

Committee: **Cabinet**

Date of meeting: **4<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

Report Subject: **Safeguarding Performance Information for Social Services 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and Education Autumn & Spring Term 2023-24**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Haydn Trollope, Cabinet Member People & Social Services**  
**Cllr Sue Edmunds, Cabinet Member People & Education**

Report Submitted by: **Alyson Hoskins, Interim Corporate Director of Social Services**  
**Luisa Munro Morris, Interim Corporate Director of Education**

Reporting Pathway								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Governance & Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet	Council	Other (please state)
3-7 <sup>th</sup> June 24	13.06.24				02.07.24	04.09.24		13.06.24

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members with safeguarding performance information and analysis from children's and adult's social services from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, and Education for the autumn term 2023 and spring term 2024.

The information provided will enable members to identify safeguarding trends and areas within the authority that require further development to improve safeguarding practice in order to meet the safeguarding needs of children and young people and adults within Blaenau Gwent.

## 2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 The report contains safeguarding information from social services for the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 to the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and Education for the autumn term 2023 and spring term 2024.
- 2.2 This report is written to provide a greater focus on the safeguarding agenda. The Corporate Leadership Team and Elected Members agreed for safeguarding information to be reported to the People Scrutiny Committee after each school term.
- 2.3 In April 2016, the Gwent-wide Adult Safeguarding Board (GwASB) and the South-East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB) became a statutory Board as set out in Part 7 of the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014. The role of the Board is to set the strategic direction in relation to multi agency safeguarding. The Board carries out these core

functions through policy direction, monitoring the effectiveness within agencies, commissioning practice reviews, and disseminating learning to practitioners to ensure safeguarding is high on the agenda at all levels of the workforce.

### 3. **Options for Recommendation**

#### 3.1 **Option1**

Accept the approach and information detailed in the report provided.

#### **Option 2**

Consider the information provided and provide comments on where improvement can be made to the current monitoring processes.

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

4.1 The Safeguarding agenda is considered as part of the Council's Corporate Strategies that includes:

- Corporate Plan
- Single Integrated Plan
- Corporate Risk Register
- Safe Reduction of CLA Strategy

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 places a statutory duty on all local authorities to produce an annual report on the discharge of its social services functions' Social Services work to a number of regional and national safeguarding procedures.

### 5. **Implications Against Each Option**

#### 5.1 ***Impact on Budget (short- and long-term impact)***

There is no impact on the budget both in the short and long term.

#### 5.2 ***Risk including Mitigating Actions***

The Directorate Risk register identifies the highest risks for the Social Services Department. These are monitored as part of the quarterly report of the Director of Social Services. Similarly, the Education Directorate risk register captures the risks in respect of Education and is again included for reference in the data pack.

#### 5.3 ***Legal***

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act came into force on 6th April 2016. The Act provides the legal framework for improving the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales.

#### 5.4 **Human Resources**

*There are no human resources implications attached to this report.*

### 6. **Supporting Evidence**

#### 6.1 **Performance Information**

Performance and data are provided within the report and the accompanying data pack.

#### 6.2 **Children Social Services**

##### 6.2.1 **Referrals to Social Services**

**6.2.2 Figure 1:1** Identifies a continued upward trend in respect of referral rates into Childrens Services with referrals received per quarter exceeding 2000 in both Q3(2,196) and Q4 (2,282). This offers a total of 4,478 for the two Q's. For comparison, the number of referrals for the same period (Q3/Q4) in year 22/23 totalled 3,670 therefore demonstrating a 22% increase in referrals. The volume of referrals being received via our front door Information, Advice and Assistance (IAA) Team continues to present at an unprecedented high. Despite the significant increase in referrals, we continue to work tirelessly to ensure children and families are offered the right support at the right time to prevent escalation of needs and to safeguard children.

Referral rates continue to be monitored and similar increasing referral patterns are being reported within neighbouring Gwent authorities. Consideration has been given to the rising trends in referrals on a regional basis and whilst no definitive identification indicator has been found, there is a view that improved training opportunities to raise awareness on child protection issues may be a contributory factor to increased reports being made as well as the ongoing cost of living crisis which has had a profound impact on our local communities.

**6.2.3 Figure 1.1A** Shows the number of individuals associated with the referrals received, the number of individuals who have had 2 or more referrals during the month and the highest number of referrals received by an individual during the month.

Q3 saw an average of 328 individuals linked to a referral and an average of 111 individuals who received 2 or more referrals. Q4 saw an average of 310 individuals linked to a referral and an average of 119 individuals who received 2 or more referrals.

The highest number of referrals linked to any 1 individual across Q3 and Q4 was 34 which occurred in November 2023. This is somewhat higher than all other months during this reporting period where the average across the remaining months was 18.2

**6.2.4 Figure 1.2:** Shows the source of the referrals. As in previous quarters, Police remain the highest referring agency (Q3 29.1% and Q4 32.9%).

Education and Health referrals are grouped closely within these quarters as being the second and third highest referring agency respectively.

Ongoing joint working with Police through West safeguarding hub meetings allows for regular discussion and monitoring of Police referrals alongside a Detective Sergeant from Gwent Police being co-located in Children's IAA, to quality assure all PPN's received.

Referral thresholds from partner agencies has been considered on a regional basis as part of a task and finish group which has been set up under the Gwent Safeguarding Board. A regional Duty to Report (DTR) and Continuum of Support Threshold Guidance document has now been produced and ratified by Gwent Safeguarding Board to act as an aid for professional judgement on when to appropriately submit a referral to Children's Services. Multi-agency meetings are now being arranged to consider the formal launch of the document and holding awareness raising sessions/briefing sessions for practitioners across the region. Additionally, the document was presented during one of the May practitioner events hosted by the Gwent Safeguarding Board to support with awareness raising.

**6.2.5** **Figure 1.3:** Shows the numbers of referrals received into the department on open cases. The graph identifies an increase for the receipt of additional referrals on open cases from Q3(1,795) to Q4(1,825). Figure 1.3 demonstrates minimal fluctuation in the receipt of additional referrals for open cases across the 4 Q's included in the graph.

#### **6.2.6** **Child Protection**

**6.2.7** **Figures 2.1 & 2.2:** Provides a summary of the number of children on the child protection register with the numbers of registrations and deregistration's also being referenced within Fig 2.2.

There was a total of 89 children on the child protection register in Q3 which demonstrates an increase of 6 from Q2. During Q3 there were a total of 27 new registrations which is a decrease of 20 compared to Q4. There were 6 less de-registrations in Q3 compared to the previous Quarter.

At the end of Q4 there were a total of 102 children on the child protection register which demonstrates an increase of 13 from Q3. During Q4 there were a total of 42 new registrations which is an increase of 15 compared to Q3. There were 8 more de-registrations in Q4 compared to Q3. In Q4 we have seen an increase in the number of children registered on the child protection register.

When scrutinising this data to identify potential reasons for the increase in child protection registrations, it is apparent that within Q4 there were registrations for 1 x sibling group of 5, 1 x sibling group of 4 and 4 x sibling groups of 3 which equates to 21 children spanning only 6 families.

Additionally, it is noted that there is a small cohort of children/families who have recently been registered past their 3<sup>rd</sup> review. As part of the internal Children's Services Audit Framework, it has been agreed that those children

who remain registered past their 3<sup>rd</sup> review conference will be referred to the Safeguarding Manager for a Multi-Agency Supervision session. This will offer the multi-agency practitioners involved in supporting the child protection plan to have a focused reflective space to explore a potential way forward. It is promising to note that these sessions have been arranged by the Safeguarding Manager for the cases identified in this cohort.

**6.2.8 Figure 2.3:** Shows the categories of abuse for which children's names are registered for on the Child Protection Register over the past year. Neglect and Emotional/Psychological abuse remain the highest categories of abuse across Q3 and Q4. This is typically in keeping with national statistics for child protection categorisations.

For Q4 we have seen Neglect become the highest category for registrations with 53 children compared to 41 children in Q3. From the graph we can see that Neglect registrations has continued to increase quarter on quarter through 23/24. It is reasonable to suggest the continued cost of living crisis may be having an impact on the growing number of children registered under this category.

Emotional/Psychological Abuse registrations has remained stable with 46 children registered under this category in both Q3 and Q4. Conference chairs seek to ensure that if the category of Emotional/Psychological Abuse is agreed within the conference, then there should be a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) consultation arranged by the social worker for the child/ren to consider their emotional wellbeing needs with health colleagues to inform the child protection plan.

**6.2.9 Figure 2.4:** relates to the age and gender breakdown of children on the child protection register during Q4. In Q4 we identified females aged 5-9 being the highest (19), followed by males aged 10-15 age (18).

Age group comparison between Q3 and Q4 data identifies the following;

- 10–15-year-olds = Increase by **6**.
- Under 1's = No change.
- 5–9-year-olds = Increase of **9**.
- 1–4-year-olds = Decrease of **1**.
- 16- and 18-year-olds = Decrease of **1**.
- 

### **6.3 Adults Social Services**

**6.3.1 Figure 3.1:** The data shows an overall increase in referrals (25%) of adult at risk compared to the same quarters last year. This may be reflective of there being more adults at risk due to increased poverty with regards to the cost-of-living crisis affecting all local communities. The increase could also be due to the national and regional media awareness raising. People are becoming more aware of their rights and the importance of reporting any concerns. We continue to jointly deliver regular Safeguarding training with Caerphilly Safeguarding Team which also increases awareness.

**6.3.2 Figure 3.2:** The data shows we received the highest number of referrals for females over 65 (a total of 154 referrals). Within this gender and age category the highest number of reports received was for neglect (76) followed by physical abuse (41). The information suggests females tend to be more at risk than males across all types of abuse and people over 65 tend to be more at risk of physical abuse and neglect. This data is consistent with previous quarters.

The regional Quality Assurance sub-group continues to support the development of the performance management and quality assurance framework identifying any emerging safeguarding themes and challenges that may become more amplified and require more targeted attention moving forward.

**6.3.4 Figure 3.3** The figures reflecting where the alleged abuse/neglect took place shows that we had the highest number of reports (for quarter 3 and quarter 4) from care home settings (187) followed by own home (142). It is more likely that abuse will be witnessed and reported in this type of environment. There has been a concerted attempt to work with care home managers to raise their awareness of the safeguarding procedures. We also continue to have a close working relationship with the Commissioning team within the department and with our Health colleagues in sharing information and jointly investigating any concerns. The majority of the population still reside in their own homes therefore we would expect to see a high number of reports from 'own home'. Care and support is often provided by domiciliary care companies in people's homes who again are aware of the safeguarding procedures so are more likely to report. Domestic abuse cases will also likely be included in the 'own home' category. This data is comparable with previous quarters.

**6.3.5 Figure 3.4** This data shows the person allegedly responsible for the abuse is most often recorded as 'not known' (222 for quarter 3 and quarter 4). An example of this is where an incident such as a fall in a care home would not identify the alleged perpetrator. There can also be cases in which the report is closed because it was inappropriate, and no abuse/neglect has occurred. The alleged perpetrator may have been identified through the course of enquiries but if the safeguarding process is still ongoing when the data is taken it may not be captured in the final performance statistics. There was an increase in reports of abuse by a professional in quarter 3 and 4 (51) compared to last year's quarters (35). The continued training and close working with Providers to raise awareness of the Safeguarding procedures and the importance of reporting any concerns may have resulted in the increase in these reports. There has been an increase in reports in which the alleged perpetrator is another service user (an increase of 32 referrals compared to the previous quarter 3 and 4). This may be again due to increased awareness (due to the continued training and close working) with Providers reporting incidences between service users (in environments such as Care Homes and Supported Living). Some of the reported incidences may have not met the threshold for Safeguarding and we are continuing to support and work with Providers regarding reporting appropriate Safeguarding concerns.

**6.3.6 Figure 3.5:** The majority of our reports are received from provider agencies and the local health board which is to be expected due to their awareness of the safeguarding procedures. This is consistent with previous data. There continues to be an increase in reports received from relatives/friends. This may be due to more awareness via media or the drive to recruit more carers who will then receive the mandatory training and are more likely to report abuse in all circumstances. This is an encouraging increase from members of the public. Self-reporting continues to increase also which suggests adults at risk are becoming more aware of their rights and the importance of raising any concerns.

A member of the Commissioning Team attends every strategy meeting held for commissioned services to offer advice, guidance and perspective. The Contracts and Commissioning Team Manager and the three Contract Monitoring Officers are all fully trained non-criminal investigators and undertake investigations independently or jointly with colleagues depending on the complexity and size of the investigation, or, with health colleagues if there are nursing issues involved. Whether referrals progress to strategy meetings and/or investigation, or are closed down as inappropriate safeguarding referrals, there is very often some preliminary investigation work and/or recommendations / performance issues with providers to be acted upon and followed up by the Commissioning Team.

**6.3.7 Figure 3.6:** The data suggests females continue to be more at risk of domestic abuse than males or are at least more likely to be reported. There continues to be a steady increase in females aged between 18 and 64 experiencing domestic abuse. This could be reflective of the crisis being experienced by the community as a whole such as the cost of living which is further impacting on poverty and unemployment. The reports could also be increasing due to an increased awareness of 'Ask and Act'. This figure only captures the adult at risk cases and not all people within the community experiencing domestic abuse. We have a dedicated worker within the team who has expertise in this area and responds to these reports.

A strong link also remains with the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) partnership. Our close working relationships are also demonstrated with the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner's Office, and nationally recognised bodies such as Public Health Wales along with our regional volunteering agencies, Gwent Association of Volunteering Organisations (GAVO) and Torfaen Voluntary Alliance as well as local Domestic Abuse agencies such as Cyfannol and Phoenix Domestic Abuse Service.

## **6.4 Education**

### **6.4.1 Overview**

Action Short of Strike (ASOS) was in place until the end of November 2023, this impacted on some of the data that would routinely be presented to Members.

Data presented within this report is done so on an exception basis to bring key aspects of information to Members' attention and as such not all evidence in the supporting performance report will be included in this narrative.

**6.4.2 Section 05 Figure 1.2 Estyn** There were three schools inspected by Estyn during this reporting period. No health and safety or safeguarding concerns were highlighted.

**6.4.3 Section 05 Figure 4.2.1/4.2.3 - Training** - All schools are compliant with 'in-person' delivery of their whole school safeguarding training.

**6.4.4 Section 05 Figure 5.2.1/5.2.2/5.2.3: Electively Home Educated (EHE) Pupils** - Annual visits by LA Officers to EHE pupils provide valuable information regarding the efficiency of the education provided. Support is offered to reintegrate or to signpost. Home visits are offered, parents who refuse are few. Neutral venues are offered, and School Attendance Orders are considered where there is limited to no evidence of a suitable education being provided by the parent to the child/ren. Additional funding from WG has improved engagement with hard-to-reach families. There is emerging positive impact of this work but more needs to be done nationally so that a national register is compiled of all those children EHE. The implementation of effective safeguarding nationally continues to be compromised until this is achieved. More robust EHE guidance has been issued by WG however there is no longer going to be a national register of EHE children. The consultation for all local authorities to keep their own CME database has ended and the results will be published in due course.

**6.4.5 Section 05 Figure 5.4.1/5.4.2/5.4.3/5.4.4/5.4.5: Children who offend** - There is a service level agreement in place with the Youth Offending Service and both agencies work together to ensure that children are in appropriate education. This reporting period has seen an increase in the number of children accessing the Youth Offending Service. The figure at the end of Spring term 2024 is 84, compared to 79 for the academic year 2022-23.

### **6.4.6 Section 05 5.5 Anti-social Behaviour Process**

The Council's Community Safety Team membership includes Gwent Police (CADRO), Social Services (including Families First), Youth Offending Service, Senior Education Welfare, Youth Services, Registered Social Landlords and Legal Team, where appropriate. Referrals to the group can come from the Council, Police or Registered Social Landlords.



The purpose of this Group is to effectively tackle anti-social behaviour by providing multi-agency tailored support.

There are 4 different stages of intervention:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Warning Letter
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Warning Letter
- Case Review
- Punitive sanction

**6.4.7 Figure 5.5.1: Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)** - shows the number of children identified in the 4-Stage Anti-Social Behaviour Process, broken down by age and gender. Generally, more males have been identified in the anti-social behaviour for primary and secondary school age children. Overall, there has been a drop in the number of incidents.

**6.4.8 Figure 5.5.2 Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents-** identified from children who have received Stage 1 and Stage 2 Warning Letters. As can be seen there has been a decrease in the number of incidents during this reporting period. The issues reported are throwing/kicking objects at property.

**6.4.9 Figure 5.5.3 - Children Identified in 4-Stage ASB Process.** The majority of individuals do not progress past Stage 1. Whilst in the summer term 2023, there was an escalation in the number of Stage 3 cases, attributed to anti-social behaviour in one of our town centres, there are no stage 3 and 4 cases during this reporting period.

**6.4.10 Figure 5.8.5 Operation Encompass**

In the Spring term, children were present at 46.8% of occurrences of reported domestic violence, a small decrease from 52.2% in the Summer term 2023.

**6.4.11 Section 05 Figure 5.10.1/5.10.2: Exclusions** - Exclusions have seen a reduction in the Spring term 24 when compared to the Summer term 23. The average number of days lost are also lower indicating that schools are excluding for shorter periods of time. vulnerable learner panel is in place where schools can discuss pupils with persistent disruptive behaviour; those that are at risk of being excluded and those that have been permanently excluded. This remains a key priority for the Education Directorate.

**6.4.12 Section 05 Figure 5.11.2: Physical Interventions** - The number of interventions has increased in Autumn and Spring terms 2023-24 when comparing to the same periods in the previous academic year. Nearly all of the interventions reported are attributable to the special schools

**6.5 Corporate Safeguarding**

**6.5.1 Figures 6.1.1 and 6.1.2 DBS Compliance** evidence all those within the Council who require a DBS and those who do not. Currently over 73% of Council employees require a DBS check. It is evident that this is an area in

which we are performing exceptionally well with an overall compliance rate of 99.58%. For those where no DBS is in place, there is a clear escalation process in place to ensure that managers and leads are aware and can take necessary action to resolve. Operational Teams receive fortnightly reports of all DBS applications currently in progress to enable Safeguarding escalation where required.

**6.5.2 Figure 6.2.1 VAWDASV Corporate Online Training** evidences that corporate training has been provided to staff in respect of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence with 57% of staff having completed the VAWDASV online training. This accounts for a small increase of staff who have completed this training in comparison to the last quarter. Welsh Government has developed an e-learning module which is available on our online learning platform – the All Wales Academy and there is an expectation for all council staff to complete this training and repeat this every 3 years.

**6.5.3 Figure 6.2.2 Corporate Online Safeguarding Training** evidences 61% of staff having completed the safeguarding training. This identifies a small increase in staff who have completed this since the last quarter. On commencing employment with Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, all practitioners are required to have basic safeguarding awareness training as per corporate induction requirements. A refresher training session is required every 3 years.

The National Safeguarding Training, Learning and Development Standards were launched in November 2023. This provides an overview of the knowledge, skills and competence expected for each group of practitioners, in relation to their safeguarding role and responsibilities. The National Safeguarding Training, Learning and Development Framework provides guidance for the implementation of training and how this could look in practice. Work is ongoing with the Regional Safeguarding Board to consider the standards and framework is aligned with training opportunities across the region.

Training compliance is being monitored via the Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group. There are identified challenges in respect of the data collection in respect of safeguarding training in the absence of an online learning management system – this is including the monitoring and tracking of safeguarding training consistently across all service areas. We identify that the current training reporting system presents challenges as those practitioners requiring higher tier safeguarding training isn't reported in the same way as the online basic awareness training. It is positive that, Thinqi, a new Learning Management system is currently in the early stages of being developed and will replace the current learning system. This will seek to resolve many of the reporting issues we are currently facing as a council and will support us in identifying more accurate training compliance data.

**6.5.4 Figure 6.3 Risk Register** – The tables under this section evidences the progress being made against the controls outlined within the risk register and progress set against the recommendations for corporate safeguarding. As noted, the annual safeguarding self-assessments for service areas across the council have been reviewed by the Children's Safeguarding Team and key

themes were presented to the Corporate Safeguarding Leads Group in January 2024. Key areas for development identified in the 2022 and 2023 self-assessments are:

- **Training:** training compliance with the basic safeguarding training; knowing what to do and who to seek safeguarding advice from in the service area; and receiving appropriate training at the relevant level to enable practitioners to carry out their safeguarding responsibilities.
- **Designated Safeguarding Person (DSP):** having a named DSP with appropriate training and all practitioners knowing who this is and how to contact them in each service area.
- **Recognition:** Recognising when additional support is required and how to make a referral to services.
- **Information sharing:** how to share safeguarding information.
- **Planning:** reflecting what has gone well, what needs to improve and ensuring new learning is embedded into practice.

Following on from the completion of the safeguarding self-assessments in September 2023, the Children's Services Safeguarding Team has worked on undertaking a review of Corporate Safeguarding in the Council throughout Quarter 4 and has considered recommendations to strengthen the corporate safeguarding arrangements in the Council. The report to outline the recommendations was presented to SLT and CLT in June 2024.

## 6.6 **Expected outcome for the public**

Quarterly reporting provides the public with the opportunity to view progress of the Directorate and ensure accountability.

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

## 6.7 **Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)**

The development of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and the Departmental Safeguarding Leads meetings reconvened in 2021 and this helps 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.

Termly meetings also take place with the Safeguarding Leads from all the schools and other education settings and half termly meetings take place between the safeguarding team and lead education staff.

The SEWSCB local Safeguarding Network group also reviews the safeguarding information to ensure all partner agencies are as fully aware as possible.

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 looks to build and strengthen on existing arrangements by involving service users, carers and

other key partners where possible in helping shape and influence future design of services.

## **6.8 Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**

The Annual Council Reporting Framework (ACRF) enables both Social Services and the Education Directorate to plan for the future as spend, risk and performance is continuously reported on and provides a baseline of where the department is currently and where it needs to be in the future. This process is further supplemented by the Local Government Education Services (LGES) framework within which local government education services operate.

The rigorous self-evaluation processes ensure that key areas for development are identified and then embedded within business planning arrangements.

## **6.9 Preventative focus**

The work undertaken by the Social Services and Education Directorates looks to promote a preventative approach to practice through early identification and intervention. Having a proactive rather than reactive approach to service planning can also help with planning resources.

Providing this report and the level of detailed safeguarding information to Scrutiny Committee enables members to ensure risks are identified and acted on.

The Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board has developed a new partnership agreement between local authorities and agency partners including Gwent Police, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Wales Probation Trust, Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations which sets out a clear and shared vision to ensure all adults in Gwent are safeguarded effectively through partnership working and community engagement.

The recent establishment of the Strategic Safer Schools Partnership Board continues to progress strategic issues across the Local Government Education Services.

## **6.10 Collaboration / partnership working**

The South-East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board and its sub-groups ensure a multi-agency collaborative approach to safeguarding. Blaenau Gwent fully participates in the Children's and Adults Safeguarding Boards.

Additionally, the Corporate Safeguarding Policy ensures each department has safeguarding leads and these meet together on a quarterly basis looking at safeguarding across the whole Authority. The Leisure Trust lead also participates in this meeting.

Throughout the Q's partnership working with the police and statutory partners continued to progress. The Hub model is working well, with multi agency safeguarding meeting happening in a timely manner.

## **6.11 Integration (across service areas)**

All local authorities and partner agencies work together on safeguarding through the South-East Wales Safeguarding Children Board and Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board.

The development of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and the Departmental safeguarding leads meetings helps ensure all departments within the Authority are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and are kept updated with any issues trends within safeguarding. Within Education this is further supplemented by the work of the Strategic Safer Schools Partnership Board and the termly meetings with Designated Safeguarding persons (DSP'S)

## **6.12 Decarbonisation and Reducing Carbon Emissions**

N/A

## **6.13 Integrated Impact Assessment - EqIA (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed).**

## **6.14 Monitoring Arrangements**

The Local Safeguarding Network Group is a subgroup of the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board and Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board. This group is made up of multi-agency representation from within Blaenau Gwent who monitor and reviews the safeguarding information and performance. This group has direct links with the Youth Forum to ensure the voice of the child is fully considered and heard on safeguarding issues.

The performance of both directorates is monitored throughout the financial year from April to March and reported to People Scrutiny Committee and in the context of Education is supplemented by various quality assurance activities that are routinely reported to Education DLT on a termly basis and seek to inform the ongoing self-evaluation and the priorities to be progressed in respect of Safeguarding in Education.

## **6.15 Background Documents /Electronic Links**

*Appendix 1 – BG Safeguarding Reporting Data Template Q3&Q4 2023-24 Final*

*Appendix 2 – BG Education Risk Register Q4*

The following hyperlink provides further details on the governance and Structure: [www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk](http://www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk)