

Meeting of:	CABINET
Date of Meeting:	21 NOVEMBER 2023
Report Title:	CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING POLICY REVIEW
Report Owner / Corporate Director:	CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES AND WELLBEING
Responsible Officer:	ALIAH AWAN-WILLIAMS CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING OFFICER
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	There is no effect upon the policy framework or procedure rules.
Executive Summary:	<p>This report presents a revised Corporate Safeguarding Policy for Cabinet approval. The previous policy was approved in June 2021. The policy sets out how the Council meets the requirements of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 in safeguarding children and adults at risk.</p> <p>This policy seeks to ensure that the Council has effective corporate arrangements in place for safeguarding. It provides a framework for every directorate and service area within and across the Council. It sets out responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and protecting children and adults. It lays out the methods by which the Council will be assured that it is fulfilling its duties and that effective practices are in place to support individuals to live their life free from harm, abuse, and neglect in a wide range of settings.</p>

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to Cabinet a revised Corporate Safeguarding Policy for approval. The draft Corporate Safeguarding Policy is at **Appendix 1**.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council requires a Corporate Safeguarding Policy to set out how it fulfils its statutory responsibilities for safeguarding children and adults at risk in accordance with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act (2014).
- 2.2 The policy provides a framework for safeguarding children and adults at risk that all policies and practices within the Council should operate consistently within. The intention of the policy is to support quality service delivery, promote good practice and ensure services are delivered in a way that children, young people and adults at risk are safe from harm and are allowed to fulfil their potential and live the lives they want to live.

- 2.3 The policy is intended to be enabling; to ensure that all parts of the Council understand how to put effective safeguards in place. This is a policy for a positive, preventative and proactive approach to safeguarding, as well as ensuring that people are protected when serious concerns arise. To be effective, the policy must be owned and implemented across the whole Council and promoted with partners and in wider communities.
- 2.4 The policy is intended as an enabler of a positive culture, of proactively identifying, mitigating, managing, and minimising risks to safety and wellbeing, whilst ensuring decisive and timely action to address serious concerns.

3. Current situation/proposal

- 3.1 The Corporate Safeguarding Policy was last revised in June 2021 to align with the implementation of Wales Safeguarding Procedures.
- 3.2 The draft Corporate Safeguarding Policy appended to this report at **Appendix 1** has been developed further to expand policy requirements in the areas of governance, quality assurance, safe workforce, and safe services. Whilst the current policy is clear that safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility, the policy revisions make explicit how the Council will assure itself, through a robust self evaluation process, that all parts of the Council are fully compliant with the requirements of the policy.
- 3.3 The draft policy includes a requirement for an annual report on the effectiveness of corporate safeguarding to be brought to Scrutiny and Cabinet, alongside the annual report on the effectiveness of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Safeguarding Board.
- 3.4 These strengthened areas of the policy reflect areas highlighted in the October 2019 Audit Wales “Follow-up review of corporate arrangements for the safeguarding of children – Bridgend County Borough Council”.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

- 4.1 An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening has identified that there would be no negative impact on those with one or more of the protected characteristics, on socio-economic disadvantage or the use of the Welsh Language. It is therefore not necessary to carry out a full EIA on this policy or proposal.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

- 5.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015) provides the basis for driving a different kind of public service in Wales, with 5 ways of working to guide how public services should work to deliver for people. The following is a summary to show how the 5 ways of working to achieve the well-being goals have been used to formulate the recommendations within this report:-

Involvement	Representatives from varying levels of the Social Services and Wellbeing directorate, along with colleagues from Corporate Safeguarding group, have been engaged in the development of this policy.
Long term	There will be a positive long-term impact of this policy due to meeting regulatory requirements as well as providing a safe and effective framework for corporate safeguarding.

Prevention	Prevention of risk and harm is at the heart of effective safeguarding practice. Ensuring that safeguarding is understood by the whole Council workforce should prevent the occurrence of serious harm through a well-trained, competent workforce who understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
Integration	This policy will be implemented and used across the Council and promoted to key partners.
Collaboration	Effective safeguarding requires multi-agency working. This requirement is reflected in this policy.

6. Climate Change Implications

- 6.1 There are no sustainability or climate change implications arising directly from this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

- 7.1 The Council's existing Corporate Safeguarding Policy has been reviewed and developed to ensure it is robust and provides clear standards for all directorates and services.
- 7.2 The reviewed Corporate Safeguarding Policy has been strengthened through inclusion of additional requirements with regards to risk assessments, self-evaluation and quality assurance.
- 7.3 The implementation of this reviewed policy will further enable the Council to robustly fulfil its corporate safeguarding responsibilities.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 There are no additional financial implications from implementing this reviewed policy.

9. Recommendation

- 9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approve the updated Corporate Safeguarding Policy at **Appendix 1** to this report.

Background documents:

None

