

Minutes



Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Date: 26 April 2024

Time: 10.00 am

Present: Councillors P Hourahine (Chair), B Davies, G Horton, C Baker-Westhead, S Cocks and L James

In Attendance: Sally Ann Jenkins (Strategic Director - Social Services), Finn Madell (Head of Safeguarding), Natalie Poyner (Head of Children Services) and Mary Ryan (Head of Adults Services)

Cllrs S Marshall (Cabinet Member for Social Services – Children’s Services) and J Hughes (Cabinet Member for Social Services – Adult’s Services)

Samantha Schanzer (Scrutiny Advisor), Simon Richards (Governance Officer) and Taylor Strange (Governance Officer)

Apologies: Councillors P Bright and M Evans

1 Declarations of Interest

Cllr Davies declared an interest as her daughter is a social worker.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Committee requested an update regarding the Strategic Equalities Plan Consultation report from the previous meeting. The Committee requested that “could” be amended to “would” on page 4. The minutes of the previous meeting held **8th March 2024** were **confirmed as a true record**.

3 Corporate Safeguarding Annual Report 2023-24

The Head of Corporate Safeguarding (CS) gave an overview of the report.

The following questions were asked:

- The Committee requested a schematic diagram of the safeguarding structure to aid accessibility of the report. The Head of CS agreed to do this.
- The Committee felt that the tables on page 18 relating to internal VAWDASV and additional specific training data required clarification. The Head of CS agreed to do this.
- The Committee queried whether the training attendance on page 18 solely comprised of Newport City Council (NCC) employees. The Head of CS confirmed that it was, and that this training was non-statutory. The Committee were pleased with the scope of additional training offered. The Head of CS highlighted the difference between new

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starter training and established social care professionals' refresher training. The Committee questioned who was responsible for providing the training. The Head of CS confirmed that this was NCC. The Committee asked whether there were plans for future training and the Head of Adult Services (AS) confirmed there was a plan to devise future training. The Cabinet Member for Social Services – Children's Services highlighted the responsibility of Elected Members to attend safeguarding training in order to lead by example.

- The Committee queried the effectiveness of e-learning and the disparity in service area uptake of safeguarding training. The Head of CS noted that Social Services training on safeguarding is at a higher level than the mandatory e-learning required to be completed by all NCC staff. This meant it was more difficult to ensure Social Services staff completed the mandatory training due to their busy workloads. The Cabinet Members for Social Services noted that social care professionals do continuous professional training. The Committee felt that this could be better presented within the report and asked that data for social care professionals and corporate staff be separated.
- The Committee queried what training and support Designated Safeguarding Persons (DSPs) received as this was not within the report. The Head of AS confirmed there were regular meetings for Safeguarding Champions which acted as a forum to raise concerns or request further training or support. The Committee recommended a section highlighting DSPs should be included in future reports.
- The Committee noted percentages displaying training completion were not contextualised on page 17 and requested that they be contextualised in future reports. The Head of CS noted that the report compiled responses received regarding the accessibility of e-learning across service areas but agreed this would be presented differently in future reports. The Cabinet Member for Social Services – Children's Services highlighted that inter-area/portfolio discussions had occurred, and that data presentation should be improved in future reports as a result.
- The Committee were concerned with the Elected Member training data and questioned whether a register existed. The Head of CS confirmed the existence of a register and noted that WGLA currently advised that safeguarding wasn't mandatory for Members but that it was reviewing that response alongside Social Care Wales. They noted that data would be more easily captured with the roll-out of national training standards. The Cabinet Member for Social Services – Children's Services highlighted that Members who were not able to complete safeguarding training at organised sessions could complete on a catch-up basis.
- The Committee commended the work done for transitional safeguarding among care leavers.
- The Committee questioned what opportunity service users had to give feedback. The Head of CS highlighted that there was a large amount of data and only the most relevant had been used, but this could be improved in future reports. They confirmed that parents were asked for feedback on meetings etc.
- The Committee felt that Standard 2 should be evidenced more thoroughly. The Head of CS noted that this was compiled from self-assessment forms from service areas but noted that it could be improved in future reports.
- The Committee agreed that whistleblowing training data should be included within future reports.

- The Committee queried the increase in children’s referrals. The Head of CS highlighted the increase in awareness and decrease in general conditions for residents as factors but highlighted that not all referrals resulted in action. The Head of AS noted the pressure on Children’s Services, specifically on the Child Protection Register.
- The Committee noted the steady nature of adult’s safeguarding referrals. The Head of AS noted the difference in circumstances between adult safeguarding and child safeguarding issues.
- The Committee queried comments in the report surrounding resource implication of safeguarding procedures. The Strategic Director for Social Services clarified that these were specifically regarding the Safeguarding Team.

Conclusions:

The Committee recommended that:

- A diagram be created and included to demonstrate the complex safeguarding structure in NCC, including wider partners. They requested that this is shared with the Committee as soon as Officers are able.
- The tables on page 18 are clarified and that a copy of the updated VAWDASV training table be circulated to the Committee as soon as Officers are able.
- The report separates mandatory training data for Corporate staff and social care professionals.
- Continuous professional development and training data for social care professionals be included.
- A section highlighting Designated Safeguarding Person training and support in future reports.
- Percentages are contextualised within future reports.
- Whistleblowing training data is included within future reports.
- Work in Standard 2 is more thoroughly evidenced.
- The report specifies that “resource implication” refers to the safeguarding team and not NCC as a whole.

4 Scrutiny Adviser Reports

a) Actions Arising

The Scrutiny Advisor noted that no actions. The Scrutiny Advisor noted the actions from this meeting and agreed to forward the Recruitment and Retention report to Committee.

The meeting terminated at 11.14 am