

ANNUAL CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING REPORT 2016/17

This report provides the Annual Report of the Corporate Safeguarding Steering Group for 1st April 2016 – 31st March 2017.

1. Introduction and background

1.1 The Corporate Safeguarding Steering Group was set up in 2014 to manage the audit of All Wales Audit of Local Authority Arrangements to Support the Safeguarding of Children. Findings of this Audit were produced in September 2014 and five proposals for improvement were made including:

- Ensure all elected members are made aware of the concept and use of risk management and its central importance in safeguarding (**Completed, this forms part of the new risk policy**)
- Improve the range, quality and coverage of safeguarding performance reporting to provide adequate assurance that systems are working effectively (**Completed, regular reports are taken to CMT, Corporate Briefing, Scrutiny and the Safeguarding meetings**).
- Improve the work of the Council's Scrutiny Committees to ensure it is providing assurance on the effectiveness of the Council's corporate safeguarding arrangements (**Actioned as part of the Annual Safeguarding Report taken to Scrutiny**)
- Ensure all elected members and staff who encounter children on a regular basis receive training on safeguarding and child protection issues and the Council's corporate policy on safeguarding (**On-going. A continuous training programme exists for all elected members and staff**). This exceeds the expectations of the original proposal as the training is now mandatory for all Council employees rather than those that encounter children on a regular basis – for further information please see 2.3)
- Identify and agree an appropriate internal audit programme of work for safeguarding (**Audit have produced their report on Safeguarding and their recommendations will be incorporated accordingly after agreement**)

- 1.2 These proposals formed the core work of the Steering Group which has continued to meet every 2-3 months. The remit of the group was also expanded from safeguarding children to include those adults who are vulnerable or at risk.
- 1.3 It was agreed that the Council's Scrutiny Programme Committee should receive information regarding the work of the Corporate Safeguarding Operational Group through an Annual Safeguarding report. This awareness provides an opportunity for Members to scrutinise, steer and influence the work programme and progress.

Regular updates are also provided to the Swansea Public Protection Executive Board concerning Western Bay and the Safeguarding Board, progress on safeguarding training for both staff and Members are reported and progress on performance information regarding the initial Welsh Audit office report and performance indicators.

These all provide reassurance that in terms of this being a high priority for the Authority, Safeguarding is now one of the five City and County of Swansea's Corporate Priorities.

- 1.4 In June 2016 Scrutiny received a copy of the first Annual Report on Safeguarding and this set out the achievements for 2014/15 and 2015/16. This detailed the main work plan priorities for 2016/17, the updates of which are as précised as follows:
- More sessions have been provided over the year for both Members and Designated leads to attend appropriate safeguarding training
 - As part of the legal responsibility for the implementation of section 28 of the Children Act 2004 to monitor and evaluate the work of safeguarding and promote the welfare of children. An evaluation exercise (self-assessment tool) was piloted with specific departments last year and as a result, consideration will be given to rolling this out further to other departments.
 - Policies are being reviewed to ensure that the council has written minimum standards for safeguarding for working with partners, volunteers and contractors
 - A Communications Plan has been established to promote Safeguarding and to raise awareness amongst staff, Members, Volunteers, partners and the public. Examples include the work on the intranet pages, staff survey, training and various events which are all detailed later in this report.

1.5 This report is intended to outline the progress made during 2016/17 against the work plan priorities, highlights the achievements for the year and also sets out the priorities for 2017/18. A copy of the Action Plan is also attached which details the progress to date against the All Wales Audit of Local Authority Arrangements to Support the Safeguarding of Children.

2. Progress made during 2016/17

2.1 Policy development

The Corporate Operational Safeguarding Policy which was published in December 2014 is currently online with the Policy being disseminated widely across the authority available to employees via Staffnet and to members of the public via the internet.

In view of changing developments including working practices / procedures and new social care legislation; a task & finish sub-group was set up during the year to review the Policy. Proposed changes were reported back to the April 2017 Corporate Safeguarding meeting and a draft document will be presented back to the July meeting for consideration. The policy will continue to be underpinned by the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child which clearly identifies that children have the right to be protected from violence, abuse and neglect.

2.2 Minimum Standards and Safe recruitment practices (External)

- A guidance document for effective safeguarding has been produced for when contractors are engaged for construction work; maintenance or emergency repairs in schools and premises used by vulnerable persons.
- More work needs to be undertaken on engaging with partners on safeguarding to ensure common agreements, mutual learning and development of good practice, although, solid progress has been made so far.

2.3 Training

The Safeguarding Training Plan is continually reviewed for relevance and the range of training is developed on an ongoing basis details of the types of training are as follows:

Elected Members Face to Face & E-Learning Training

Face to Face training courses are accessible for all Members and E-learning courses continue to be available on an ongoing basis. Full Council has adopted this training as a mandatory course for all Elected Members

- As at 31st March, 56 out of 72 Councillors have completed the Council's safeguarding training.

Face to Face Training

The one hour face-to-face safeguarding awareness training for frontline staff has been developed for staff currently not having any access to PC's (Spot it Report it). This training session to complement the e-learning module and has been rolled out across the Authority

- As of 31st March 2017 2877 (cumulative) staff members have completed the face to face training programme to date.

E learning Training

- Courses continue to be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis and as of 31st March 2017, the number of training elements completed by new or existing staff in safeguarding vulnerable people in both Child & Family and Adult Safeguarding is 6,121 cumulative (approximately 3,060 employees) to date.

Child Sexual Exploitation Training

A training programme has been devised and facilitated in partnership with Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and Bridgend Council. Feedback suggested that the training was well received and that learners had improved their knowledge in respect of Child Sexual Exploitation. Training is being actively promoted across the Authority by the Safeguarding Leads and several employees have undertaken the necessary 'train the trainer' course enabling them to co-deliver these sessions. Looking forward there may be further opportunities to introduce the Child Sexual Exploitation training online.

Designated Safeguard Lead Training

- In May 2016 Safeguarding Leads were invited to attend one of three Child and Family Services lunchtime sessions on Child Sexual Exploitation. This provided an opportunity for them to broaden their knowledge about this important subject. In January 2017 14 the designed safeguarding leads participated in a specific training session designed to assist them in undertaking their role effectively.
- Further training sessions designed for Leads are being organised by the Social Services co-ordinator during 2017/18

External / Partner Training

- Specialist training has been provided by Social Services to 202 taxi drivers during 2016/17 with plans to train all 1,100 drivers operating in the city within 2017/18. Currently all these sessions are voluntary and free but the UK Government are considering introducing mandatory safeguarding training for all taxi drivers in the future.
- Greater interest from multi-agencies and voluntary organisations for safeguarding training has been expressed during 2016/17, with plans to review and expand training to other bodies during 2017/18.

2.4 Communication Plan and associated actions

Through the establishment of a Communications Plan to promote Safeguarding and to raise awareness amongst staff, Members, Volunteers, partners and the public during the year the following highlights should be noted:

Staff awareness

- The Corporate Safeguarding Group has identified the value of promoting safeguarding across the whole authority particularly for those services which may not traditionally see Safeguarding as part of their role. The staffnet pages have been developed further to incorporate a 'Safeguarding' area to enable access to safeguarding information for both children and adults at risk of harm.
- Initiatives range from including Safeguarding in employee briefing notes/newsletters, a standard agenda item for discussion in team briefings, designing and displaying posters in employee work areas, highlighting who their safeguarding lead is including their picture, contact details and the contact for Child and Family Services and Adult services.
- Awareness of safeguarding issues has improved amongst staff during 2016/17 as indicated in the most recent staff survey when compared to 2015:

	2016	2015	Increase
Do you know who the lead Councillor is for safeguarding?	45%	28%	17%
Do you know who your departments designated lead for safeguarding is?	62%	47%	15%
Have you had your responsibility for safeguarding and child protection explained to you?	86%	64%	22%
Views of safeguarding pages and news stories on Staffnet	14,147	7,059	7,088

Feedback suggests that employees are now more aware of who they can talk to and understand the part they can play in safeguarding and preventative work.

- Many employees do not have access to computers or staffnet, therefore, Safeguarding leads have taken the responsibility in providing face to face training and information in alternative ways.

The Corporate Safeguarding Group has discussed the progress of this work which has also resulted in sharing ideas and good practice particularly exists in Corporate Building and Property Services and Waste and Parks.

- Leads have worked with HoS in their area to promote safeguarding.

General awareness – PR and Events

- A Safeguarding conference took place at the Liberty Stadium in November 2016 as part of the Western Bay Safeguarding Board's collaboration between Swansea, Neath Port Talbot and Bridgend Councils and ABMU health board in which over 300 persons attended the day conference.
- As part of National Safeguarding week the Authority organised two sessions:

Firstly, a lunchtime seminar to explore working together to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation and this was attended by over 40 internal and external professionals including housing, schools and ABMU.

Secondly, the Education department hosted a drop-in day for both internal staff and external professionals; again this was also well attended.

- Press coverage during National Safeguarding Week was extended outside the Authority to raise awareness by highlighting the council's commitment to training its staff in safeguarding. This was the first time the Authority has done a story in the media about safeguarding. It was positively-received with a two-page spread in Evening Post and bulletin items on The Wave and Swansea Bay Radio.
- Linking in other issues as part of Safeguarding week also included a greater awareness on anti-bullying.
- The Authority looked at different methods to get information out to the public during National Safeguarding week via social media including Facebook and Twitter. Relative success was experienced via twitter as Swansea Council was the second most active Authority on twitter, after Pembrokeshire. Partners also encouraged by us, including Spectrum Cymru, the libraries service, the housing team and Pontybrein Primary school issued 29 tweets resulting in 162 re-tweets and likes.

- Comms have submitted 14 positive news stories during 2016/17 on the intranet to raise and maintain awareness on Safeguarding. Every month the staff briefing note 'Top Brief' carries an item on safeguarding and during 2016/17 the intranet safeguarding pages were re-vamped to make material relevant and accessible during 2016/17 on the intranet to raise and maintain awareness on Safeguarding. During National Safeguarding week there had been four stories during in a 10 day period focussing on Safeguarding, this was later praised by external participants.
- A positive aspect of social media coverage was the way some members of staff acted as ambassadors without being prompted. Staff shared Facebook posts, retweeting and liking tweets which sent a strong message about the Authority's commitment to safeguarding.

2.5 Future Workplan during 2017/18 includes:

- All new elected Members to undertake Safeguarding training during 2017/18.
- An Authority safeguarding event to be staged during 2017/18 in conjunction with Western Bay.
- The revised Corporate Operational Safeguarding Policy to be adopted and placed on the intranet site for all employees to view.
- Review the safeguarding training programme to ensure that it includes domestic abuse, DLM Meetings, anti-slavery and child sexual exploitation.
- Departments to continue to promote and devolve key messages on safeguarding, monitor the training compliance of employees, both new and existing and to address the issues raised as a result of the employee's annual staff survey.

Appendices: Appendix A - Action Plan to implement the key features of effective corporate arrangements for Safeguarding