

Annual Report of the Strategic Safeguarding Panel

2016/17

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Members will be aware that the Council gives high priority to safeguarding and has included it within the Strategic Plan. The Members will be also be aware that the Strategic Children and Adults Safeguarding Panel was established to provide assurance to the Cabinet and the Statutory Director of the efficiency of our safeguarding and protection arrangements as a Council.
- 1.2 Therefore, the purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the Panel's work for 2016/17 along with a summary of the opinion of external inspectors of our arrangements. In addition, it will also summarise our intentions for 2017/18 for information.
- 1.3 Councillor Mair Rowlands chaired the Panel during the year and she was supported by Morwena Edwards, the Statutory Director with responsibility for safeguarding. Councillor Gareth Roberts and Councillor Gareth Thomas are also Panel Members due to their responsibilities within adults and childrens services. In terms of Officers, a number of Heads of Department are Panel members (such as Education, Adults, Children and Corporate Support) and the Monitoring Officer is also a member of the panel.
- 1.4 An Operational Group exists to support the work of the panel. The purpose of this Group is to implement the work programme and deal with operational matters. The Group's membership includes the safeguarding champions from each of the Council's departments. The Chair of the Operational Group also serves on the Strategic Panel.
- 1.5 The main focus of the above arrangements is to ensure that the Council's corporate safeguarding procedures are effective and robust. It is worth noting that there is also an intention to expand the Panel's focus and responsibility to include counter terrorism duties, recognising and preventing radicalization duties, modern slavery requirements, domestic violence requirements and Social Inclusion Requirements. This will ensure that the Panel has an overview of the wider safeguarding agenda which exists to make best use of the safeguarding operational group and the officers who are champions in the above fields.
- 1.6 Other arrangements exist, such as the Regional Safeguarding Boards for Children and Vulnerable Adults, to deal with specialised issues within the field. These Boards are statutory and operate across agencies, with specific and legal responsibilities. The Council has a responsibility to contribute to these Boards regionally in terms of implementation. At the end of this report there is a link to the Annual Reports of these Safeguarding Boards.
- 1.7 The Corporate Director is required to consistently and regularly report upon Safeguarding matters to members. It is our intention to report upon the progress within the safeguarding field every six months. This report looks at the 2016/17 period. The next Progress report will be submitted to members in November/December 2017 and the annual report will be submitted in May 2018.

2. What has been achieved during the 2016/17.

Field of work	Action / Result	Status
D1- Ensure Whole Council Ownership in the Safeguarding Field		
Review Policies and procedures every year	<p>Every department has reviewed its departmental policies.</p> <p>Review of the Corporate Policy has not been completed as we are still awaiting the publication of part seven of the Social Services and Well-being Act's code of practice.</p>	Task has slipped to the 2017-18 work programme
Ensure that arrangements are in place for measuring the impact of the corporate safeguarding arrangements	<p>Encouraging corporate ownership of the safeguarding field is one of the authority's priorities. Since adopting the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and departmental Safeguarding policies, we have ensured that operating in accordance with the policy impacts on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. An impact measurement framework had been drawn up and submitted to the Panel.</p> <p>A Task Group has also been established to review the Corporate Policy's measures and a collecting/reporting procedure will be introduced within the Strategic Plan for 2017/18.</p>	Has been achieved. Work programme continuing.
Hold awareness raising sessions in the field and monitor their impact	<p>A comprehensive programme to raise awareness has taken place during the year including distributing posters, use of social media. A departmental analysis of the staff who have read and accepted the Safeguarding policy has been undertaken and the designated managers have continuously promoted the policy. A CSE safeguarding reminder session has also been arranged.</p> <p>A training programme has also been arranged that meets the needs of raising awareness in the fields of counter radicalization, CSE, Safeguarding children and adults, safe recruitment and the Social Services and Well-being Act (2014).</p>	Has been achieved
Hold an annual audit of compliance with the policy	An audit of the Understanding and Awareness of Safeguarding has been completed by the	Has been fully achieved

	audit unit which measured the levels of awareness across groups of different jobs across the Council. This year's Audit has shown that there has been an increase in awareness level of the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.	
Monitor contract arrangements (staff and provisions) in terms of safeguarding and strengthen procedures as needed	A DBS audit was completed by the audit unit during the year.	Has been achieved
Ensure that scrutiny Members are aware of the Safeguarding Strategic Panel	Arrangements are in place for Scrutiny Members to receive a report from the Panel every six months.	Has been achieved
D2 Safeguarding Children and Young People		
Ensure that the Council's arrangements coincide with the regional strategy which is being developed on a multi-agency level	The Council is continuing to contribute to the regional work in terms of developing the CSE action plan. A task and finish group, which is led by the police has been established to look at arrangements across the region and in order to identify areas that could be strengthened and improved upon. We are confident that our operational arrangements in the field coincide with the guidelines and procedures and we contribute to the regional action plan.	Has been achieved
Ensure that the Council, as far as possible, understands the demand for services and CSE trends in Gwynedd	The Children and Supporting Families Department has developed systems to collect and store data about cases of CSE in Gwynedd.	Has been achieved. Work programme continuing
Improve the understanding and awareness of individuals and key groups within this specific field, including how to identify the signs.	Training was conducted by an expert in the field, Dr Helen Beckett, and the work is continuing throughout the year to review the SERAF assessment. The Regulatory Department has now introduced a requirement for taxi drivers to complete CSE safeguarding and awareness training before they receive their licence. This complies with the requirements of the regional CSE plan and the local requirement.	Has been achieved
Acknowledge that the risk is higher for looked after children, and work with the Corporate Parenting Panel to try to safeguard the most vulnerable children.	The Children and Supporting Families Department has developed its information systems; this means that the department can better identify the numbers of looked after children who are at risk of CSE; those who need initial work to avoid risks increasing and	Work programme continuing

	remedial work to safeguard them.	
Conduct an annual audit of safeguarding and governance arrangements within the department and schools.	A routine annual audit of safeguarding and governance arrangements in place within the department. The department receives a Governors' Annual Report from every school. These reports feed into the education department's annual safeguarding business plan. A number of other audits have been conducted during the year.	Work programme continuing
Create a training programme to meet the needs of the annual audit.	An 'Practice Improvement Group' has also been established to review the audit's findings and designs ways to improve our practice.	Has been achieved
Implement a work programme in accordance with the recommendations of the annual audit and also consider any opportunities for improvement.	A training programme is in place based on the findings of the annual audits.	Has been achieved, work programme is in place.
D3- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults		
Develop a wide range of different methods for individuals to be heard.	A range of different methods for individuals to be heard need to be developed in response to the Winterbourne Report's recommendations in addition to the Older People's Commissioner's report "Where to Call Home" The Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit's work programme refers to engagement work with service users and carrying out an audit of experiences. We will be working with service users to ensure that sustainable safeguarding plans are in place which are suitable for their needs. The Quality Assurance Officers will engage with residents, individuals who receive home care and their families to get feedback and to identify lessons to be learned.	Work programme in place for 2017/18
Identify whether there is appropriate use of advocacy and try to respond to any shortcomings.	In addition to the above, identifying whether there is appropriate use of advocacy and trying to respond to any shortcomings is needed. The Advocacy service is extensively used when carrying out DoLS work, but it should be ensured that advocacy is offered to individuals who are under the Safeguarding procedure and receiving Services in the Adults field.	Work programme in place for 2017/18

<p>Provide evidence that the corporate groups can demonstrate that they listen to the voices of vulnerable adults.</p>	<p>The Operational Panel for Safeguarding Children and Adults is a Corporate group which meets every quarter. The Panel discusses matters such as Safeguarding and how the Department can take responsibility for listening to the voices of vulnerable adults. The work of reviewing the Corporate Safeguarding Policy will begin in May.</p> <p>A meeting was held with a CSSIW officer at the beginning of March 2017 and, in acknowledging that there was work to do and a challenge ahead of us, the plans for the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Team were described as 'exciting' changes. This feedback is very encouraging at the beginning of a period of change.</p>	<p>Has been achieved.</p>
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3. External Inspections received during the period

3.1 Review of 'A Place to Call Home' (Older People's Commissioner)

During the year, the Adults, Health and Well-being Department has responded to the recommendations in the report of the Older People's Commissioner, 'A Place to Call Home'. Our response shows that we are on the right path but, like every other authority, there is still work to be done, and a range of different methods for individuals to be heard need to be developed. The Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit's work programme refers to engagement work with service users and carrying out an audit of experiences. The unit will be working with service users to ensure that sustainable safeguarding plans are in place which are suitable for their needs. The Quality Assurance Officers will engage with residents, individuals who receive home care and their families to get feedback and to identify lessons to be learned.

3.2 Annual Letter 2016/17 (Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales)

The Council received the Inspectorate's Annual Letter 2016/17 on 13 June. They have made reference to Safeguarding. The Inspectorate recognise the progress that has been made in the adult safeguarding field and in the Learning Disabilities field.

3.3 Annual Letter 2015/16 (Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales)

You will be aware the Inspectorate's Annual Letter 2015 referred to the need to improve the Adults, Health and Well-being Department's vulnerable adult's arrangements and this work has already been identified and incorporated into the strategic plan. The Adults Department has put robust arrangements in place during the year in order to ensure expertise and full

understanding of all the issues involving safeguarding. This enables the Council to be proactive in order to respond appropriately and effectively to concerns as they arise. There has been a general increase in cases involving safeguarding issues recently, however, from discussions with other Authorities within the region, it is clear that we are all in a similar situation. The unit will be fully established by June 2017 and a comprehensive work programme has been developed.

3.4 Inspectorate Report on Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities

In June 2016, the Inspectorate published a report on services for adults with learning disabilities. Since the publication of the report, the Learning Disabilities Service has made substantial progress to modernise the service following the inspection and has jointly developed a clear vision with service users and their families. An exciting programme is in place to ensure a sustainable provision for adults with learning disabilities for the future. The new service has been designed to assist citizens to focus on their strengths and on what they can achieve safely on their own. The Council has secured funding from Welsh Government's Intermediate Fund to develop the new model of service provision that will benefit adults with learning disabilities, located at the Arfon Leisure Centre initially.

4. Practice Reviews

4.1 Wales has developed a Child Practice Review (CPR) framework to improve the culture of learning from child protection cases. 'Brief' or 'extended' reports are in place depending on the circumstances of the child in question. The reports focus on improving practice. During this period, Gwynedd has had two extended practice case reviews (ECPR). Both reviews have ended. The full reports will be available on the North Wales Safeguarding Board's website soon. Full Action Plans have been compiled for both reviews following reconsiderations and achievements against the action plans are being reviewed by the Regional Board, the Statutory Team are also monitoring achievements in order to ensure reflection and learning from the incidents and reviewing practice where needed. The Strategic Safeguarding Panel reviews learning from each Practice Review to ensure that the Council takes necessary actions.

4.2 Likewise, Adult Safeguarding Practice Reviews (APR) are conducted on behalf of the North Wales Safeguarding Adults Board. They are also a method that enables every partner agency to note the lessons that can be learnt from especially complicated or difficult cases of Adult Safeguarding and implement changes to services in response to these lessons. Gwynedd currently has 1 APR case which is about to close (APR Gwynedd 1). This case's full report will be available on the Regional Board's website soon and as with Child Practice Reviews, the Panel will review the learning to ensure the Council takes the necessary actions.

5. The intention looking forward - 2017 and beyond

5.1 As is stated at the beginning of this report, the Council has prioritised and promoted the Safeguarding field within the Strategic Plan by ensuring that it receives cross-departmental consideration and attention from the whole Council - rather than being seen as a responsibility for some departments only. The Safeguarding project will continue to receive attention in the 2017/18 Strategic Plan.

5.2 **D1 Ensure whole Council ownership in the safeguarding field**

5.3 The purpose of the project is to ensure that there is corporate ownership of the safeguarding agenda and that we have effective procedures to safeguard children and vulnerable adults in Gwynedd. Work to raise the awareness of Council staff and members regarding this agenda is ongoing work to ensure that everyone is aware that safeguarding children and vulnerable adults from abuse is a responsibility that falls on everyone.

5.4 By the end of March 2018, we will have:

- Reviewed our policies and procedures to address legislative changes
- Monitored the impact of our actions via the annual awareness survey and the contracts inspection, implemented any recommendations and continued to raise awareness and provide training in the safeguarding field

5.5 D2 Safeguarding children and young people

5.6 The purpose of this project is to continually improve the safeguarding arrangements and culture for children and young people. We will ensure that safeguarding policies and procedures are clearly understood by everyone working within the Education field and respond to the CSE risk across north Wales.

5.7 By the end of March 2018, we will have further strengthened the safeguarding procedures and culture within the field of Education, by:

- Conducting an annual audit of safeguarding and governance arrangements within the department and schools
- Continuing to improve the understanding and awareness of individuals and key groups within this specific field, including how to identify the signs
- Continuing to update the training programme to meet the needs of the annual audit
- Implementing a work programme in accordance with the findings and recommendations of the annual audit and also consider any opportunities for improvement.

5.8 By the end of March 2018, we will have reviewed the Council's arrangements for responding to the risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) by:

- Ensuring that the Council's arrangements coincide with the regional strategy which is being developed on a multi-agency level.
- Continuing to maintain arrangements to collect information about the number of cases, risk and compliance levels and safeguarding processes in the field in order to be aware of the nature of the demand in the field. Improving the understanding and awareness of individuals and key groups within this specific field, including how to identify the signs
- Establishing a multi-agency operational panel to look at individual cases in the field of CSE in order to agree on action that needs to be taken to safeguard individual children and young people. This panel will add value to front-line day to day intervention

5.9 D3 Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults

5.10 The purpose of the project is to continually improve the safeguarding arrangements and culture within the adults field.

5.11 By the end of March 2018, the project will be implementing the aforementioned work programme, and in doing so, will have ensured that we are:

- Developing a range of different methods for individuals to be heard
- Identifying whether there is appropriate use of advocacy and trying to respond to any shortcomings
- Providing evidence that the corporate groups can demonstrate that they listen to the voices of vulnerable adults

6. Strategic Safeguarding Panel for the Future

- 6.1 You will be aware that there is an intention to expand the Strategic Safeguarding Panel's field of work to include counter terrorism and preventing radicalization duties, modern slavery requirements, domestic violence requirements and Social Inclusion Requirements. This will ensure that the Panel has an overview of the wider safeguarding agenda which exists and makes best use of the safeguarding operational group and the officers who are champions in the above fields. Although these areas have not received the Panel's attention during the year, the following information gives an overview of the areas in question.

6.2 CONTEST / PREVENT

- 6.3 The UK Government's Counter Terrorism and Safety Act 2015 introduces a duty on local authorities, schools and colleges as part of their role, to give due attention to the need to prevent people from being attracted to terrorism. The UK Government's PREVENT strategy is one of the four 'CONTEST' strands, the Home Office's broader counter-terrorism strategy, and mainly relates to preventing people from becoming terrorists or from supporting terrorists and violent extremism. The PREVENT strategy specifically:
- Responds to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it.
 - Prevent individuals from being attracted to terrorism and ensuring they receive appropriate advice and assistance.
 - Work with other sectors and institutions where there is a danger of radicalization that needs to be addressed.
- 6.4 The Regional 'CONTEST' Board, which is a multi-agency board with representation from Gwynedd Council, is in place. Morwenna Edwards, Corporate Director represents Gwynedd on the 'CONTEST' Board. The Gwynedd and Anglesey Community Safeguarding Partnership has the responsibility to supervise 'PREVENT' programmes within the partnership's services.
- 6.5 The PREVENT strategy includes developing a wide range of activities including practical assistance, advice and support and during incidents and programmes supporting individuals and institutions to offset malicious ideologies. During the 2016/17 year a comprehensive training programme has been carried out within Gwynedd schools, with most of our schools' staff completing safeguarding children training (level 1 or 2) which includes modules on radicalization.

- 6.6 The 2017/18 PREVENT work programme will focus on running this training for Council staff on every level. E-learning modules have been prepared by the Home Office and have been shared with the Learning and Development Department, and are available to the Council's staff. It will need to be ensured that these learning programmes are available for the Council's workforce.
- 6.7 In addition it is a statutory requirement for us to conduct 'CHANNEL' panels which are multi-agency meetings that focus on supporting people early on who have been recognised as being at risk of being attracted to terrorism. The panel works in a multi-agency method to identify individuals, assess a dangerous nature and develop effective and appropriate ways to support the individuals. In Gwynedd, 'CHANNEL' Panels arrangements are in place and it is encouraging to report that not one referral has reached the need for 'CHANNEL' intervention.

6.8 Violence against Women, domestic abuse and Sexual Violence

- 6.9 The Violence against Women, Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act came into force in 2015. The aim of the act is to improve the response of the public sector in Wales to abuse and violence of this kind. The Act specifically places responsibilities upon Councils to establish a Regional operational structure. To this end, the Regional Strategic Board has been established with Morwenna Edwards, Corporate Director representing the Council on the Board. The Board has appointed a 'Regional Advisor', as is required in the Act and they are now working on a regional transformation program which means that local officers will move to be part of a regional team.
- 6.10 One of the main responsibilities as a result of the Act is the national training framework. The Framework includes six training groups. All public service's professions will belong to one of these groups and it every member of the Council's workforce is required to receive the relevant training. The Welsh Government expected Councils to have completed 50% of the training by the end of the year. This was not achieved for various of reasons including the standard of the Welsh language learning materials being inadequate in addition to technical matters. The Council is working with the Welsh Government to try to overcome these obstacles. Disseminating the training will be a priority for 2017/18.

6.11 Modern Slavery

- 6.12 The Modern Slavery agenda is once again a field of work which is receiving a much higher profile. A regional group leads on this field and Gwynedd Council contributes to this North Wales Group. During the year the Senior Housing Manager, Arwel Owen has been appointed as the Council's Single Point of Contact (SPOC). It is early days for the Regional and training has been arranged for group members in order to better understand how to identify and respond to the problem. The intervention's emphasis is on working together and priority for 2017/18 will be to extend the understanding of specific groups of staff within the Council which are likely to come across modern slavery. In addition, e-learning modules are available to provide training for the whole workforce.

6.13 Social Inclusion

- 6.14 The Welsh Government will be releasing a new Community Inclusion Plan in the coming months. It is likely that Social Inclusion's current themes will continue to be a priority with the 'PREVENT' agenda and changing demographic receiving more attention. North Wales Police and the Police Commissioner (PCC) have published their plan for 2017-18 which includes their Social Inclusion priorities which are Modern Slavery, Safe Communities and 'PREVENT'. The North Wales Safeguarding Communities Board will be considering and deciding upon their priorities for 2017/18.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 This report is presented in order to give an overview of the activities happening within the safeguarding field within the Council. The emphasis of the work is on the fact the safeguarding is a corporate responsibility and not something for the Education Department and Social Services Department only.
- 7.2 Last year's achievements regarding the work programme highlights the Strategic Panel and Operational Group's activity and the hard work which has been done in terms of continuing to improve our corporate safeguarding and protection arrangements. External audits and practice reviews have generally given positive feedback. They have also highlighted elements which could be improved. The specific cases raised also offer opportunities to learn and to improve and review our arrangements.