needs to be accessible with each service areas shared spaces including electronic and physical locations.

The DSL/DSO needs to be displayed in spaces where the public attend and have sight.

Safeguarding Champions role – All areas were aware of the Safeguarding Champions, with some commenting on usefulness of cascaded information. Within some areas, the Champions role was confused with the DSL/DSO role. However, other areas were very keen to increase the number of Champions per area to ensure Safeguarding remained a priority within team meetings.

Actions: Relaunch of the Safeguarding Champion role with clear comparison between the DSL/DSO role made and recruit active, motivated participants. Biannual meetings and rolling agenda items in place.

Volunteers – Areas were able to identify if they work with volunteers and in which sectors of their service area. All were unable to confirm if a register is kept and how this is monitored across the service.

Actions: Link in with People and Business Change to promote their work on the new centrally held Volunteers Register and remind all it is part of a commitment to safeguarding by following the associated policy and procedures.

Professional Concern referrals – No area holds data on how many referrals are made from that service area, in relation to concerns about professionals who work with children or adults at risk.

Actions: Corporate Safeguarding to work with WCCIS team to collate that data and share with service areas annually. This will evidence that the policies in place are effective, and employees are following the duty to report process. This work is ongoing and will require the Duty to Report form to be amended.

Audits – Adult Services and Children and Young People Services were the only teams who could identify audits where safeguarding had been a focus.

Actions: Work with Safeguarding Champions to identify areas within audits where safeguarding can be focussed on to ensure practices and procedures are regularly assessed for their robustness in terms of Safeguarding. Consideration to Safeguarding being a standing item on all team meeting agendas.

Standard 2 Environment (Safe)- How safe does your service area feel to citizens that access your services, and to your staff working in your service area?

Strengths

Service areas are confident that citizens and staff feel safe and informed when at sites and accessing services. It was reported that 71% felt that this was working well and that there was confidence in this. 21% of the returns raised this as Amber in their scoring and 8% considered this to be a red risk, Security measures are complied with in terms of those on premises as well as risk assessments. Staff who work directly with the public have additional and specific safeguarding training suitable to their role. Services areas were able to provide examples of how they have managed any concerns received by other citizens or professionals. Service areas were reflective of procedures in relation to contractors attending properties and identified areas of improvement.

Actions

Citizen's awareness of safeguarding – Although areas can example that safeguarding concerns are raised by staff and citizens, there was still a lack of clarity about this.

Actions: DSL/DSO's identified and widely communicated, with timely reviews as a priority. The quality of public displays of across sites and online sources needs scrutiny to ensure best practice is established.

Other premises risk assessments – Service areas where staff visit other premises utilise logging and communication processes. However, the pandemic changed some practices with physical logbooks to digital or phone calls made post visit, ensuring new agreed practice is in place.

Actions: Champions to highlight the need for these new practices to be reviewed in a timely manner as the working practices continue to evolve due to blended working.

Standard 3 Culture (Effective) - How Effective is your service area approach to safeguarding?

Strengths

All areas stated that their strategic planning considers the need to safeguard citizens and to promote their welfare. Some were able to reflect on what has gone well and areas for improvement. 79% of responses said that they were competent in this, 19% rated themselves as amber and 2% as red. Most areas were able to demonstrate that new learning is embedded into practice and planning in relation to consent to share and safeguarding children and adults at risk. Gaps in service area approach to safeguarding were mainly identified, showing willingness to accept change will be required to improve and uphold safeguarding standards.

Actions

Training – All areas again commented on the need for better monitoring of training and will undertake snap audits to test the effectiveness.

Actions: Utilise Champions to provide prompts for regular training and testing of safeguarding understanding.

Commissioned services – Work in progress to ensure that safeguarding requirements are clearly stated in service specifications for commissioned services and that there is some assurance that Safeguarding training is undertaken routinely. Examples of work programmes in relation to this include the School Transport contracts. There has been considerable cross directorate work to ensure that services taking our most vulnerable learners to and from education are appropriately trained, wear ID always and are aware the specific need of some of the children. This is also work being looked at with the Home Adaptations team to ensure that all contracted maintenance staff are aware of safeguarding when entering homes of Adults deemed to be at risk. Service areas are aware of the LADO role and the Professional Concerns process/

Actions: Further discussion and quality checks required with Service Areas to ascertain if a comparison tool for those assessing a commissioned service safeguarding practices is in line with Newport City Council's.

7 Future Work, Areas of stress/ risk, and Recommendations

- 7.1** The impact of Covid-19 pandemic is still impacting on developments and has resulted in further delays in actions from the previous year's work plan targets either being met or commenced for some work streams. The outstanding work has therefore been rolled over into this year's work plan (2022- 2023) and new target dates have been set. Members are respectfully asked to remember that given the ever-changing climate that we remain in that the service will always need to remain adaptable and reflexive, and the proposals stated will need to have a degree of flexibility to their completion.
- 7.2** The Safeguarding Unit, collaboratively with the Social Services Training Department and People and Business Change Department, will continue to progress on the secondary phase of "skill-scanning" of all job descriptions within the council (including volunteers) to ensure that every post is reviewed to ensure that the correct level of safeguarding training and checks required for that role is "assigned" and then can be reviewed by the responsible line manager at the correct intervals. This work is identified on the Work Plan (2022/ 2023).
- 7.3** As highlighted to Members, there is an area of risk to the Council in relation to poor performance for mandatory training where fines/ regulatory action may be taken regarding safeguarding training. Although there have been mitigating factors affecting performance (including the pandemic; access issues for specific service areas) which have been acknowledged by both the Senior Children/ Adult Management Team and Welsh Government to prevent action being taken currently, this on-going low performance and non-compliance requires to be formally addressed. It is therefore a strong recommendation to Members that Cabinet continues to endorse the work plan action at 1. for People and Business Change to adopt new ways of working into their priority planning for current employees in completing mandatory Safeguarding training in order to improve compliance rates; meet the objectives of the Council's commitment to ensuring "Safeguarding Involves Us All"; and in ensuring fines or regulatory action are not taken by governing bodies against Newport City Council.
- 7.4** Safeguarding Champions. This role has been refreshed and biannual meetings are in place. Consideration to be given to the creation of a LA Corporate Safeguarding Steering Group. The purpose of this group would be to allow senior members of the council to have an overview of their roles and responsibilities around safeguarding and to ratify plans at directorate level before being represented in reports such as this.
- 7.5** Audit cycle for children services. We are going to implement a case audit cycle in Children's Services from 1st September and have devised a process for all managers, Team Manager and above to audit a case bimonthly. This will be managed by the Quality Assurance team. From this we will gain oversight into case themes and subsequent strengths as well as improvements.

- 7.6** Greater connectivity with Children’s Services, Adults services and Prevention and Inclusion Services. Biannual meetings with Heads of Services to look at pressing safeguarding issues and arising issues and to approach issues consistently and share knowledge across the social care directorate.
- 7.7** Developing and Improving work that is cross directorate with Education Safeguarding. This includes a quality assurance process in all Newport schools, training data, referral (DTR) monitoring and hearing the Child/Learner’s voice.
- 7.8** The Head of Corporate Safeguarding is now the Deputy Chair of the Channel Panel. This is a Prevent led process and looks at cases of radicalisation and extremism within Newport. This has strengthened awareness of vulnerability and safeguarding within Community Safety and Communities.
- 7.9** We have been actively involved in the consultation work regarding changes to the Practice Review process and the incoming Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) This is a Welsh Government process but one that was initiated by Newport. This is simplifying the Practice Review/Domestic Homicide/Mental Health/Offensive Weapons review process. A multi-agency workshop was facilitated by The Head of Corporate Safeguarding in April 2023.

8 Corporate Safeguarding Work Plan (2022/ 2023)

What outcomes do we want to achieve? (objectives to achieve)	How will we make this happen?	When will we achieve this?	How will we know it’s making a difference? (performance measures)	RAG status
1. Mandatory safeguarding training compliance to be corporately addressed by People and Business Change urgently via new ways of working for current employees (via I-Trent tracking and employee check ins and if necessary, capability procedures for non	People and Business Change to ensure that Mandatory Safeguarding Training is addressed as part of their priority planning for 2022/2023. Current Employees- via I-Trent/ employee check-ins.	Proposed for PBC to progress as a matter of urgency	Compliance rates for mandatory safeguarding training will improve across all service areas and the council will not receive fines or regulatory action. The council will be able to easily track compliance with mandatory training and address with service areas where there are issues with low up take and	Green - Complete AMBER Processes in place for new starters and volunteers.

<p>completion) in order to avoid fines/ regulatory action for continued non-compliance.</p>			<p>identify if barriers exist and address these swiftly.</p> <p>Completion of mandatory safeguarding training for all employees will result in a work force that is aware of its duties and responsibilities.</p>	<p>Current employees have access to all the training and Safeguarding Champions and campaigns promote these.</p> <p>F2F sessions are being schedule to capture those without IT access.</p>
<p>2. Develop a tiered safeguarding training framework for all roles across the organisation (including volunteers) to be clear on the level of safeguarding training and safeguarding check they must have in order to undertake their role</p>	<p>Early stages of the project with Social Services training department, identifying roles within services areas. Collaboration with POD is being arranged to develop this project.</p>	<p>Arrange further project meeting with Safeguarding Unit; Training Department and PBC- lead officers</p>	<p>There will be a clear safeguarding training framework which staff/ managers from all council service areas can access to identify what level of safeguarding training is required for their employment role (including volunteers) to ensure compliancy in terms of safeguarding training.</p> <p>This tiered training framework could also be developed as a future project to be linked to the clear review and personal development plans of employees.</p>	<p>AMBER due to roll over from previous work plan task (20/21) Awaiting final version of National Safeguarding training framework and guidance to shape this training</p>

<p>5. Improve how “safeguarding” information is communicated externally to the citizens of Newport in order to ensure that our citizens know who to contact if they need information, advice or assistance and to promote the Council’s commitment to safeguarding by communicating essential information and highlighting where changes have or will be made (ie. legislation/ policy/ council procedures).</p>	<p>Review the current Newport.gov webpages to ensure that the information is up to date/ useful/ engaging</p>	<p>1) Content ratification of content by CSMT by August 2022</p> <p>2) Dissemination strategy to be agreed with Comms & Marketing department upon agreement of information content IT web page content development and launch by November 2022)</p>	<p>Citizens of Newport report that they can access information, advice and assistance and feel that the information is communicated to them clearly.</p>	<p>AMBER due to roll over from previous work plan task (20/21)</p> <p>Proposed development pages being finalised</p> <p>Communicating Information to Citizens about the Children-Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment Law was prompted by the council social media channels Delayed due to staff changes</p>
<p>6. Self assessment tool – regional work</p>	<p>Ongoing meetings with Gwent counterparts. Managed by Safeguarding Service Managers with help from the Safeguarding Board Business Unit</p>	<p>Spring 2023 for the new reporting cycle</p>	<p>More robust self assessment will mitigate N/A answers as well as allow for benchmarking against WAO recommendations and regionally agreed performance indicators.</p>	<p>Amber – some agreed data collection to be implemented</p>

7. Audit Cycles	Process is devised and ready to implement	Sept 2022	Case themes, strengths and improvements	Amber – process has begun.
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9 Resource implications (employment and financial)

There are no resource implications currently other than corporate Safeguarding being a part of everyone’s role. This is being managed without a budget.

Appendix 1 – Glossary of terms

Acronym	Term
ABUHB	Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
CSMT	Children Services Management Team
DoL	Deprivation of Liberty
DSL/O	Designated Safeguarding Lead / Officer
DTR	Duty to refer
F2F	Face to face
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FM	Forced Marriage
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations
HBA	Honour Based Abuse
LAC / CLA	Looked After Child / Child Looked After
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
LPS	Liberty Protection Safeguards
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences
NCC	Newport City Council

PBC	People and Business Change
PPN	Police Protection Notification
PSM	Professional Strategy Meeting
SG	Safeguarding
SPOC	Single points of contact
VAWDASV	Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
WCCIS	Welsh Community Care Information System
UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

Appendix 2 – Welsh Government Corporate Safeguarding Good Practice Guidance



WG Corp
Safeguarding Policy