



Joint Report of the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Community Health Services and Director of Social Services

Governance and Audit Committee – 9 November 2021

Annual Report – Corporate Safeguarding 2020-21

Purpose:	This is the latest annual report on the Council's corporate safeguarding arrangements, which reviews the work programme of the Corporate Safeguarding Group during 2020/21. The report acts as a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Council's Corporate Safeguarding policy, which promotes a "Safeguarding as everyone's business" approach. Safeguarding people from harm is a corporate priority in Swansea Council's Corporate Plan.
Report Author:	Simon Jones - Social Services Strategy & Performance Improvement Officer
Finance Officer:	Chris Davies
Legal Officer:	Lucy Moore
Access to Services Officer:	Rhian Millar
For Information	

1. Background

- 1.1 At the Governance & Audit Committee held on 13th July 2021, the meeting resolved that an update report be provided to the Committee which gives assurances on a number of matters, including:
 - action plan dates are being met
 - clarity is provided regarding the terms of reference / responsibilities of the various groups supporting the Corporate Safeguarding group.The items raised about the potential risk with school procurement / monitoring contracts and future training provision for Councillor School Governors are not directly addressed by this report.
- 1.2 It is recommended that the Governance & Audit Committee considers this Annual Report for information only, as an additional follow up on

progress arising out of the Audit Wales review of Swansea Council arrangements for the corporate safeguarding of children.

- 1.3 The Annual report was prepared after consultation with the Corporate Safeguarding Group, and then presented to Scrutiny Programme Committee on 19th October 2021 by lead Cabinet Member and the Director of Social Services.
- 1.4 This Annual Report - Corporate Safeguarding 2020/21 (attached as Appendix 1) is an important part of this reporting cycle. The Annual Report aims to update on the work undertaken in relation to corporate arrangements for Safeguarding across the whole Council during the year 2020/21, covering seven key areas of activity. It also identifies work for the year ahead. It is a regular report to the Scrutiny Programme Committee for awareness and comment on progress, achievements and implementation of policy.
- 1.5 At the Scrutiny Programme Committee held on 19th October 2021 Cabinet Member Mark Child and the Director of Social Services, David Howes were questioned on the following topics:
 - Current pressures and impact on safeguarding work
 - Access to safeguarding training by external providers/ persons, and compliance
 - DBS policy and systems- improvements for ensuring DBS checks for contractors are completed in line with new policy
 - Volunteers – Who is overseeing / monitoring whether those working in a voluntary capacity.

2. Corporate Safeguarding group

- 2.1 Swansea Council's Corporate Safeguarding Group was first set up in 2014 to lead on development and of corporate safeguarding policy, monitoring of policy implementation. This Group has met regularly - chaired by Director of Social Services, and attended by the lead Cabinet Member, with lead representatives from all services areas across the Council. The remit of the corporate safeguarding group covers both safeguarding children, and vulnerable adults from harm.
- 2.2 Regular progress reports are provided to Corporate Management Team on safeguarding performance. The Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Community Health Services, the Scrutiny Programme Committee and relevant Scrutiny Performance Panels also expect to receive regular information regarding safeguarding and on the work of the Corporate Safeguarding Group.
- 2.3 The annual report also acts as a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Council's Corporate Safeguarding policy, which promotes a "Safeguarding as everyone's business" approach.

Safeguarding people from harm is a corporate priority in Swansea Council's Corporate Plan.

3. Action Plan/ Work programme

3.1 Swansea Council's model for effective safeguarding arrangements effectively covers 7 key areas of activity (see appended report), and these are managed within a work programme, with leads reporting into the Corporate Safeguarding group. Safe practice and safe partnership are reporting jointing to reflect on multi agency work undertaken on behalf of children and adults.

3.2 The progress reports provided by lead set out the following headings:

- main aim of working group:
- scope of work to be carried out:
- main actions to be taken:
- progress to date:
- risks identified:

Note that leads have been requested to provide indicative timescales for future progress reports.

3.3 The annual report as provided picks up highlights from these progress reports, whilst placing what we have achieved in the wider context of the strategic work of the Council, and across the range of services we provide based on the annual review of performance, particularly in the steps taken towards achieving the corporate priority of safeguarding vulnerable people.

3.4 Swansea Council's Corporate Safeguarding group requested that an annual Section 135 audit be carried out this year to gain further assurances that arrangements are robust in all the Council's main service areas, and to identify any additional improvements needed.

3.5 A first exercise using a new regional tool, strives to develop our understanding of how well each service area within the Council manages their own corporate safeguarding responsibilities. Findings from this audit are now included in this annual report (see section on Delivering Safe Performance). Also, the main findings are set out within Swansea Council's section 135 Summary Report, delivered via the Council's Safeguarding Leads to the West Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Board, and reported on an exception basis.

3.6 The Annual Report for Corporate Safeguarding intends to reflect more on the feedback of the Section 135 self -assessment in future years. Improvements identified from this year's exercise, and within the summary report to the Regional Safeguarding board, are incorporated into the revised corporate safeguarding group work programme, as within the Annual Report appended to this report.

4 Integrated Assessment Implications

- 4.1 The Council is subject to the Equality Act (Public Sector Equality Duty and the socio-economic duty), the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure, and must in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Acts.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Deliver better outcomes for those people who experience socio-economic disadvantage
 - Consider opportunities for people to use the Welsh language
 - Treat the Welsh language no less favourably than English.
 - Ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 4.1.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 mandates that public bodies in Wales must carry out sustainable development. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the 'well-being goals'.
- 4.1.2 Our Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process ensures we have paid due regard to the above. It also takes into account other key issues and priorities, such as poverty and social exclusion, community cohesion, carers, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and Welsh language.

An Integrated Impact Assessment Screening Form has been completed, with the agreed outcomes as follows:

- Summary of Impacts (Q2) Impacts are positive and low on specific groups due to the nature and purpose of the report as explained above.
- Summary of involvement (Q3) Swansea Council works closely with Swansea Bay University Health Board, Third Sector organisations, Social Care providers and the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership Boards. The Councils also works co-productively on what matters most to people, how services are developed and within commissioning plans. This collaborative, co-productive approach and the involvement of others has been involved in his report.
- WFG considerations (Q4) Well-being of Future Generation forms part of the overall plan and as part of the corporate plan and Council's transformation programmes, which are working towards safe, sustainable approaches to

corporate safeguarding. Health, social care and wellbeing is a significant part of the local and regional economy of Swansea, and the report focused on the range of services and other organisations which form part of this economy. A skilled, qualified public sector workforce is vital to improving wellbeing outcomes for vulnerable people. The report shows how we are looking to the future by ensuring that we are well placed to recruit, retain and better support employees in their professional development, in their duty to report on safeguarding concerns, and how we can help them be the best that they can be in their work with Swansea citizens.

- Any risks identified (Q5) The work programmes referred to within this report is risk managed closely. Any risks identified within one or all of the Council services, are agreed, mitigated and checked as routine at service, directorate and corporate levels, for example through monthly Social Services Performance and Financial Monitoring meeting and the Corporate Safeguarding group. Risks are then escalated accordingly through to appropriate corporate and political structures. Some of the wider impacts for example those emerging during the Covid pandemic, and their associated risks have been, and will continue to be, managed through the regional partnership structures.

- Cumulative impact (Q7) There is a positive impact on the wellbeing of Swansea citizens through corporate safeguarding of our most vulnerable people, including children, and the benefits this brings to the local area, economy and workforce.

The screening exercise concluded it is not necessary to complete a full Integrated Impact Assessment on this report.

4.3 The annual report of corporate safeguarding sets out progress towards the Council's corporate objective on safeguarding people from harm, as described in the Corporate Plan 2020-22, as required by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and associated statutory guidance.

4.4 The Annual Report takes into account the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) by outlining how Swansea Council is committed to taking forward these rights forward through the Children and Young People Strategic Partnership Board, and action plan.

4.5 The Council's approach to corporate safeguarding, and practice across all functions and services, has to be comply with Welsh Language Standards.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications.

Background papers:

None.

Appendices:

Appendix A - Annual Report – Corporate Safeguarding 2020/21.

Appendix B – IIA Assessment Form.