



Appendix A Annual Report – Corporate Safeguarding 2021/22

Report of the Director of Social Services & Cabinet Member – Care 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 2021/22.
- 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 (2022-23). 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 a public duty to ‘Spot it, Report it!’, and the arrangements are ensuring everyone is clear about how we work together in response to shared concerns
- 1.4 **Safeguarding our most vulnerable people** – The Council, and Social Services and Education, in particular, have faced some major challenges the past two years through the Covid-19 pandemic, and now more recently the cost-of-living crisis.
- 1.5 **Director Of Social Services Annual Report 2021/22**
As a statutory requirement, the Council must have the opportunity to consider the Director of Social Services Annual Report. The latest report contains summary information about activity performance and service developments
[09 2 of 3 - Appendix A.DirectorofSocialServicesAnnualReport2021-22 \(swansea.gov.uk\)](#)

- 1.6 **Corporate Safeguarding Policy** – Swansea Council’s recently 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"**. [Corporate Safeguarding Policy - Swansea](#)
- 1.7 **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/>
- 1.8 **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!”

- 1.9 **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. Clearly 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

- 1.10 **Self-Assessment (section 135 Audit)**-. Only 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. In last year’s report we undertook to incorporate findings from the Self-Assessment (section 135) audit into future annual reports.

1.11 **Corporate Safeguarding Annual Reporting –**

This corporate safeguarding annual report, with the accompanying appendices, intends to act as a broad summary of the ranger of corporate safeguarding activities and as a record of the Council’s improvement journey towards a fully corporate approach to safeguarding our most vulnerable people from harm, which applies across the whole Council.

Appended to this report are:

- **Appendix 1.** Corporate Safeguarding Governance chart
- **Appendix 2.** Management Action Plan

2. Activities and progress made this year

This next section considers progress within in the seven key areas of activity as set out in the Swansea model (Fig. 1), using the findings from this year's self-assessment carried out by safeguarding leads within **15** of the Council's service areas (2020 = 8).

2.1 Safe Governance

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.

2.1.1 Corporate Leadership - In Swansea, we demonstrate 'safe' leadership by having a clear policy framework, effective structures, lead roles across the whole Council and most of all by taking action as and when needed. Safe governance operates across the whole Council and within all structures, including Cabinet, Corporate Management Team, scrutiny boards, corporate policy development and partnership structures (see Appendix 1).

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).

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, named safeguarding officers are there 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 Steering 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 Care Services –Cllr. Louise Gibbard.

2.1.5 **Scrutiny Performance Panels** - Child and Family Services Scrutiny Performance Panel receives the Monthly Child and Family Services Performance report, and a work programme looking in more depth at key issues. Similarly, Adult Services Scrutiny Performance Panel receives the Monthly Adult Services performance report and 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-report-2021-22-final.pdf](#)

2.1.7 **Safeguarding People and Tackling Poverty Corporate Development Committee** has been reconstituted to support the delivery on Council's corporate priorities and policy commitments. Chaired by Cllr Ceri Evans, the Committee has put together a work programme to support our work with the most vulnerable people

2.1.8 **Recent finding-** from Estyn's Inspection report on Education in Swansea (June 2022) endorses the Council's approach to corporate safeguarding, noting strong leadership, a positive culture and collaboration between service areas (p16-17). [Inspection report City and County of Swansea 2022 \(gov.wales\)](#)

2.1.9 **Corporate Parenting**
When a child has experience of care, they become 'looked after' by a local authority under a Care Order, the council becomes a 'corporate parent' with legal and moral responsibility for safeguarding that child's welfare and rights. Swansea's Corporate Parenting Board is a group of councillors who have a lead role in promoting the role of corporate parenting within and outside the local authority and additional formal responsibilities relating to corporate parenting. <https://staffnet.swansea.gov.uk/corporateparenting>

2.1.10 **Other**
National Safeguarding Week: West Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Board and Swansea Council support a range of campaigns and learning events throughout the year, and with focused activities during National

Safeguarding Week, this year taking place between 14th - 18th November 2022.

Housing & Public Health Safeguarding group

Housing and Public Health hold own safeguarding group meetings to share good practice, discuss difficult, sensitive cases, training opportunities etc

2.2 Safe Employment

Safe employment is a set of corporate practices that help make sure our staff and volunteers are suitable to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. It's a vital part of creating a safe and positive environment and making a commitment to keep children safe from harm. 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 also addressed failings identified by the Bichard Inquiry (2004). Safe employment is a continuing process of policy and practice improvement, reaching across all Council Services, into business or organisations who carry out work or services, on the Council's behalf, and that may involve contact with vulnerable children or adults

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. Work is underway on reviewing and updating safeguarding elements within Council recruitment policy and staff handbook

2.2.2 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)-

We must ensure DBS checks are undertaken for all roles that have identified as needing one. The DBS Policy has recently been reviewed and updated and is awaiting final agreement. Alongside this, work is underway reviewing the procedures, guidance and standard letters for Managers/Schools. Work in this area is carried out within the Council by a dedicated DBS service centre, to assist Council Headteachers, School Governors, and Managers in making safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children. Safeguarding policy expects that job requirements for all new starters, for each position to be filled, are risk assessed to ensure a DBS check is completed where a requirement has been identified.

A subgroup is also looking at improvements for ensuring DBS checks for contractors are completed in line with new DBS Policy and Risk Assessment.

2.2.3 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. Lists of renewals and overdue DBS are sent to Heads of Service, every month reports and copied to Human Resources to allow them to raise any queries/issues directly with the business areas and to School Challenge Advisors.

2.2.4 Volunteers – We have been working with Swansea Council for Voluntary Service to complete our own corporate volunteer recruitment guidance Volunteer starter forms have been updated to include corporate safeguarding duties and expectations. Safeguarding People and Tackling Poverty Corporate Development Committee are supporting work on a broader Council strategy for volunteering building on the success of the community response to the pandemic. We must ensure that volunteers can access the appropriate level of safeguarding training.

2.2.5 Work identified for year ahead:

- To complete work on updating and finalising policies relating to recruitment and selection, DBS checks and volunteers, to reflect the latest corporate safeguarding policy.
- To ensure corporate safeguarding policy, responsibilities and expectations are reflected in all work commissioned or contracted on the Council's behalf

2.3 Safe Workforce

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. All Council workers, and any individual, business or organisation we commission work from, have a vital role in ensuring that we work closely together to protect children and adults at risk from abuse or neglect through, both, responses to specific situations through a duty to report, and, also, by putting in place broader prevention measures.

2.3.1 Workforce Strategy

Effective workforce planning is vital to ensure appropriate numbers of staff, with the right skills, experience and professional competencies are available to deliver safe, high quality care support and wellbeing services to citizens.

A new Council-wide workforce strategy has been consulted upon, for approval later this year. [Workforce Strategy 2022-2027](#)

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

2.3.3 Communications -

All Council staff are made aware of their duty to report concerns, through Staff Handbook. Council employees have access to Safeguarding information and resources via StaffNet: <https://staffnet.swansea.gov.uk/safeguarding> Each service area through their named safeguarding person/ representative has developed their own approach to cascading information to promote safeguarding awareness.

For example: Waste, Parks and Cleansing

As well as induction and face to face training, the safeguarding rep. uses creative ways to promote safeguarding awareness amongst a dispersed workforce e.g. posters, monthly newsletter

2.3.4 Named Safeguarding Persons – all Council staff are expected to be aware of the Named Safeguarding Persons in their respective service area. This group of trained 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.

[Named safeguarding persons - Staff portal \(swansea.gov.uk\)](https://staffnet.swansea.gov.uk/safeguarding)

2.3.5 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 Persons Lead Training** – this new 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 delivered this year.
- 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 e-learning face-to-face sessions to meet the range of needs

2.3.6- 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.

2.3.7 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.

2.3.8 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 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 April 2023.

2.3.9 Work identified for year ahead:

- Development of management information: employee / elected member compliance in completion of mandatory training
- Ensure there are named safeguarding officers in each service area, and representation 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

Safeguarding practice is expected to be timely and effective, delivered 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.

2.4.1 **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 Duty to Report

A concern may involve any child or young person under the age 18 years old or a vulnerable adult. There is a statutory duty places on all Council workers and elected members to report their concern regardless of whether the child or adult is living permanently in the Swansea area or not. If you think, there are child protection concerns, then you should seek immediate advice from your safeguarding lead, or from the Child and Family Service Single Point of Contact. Similarly, there is a duty to report any concerns about an adult at risk, and for a local Authority to make enquiries if it has reasonable cause to suspect that a person within its area (whether or not ordinarily resident there) is an 'adult at risk'.

2.4.3 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.

2.4.4 How we implement Safe Practice in Swansea

2.4.4a. 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..

2.4.4b. Work with Children, Young People and Families

<https://staffnet.swansea.gov.uk/cfstrainingsupportypathome>

Child and Family Services has set out a new strategy to support children and young people to live safely at home with their family.

The strategy aims to achieve the Child and Family Services vision (2021): 'Doing what matters to make things better for children, young people and families'. By focusing on improving safe practice:

- Using a Signs of Safety/Wellbeing model to work in partnership and collaboration, to understand what matters and explore strengths and risks to stabilise and strengthen a child and family's situation.
- Working with children, young people and families to help them identify their needs and the right support for them.

- Wherever possible, ensuring children can live in permanent homes with their parents or wider family network, with the necessary support, but under an arrangement where those caring for them feel enabled and able to meet their children's needs, and exercise their parental responsibility.
- Improving outcomes for looked after children in our care and strive to achieve genuine permanence and security for those children, until at least they reach adulthood.
- Ensuring practitioners have access to a forum of experts who can support them to address barriers and obstacles when progressing children's cases towards achieving permanence.

Also, Continuum of Need [Getting the right response to need - Staff portal \(swansea.gov.uk\)](https://www.swansea.gov.uk)

Following consultation with a number of our partner organisations the Continuum of Need - Indicators for Support document is now completed and ready to be used as a guide to professional decision making within Child and Family Services, and in ensuring a proportionate response to need

2.4.4c. **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.

2.4.4d. **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.

2.4.4e. Collaborative Communication

A 'What matters to you' conversation is now central to how we work, across social services. 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.

2.4.4f. 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.

2.4.4g. 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.

2.4.5 Capturing stories of good practice

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 must target our efforts are to where there is significant risk of harm and abuse and ensure we are working in a timely way, with the vulnerable person at the centre.

By working in new ways, the Council is in a stronger position to focus resources on more preventative and contextual approaches. Child and Family Services places practice excellence at the centre of our work with the most vulnerable children

<https://staffnet.swansea.gov.uk/cfssafeguarding>

Adult Services are using collaborative communication and narrative based approaches to help professionals and service users reflect together on their experiences, the outcomes achieved and what could be done better.

<https://staffnet.swansea.gov.uk/collabcommscaseexample>

2.4.6 Work identified for year ahead:

- To implement quality assurance frameworks within child and family and adult services
- To undertake next self-assessment (Section 135 audit) cycle, involving leads from all Council Departments

2.5 Safe Partnerships

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.

- 2.5.1 **Covid response** - Swansea Council and the West Glamorgan Regional Partnership has overseen a coordinated, regional response to the Covid-19 crisis over the past two and a half years. During this time resources have been deployed quickly to meet local need, service have transformed themselves and new ways of working have been discovered. 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. The Director of Social Services has provided regular weekly briefings to staff during this challenging period: [Director's Weekly Social Services Briefing including Covid-19 - Staff portal \(swansea.gov.uk\)](#)

2.5.2 **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.

2.5.2a **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 our multi-agency response 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.

2.5.2b **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.

2.5.2c **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

2.5.3 **Working with contractors and suppliers**- - We expect that all contractors to confirm that they comply with Swansea Council corporate safeguarding policy, their staff and/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. We carry out a suitability questionnaire to ensure that all expectations, in relation to safeguarding, are fully understood. We have also 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 this is annexed to the contract. Safeguarding clauses are placed in all social care contracts and inserted into other contracts where there are seen as relevant. All external employees working on our behalf are therefore expected to be made aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and duties; and when required provided with safeguarding awareness raising training.

2.5.4 Work identified for year ahead:

- To continue to embed corporate safeguarding policy procedures into how we work with suppliers in carrying out checks, specifying contracts, building awareness in the wider workforce and contract monitoring

2.6 Safe Voice

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.

2.6.1 Making safeguarding personal – In all, of the above, 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- Adult Services and Child and Family Services are implementing a quality assurance framework that articulates the high standards of service we expect in all work with vulnerable children and adults. Recognising that we need to focus on understanding the lived experience of those 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.

2.6.3 Advocacy

Both Child and Family and Adult Services are improving the Council’s advocacy offer made to vulnerable children, adults and their families, who can now access Independent Professional Advocacy to help ensure that they are fully informed and engaged in decisions about their care and support and that plans are in their best interests and with regard to safety.

2.6.4 Work identified for year ahead:

- Continued 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. To ensure there is a 'golden thread' running through everything we do. From the corporate objective to safeguard our most vulnerable people, through service planning and extending to help each employee to act on their duty to report.

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 Self Assessment (section 135) summary of findings – improvements identified from this year's S135 audit are incorporated into a revised work programme. 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

2.7.8b Internal Audit- working on behalf of the Governance and Audit Committee our own internal audit team has recently carried out a recent review of the Council's Corporate Safeguarding 2022/23, and their final report has just been published (September 2022). The overall assurance given within the scope of the review is 'High'. The report gives two recommendations to be incorporated into a Management Action Plan see appendix 2:

2.7.9 Work identified for year ahead

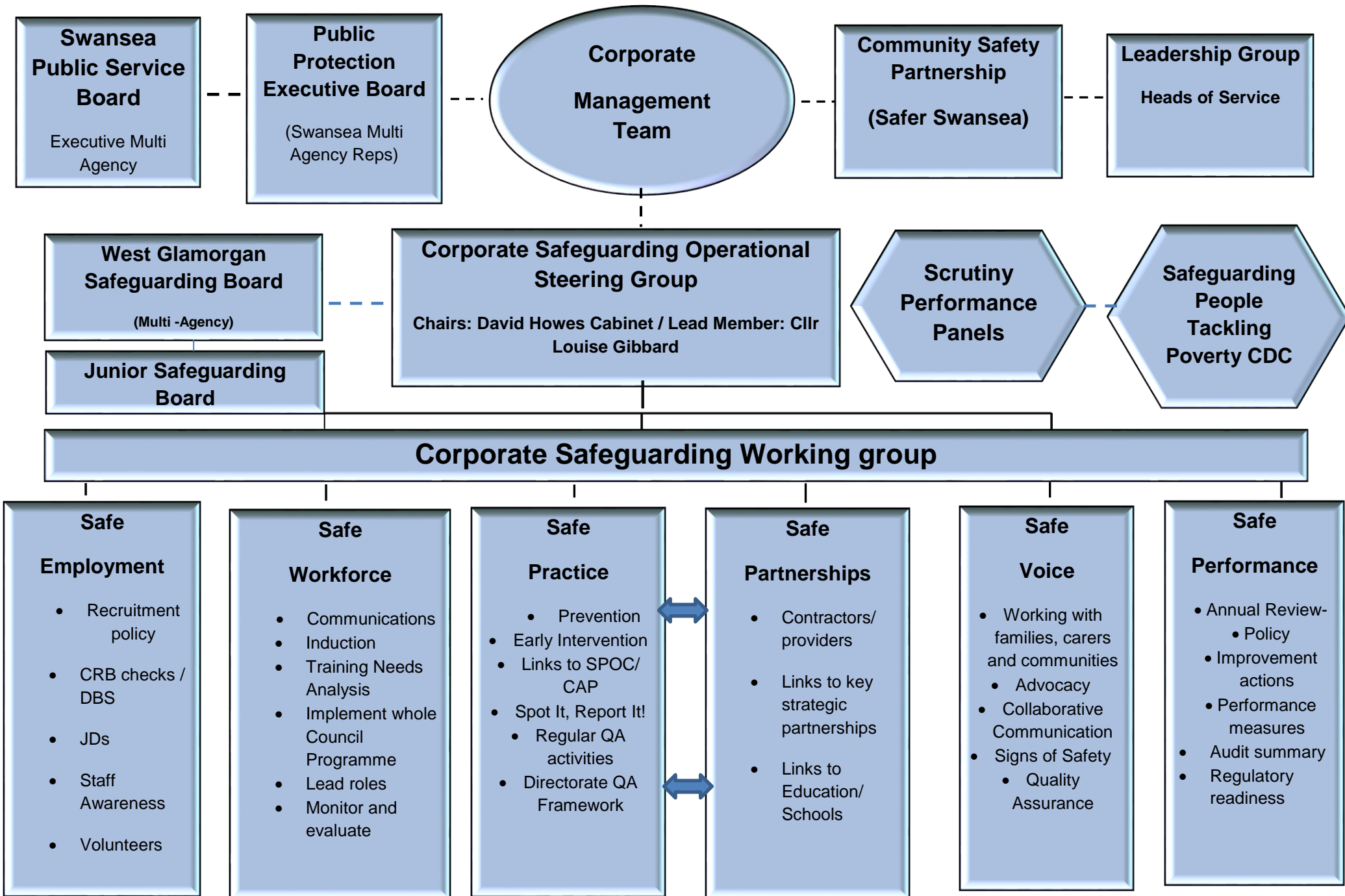
- To review performance framework for corporate safeguarding and agree set of measures for 2023/24

Appendices:

Appendix 1. CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING GOVERNANCE CHART

Appendix 2. MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING 2022/23

Appendix 1. Corporate Safeguarding Governance Chart (updated June 2022)



Appendix 2 Management Action Plan in response to Internal Audit report (September 2022)

<p align="center">CITY & COUNTY OF SWANSEA MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING 2022/23</p>					
REPORT REF	RECOMMENDATION	CLASS	AGREED ACTION/ COMMENTS	RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION	IMPLEMENTATION DATE
Training					
2.3.5	Work should continue to develop the recording of all employee Safeguarding training on the Council's new Oracle Fusion system.	LR	This is a priority action in the Corporate Safeguarding Group and work is currently underway to ensure that safeguarding training is being accurately recorded in all areas.	Corporate Safeguarding Group	Spring 23
Self-Assessment Questionnaires					
2.5.4	All services should be required to return their self-assessment questionnaires	LR	This will be reviewed at the Corporate Safeguarding Group where membership and representation will be reviewed.	Corporate Safeguarding Group	Spring 23