

SUBJECT:	Annual Safeguarding Evaluation Report 2024/25 (Self-Assessment)
MEETING:	Full Council
DATE:	4th December 2025
DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED:	All

1. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is:

- To evaluate the progress of Monmouthshire County Council's key safeguarding priorities during 2024 / 2025 through self-assessment, highlighting progress, identifying risks and setting out actions and priorities for 2025 – 2026.
- To inform 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 Members about the progress made towards meeting the standards in the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy approved by Council in July 2017, amended July 2022 and January 2024.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

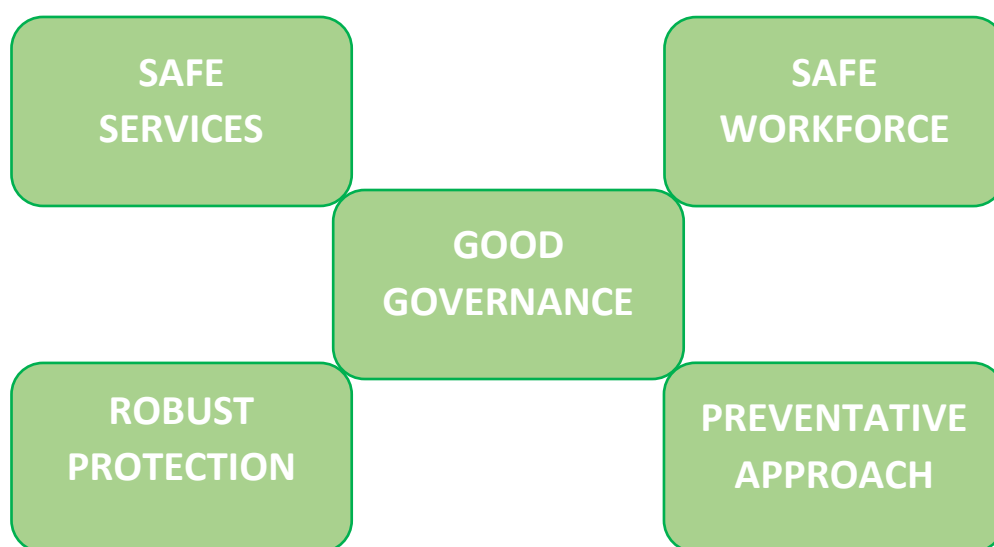
- For Council to receive and endorse the Annual Safeguarding Report 2024 /2025.
- That Council tasks the Strategic Director for Social Care, Safeguarding and Health to maintain focus on the priority actions as set out in the Whole Authority Safeguarding Action Plan.

3. KEY ISSUES:

- 3.1 Monmouthshire County Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy, which covers duties for both children and adults at risk in line with the Social Services and Wellbeing [Wales] Act [2014] and Wales Safeguarding Procedures, underpins this evaluation report. The analysis reflects progress against priority areas set out within the policy and the previous year's action plan and forms an integral part of the continual development of Safeguarding practice across the Council.
- 3.2 This period (April 2024- March 2025) has seen ongoing demand pressures across services and within partner agencies. Nevertheless, safeguarding has remained a foremost priority. The Council's commitment to safeguarding is evident through its reviews of policies, updated training, the preventative and

proactive approach to emerging issues and effective collaboration with regional partners.

- 3.3 Safeguarding practice across the council continues to evolve and develop as services change and as new safeguarding challenges and trends emerge. Each directorate is required to undertake their own self-assessment through completing a SAFE [Safeguarding Assessment Framework for Evaluation] and there are plans to enhance this process through digitalization. The report sets out updated information regarding core safeguarding practice in the sections covering 'robust protection' and 'safe workforce', as well as the array of wider council services that contribute to ensuring the wellbeing and safeguarding of residents in the section on the 'preventative approach'.
- 3.4 Areas for specific focus over the year ahead include ensuring that we progress with the implementation of the National Training Standards across the Council; complete the digitalization of the SAFEs; contribute to regional development of practice related to 'managing practitioner concerns' and continuing to use data and develop good practice around emerging themes. Priority actions are continued within the Action Plan which is implemented by the Safeguarding Unit and overseen by WASG.
- 3.5 As in previous years, the report is constructed around 5 pillars of safeguarding. Each section offers a statement of "what good looks like" which is agreed within the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group [WASG] based on experience, professional judgement, and recognised good practice.



- 3.6 The corporate scoring framework is used to provide an overall judgement of effectiveness between 1 [major weaknesses] and 6 [excellent / outstanding]. The self-assessment score is agreed by the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group [WASG] through critical challenge and on the basis of evidence reviewed

to date. This year, the self-assessed scores remained the same as the previous year, aside from a half-point uplift for 'preventative approaches'.

3.7 To balance the self-assessment process the WASG triangulates data and evidence through drawing on a number of sources of information including:

- (1) National checkpoint data and local dashboard data.
- (2) Specific Inspections including Monmouthshire County Council Performance Evaluation Inspection Children's Services (Feb 2024) and Improvement Check visit to Monmouthshire County Council adult services (April 2025)
- (3) Progress against the Action Plan set following Care Inspectorate Wales Inspection of Children Services Feb 24
- (4) Service led performance data within Children and Adults Safeguarding Teams
- (5) Regional safeguarding data via the Safeguarding Board (which helps to track trends and highlight issues / benchmark against regional data)
- (6) Quarterly Safeguarding reports produced by Independent Reviewing Officers.
- (7) Information arising from Internal Audit

3.8 The current self-assessment is set out below:

SELF ASSESSMENT SCORES:

CORNERSTONE	April – September 2017	October 2017 – March 2018	April 2018 – March 2019	April 2019 – March 2020	April 2020 – March 2021	April 2021 – March 2022	April 2022 – March 2023	April 2023 – March 2024	April 2024 – March 2025
GOOD GOVERNANCE	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
SAFE WORKFORCE	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	4
PREVENTATIVE APPROACH	3	4	4	4	5	4	4	4/5	5
ROBUST PROTECTION	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	5	5
SAFE SERVICES	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4

3.9 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

4. OPTIONS APPRAISAL:

Not applicable to this report

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Safeguarding progress is reported on an annual basis to full Council.

6. REASONS:

Safeguarding vulnerable people is central to the Council and requires strong leadership and governance. An evaluation of Safeguarding within Monmouthshire County Council is, therefore, reported to the Council on an annual basis.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

There are no new resource implications to this report.

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

This report is critically concerned with the effectiveness of Safe/guarding in Monmouthshire County Council.

9. CONSULTEES:

- Members of the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group [WASG]
- Chief Officer for Social Care, Safeguarding and Health

The draft report was presented to Performance & Overview Committee on 23rd September 2025. In light of the discussion and feedback received the report has been updated as follows:

- The categories for Professional Concerns Meetings described as "other" and "inappropriate conduct" have been further clarified in the report.
- Additional context is provided regarding the introduction of Harmful Sexual Behaviour [HSB] meetings.
- We have adjusted the report to better reflect the local position from the Youth Offending Service [YOS] and Education regarding the risk of knife crime/carrying of weapons.
- The cover report makes reference to the self-assessed nature of the evaluation.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Corporate Safeguarding Policy

11. AUTHOR:

Head of Children's Services – Diane Corrister

Safeguarding and Early Help Service Manager – Jess Scarisbrick

12. CONTACT DETAILS:

dianecorrister@monmouthshire.gov.uk

jessicascarisbrick@monmouthshire.gov.uk