
Corporate Safeguarding Board – Annual Report 2015/16

Reason for the Report

1. The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutinising the performance of Children’s (Social) Services. This report provides the Members with a copy of the draft Corporate Safeguarding Board’s Annual report 2015/16, prior to its consideration by Cabinet, copy attached at **Appendix A**.

Background

2. This Committee, at its meeting in May 2015, received a copy of Wales Audit Office inspection report dated October 2014, together with a draft copy of the Corporate Safeguarding Governance Report of the Director of Social Services dated 2 July 2015 responding to the inspection recommendations. The Committee welcomed the opportunity to review the draft Cabinet response. Members agreed to write suggesting some amendments to the draft Cabinet report and recommended that the training sessions were crucial and must be completed by June 2015. The Cabinet Member subsequently responded accepting the points raised by the Committee.
3. The Cabinet approved the Corporate Safeguarding Governance Report at its meeting on 15 July 2015. The report set out proposals to strengthen Corporate Safeguarding by establishing a Corporate Safeguarding Board, with an Action Plan copy attached at **Appendix B**, to support the implementation of the recommendations arising from the Welsh Audit Office inspection.

4. The Board was established in March 2015 and the terms of reference were agreed as:
 - i. Ensure the compliance of all Council Directorates with key safeguarding requirements in relation to children and vulnerable adults.
 - ii. Support the Statutory Director of Social Services in the discharge of his/her wider safeguarding duties.
 - iii. Support HR in the delivery of key vetting and barring requirements and workforce development.
 - iv. Provide an Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report, setting out the performance of all Directorates, in relation to vetting and barring, staff safeguarding training, and the operation of front-line services in terms of their effectiveness in identifying and referring safeguarding concerns.
 - v. Review and develop relevant corporate safeguarding standards and policy.
 - vi. Review and develop appropriate corporate safeguarding performance measures.
 - vii. Advise the Head of the Paid Service and recommend relevant action in relation to corporate safeguarding standards and policy.
 - viii. Promote effective cross Directorate safeguarding practice particularly in terms of information sharing and data collection, front-line operational awareness, staff training and wider partnership engagement.
5. The Board has met on four occasions during 2015-16 to work towards implementing the action plan. This report will therefore provide an annual summary of the progress made against the action plan.
6. Council's Standards and Ethics Committee at its meeting on 15 December 2015, considered a draft Protocol to provide guidance and advice to elected Members on their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding vulnerable children and adults. This was subsequently approved by Council in January 2016.

Issues

7. The draft Annual Report, copy attached at **Appendix A**, includes the following elements:
 - a. Welsh Audit Office proposals for improvement
 - b. Governance arrangements
 - c. Key achievements
 - d. Overall evaluation
 - e. Future work programme
 - f. Updated action plan

Evaluation

8. The terms of reference require that the Board advise the Head of the Paid Service and recommend relevant action in relation to corporate safeguarding standards and policy. No recommendations were made during 2015/16, but work throughout the year built towards presenting recommendations on vetting and barring, training and performance early in 2016/17. The Chair and members of the Board rated performance of the board over the year as six out of ten with the prospect of now having sufficient engagement to be able to accelerate performance during 2016/17.

Scope of Scrutiny

9. The scope of this scrutiny is to consider the proposed Draft Corporate Safeguarding Board Annual Report – 2015/16, and assess whether the Board has appropriately addressed the Welsh Audit Offices six recommendations.
10. Members may also wish to review and assess the key achievements for the year, and pass any observations, comments or recommendations to the Chair of the Board, Cllr Hinchey and the Director of Social Services with regards to the progress made.

Way Forward

11. Members are invited to consider the information set out in the attached report at Appendix A and to identify any issues on which they would wish to receive further information.

12. Councillor Graham Hinchey (Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and Performance) has been invited and may make a statement. Tony Young, Director of Social Services have been invited to comment on the Annual report.

Legal Implications

13. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend, but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to the Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

14. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend, but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct

financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to consider the contents of the Corporate Safeguarding Annual report attached at **Appendices A** and provide the Cabinet Member and Director of Social Services with any comments or concerns, prior to the Cabinet's consideration of the report.

DAVID MARR

Interim Monitoring Officer

7 June 2016