

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET EXECUTIVE

For Cabinet 23rd May 2023

For Health and Care Scrutiny 2nd June 2023

For Governance and Audit 23rd June 2023

REPORT AUTHOR: Nina Davies, Interim Director of Social Services and Housing

SUBJECT: Corporate Safeguarding Board Activity Update

REPORT FOR: Information

1. Introduction

1.1 Cabinet is asked to note this update from the Corporate Safeguarding Board.

1.2 The Corporate Safeguarding Board last met on 16th March 2023; this report summarises the information provided at that meeting.

2. Agenda discussions

2.1 Update on Safeguarding Audits and Action Plan

Progress was reviewed against the Action Plan developed from the recommendations in the Wales Audit Office Safeguarding Audit Report, published in December 2022.

It was noted that an Action Plan was drafted, and work started ahead of receiving the Report. Five additional actions were proposed and accepted for inclusion.

The Action Plan will now be built into the Regulatory Tracker and be reported on during Quarterly Performance Meetings and by the Governance and Audit Committee.

2.2 Feedback from Scrutiny and Cabinet

Feedback from Health and Care Scrutiny on 27th January 2023 and Cabinet on 7th February 2023 was shared with the Board.

Feedback from Governance and Audit Committee's consideration of the Wales Audit Office Safeguarding Report, recommendations and the resultant Action Plan on 9th February was also considered.

The Board were advised that Governance and Audit Committee were keen to have sight of the Board's Activity updates in future, as well as Cabinet and Scrutiny.

2.3 Service Corporate Safeguarding Audit/Self Assessments

The Board were informed that each Service area are in the process of completing a Safeguarding Audit as part of their Annual Self-Assessment Workbook.

These will be considered at the Self-Assessment Panels in April and May, after which the information will be integrated into the Authority's overall Self-Assessment Report, pending review by Governance and Audit and then submission to Welsh Government.

The Self-Audit looks at how robust the policies and practice are, how safe the service environment is and how safe the culture is with Red/Amber/Green RAG rating.

2.4 Safeguarding in Contract Management

The Board were advised that a new robust four-tiered approach to contract management framework is being developed, which will be supported by workshops and training.

Research is underway looking at other Local Authorities' approach to communicating expectations with their supply base and defining the safeguards and standards required. When clear and finalised, this will be communicated to live contracts and be embedded into future tendering processes with planned roll out in April 2023.

The new Commercial Performance and Risk Board will be monitoring the roll out of the new contract management approach, with performance captured on the commercial dashboard that is being developed to allow reporting, governance and scrutiny.

2.5 Work Around Child Performance and Child Employment

The Board were informed that Welsh Government had reminded Local Authorities in 2022 of their statutory duties in respect of this matter, which is rooted in 90-year-old legislation. Guidance has been updated since in respect of Child Performance Licences, Child Work Permits and Chaperone Licences.

There is a lack of knowledge and understanding in the Authority, organisations, employers and the public in respect of the legislation and legal requirements. Applications are often made with very little notice and processing time is dependent on the complexity of the application and whether the full range of required information has been provided.

Between April 2022 and January 2023, 19 individual performance licences had been issued, 10 Body of Persons Approvals (BoPA -approval for an organisation putting on a performance, rather than for the individuals taking part

separately), 40 employment permits and 25 chaperone applications had been received.

The Board were informed about next steps, including strengthening cross departmental working, drafting a Policy involving cascade of that information via comms and social media, linking with community child performance groups, clarification of employment bylaws including determining powers to enter and inspect, strengthen the chaperone process by adding an annual review (in addition to the application, references, DBS and safeguarding training).

2.6 Reports by Exception were provided as below

a) Young People's Housing (16/17 year olds):

This report was accepted with no further questions.

The Board were informed that a gradual reduction in homelessness is being seen, and there were no families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation at the time of the meeting.

b) Elective Home Education:

The Board were informed that numbers of electively home educated children has increased to more than 300. This figure is partly due to some learners not returning to a school setting since the pandemic and partly because some families registering as electively home educating due to the Resource Grant being made available. Numbers are expected to alter towards the summer as some learners reach school leaving age.

The Board were advised that Welsh Government will be issuing Guidance for the new financial year arising from a court case, with a subtle shift from it being Powys County Council's responsibility to ascertain a suitable education is in place, to its being the parent's duty to evidence it is in place.

c) Mandatory Safeguarding Training, including VAWDASV

The Board were informed that compliance with mandatory Safeguarding Training has increased from 44.3% in July 2022 to 81.1% at the time of the meeting.

The Board was also advised that compliance with VAWDASV training is improving and ahead of our regional partners. Compliance sat at 80% at the time the report was written for Board and had increased to 82.1% at the time of the meeting.

d) Adult Social Care Safeguarding Performance including Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.

This report was accepted with no further questions.

The Board were informed there is no further update from Welsh Government in respect of the shift from Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards to Liberty Protection Safeguards.

e) Childrens Social Services Safeguarding Performance

The Board were informed that demand at the Front Door continues to increase, but child protection numbers have decreased due to intervention and support services.

The Board discussed the type and location of the placements where the thirteen asylum-seeking children and young people are currently being looked after and how this meets their needs. The Board were informed this number is likely to increase and how this might be managed in terms of the Closer to Home policy, given these children and young people's particular needs and placement availability.

2.7 Future Agenda Items are currently to include

- Programming of the newly proposed 'Safeguarding Theme of the Month'
- Preparations for the annual National Safeguarding Week (in November)
- Annual Private Fostering Report
- Service Safeguarding Audits (from Self-Assessment)
- Progress update regarding Safeguarding in Contract Management
- Progress update regarding Child Performance Licences and Child Employment Permits
- Feedback from National Safeguarding Week

2.8 Other business included

a) Information about Reporting of Damp and Mould in PCC Housing Stock. The Board were advised this matter had been of national media interest, so the Housing Officers worked with the Tenant Scrutiny Panel to collate this information. (See Appendix A)

b) Young People's Safeguarding Animation <https://youtu.be/SpFhqUfDPaQ>

4. Future Corporate Safeguarding Board Meetings

4.1 Future meetings are scheduled for 8th June, 15th September, 14th December 2023 and 14th March 2024.

Recommendation:	Reason for Recommendation:
Cabinet receives this briefing as an update from the Chair of the Corporate Safeguarding Board.	To ensure Cabinet are fully sighted on work to date.

Relevant Policy (ies):	Corporate Safeguarding Policy		
Within Policy:	Y	Within Budget:	Y

Relevant Local Member(s):	All elected Members.
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Person(s) To Implement Decision:	N/A
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Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	N/A
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Is a review of the impact of the decision required?	N
If yes, date of review	N/A
Person responsible for the review	N/A
Date review to be presented to Portfolio Holder / Cabinet for information or further action	N/A

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For Information – to raise awareness

- about the difference between damp and condensation,
- of the reporting processes when damp or mould is seen during home visits to Powys Council house tenants.

Differences between damp and condensation.

Web address <https://en.powys.gov.uk/article/13445/The-difference-between-damp-and-condensation>

What to do when a tenant raises concerns about damp or mould

In the first instance all concerns about damp or mould should be reported to the repairs service so that issues are recorded, responded to correctly and that progress can be tracked.

Repairs for Council Housing should be reported via:

- ☺ Email: powys-repairs@powys.gov.uk
- ☺ Phone: 01597 827464
- ☺ [Ask for a council housing repair - Powys County Council](#)

With regard to private sector tenancies, the website link does give the option of reporting this to our Environmental Health Officers – so I would ask that in these circumstances please could you ask them to use this route.

[For further clarification](#), please contact:

Julie Heighway julie.heighway@powys.gov.uk

Resources Team Leader, Housing

Telephone 01597 827107 Housing One No. 01597 827464