

Scrutiny Report



Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Part 1

Date: June 2021

Subject Annual Corporate Safeguarding 2020/21

Author Scrutiny Adviser

The following people have been invited to attend for this item:

Invitee:	Area / Role / Subject
Sally Ann Jenkins	Head of Children and Young Peoples Service
Mary Ryan	Head of Corporate Safeguarding

Section A – Committee Guidance and Recommendations

1 Recommendations to the Committee

The Committee is asked to

1. Consider the Annual Corporate Safeguarding Executive Summary report, to scrutinise and review the progress of the key priority work plans for both corporate safeguarding arrangements and the safeguarding self- assessment findings for the whole Council.
2. Determine if it wishes to make any comment / recommendations to Cabinet regarding the report and the how the Council is managing corporate safeguarding.

2 Context

Background

- 2.1 Safeguarding, whether concerning children or adults is of paramount importance and accordingly occupies a high priority within the Council's services.
- 2.2 Hitherto, reports on aspects of safeguarding responsibilities of the Council have been reported in the past to a joint Committee or individual Committees whom the relevant safeguarding matters relate to. This has been programmed for scrutiny on a regular basis annually.

- 2.3 Safeguarding is a complex topic in so far as safeguarding responsibilities are present in all aspects of Council Services and external life activities. The theme of safeguarding is therefore present in all aspects of Council Services, functions and duties. Due to the overarching corporate significance of the Corporate Safeguarding plan and the new self- assessment safeguarding toolkit which provides Members with a baseline assessment of how the whole Council is ensuring safeguarding is embedded within all services are being brought to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.
- 2.4 This report combines the relevant portfolio areas for Committees with scrutiny safeguarding roles and enables the topic of safeguarding across the spectrum to be addressed at the same time.
- 2.5 The report firstly seeks to make Members aware of the scope and detail of the Council's safeguarding services and role of the Committee. The Committee's role will be to monitor the performance of each element of the service action plan provided and to comment on planned activity for the coming period. The overall aim is to ensure that the theme of "safeguarding" becoming fundamentally embedded within all aspects of council services.
- 2.6 In order to maintain and improve understanding of the services provided and roles associated with safeguarding, as Councillors and Scrutiny Members specifically, Members are asked to endorse the planning and future provision of suitable training through a range of opportunities.

Previous Consideration of Corporate Safeguarding

- 2.7 Following a Welsh Audit Office Inspection in 2019, the format and data presented within this report has required to be revised. Welsh Government are due to implement a change to the Quality Standards (Key Performance Indicators) which provide the basic benchmark of performance for local authorities who deliver care and support to the people of Wales. The new performance data sets will commence from 1st April 2020 and will report to Welsh Government in March 2021. Welsh Government will not be externally publishing this data for any Local Authority for the first year. This means that the collection and presentation in terms of "Safeguarding" data for members to be aware of and scrutinise currently, and in future reports, will change from this year's report and in forthcoming reports. These changes have resulted in a more detailed report than committee have previously received.
- 2.8 At the last Scrutiny Committee review in October 2020, the Committee made the following comments to the Cabinet:
- Members appreciated the hard work that had been completed over this period, and advised the report was very comprehensive.
 - Members expressed the importance of the department having the expertise to be able to make recommendations, and approaching with issues such as depriving individuals of their liberty, professionally and sensitively as wrong decisions could leave the Council open to legal challenges. Processes need to be water tight.
 - Members voiced concerns of the potential risks if the Council do not go ahead with a 3 yearly check, as well as making sure that Subject Access Requests are completed without breaching any time scales and risking fines.
- 2.9 As Scrutiny is not a decision making forum, the Scrutiny Committee's review and subsequent comments / recommendations on this matter will be reported to the Cabinet for consideration and action.
- 2.10 As Elected Members, and Scrutiny Members, the Committee has an important role in considering the arrangements that the Council has in place for Safeguarding, Corporately and for those in direct contact with vulnerable groups.

3 Information Submitted to the Committee

- 3.1 Attached at **Appendix 1** is the Annual Corporate Safeguarding Executive Summary update. This report provides key information on the topic of “safeguarding” for members, provides information on how well the Council is achieving on its safeguarding arrangements, and provides a specific focus on the areas in which the performance is AMBER or RED.

4. Suggested Areas of Focus

Role of the Committee

The role of the Committee in considering the report is to:

- Establish whether associated key priorities and themes are appropriately addressed within the Action Plan (2021/2022) and planned actions are geared to meet the objectives within the timescale concerned.
- Determine whether there are any perceived areas of practice where objectives are not effectively addressed or met (both Corporate or within specific work plans of the Safeguarding Unit)
- Consider 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.
- Consider whether an adequate monitoring and performance management framework and measures are in place to ensure an appropriate level of management on an ongoing basis and to consider possible arrangements for the Committee to implement.
- Consider the level of planning and future provision of suitable training through a range of opportunities for Members in their roles as Councillors and Members of Scrutiny Committees.

4.1 Suggested Lines of Enquiry

The following broad lines of enquiry have been adapted from the Centre for Public Scrutiny / Improvement and Development Agency 'Safeguarding Children Scrutiny Guide' as areas to consider when thinking about safeguarding both children and adults:

4.1.1 **Partnership Working:**

- Is the relationship between the Council and the Regional Safeguarding Boards (SEWSCB; GWASB; VAWDASVB) clear and working effectively to improve outcomes for children and adults?
- Scrutiny arrangements - Is the Scrutiny Committee for Partnerships aware of all relevant partnerships and are they included on their Forward Work Programme?

4.1.2 **Quality and Performance:**

- Is there evidence that learning from the regional boards leads to service improvement at system and frontline practitioner level? For example, how embedded and integrated is the learning following Child Practice Reviews/ Adult Practice Reviews to local practice within Newport Social Services?
- How is the Council and the Regional Safeguarding Boards gathering and using the experiences of children, young people and families to inform improvements to safeguarding arrangements?
- Is there a robust assessment process in place for both children and adults who may have care and support needs and are outcomes well understood?

4.1.3 **Practice:**

- Are universal services supporting vulnerable children well and are there adequate and effective early intervention or prevention services in place for children and families? What safeguards are there to protect children and families from inappropriate child protection interventions?
- Are services reaching the most vulnerable groups e.g. children with disabilities, children in families affected by substance misuse, domestic violence or parental mental illness and children from refugee and asylum seeking communities?
- Do all Care and Support Plans contain specific, achievable, focussed outcomes intended to safeguard and promote the well-being of the person?
- Are these plans measurable and are those care and support plans for children identified in need of protection independently reviewed?
- What is the quality and frequency of supervision and training given to frontline staff? Does supervision routinely address safeguarding practice and performance?
- Role of Members – is the role for Members clear, and accountable?

Section B – Supporting Information

5 Supporting Information

5.1 The Corporate Safeguarding report includes the Corporate Safeguarding Action Plan 21/22 and the following Safeguarding Service areas within Newport City Council Individual Teams Key Data and Priority Plans;

- Adult Safeguarding
- Safeguarding / Quality Assurance (Local Designated Officer)
- Independent Reviewing Officers and Independent Conference Chairs
- Education Safeguarding
- Child Criminal Exploitation (Child sexual exploitation)
- Independent Reviewing Officer Team Plan

6 Links to Council Policies and Priorities

- The Annual Corporate Safeguarding report has links to both the *Aspirational People* and *Resilient Communities* Corporate Plan Commitments and the related Wellbeing Objectives:

Well-being Objectives	Promote economic growth and regeneration whilst protecting the environment	Improve skills, educational outcomes & employment opportunities	Enable people to be healthy, independent & resilient	Build cohesive & sustainable communities
Corporate Plan Commitments	Thriving City	Aspirational People		Resilient Communities
Supporting Function	Modernised Council			

7 Wellbeing of Future Generation (Wales) Act

5 Ways of Working	Types of Questions to consider:
<p>Long-term The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.</p>	<p>Can the Officers provide actions to any of the Amber and Red</p> <p>Are there any long term trends developing that could affect how this plan is implemented to how the actions are prioritised?</p>
<p>Prevention Prevent problems occurring or getting worse.</p>	<p>How are you ensuring that the needs of the service users monitored and are taken into account when developing the long term strategy?</p> <p>The PRG recommended that education around proper recycling is important to increasing recycling rates, what is the Council doing to increase people's knowledge of how to recycle appropriately?</p>
<p>Integration Considering how public bodies' wellbeing objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.</p>	<p>How does the Council's implementation of the plan impact upon the services of other public bodies and their objectives?</p>
<p>Collaboration Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the organisation itself).</p>	<p>How are you using the knowledge / information / good practice of others to inform / influence the Council's work?</p>
<p>Involvement The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.</p>	<p>How as a Council are we ensuring we are consistently seeking the views of those who are impacted through the implementation of the plan?</p> <p>While developing a long term strategy, how are you ensuring the diverse communities are involved in your decision making?</p>

8. Background Papers

Include all additional documents that are referenced in the report, and those that you have used as background reading. Hyperlink to online versions of them if available.

- [The Essentials - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act \(Wales\)](#)
- [Corporate Plan](#)

Report Completed: June 2021