

REPORT TO THE CABINET
(17 December 2013)

Cabinet Member: Councillor R.H. Wyn Williams

Subject: Safeguarding Adults Board

Contact officer: Ann Lloyd Jones, Senior Manager- Elderly Services

Decision sought

The Cabinet is requested to make a decision on the following:-

- Agree to formalise the current shadow procedure, namely establish a Safeguarding Adults Board which would increase the strategic status of Safeguarding Adults in Gwynedd.
 - Agree to a joint Board with Anglesey in accordance with the context of a history of collaboration in this field on a regional, two-tier model.
 - That the role of the Board is to make multidisciplinary decisions and to act and advise on matters involved with safeguarding adults in accordance with the recommendations in the Social Services and Well-being Bill.
 - Agree to the regional two-tier model being proposed.
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Local member's views

Not applicable

Introduction

The purpose of the report is to ensure a robust framework to deliver an effective safeguarding adults agenda on a strategic and operational level for the future. A decision is sought on formalising the arrangements of the 'shadow' Gwynedd and Anglesey Safeguarding Adults Board, the status of the Board and the regional model.

This matter has already been raised as information in a meeting of the Safeguarding Strategic Panel in May this year.

Reasons for recommending the decision

Agreeing on these steps will put the matter of safeguarding adults on an equal stage with safeguarding children and will provide a robust model for safeguarding. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill and Sustainable Social Services for Wales: A Framework for Action brings a different context to safeguarding adults. The current arrangement throughout North Wales is a network arrangement for information-sharing and peer support, and the emerging view is that there is a need to move the safeguarding adult agenda to a robust regional framework. Part 7 of the Bill which relates to safeguarding notes clearly the requirements for Safeguarding Adults Boards to be developed with the following objectives of safeguarding adults that:-

- Have care and support needs (whether or not the local authority is meeting those needs), and
- Are experiencing, or are at risk of abuse or neglect, and
- To prevent those adults within its area from being at risk of abuse or neglect.

To coincide with these recommendations, there was a need to respond to the following challenges:

1. Ensure clear and robust regional strategic leadership in matters relating to safeguarding vulnerable adults.
2. Set up arrangements that:
 - 2.1 Ensure local ownership of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult agenda.
 - 2.2 Facilitate closer co-working with the Children and Young People Safeguarding agenda – which will in time lead to the joining of the two strategic agendas.

To this end, it was decided to establish a North Wales Regional Safeguarding Board for Vulnerable Adults with the Local Authorities forming the following Sub-Boards: Conwy and Denbighshire; Flint and Wrexham; Gwynedd and Môn. As regards Gwynedd and Môn, we already had arrangements in place in the shape of the Gwynedd and Môn Safeguarding Forum since 2000 and therefore the transition to a Shadow Board was more natural.

However, there are elements of safeguarding adults that could actually be achieved regionally; for example, training, performance and audit, policy and serious case reviews. This structure would strike a balance between working regionally and being able to work effectively across boundaries, whilst continuing to maintain local connections.

Relevant considerations

The two-tier option is favoured because:

- The model allows structures to be developed in a way which strikes an acceptable, well-managed balance between local and national agendas.
- It maintains the ability to be responsive to local matters and customs.
- Regional elements of safeguarding adults could create a higher profile and increase the level of influence the North Wales Board has regionally and nationally.
- This model would be easier to manage for the organisations across North Wales.
- It strengthens the North Wales agenda for collaboration.
- There would be the same models for adults and children safeguarding boards.
- Over time, this model could offer an opportunity to combine some common fields of safeguarding practices across children and adults services.
- This model could offer an opportunity for integrated business support to underpin safeguarding children and adults across North Wales.

A successful bid was submitted to the Regional Collaboration Fund which includes a Project Manager post to support this development on a regional level. The funding will be available for three years.

A bid has been submitted on a Corporate level for a Business Manager post and administrative support for the Gwynedd and Môn Adult Safeguarding Board on the basis of 60% Gwynedd and 40% Môn – the sum for Gwynedd is £38,600. The bid is for a transitional period of a year to allow time to jointly review the administrative support of the Children Safeguarding Board. It may also be possible to take further advantage of the regional funding because the developments in Gwynedd and Môn are more advanced in comparison with the other North Wales Authorities – this is yet to be confirmed.

Next steps and timetable

- Move ahead with the Safeguarding Adults Board and the operational plan.
- Plan the Regional Board jointly with the counties of North Wales.

Views of the statutory officers

Chief Executive:

This development is clearly important in terms of collaboration in key areas of safeguarding vulnerable adults and the proposals in the report are welcome. As the report notes, a bid has been submitted for temporary resources to fund specific work. Obviously, the Cabinet cannot express an opinion on the bid without seeing all the other bids competing for attention and this will not happen until the new year. So, while welcoming the recommendations, the Cabinet should note that a second look at the work programme may be necessary should the bid be successful.

Monitoring Officer:

The report will formalize arrangements already in existence on an informal basis and is a means of keeping the operational decisions at the local level while dealing with more strategic issues on a regional level. This separation in arrangements is suitable for the purpose of considering new legislative duties in relation to safeguarding adults

Head of Finance Department:

I understand that the Cabinet could decide to formalize the Safeguarding Adults Board procedure in collaboration between Gwynedd and Anglesey without committing to additional costs, although a bid has been submitted to strengthen these arrangements. These arrangements would fit in to the North Wales regional procedure already in place and resourced from the Regional Co-operation Fund

Director of Social Services:

The steps outlined in this report for developing the area of safeguarding vulnerable adults in North Wales and locally with Anglesey are to be welcomed. It is believed that regional resources can be combined and shared in relation to specific aspects of the work such as raising the profile and ensuring suitable training ensuring, at the same time, worthy attention and response to local matters. Forming this Board is a natural development jointly with Anglesey. I recommend the development

Appendices