

# Public Document Pack



Neuadd y Sir  
Y Rhadyr  
Brynbuga  
NP15 1GA

County Hall  
Rhadyr  
Usk  
NP15 1GA

Tuesday, 16 January 2018

**Notice of meeting / Hysbysiad o gyfarfod:**

## **Children and Young People Select Committee**

**Wednesday, 24th January, 2018 at 2.00 pm,  
Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA**

*Please note that a pre meeting will be held 30 minutes prior to the start of the meeting for members of the committee.*

### **AGENDA**

| <b>Item No</b> | <b>Item</b>   | <b>Pages</b> |
|----------------|---|--------------|
| 1.             | Apologies for Absence   |              |
| 2.             | Declarations of Interest  |              |
| 3.             | Safeguarding Training Strategy - Scrutiny of South East Wales<br>Safeguarding Childrens Board               | 1 - 6        |
| 4.             | Corporate Parenting Strategy - Pre-decision scrutiny of the Corporate Parenting Strategy                    | To Follow    |
| 5.             | Childrens Services Placements - Scrutiny of the action plan to manage child placements and associated risks | 7 - 12       |

**Paul Matthews**

**Chief Executive / Prif Weithredwr**

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillors:

M.Groucutt  
L.Jones  
L.Brown  
D. Jones  
M.Lane  
M. Powell  
T.Thomas  
J.Watkins  
S. Woodhouse  
Dr. A. Daly  
Dr. A. Daly  
Church)  
M Fowler (Parent Governor Representative)  
Vacancy (Catholic Church)  
K Plow (Association of School Governors)

**Added Members**

**Members voting on Education Issues Only**

Dr. A. Daly ( Church in Wales)  
M. Fowler (Parent Governor Representative)  
Vacancy (Parent Governor Representative)  
Vacancy (Catholic Church)

**Added Members**

**Non Voting**

K. Plow (Association of School Governors)  
Vacancy (NAHT)  
Vacancy (ASCL)  
Vacancy (NUT)  
Vacancy (Free Church Federal Council)  
Vacancy (NASUWT)

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**Welsh Language**

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public through the medium of Welsh or English. We respectfully ask that you provide us with adequate notice to accommodate your needs.

# Aims and Values of Monmouthshire County Council

## Sustainable and Resilient Communities

### Outcomes we are working towards

#### **Nobody Is Left Behind**

- Older people are able to live their good life
- People have access to appropriate and affordable housing
- People have good access and mobility

#### **People Are Confident, Capable and Involved**

- People's lives are not affected by alcohol and drug misuse
- Families are supported
- People feel safe

#### **Our County Thrives**

- Business and enterprise
- People have access to practical and flexible learning
- People protect and enhance the environment

### Our priorities

- Schools
- Protection of vulnerable people
- Supporting Business and Job Creation
- Maintaining locally accessible services

### Our Values

- **Openness:** we aspire to be open and honest to develop trusting relationships.
- **Fairness:** we aspire to provide fair choice, opportunities and experiences and become an organisation built on mutual respect.
- **Flexibility:** we aspire to be flexible in our thinking and action to become an effective and efficient organisation.
- **Teamwork:** we aspire to work together to share our successes and failures by building on our strengths and supporting one another to achieve our goals.

## Monmouthshire Scrutiny Committee Guide

### Role of the Pre-meeting

1. Why is the Committee scrutinising this? (background, key issues)
2. What is the Committee's role?
3. What outcome do Members want to achieve?
4. Is there sufficient information to achieve this? If not, who could provide this?
5. Discuss the committee's approach:
  - Agree the order of questioning and which Members will lead
  - Agree questions for officers and questions for the Cabinet Member

### Questions for the Meeting

#### Scrutinising Performance

1. How does performance compare with previous years? Is it better/worse? Why?
2. How does performance compare with other councils/other service providers? Is it better/worse? Why?
3. How does performance compare with set targets? Is it better/worse? Why?
4. How were performance targets set? Are they challenging enough/realistic?
5. How do service users/the public/partners view the performance of the service?
6. Have there been any recent audit and inspections? What were the findings?
7. How does the service contribute to the achievement of corporate objectives?
8. Is improvement/decline in performance linked to an increase/reduction in resource? What capacity is there to improve?

#### Scrutinising Policy

1. Who does the policy affect ~ directly and indirectly? Who will benefit most/least?
2. What is the view of service users/stakeholders? Do they believe it will achieve the desired outcome?
3. What is the view of the community as a whole - the 'taxpayer' perspective?
4. What methods were used to consult with stakeholders? Did the process enable all those with a stake to have their say?
5. What practice and options have been considered in developing/reviewing this policy? What evidence is there to inform what works?
6. Have all relevant sustainable development, equalities and safeguarding implications been taken into consideration? For example, what are the procedures that need to be in place to protect children?
7. How much will this cost to implement and what funding source has been identified?
8. How will performance of the policy be measured and the impact evaluated.

### Questions for the Committee to conclude...

Do we have the necessary information to form conclusions/make recommendations to the executive, council, other partners? If not, do we need to:

- (i) Investigate the issue in more detail?
- (ii) Obtain further information from other witnesses – Executive Member, independent expert, members of the local community, service users, regulatory bodies...

(iii) Agree further actions to be undertaken within a timescale/future monitoring report...

# Nodau a Gwerthoedd Cyngor Sir Fynwy

## Cymunedau Cynaliadwy a Chryf

### Canlyniadau y gweithiwn i'w cyflawni

#### Neb yn cael ei adael ar ôl

- Gall pobl hŷn fyw bywyd da
- Pobl â mynediad i dai addas a fforddiadwy
- Pobl â mynediad a symudedd da

#### Pobl yn hyderus, galluog ac yn cymryd rhan

- Camddefnyddio alcohol a chyffuriau ddim yn effeithio ar fywydau pobl
- Teuluoedd yn cael eu cefnogi
- Pobl yn teimlo'n ddiogel

#### Ein sir yn ffynnu

- Busnes a menter
- Pobl â mynediad i ddysgu ymarferol a hyblyg
- Pobl yn diogelu ac yn cyfoethogi'r amgylchedd

### Ein blaenoriaethau

- Ysgolion
- Diogelu pobl agored i niwed
- Cefnogi busnes a chreu swyddi
- Cynnal gwasanaethau sy'n hygyrch yn lleol

### Ein gwerthoedd

- **Bod yn agored:** anelwn fod yn agored ac onest i ddatblygu perthnasoedd ymddiriedus
- **Tegwch:** anelwn ddarparu dewis teg, cyfleoedd a phrofiadau a dod yn sefydliad a adeiladwyd ar barch un at y llall.
- **Hyblygrwydd:** anelwn fod yn hyblyg yn ein syniadau a'n gweithredoedd i ddod yn sefydliad effeithlon ac effeithiol.
- **Gwaith tîm:** anelwn gydweithio i rannu ein llwyddiannau a'n methiannau drwy adeiladu ar ein cryfderau a chefnogi ein gilydd i gyflawni ein nodau.

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**SUBJECT: South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board**

**MEETING: CYP Select Committee**

**DATE: 24<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All**

## **1. PURPOSE:**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information so that members can scrutinise the work of the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB) and the alignment between local and regional activity in children's safeguarding. Information is provided regarding the contribution made by Monmouthshire County Council officers to the work of the board.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

2.1 It is recommended that members:

- Scrutinise the strategic objectives of the SEWSCB as set out within the Strategic Plan 2016 – 2019 (annexe 1)
- Scrutinise the alignment between local and regional children's safeguarding activity
- Identify the contribution of Monmouthshire County Council officers to the work of the board.

## **3. KEY ISSUES:**

3.1 The South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB) has the statutory responsibility to provide the strategic lead in the region in relation to the safeguarding of children and promotion of their welfare, as enshrined in the Children Act 2004 and The Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014 and accompanying guidance, 'Working Together to Safeguard People' Volume 1.

3.2 The South East Wales region incorporates Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen. From April 1st, 2013, the SEWSCB has replaced the five former Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) in Gwent.

3.3 The SEWSCB's purpose is to lead, co-ordinate and ensure the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding children practice in the region, both through its own programme of activity and through the challenge it provides to partner organisations.

3.4 The SEWSCB vision is that: All children and young people in South East Wales are protected from abuse and neglect, live in safe homes and communities and are supported to achieve their full potential.

### 3.5 This means:

- Making sure that children are protected from abuse, neglect and exploitation;
- Preventing abuse, neglect or exploitation; and
- Ensuring that children are growing up in safe homes, schools and communities and creating opportunities to enable children to have optimum life chances so that they can enter adulthood successfully.
- Ensuring that the well-being of children and young people is at the core of all levels of service provision

### 3.6 The Board has identified four strategic priorities to focus on over the three years (2016 – 2019):

- Reducing the effects of compromised parenting on children's well-being
- Improving our work with adolescents who exhibit risky behaviours
- Ensuring the continued effectiveness of safeguarding practice during the implementation and transition of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Improving the effectiveness of the Regional Safeguarding Children Board

3.7 Monmouthshire is well-represented across the Business structure of the SEWSCB (see annexe 2). The Head of Children's Services is a Board member, chairs the Quality Assurance Sub-Group and is a member of the Case Review Group and Business Planning Group. Members of the Safeguarding Unit are required within their Job Descriptions to participate in the work of the board at sub-group level providing the operational link and fostering alignment between the work of the board and the local activity within Monmouthshire. From its inception, Monmouthshire officers have played a key role in shaping and influencing the work of the Board.

3.8 The Children's Services improvement plan and the quality assurance arrangements within the social care directorate accord with the strategic intent of the SEWSCB regarding children and young people living free from abuse and neglect and living in safe homes and communities where they are supported to reach their full potential.

3.9 Under the (draft) quality assurance processes for the SEWSCB Monmouthshire County Council is obliged to undertake an audit of its safeguarding arrangements as part of its duties under section 135 Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014 and report by exception to the Board. Safeguarding issues / outcomes from regulatory inspections and reviews within Monmouthshire also must be reported to the Board.

### 3.10 Specific alignment between Monmouthshire and the work of the Board include:

- Participation in undertaking multi-agency supervision for children on the child protection register, particularly where children remain on the register at the second review;
- Participation in Multi-agency Sexual Exploitation meetings (MASE) and operation Makesafe;
- Leading training and ensuring that SEWSCB is accessible to Monmouthshire workforce;
- Establishing Safeguarding Learning Networks;
- Disseminating lessons learning from child practice reviews undertaken within the Gwent across Monmouthshire practitioners;
- Taking a lead role in young people's participation activity;

- Leading on the development of some key regional guidance;
- Working in accordance with regional processes / procedures (e.g. for the management of professional allegations).

3.11 Moving forward, and as part of the actions identified within the Safeguarding SIP, the Safeguarding Unit will report to Members on the work of the SEWSCB on an annual basis.

#### **4. OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

N/A

#### **5. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

N/A

#### **6. REASONS:**

Monmouthshire Corporate Safeguarding Policy recognises the key role of the SEWSCB within its governance arrangements and as a key strategic partnership within children's safeguarding. As such, information regarding the activity is presented for scrutiny.

#### **7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

Monmouthshire County Council makes an annual contribution to the SEWSCB as a statutory requirement under Social Services and Well-Being Act (Wales) 2014, Part 9.

#### **8. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS IMPLICATIONS (INCORPORATING EQUALITIES, SUSTAINABILITY, SAFEGUARDING AND CORPORATE PARENTING):**

N/A

#### **9. CONSULTEES:**

- Claire Marchant, Chief Officer
- Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit
- Damien McCann Chief Officer Blaenau Gwent and Chair of SEWSCB
- Mel Roach, Business Manager, SEWSCB

#### **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

- **Appendix 1 SEWSCB Strategic Plan 2016 – 2019**



Strategic Plan 2016  
to 2019 Final Version

- **Appendix 2 Monmouthshire's representation within the SEWSCB structure**



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**SUBJECT: External Placements in Children's Services**

**MEETING: CYP Select Committee**

**DATE: 24<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

**DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: All**

## 1. PURPOSE:

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information so that members can scrutinise the response and activities undertaken following a review by Internal Audit into the use of external placements for Looked After Children (LAC) and young people by Monmouthshire County Council's Children's Social Services.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 It is recommended that members:

- Scrutinise the improvement actions undertaken by Children's Services as set out within the action plan (see appendix 2)

## 3. KEY ISSUES:

3.1 The internal audit of external placements was carried out as part of the 2016/2017 Audit Plan agreed by the Head of Finance and by the Audit Committee at their meeting on the 26th May 2016. The field work was subsequently undertaken in October 2016 / March 2017 with a final report being issued in October 2017 (appendix 1).

3.2 The audit was undertaken following concern within Social Care and Health that the absence of commissioning capacity over a number of years meant that this was a high risk area. The objective of the audit was to provide a risk based audit of External Placements within Children's Services, with a view to providing an overall opinion on the internal control environment in place. The audit focused on the commissioning and contract arrangements when LAC and young people are placed in externally provided fostering and residential placements.

3.3 Overall, the External Placements system was assessed as providing a 'LIMITED' level of assurance which reflects that the financial and administrative systems reviewed were found to be poorly controlled, with unacceptable levels of risk. In summary 4 significant risks, 15 moderate risks, 9 minor risks and 9 areas of strength were found.

3.4 In headline terms, overall improvements were needed included:

- The interface operationally between child care teams and commissioning and contracting

- Clearer systems and processes for commissioning and contracting within Children's Services
- Improvement to the interface between regional (4cs) and local systems regarding commissioning arrangements, with increased clarity of respective roles
- A clear process for accreditation of providers
- Improvements in contract monitoring placements.

3.5 The report recognised that there had been an historical lack of commissioning resource within Children's Services.

3.6 Since the audit Children's Services has taken key steps to rectify the problems identified:

- A lead commissioner for Children's Services initially employed on a temporary basis is now permanent. The post is located in Commissioning and the Social Care and Health Commissioning Team now covers children's as well as adult services.
- A review of all high cost placements was undertaken in February 2016 so that any immediate risks regarding contracts / monitoring arrangements could be addressed.
- A senior practitioner from the Placement and Support Team was commissioned to develop the internal processes for Children's Services around the placement process which were in line with the Social Services and Well-Being Act (Wales) 2014 (see appendix 3).
- An independent 'stock-take' was undertaken in October 2017 which cross-referenced with the Internal Audit Report action plan and additionally supported further improvements of internal processes and practice around placement searches.

3.7 Activity in regards to the Internal Audit action plan is on-going and has entailed a joint approach between Commissioning and Children's Services. The current updated action plan is attached at appendix 2.

#### **4. OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

N/A

#### **5. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

N/A

#### **6. REASONS:**

6.1 A review by Internal Audit was issued in October 2017 which gave only limited assurance concerning risks in contract and commissioning arrangements for the use of external placements for LAC. An action plan was put in place to drive the improvement actions necessary to address the risks and issues identified.

#### **7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**



There are no additional resource implications identified as a consequence of this report. The appointment of the Lead Commissioner has been resourced through realignment of current budgets.

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

N/A

**9. CONSULTEES:**

- Claire Marchant, Chief Officer, Social Care and Health
- Children's Service Leadership Team
- Directorate Management Team (Quality Improvement and Performance Group)

**10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

- **Appendix 1 Internal Audit Report issued October 2017**



External Placements  
Final Issued.pdf

- **Appendix 2 Updated Action Plan**



Internal Audit  
(External Placements)

- **Appendix 3 Placement Process**



FLOWCHART  
Placement Process N

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