

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

21ST FEBRUARY 2024

THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING POLICY

**REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE IN DISCUSSIONS WITH THE
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, CLLR ANDREW MORGAN OBE**

Author(s): Paul Mee

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek Cabinet approval of the revised Corporate Safeguarding Policy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet:

- 2.1 Note the information contained in the report;
- 2.2 Note the feedback provided by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee which met on 29th January 2024;
- 2.3 Subject to 2.1 and 2.2, approve the new Corporate Safeguarding Policy, presented at Appendix I.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Safeguarding and protecting children and adults from harm is a priority for the Council. The Corporate Safeguarding Policy provides a framework for every service across the Council, setting out responsibilities and expectations in relation to safeguarding children and adults. This policy applies to all our employees, elected members, volunteers and suppliers/service providers delivering service on behalf of the Council.
- 3.2 The policy is reviewed every three years by the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Group to ensure it remains fit for purpose, reflects current legislation and best practice. The policy has been reviewed and revised and a new policy is presented at Appendix I for members consideration, and subject to any amendments, approval prior to dissemination across the Council.

4. **BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The Council's current Corporate Safeguarding Policy was approved and adopted by Cabinet following consideration at their meeting on 28th July 2020. The policy is subject to review every three years to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and to reflect developments in legislation or best practice.
- 4.2 The policy has been reviewed by the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Group, chaired by the Chief Executive, and a revised policy is presented at Appendix I for members consideration.
- 4.3 The policy has been reviewed against the Welsh Government and WLGA Corporate Safeguarding Good Practice Guide and reflects input on current safeguarding best practice from professionals working across the Council, including Children's Services, Adult Services, Human Resources, Procurement, Digital & ICT and others.
- 4.4 The main changes to the policy are summarised as follows:
- The corporate safeguarding framework has been revised to reflect good practice and now has four principal areas of focus:-
 - **Leadership & Culture** – a clear articulation of who this policy applies to and that leadership for safeguarding sits at the highest possible level with the Leader and Chief Executive.
 - **Governance, Scrutiny & Performance Management** – robust governance through the Corporate Safeguarding Group, chaired by the Chief Executive, robust challenge and scrutiny through the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, underpinned by a performance management framework and annual delivery planning cycle.
 - **Professional Practice & Service Standards** – a clear articulation of expectations in relation to professional practice in relation to those working with children and adults at risk and the duty to report that applies to all employees, elected members and those working on behalf of the Council.
 - Service specific safeguarding considerations around licensing, planning, schools and education, procurement, digital and ICT and partnerships.
 - **Workforce, Recruitment & Selection** – clarity of requirements for mandatory training in compliance with the national safeguarding training, learning and development standards and recruitment processes that prevent unsuitable persons from working for the Council.
- 4.5 The policy also includes important information on what to do if you suspect someone is at risk; a revised description of what constitutes abuse and/or exploitation to reflect current professional thinking;

reference to an updated list of related Council policies, and a description of roles and responsibilities.

4.6 The new policy is presented at Appendix I for members consideration.

5 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS / SOCIO-ECONOMIC DUTY

5.1 An equality impact assessment screening exercise has been undertaken for the policy which indicates that there are no negative impacts upon protected groups. Consequently, there is no need to undertake a full equality impact assessment.

6 WELSH LANGUAGE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Corporate Safeguarding Policy, once approved, will be available in Welsh.

7 CONSULTATION / INVOLVEMENT

7.1 Consultation and engagement will be undertaken across the Council and with suppliers/service providers as necessary to ensure effective implementation of the new policy. The policy will be published on the Council's website, embedded into relevant Council policies, and incorporated into training and induction programmes.

7.2 The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee pre-scrutinised the policy at its meeting on the 29th January 2024 and a letter detailing its feedback was provided to the Cabinet. A copy of the letter can be found at Appendix 2.

7.3 A link to the recording of the meeting can be found [here](#).

8 FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)

8.1 There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

9 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

9.1 The proposed Corporate Safeguarding Policy is consistent with and compliant with the legislative framework and guidance that governs safeguarding practice. There are many relevant legislative provisions and guidance documents that concern safeguarding, the most significant of which include the following:

- Wales Safeguarding Procedures,
- Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014,
- Education Act 2002,

- Children Act 1989 and 2004,
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998,
- Mental Capacity Act 2005,
- Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015,
- Housing Act 2004,
- Licensing Act 2003, and
- Human Rights Act 1998

10 LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

10.1 The Council's approach to safeguarding and its corporate responsibilities in this regard, support the Council's priorities as set out in the corporate plan relating to people, place and prosperity. This also supports the two well-being objectives of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Well-being plan, A more equal Cwm Taf Morgannwg, namely:

- Healthy local neighbourhoods, and
- Sustainable and resilient local neighbourhoods

10.2 At a regional level the Council is part of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Regional Safeguarding Group. The Council contributes to the development and delivery of an annual strategic plan to ensure that measures are in place to safeguard children and adults at risk across the region.

11 CONCLUSIONS

11.1 The new corporate safeguarding policy has been revised to reflect current best practice and guidance, sets out the Council's expectations of employees, elected members and services/suppliers working for the council and establishes a robust framework within which the Council will continue to strengthen its safeguarding arrangements to keep children and adults safe.

Other Information:-

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Contact Officer

Paul Mee

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Cabinet

21 February 2024

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OF THE COUNCIL, CLLR A MORGAN, OBE**

Item: The Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy

Background Papers

- a) The Council's Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements – Cabinet – 28th July 2020
- b) Local Authority Arrangements to Safeguard Children and Adults at Risk – Cabinet – 25th March 2021
- c) Local Authority Arrangements to Safeguard Children and Adults at Risk – Community Services Scrutiny Committee – 24th October 2022

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