

SUBJECT: SAFEGUARDING EVALUATIVE REPORT APRIL – OCTOBER 2017

MEETING: Council

DATE: 14TH DECEMBER 2017

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1. PURPOSE:

This purpose of this report is:

- To evaluate the progress of Monmouthshire County Council's key safeguarding priorities, in the period April – October 2017, using identified measures to highlight progress, identify risks and set out clear improvement actions and priorities for further development.
- To inform Cabinet Members about the effectiveness of safeguarding in Monmouthshire and the work that is in progress to support the Council's aims in protecting children and adults at risk from harm and abuse.
- To inform Cabinet members about the progress made towards meeting the standards in the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy approved by Council in July 2017.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

Members are requested to:

- Note the key safeguarding risks and approve the priority improvement actions as set out at Appendix 2 to this report.
- Endorse the evaluation of safeguarding progress set out in Appendix 5 to this report.

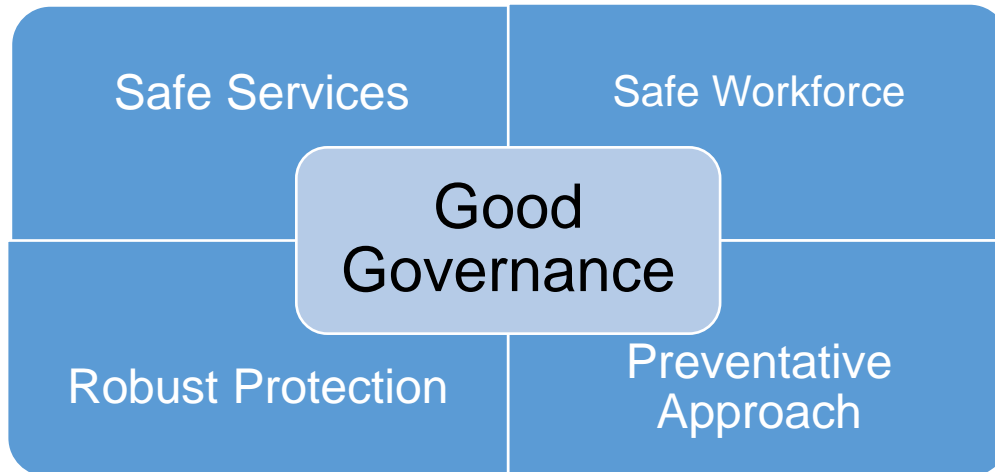
3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 This safeguarding evaluation is based on activity and information from April 2017 – October 2017. It builds upon the previous progress review reported in March 2017. The timing of this report reflects a biannual reporting cycle to Select Committees, Cabinet and Council. This reporting period saw the approval of Monmouthshire County Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy which extended the policy scope to cover statutory duties for both children and adults at risk in line with the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act (2014).

The analysis within this report reflects current legislation and policy and draws on data and information concerning both groups.

- 3.2 The evaluation reflects the 5 cornerstones of safeguarding within the Corporate Safeguarding Policy (Table 1).

Table 1: The Cornerstones of a safeguarding in Monmouthshire



- 3.3 Embedding and sustaining the highest standards of safeguarding is a continuous endeavor. This evaluative report forms an integral part of the improvement of safeguarding practice across the Council. It asks asks critical questions about what are we trying to achieve, how well we are doing, what is the evidence to support our analysis, do we understand, manage and mitigate risks and how can we improve and develop. This is fundamental to an open and transparent approach to the evaluative task. The report tries, wherever possible, to balance qualitative and quantitative data as well as drawing in other sources of information to support triangulation of the assertions around progress.

- 3.4 The self-assessment score has been developed by the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group (WASG) on the basis of evidence review and critical challenge. It uses the corporate scoring framework (Appendix 1) to provide an overall judgement of effectiveness. The current self-assessment is at Table 2.

Table 2: Self-assessment scores as at October 2017

Safeguarding Cornerstone		March 2017	Oct 2017	March 2018
1.	GOOD GOVERNANCE	3	4	
2.	SAFE WORKFORCE	3	3	
3.	PREVENTATIVE APPROACH	5	3	
4.	ROBUST PROTECTION	3	4	
5.	SAFE SERVICES	2	2	

- 3.5 Of note, is the differential score in the self-assessment of the 'preventative approach' standard. The evaluation in March 2017 focused on highlighting various preventative activities and developments that were in progress across the Council. Whilst the range of activity is positive, within our current evaluation we challenged ourselves to consider *impact* through a more critical lens. The challenges this presented in evidencing impact is reflected in the lower score. Steady progress continues in 'good governance' and 'robust protection', whilst the static scores within 'safe workforce' and 'safe services' is representative of the ambitious scope within these areas and the time that is required to implement improvement activities. It particularly reflects the challenge

around information system in the critical areas of training and volunteer management.

- 3.6 Arising from the assessment the key risks have been extracted and incorporated into the Safeguarding Risk Register (Appendix 2). The most significant risks also feature in the Council's Corporate Risk Register Priority improvement actions have been extracted from the Evaluative Report and are attached at Appendix 3.

3.7 Good Governance

The last 6 months has seen positive progress to ensure that safeguarding is a fundamental feature in the governance arrangements for officers and Members. The Corporate safeguarding policy sets out clearly roles, responsibilities and governance arrangements. WASG has an important role, bringing together Chief Officers/ Heads of Service from each directorate to lead safeguarding activity in the Council. To reflect the need to improve systems for identification, management and mitigation of risk, a new system of SBARs (Situation Background Analysis Review) has been introduced to support WASG in identifying risks, overseeing action plans arising from significant event analyses in respect of compliance with the Council's safeguarding policy. There is further work needed to really embed risk management for safeguarding through strengthening the relationships between risk registers at every level and priority improvements.

There are arrangements in place for self-evaluation in all directorates via the SAFE process. Self-evaluation is triangulated in a number of ways including via an internal audit programme. Further activity is needed to ensure that the SAFE process is quality assured and embedded operationally and supports a programme of continual improvement within every directorate. This further work recognises that in the reporting period the SAFE process, which was originally developed as a tool in childcare settings, and related to safeguarding children, has been rolled out across all parts of the Council and covers adults at risk as well as children.

At a regional level, the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board and Safeguarding Adults Boards fulfil the statutory responsibilities set out in the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act. Monmouthshire County Council is fully represented on both the Children and Adult Safeguarding Boards, and their subgroups. It is acknowledged that more work is required to strengthen the links between national, regional and local safeguarding activity and ensure the learning from through the regional boards and sub-groups is embedded in

practice and operations in Monmouthshire. The 2016/17 annual report from the regional boards is available at: <http://www.gwasb.org.uk/index.php?id=34>.

3.8 Safe Workforce

Safe recruitment of the whole workforce is a fundamental test of safeguarding in a local authority. Regular reporting over a number of years shows a very high level of compliance with safe recruitment of the employed workforce and the small number of cases where the safe recruitment process has not been followed an analysis using the SBAR process has been undertaken to ensure risks are immediately managed and lessons learned. Safe recruitment, and effective management, of the volunteer workforce has been a major focus in the last reporting period supported by the leading volunteer training and extensive involvement of volunteers and managers in the development of the Volunteering Policy approved by Cabinet in November 2014. Following the Wales Audit Office (February 2017) report into the Kerbcraft scheme, and an internal audit report which highlighted deficiencies in a number of parts of the Council a full review of compliance of volunteers has taken place with to achieve 100% compliance with all aspects of the standards for a safe workforce in advance of the implementation of the central volunteer information management system.

Strengthening policy, systems and process in the safety of the workforce has been a major focus during the last reporting period. There are considerable strengths in the levels of training within schools and child care settings which were the standards set within the previous safeguarding policy. The training standards set in the July 2016 Corporate Safeguarding Policy cover the whole Council workforce duty to report and safeguard children and adults at risk in line with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act. This means that significant training needs have been identified across the whole authority. Basic awareness training covering adults and children is now available and each area of the Council has undertaken an in-depth review, team by team, to understand training needs and gaps. Plans are in place to co-ordinate training resources to ensure training needs are being met. Digital whole authority systems are also being implemented to enable reporting on training compliance across the paid and volunteer workforce. Plans to test out whole workforce understanding of their responsibilities are in place. Other improvements have been made, including the development of trainer's forum. Training will remain a significant priority for the next period.

There is a well-established process for managing professional allegations within Children's Services. We are working in context of regional and national

developments to ensure there is alignment across children and adults in respect the management of professional allegations.

3.9 Preventative Approach

Understanding the issues which cumulatively mean people are at risk of requiring protection is at the heart of a preventative approach to safeguarding. The preventative agenda is developing within community well-being hubs, and local groups and communities are supported to create, maintain and sustain activities where needs are identified within the community itself. The WASG challenges all parts of the Council to consider how they contribute to preventative activities. In some areas this is well developed – the examples in public protection cited above are clear examples of how safeguarding is at the heart of the work that is undertaken. The WASG provides a more joined up approach to some of the targeted work taking place within the Council around areas such as CSE, development of dementia friendly communities and PREVENT.

As a priority action, WASG is considering how it can better develop effective ways of measuring and evaluating the impact of preventative activity to ensure that activity leads to better safeguards being in place for both children and adults at risk, and makes the best use of limited council resources to target vulnerability.

3.10 Robust Protection

Working to All-Wales protection procedures is embedded in the work of adult and child protection practitioners. The Children's Services Improvement Programme has created a drive to improve the quality child protection practice, application processes and procedures, and ensure staff understand the requirements and expectations of their role and task. Critical to this has been recruitment of a permanent workforce. Safe practice is now supported by a clear infrastructure of risk management frameworks, clear procedures, models and tools.

The creation and development of the Adult and Children's Safeguarding Unit presents opportunities to consider how best to identify opportunities for "joined up" work and joint implementation of the revised All Wales guidance for children and adults at risk. Effective quality assurance is a prerequisite in ensuring that the quality of safeguarding practice is understood and to drive improvement actions. This is better developed in children's than adult services, but again the development of the joint unit provides the basis for aligning practice and systems.

3.11 Safe Services

This is the first time information regarding commissioned services has been reported and there is an emphasis on social services commissioning in this report. Social care commissioning capacity in Monmouthshire had for many years been focussed on adult commissioning. The Social Care and Health Commissioning Team is developing its operating model to provide a comprehensive approach for all social care commissioning for children and adults. A Commissioning Lead is in place and has developed productive relationships with commissioned providers have been addressed alongside the social worker review of placements which have met all statutory timescales. A robust, risk-based, contract management and quality assurance process across all providers from January 2018.

Initial review of the evidence from schools, and other parts of the Council that contract for services for children/ adults at risk indicate there are robust arrangements in place (individual school contracts, transport, leisure services). However, the evaluative score recognises the need for an in-depth understanding of the baseline position across the whole of the Council in respect of commissioning. It has been agreed that internal audit will undertake work in this area during their 2017/18 audit programme.

4. **OPTIONS APPRAISAL**

Not applicable to this report

5. **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

An evaluation assessment has been included at Appendix 5 to support the analysis in this report. This includes clear descriptors of 'what good looks like' against the standards for safeguarding in Monmouthshire. This provides the basis of measurement which can be monitored over time. Safeguarding progress will be reported on a 6 monthly basis to CYP and Adult Select Committees, Cabinet and Council.

6. **REASONS:**

- 6.1 This evaluation report is completed within the context of Monmouthshire County Council's recent background and history in respect of safeguarding as set out in brief below and represents a further opportunity for Members to consider the distance travelled by the Local Authority in improving safeguarding performance.

- 6.2 Council Members will be aware that in November 2012 the Local Authority was found to have inadequate safeguarding arrangements in place. Shortcomings was clearly articulated by Estyn and included a lack of safeguarding policy and procedures as well as operational weaknesses particularly within a schools based context.
- 6.3 The Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit was established within Children's Services in 2012 and quickly extended its role in supporting the Authority's improvement journey around child's safeguarding.
- 6.4 In February 2014 an Estyn monitoring visit recognised that the council had appropriately prioritised safeguarding and 'set the foundations well for recovery' particularly at service and practitioner. However, the authority still did not have 'effective enough management information systems and processes to enable it to receive appropriate and evaluative management information about safeguarding'. This criticism was echoed by a subsequent Welsh Audit Office review of safeguarding in March 2014.
- 6.5 In response to this the council established the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group (WASG) initially chaired by the Chief Executive with a focus specifically on children. The inaugural meeting took place in July 2014.
- 6.6 The Local Authority came out of Special Measures in November 2015 when strong progress in safeguarding was recognised.
- 6.7 A recommendation was subsequently made to Cabinet and endorsed in July 2016 allowing the work of the WASG to incorporate safeguarding for adults at risk, so that good practice and learning could be mutually shared and also to recognise the statutory basis of safeguarding adults at risk as a consequence of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. The focus of WASG reflected developments in the national legislative framework and guidance around integration and all-age citizen / family centred approaches.
- 6.8 Council Members will also be aware that Wales Audit Office issued statutory recommendations in respect of safeguarding in respect of the Council's Kerbcraft service in January 2017.
- 6.9 A new Corporate Safeguarding Policy was approved by Council in July 2017.
- 6.10 Officers are currently preparing for a further inspection of whole authority safeguarding across which is planned for January 2018. This will be led by the Welsh Audit Office working together with Estyn and CCSIW.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

There are no resource implications to this report.

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

This report is not seeking any change in policy and therefore a future generations assessment has not been completed. This report is clearly critically concerned with the effectiveness of safeguarding in Monmouthshire County Council.

9. CONSULTEES:

- Children and Young People's Select Committee – the committee considered a draft of the evaluation report at its meeting on 13 November 2017. The select committee

Recommendations:

- Members who have not undertaken their Safeguarding Training should be pursued for completion of the training
- The completed document with the evaluative scores be brought back to the next meeting

The overall judgement of the committee was 'the report demonstrates that continued improvement is being made in safeguarding and this is clearly evidenced when comparing the position the Council was in a number of years ago to the position outlined in this report.'

- The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) considered a draft of the report at its meeting on 14 November 2017. SLT recommended

Recommendations:

- Training records should be kept on My View in the short term until a Learning Resource Management system can be implemented

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Evaluative Progress Report April – September 2017

[Corporate Safeguarding Policy July 2017](#)

11. AUTHOR:

Whole Authority Safeguarding Group

12. CONTACT DETAILS:

Cath Sheen

Corporate Safeguarding Programme Lead

Tel: 07595647637

E-mail: cathsheen@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1

The Corporate Evaluation Framework

The evaluation score from 1-6	The evaluative context
Level 6 Excellent	Excellent or outstanding
Level 5 Very Good	Good Major strengths
Level 4 Good	Important strengths with some areas for improvement
Level 3 Adequate	Strengths just outweigh weaknesses
Level 2 Weak	Important weaknesses
Level 1 Unsatisfactory	Major weakness

Appendix 2

Ref	Risk	Reason why identified	Risk Level (Pre – mitigation)				Mitigating actions	Timescale and responsibility holder	Mitigation action progress	Risk Level (Post – mitigation)				Risk owner & Cabinet member responsible
			Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level				Year	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Level	
1a	Potential for significant harm to vulnerable children or adults due to factors outside our control.(escalated to corporate register)	- The likelihood of this occurring in a given year is low. However the significant harm that can occur due to factors that are outside our control mean that this will always be a risk.	2017/18	Possible	Major	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continually monitor and evaluate process and practice and review accountability for safeguarding 	Claire Marchant Chief Officer, SCH	Latest evaluation is being presented to Cabinet in December 2017	2017/18	Possible	Major	Med	Will Mclean & Claire Marchant Cllr Penny Jones & Cllr Richard John
1b	Potential for significant harm to vulnerable children or adults due to failure of services and/or partners to act accountably for safeguarding (escalated to corporate register)	- Volunteering is increasingly part of meeting community needs and it is important to have consistency across the LA in the use of volunteers particularly in respect of HR practices and training.	2018/19	Possible	Major	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that robust systems are in place within the authority to respond to any concerns arising from allegations or organised abuse 	Claire Marchant Chief Officer, SCH		2018/19	Possible	Major	Med	
			2019/20	Possible	Major	Med				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drive the strategic agenda and the associated programme of activities for safeguarding through the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group including undertaking a second review of safeguarding policy and continuing to promote and review safe recruitment practices. 	Claire Marchant Chief Officer, SCH	Service Improvement Plan have a safeguarding section. These are not being routinely evaluated	2019/20	
							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to implement the Children's services improvement programme and related Workforce and Practice Development Action Plan and Commissioning strategy for Children, Young People and their Families 							
						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure safeguarding is reflected in all council service improvement plans and in roles / responsibilities as appropriate 								
2	Potential that the Council does not make sufficient progress in areas of weakness in safeguarding identified by regulators leading to under-performance (escalated to corporate register)	In February 2017 Wales Audit Office issued Statutory recommendations for improvement in the Safeguarding arrangements – Kerbcraft scheme report	2017/18	Possible	Substantial	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To implement the Action Plan established in response to the Safeguarding arrangements – Kerbcraft scheme report approved by Council in March 2017 	Roger Hoggins, Head of Operations	Audit Committee received a report on the implementation of the Action Plan (Nov 2017). A further report on implementation	2017/18	Possible	Substantial	Med	Roger Hoggins Cllr Bryan Jones
			2018/19	Possible	Substantial	Low				2018/19	Unlikely	Substantial	Low	
			2019/20	Unlikely	Substantial					2019/20	Unlikely	Substantial		

										of the Action Plan will be presented to CYP Select Committee along with the performance data which will thereafter form the basis of annual performance reports to the committee				
3	Potential that staff and volunteers are not recruited safely and begin their appointment without DBS checks having been completed resulted in increased risk of harm to vulnerable people	Within a large organisation with devolved responsibility for recruitment and selection there is opportunity for deviation from agreed processes	2017/18 2018/19 2019/20	Likely Likely Likely	Moderate Moderate Moderate	Med Med Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all managers receive SAFE recruitment training. Ensure the SBAR system of significant event analysis is understood and being used positively In the event of any deviation from process ensure that an SBAR is completed and analysed by the next meeting of the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group 	Peter Davies. Chief Officer, Resources Claire Marchant Chief Officer Social Care & Health	To date 4 SBAR forms have been received in 2017-18.	2017/18 2018/19 2019/20	Likely Unlikely Unlikely	Moderate Moderate Moderate	Med Low Low	Peter Davies. Cllr Phil Murphy Claire Marchant Cllr Penny Jones
4	Potential that the workforce may not be aware of their duty to report concerns due to do not have up-to-date safeguarding training reducing the opportunities for successful preventative work and early intervention across the whole authority	The National Study of Safeguarding published by WAO in 2015 reported that 84 per cent of employees nationally had not received safeguarding training	2017/18 2018/19 2019/20	Likely Likely Likely	Moderate Moderate Moderate	Med Med Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure robust information systems in place to support accurate reporting of whole workforce training levels Safeguarding is a standard item on the council's induction programme for all new starters Full implementation of volunteering policy Implement the safeguarding training plan to address any gaps in safeguarding training for children and adults at risk through the SAFE self-evaluations 	Peter Davies, Chief Officer, Resources Claire Marchant Chief Officer, Social Care and Health	Data is in place for the majority of teams providing up-to-date information about safeguarding training	2017/18 2018/19 2019/20	Likely Unlikely Unlikely	Moderate Moderate Moderate	Med Low Low	Peter Davies Cllr Phil Murphy Claire Marchant

5	Potential that the council and its partners are not doing everything they can to keep vulnerable people safe	Improved outcomes for vulnerable people children can only be achieved and sustained when people and organisations work together to design and deliver more integrated services around people's needs	2017/18	Possible	Substantial	Med	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wide range of services represented on the whole authority safeguarding group to ensure it is seen as everyone's responsibility and give appropriate priority Increase the connections and partners who are working as part of place-based working together 	Claire Marchant. Chief Officer Social Care and Health		2017/18	Possible	Substantial	Med	Cllr Penny Jones
			2018/19	Possible	Substantial	Med				2018/19	Unlikely	Substantial	Low	
			2019/20	Possible	Substantial					2019/20	Unlikely	Substantial	Low	

Appendix 3

Good Governance - Action Plan

- Strengthen and evidence links between the work of the national and regional Safeguarding Boards and practice within Monmouthshire.
- Strengthen alignment of safeguarding risk management systems at every level of the organisation through:
 - reviewing the quality of SAFE self- evaluation across all directorates to ensure that resulting action plans address the critical safeguarding issues for each service area and priority actions are reflected in SIPs;
 - ensuring the SBAR system of significant event analysis is understood, being used positively and risks highlighted are reflected in risk registers at directorate level as well as whole authority and WASG
 - testing out the effectiveness of arrangements in the 2018/19 internal audit work programme.

Safe Workforce - Action Plan

- Implementation of safeguarding training plan to address the gaps in safeguarding training for children and adults at risk through the SAFE self-evaluations
- Full implementation of volunteering policy
- Implementation of information systems to support accurate reporting of whole workforce
- Professional allegations processes to align across adult and children's services.

Preventative Approach - Action Plan

- Implement fully the early support and referral pathway
- Continue to build on the strengths of place based working by increasing the connections and partners who are working together to support individual and community well-being.
- Develop evaluative measures that enable better reporting of the impact of preventative work

Robust Protection - Action Plan

- Children and adult Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit to develop an operating model which builds on strengths in both parts of the service
- Continue to improve outcomes in children's services through the children's services improvement programme, including improving systems, processes and practice which contribute to timescales for completion of assessments.
- Implementation, and quality assurance of, risk framework in children's services.
- Further develop quality assurance mechanisms, and data analysis, in adult protection, to support improvement.

Safe Services - Action Plan:

- Internal audit to undertake review to baseline position across the authority in terms of commissioning and partnership
- Integrated Social Care and Health Commissioning Service to implement operating model covering adult and children's services
- Implement internal audit action plans for children's services placements and volunteering.

Regional Strategic Safeguarding Structure Appendix 4

