

SUBJECT:	Proposed changes to the whole authority safeguarding approach
MEETING:	Joint Adult and Children and Young People Select Committees
DATE:	20th June 2016
DIVISIONS/WARDS AFFECTED:	All

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide the select committees with proposed changes to the whole authority safeguarding approach.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

That members support the proposed changes to:

- Introduce a Safeguarding Strategy – Appendix 1.
- Underpin the strategy with a programme of three distinct elements covering: Corporate, Children and Young People and Adults. Appendix 2.
- Change the terms of reference and representation of the Whole Authority Safeguarding Coordination Group - Appendix 3
- Discontinue the current performance report mechanism and replace it with a scorecard of key safeguarding measures to monitor performance. The scorecard will be developed once the strategy and activity programme have been agreed through Council
- Widen the current political accountability for safeguarding to include the Council's Audit Committee

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The authority has made huge progress within the past three years on assuring safeguarding in the authority. In the main, this has been in response to Monmouthshire having been placed in Estyn Special Measures where Safeguarding was a first of six key recommendations.
- 3.2 The authority has been released from Special Measures since the start of the year. This has given an opportunity to reflect on the framework in place around safeguarding and consider what the authority needs in going forward
- 3.3 The authority must implement the new Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014 and as an integral part of this, the Safeguarding agenda needs to be widened to incorporate Adults.
- 3.4 There needs to be an escalated focus on safeguarding practices applied by agencies and volunteers that the authority works and by commissioned providers.

- 3.5 Governance arrangements are overseen by the Council's Audit Committee. However, currently the Audit Committee does not have a role in assuring whole authority safeguarding.
- 3.6 Important reviews have been undertaken to assess the current safeguarding framework and the learning gleaned has contributed to a take stock of the current position and assess what is needed going forward. These are:
- A report completed by the Wales Audit Office on safeguarding across the greater Gwent authorities in 2015
 - A report carried out by Ellis Williams on Safeguarding in Monmouthshire in 2015 – the former Rhondda Cynon Taff Social Services chief officer
 - A Monmouthshire Internal Audit Service report on safeguarding carried out in 2015 and presented in January 2016

These reports are identified as sources of evidence in the programme of activities that underpins the strategy and in this context reflect the issues picked up through them.

- 3.7 Reflection by the Whole Authority Safeguarding Coordinating Group has led to the following considerations:
- The composition and terms of reference of the current Whole Authority Safeguarding Coordinating Group are no longer appropriate to drive the agenda forward and embed accountability
 - The authority needs to develop the leadership, accountability, monitoring and review of safeguarding across the authority services and also by services delivered for the authority by others
 - Adult safeguarding needs to be integrated into the whole authority approach
 - Safeguarding needs to be seen as distinct from the specific function of child protection to avoid confusion
 - A need to develop the authority's approach to safeguarding in line with the new Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014
 - A need to mainstream safeguarding into service planning across the authority

- 3.8 This proposal has been presented to the Senior Leadership Team and following scrutiny through the select committees will be presented to the Council for approval on 28th July 2016.

4. **REASONS**

To ensure that:

- 4.1 Safeguarding across the authority is strategic and robust, is integral to all decisions and part of everyday operations and that Chief Officers and Cabinet members are robustly held to account.

4.2 Services commissioned through other providers apply robust safeguarding practices and procedures.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

It is not envisaged that additional resources will be needed to support the changes proposed. As now, responsibility will be absorbed within day to day business activities.

6. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING)

This proposal should increase the level of safeguarding compliance. An evaluation form will be completed for the Council report.

7. CONSULTEES:

The Whole Authority Safeguarding Coordinating Group Senior Leadership Team
Children and Young People and Adults Select Committees
All DMTs

Views received will be considered in the final proposal before presenting to the Council for approval on 28th July.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Monmouthshire's Safeguarding Policy
The current constitution and terms of reference of the Whole Authority Safeguarding Coordinating Group
The Internal Audit Service report on safeguarding 2015
The Wales Audit Office study on safeguarding 2015
The Ellis Williams report on safeguarding 2015

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