

**Powys County Council
Governance and Audit Committee Template**

Committee:	Governance and Audit Committee
Date:	29 September 2023
Subject:	Corporate Safeguarding Board Activity Report, regarding June meeting.

1. Who will be the Lead Officer(s) / Lead Cabinet Member(s) presenting the report?

Name:	Role:
Nina Davies	Interim Director of Social Services and Housing
Councillor Church	Portfolio Holder for a Safer Powys

2. Why is the Committee being asked to consider the subject?

To scrutinise the way the Corporate Safeguarding Board monitors safeguarding across the whole Council, and progress against the Action Plan.

3. Role of the Committee:

The role of the Committee in considering the subject is to:
To read and note contents of the update regarding the Corporate Safeguarding Board, scrutinise the work and its impact, and provide constructive challenge to the Council about its safeguarding activity in an impartial and independent manner.

4. Key Questions:

What Key areas should the Committee focus on:
Summary of most recent Corporate Safeguarding Board activity including updates about work in progress, achievements, and action plans.

Key Feeders (tick all that apply)

Strategic Risk	x	Cabinet Work Plan	
Director / Head of Service Key Issue	x	External / Internal Inspection	x
Existing Commitment / Annual Report	x	Performance / Finance Issue	
Suggestion from Public		Referral from Council / Committee	
Corporate Improvement Plan		Impacting Public / other services	
Service Integrated Business Plan			
Suggestion from Members			
Partnerships			

Key Impact (tick all that apply)

Policy Review		Performance	x
Informing Policy Development		Evidence Gathering	
Risk		Corporate Improvement Plan	
Service Integrated Business Plan		Partnerships	
Pre-Decision Scrutiny		Finance / Budget	

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET EXECUTIVE

For Cabinet 1st August 2023

For Health and Care Scrutiny 22nd September 2023

For Governance and Audit 29th September 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 met on 8th June 2023; this report summarises the information provided at that meeting.

2. Agenda discussions

2.1 Review of Progress against actions on Safeguarding Regulatory Tracker

The four actions on the tracker with a completion date that had passed were reviewed. The Board noted:

- The action requiring the publication of Lead Officer and Lead Member for Safeguarding's roles and responsibilities had been completed, so this action could be closed.
- The action requiring the Volunteer (Safer Recruitment) Policy was completed pending a few minor amendments; once completed this would be circulated to the Board, and the action closed.
- Actions relating the gathering of contractual monitoring information from services regarding their monitoring and address of safeguarding issues, and the clarification of Powys expectations of contracts regarding safeguarding training had taken longer than expected so the deadline reframed to end August.

[Quarterly Reporting - Corporate Regulatory Tracker 2022-2023 - 2022-2023 \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

2.2 Feedback from Cabinet, Health and Care Scrutiny and Governance and Audit Committee.

The Board were informed that the Activity Report arising from the March meeting was considered at the meetings below, with the resultant comments.

2.2.1 Cabinet on 23rd May accepted the report, noting the progress of the Actions in the Regulatory Tracker.

2.2.2 Health and Care Scrutiny on 2nd June requested that:

- a) the Elective Home Education Lead attends a future Scrutiny to explain the themes around children being educated at home. This was agreed.
- b) the Contracts and Procurement Lead attends a future Scrutiny to update on the changes in contract management. This was agreed.
- c) Safer Internet Usage could be a Safeguarding Theme of the Month, and that other methods of communication should/could be used including schools, town and community councils, leisure centres, County Councillors. This was agreed.
- d) The statistics about mandatory safeguarding training compliance in the future should include school staff and volunteers. The processes around this will be explored.

Scrutiny had asked what timeframe is set for staff to complete the mandatory training within – the Board were advised there is a two-week deadline.

Scrutiny had asked how staff without access to computers access the mandatory training. Organisational Development Professional Lead was tasked with providing a Briefing on this. The Board were informed that hard copies had been provided successfully to staff and additionally the training was delivered at different times of day to suit their work pattern, both with positive outcomes; the following stats were provided

Catering and Cleaning	@ 1st Jan = 44.7%	@ 1st June = 85.8%
HTR	@ 1st Jan = 67.8%	@ 1st June = 96.6%

Scrutiny would like the Safeguarding Action Plan to be added to future Activity Reports. This was agreed – see 2.1 above.

2.2.3 The feedback from the Governance and Audit Committee on 23rd June (on the March Board Activity Report) will be fed into the September Board.

2.3 SWAP DBS Audit

The Board were provided with the Audit Report and Appendices. An Officer for SWAP Audit attended the meeting and confirmed the DBS Team gave high assurance, but some other areas gave a more limited assurance (Taxis, Foster Carers, Procurement) with improvements needed.

The Heads of Service responsible in those areas confirmed that remedial actions had been identified, agreed and had been or were in the process of being implemented. It was noted that the Actions from the DBS Audit will be incorporated into the Regulatory Tracker.

2.4 Safeguarding Audits/Self Assessments.

The Board were informed that further work was needed to analyse the information collated from the Safeguarding Audit section of Services' Self-Assessment.

To note at this stage

- Heads of Service had completed the template differently.
- Not all questions were relevant for every service area.
- Heads of Service had allocated a series of actions for themselves, lots of communication and reminders to staff will result.

As a result, the questions, potential inclusion of a moderation facility, document set up and guidance, needs review. This will be discussed at a future Board.

2.5 Preparations for National Safeguarding Week

Preparations for this event in November 2023 are in the early stages. Powys are hosting the National Safeguarding Conference on 16th November, with the theme being 'Safeguarding in Rural

Communities'. Communications Team will link with the Safeguarding Leads around promotion and communications for this event.

2.6 Safeguarding Theme of the Month

Many cross-cutting themes were suggested as potentially suitable for the programme, including alignment with national awareness raising weeks. The suggestions were to be drafted into a table. The Board agreed subjects should be bite size to promote accessibility and understanding given the scope and variety of potential audiences.

2.7 Annual Private Fostering Report

The Board were informed that Private Fostering Arrangements fall within childcare legislation. This applies to any child under the age of 16 who moves into another household outside of their immediate family, such as that of a friend, for longer than 28 days. The Board were informed that the Local Authority has statutory duties to assess, undertake DBS checks and visit to ensure a child is safe and their needs are being met.

There have only been two private fostering arrangement notifications in the last twelve months, with two arrangements in place at the present time. Awareness raising is key, but the Board noted this should be to promote a sense of support and good outcomes rather than statutory intrusion. Guidance and support is available for social workers undertaking this less common area of work. The Private Fostering Report is to be circulated to all Councillors to increase their awareness and understanding.

2.8 Reports by Exception were provided as below:

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

The Board discussed options for young people who are homeless and the challenges therein, in particular Bed and Breakfast accommodation. It reflected on real life examples where this type of accommodation may be the 'least-worst' option for a young person, promoting their safety and better outcomes in comparison to other options that may increase their vulnerability.

The Board were informed that Housing Development Business Cases were being progressed to broaden the scope of creative housing options that may assist.

b) Elective Home Education:

The Board were informed that the Welsh Government Guidance on this matter had now been received, which will allow reflection on relevant and appropriate service developments.

c) Mandatory Safeguarding Training, including VAWDASV

The Board were informed that all service areas have increased their compliance with both Safeguarding and VAWDASV mandatory training.

The Board discussed that Childrens Services show a lower compliance (82%) than other service areas. The Service had reflected on whether their workers should in fact complete this training, given the raft of other safeguarding training they have to complete; but determined they would continue as it covers the basics and adult safeguarding. Compliance is being addressed through supervision sessions.

It was noted that the VAWDASV 'Ask and Act' training 91% compliance rate compares extremely favourably with other Authorities.

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

The Board were informed that the Appointeeship and Deputyship Unit had received a positive outcome report following the inspection by the Office of the Public Guardian. This shows the work the quality of work and rigour needed to comply with the Office of the Public Guardian standards.

e) Childrens Social Services Safeguarding Performance

The Board were informed that whilst some dips had been identified in some areas of performance, the trajectory is showing overall improvement. Numbers of children on the Child Protection Register were low (around 100) in contrast to the twelve months previous.

3. Future Agenda Items, in addition to the standing agenda items, are currently to include

Meeting	Item	Lead
September	Safeguarding in Contract Management – progress update. Volunteer (Safer Recruitment) Policy Safeguarding VLOG for Members & Governors Safeguarding Self-Audits Theme of the Month Update about progress of Preparation for National Safeguarding Week (in Nov)	Prof Lead Procurement & Commercial Services, Commissioning HoS Rachel Evans WOD HoS Education HoS Director of SS & Housing All / Director of SS & Housing Safeguarding Senior Managers, Childrens & Adult Services
December	Feedback on National Safeguarding Week Child Performance Licencing and Child Permits – progress update	Education Manager & Designated Schools Safeguarding Lead
March		
June	Update on prep for National Safeguarding Week (annually, in November) <i>Annual</i> Private Fostering Report Services’ Safeguarding Audits in Self-Assessments	Safeguarding Senior Managers, Childrens & Adult Services each Service Childrens Safeguarding Manager HoS

4. Other business included:

4.1.1 Home Office Anti-Terrorism Notifications.

The Board were informed that the Property, Planning and Public Protection Service had received correspondence regarding the anti-terrorism information sharing processes, in particular relating to notifications about individuals who do / may post a threat that live in Powys. The signing and return of a Memorandum of Communication identifying the Prevent Lead would allow the Home Office to provide Powys with such notifications.

The Board resolved that the Prevent Lead (being a Senior Manager in the Public Protection Team) should receive the notifications.

2.10.2 Safeguarding Fora

The Board were informed that these multi agency learning and development sessions have now resumed (previously stopped by Covid). The first one held recently with 75 delegates looked at the subject of sexually harmful behaviour with an expert guest speaker.

The aim is to run two sessions a year, although this may be more as partner agencies are being encouraged to use the 'Safeguarding Fora' banner to run their own safeguarding learning events.

4. Future Corporate Safeguarding Board Meetings

4.1 Future meetings are scheduled for 15th September, 14th December 2023; 14th March 2024 and 13th June 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
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	N/A

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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