

PROTOCOL OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

Background

Section 144 of the Act reiterates the requirement for every local authority to appoint an officer, known as the Director of Social Services, for its social services duties. A local authority must appoint a person who can demonstrate the competencies noted by Welsh Government Ministers.

Purpose

The main purpose of this Protocol is to seek to set out the local arrangements to meet the requirements of Part 8 of the Act in one document which is explicit to all. It is believed that doing so will ensure that every relevant person within the authority understands the requirements of them within the Act in relation to the Role of the Director of Social Services.

The Code of Practice has been used as part of the Protocol in order to cross-reference the requirements and what will happen in Gwynedd clearly and explicitly for all.

Therefore, the Protocol sets out the need in terms of our conduct and practice in relation to Part 8 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014.

[The Code of Practice will be in normal type whilst the Council's response to the requirements will be in italic type.]

[Paragraph 1 - 16 of the Code of Practice offers an introduction only.]

Role in executive structure of the local authority (para 17 - 19)

The following is set out within the Code of Practice:-

17. The director of social services must have a sufficient level of seniority to discharge the authority's social services functions and deliver their accountabilities. This level of authority must be well understood by relevant officers and councillors
18. Regardless of the executive structural arrangements put in place by a local authority, the director of social services must always be a member of the corporate management team and have direct access, and directly report to, the head of paid service and councillors.
19. Membership of the corporate management team is the formal mechanism that enables the director of social services to contribute to the vision and direction of the council and ensure services seek to promote the well-being of people with care and support needs.

➤ ***Gwynedd Council arrangements to respond to the above***

The role of the Director of Social Services has been placed within the post of one of the Corporate Directors. The Corporate Director is accountable directly to the Chief Executive, or the Head of Paid Service, and the role of the Corporate Director, who has statutory responsibility for social services, is entirely clear to members and officers and is noted within the structural information on the Council's website and in written information.

The Corporate Directors are members of the Corporate Management Team and this allows this specific Director, in the statutory role, to ensure that they can influence the vision and direction of the Council in terms of matters involving the well-being and care requirements of individuals.

Relationships with the Head of Paid Service and other Senior Officers (para 20 - 27)

20. The director of social services must report directly to the head of paid service. The head of paid service does not appoint the director of social services but is likely to have a role in this process.
21. The head of paid service must maintain a strong oversight of arrangements and ensure social services are viewed as a corporate priority. The head of paid service has a pivotal role in enabling the director of social services to deliver the local authority's social services functions and must ensure that corporate infrastructure supports them with their statutory accountabilities.
22. The relationship between the head of paid service and the director of social services must be properly agreed and appropriately communicated to councillors, officers and partners. This must be underpinned in governance and delegation documents that should be subject to periodic review.
23. Accountability and governance arrangements must provide the ability for the head of paid service to detect and ensure correction of any systemic and ongoing breakdown in the standards and quality of care and support services.
24. As a member of the corporate management team, a director of social services may be required to consider overall resource implications, including budgetary issues. The head of paid service and the director of social services have a responsibility to ensure councillors have clear advice on the level of resources required for a local authority to effectively deliver its social services functions.
25. Defined working arrangements must also be put in place between the director of social services and other senior officers within the local authority to ensure the accountabilities of the director of social services are met. Any sharing of these responsibilities should also be explicitly negotiated and clearly communicated.

26. The effectiveness of defined arrangements in supporting the discharge of the functions of a director of social services must be regularly evaluated.
27. The individual designated as the director of social services may simultaneously undertake other roles within the local authority, including lead director for children and young people. (Further reference to the relationship between the director of social services and the lead director for children and young people's services where these roles are held separately is made in paragraphs 49 to 51). Local authorities must however be satisfied that additional responsibilities do not negatively affect the ability of an individual to discharge the functions of a director of social services.

➤ **Gwynedd Council arrangements to respond to the above**

The Director of Social Services reports directly to the Chief Executive. Arrangements are also in place to ensure that the Chief Executive is a key part of the process to appoint the Director of Social Services.

Weekly meetings of the Corporate Management Team are held where the Director of Social Services is able to raise any issues about the field.

In addition, every 6-8 weeks the Chief Executive is required to meet individually with the Director of Social Services to discuss relevant issues. These meetings are known as "care field governance meetings". During these meetings, important issues within the care field are discussed and the Director of Social Services is required to share any concerns with the Chief Executive. The Director of Social Services should use performance and risk register information from the Adults and Children Departments. The Chief Executive will also use this opportunity to discuss with the Director of Social Services any problem in terms of workload and any obstacles which could exist in terms of fulfilling the role.

Over and above the aforementioned arrangements, the Director of Social Services is required to inform the Chief Executive if any issues of concern are raised between these meetings.

In addition, at the Strategic Safeguarding Panel there is a standing item on the agenda which gives members of the panel an opportunity to share relevant information with the Director of Social Services.

Heads of Service (para 28 - 29)

- 28 Proper accountabilities must be in place for all social services staff, whether or not they are directly managed by a director of social services. Within the parameters of the local authority, a director of social services may seek to structure social services departments in a way that places responsibility for the delivery of services with others. Whilst responsibility for the delivery of certain social services functions may, for example, be placed with heads of services for adults and heads of service for children and families, accountability for these functions still rests with the director of social services.
- 29 Where responsibility for the delivery of any part of social services is outside the direct line management of the director of social services, there must still be regular liaison between the director of social services and that head of service. Written framework documents must set out clearly how responsibilities have been put in place that ensure the effective discharge of social services functions.

➤ **Gwynedd Council arrangements to respond to the above**

The Council has two Departments which are directly involved with social services matters, namely the Children and Supporting Families Department and the Adults, Health and Well-being Department. There is a head of department for each one, and the heads are responsible for the services within their departments. Nevertheless, the Director of Social Services remains accountable for these work fields. The job descriptions set out clearly how the responsibilities have been divided.

The Director of Social Services will hold regular meetings (every 6 - 8 weeks) with the two relevant heads in order to discuss important matters, the performance of their services and also the risk register. Issues raised within external and internal inspections will also be discussed at these meetings. These meetings are known as "Statutory Team meetings". There are terms of reference for these meetings.

The Director of Social Services undertakes an appraisal of the Heads of both these departments and the Director will also be a part of the appointment process for the recruitment procedure for these posts.

Other heads are members of the Management Group and also the most crucial ones, for example the Head of Education, are members of the Strategic Safeguarding Panel. The intention of this is to ensure that the

Heads have easy access to the Director of Social Services in terms of sharing concerns and also to respond to the Director's requirements.

Accountabilities of the Director (para 30 - 33)

30. The director of social services is accountable for the effective delivery of the local authority's social services functions to the head of paid service and through them to the council. The head of paid service and the director of social services must have regular meeting time as part of their relationship of accountability.
31. Where services are delivered in partnership, accountability for the delivery of social services functions still rests with the director of social services.
32. The director of social services must raise awareness of their role amongst councillors. This includes how councillors, including scrutiny committees and the relevant lead members, can both support the role and hold post holders to account, including in relation to the production of the annual report as set out in chapter 5. The director of social services must ensure that there are clear commitments setting out what information councillors should expect to receive in relation to both the discharge of specific social services functions and wider activities to promote the well-being of people with care and support needs.
33. The director of social services must:
 - ensure the head of paid service, executive and councillors have access to the best, up-to-date professional advice and information on all aspects of care and support services;
 - assure the head of paid service and councillors that statutory functions laid on the authority have been carried out, and that proper management information and accurate records are being kept;
 - ensure effective performance management processes are in place;
 - identify and advise councillors on priorities, challenges and risks across all aspects of social services, including areas of co-dependency between agencies and circumstances

where staffing issues affect the Council's ability to discharge its statutory responsibilities;

- brief the head of paid service and councillors on high-profile cases and other matters likely to cause public concern; and
- advise councillors on strategies for improving methods of intervention, service provision, practice and use of resources.

34. Chapter 3 sets out the director of social services' role in relation to partnership working via the regional partnership boards and Safeguarding Boards.

➤ **Gwynedd Council arrangements to respond to the above**

The Director of Social Services has several forums in which they can raise matters with the Chief Executive. There are weekly meetings of the Corporate Management Team as well as one-to-one meetings every six to eight weeks. In addition, the Chief Executive has open working arrangements which ensure that the Director of Social Services can access him at any time if required.

In relation to ensuring that elected members understand the Role of the Director of Social Services, the following exist:-

- *The Director of Social Services will submit an Annual Report to the full Council every year. As part of this, the Director of Social Services explains the role and sets out the main duties of the role to the members.*
- *The Director of Social Services will meet with the Chair and Vice-chair of the relevant Scrutiny Committee to outline what the key important matters are within the care field. The Director will include matters which require the attention of the scrutinisers in this, in terms of the support for the role and also in terms of holding matters to account. For example, the Director's Annual Report and the Annual Assessment of the CSSIW will be sent to the scrutiny procedure for consideration. This process will include the wide range of duties which the Director of Social Services has, including the aspects of promoting the well-being of those individuals with care and support requirements.*

- *The Director of Social Services will update the Chief Executive and the members regarding changes made to relevant Acts or other relevant information. The Director of Social Services will do so through the medium of informal or formal meetings as appropriate.*

The Director of Social Services will use management information and national performance indicators in order to monitor actions and performance, including performance against budgets and financial requirements. The Director of Social Services receives information and assurances via several methods:-

- *Attending Departmental Management Teams in order to receive assurances of this.*
- *Receiving information and feedback from the two relevant Heads at the Statutory Team meetings (every 6-8 weeks).*
- *Receiving a risk assessment/governance assessment from the two Heads which summarise the fields which require attention and what the action plans are to respond.*
- *Monitoring the delivery of the main strategic fields via the relevant Delivery Panels and raises any relevant developments with the relevant cabinet members.*
- *Specific monitoring of the safeguarding field regarding corporate aspects within the Strategic Safeguarding Panel.*
- *Member of the Regional Safeguarding Children Board and the Regional Safeguarding Adults Board and can therefore ensure that any lessons from incidents can be incorporated in practice.*

As part of the Team which supports the Cabinet, the Director of Social Services can identify and advise the highest level leadership in the Council on the priorities, challenges and risks which exist in the social care field. This obviously includes any risks which could arise in terms of staffing issues, whether they are direct staffing issues or issues encountered by external providers or agencies.

High-profile cases arise from time to time. The procedure is that the Director of Social Services ensures that the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, Deputy Leader of the Council, relevant Cabinet Members are aware of the case. In order for the Director of Social Services to be aware, arrangements are in place and officers understand that they need to elevate such matters to the attention of the Director immediately.

Regulators (para 35-36)

35. The director of social services must lead and support continuous engagement and co-operation with inspectorates and regulators by all local authority officers in relation to the preparation and undertaking of any performance reviews of local authority social services functions, as well as any other care and support services provided in the local authority area. This includes ensuring inspectorates and regulators have access to all relevant information.
36. As part of their accountability, the director must report to the council on the detail of any inspection or regulatory report on the performance of the local authority social services. This must include setting out what appropriate action is taken to improve services that promote the well-being of people with care and support needs, or prevent or delay the development of such needs, in response to that report. The director should also contribute to the overall governance arrangements that the local authority (and partners) have in place.

➤ Gwynedd Council arrangements to respond to the above

The Director of Social Services is clear of the need to ensure that regulators receive the information required by them to fulfil their duties. Arrangements will be put in place for a formal meeting with the principal regulators within the care field, namely the CSSIW, twice a year. These meetings are known as "Performance Review meetings". Liaison meetings are held, attended by the Director of Social Services together with the Heads. At the March meeting, the chair or vice-chair of the relevant scrutiny committee will be expected to attend at least part of the meeting. At the September meeting, the relevant Cabinet Members will be expected to attend at least part of the meeting.

The purpose of the performance review meetings is to consider and review progress against the authority's strategic priorities, in accordance with the Act and the national outcomes framework, including improvement objectives noted in any relevant inspection or via regular scrutiny of the local authority's performance. Performance review meetings will also provide feedback on the CSSIW's local engagement activity.

In addition, the Director of Social Services is required to submit the Annual Report to the Full Council in a timely manner. This is expected to happen as soon as possible after the end of the year for which the report is relevant, with consideration, naturally, to the Council's committees timetable.

Well-being (para 37-43)

37. Section 5 of the Act requires that all persons must seek to promote well-being for people who need care and support, and carers who need support, when carrying out their functions under the Act.
38. The other overarching duties stated in section 6 require that all persons exercising functions under the Act must have regard to an individual's views, wishes, feelings, characteristics, culture and beliefs. They must also promote and respect the dignity of the individual, and support them to participate in decisions that affect him or her. This means supporting and empowering them to speak for themselves or to have someone that can do it for them.
39. In relation to adults, persons must begin with the assumption that the adult is best placed to judge their own well-being and must promote the adult's independence wherever possible. This must be embedded in practice so that people are equal partners in the design and delivery of their care. Local authorities must take people's views, wishes and feelings into account when identifying, assessing and supporting people to achieve well-being.
40. In relation to children, persons must promote the upbringing of the child within their family, so far as doing so is consistent with promoting the well-being of the child. Local authorities must have regard to the views, wishes and feelings of persons with parental responsibility for a child under the age of 16, in so far as this is consistent with promoting the well-being of the child and in so far as this is reasonably practicable.
41. Section 7 requires that all persons exercising functions under the Act must have due regard to the UN Principles for Older Persons and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The code of practice issued under Part 2 of the Act places a duty on local authorities to have due regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People when exercising social services functions in relation to people who need care and support and carers who need support.

42. The code of practice for Part 2 of the Act sets out the detail about duties to promote the well-being of people who need care and support and other overarching duties:
43. The director of social services must have regard to the well-being duty and other overarching duties in relation to how the local authority exercises all its social services functions. The director of social services must show strategic leadership in ensuring all care and support services in the local authority area seek to promote the well-being of all people with care and support needs. This includes overall responsibility for meeting the identified care and supports needs of deafblind citizens. This will involve ensuring all care and support services work with people to empower them to contribute to achieving their own well-being with the appropriate level of support and services. The support must be delivered in line with the six quality standards described in the code of practice in relation to measuring social services performance, issued under the Act. These are stated at Annex 2. The quality standards describe the activities of local authorities that contribute to the achievement of well-being outcomes as stated in the well-being statement.

➤ **Gwynedd Council arrangements to respond to the above**

The Council has acknowledged the additional needs required within the Act involving well-being. The workforce within the social care field has and is receiving training. This training will be updated regularly, and it will meet and promote the need to consider the well-being of people who have care and support needs.

The fundamental principle of the Council's way of working, namely placing the individual at the centre of everything we do, clearly reinforces this requirement also.

The Director of Social Services will attempt to promote well-being across the Social Services, and ensure that a clear understanding and firm arrangements are in place in order to respond in full to the well-being needs of our residents.

Though arrangements are in place in order to respond to the legislative requirements in relation to Well-being, the Director of Social Services will continually challenge the success of these arrangements. The Director of Social Services will challenge the performance of the Social Services in terms of promoting and addressing well-being needs in the relevant

formal forums, but also informally when undertaking the role from to day to day.

Co-operation, partnership and integrated working (para 44-48)

44. Improving the well-being of people with care and support needs and preventing or reducing the development of care and support needs will often require services beyond those traditionally provided by social services. There will frequently be a need for an approach that involves services across the local authority and by other relevant partners.
45. The director of social services must lead on the development of effective arrangements, including at regional partnership level, to promote co-operation to achieve the following purposes:
 - a) improve the well-being of people with care and support needs, including carers who need support;
 - b) improve the quality of care and support for people, including support for carers;
 - c) protecting adults with care and support needs who are at risk or experiencing abuse or neglect; and
 - d) protecting children who are at risk or experiencing abuse or neglect
46. The director of social services should ensure that any problems of inter-agency co-operation and gaps between services are identified and resolved. While the director of social services is responsible for the development of effective arrangements for co-operation to improve well-being of people with care and support needs, this does not allow other partners to abrogate their responsibilities and duties.
47. The director of social services' membership of the corporate management team and defined accountability arrangements with other senior officers, as set out in Chapter 2, should be utilised to promote co-operation within the local authority. This will involve ensuring that all local authority services collectively seek to achieve the purposes above.
48. The director of social services must similarly seek to develop an effective environment to promote co-operation in relation to people with care and support needs with external partners, including the Local Health Board, the third sector and independent sector.

Paragraphs 52 to 56 set out the role of the director in relation to formal partnership arrangements provided for by Part 9 of the Act which can be used for this purpose.

➤ **Gwynedd Council arrangements to respond to the above**

Working in partnership is essential in order to ensure that individuals' needs are met.

The Director of Social Services is a member of the Corporate Management Team and is also a member of the Management Group, of which all Council heads are members. Consequently, the director will ensure that these senior officers have awareness and understanding of the requirements of their services to ensure that the well-being of people who have care and assistance needs is improved.

The Council identifies the third sector as one of its main partners, and certainly within this field the contribution of the third sector is invaluable. The Council has arrangements in place to liaise with representatives of the third sector formally through the Third Sector Liaison Group, and there is a formal Compact which outlines the objectives and arrangements around this. The Director of Social Services is a full member of this Liaison Group along with a number of Cabinet members.

The Council and the Health Board are key partners on the Public Services Board and they identify those fields in which they need to work together to deliver well-being aims. Though the Director of Social Services is not a member of the Public Services Board, the Director can influence the direction via the Head of Paid Service.

There is acknowledgement that there is a need to collaborate very closely within this field, and a County Forum has been established in order to ensure that more local action takes place. Terms of reference for the County Forum have been agreed and it will report to the Public Services Board on progress against the main fields of collaboration.

In terms of regional arrangements, the Director of Social Services is currently a member of the Regional Leadership Group and will be a member of the Regional Partnership Board (see Part 9 of the Act) when it is established.

Role of the Lead Director for Children and Young People's Services (para 49-51)

49. Section 27 of the Children Act 2004 requires local authorities to appoint a lead director for children and young people's services to co-ordinate and oversee arrangements to improve the well-being of children in the local authority area. This role is to champion children's rights and can be attached to any appropriate director within the corporate management team, including the director of social services.
50. In authorities where the posts of director of social services and lead director for children and young people's services are held separately, there will be an overlap between the two roles. The lead director for children and young people's services will seek to address the well-being needs of all children. The director of social services must focus on improving the well-being of children *specifically with care and support needs* and protecting children from harm.
51. Individuals undertaking these respective roles must liaise regularly and formally in accordance with defined arrangements, as set out in chapter 2. The effectiveness of these arrangements should be reviewed as required.

➤ Gwynedd Council arrangements to respond to the above

The post of lead Director for Children and Young People's Services and the post of Director of Social Services are held separately within the Council. Both roles are held by one of the Corporate Directors.

Both Corporate Directors will meet formally every two months in order to discuss the fields in question. There is also an opportunity for them to discuss the field within the Corporate Management Team arrangements with the Head of Paid Service present.

Integration and Partnership Working (para 52 - 56)

52. The guidance about partnership arrangements issued under Part 9 of the Act sets out how local authorities and Local Health Boards must work together, along with other partners, to plan and ensure the delivery of

integrated care and support services on a regional basis. Regulations provide for the following regional partnership boards:

- **Cardiff and Vale Regional Board** - Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and the following local authorities: Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.
- **Cwm Taf Regional Board** - Cwm Taf University Health Board and the following local authorities: Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- **Gwent Regional Board** - Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and the following local authorities: Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen.
- **West Wales Regional Board** – Hywel Dda University Health Board and the following local authorities: Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion.
- **Powys Regional Board** – Powys Teaching Health Board and the following local authority: Powys.
- **North Wales Regional Board** - Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and the following local authorities: Anglesey, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd and Wrexham.
- **Western Bay Regional Board** - Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board and the following local authorities: Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea.

53. The person appointed as director of social services in respect of each local authority which established the regional partnership board, or a nominated representative, must be a member of the Board.
54. There is a need to ensure the quality of information given to regional partnership boards is sufficient to allow their effective operation. Similarly, the director of social services should ensure information from the regional partnership board clearly demonstrates how any social services functions have been discharged.
55. The director of social services must ensure their respective regional partnership boards facilitate and promote co-operation to improve the outcomes and wellbeing of people who need care and support, including carers who need support.

56. In addition, the director of social services must ensure this regional co-operation leads to improved effectiveness and efficiency in relation to the delivery of care and support services to address care and support needs, and support needs for carers, identified in the Population Assessment Report. Regional partnership boards have a key role to play in bringing partners together to determine, in consultation with service users, where the integrated provision of care and support services will be most beneficial to people within their region.

➤ **Gwynedd Council arrangements to respond to the above**

The Director of Social Services will be a member of the Regional Partnership Board in accordance with the requirement within Part 9 of the Act and will act to realise the aforementioned requirements.

A preventative approach to care and support needs (para 57-59)

57. The director of social services must ensure that the local authorities and partners develop a strategic approach to prevention. It is vital that care and support services do not wait to respond until people reach crisis point.
58. The code of practice in relation to Part 2 of the Act sets out the requirements in sections 14 and 15 for local authorities and Local Health Boards to undertake a population assessment of care and support needs; and for local authorities to provide or arrange a range of preventative services. The director of social services must ensure that preventative services are provided or arranged specifically to address the care and support needs identified by the population assessment.
59. Ensuring a preventative culture in relation to care and support is embedded across the local authority, and in particular the social services department, will require leadership across the local authority from all chief officers, and principally from the director of social services.

➤ **Gwynedd Council arrangements to respond to the above**

The Council's vision is to put the People of Gwynedd at the centre of everything it does, and in doing so ensuring a preventative approach to care and support needs is core to this mind-set. People do not want to become dependent on statutory services; therefore, the focus of our work

within the field ensures that a preventative culture in the context of care and support is incorporated across the Council.

"Ffordd Gwynedd" is the terms used to explain this to staff within the Council. All leaders within the Council, including officers and elected members, seek to recognise the appropriate conducts to ensure that this change happens. The Director of Social Services is a prominent part of this and uses the reporting arrangements, such as the Annual Report, to emphasise this.

The Director of Social Services will ensure that firm arrangements are in place in order to make the best use of the Population Needs Assessment. The Director of Social Services will ensure that the Social Services will use the information from the population assessment in order to plan strategically for the future. The population assessment will identify opportunities to develop preventative services and the Director of Social Services will highlight the need to act where relevant.

Citizen and Community Engagement (para 60 - 63)

60. Local authorities must involve people for whom care and support or preventative services are to be provided in the design and operation of that service.
61. The code of practice in relation to Part 2 of the Act sets out the requirement in section 16 which places a duty on local authorities to promote the development in their area of not-for-profit organisations to provide care and support services, including preventative services. These models include social enterprises, cooperative organisations, co-operative arrangements, user led services and the third sector. This requirement supports a new relationship between the local authority and service providers.
62. The director of social services must ensure that, in identifying the range and level of services required to respond to care and support needs identified by the population assessment, a co-operative approach to the planning, development, procurement and delivery of services is taken.
63. The requirement for an information, advice and assistance service in section 17 of the Act is also set out in the code of practice in relation to

Part 2. The director of social service must also ensure the effectiveness of this service in supporting people to achieve their well-being outcomes.

➤ **Gwynedd Council arrangements to respond to the above**

Arrangements are developing in terms of meeting the requirement of undertaking a population assessment and this will be used as a basis to plan suitable services for the future. Also, arrangements will be developed to ensure that information, advice and guidance services are fit for purpose and comply with other relevant developments such as the change currently underway in the older people field.

The focus on all services is to assist people to achieve their well-being outcomes.

Safeguarding (para 64 - 69)

64. Safeguarding children and adults at risk of abuse or neglect is everyone's responsibility. However, the director of social services must show leadership to ensure effective safeguarding arrangements are in place both within the local authority and by relevant partners.
65. The director of social services must oversee and report to councillors, on a consistent basis, regarding the operation, monitoring and improvement of child and adult safeguarding systems within the local authority.
66. Defined arrangements with other officers within the local authority, particularly the head of adult services and head of children services, as set out in Chapter 2, must be clear in relation to delegation and reporting arrangements related to safeguarding issues.
67. Statutory Guidance in relation to Part 7 of the Act sets out the requirements for Safeguarding Children Boards and Safeguarding Adult Boards. The Safeguarding Boards areas are:
 - **Cardiff and Vale** - Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan local authorities.
 - **Cwm Taf Regional Board** - Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf local authorities.

- **Gwent** - Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire, Newport and Torfaen local authorities.
- **Mid and West Wales** - Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire and Powys local authorities.
- **North Wales** - Anglesey, Conwy, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Gwynedd and Wrexham local authorities.
- **Western Bay** - Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea local authorities.

68. Both Safeguarding Children Boards and Safeguarding Adult Boards must include a representative with a sufficient level of seniority from each local authority within the Board's area. This includes, but is not limited to, the director of social services. In the absence of the director, another officer who is acceptable to the director and of sufficient seniority may attend in their place.

69. Each partner has equal responsibility for the exercise of functions of Safeguarding Boards, rather than it being a specific local authority function. The director of social services must support effective partnership working and ensure safeguarding duties are effectively discharged collaboratively by Safeguarding Boards. These include in relation to:

- Contributing to the review and development of policies and procedures to safeguard children and adults at risk
- Raising awareness of abuse, neglect and harm in a Board's area
- Regularly reviewing the effectiveness of local safeguarding measures
- Undertaking and ensuring lessons are learnt from Child Practice Reviews and Adult Practice Reviews
- Disseminating information about safeguarding best practice and learning
- Ensure practitioners across all safeguarding partners are receiving or have access to appropriate safeguarding training

- Ensuring there are effective, understood and publicised arrangements for the reporting of children and adults suspected of being at risk of abuse or neglect

➤ **Gwynedd Council arrangements to respond to the above**

The Director of Social Services is a full member of the Regional Safeguarding Adults Board and the Regional Safeguarding Children Board. The Director of Social Services has identified the Council's Head of Children Department as the senior lead officer within the safeguarding field and in addition this head will ensure, as is possible, a regular input on these two Regional Boards.

The Cabinet has established internal arrangements to lead and manage corporate safeguarding matters, and in order to give it appropriate attention it has established a Strategic Safeguarding Panel. A Cabinet member chairs this Panel, but is supported by the Director of Social Services. The intention of this Strategic Safeguarding Panel is to assist the Director of Social Services to ensure that she can fulfil her duties by highlighting necessary actions. Reports go regularly from this Panel to the Cabinet members via performance monitoring arrangements, and a formal report is submitted for the Cabinet's attention twice a year.

On a more operational and individual case level, the Corporate Director holds formal discussions with the Head of Children Department and the head of Adults Department via the Statutory Team meetings. During these meetings, there is an opportunity for senior officers to discuss important issues and barriers and matters of concern. A governance/risk management cycle is submitted by both heads for the attention of the Director of Social Services on a quarterly basis.

Usual departmental performance management arrangements are also in place and there is an opportunity for the heads to raise important issues from this information. It is also asked that anyone who identifies a matter of concern in the field of safeguarding brings the matter to the attention of the Director of Social Services immediately.

Children and their Families (para 70 - 71)

70. Supporting families to stay together by focusing on early intervention and preventative action across all service provision for children and their

families is key to enabling children to have the best possible outcomes. The director of social services must provide leadership and demonstrate a strategy to manage risk confidently and effectively cooperate with the full range of partners to work with families at the 'edge of care', making sure that needs are accurately assessed and met, so that only the right children are accommodated at the right time.

71. The code of practice in relation to Part 6 of the Act sets out a comprehensive framework of support for those children who can no longer be cared for by their families and do need to be taken into a local authority's care. The director of social services must ensure strategic arrangements are in place to provide for cooperation across the local authority and with partners for effective provision of care and support services for all looked after children. Arrangements must provide for planning which embraces all aspects of the child's well-being, including health and developmental needs, stability and permanence, and educational attainment, and focuses on improving outcomes for looked after children.

➤ **Gwynedd Council arrangements to respond to the above**

Fairly recent structural changes have placed the children and young people services with one head within the Council, namely the Head of Children and Supporting Families Department. A cabinet member also leads on the field of Children and Young People. The purpose of doing this was to ensure the focus in terms of early intervention and preventative steps being taken.

The Director of Social Services will ensure leadership in this field and will also ensure a close working relationship with the Head of Children and Supporting Families Department in order to deal with strategic and operational matters.

The Corporate Director will hold formal discussions with the Head of Children's Department at the Statutory Team meetings. During these meetings, there is an opportunity for the Director of Social Services and the Head of Children and Supporting Families Department to discuss individual cases, important matters, barriers or matters of concern. The Head of Children and Supporting Families Department will submit a governance/risk management cycle to the Director of Social Services on a quarterly basis.

A Corporate Parent Panel is in place within the Council in order to seek to ensure that all the needs of those children whose families can no longer look after them and who need to be looked-after by the local authority are met. The Director of Social Services is a full member of the Corporate Parent Panel and can ensure that strategic arrangements are in place to facilitate co-operation across the local authority and with partners.

Workforce Development (para 72 - 79)

72. The director of social services has a strategic leadership role to promote high standards across the care and support workforce, including the private and third sectors.
73. The director must ensure a whole sector workforce plan is in place which identifies and secures implementation of measures to ensure a sufficiently large, skilled, safe and focused workforce to promote the well-being of people with care and support needs. This includes in relation to recruitment and retention, preemployment vetting, registration, reward, addressing poor performance, career pathways, competency and qualification requirements, skill mix, training needs, evidence based practice, compliance with codes of practice and contributions to workforce data.
74. This strategic leadership approach should be undertaken as part of the development of effective partnership working arrangements, as described in paragraphs 52 to 56. The director must however make clear that other agencies' and providers' are not absolved of their individual responsibilities towards workforce planning and development.
75. The director should promote collaborative workforce learning through networks and relationships with other bodies. This includes working with education and training providers, such as Higher Education bodies, to ensure they are able to deliver relevant and effective training and support a competent workforce.
76. A crucial role of the director is to ensure that positive leadership behaviours are developed through the service. When working with professional bodies, clear leadership is needed to promote a culture of continuous learning, evidence based practice and professional accountability. The director acts as a role model for others and should champion the development of these skills and behaviours amongst service managers.

77. The director's role in delivering leadership in relation to workforce development within the local authority should be included in the defined working arrangements, as described in paragraphs 25 to 26. As part of their senior corporate leadership role, the director must ensure the local authority has overarching personnel and safe recruitment policies supporting the requirement for a social care workforce to provide effective care and support services. This includes ensuring social workers employed are registered with the regulatory body in Wales to provide strong connectivity between employers and regulators.
78. The director must advise councillors, partners and other providers where workforce shortfalls inhibit the local authority's capacity to discharge statutory responsibilities and set out actions necessary to rectify these issues.
79. In line with the *More than just words* strategic framework, directors of social services will ensure an effective recruitment and retention strategy to secure the capacity to provide local authority social services functions through the medium of Welsh. The ability of the independent and third sector to provide services in Welsh will also be a consideration when services are commissioned or contracted from them.

➤ **Gwynedd Council arrangements to respond to the above**

The quality and sustainability of workers within the care sector is extremely important and the Director of Social Services has several resources to seek to ensure that the right priority is given in the field.

A Workforce Support and Development Unit exists and is placed within the Adults, Health and Well-being Department. This team is responsible for training matters for the entire sector and also for planning developmental matters for the workforce, including anticipating fields of need and skills and recruitment problems. This team reports via its manager to the Director of Social Services who is also available to attend the Statutory Team as and when necessary. In addition, and as part of the Statutory Team arrangements, the Head of Children and Supporting Families Department and the Head of Adults, Health and Well-being Department will submit a Governance / Risk Register Cycle every quarter. In submitting the Governance / Risk Register Cycle, they will be expected to give specific attention to all the 'Workforce Development' considerations.

By means of these methods, any risks will be highlighted to the Director of Social Services, who will then be able to agree on any action.

The Workforce Support and Development Unit also works in a regional context and a Regional Workforce Board provides additional strategic support to the director on important matters. It appears increasingly that the Government is now encouraging more matters to be dealt with regionally. Within this context, associated matters such as the health field workforce are discussed.

In terms of the professional workforce, the Director of Social Services meets with the principal leaders of Bangor University in order to discuss aspects and developments within the Social Work MA course. This relationship is extremely important in order to ensure the future sustainability of the workforce and also obviously the availability of workers who are fluent in Welsh.

In terms of commissioning and contracting arrangements, the Council has arrangements in terms of ensuring that providers recruit staff who can speak Welsh to an appropriate level for the post. These arrangements will be monitored and this information will be available to the director of social services. The Director of Social Services will also monitor whether this number is adequate to meet the needs which have arisen from the population assessment.

Annual Report (para 80 - 90)

80. The director of social services must prepare and publish an annual report about the exercise of the local authority's social services functions. This annual report must be published as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of a financial year.
81. The annual report must evaluate the performance of the local authority in relation to the delivery of its social services functions in respect of that year and include lessons learned. It must also set out objectives in relation to promoting the wellbeing of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, for the forthcoming year.
82. The annual report should be presented in such a way as to set out how the local authority has achieved the six quality standards in relation to well-being outcomes as described in the code of practice in relation to measuring social services performance,

issued under section 145 of the Act. Annex 2 sets out the quality standards in relation to the above code of practice.

83. The annual report must set out how the local authority has promoted the wellbeing of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, identified in the Population Assessment Report produced in relation to that local authority area.
84. The annual report must include details of the extent to which the authority has acted in accordance with relevant requirements contained in a code relating to assessing the needs of an individual in accordance with Part 3 and meeting needs under Part 4.
85. The annual report must also set out how the local authority has exercised relevant requirements contained in code of practice so as to provide:
 - Assurances in terms of structural arrangements within the local authority that enable good governance and strong accountability
 - Assurances in relation to effective partnership working via Partnership Boards
 - Assurances in relation to safeguarding arrangements
 - Information in relation to the performance of the handling and investigation of complaints and representations (as set out in '*A guide to handling complaints and representations by local authority social services*' published in August 2014)
 - A response to any inspections undertaken in relation to social services functions.
86. The Welsh Government is committed to the delivery of high quality health, social services and social care services that are centred on users' needs. *More than just words* is its strategic framework to realise this aim. Directors of social services are therefore required to provide an update on Welsh language provision and their implementation of *More than just words* as part of the annual report.
87. It is important that the views of services users in relation to the way the local authority has discharged its social services functions are

included in the annual report. People, including children, who have experience of using care and support services, the parents of children who have care and support needs, and carers in the local authority area must be engaged in the process of producing an annual report. This should also be evidenced by the statutory performance information that each local authority must collect, as set out in the code of practice on measuring social service performance, annually. It is also important that external providers and partner agencies contribute their view of the quality of partnership working. The annual report must set out how the local authority has engaged with people in its production. The annual report should reflect the experiences of service providers and services users.

88. Annual reports are a key way for local authorities to demonstrate accountability to citizens and should therefore be accessible to people, including service users. The director of social services should ensure that annual reports are not overly long and are written in a clear and concise way.
89. To ensure effective accountability, the annual report must be presented to the council by the director of social services.
90. A copy of the published annual report must be sent to Welsh Ministers. They must also be available on the local authority website.

➤ **Gwynedd Council arrangements to respond to the above**

Arrangements are in place for the Director of Social Services to submit the annual report to the Full Council. Every effort is made to ensure that this happens at the meeting before the summer, which follows the end of the financial year - a copy will also be made available for scrutiny arrangements.

The aforementioned aspects in terms of content will be incorporated within the report and reference will also be made to matters such as More Than Just Words.

Copies of the report will be available on the Council's website and it will be sent, as required, to regulators and the Government.

Competencies of a Director of Social Services (para 91)

91. A local authority may not appoint a person to be its *Director of Social Services* unless it is satisfied that person has demonstrated the full set of interrelating competencies that define the knowledge, skills and behaviours required of the role. These competencies are generally consistent with the Welsh Public Service Leadership Behaviours Model.

Core Qualities

Self Awareness and Learning

- demonstrate vision, creativity, adaptability, innovation and emotional intelligence with an outward looking approach to learning and development for yourself and others
- committed to the continuous development of all services and people across all sectors involved in the delivery of care and support services

Drive for Results and Resilience

- substantial experience in the management and delivery of effective care and support services
- knowledge of the legislative and structural context of social care services in Wales, particularly the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

- is willing to hold themselves to account as well as others for the delivery of results and outcomes

Future Working

Championing Innovation & Change

- strong professional leadership capabilities, able to achieve and inspire change and improvement through influence, openness and effective communication
- able to proactively promote and facilitate the integration of, and collaboration between health and social services to achieve improved outcomes for people with care and support needs

Strategic Orientation

- knowledge and experience in workforce planning and development with a good understanding of the importance of an effective workforce in all sectors
- able to hold people and services to account by ensuring appropriate information flows and systems, reporting lines and professional and management audit methods are in place

Working with Others

Building Collaboration and Partnership

- able to promote effective partnership working, contributing to the development of collaborative and co-produced solutions between the public, independent and third sectors in the planning and delivery of services that maximise expertise and resources
- able to demonstrate strategic evidence-based decision making to collaboratively develop effective care and support services
- is adaptable and flexible in their leadership style and willing to learn from others to improve service provision

Political Awareness and Skill

- demonstrate understanding and experience of working at a senior level in publicly accountable national and local political contexts
- good knowledge of the operational environment of independent and third sector organisations that provide care and support services

Delivery

Focusing on Citizens and Value

- ensure an approach is taken by the local authority and all partners which seeks to promote the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support
- provide strategic leadership so that all care and support services are designed and delivered in partnership with citizens and focused on enabling them to achieve their own well-being
- demonstrate excellent financial management skills within local authority and shared budgets

Sharing Leadership

- able to show values-led leadership to achieve the commitment of staff and managers at all levels to maintain high standards and good practice through empowering them to show ambition and take responsibility

➤ Gwynedd Council arrangements to respond to the above

The Council's arrangements to appoint and recruit chief officers respond to the requirement with the above. The Head of Paid Service is a member of the Chief Officers' Appointment Panel and can provide guidance to elected members in relation to the aforementioned competencies. The Appointment Panel will also consider the results of an appropriate assessment centre as part of its appointment process.