

CABINET

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 24 th October 2017
Report Subject	Corporate Safeguarding Policy
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Social Services
Report Author	Chief Officer (Social Services)
Type of Report	Strategic

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Wales Audit Office (WAO) published a report in July 2015: 'Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements in Welsh Councils'. The WAO identified eight recommendations for councils, including ensuring there is "a corporate county wide policy on safeguarding covering all council services". Corporate Safeguarding is now included for priority attention in the Council Plan 2017/18.

Safeguarding is everybody's business in every service within the Council. Whilst Social Services is the lead Service within the Council for dealing with enquiries regarding allegations / concerns that children and adults may be suffering significant harm, everyone, whatever their role in the authority, has a responsibility to safeguard the well-being of children, young people and adults.

The purpose of this report is to set out the work being undertaken to ensure that the Council fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities, identify areas for improvement and present the Corporate Safeguarding policy (attached as an appendix) for approval prior to publication. The Corporate Safeguarding policy provides a framework to safeguard and protect children and adults. The policy describes the roles and responsibilities expected of every employee, as well as the role of elected members, volunteers and contractors. It includes information on the types of abuse, recognising abuse and how to report any concerns.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Cabinet is assured that work is being undertaken to improve corporate arrangements for safeguarding children and adults.
2	Cabinet to approve the Corporate Safeguarding policy for publication and implementation.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING POLICY
1.01	Safeguarding is the responsibility of all services across the Council, not just those that work directly with children and vulnerable people. It is everybody's responsibility. The Council's responsibilities for safeguarding is set out in legislation including the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. This Act was implemented in April 2016 and created a duty on all local authority employees, elected members and relevant partners to report any actual or suspected incidents of abuse or harm.
1.02	In 2015, the WAO examined the corporate assurance arrangements within councils and the extent to which they are operating, effective management and assurance processes and controls for safeguarding children. The WAO found that many of the corporate safeguarding responsibilities within local authorities across Wales needed to be improved. The report by the WAO identified eight recommendations for councils, including ensuring there is "a corporate county wide policy on safeguarding covering all council services".
1.03	A Corporate Safeguarding Panel was established in December 2015 to ensure that there are robust arrangements for protecting children, young people and adults. The Panel will ensure that the Council fulfils its safeguarding duties corporately and in partnership with other statutory agencies. It is jointly chaired by the Chief Officer, Social Services and Chief Officer, Education and Youth and comprises a designated Safeguarding Lead from every Portfolio. The Cabinet Member, Social Services and Cabinet Member, Corporate Management are senior members of this Panel.
1.04	<p>The Corporate Safeguarding policy is attached as an Appendix and provides a framework to safeguard and protect children and adults. The policy describes the roles and responsibilities expected of every employee, as well as the role of elected members, volunteers and contractors. It includes information on the types of abuse, recognising abuse and how to report any concerns.</p> <p>The policy does not replace existing arrangements within Social Services to safeguard children and adults; however, it sets out the duty for the Council as a whole organisation, making clear the responsibilities at all levels, regardless of their area of work. Social Services will remain responsible for co-ordinating investigations into any concerns.</p>
1.05	The implementation of the policy will be measured through the following

	<p>performance indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of employees receiving safeguarding training as they receive induction • % of relevant employees attending safeguarding training • % of councillors attending safeguarding training • Referral rates from services other than Social Services • % of adult protection Referrals completed where the risk has been managed • % of reviews of children on the Child Protection register due in the year that were carried out within the statutory timescales • % of initial child protection conferences that were due in the year and were held within 15 working days of the strategy discussion.
1.06	<p>To support the implementation of the Policy a summary document and a set of Frequently Asked Questions will be published and made available to employees. Two e-learning programmes for safeguarding children and safeguarding adults are already available for employees to complete.</p> <p>AFTA Thought, an organisation specialising in training through drama, delivered four Safeguarding training sessions in May and June which brought to life different safeguarding issues. These sessions were attended by almost 300 employees across a range of portfolios.</p> <p>Presentations about safeguarding will be made to Scrutiny Committees during the next few months to raise their awareness.</p>
1.07	<p>A safeguarding clause is being incorporated into the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. Some services such as Transport and Housing have included specific safeguarding clauses into contracts which require contractors to receive safeguarding training.</p>
1.08	<p>To maintain the profile of safeguarding across the workforce a Corporate Safeguarding newsletter will be published periodically. This will reinforce the importance of recognising and reporting concerns and will highlight current issues.</p>
1.09	<p>Areas for improvement include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementing a Council wide training programme to ensure all employees receive appropriate safeguarding training; • ensuring all new employees receive safeguarding training as part of their induction; • reviewing contracts to identify those where safeguarding clauses need to be incorporated. <p>Internal Audit are undertaking a review of corporate safeguarding arrangements; the outcome of this review will inform the work programme of the Corporate Safeguarding Panel.</p>
1.10	<p>An Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report 2016/17 will be produced which will summarise the actions that have been taken to progress safeguarding.</p>

	This will be presented to Cabinet in November 2017 for approval, prior to publication.
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
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2.01	There are resource implications for rolling out a training programme to ensure employees have the skills and knowledge for the Council to identify potential safeguarding issues and know how to make a referral. This will be managed within existing budgets.
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3.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
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3.01	Chief Officers, and the Corporate Safeguarding Panel have been consulted on this policy, and it has been circulated to services through the Corporate Safeguarding Panel. The draft policy has also been considered by Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
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4.00	RISK MANAGEMENT
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4.01	The work programme of the Corporate Safeguarding Panel supports the Council to meet its statutory obligations in the safeguarding of all children, young people and adults. Not having appropriate, clear policies and procedures in place, and lack of awareness and knowledge of safeguarding within the organisation, could put children, young people and adults at risk.
4.02	An equalities impact assessment has been undertaken. No negative impacts have been identified; the policy aims to protect children and adults across all protected groups particularly those who may be more vulnerable.

5.00	APPENDICES
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5.01	Appendix 1: Corporate Safeguarding Policy Appendix 2: What we mean by safeguarding
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6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
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6.01	Contact Officer: Fiona Mocko Strategic Policy Advisor Telephone: 702122 E-mail: fiona.mocko@flintshire.gov.uk
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7.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
7.01	Safeguarding: is about protecting children and adults from abuse or neglect and educating those around them to recognise the signs and dangers.