



Improvement Assessment 2015-16: Local Authority Arrangements to Support Safeguarding of Children Follow-Up

Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Issued: May 2016

Document reference: 328A2016

Status of report

This document has been prepared as part of work performed in accordance with statutory functions.

In the event of receiving a request for information to which this document may be relevant, attention is drawn to the Code of Practice issued under section 45 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The section 45 Code sets out the practice in the handling of requests that is expected of public authorities, including consultation with relevant third parties.

In relation to this document, the Auditor General for Wales and the Wales Audit Office are relevant third parties. Any enquiries regarding disclosure or re-use of this document should be sent to the Wales Audit Office at info.officer@audit.wales.

The team who delivered the work comprised Tim Buckle and Colin Davies.

Contents

The Council is strengthening its corporate arrangements to support the safeguarding of children and is making progress in addressing our previous proposals for improvement.

Summary report	4
Appendices	
Proposals for improvement and findings	5

Summary report

1. In October 2014 we reported our local findings to Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (the Council) following our review of **Local Authority Arrangements to Support Safeguarding of Children**. The study focused on answering the following question: 'Do the Council's governance and management arrangements provide assurance that children are safeguarded?'
2. In reporting our findings we made four proposals for improvement to the Council that are set out below.

P1	Develop a Corporate Safeguarding Policy that clearly specifies roles, responsibilities and procedures for safeguarding.
P2	Ensure all safeguarding risks are identified; ensure corporate and service level risks are integrated; and agree actions to mitigate these.
P3	Improve the range, quality and coverage of safeguarding performance reporting to provide adequate assurance that systems are working effectively.
P4	Ensure all elected members and staff who come into contact with children on a regular basis receive training on safeguarding and child protection issues and the Council's corporate policy on safeguarding.

3. In February 2016 we reviewed the Council's progress in addressing the above proposals for improvement. We asked the question: 'Has the Council made progress in addressing the proposals for improving arrangements to support safeguarding of children?' We found that: 'The Council is strengthening its corporate arrangements to support the safeguarding of children and is making progress in addressing our previous proposals for improvement.' We came to this conclusion because the Council has:
 - developed a draft Corporate Safeguarding Policy;
 - developed a draft corporate safeguarding risk register, and intends to incorporate service risks into its service delivery plans;
 - identified key corporate performance measures for safeguarding, although not all of the measures are finalised; and
 - begun to deliver a training programme for staff, and there are plans to deliver training for elected members from May 2016.
4. Our findings are outlined in [Appendix 1](#).

Appendix 1

Proposals for improvement and findings

Proposal for improvement	Follow-up findings
P1 Develop a Corporate Safeguarding Policy that clearly specifies roles, responsibilities and procedures for safeguarding.	In progress – the Council has developed a draft Corporate Safeguarding Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council has developed a draft policy and intends to finalise this subject to Cabinet approval, in March 2016. The policy sets out the roles and responsibilities of a range of stakeholders.• The draft policy also sets out the governance arrangements for safeguarding with reference to the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board, the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Adult Board, the Council's Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Director for Social Services.• The policy also sets out contact details for officers/members who have a concern regarding safeguarding.
P2 Ensure all safeguarding risks are identified; ensure corporate and service level risks are integrated; and agree actions to mitigate these.	In progress – the Council has developed a draft corporate safeguarding risk register, and intends to incorporate service risks into its service delivery plans <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council has developed a draft corporate safeguarding risk register for safeguarding.• The Council intends to identify service risks in children and adult services through the service self-evaluation process and include identified risks in the subsequent service delivery plans. However, as the delivery plans have not yet been finalised for 2016-17 it is too early to review the robustness of these arrangements.
P3 Improve the range, quality and coverage of safeguarding performance reporting to provide adequate assurance that systems are working effectively.	In progress – the Council has identified key corporate performance measures for safeguarding, although not all of the measures are finalised <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council has identified key corporate measures, although these are not yet all clearly defined.• It has not yet set targets for the measures as 2016-17 will be a baseline year.

Proposal for improvement

P4 Ensure all elected members and staff who come into contact with children on a regular basis receive training on safeguarding and child protection issues and the Council's corporate policy on safeguarding.

Follow-up findings

In progress – the Council has begun to deliver a training programme for staff, and there are plans to deliver training for elected members from May 2016

- The Council has begun to develop and deliver a training programme for staff.
- It will produce a training programme for elected members by April 2016 with a rolling training programme to be implemented from May 2016.

Wales Audit Office
24 Cathedral Road
Cardiff CF11 9LJ

Tel: 029 2032 0500

Fax: 029 2032 0600

Textphone: 029 2032 0660

E-mail: info@audit.wales

Website: www.audit.wales

Swyddfa Archwilio Cymru
24 Heol y Gadeirlan
Caerdydd CF11 9LJ

Ffôn: 029 2032 0500

Ffacs: 029 2032 0600

Ffôn Testun: 029 2032 0660

E-bost: post@archwilio.cymru

Gwefan: www.archwilio.cymru