
**Local Authority Arrangements to support Safeguarding of Children –
City and County of Cardiff Council**

Reason for the Report

1. This report provides a copy of the Inspection Report resulting from a Follow-up review of corporate arrangements for the safeguarding of children – Cardiff Council undertaken during April 2019 by the Wales Audit Office. A copy of the Review Report is attached at **Appendix A**, together with the a copy of the feedback to the report provided by the Director of Social Services and Audit Manager attached at **Appendix B**.

Issues

2. The review was undertaken to seek assurance that the Council has effective corporate arrangements in place for safeguarding children. They considered the findings of our 2014 report into the Council's arrangements to support safeguarding of children. They also considered the Council's progress in implementing the recommendations contained in the Auditor General's report, 'Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements in Welsh Councils' (July 2015)
3. The review sought to answer the question: Has the Council acted upon the recommendations and proposals for improvement contained in the national and local reports of the Auditor General published in 2014 and 2015.

4. Overall the Wales Audit Office found that: “The Council has been slow to implement a number of our previous recommendations and proposals for improvement, but has made progress in recent months. We have identified some further proposals for improvement to strengthen aspects of the Council’s safeguarding arrangements”.

5. The report provides six proposals for improvement, namely:

P1. The Council should improve its approach to safeguarding training in the following ways:

- Get staff through mandatory safeguarding training more quickly and take forward the work identified by the Corporate Safeguarding Board to collate a percentage breakdown of safeguarding training compliance within each Council Directorate
- Ensure it centrally collates safeguarding training records for those staff and volunteers who have had face to face safeguarding training as well as the e-learning safeguarding training;
- Clarify when mandatory safeguarding training for staff and members needs to be refreshed;
- Consider ways in which it could extend its safeguarding training offer, for example building on the planned Child Sexual Exploitation awareness training to be given to taxi drivers, and to provide safeguarding training to (for example) those working in the night time economy;
- Accelerate the mandatory completion of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 (VAWDASV) training

P2 The Council’s corporate safeguarding intranet pages could be strengthened by providing:

- a link to the Corporate Safeguarding Policy;
- information on the lead officer for corporate safeguarding, the lead member for corporate safeguarding and the Corporate Safeguarding Board; and

- information on where to report concerns or to find out further information.
- P3 The Council should strengthen its Recruitment and Selection Policy in relation to safeguarding and safe recruitment.
- P4 The Council should strengthen its safeguarding contractual provisions by being more explicit about its safeguarding training requirements.
- P5 The Council should ensure it is able to record and monitor volunteer information centrally, including any training records and Disclosure and Barring Service checks for volunteers.
6. The Review Report, also includes an assessment of progress against the recommendations from the Wales Audit Office's 2015 report and an assessment of progress against the proposals for improvement from the 2014 report. The assessments are attached at **Appendix A** pages 5 to 18.
7. A copy of the Council's comments on the draft report, provided by the Director of Social Services and Audit Manager, together with the changes to text that were subsequently made to the draft report, copy attached at **Appendix B**.
8. The directorate has already stated to develop an action plan to address the proposals for improvement and the Director of Social Services will provide a verbal briefing on the work undertaken to date.

Scope of Scrutiny

9. The scope of this scrutiny is to receive the review report from the Wales Audit Officer and to note the proposals for improvement, and to pass on any observations, comments or recommendations to the Director of Children's Services.

Way Forward

10. Ian Phillips, Performance Audit Lead, Wales Audit Office has been invited to present the review report, copy attach at **Appendix A & B** to committee and answer any questions members may have
11. Councillor Chris Weaver Cabinet Member for Finance, Modernisation and Performance, including Corporate Safeguarding; Graham Hinchey (Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Families) has been invited and may make a statement. Claire Marchant, Director of Social Service, Deborah Driffield Interim assistant Director Children's Services and Chris Pyke, Audit Manager, Internal Audit have also been invited to comment on the Audit Report, and to explain the actions being developed to address the areas for improvement.
12. Members are invited to consider the information set out in the attached report and presented to Committee and to identify any issues on which they would wish to receive further information or include in the Committee's forward work programme.

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 report attached at **Appendices A & B** together with any information presented at the meeting, and provide the Cabinet Member, Director of Social Services and Head of Internal Audit with any comments, concerns or recommendations.

Davina Fiore

Director of Governance and Legal Services

16 September 2019