

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO PARTNERSHIPS AND GOVERNANCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 FEBRUARY 2017

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING

WESTERN BAY SAFEGUARDING

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To update the committee with information on the Regional Safeguarding Adults Board and Safeguarding Children Board and evidence how partners are working together.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The report links to the following priority in the Corporate Plan:
- Helping people to be more self-reliant.

3. Background

- 3.1 Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.
- 3.2 Safeguarding adults includes:
- Protecting their rights to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect;
 - People and organisations working together to prevent the risk of abuse or neglect, and to stop them from happening;
 - Making sure people's wellbeing is promoted, taking their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs into account.
- 3.3 Safeguarding children and promoting their welfare includes:
- Protecting them from maltreatment or things that are bad for their health or development;
 - Making sure they grow up in circumstances that allow safe and effective care.
- 3.4 Effective safeguarding arrangements should be underpinned by two key principles:
- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility: for services to be effective each professional and organisation should play their full part; and
 - A person-centred approach: for services to be effective they should be based on a clear understanding of the needs and views of adults and children.

- 3.5 The key pieces of legislation relating to safeguarding children and adults at risk are the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and the Children Act 1989.
- 3.6 Part 7 of the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act relates to Safeguarding. Provisions contained in Part 7 include:
- Definitions of an ‘adult and child at risk’;
 - A duty on relevant partners to report adults and children at risk;
 - A requirement on a local authority to investigate where they suspect that an adult with care and support needs is at risk of abuse or neglect;
 - The introduction of an Adult Protection and Support Order (APSO);
 - The requirement on the local authority to consider undertaking an investigation when there has been a report that a child is at risk and then carry this out in line with Section 47 of the Children Act 1989;
 - The establishment of a National Safeguarding Board;
 - The functions and procedures of Safeguarding Adults and Safeguarding Children Boards.
- 3.7 Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 sets out the duty on a Local Authority, with the help of other organisations as appropriate to make enquires if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering harm, to enable them to decide whether they should take any action to safeguard and promote the child’s welfare.

National Safeguarding Board

- 3.8 The National Safeguarding Board is an advisory board that advises Welsh Government on the effectiveness of arrangements to safeguard people in Wales. The Board is chaired by Dr Margaret Flynn with Board members having being appointed by Welsh Ministers through an open public appointments process.
- 3.9 One of the National Board’s duties is to provide advice and support to regional Safeguarding Boards and each Board member has been assigned to a regional board. The Board member linked to the Western Bay Safeguarding Board is Keith Towler.

Regional Safeguarding Boards

- 3.10 Part 7 regulations of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act specify the establishment of regional Safeguarding Boards and require each region to specify a lead partner agency for each Board. The Western Bay Safeguarding Boards cover the Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea regions, with Neath Port Talbot CBC as the lead partner agency. **Appendices 1a – 1f** shows the structure and associated business plans for both the Adult Board and the Children’s Board.
- 3.11 The objectives of the Safeguarding Boards are to both protect adults and children who are experiencing, or at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of

harm and to prevent them becoming at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm.

- 3.12 Membership of Safeguarding Boards is prescribed within the Act. A Board include senior representatives from agencies who exercise functions or who are engaged in activities in relation to children and adults. At a minimum a Board must include a representative from:
- Each Local Authority
 - Police
 - Local Health Board
 - NHS Trust
 - Probation services provider(s)

The current chairs of the Western Bay Safeguarding Boards are:

- Adults Board - Susan Cooper, Corporate Director, Social Services and Wellbeing at Bridgend CBC.
- Children Board - Nick Jarman, Director of Social Services at Neath Port Talbot CBC

- 3.13 Governance: The Safeguarding Adults and Children Boards have outcome focused business plans in place. There are management group structures in place which support the delivery of the business plans on behalf of the Boards. Reports are routinely submitted to the Boards to raise risks and issues against the delivery of the plan and for decision and action from the Board. This enables the Board to take ownership of its work at strategic level and provide leadership to the management groups. There is an established business unit based in Neath Civic Offices that supports the Boards in this respect. The team is funded through the Safeguarding Board budget and consists of one Strategic Business and Development Manager, two Strategic Business Coordinators and a Business Administrator. The reporting arrangements into each Local Authority area, Local Service Board or equivalent are inconsistent however each receives progress updates when required. Work on wider governance issues, links with other partnerships and robust reporting mechanisms are being developed by the business unit.

- 3.14 The Terms of Reference developed for Safeguarding Boards are reviewed annually and promotes the requirement for accountability. There are clear definitions for professional challenge and holding to account. Each Board member is required to sign up to a member Role Profile to which they are individually accountable in relation to their contribution to the Board and attendance at Board meetings. The Boards also have measures within a Performance and Impact Framework which assist in reporting activity of Board members against elements within their role profiles. This allows the Boards to demonstrate multi-agency working at a strategic level.

4. Current situation/Proposal

- 4.1 The core functions for Safeguarding Boards are set out in the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

To assist the Safeguarding Boards in carrying out their duties effectively to safeguard adults and children a number of functions have been delegated to various subgroups. Each of the sub-groups is composed of relevant managers and practitioners who can bring expertise and knowledge to a group. The sub-groups carry out work which is informed by the Safeguarding Board's priorities. These groups report to the Boards through the relevant Chair.

4.2 The sub-groups of the Safeguarding Adults Board are:

- *Quality Monitoring, Review & Escalating Concerns* (to include adult practice reviews); function:
 - Develop maintain and review a Performance Framework to ensure that the Board is satisfied and can scrutinise safeguarding adult practice.
 - Establish links and reporting mechanisms for the Local Case Audit and Review groups to enable thematic review of safeguarding functions across the region.
 - Receive referrals and consider cases against the criteria set out in the Adult Practice Review Guidance and monitor the progress of individual APRs.
- *Policy and Practice Management Group*; function:
 - Coordinate and ensure the effective development of multi-agency Policy, Procedure and Practice documents for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Adults and Children's across the Western Bay area.
 - Take a lead role in providing comments towards the review of national and regional policies on behalf of the WBSAB.
- *Strategic Training Management Group* (joint with Children's) function:
 - To set regional training and development priorities related to the strategic safeguarding priorities set by the Boards.
 - To commission, quality assure, monitor and evaluate Board specific multiagency safeguarding training where appropriate.
 - To assure the Boards that partners have specific evaluation procedures to enable assurances on the quality of safeguarding training.

All sub groups have individual work plans that link into the overall Business Action Plan 2016 – 2017 of the Safeguarding Adults Board.

4.3 The Safeguarding Adults Board in addition to discharging its core functions has focused its attentions on the following priorities:

- Response the Older Peoples Commissioner's report 'A Place called Home' and Operation Jasmine response
- Governance
- Domestic Abuse

4.4 The Safeguarding Adults Board has focussed its work on two key reviews;

1. A Place to Call Home published by the Older People's Commissioner in November 2014. This focused on the quality of life and care of older people living in care homes in Wales. The overall conclusion of the review was that too many older people living in care homes have an unacceptable quality of life and that the view of what constitutes 'acceptable' needs to shift significantly.

2. In Search of Accountability which details the findings of Operation Jasmine, which was a seven year investigation by Gwent Police into allegations of abuse at several care and nursing homes in South East Wales.

4.5 The Safeguarding Adults Board has responded to Welsh Government regarding both of these reports and given assurance of actions that have been taken as a result.

4.6 There have been several key achievements this year for the Safeguarding Adults Board; a performance framework has been developed which allows for local audit; data collection and analysis this will assist in identifying which specific groups of adults should be identified for regional prioritisation e.g. domestic violence.

4.7 The Safeguarding Adults Board was tasked by Welsh Government to organise a National Safeguarding week 14 – 18th November 2016 for both adults and children, a programme of events took place across the Western Bay region which included training on Human Trafficking & Modern Slavery, Hate crime, Child Sexual Exploitation and promotion of White Ribbon Day. The week was well supported by partner agencies e.g. Probation, Fire Service, Trading Standards etc. The annual conference held by the Boards "Safeguarding Matters" took place on the 25 November 2016 and was extremely well attended by over 400 delegates with very interesting key note speakers.

4.8 The sub-groups of the Safeguarding Children Board are:

- Quality Performance and Monitoring Group.
- Policy and Practice Management Group
- Strategic Training Management Group (joint with Adults)
- Child Practice Review Group; function:
 - Receive referrals and consider cases against the criteria set out in the Child Practice Review Guidance and monitor the process of individual CPR's
 - Contribute to the reviews and provide professional challenge and consider strategic implications for improving systems and practice in individual agencies or on an interagency basis.

All sub groups have individual work plans that link into the overall Business Action Plan 2016 – 2017 of the Safeguarding Children Board.

- 4.9 The Safeguarding Children Board in addition to discharging its core functions has focused its attentions on the following priorities:
- Neglect
 - Child Sexual Exploitation
 - Domestic Abuse
- 4.10 Neglect: The Safeguarding Children Board has a Neglect Practice Guidance Toolkit which is clear, focused and is regularly reviewed and updated with links to research and practice learning. This guidance is in place and will remain in place while the Board works with National initiatives to develop a consistent suite of tools to assess and manage neglect in Wales.
- 4.11 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE): CSE is actively debated at each Safeguarding Children Board meeting as a standing agenda item. A comprehensive multi-agency data set has been developed with all partners which enables the Board to actively enquire about the prevalence of CSE across the region and to be clear on local interventions. Performance data is provided to the Board with 6 monthly updates on how agencies respond to cases of identified or suspected CSE and allowed the Board to target areas in need of training and awareness. A dedicated pool of Child Sexual Exploitation awareness raising trainers has been established using accredited training and resources with over 2000 staff trained across the region.
- 4.12 Domestic Abuse: The Safeguarding Children Board understands the impact domestic abuse has on children living in domestic abuse situations and wishes to improve knowledge on prevalence, interventions and support provided to safeguarding children from living in domestic abuse situations.
- 4.13 The Board continues to work with the 3 domestic abuse forums to develop consistent information which will enable the board to understand more fully the prevalence of domestic abuse across the region.
- 4.14 2017 will see the implementation of a programme of training in line with the National Training Framework on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. The National Training Framework is one of the key mechanisms for delivering on The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015.

Bridgend Operational Safeguarding Group

- 4.15 Bridgend Operational Safeguarding Group is committed to practices that protect children and adults at risk. The two regional Safeguarding Boards have been established to ensure that the statutory safeguarding responsibilities are discharged appropriately and effectively. The Bridgend Operational Safeguarding Group focuses on Bridgend specific matters as well as the regional operational issues which are relevant to Bridgend and receive and review policy and guidance from the regional boards and national enquiries whilst ensuring that there are effective local monitoring arrangements.

4.16 The Group is chaired by the Corporate Director, Social Services and Wellbeing, its membership includes representatives from partner agencies such as Health, Police, Education and the third sector. **Appendix 2** sets out the membership of this local safeguarding group.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

5.1 There is no effect upon the Policy Framework and Procedure Rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 There are no direct financial implications linked to this report.

8. Recommendation

8.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the report.

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10. Background documents:

None.