



**Blaenau Gwent County  
Borough Council**

**Safeguarding Children  
and  
Vulnerable Adults**

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# 1. Corporate Policy Statement:

- 1.1 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is committed to ensuring that everyone living within the Borough is safe and protected and that our statutory responsibilities to safeguard and protect children, young people and vulnerable adults are effectively met.
- 1.2 Safeguarding children and adults from abuse is everybody's business. We all share a responsibility, both corporately and individually, to ensure that all children and adults are treated with respect and protected from others who may abuse them. All Council employees, Elected Members, volunteers and contractors who come into contact with children or vulnerable adults in the course of their duties are expected to understand their responsibility and wherever necessary, to take action to safeguard and promote their welfare.
- 1.3 As part of the Council's commitment to safeguarding, we work proactively with our partners under the auspices of the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB) and the Gwent Wide Adult Safeguarding Board (GWASB) to ensure that statutory guidance is followed, awareness and good practice is promoted and the children and adult's workforce practices safely and effectively. Helpful guidance on professional conduct and safe working practice can be found in Appendix 2.
- 1.4 This policy covers all Council employees, Elected Members, volunteers and contractors. Individual Departments or Educational Establishment may have their own supplementary structured guidance to inform their staff.
- 1.5 While employees, Elected Members, volunteers and contractors are likely to have varied levels of contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults as part of their duties, everyone should be aware of the potential indicators of abuse and neglect and be clear about what to do if they have concerns. Responsibilities are limited and it is important to remember that:

**IT IS NOT** the responsibility of any Council employee, Elected Member, volunteer or provider of services to investigate and determine whether abuse or neglect is actually taking place.

**HOWEVER,**

**IT IS** the responsibility of the employee, Elected Member, volunteer or contractor to take the actions set out in this policy if they are concerned that abuse or neglect may be taking place.

## **2. What is safeguarding?**

2.1 Safeguarding means protecting individual's health, well-being and human rights and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

2.2 The Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014 defines abuse and neglect as:

'Abuse' means physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse and includes abuse taking place in any setting, whether in a private dwelling, an institution or any other place. 'Financial abuse' includes:

- Having money or other property stolen;
- Being defrauded;
- Being put under pressure in relation to money or property;
- Having money or other property misused.

'Neglect' means a failure to meet a person's basic physical, emotional, social or psychological needs which is likely to result in an impairment of the person's well-being for example, impairment of the person's health or, in the case of a child, an impairment of the child's development.

### **Safeguarding Children and Young People**

2.3 For the purposes of this policy, a child is defined as anyone who has not yet reached their eighteenth birthday. 'Children' therefore means 'children and young people' throughout this document. The fact that a child has reached 16 years of age, is living independently or is in further education, is a member of the armed forces, is in hospital or in custody in the secure estate does not change his or her status or entitlement to services or protection under current legislation.

### **Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults at Risk**

2.4 For the purposes of this policy, an adult is defined as being over eighteen years of age. A vulnerable adult becomes an adult at risk when they:

- a) are experiencing or are at risk of abuse or neglect;
- b) have the need for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs); and
- c) as a result of those needs is unable to protect him/herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

## **Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDA&SV)**

- 2.5 The Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 aims to improve arrangements for the prevention of gender based violence, abuse and sexual violence. The protection of victims and support for people affected is underpinned by the 'Ask and Act' duty placed on public service staff to ask potential victims about the possibility that they may be experiencing VAWDASV and act so as to reduce suffering and harm.

### **Counter-terrorism and risk of radicalisation**

- 2.6 Local authorities have a duty to identify vulnerable individuals and families at risk of radicalisation from all forms of extremism. The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and its guidance, identifies that children and adults may be vulnerable to ideologies that place them, their families and the general public in danger should they be enticed to act upon extremist beliefs. Identifying individuals at risk and determining what action is necessary to support them is complemented by the 'Channel' multi-agency intervention process which deters continued involvement.

### **Modern Day Slavery**

- 2.7 Modern day slavery encompasses slavery, sexual exploitation, human trafficking, and forced labour and domestic servitude. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individual's into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment. In March 2015, the Modern Day Slavery Bill consolidated and simplified existing offences into a single Act ensuring that perpetrators can receive suitably severe punishments. The Bill also introduces new powers for the courts to place restrictions on individuals to protect people from the harm caused by modern day slavery.
- 2.8 Modern day slavery is a hidden, pervasive crime targeted towards those individuals most vulnerable. The Council and BAWSO are first responding organisations to cases of slavery. Contact details for BAWSO are included in Appendix 6.

### **Recognition of abuse or concerns**

- 2.9 Guidance in respect of possible signs and symptoms of each form of abuse can be found at Appendix 3. This Appendix details generic factors and those factors as they relate to Children and Adults for each category of abuse.

### **3. Responsibilities for Safeguarding:**

- 3.1 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults who may be at risk of harm.
- 3.2 The Council ensures that everyone working with or on behalf of children and vulnerable adults are competent to do so.
- 3.3 The Council promotes safer recruitment policy and practice and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks are undertaken for employees in accordance with statutory and regulatory requirements and provisions contained within the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. Checks are also undertaken to ensure that staff are registered with relevant professional and other bodies wherever appropriate e.g. Social workers and Teachers.
- 3.4 Safeguarding responsibilities for all employees are emphasised from the point of recruitment and throughout their employment. There are clear lines of accountability, responsibility and support regarding safeguarding throughout the authority and these are achieved via relevant staff guidance, code of conduct (including disciplinary procedures) and specific policies and procedures which all staff must adhere to.
- 3.5 The Council has a range of policies and procedures available to promote and support staff to raise concerns about the safety and welfare of children and adults. These include the Whistle Blowing Policy which provides guidance for staff to report concerns or suspicions about other employees or contractors.
- 3.6 The Council also hosts safeguarding information pages on the Council website in order to provide information to the general public. The Council intranet site has direct links to the regional Children's and Adults Safeguarding Boards (SEWSCB and GWASB).
- 3.7 All employees will be made aware of their safeguarding responsibilities as part of their induction to their employment. More specialist single agency and multi-agency training opportunities are available for employees who routinely work with children or vulnerable adults at levels appropriate to their role and responsibilities.
- 3.8 Elected Members have a responsibility to be aware of and support the Council's safeguarding responsibilities and to scrutinise how these are carried out in the planning and delivery of services.
- 3.9 The Council undertakes to ensure that through procurement processes, services commissioned and contracted on its behalf have safeguarding responsibilities built into contracts and that appropriate policies and staff

training are in place. This includes an expectation that any person or organisation using Council resources or premises adhere to the Council's safeguarding standards.

- 3.10 The Council expects all employees to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of any child or adult involved in any activity or interaction for which they are responsible. Guidance on professional conduct and safe working practice can be found in Appendix 2. Helpful guidance on possible signs and symptoms of abuse can be found in Appendix 3.
- 3.11 Any person responsible for, or working with, children or vulnerable adults in any capacity, whether paid or unpaid, is considered both legally and morally, to owe them a duty of care. This includes a duty to behave in a manner that does not threaten, harm or put people at risk of harm from others.
- 3.12 All employees have a responsibility to conduct themselves in their private lives in a manner that does not compromise their position in the workplace or call into question their suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults.
- 3.13 All employees should:
- Be alert to the possibility of harm, abuse and neglect
  - Participate in relevant safeguarding training and multi-agency working to safeguard children and vulnerable adults
  - Be familiar with local procedures and protocols for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults and follow the Council's Code of Conduct and any other Professional Codes
  - Report any concerns about the safety or welfare of a child or vulnerable adult. Please refer to Appendix 5; 'How to make a referral'
- 3.14 All employees working for or on behalf of the Council have a duty to report any concerns they may have for the welfare and/or protection of children and vulnerable adults. The duty to report is a legal requirement and may have serious consequences for the employee who fails to report appropriately. The process to follow to make referrals is contained in Appendix 5.
- 3.15 Each department has a Designated Safeguarding Lead responsible for safeguarding. The Lead provides advice and guidance and is responsible for ensuring procedures are followed regarding safeguarding concerns about a child or vulnerable adult including allegations against members of staff. The Leads responsibilities are detailed in Appendix 1.
- 3.16 Professional advice can also be sought from and referrals made to the Social Services Information, Advice and Assistance Service.

## **4. Governance Arrangements for Safeguarding with the Authority**

- 4.1 The Local Authority is required to provide a clear governance structure and clarity on roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.
- 4.2 The Managing Director is ultimately accountable for ensuring safeguarding across the Authority is effective.
- 4.3 Ensuring the Local Authority has proper safeguards in place to protect children and 'adults at risk' is one of the core responsibilities of the Director of Social Services.
- 4.4 The lead member for safeguarding who is currently the Executive Member responsible for Social Services is responsible for providing political scrutiny to the local authority to ensure it fulfils its legal responsibilities for safeguarding.
- 4.5 Each Directorate is responsible for nominating a Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead plus a Deputy Safeguarding Lead. The roles and responsibilities of the Managing Director, Lead Member for Safeguarding, Directors and their Strategic Safeguarding Leads are clarified under Appendix 1.
- 4.6 The South East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board was set up in April 2013. The aim of the Board is "All Children and Young People in South East Wales are protected from abuse and neglect live in safe homes and communities and are supported to achieve their full potential".
- 4.7 The Gwent-wide Adult Safeguarding Board (GWASB) was established in January 2011, and as of the 6th April 2016, GWASB became a statutory Board as set out in Part 7 of the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014. The Board's purpose is twofold; to protect adults in Gwent becoming "adults at risk" and to protect adults who have been abused or neglected or are at risk of it.
- 4.8 The Board's vision is to ensure that all adults in Gwent are safeguarded effectively through partnership working and community engagement. The Board provides strong leadership, governance and accountability and promotes the rights of adults at risk to live in safety and actively works to prevent, identify and investigate alleged abuse. The Boards objectives and functions can be viewed in its Partnership Agreement
- 4.9 Each Authority in the South East Wales Region is required to have a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Network Group which sits under both Boards. The purpose of the Group is to ensure the Local Safeguarding Agenda within each Authority is progressed. The Service Manager with responsibility for Safeguarding Chairs this Local Group and representatives from the Education Department, Schools, Health, the Youth Service, Probation, Families First, Police, Youth Offending Service, Adult Services and the voluntary sector sit



on this Group. There are a number of other joint sub groups that sit under and report to both boards

- 4.10 Social Services are inspected by the CSSIW. Their Inspection criteria includes Safeguarding of Children. Social Services have mechanisms in place to evidence the work undertaken in relation to this area of work which is presented to the CSSIW in the Directors Annual Report to them.
- 4.11 The Education Department are inspected by Estyn. Part of their inspection criteria includes Safeguarding. This includes practice relating to safeguarding within schools and other education settings plus how Safeguarding is managed corporately.
- 4.12 Everyone shares responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Children and Adults irrespective of their individual role within the Council.
- 4.13 Our priority is for all staff to be responsible for implementing this Policy and reporting concerns if they become aware of the following situations:
  - Any allegation, or a concern about actual, or suspected situations of abuse involving a Child or 'Adult at risk'.
  - Any allegation or a concern about actual or suspected staff misconduct, and/or criminal activity involving the abuse of a Child or 'Adult at risk'.

## 5. Appendices:

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## Governance Arrangements for Safeguarding within the Authority

### Managing Director

Roles & Responsibilities	How this will be done
Ensure safeguarding of children and adults is effective across the Local Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All serious Safeguarding concerns will be reported to the Director of Social Services via email with the Managing Director cc'd in.</li> <li>• The Director of Social Services will in consultation with the Managing Director agree an appropriate response to serious Safeguarding concerns raised.</li> <li>• The Managing Director will have monthly one to one meetings with all Directors who can raise general Safeguarding issues specific to their Directorate if necessary.</li> <li>• Safeguarding is a standing item on the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) agenda</li> <li>• The Managing Director sits on the Local Service Board, where strategic partnership work takes place.</li> <li>• The Risk Register of the Council which includes Safeguarding is reviewed regularly at CLT meetings which are chaired by the Managing Director.</li> <li>• The Managing Director can meet with the Lead Member for Safeguarding at any time to discuss immediate or general concerns.</li> <li>• The Managing Director can raise safeguarding issues with the Leader of the Council at their 1-1 meetings.</li> <li>• The Managing Director has access to any papers produced by the Director of Social Services, including reports submitted to the South East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board, Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board and Social Services Scrutiny Committee.</li> <li>• The Managing Director receives six monthly updates on the activity of the South East Wales safeguarding Children's Board and Gwent wide Adult safeguarding Board at G7 meetings. These meetings consist of the five Chief Executives and Leaders of the South East Wales Region, the Chair of the ABHB, the Police</li> </ul>

	<p>Commissioner and the CEO of the Fire Service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Managing Director will have sight of the quarterly Safeguarding Reports presented to Social Services and Education Joint Scrutiny Committee.</li></ul>
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## Lead Member for Safeguarding

<b>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</b>	<b>How this will be done</b>
<p>The Lead Member for Safeguarding is responsible for providing political scrutiny to the local authority to ensure it fulfils its legal responsibilities for safeguarding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Lead Member will scrutinise the quarterly performance information provided by Social Services and provide any necessary challenge.</li><li>• The Lead Member will receive fortnightly briefings from the Director of Social Services on all aspects of Social Services including safeguarding.</li><li>• The Director will inform the Lead Member of any sensitive cases that may be considered for a Child Practice Review or may become a matter of public interest.</li><li>• The Lead Member will raise safeguarding issues within Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Executive Committee when necessary.</li><li>• The Lead Member will attend the Local Safeguarding Network Group as a 'participant observer'.</li><li>• The Lead Member will periodically meet with children within the Authority.</li><li>• Where urgent Safeguarding issues arise across the Directorate these will be shared immediately with the Lead Member by the Director of Social Services.</li></ul>

## Director of Social Services

<b>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</b>	<b>How this will be done</b>
<p>Oversee and report to Councillors and the Managing Director on the operation, monitoring and improvement of safeguarding systems across the Local Authority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Director will be the point of contact within the Authority for all other Directors to report serious Safeguarding concerns which develop within their own Service Areas.</li> <li>• The Director of Social Services will take responsibility for reporting these concerns immediately to the Managing Director and agreeing an appropriate response.</li> <li>• The Director will take responsibility for reporting serious Safeguarding concerns as necessary to the Lead Member for safeguarding and the Lead Member for Directorate involved as appropriate.</li> <li>• The Director will meet monthly on a one to one with the Managing Director where general Safeguarding concerns can be raised.</li> <li>• The Director will review Social Services Risk Log on a quarterly basis and inform the Managing Director and Lead member for Safeguarding of any changes.</li> <li>• The Director will brief the Lead Member for Safeguarding on safeguarding activity within Social Services during formal briefing sessions.</li> <li>• Social Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be provided with termly performance management information which will include Safeguarding information. Scrutiny will also receive a termly report on Safeguarding which will include information from across the Local Authority.</li> <li>• The Director will inform the Managing Director and Lead Member of significant Safeguarding matters arising from the Annual Framework put in place by CSSIW.</li> <li>• The Director has a seat on the South East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board and the Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board which meet bi-monthly and receive updates and exception reports from the four sub groups and the five Local Safeguarding Networks which drive the work of the Boards.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Director will designate the Head of Service for Children’s Services as Strategic Safeguarding Lead.</li><li>• The Director will have monthly one to one sessions with the Head of Children’s Service with Safeguarding as a standing agenda item.</li><li>• The Director will from time to time visit staff teams and resources.</li><li>• The Director is responsible for providing an Annual Report to CSSIW and the Council on the progress and performance of Social Services which includes safeguarding.</li></ul>
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## Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead in Social Services

<b>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</b>	<b>How this will be done</b>
<p>To support the Director to monitor and improve Safeguarding systems across the Local Authority.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL) will in their monthly one to one meetings with the Director raise relevant Safeguarding issues.</li> <li>• The SSL Lead will bring to the Directors immediate attention serious Safeguarding concerns as they arise.</li> <li>• The SSL will ensure the Director receives copies of the minutes of the Local Safeguarding Network which sits under the South East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board.</li> <li>• The SSL has a seat on the South East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board and is responsible for ensuring Blaenau Gwent is represented on the sub groups of this Board.</li> <li>• The SSL is responsible for ensuring Policies and Procedures are in place and accessible to staff in relation to managing Safeguarding issues.</li> <li>• The SSL is responsible for scrutinizing performance information relating to Safeguarding and putting corrective measures in place to improve performance when necessary.</li> <li>• The SSL will brief the Director on progress of action plans resulting from Child Practice Reviews within Blaenau Gwent.</li> <li>• The SSL will keep a Deputy Safeguarding Lead Officer briefed to deputise in their absence.</li> </ul>



## **Director of Education**

<b>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</b>	<b>How this will be done</b>
<p>The Director is responsible for ensuring systems are in place to ensure children and adults are safeguarded, staff are appropriately trained and monitoring information is gathered and used to analyse safeguarding issue and prompt action when required within the Directorate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Director will report any serious safeguarding concerns immediately to the Director of Social Services via email and cc the Managing Director. The Director of Social Services with the Managing Director will agree an appropriate response.</li><li>• The Director will keep briefed their Lead member for Education on general performance issues relating to Safeguarding within their service area.</li><li>• The Director will present a termly Safeguarding report jointly with the Director of Social Services to Scrutiny Committee.</li><li>• The Director will in Corporate Management Team meetings review the Corporate risk log which includes Safeguarding.</li><li>• The Director will nominate a Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL).</li><li>• The Director will have monthly one to one sessions with the Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead to ensure they meet their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding as defined in this document.</li></ul>

## **Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead for Education**

<b>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</b>	<b>How this will be done</b>
<p>To support the Director in ensuring systems are in place to Safeguard children and adults. Staff are appropriately trained and monitoring information is gathered and used to analyse Safeguarding issues to prompt action when required across the Directorate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL) will be trained to an appropriate level in Safeguarding/'Safeguarding for Designated Leads' and have awareness of the All Wales Child Protection Procedures and Adult procedures.</li> <li>• The SSL will sit on the Local Safeguarding Network which sits under the two Safeguarding Boards.</li> <li>• The SSL will immediately alert the Director to serious Safeguarding concerns, who will in turn report them to the Director of Social Services via email copying in the Managing Director.</li> <li>• The SSL will in their monthly meetings with the Director raise any general Safeguarding issues.</li> <li>• The SSL will monitor Safeguarding performance information via their one to one meetings with the Education Safeguarding Manager, whose role is to work directly with Head Teachers and Governing Bodies to implement the Welsh Assembly Government's circular 158/2015 "Keeping Learners Safe".</li> <li>• The Safeguarding performance information to be monitored will include; training of staff across the Directorate, safe recruitment of staff, ensuring Policies and Procedures are in place and accessible to staff.</li> <li>• The SSL will ensure Safeguarding performance information is regularly presented to the Senior Leadership Team.</li> <li>• The SSL will keep briefed a Deputy Safeguarding Lead who will deputise in their absence.</li> </ul>

## **Education Safeguarding Manager**

<b>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</b>	<b>How this will be done</b>
<p>To support the Director, the Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead in Education, Head Teachers and Governing Bodies to ensure systems are in place to safeguard Children. That staff are appropriately trained, and monitoring information is gathered and used to analyse Safeguarding issues to prompt action when required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Education Safeguarding Manager will receive their one to one supervision from the Deputy Safeguarding Lead in Social Services.</li> <li>• The Education Safeguarding Manager will also meet the Designated Strategic Lead in Education on a one to one basis to discuss relevant Safeguarding issues across the Directorate.</li> <li>• The Education Safeguarding Manager will report Safeguarding information to the Education Senior Leadership Team and contribute to the termly Safeguarding Report to be presented to Scrutiny Committee.</li> <li>• The Education Safeguarding Manager will sit on the Local Safeguarding Network and other relevant Sub Groups of the two Boards.</li> <li>• The Education Safeguarding Manager is responsible for supporting schools and Local Authority to put systems in place to ensure the Welsh Assembly Government circular 158/2015 “Keeping Learners Safe” is adhered to.</li> <li>• The Local Authority Designated Officer is the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Manager in Social Services. The Education Safeguarding Manager, covers the responsibilities of the LADO laid out in WG circular no 009/2014, “Safeguarding children in Education: - Handling allegations of abuse against teachers and other staff”.</li> <li>• The Education Officer will be the day to day support for Schools to discuss any Safeguarding issues and will be the first point of contact with schools and education directorate staff in relation to advice regarding safeguarding and child protection issues arising in schools.</li> </ul>

## **Chief Finance Officer**

<b>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</b>	<b>How this will be done</b>
To ensure systems are in place to safeguard children and adults within their Directorate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Chief Finance Officer will report any serious Safeguarding concerns immediately to the Director of Social Services via email and cc in the Managing Director. The Director of Social Services with the Managing Director agree an appropriate response.</li><li>• The Chief Finance Officer will in Corporate Management Team Meetings review the Corporate Risk Log which includes Safeguarding.</li><li>• The Chief Finance Officer will nominate a Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL).</li><li>• The Chief Finance Officer will have one to one sessions with the Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead to ensure they meet their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding as defined in this document.</li></ul>

## **Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead for the Chief Finance Officer**

<b>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</b>	<b>How this will be done</b>
<p>To support the Director to ensure systems are in place to safeguard children and adults within their Directorate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Designated Strategic Lead (SSL) will be trained to an appropriate level in Safeguarding/'Safeguarding for Designated Leads'.</li> <li>• The Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead will ensure all staff members have been briefed and are aware of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy.</li> <li>• The SSL will ensure all new staff as part of their induction are made aware of their Safeguarding responsibilities in line with the Corporate Safeguarding Policy.</li> <li>• The SSL will ensure those staff who have an interface with Children and Families are trained in Safeguarding/'Safeguarding for Practitioners'.</li> <li>• The SSL will keep briefed a Deputy Safeguarding Lead to deputise in their absence.</li> <li>• The SSL will report serious Safeguarding concerns immediately to the Chief Finance Officer who will in turn email the Director of Social Services and cc the Managing Director.</li> <li>• The SSL will in their one to one sessions with the Chief Finance Officer discuss general Safeguarding issues relevant to the Directorate.</li> <li>• The SSL will respond to requests for information to contribute to the termly Safeguarding reports which will be presented to Scrutiny Committee.</li> <li>• The SSL can and should contact the Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead for Social Services if they need advice/support in relation to Safeguarding matters.</li> </ul>

## **Director of Strategy Transformation & Culture**

<b>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</b>	<b>How this will be done</b>
To ensure systems are in place to safeguard children and adults within their Directorate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Director of Strategy Transformation &amp; Culture will report any serious Safeguarding concerns immediately to the Director of Social Services via email and cc in the Managing Director. The Director of Social Services with the Managing Director will agree an appropriate response.</li><li>• The Director of Strategy Transformation &amp; Culture will in Corporate Management Team Meetings review the Corporate Risk Log which includes Safeguarding.</li><li>• The Director of Strategy Transformation &amp; Culture will nominate a Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL).</li><li>• The Director of Strategy Transformation &amp; Culture will have one to one sessions with the Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead to ensure they meet their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding as defined in this document.</li></ul>

**Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead for the Director of Strategy Transformation & Culture**

<b>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</b>	<b>How this will be done</b>
<p>To support the Director to ensure systems are in place to safeguard children and adults within their Directorate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Designated Strategic Lead (SSL) will be trained to an appropriate level in Safeguarding/'Safeguarding for Designated Leads'.</li> <li>• The Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead will ensure all staff members have been briefed and are aware of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy.</li> <li>• The SSL will ensure all new staff as part of their induction are made aware of their Safeguarding responsibilities in line with the Corporate Safeguarding Policy.</li> <li>• The SSL will ensure those staff who have an interface with Children and Families are trained in Safeguarding/'Safeguarding for Practitioners'..</li> <li>• The SSL will keep briefed a Deputy Safeguarding Lead to deputise in their absence.</li> <li>• The SSL will report serious Safeguarding concerns immediately to the Director of Strategy Transformation &amp; Culture who will in turn email the Director of Social Services and cc the Managing Director.</li> <li>• The SSL will in their one to one sessions with the Director of Strategy Transformation &amp; Culture discuss general Safeguarding issues relevant to the Directorate.</li> <li>• The SSL will respond to requests for information to contribute to the termly Safeguarding reports which will be presented to Scrutiny Committee.</li> <li>• The SSL can and should contact the Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead for Social Services if they need advice/support in relation to Safeguarding matters.</li> </ul>

## **Director of Environment & Regeneration**

<b>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</b>	<b>How this will be done</b>
To ensure systems are in place to safeguard children and adults within their Directorate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Director of Environment &amp; Regeneration will report any serious Safeguarding concerns immediately to the Director of Social Services via email and cc in the Managing Director. The Director of Social Services with the Managing Director will agree an appropriate response.</li><li>• The Director of Environment &amp; Regeneration will in Corporate Management Team Meetings review the Corporate Risk Log which includes Safeguarding.</li><li>• The Director of Environment &amp; Regeneration will nominate a Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead (SSL).</li><li>• The Director of Environment &amp; Regeneration will have one to one sessions with the Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead to ensure they meet their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding as defined in this document.</li></ul>



**Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead for the Director of Environment & Regeneration**

<b>Roles &amp; Responsibilities</b>	<b>How this will be done</b>
<p>To support the Director to ensure systems are in place to safeguard children and adults within their Directorate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Designated Strategic Lead (SSL) will be trained to an appropriate level in Safeguarding/'Safeguarding for Designated Leads'...</li> <li>• The Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead will ensure all staff members have been briefed and are aware of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy.</li> <li>• The SSL will ensure all new staff as part of their induction are made aware of their Safeguarding responsibilities in line with the Corporate Safeguarding Policy.</li> <li>• The SSL will ensure those staff who have an interface with Children and Families are trained in Safeguarding/'Safeguarding for Practitioners'.</li> <li>• The SSL will keep briefed a Deputy Safeguarding Lead to deputise in their absence.</li> <li>• The SSL will report serious Safeguarding concerns immediately to the Director of Environment &amp; Regeneration who will in turn email the Director of Social Services and cc the Managing Director.</li> <li>• The SSL will in their one to one sessions with the Director of Environment &amp; Regeneration general Safeguarding issues relevant to the Directorate.</li> <li>• The SSL will respond to requests for information to contribute to the termly Safeguarding reports which will be presented to Scrutiny Committee.</li> <li>• The SSL can and should contact the Designated Strategic Safeguarding Lead for Social Services if they need advice/support in relation to Safeguarding matters.</li> </ul>

<b>Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council</b>
<b>Corporate Safeguarding Policy</b>
<b>Professional Conduct and Safe Working Practice</b>

This document provides a description of the professional standards of practice that are required from all Council staff, Elected Members, volunteers and contractors when undertaking their day to day duties. For Elected Members and officers, it must be read in conjunction with the Council's 'Code of Conduct for Employees' and the 'Social Media Policy'.

Any breach of the following conditions will result in an investigation and possible disciplinary action which could, if serious, result in dismissal and the possibility of criminal investigation if there is evidence of illegal activity.

Exceptions: Staff employed in identified roles within Education, the Youth Service, Customer Care, Housing and Social Care will be required to meet with individuals alone as part of the role and function. In such cases, due regard must be given to all information available in relation to the individual to ensure adequate risk assessments can be completed.

#### **You MUST:**

Set a good example in terms of behaviour to ensure that children and adults are safeguarded and protected.

Keep yourself safe through adherence to any agreed plan of intervention/care plan where applicable, through relevant risk assessments including Health & Safety and checking the Employee Protection Register database and through compliance with the Council's Policy for Lone Working.

Be open and transparent when meeting and/or working with children and vulnerable adults and where not required to do so as part of your role and function, you should try to avoid any situation where you may be alone with a child or vulnerable adult out of sight or sound of another officer or colleague.

Respect an individual's rights to privacy, equality and dignity and a safe and positive environment.

Prioritise the welfare and safety of the child or vulnerable adult before concerns about performance and service delivery.

Ensure you are familiar with the Corporate Safeguarding Policy.

Take responsibility to identify the Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) for your respective Service area.

Ensure you access the appropriate safeguarding training relevant to your role and responsibility.

Respond in an appropriate and timely manner to any concerns you may have in respect of a child or vulnerable adult.

Follow the required process for reporting incidents and concerns.

If the vulnerable child or adult does not want a member of staff to disclose, nevertheless staff have an overriding duty to report to their manager but must also tell the vulnerable person that they are doing so.

Vulnerable adults have the right to give or withhold their consent to a referral to adult protection being made. Unless the vulnerable adult has been assessed not to have the mental capacity to make this decision, their decision must be respected unless there are reasons for it being overridden.

The reasons for overriding the decision of a vulnerable adult include when a crime has been committed and when there are risks to other vulnerable people, including children. In these circumstances the referral should proceed, although the vulnerable adult has the right to participate in the process.

If a vulnerable adult does not have the mental capacity to make this decision, a Best Interest Decision must be made that reflects the best interests of the person and the wider public interest.

**You MUST NOT:**

Use force, threats or inappropriate language.

Make suggestive sexual comments or behave in a sexualised manner.

Touch inappropriately or allow inappropriate touching in any way.

Use any behaviour control methods that are not authorised by Council policy and procedure.

Ignore allegations made by a child or adult. All allegations must be reported to Social Services or the Police.

Undertake tasks of a personal nature for a child or adult which they could do for themselves.

Invite a child or vulnerable adult to be alone with you where this is not part of your role and function.

Enter areas that have been specifically designated for use by another sex/gender.

Use the internet, electronic devices or phones to access inappropriate sites including inappropriate use of social media.

Breach confidentiality or share sensitive information relating to an individual inappropriately.

**NB:** this is by no means an exhaustive list and all actions must be determined by application of professional judgement and decision making.

<b>Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council</b>
<b>Corporate Safeguarding Policy</b>
<b>Possible Signs and Symptoms</b>

Please Note: the following lists are not exhaustive and one sign or symptom in isolation does not automatically signify a safeguarding concern. Any concerns you may have must be discussed with your Designated Safeguarding Officer as a matter of priority. You can also seek advice from Social Services.

<b>NEGLECT</b>	
<b>GENERIC</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of personal care</li> <li>• General deterioration of health</li> <li>• Excessive dirt or other health hazards in the living environment</li> <li>• Poor standard of living accommodation eg cold, dirty, beds, bedding</li> <li>• Unsuitable clothing for weather conditions</li> <li>• Dishevelled / unkempt / dirty appearance</li> <li>• Untreated medical condition</li> <li>• Poor personal hygiene</li> <li>• Rashes, sores, lice</li> <li>• Loss of weight</li> <li>• Malnutrition</li> <li>• Dehydration</li> <li>• Lack of supervision, either at home or during activities which hold danger for them</li> </ul>	
<b>CHILDREN</b>	<b>ADULTS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Constant hunger</li> <li>• Constant tiredness</li> <li>• Frequent lateness / non attendance at school</li> <li>• Low self esteem</li> <li>• Inappropriate care</li> <li>• No social relationships</li> <li>• Running away</li> <li>• Compulsive stealing or scavenging</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of management of continence</li> <li>• Misuse of medication</li> <li>• Failure to obtain/ facilitate use of necessary prosthetic devices dentures, glasses, hearing aids, or durable surgical equipment</li> <li>• Pressure sores</li> </ul>

<b>PHYSICAL ABUSE</b>	
<b>GENERIC</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Injury incompatible with explanation</li> <li>• Accounts of injury by carer varying over time or inconsistent with the nature of the injury</li> <li>• Injury which has not been properly cared for (injuries are sometimes hidden on areas of the body normally covered by clothes)</li> <li>• Refusal to discuss injuries</li> <li>• Cuts / scratches / lacerations</li> <li>• Bruising / wounds (particularly on parts of the body which do not normally sustain such injuries)</li> <li>• Sprains and bruises</li> <li>• Weal marks</li> <li>• Bite marks, fingertip and pinching marks</li> <li>• Burns and scalds, including friction burns and carpet burns</li> <li>• Signs of hair pulling / bald patches</li> <li>• Poor skin condition / hygiene / discolouration</li> <li>• Flinches at physical contact</li> <li>• Fearfulness</li> <li>• Low self esteem</li> </ul>	
<b>CHILDREN</b>	<b>ADULTS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unexplained recurrent injuries</li> <li>• Admission of punishment which appears excessive</li> <li>• Withdrawal from physical contact</li> <li>• Arms and legs covered in hot weather</li> <li>• Fear of returning home</li> <li>• Fear of medical help</li> <li>• Self harming tendencies</li> <li>• Aggression towards others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Untreated pressure sores, ulcers, bedsores, and being left in wet clothing</li> <li>• Dehydration and/or malnutrition without illness related cause, and when not living alone</li> <li>• Significant weight loss</li> <li>• Hypothermia</li> <li>• Uncharacteristic behaviour</li> <li>• Confusion / insomnia</li> <li>• Asks not <i>"to be hurt"</i></li> <li>• Unexplained paranoia</li> <li>• Excessive repeated prescriptions /under use /over use of medication</li> <li>• Excessive drowsiness</li> <li>• Mobile person not being able to get up from bed or chair for various reasons eg. being tied in</li> <li>• Use of furniture or special chairs to prevent movement, removal of walking aid or specialist equipment</li> <li>• Global or specific deterioration in health without obvious cause</li> <li>• Increasing immobility</li> </ul>

<b>SEXUAL ABUSE</b>	
<b>GENERIC</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotional distress</li> <li>• Difficulty in walking or sitting</li> <li>• Pain or itching in genital area</li> <li>• Recurring urinary tract infections</li> <li>• Over-affectionate displays</li> <li>• Incestuous relationships</li> <li>• Love bites</li> <li>• Fear of medical examinations</li> <li>• Carer unreasonably refuses examination.</li> <li>• Withdrawal from social situations</li> <li>• Depression and isolation</li> <li>• Sleep disturbances or nightmares</li> <li>• Phobias and panic attacks</li> <li>• Unexplained pregnancy</li> </ul>	
<b>CHILDREN</b>	<b>ADULTS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sudden changes in behaviour or school performance</li> <li>• Displays of affection in a sexual way inappropriate to age</li> <li>• Tendency to cling or need constant reassurance</li> <li>• Tendency to cry easily</li> <li>• Regression to younger behaviour</li> <li>• Distrust of familiar adults</li> <li>• Anxiety about being left with carer</li> <li>• Unexplained gifts or money</li> <li>• Apparent secrecy</li> <li>• Wetting, day or night</li> <li>• Fear of undressing eg for PE</li> <li>• Also refer to CSE below</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Torn, stained or bloody underclothing</li> <li>• Bruises or bleeding in external genitalia, vagina or anal area</li> <li>• Bruising on the inner thighs</li> <li>• Semen staining on clothing</li> <li>• Torn penile fraenum</li> <li>• Tissue tearing</li> <li>• Mood changes</li> <li>• Change in usual behaviour</li> <li>• Feeling of guilt or shame</li> <li>• Untypical changes, ie, bedwetting, aggressiveness, self injury</li> <li>• Overt sexual behaviour/language by the person</li> </ul>

## CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)

### Key facts about CSE:

Sexual exploitation often starts around the age of 10 years old. Girls are usually targeted from age 10 and boys from age 8.

It affects both girls and boys and can happen in all communities.

Any person can be targeted but there are some particularly vulnerable groups: Looked After Children, young people Leaving Care and disabled children.

Victims of CSE may also be trafficked (locally, nationally and internationally).

Over 70% of adults involved in prostitution were sexually exploited as children or teenagers.

Sexual violence or abuse against children affects approximately 16% of children under the age of 16 years.

### Possible signs:

- going missing for periods of time or regularly returning home late
- skipping school or being disruptive in class
- appearing with unexplained gifts or possessions that can't be accounted for
- experiencing health problems that may indicate a sexually transmitted infection
- having mood swings and changes in temperament
- using drugs and alcohol
- displaying inappropriate sexualised behaviours, such as over familiarity with strangers, dressing in a sexualised manner or sending sexualised images by mobile phone ("sexting")
- they may also show signs of unexplained physical harm such as bruising and cigarette burns



<b>EMOTIONAL / PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE</b>	
<b>GENERIC</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High levels of anxiety/stress especially in response to certain individuals or circumstances</li> <li>• Extremes of passivity or aggression</li> <li>• Fear</li> <li>• Inappropriate emotional responses to situations</li> <li>• Self harming behaviour</li> <li>• Recoiling from the physical approach of carers</li> <li>• Excessive and inappropriate craving for affection</li> <li>• Running away or not wanting to return to carers</li> <li>• Overly overtly subservient or anxious to please</li> <li>• Feelings of worthlessness</li> </ul>	
<b>CHILDREN</b>	<b>ADULTS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical and emotional developmental delay</li> <li>• Admission of punishment which appears excessive</li> <li>• Over reaction to simple mistakes</li> <li>• Continual self deprecation</li> <li>• Sudden speech disorders</li> <li>• Fear of new situations</li> <li>• Neurotic behaviour eg rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking</li> <li>• Fear of parents being contacted</li> <li>• Substance misuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Resignation</li> <li>• Signs of depression, such as suicidal ideation</li> <li>• Sleep disturbances</li> <li>• Changes in appetite</li> <li>• Loss of interest in pursuing social contact</li> <li>• An air of silence in the home when the alleged abuser is present</li> <li>• Cowering</li> <li>• Helplessness</li> <li>• Isolation in a room in a house</li> <li>• Inappropriately or improperly dressed</li> <li>• Denial</li> </ul>

## DOMESTIC ABUSE

### GENERIC

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 years and over who are, or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

This can be observed as signs and symptoms of the following types of abuse:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

## FINANCIAL ABUSE

### ADULTS

- Unexplained withdrawals / unusual activity in the bank accounts
- Unpaid bills
- Unexplained shortage of money
- Withholding or reluctance on the part of the person with responsibility for the funds to provide basic food and clothes etc.
- Fraud
- Theft
- Basic needs not being met.
- Unexplained sudden inability to pay bills or maintain lifestyle
- Lasting Power of Attorney or Enduring Power of Attorney obtained when vulnerable adult is unable to comprehend and give consent
- Recent change of deeds or title of property
- Unusual interest shown by family or others in the vulnerable adult's assets
- Person managing financial affairs is evasive or not co-operative.
- Creation of a Will when the person is incapable of making such decisions
- The individual requires residential/nursing care but is prevented by relatives from entering a residential/nursing home because the client owns their own property and there are concerns about the inevitable depletion of their estate
- Deliberate isolation by carer (informal/formal of a vulnerable adult) from friends or family resulting in carers having total control
- Unexplained disappearance of financial documents, e.g. building society books, and bank statements, payments or order books.
- Signatures on cheques which do not resemble the vulnerable adult's signature or signed when this person cannot write
- Unusual concern by carer that an excessive amount of money is being expended on the care of the vulnerable adult
- Lack of amenities such as TV, appropriate clothing, personal grooming items that the vulnerable adult can well afford
- Missing personal belongings such as silverware, jewellery, or other valuable items
- Lacks financial recording/monitoring in a care setting.

<b>Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council</b>
<b>Corporate Safeguarding Policy</b>
<b>How to make a referral</b>
<b>LISTEN, SHARE, RECORD</b>

<b>LISTEN</b>
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If you are concerned because of something a child or vulnerable adult is saying, you should not attempt to take any action directly but **you should**:

- Stay calm
- Listen carefully, do not directly question him or her, instead use open questions; what, where, when, who?
- Never stop them talking if they are freely recalling significant events
- Tell them what you will do next and who you will inform (see below)
- Never promise to keep what you have been told secret or confidential
- Make a note of the discussion, taking care to record what was said, when and where it happened and who else was present

<b>SHARE</b>
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Any safeguarding concerns should be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the respective service area. With the support of the Designated Safeguarding Lead the decision to refer a concern to Social Services will be made and responsibility for referring will be agreed i.e. the staff member or the Designated Safeguarding Lead will make the referral.

Should the concerns relate to a professional, the same procedure will apply.

Referrals in relation to a concern about a child, young person or adult should be made to Social Services as soon as possible and certainly **within 24 hours**.

Social Services Information, Advice and Assistance Service can be contacted on:

Concerns about a child or young person: **01495 315700**

Concerns about an adult: **01495 315700**

Outside office hours, referrals should be made to the South East Wales Emergency Duty Team or if there is immediate risk, to the Police.

The Emergency Duty Team can be contacted on: **0800 328 4432**

Elected Members, employees, volunteers and providers should be aware that they **cannot remain anonymous** when making a referral.

The Duty Worker taking the referral should be given as much information as possible if it is available to the referrer. This will include the following:

- Full name of the subject of the concern
- Their date of birth or age
- Their address
- The nature of the concern
- Who may be responsible
- Their name and relationship (if any)
- What happened
- When and where
- What has been done in response
- Whether or not the Police have been informed
- The names and relationship of those with caring responsibility
- The names and ages of any other adults living in the household
- The names of any professionals known to be involved eg school, GP
- Any information affecting the potential safety of staff
- The allocated social worker or team if known/if applicable

## RECORD

All telephone referrals should be confirmed in writing within two working days. For Children, a Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF) should be used and for an Adult referral a POVA Advice/Adult Protection Referral Form (APRF) should be used. Both referral forms can be found on the Intranet.

## LISTEN, SHARE, RECORD

<b>Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council</b>
<b>Corporate Safeguarding Policy</b>
<b>Support and Resources:</b>

**Social Services Information, Advice and Assistance Service:**

For a concern in relation to a child or young person:

Tel: **0808 100 1727**

For a concern in relation to an adult:

Tel: **0808 100 2500**

**All Wales Procedures:**

- [All Wales Child Protection Procedures](#)
- [All Wales Adult Protection Procedures](#)
- [SS&WB \(Wales\) Act 2014](#)

**Regional Safeguarding Boards:**

Children:

- [SEWSCB](#)

Adults:

- [GWASB](#)

**Services for people from Black and Ethnic Minority (BME) backgrounds:**

- [BAWSO](#)

**Domestic Abuse:**

- [info@phoenixdas.co.uk](mailto:info@phoenixdas.co.uk)

**Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Policies and Statutory Guidance:**

***PLEASE REFER TO THE CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING ON THE INTRANET  
FOR THE MOST ACCURATE AND UP TO DATE INFORMATION.***