

Committee: **Executive Committee**
Date of meeting: **16th March 2022**
Report Subject: **Corporate Safeguarding Policy & Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework**
Portfolio Holder: **Cllr John Mason, Executive Member Social Services**
Report Submitted by: **Damien McCann, Corporate Director of Social Services**

Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
	X	01.03.22				16.03.22		

1. Purpose of the Report

To update the Executive Committee on the developments in respect of the Audit Wales (AW) recommendations, regarding the development of a Corporate Safeguarding Policy (*appendix 1*) and a Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework (*appendix 2*).

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 AW undertook a review of corporate arrangements for safeguarding children in 2014 and in addition made recommendations within the Auditor General's report *Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements in Welsh councils* (July 2015).
- 2.2 AW undertook a further review during June 2019 to seek assurance that the Council had acted upon their previous national and local recommendations.
- 2.3 The Council was asked to complete a self-assessment and provide documentation to support its self-assessment. AW then interviewed key officers and the lead member for Corporate safeguarding.
- 2.4 AW sought to answer the question can the council provide assurance that it had addressed the recommendations and proposals for improvement contained in the Auditor General's national and local reports published in 2014–15.
- 2.5 AW's conclusion was that the Council had made limited progress in addressing the previous recommendations and proposals for improvement, and safeguarding arrangements were not consistent enough to provide assurance across all areas.
- 2.6 The AW recommendations were formulated into an Action Plan which was then passed to the Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group (CSLG) for their oversight and management.

- 2.7 Following the retirement of the Service Manager with responsibility for chairing the CSLG meetings, the CSLG meetings were re-established in early February 2020. The CSLG reviewed the terms of reference for these meetings and revisited the core membership from across the Council.
- 2.8 Terms of Reference were drafted and agreed (*appendix 5*) and an initial work plan was formulated that prioritised:
- Updating the Corporate Safeguarding Policy which included the Education Safeguarding Policy;
 - Undertaking a review of the current corporate safeguarding training plan;
 - Draft a proposal for a new corporate safeguarding training framework commensurate to role and responsibilities.
- 2.9 Within the reviewed corporate safeguarding training framework would be a proposal that there would be mandatory safeguarding training requirements.
- 2.10 That the Corporate Safeguarding Leads would adopt the role of Designated Safeguarding Person (*appendix 3*).
- 2.11 That the CSGL meeting would undertake an annual self-assessment (*appendix 4*) of its corporate safeguarding arrangements and performance.

3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1 That Executive Committee consider the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and the Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework; and

Option 1

- Agree the revised Corporate Safeguarding Policy;
- Agree with the Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework and its implementation plan.

Option 2

- Make recommendations for amendments to the Corporate Safeguarding Policy;
- Make recommendations for amendments to the Corporate Safeguarding Training.

4. Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan

The Safeguarding agenda is considered as part of the councils Strategies that includes:

- Corporate Plan;
- Corporate Risk Register and Directorate Risk Register;
- Safe Reduction of Looked after Children Strategy;

- Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 ***Impact on Budget***

The training framework recommends mandatory safeguarding training for all Council employees and Members, Tier 1 training has been developed by Social Care Wales and can be accessed via the All Wales Platform and accessed on line. We will be able to accurately record all staff and members who undertake the training electronically. There will be some employees who will not be able to access electronic training and will therefore require face to face training. Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Workforce Development team will commission and record all those who attend 'Face to face' training at a small cost to Directorates.

Tier 2 and 3 training is currently being developed by Social Care Wales for release later this year, we are proposing that mandatory training commensurate to role and responsibility will be provided to those requiring a greater understanding of safeguarding at these levels.

In order to deliver on the proposed safeguarding training framework, there will need to be a Council wide commitment and Council wide investment into the proposed programme. This means ensuring that all staff across the Council are given sufficient time to undertake the mandatory training for Tier 1, 2 and 3 commensurate to their role/responsibility.

5.2 ***Risk***

As part of the AW Action Plan safeguarding needs to be reflected in the corporate risk register.

5.3 ***Legal***

There are no legal implications.

5.4 ***Human Resources***

Mandatory safeguarding training will require staff time out of their daily work to either access electronically or by 'face to face' which may impact on service delivery.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 ***Performance Information and Data***

The Action Plan in response to the AW recommendations was amended to allow for the timescales for the completion of the actions to be extended due to the global Coronavirus pandemic.

6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

Those children who are assessed to be at risk of harm are protected and safeguarded and that the Local Authority adheres to legislations regarding statutory intervention.

- 6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***
The Corporate Safeguarding Leads meeting is in place to ensure all departments within the Authority are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and are kept updated with any emerging issues or trends within safeguarding.
- 6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***
Implementation of the recommendations of the AW Corporate Safeguarding review will ensure that the Council is appropriately safeguarding children to the best of its ability moving forward.
- 6.5 ***Preventative focus***
Providing this report and the level of detailed safeguarding information and progress on the AW Action Plan to the Corporate Leadership Team to ensure risk are identified and acted on.
- 6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***
The updated Corporate Safeguarding Policy ensures that each department has identified Safeguarding Leads and that these leads meet together on a quarterly basis looking at safeguarding across the whole Authority.
- 6.7 ***EqIA***
There is no need to submit an impact assessment.
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**
- 7.1 The implementation of the management response and action plan will be monitored quarterly by the Corporate Leadership Team and reported to the Corporate Overview and / or Joint Education and Learning Safeguarding Scrutiny Committees.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

- Appendix 1: Corporate Safeguarding Policy
- Appendix 2: Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework
- Appendix 3: Designated Person Roles & responsibility
- Appendix 4: Corporate Safeguarding self-assessment template
- Appendix 5: Terms of Reference