

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO AUDIT COMMITTEE

14 NOVEMBER 2019

**REPORT OF THE INTERIM HEAD OF FINANCE AND
SECTION 151 OFFICER**

**WALES AUDIT OFFICE FOLLOW-UP REVIEW OF CORPORATE
ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN**

1. Purpose of this report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to submit the Follow-Up Review of Corporate Arrangements for the Safeguarding of Children, produced by Wales Audit Office (WAO), attached as **Appendix A**, for noting.

2. Connections to Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities

2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate priority:

- Helping people to be more self-reliant – taking steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services.

3. Background

3.1 Wales Audit Office undertook this piece of work as a follow up to a review they had undertaken in Bridgend in 2014 on 'Local Authority Arrangements to Support Safeguarding of Children', and to enable them to consider the Council's progress in implementing the recommendations contained in the Auditor General's report, 'Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements in Welsh Councils' in July 2015.

3.2 The review was undertaken between July and September 2019, and involved interviews with a selection of officers and members and review of documentation.

4. Current Situation / Proposal

4.1 The follow up review in 2019 sought to answer the question: Has the Council acted upon the recommendations and proposals for improvement contained in the national and local reports of the Auditor General published in 2014 and 2015?

4.2 Overall, WAO found that the Council has met, or partially met, their previous recommendations and proposals for improvement, but they have identified some further proposals for improvement to strengthen aspects of the Council's corporate safeguarding arrangements. There are nine proposals for improvement identified following this latest review which are set out on page 5 of the report.

4.3 WAO also assessed progress against the recommendations from the 2015 national and 2014 local report and provide an update against those. For the 2014

local report most proposals for improvement have been met, but one further proposal for improvement has been identified. In relation to the 2015 national report the Council has met, or partially met the previous recommendations and proposals for improvement, but WAO have identified some further proposals for improvement to strengthen aspects of the Council's corporate safeguarding arrangements.

5. Effect upon policy framework and procedural rules

5.1 The report does not have any impacts on policy framework and procedure rules.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

7. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Implications

7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report.

8. Financial implications

8.1 There are no financial implications relating to the report.

9. Recommendation

9.1 It is recommended that Audit Committee:

- Note the WAO Follow-up Review of Corporate Arrangements for the Safeguarding of Children (**Appendix A**)

Gill Lewis CPFA
Interim Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer
November 2019

Contact Officer: Deborah Exton
Interim Deputy Head of Finance

Telephone: (01656) 643604

E-mail: Deborah.Exton@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address: Bridgend County Borough Council,
Raven's Court
Brewery Lane
Bridgend,
CF31 4AP

Background documents:

Wales Audit Office: 'Local Authority Arrangements to Support Safeguarding of Children'

Wales Audit Office: 'Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements in Welsh Councils'