



## Annual Report – Corporate Safeguarding 2020/21

### Report of the Director of Social Services & Cabinet Member - Adult Social Care & Community Health Services on behalf of the Corporate Safeguarding Group

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 **Purpose** - this annual report aims to update Scrutiny Programme Committee on the work undertaken in relation to corporate arrangements for Safeguarding across the whole Council, during the year 2020/21.
- 1.2 **Corporate Safeguarding** - Swansea Council expects that vulnerable people in Swansea are kept safe and protected from abuse and neglect. Safeguarding vulnerable adults and children is both a corporate priority, and well-being strategic outcome within the Corporate Plan (2020-22). This is now widely understood as “everyone’s business”, by our leaders and elected members and our workforce,, partner organisations and the individuals who are carrying out work on behalf of the Council,
- 1.3 **Corporate arrangements-** - by implementing a corporate wide approach to safeguarding vulnerable people the Council has to ensure there are clear lines of responsibility and accountability in all service areas of the Council, and that we are involving representatives of partner organisations in this work. We have to be clear of how ‘Spot it, Report it!’, and how we work together in response.
- 1.4 **Covid Response-** 2020-21 has undoubtedly been a most challenging period for Swansea citizens, the Council, the workforce, the health and social care system and public services. There are so many good examples of how we have faced down these challenges by working together in safeguarding communities and the most vulnerable people. However there has been an impact on the work we intended to do, and this report reflects on this.

Social Services and Education, in particular, have faced some major challenges this year during the Covid-19 pandemic. How in the face of these challenges, our remarkable health and social care, schools and the wider public facing workforce in Swansea have shown great resilience, commitment and humanity to support our most vulnerable citizens during these extraordinarily difficult of times. All workers, whether employed directly by the Council, in the independent

and third sectors, all the unpaid carers, volunteers and other members of the community who help coproduce our services have made a vital contribution to meeting the care and support needs within communities. Throughout these unprecedented times, the Director of Social published a informing, reassuring and appreciative blog, daily in the critical early stages, moving to weekly in more recent time. Aside from the strategic meetings with partners, the Director and Cabinet member have held regular discussions with staff to hear first-hand their experiences, and to direct support. The wellbeing of our workforce has been and continues to be a priority.

[Coronavirus---Covid-19-Social-Services](#)

- 1.5 **Corporate Safeguarding Policy** – Swansea Council’s updated policy has a greater focus on prevention and duty to report placed on all public service officers. The policy aims to make sure our work covers the full extent of potential, contextual safeguarding risks and concerns posed to vulnerable people, such as child sexual exploitation, modern slavery, radicalisation, etc. Reflected in the new corporate safeguarding policy are the key elements needed to ensure **safeguarding remains "everyone’s business"**
- 1.6 **Wales Safeguarding procedures** – Swansea’s corporate safeguarding arrangements and procedures are based on the revised national guidance (Sept. 2020). Our Swansea model approach is set towards driving continuous improvement in key policy areas. Named safeguarding officers from all service areas of the Council are trained and come together regularly to share learning from their experiences in carrying out this work, overseen by the Corporate Safeguarding group: <https://safeguarding.wales/>
- 1.7 **Swansea Council’s model for effective safeguarding arrangements** effectively covers **7 key areas** of activity (Fig. 1), and these are managed within a work programme, with leads reporting into the Corporate Safeguarding group. This annual report picks up highlights from these reports, whilst placing what we do in the wider context of the 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.



Figure 1 Swansea Model

*“Doing nothing is not an option – Spot it, Report it!”*

- 1.8 **Safeguarding as Everyone’s Business** - Our corporate safeguarding policy continues to promote “a “Safeguarding as everyone’s business” approach, and this applies to:
- our employees
  - elected members
  - volunteers
  - contractors (specific conditions may also apply within contracts)

The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 was implemented in April 2016. This Act and recently revised guidance has brought about changes in safeguarding arrangements, in particular the introduction of a 'Duty to Report', placed on all Council staff, and this wider public responsibility is reflected in corporate safeguarding policy, accompanied by new, revised mandatory training programme.

- 1.9 **Working in partnerships-** Clearly in order to address the new statutory requirements, and the wider range of safeguarding issues and concerns now present in our communities, it is necessary to ensure that the whole workforce, elected members, volunteers and partners are each informed and made aware of their public duty, and what is expected of us. By working together as a whole Council, we can ensure that all our activities and services are carried out by elected representatives, paid staff, partners, volunteers and providers who are all fully up to date and aware of their safeguarding roles and responsibilities to help protect our most vulnerable citizens.

1.10 **Updated key documents** - This annual report, with the accompanying appendices, intends to act as a full summary record of our progress in implementing a corporate approach to safeguarding our most vulnerable people from harm, which applies across the whole Council. Appended to this report are:

- **Appendix A.** Corporate Safeguarding Governance arrangements
- **Appendix B.** Terms of Reference for Corporate Safeguarding group
- **Appendix C.** Work programme –Corporate Safeguarding group
- **Appendix D.** Swansea Council's Named Safeguarding officers

## 2. Progress made during 2020/21

This next section considers progress within in the seven key areas of activity as set out in the Swansea model (Fig. 1).

### **2.1 Safe Governance**

**2.1.1 Corporate Leadership** - As mentioned, Safeguarding is seen as everyone's business and as our number one corporate strategic priority. As a Council, we are confident that have a set of robust, arrangements for responding to and managing safeguarding concerns. This does not automatically mean a culture of safeguarding exists, work across the whole organisation and continues to improve. We have to ensure we have strong, effective corporate leadership in place to ensure that all staff know, understand and can apply what they know about safeguarding in all circumstances. In Swansea, we demonstrate safe leadership by having this clear policy framework, effective structures, lead roles across the whole Council and most of all by taking action as and when needed. Safe governance must operate across the whole Council and all structures, including Cabinet, Corporate Management Team, Scrutiny boards and partnership structures (see Appendix A).

**2.1.2 Swansea Council and Cabinet** - the Council has further strengthened governance and Management arrangements to drive forward safeguarding vulnerable people. Cabinet Member portfolios have been reviewed-with changes recently agreed by Council (November 2020). As a statutory requirement, the Council must have the opportunity to consider the Director of Social Services Annual Report.

**2.1.3 Corporate Management Team**—all Corporate Directors, Chief Officers and Heads of Service – through their Management Teams – are jointly responsible for ensuring that all the statutory requirements in terms of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults receive due consideration. Each Director must ensure there is a named safeguarding officer in their service area, who regularly attends the corporate safeguarding group and ensures the quality, content and frequency of training provided to their own staff, and by maintaining a sufficient staff training record. Also the named safeguarding officers are expected to ensure all statutory duties are carried out with regard to the duty to report within the Council, and Swansea's corporate safeguarding policy is being implemented.

**2.1.4 Corporate Safeguarding Group** - An effective corporate safeguarding culture requires strong, visible, leadership presence, ensuring that senior officer and their workforce receives positive, professional and consistent backing in carrying

out Council activities. This has been evident during this most difficult, challenging period, and though the vast range of actions taken in keeping people safe and well. All named safeguarding officers are working effectively together under the direction of a Corporate Safeguarding group, which meets quarterly, and is jointly chaired by the Director of Social Services David Howes and the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Community Health Services –Cllr. Mark Child.

**2.1.5 Scrutiny Performance Panels** - Child and Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel receives the Monthly Child and Family Services Performance report, and has a Work Programme to look in more depth on key issues. Similarly, Adult Services Scrutiny Performance Panel receives the Monthly Adult Services performance report, and also has a Work Programme to cover off key issues

**2.1.6 Regional Safeguarding** <http://www.wgsb.wales/>

Swansea Council is working within effective regional safeguarding board arrangements. Regional Safeguarding board publishes an annual plan setting out priority areas for the coming year. There is shared accountability for this plan across a range of partners, with targeted focus on preventative approaches, improving quality, performance reporting and learning lessons from practice reviews. [WGSB Annual Plan 20-21](#)

Swansea Council supports a range of campaigns and events, in particular during National Safeguarding Week.

**2.1.7 Governance & Audit Committee-** the Council's Governance Audit Committee is a requirement under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, chaired by a lay member. Under the new Local Government and Elections Act Amongst the committee's duties is to review and assess the risk management, internal control and corporate governance arrangements of the Authority. Reports from Internal Audit on their work programme, and Corporate Business Performance on risk management, have been taken to recent Audit Committees. The enhanced role of Governance & Audit Committee provides an additional level of scrutiny and challenge, and Senior Managers are now expected to attend regularly to present on the risk and issues they are facing.

**2.1.8 Findings from Audit Wales Follow up review-** a number of proposals for Improvement were made by Audit Wales in their recent report on Swansea Council : [AuditWales FollowUpReview Swansea Feb2020](#)

Audit Wales found that Swansea Council has addressed most of the recommendations in our previous national and local safeguarding reports, but that we should strengthen some aspects of its corporate safeguarding arrangements: Broadly speaking, many of the issues highlighted in the most WAO report conclusions have already been addressed, or are being worked on

by work groups set up on behalf of the Corporate Safeguarding group. This report to Scrutiny Programme Committee provides additional detail on the progress made on these proposals for improvement.

**2.1.9 Follow up report to Governance & Audit Committee-** a report setting out a full summary of how Swansea is responding to the Audit Wales report's recommendations, and where progress is being made against the areas of improvement needed was presented to Child and Family Services Performance panel in and more recently to Governance & Audit Committee in July 2021: Governance&AuditReport\_July2021

**2.1.10 Section 135 Audit -** Swansea Council's Corporate Safeguarding group has requested that an annual Section 135 audit be carried out to gain assurance that arrangements are robust in all the Council's main service areas, and to identify improvements needed. The 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 findings are reported via the Council's Safeguarding Leads to the West Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Board on an exception basis.

## **2.2 Safe Employment**

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act (2006) still applies in England and Wales. This Act aims to prevent those deemed unsuitable to work with children and vulnerable adults, from gaining access through work (whether paid or unpaid). The Act aimed to solve the failures identified by the 2004 Richard Inquiry.

**2.2.1 Safe Recruitment and Selection -** In working safely with Swansea citizens, the Council has a Recruitment and Selection Policy and staff handbook. which are currently being reviewed. The review ensures that the revised national safeguarding guidance is fully embedded into our procedures, where appropriate. Safeguarding roles and responsibilities are now reflected with all Job Descriptions

**2.2.2 Commissioning and Procurement –**we expect all contractors, companies and individuals, carrying out work on behalf of the Council, to confirm that they comply with Swansea Council Safeguarding Policies, and this applied to their staff or their sub-contractors. All such employees must be made aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and duties, and when required provided with safeguarding awareness raising training. We now have developed a Safeguarding policy specifically for Contractors of the City and County of Swansea to detail the Council's expectations of partners and providers, and annexed to the contract. Safeguarding clauses are placed in all social care

contracts and inserted into other contracts where there are seen as relevant, together with a suitability questionnaire to ensure that all expectations are fully understood.

**2.2.3 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) policy** - The DBS Policy has recently been reviewed and updated and is awaiting agreement; alongside this, work is underway reviewing the procedure guide and letters for Managers/Schools. work in this area is carried out within the Council by a dedicate service centre, to assist Council managers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children. Safeguarding policy expects that job requirements for all new starters to the, for each position to be filled, are risk assessed to ensure a DBS check is completed where a requirement has been identified. A sub group is looking at improvements for ensuring DBS checks for contractors are completed in line with new DBS Policy and Risk Assessment.

**2.2.4 DBS Service Centre/ helpdesk** – in early 2020, the Service Centre Helpdesk took over all ID applications and verifications previously carried out in the contact centre. Alongside this, there is daily monitoring of compliance to ensure that verifications are tracked to completion. Monthly reports are sent to HR&OD Business Partners to raise any queries/issues directly with the business areas and to School Challenge Advisors.

**2.2.5 Volunteers** – the Council's Volunteer guidance has also been reviewed, and updated for all central departments, Volunteer starter forms have been updated to include corporate safeguarding duties. People Policy Development Committee are supporting work on a broader Council strategy for volunteering building on the success of the community response to the Pandemic. We will have to ensure that volunteers can access the appropriate level of safeguarding training.

**2.2.6 Work identified for year ahead:**

- Promoting safeguarding and the duty to report as everybody's business in all recruitment materials, and job descriptions in line with the current corporate safeguarding policy,
- Continue to review all our staff and employment policies including a Council safe recruitment policy and staff handbook are up to date
- By ensuring that all work roles and responsibilities are risk assessed and, where necessary, DBS compliant.

## **2.3 Safe Workforce**

**2.3.1 New Workers** - all staff employed by Swansea Council , including new staff are expected to have an awareness and understanding of their own corporate safeguarding role, as a Council employee, and as a citizen. On commencement



of employment, all Council employees have to undertake a corporate induction and mandatory corporate safeguarding training, and be ready to prevent or report their concerns of possible abuse, when they work for the Authority or work on its behalf.

### 2.3.2 Communications -

Council employees have access to Safeguarding information and resources via StaffNet: <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/staffnet/safeguarding>

All Council staff are made aware of their duty to report concerns, through Staff Handbook and all staff are expected to be aware of the Named Safeguarding Persons in their respective service area (see Appendix D). These lead officers provide support to their staff teams in helping them identify, discuss and raise any signs of potential abuse, and to access the training and support they need.

### 2.3.3 Training Programme – Staff

Our safeguarding awareness training offer has to include face to face, e-learning and class based training approaches to meet the needs of a diverse workforce, for example to staff that do not have regular PC access. Staff are required to attend these mandatory courses a minimum of every 3 years. A senior manager has been deployed to carry out robust training needs analysis for the specific roles within the Council and to develop a comprehensive training programme. Again the Covid pandemic impacted on the capacity to plan, develop and provide the revised training programme, as many officers were redeployed to fill service gaps. The programme has now resumed virtually, and the courses available to include:

#### a) E-Learning

- Safeguarding adults: this e-Learning module looks at different elements that contribute to keeping vulnerable adults safe, and how to recognise and report concerns.
- Safeguarding and protection of children: this e-Learning course helps staff learn how to recognise when a child may be suffering from abuse or neglect and what you can do to help.

b) **Training Levels 1 to 3** - mandatory safeguarding training has been developed across 3 levels to meet role specific requirements. All training materials across all levels has been updated to fully reflect new policy and the latest national guidance (in development. Child Protection Level 2 has been jointly delivered between Social Services and Education.

c) **Named Safeguarding Lead Training** – this programme is vital to Swansea's approach in supporting service areas leads to gain knowledge and know- how which can be passed through to their own teams. This

training has now been transferred to virtual training and will be delivered from October 21.

- d) **Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV)** training within a National Training Framework is one of the key mechanisms for delivering the VAWDASV (Wales) Act 2015. As part of this act, the Council has a duty to train all our workforce, which is also a mandatory expectation on staff and elected members. As with safeguarding training, Swansea facilitates meeting this target with a combination of e-learning face-to-face sessions to meet the range of needs

### **2.3.3 Training Programme – Elected Members**

Through the Council's corporate policy on safeguarding, we aim to ensure all elected members, and support staff who encounter children on a regular basis complete as a minimum the eLearning awareness training on safeguarding /child protection issues, safeguarding adults and Domestic Abuse. The policy expectation is that each councillor, including new councillors, completes this level of training within each electoral cycle. A Master Training Record of all elected members who complete the training is maintained, on behalf of the lead Cabinet Member.

### **2.3.4 Reporting on compliance**

Swansea's approach is that managers are responsible for compliance in how many of their staff are completing mandatory training within their own teams. There are issues in how we report compliance across the whole Council as there have been other systems in use, for example in social services and Education to support regional approaches and national demands. Any system requires timely data input and routine quality checks for reporting on staff training records to be accurate. This will require the further development of self service and real time data management, which the proposed, next generation Oracle Fusion Electronic Resource Planning (ERP) system can support.

### **2.3.5 Oracle Fusion**

Oracle is the Council's system for managing staff employment and training records, together with other resources such as budgets and assets. As there have been ICT resources needed to support Agile working during recent months, a decision was taken in April 2020 to delay implementation of the new Cloud based ERP system (Oracle Fusion) to support real-time record reporting and review of staff training and data checks. We therefore took the difficult decision to pause the programme. The change programme was relaunched in February 2021, and the team are currently planning a new go-live date in 2022.

**2.3.6 Work identified for year ahead:**

- Ensure named safeguarding officers and service areas are represented at the Corporate Safeguarding group meetings
- Continue roll out of revised mandatory training across Council through hybrid programme of e-learning, virtual and face to face options to meet diverse needs of service areas and employees
- To work with Fusion team to ensure safe and accurate transfer of current staff records and to look at solutions to tackle the reporting issues highlighted above

**2.4 Safe Practice**

**2.4.1 Safeguarding as “everyone’s business”** -Swansea Council expects that vulnerable people in Swansea are kept safe, and protected from abuse and neglect. To best achieve this, safeguarding vulnerable adults and children is seen as “everybody’s business” Safeguarding practice has to be delivered timely and effectively, to expected standards and with consistency in practice. The Council can be assured that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place, and that all safeguarding practice within the wider workforce (including partners, providers and volunteers) is continuously improving and working towards enhancing the lives well-being and safety of Swansea citizens.

**2.4.2 Person at the centre of each concern-** In Swansea, safeguarding practice aims to be focused on the child or person at the centre of the concern, and working towards a set of agreed safe outcomes. By working collaboratively to identify and prevent abuse and neglect, where possible. To ensure all agencies, services and individuals can give timely and proportionate responses, in circumstances when possible occurrences of abuse or neglect of children and adults at risk has noticed.

**2.4.3 How we implement Safe Practice in Swansea**

**2.4.3a Rights of a Child**

The Council is committed to the 1945 Declaration of Human Rights, and the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act (2014) has recently reviewed national guidance on safeguarding practice in Wales to ensure that children are safe and protected, and vulnerable people are able to live their lives fully, and to achieve their own wellbeing outcomes..

**2.4.3b Work with Children, Young People and Families**

In Child and Family Services, the Signs of Safety Practice Framework is a whole systems approach embedded across the service, whilst adhering to the

prescriptive requirements of the Wales Safeguarding Children practice guidance.

In an effort to further embed our strengths-based approach, as planned children services underwent a full scale restructuring this year, through which we implemented a reclaiming social work design, introducing for example practice leaders as a separate function from team managers. Undergoing inspection during period of major restructure was an extraordinary challenge. The Inspection findings and feedback from the review team was both positive and constructive and further influenced our transformation plans.

#### **2.4.3c Contextual Safeguarding**

Contextual Safeguarding -the lives of hundreds of young people are being made safer, thanks to the Contextual Safeguarding pilot led by our service, but involving a whole range of partners. Swansea Council are working with Bedford University on Contextual Safeguarding Risk to improve our child exploitation work and practice, in the area of risks to children outside of the family (such as criminal or sexual exploitation). The Covid-19 lockdown has not stopped the project from pressing ahead with preventing exploitation and disrupting criminal networks and behaviour within the context in which the harm occurs.

A contextual approach to safeguarding requires us to look beyond the family to assess neighbourhood and peer group factors in considering risks to children and young people. Swansea's Contextual Missing Exploitation Trafficking multi-agency forum (CMET) tackles referrals, which can potentially impact on hundreds of young people. Youth workers have been doing vital outreach harnessing their skills to identify contextual risks and potential solutions.

#### **2.4.3d Rights of Adults**

The embedding of human rights as part of the Council's approach. This can be demonstrated by our commitment to the Dublin Declaration which requires a whole Council approach to involvement, engagement and coproduction. The Pandemic means that more thought needs to be given to how we live and how we safeguard our wellbeing both as individuals and within communities. We are continuing to work closely with the Older Person's Commissioner's Office and CADR at Swansea University to ensure meaningful mechanisms for engagement of citizens 50+ within the "Live Well, Age Well Forum". Similar to work on engagement with Children and Young People, we have reflected upon our learning from engagement during the pandemic and refined the focus of our work on partnerships, rights-based policy the and involvement of stakeholders.

#### 2.4.3e **Collaborative Communication**

A 'What matters to you' conversation is now central to how we work, across social service. Through a warm front door we can help promote wellbeing and prevent rapid escalation of needs. In Adult Services there is the Common Access Point (CAP), which is set up to help people explore what they need to enhance their personal wellbeing, taking in their strengths as well as risks in their situation, and the outcome they are looking for.

Access and Information Assistants in the CAP can also

- signpost to community-based services, such as local groups or charities.
- give information and Advice relating to care and support and assistance in accessing care and support
- Advise on how the care and support system operates in the local authority
- Advise on types of care and support available
- Explain how to access the care and support available
- Advise how to raise concerns about well-being of a person who appears to have needs for care and support.

#### 2.4.3f **Adult Safeguarding**

A full review of safeguarding arrangements has been undertaken in Adult Services with the establishment of a dedicated safeguarding team to be incorporated into the temporary management structure in Adult Services. The changes are in their early stages though they have already received positive feedback from Care Inspectorate Wales (CiW) . The new Adult Safeguarding team are working hard to ensure that all concerns are addressed at the earliest opportunity, risks are managed effectively with partners using our practice approaches that place the person at the centre, with full involvement and engagement. More cases are being closed and Safeguarding concern investigations are now more likely to be followed through to conclusion, and where necessary supporting police to achieve a conviction.

**2.4.3g Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards** – The Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards were introduced in 2009 to protect against arbitrary deprivations of liberty in hospitals and care homes. These safeguards provide a legal framework that helps to ensure that human rights are protected once notified by a Managing Authority the Local Authority has a duty to assess whether the restrictions are necessary in order to prevent harm to the person and proportionate to their needs. Swansea has significantly improved performance in relation to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) through implementing dedicated team arrangements. Feedback suggests this has not only improved professional knowledge but is driving up standards and response times.

**2.4.4 Case Examples**

Safeguarding and protecting our most vulnerable citizens whilst ensuring their own voice is at the centre of our work remains a priority. Within a sustainable model of social care, we have to target our efforts are to where there is significant risk of harm and abuse and that we are working in a timely way, with the vulnerable person at the centre.

The following case studies reflect how by working in partnership and in new ways, the Council is in a stronger position to focus resources on more preventative and contextual approaches:

**Case Example (1): Domestic Abuse**

Following the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic hit, there were frequent reports in the media of heightened domestic abuse rates, however this was not reflected in number of police reports or referrals into specialist services. Domestic abuse helplines were seeing record numbers of contacts, but this was not reflected locally and there were concerns that victims of domestic abuse were 'staying put', or feared that the 'stay at home' messaging would prevent them from leaving. In response to this, we prioritised awareness raising campaigns with a strong message that help was available and we developed multimedia campaigns linking to national campaigns and signposting to local support services. We also ensured that large-scale posters were on display in supermarket car parks and other public areas. Our Specialist Lead has worked with Microsoft to develop the first domestic abuse 'Chatbot' in Wales, which allowed professionals and members of the public to access round the clock information, advice and details of local support services in an interactive, anonymous way. We also secured funding to provide IT equipment and SMART phones to families affected by domestic abuse and additional target hardening equipment to reinforce the safety of the homes of high risk domestic abuse victims. We work closely with the Welsh Government, the Police and Crime Commissioner's office and other partners to identify funding opportunities and alternative ways to increase resilience of projects, including training wider staff to assist and opportunities to increase resource.

This year we have re-structured our early help offer in Swansea, which includes representation from South Wales Police as part of the Early Action Together programme and representatives from Health and Education. The aim of our early help offer is to ensure that children and young people are able to access the right support at the right time, from the right service to prevent escalation of need. We have continued to offer Domestic Abuse training to our staff. More than 1,000 members of staff have completed our training on Domestic Abuse awareness training and we have developed a new draft Special Leave policy for staff who have suffered from Domestic Abuse

**Case Example (2) Child and Family Early Help Hubs launched in April 2020**

Early Help Hubs have been implemented in an interim format from 1st April 2020. to strengthen capacity and minimise the level of statutory intervention needed. There are now five co-located, multi-agency hubs, making use of the Signs of Wellbeing framework. The offer involves a multi-agency 'what matters' conversations at the front-door. The enhanced service also incorporates:

- Integrated Safeguarding Hub
- Access to YOS Services to improve behaviours and prevent family breakdown
- Use of multi-agency panels supporting preventative approaches

These Hubs strengthen partnership links to support joined up working and better step-down arrangements. The services is trialling the use and development of electronic 'auto-bot' responses to support queries around domestic abuse. Overall demand at social services social services front door (IIAA) is reduced as demand is re-directed to Early Help Hubs.

#### 2.4.5 Work identified for year ahead:

- To ensure quality audits on cases are completed within child and family and adult services, as well involving leads from all Council Departments within the next Section 135 audit cycle.

### 2.5 Safe Partnerships

**2.5.1 Working in partnership** Only by working together with citizens, and other agencies, can we support children, their parents, carers and vulnerable adults to achieve the best possible outcomes. Collaboration is vital in promoting child, young person, adult and older adult safety and well-being. Good interagency, partnership, and multi-disciplinary working, is now firmly embedded within Swansea Council approaches to practice, and our work with other organisations is seen as central our robust, effective corporate safeguarding arrangements.

**2.5.2 Covid Partnerships - Swansea Council and the West Glamorgan Regional Community Silver Command Group** has overseen a coordinated, regional response to the Covid-19 crisis over the past 18 months. Many staff regionally and locally within the Council have volunteered for new roles and key tasks to meet the range of challenges, often working in partnership with colleagues from the Local Authorities, Swansea Bay University Health Board and the third sector. Colleagues from building services have supported Social Services to ensure provision of the PPE required for health and social care staff in providing direct care to people living in their own homes, or in care homes. Corporate colleagues have worked with social services to ensure routine testing of care and support staff, and within Contact & Tracing, A large number of staff from across the Council have been involved in providing direct support to our most vulnerable citizens on a local basis, within communities.

#### 2.5.3 Safer Swansea strategy

Harm is sometimes more related to place than people, and this also requires a more joined up approach. Harm, exploitation or victimisation may target or impact on the most vulnerable in our communities and the Council has access a range of approaches from prevention, duty to report, and possible criminal investigation. Swansea Housing Service are working in partnership with social services, the police, community safety and other housing providers to safeguard the vulnerable by highlighting issues, concerns and taking necessary action as asset out in our Safer Swansea Strategy 2018-21.

**2.5.3a Hate Crime** - the prevention and reduction of Hate Crime and Community Tension Monitoring is one the five strategic priorities identified, which aims to prevent Hate Crime, support victims and improve a multi-agency responses to the problem. Our Hate Crime Stakeholder Action Plan' continues



to be managed and monitored through the Hate Crime Stakeholder Group and the Safer Swansea Partnership Steering Group.

**2.5.3b Victim Support-** the Council continued to support Hate Crime awareness week in October 2020 and signed up to Victim Support's Charter. The Charter sets out in detail the rights of victims, and the commitments of organisations such as the Council in tackling Hate Crime, providing support and information for victims, and raising awareness of Hate Crime.

**2.5.3c PREVENT** Our PREVENT strategy and interventions programme target support to vulnerable individuals who may be at risk of radicalisation or being drawn into extremism. This is managed through a multi-agency (channel) partnership made up of organisations that have a legislative duty under the Counter Terrorism Act 2015

**2.5.4 Regional Safeguarding** - Swansea Council is working to ensure there is effective regional safeguarding board arrangements, established for the new West Glamorgan region, to replace the Western Bay boards. The Board will have a clear business plan setting out objectives and shared accountability across a range of partners, with targeted campaigns, promoting preventative approaches, performance reporting and learning lessons from practice reviews

**2.5.5 Case Examples- some other examples of safe partnerships working** across the Council:

### **Case Example (1) Education**

Within Education, there is a rolling programme of child protection and safeguarding training delivered to all staff and school governors. There is a dedicated Education Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer. Safeguarding Audit visits are carried out with schools being re-visited on a three year rolling programme basis. Each school has a completed analysis of the visit with an action plan of issues that are identified in the visit. Through effective monitoring, education can provide a regular report on Education Safeguarding issues. Education and social services are now jointly delivering Level 2 Safeguarding Child/Protection training

### **Case Example (2) Mayhill Response**

Whilst there is an independent review taking place, Multi agency teams across adult and children's services, Tackling poverty, Local Area Coordinators have worked tirelessly alongside Place workers to provide a supportive, community based response to the recent Mayhill Incident.

This work takes place alongside consideration of the unexpected death of a young adult under 21, the practice review involving partner agencies is already looking at potential improvements to practice

**2.5.6 Work identified for year ahead:**

- To invite leads in all service areas outside of social services to discuss how they review safe practice in their areas to help inform further improvements, and in readiness for next Section 135 audit.

**2.6 Safe Voice**

**2.6.1 Making safeguarding personal** – In all of the above examples of service developments and safe practice, Swansea is aiming to ensure individuals have a “safe voice” on safeguarding matters by providing stronger voice, meaningful control over the support they receive and remove any barriers to achieving their wellbeing outcomes.

**2.6.2 Quality Assurance-** Child and Family Services are implementing a quality assurance framework that articulates the high standards of service we expect in all work with children and young people Recognising that we need to focus on understanding the lived experience of our children, young people and families who receive a service. To achieve this, Child and Family Services are expanding how we get information both qualitative and quantitative to help identify improvements.

For example, by identifying best practice through our child protection and crisis work, using appreciative enquiries with children and families This framework is designed to ensure that all our safeguarding action is proportionate and timely, and that we built a culture committed to continual learning, checking by audits and professional development. Similar approaches are also taken place in Adult Services.

**2.6.3 Looked after children**

Children and Young People are benefitting from the work of the Safe LAC Reduction Operational Group (SLOG) and the staff that support the group's work. Everyone involved has been praised by the Head of Service, POs and Senior Management Team as it has achieved a month on month reduction in the LAC population since July 2020. This programme was set up last year to enable a whole service approach to getting children back with their families or otherwise achieving genuine permanence, safety and security until they reach adulthood. It was in response to escalating LAC numbers. The SLOG comprises of members from Permanence, SQU, SCP, FAFFT, Bays+ and has the facility to call in additional expertise as and when needed. It provides a unique forum of experts to support practitioners to address barriers and obstacles to support the development of care and support plans that can achieve permanence for our looked after children.

## 2.6.4 Case Examples

**Case Example (1) – Best life project** Corporate Parenting Board and Care Experienced Children and Young People (CYP) have recently developed what the key areas of a best life are, the main areas for development for each area, and who is going to take accountability for improving services around those themes. The next stage will be sub-groups unpicking the “hows” and reporting back to our care experienced population what we have done, what difference they should see and what we haven’t been able to do

### **Case Example (2) - Voice & Control –Children and Young People**

Covid-19 has meant new national guidance to staff, and huge challenges posed by the lockdown period have, at the same time, created opportunities to adapt and improve ways of working.

These themes are reflected within the Big Conversation.

Moving to digital platforms presented challenges for county-wide, and cross-county working with large numbers of children and young people. This period has enabled dialogue to review how this is facilitated in the future, e.g. how operations for listening to children and young people, and to ensure the policies refined to ensure they are fit for purpose and encompass new ways of working, e.g. Children’s Rights Scheme

## 2.6.5 Work identified for year ahead:

- Checking out how Swansea is ‘Making safeguarding personal’ by carrying out case audits within Quality Assurance framework
- Development of advocacy offer and independent support to promote citizen rights and best interest decision within safeguarding and deprivation of liberty safeguards
- Working within families, communities and schools to promote safeguarding awareness

## 2.7 Delivering Safe Performance

The aim of this work area is to maintain a performance framework to support a full range of improvement activities in relation to Corporate Safeguarding.

### 2.7.1 Performance Framework

Swansea Council has a strong corporate performance framework to drive through continuous improvement. Our approach to safeguarding makes full use of a range of embedded approaches:

- Corporate Plan / Annual Review of Performance against each wellbeing objective
- Service Planning
- Corporate Risk Management
- Scrutiny Performance Panels

- National Performance/ Quality standards
- Corporate Performance reporting
- Self-assessment (section 135 audit)

**2.7.2 Annual Review of Performance (ARP)** – a statutory requirement that requires the Council to look in detail about how the Council is taking steps to achieve each of the corporate priorities, including safeguarding people from harm, and the progress made. Latest ARP is being finalised and the section on safeguarding covers a broader range of corporate activities than this

**2.7.3 Service Planning** - Service Planning is carried out annually by all Heads of Services. Service Plans are expected to demonstrate links to corporate priorities, and policy commitments, including safeguarding people from harm.

**2.7.4 Corporate Risk Management**- safeguarding is identified as a corporate risk (Risk id 153), and detailed within the new corporate risk register, with actions to mitigate reviewed monthly, within Social Services Finance and Performance Monitoring meetings, and updated. As mentioned earlier, Internal audit has a work programme, aligned to the work of the. Governance and Audit Committee, to include consideration of areas such as corporate risk management and corporate governance.

**2.7.5 Role of Scrutiny Performance Panels**

Child and Family Services and Adults Scrutiny Performance Panels receive and give robust consideration to regular performance reports from their respective service areas including safeguarding and protection work, and each panels has a Work Programme to look in more depth on key issues.

**2.7.6 Corporate Performance Reporting** - Corporate Management Team receives regular reports on key performance measure and operational issues concerning safeguarding children and adults. The full Corporate Performance Management Annual Monitoring Report 2020/2021, including results within the section on Safeguarding, was presented to Cabinet in July this year.

**2.7.7 National Social Services Performance Framework**

The committee are advised that Welsh Government are implementing changes to the Quality Standards (Key Performance Indicators) which provide the basic benchmark of performance for local authorities who deliver care and support to the people of Wales.

**2.7.8 Other areas to note:**

**2.7.8a Director of Social Services Annual Report**- this report - a statutory requirement - sets out how Swansea Council is safeguarding and protecting

citizens through its social services and wellbeing functions, and presented to Council by the Director.

**2.7.8b Section 135 Audit Summary of Findings** – improvements identified from this year's S135 audit are incorporated into a revised work programme (**see Appendix C-**). Task groups, already established to support Swansea approach, are to take the programme forward and report progress cycle for task group leads to the Corporate Safeguarding group

**2.7.8c Learning Lessons** – Swansea has to seek to continuously improve practice and policy by apply the key learning points as they apply from Regional Child Practice and Adult Practice Reviews. The aim is that the potential improvements will be brought to the Corporate Safeguarding group and, where necessary, incorporated into the work programme.

### **2.7.9 Work identified for year ahead**

- To incorporate findings from the Section 135 audit into future annual reports
- To review set corporate performance indicators in readiness for reporting in 2022-23

### **Appendices:**

- Appendix A. - Corporate Safeguarding Governance arrangements**
- Appendix B. - Terms of Reference for Corporate Safeguarding group**
- Appendix C. - Work programme –Corporate Safeguarding group**
- Appendix D. - Swansea Council's Named Safeguarding persons**

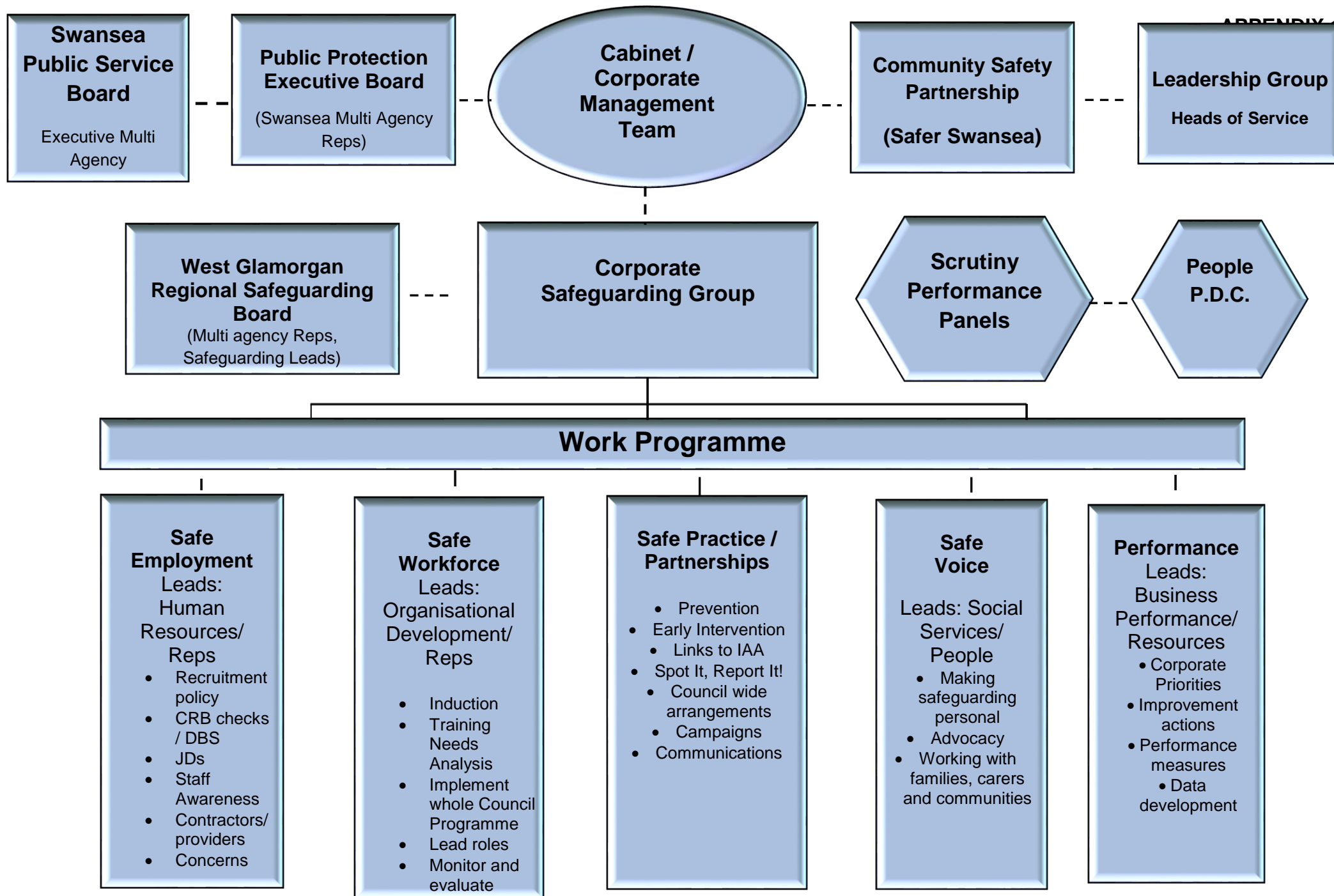


Figure 2. Safe Governance: Current structure (August 2021)

## Appendix B. Terms of Reference for Corporate Safeguarding group



### Corporate Safeguarding Group TERMS OF REFERENCE v1 July 2018

#### 1. PURPOSE

Swansea Council's Corporate Safeguarding Group is the management and leadership group overseeing implementation of Corporate Safeguarding policy. The group provides 'safe governance' as set out in the policy, and, through an agreed work programme, aims to ensure that all Council service areas are operating effectively within this policy with robust safeguarding arrangement in place.

#### 2. FUNCTIONS / RESPONSIBILITIES

Swansea Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy aims to protect the most vulnerable people in our communities, so it is vitally important that all staff, services and partner organisations are aware of how all the work of the Council contributes to safeguarding people in Swansea, and what is expected of them individually and collectively.

The Corporate safeguarding group will lead and co-ordinate a work programme to embed 'everybody's business' approach to corporate safeguarding, and to deliver actions in support of the Council's the Council's strategic objectives and corporate priorities, in particular our safeguarding vulnerable people in Swansea.

The group also supports delivery of national and local outcomes, and promotes ways of working under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, and this includes a focus on prevention and collaboration.

To enable a diverse range of statutory partners, agencies and groups to work together effectively to deliver the agreed programme of work

This group, through a range of activities set out in the work programme, can give assurances to members of the public, service users, councillors, employees and people working on behalf of the Council that there are clear arrangements in place to safeguard and protect children and adults:

- statutory functions of safeguarding adults and children are carried out in line with guidance and Part 7 Code of Practice within the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.
- compliance in all areas of safeguarding policy, and in particular mandatory training of staff and elected members, and the duty to report any safeguarding concerns about vulnerable adults and children, and to investigate concerns as necessary.
- service designated safeguarding leads can give and account for the delivery of the Councils policy and corporate priority outcomes in relation to safeguarding to this group and to other management meetings
- escalating trends, concerns or issues to Safeguarding Boards or other relevant Boards regionally or locally

The current work programme is agreed and implemented in support of these objectives

### 3. MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

**Frequency:** Quarterly

**Chair:** David Howes – Director of Social Services, Swansea Council

Mark Child - Cabinet Member for Care, Health and Ageing Well is invited to attend all meetings.

Meetings will be supported and administered by business support, People Hub

Agenda is distributed to members at least 3 working days prior to the meeting.

An action log of each meeting is distributed to all leads/ group members, and actions to be completed are reviewed at every meeting.

Any requests for additional meetings or specific agenda items can be addressed to the Chair.

### 4. MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Steering Group comprises of safeguarding lead officers (social services), cabinet member, designated safeguarding lead officer (all service areas) and business support.

A safeguarding contact list is kept up to date by business support, as this resource is made available via Staff Intranet pages, and via a link within the relevant eLearning courses.

### 5. ATTENDANCE/DEPUTISING ARRANGEMENTS

Leads are obliged to attend regularly, and/or to identify and ensure attendance of an appropriately senior representative in their absence.



## **6. TASK GROUPS**

The Corporate Safeguarding Group has a work programme, in which task groups have been set up deliver on several policy areas, and to report on progress achieved:

- Safe Employment
- Safe Training
- Safe Practice / Safe Partnerships combines
- Safe Voice
- Safe Performance

## **7. Governance**

The Corporate Safeguarding group reports and accountable to Corporate Management Team.

A full governance structure is included in the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy.

## Appendix C: CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING GROUP WORK PROGRAMME/ WORK GROUPS (2020/21)

WORK GROUP	AIM OF GROUP	SCOPE OF WORK
<b>1. Safe Employment</b> Lead Officer: Nicola Reid	To ensure safe employment practices are in place to safeguard vulnerable children and adults.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Updating safeguarding elements within Council recruitment policy and staff handbook.</li> <li>2. Ensure DBS checks are undertaken for roles that have identified as required and review of DBS processes/policies – who reviews decision on DBS risk assessments and the need for this.</li> <li>3. Safeguarding roles and responsibilities are reflected with all Job Descriptions</li> <li>4. For all contractors to confirm that they comply with Swansea Council Safeguarding Policies and their staff or their sub-contractors staff are aware of their responsibilities and duties and when required provided or able to provide safeguarding awareness raising and training.</li> </ol>
<b>2. Safe Workforce</b> Lead Officer: Teresa Mylan Rees	To ensure that all Staff, Elected Members across SC directorates as well as our Foster Carers, Direct payment PA's and commissioned providers are trained/qualified to the appropriate level and therefore aware of their responsibilities and duties to report regarding the safeguarding of Adults and Children. To ensure SC has a register of Safeguarding leads in each area and that each area has a Named Safeguarding person (NSP).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identification of Named Safeguarding person role within each service and development of system within Safe workforce group to keep this updated</li> <li>2. Named Safeguarding person (NSP) training to be designed and delivered across Adult and Child and Family Services Named Safeguarding Person training (children) and named safeguarding person training (Adults), Safeguarding Adults Non Criminal Investigation Training Level 4</li> <li>3. Insuring all Council Staff know their safeguarding responsibilities through the Induction Process via corporate induction and managers across directorates and teams. Safeguarding training provides staff with guidance on how to raise concerns through existing policies and procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Corporate Induction</li> <li>o Social Services</li> <li>o Housing</li> <li>o Elected Members</li> <li>o Education</li> <li>o Place</li> <li>o Resources</li> </ul> Set up a process and system to enable a consistent approach to collate and monitor mandatory safeguarding training and associated </li> </ol>

## APPENDIX 1

Safe Workforce cont.		<p>training relating to statutory reporting responsibilities e.g. VAWDASV group 1 (face to face or e-learning), Modern slavery awareness.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Carry out training needs analysis within service to ensure all service area managers and employees receive the appropriate level of safeguarding e-learning or face to face corporate mandatory training ,( level 2 child protection/safeguarding, level 2 safeguarding adults, level 3 child protection/safeguarding, level 3 safeguarding adults)</li> <li>5. All Council elected members undertake safeguarding training / e-learning</li> <li>6. Reporting on regional safeguarding developments / safeguarding campaigns – National Safeguarding Week, CSE Day, Facilitation of practice learning events for relevant professional</li> <li>7. Ensure that all training reflects current legislative and policy objectives at a national, regional and local levels</li> <li>8. To have a realistic and achievable target for staff completion of mandatory safeguarding training</li> </ol>
<b>3. Safe Practice &amp; Safe Partnerships</b> Lead Officer: Damian Rees	Ensure safe practice across Swansea in respect of responding and reporting to safeguarding matters	S.135 Compliance audit to be completed and include adult services as well as all Council Departments
<b>4. Safe Voice</b> Lead Officer: Ffion Larsen	Ensure individuals have a “safe voice” on safeguarding matters by providing stronger voice, real control over the support they receive and remove any barriers to achieving their wellbeing outcomes. Also ensure that individuals feel that they are equal partners in the process and that intervention is meaningful. There will be focus on early intervention to prevent needs escalating	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure that Covid 19 changes in practices and policies focuses on safeguarding and the voice of the individual.</li> <li>2. Ensure that every conversation matters by working to ensure meaningful interventions at every level</li> <li>3. Provide accessible information to support participation and understanding.</li> <li>4. Collaborative Communication: embed a person centred approach Adult SW practice, including safeguarding, by placing the individual central to the safeguarding. Ensuring needs, goals and outcomes are captured.</li> <li>5. Emphasis of making safeguarding personal in adult services to ensure the process is meaningful for individuals with emphasis on prevention and early intervention.</li> <li>6. Develop tools for practitioners to support a person centred approach to collaborative communication and safeguarding.</li> <li>7. Focus on qualitative reporting on outcomes and well as qualitative measures. Develop an auditing and quality assurance framework</li> <li>8. Ensure that individuals are aware of their rights and their human rights</li> <li>9. Educate partners on the need to be person centred</li> </ol>

## APPENDIX 1

<b>5. Safe Performance</b> Lead Officer: Simon Jones	To develop and implement a performance framework to cover full range of improvement activities in relation to Corporate Safeguarding	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Framework of performance / improvement activities linked to Corporate safeguarding (Golden thread)</li><li>2. Complete the Annual review of Performance – Corporate Plan/ Annual Report</li><li>3. Update and publish latest version of Corporate Safeguarding Policy</li><li>4. Support data development in the reporting of suite of key performance measures to Senior Managers/ Elected Members</li><li>5. Regulatory compliance for corporate safeguarding arrangements, backed by self- assessment / audit cycle</li></ol>
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## APPENDIX D. LIST OF NAMED SAFEGUARDING PERSONS AND LEADS

**Safeguarding Contacts 2021**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Safeguarding designated lead</b>	<b>Safeguarding contact</b>
Social Services (Child and Family)	Damian Rees – Principal Officer (Safeguarding Performance Quality)	Damian Rees – Principal Officer (Safeguarding Performance Quality)
Social Services (Adults)	Ffion Larsen – Principal Officer (Safeguarding & Prevention)	Ffion Larsen – Principal Officer (Safeguarding & Prevention)
Poverty and Prevention	Sue Peraj – Team Around the Family Manager	Sue Peraj – Team Around the Family Manager
Education	Kate Phillips – Head of School Support Unit	Lisa Collins – Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer
Education – Lifelong Learning	Kay Piper - Lifelong Learning Service Operations Team Leader	Kay Piper - Lifelong Learning Service Operations Team Leader
Housing Services & Public Protection	Jane Harries – Landlord Services Manager	Jane Harries – Landlord Services Manager
Cultural Services	Karen Davies – Principal Librarian	Karen Davies – Principal Librarian David Jones – Sport and Health Manager Joanna Furber – Literature Officer
Highways and Transport	Cath Swain – Integrated Transport Unit Manager	Cath Swain – Integrated Transport Unit Manager
Building Services	Malcolm Jones – Adaptations and Voids Senior Manager	Malcolm Jones – Adaptations and Voids Senior Manager
Waste Management & Parks	Rebecca Tribe – Recycling Team Supervisor	Rebecca Tribe – Recycling Team Supervisor

Service	Safeguarding designated lead	Safeguarding contact
Economic Regeneration & Planning	Phillip Holmes – Head of Planning & City Regeneration	Phillip Holmes – Head of Planning & City Regeneration
Legal, Democratic Services & Business Intelligence	Lucy Moore – Directorate Lawyer	Lucy Moore – Directorate Lawyer
Communication & Customer Engagement	Liz Edmonds – Chief Executive's Support Officer	Lee Wenham – Head of Communications & Marketing
Information & Business Change	Jo Harley – Head of Service	Sarah Caulkin – Director (Resources)
Financial & Performance Services	Ben Smith – Chief Finance Officer	Ben Smith – Chief Finance Officer
HR & Organisational Development	Nicola Reid – Principal HR&OD Business Partner	Nicola Reid – Principal HR&OD Business Partner
Commercial Services	Lee Morgan – Category Manager	Lee Morgan – Category Manager

### **Corporate Safeguarding Champion - Councillor Mark Child**

### **Social Services Information, Advice and Assistance**

Adult Safeguarding enquiries via CAP:

01792 636854  
or email:

[Adult.safeguarding@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:Adult.safeguarding@swansea.gov.uk)

Child and Family Services (Information, Advice and Assistance) 01792 635700

[access.information@swansea.gov.uk](mailto:access.information@swansea.gov.uk)

Opening Hours:

8.30am - 5.00pm Monday to Thursday

8.30am - 4.30pm Friday.

The Emergency Duty Team is available outside normal working hours on 01792 775501.

In an emergency where an adult or child may be at immediate risk of harm please contact 999