

Corporate Safeguarding Annual Report (Interim)

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1.

1.1 Legislation

The implementation of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 there has been both a cultural and practice change required from Adult and Children's Services in order for the local authority to be compliant with the new legislation, moving away from the traditional models of providing social care services to one which 'promotes the wellbeing of people and carers who need care and/or support'. The Act provides opportunity for innovation and positive change and certainly focusses on the "Well-being" of our citizens.

One of the most significant changes from a safeguarding perspective is the definition of an "adult at risk" and the legal duty to report where there are concerns identified for either a child or adult. This legal duty to report is of significance and clearly illustrates how safeguarding is everybody's business, hence the establishment of a corporate safeguarding report of this nature to assure members of the pro-active arrangements which the local authority are under taking in safeguarding provisions and service planning. The data within the report continues to evidence a rise in referrals to all front door pathways. The rise relates to better communication with and reporting from health partners, provider agencies and our own social work teams, therefore, the rise in referrals is suggestive of a more robust system which protects our citizens and again is a positive improvement in respect of safeguarding practices within Newport.

Newport City Council remains an active member of the "Gwent Safeguarding Board", which is an amalgamation of the two former specific regional boards. Newport continue to host the regional Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) team and work closely with the regional Partnership Board (VAWDASVB).

Newport officers are involved at all levels of the work of the boards. Heads of Children and Adult services are members at both Board's, the Head of Corporate Safeguarding for Newport chairs the Business Planning meeting for both boards and also chairs the local safeguarding network meetings in Newport. The local safeguarding practitioner network meet in Newport bi monthly and is attended by all partner agencies working across Newport for Adults, Children and specialist services. The local safeguarding network also arranges 2 practitioner events per year, which is open to all practitioners in Newport. The events update practitioners on all local and regional developments such as learning/messages from Child/Adult practice reviews, new services and local developments, as well as introducing updated policies and/or procedures. There is a National Independent Safeguarding Board which will work alongside the regional boards to secure improvements in safeguarding policy and practice throughout Wales. All regional boards have duties and responsibilities to submit information to the National Independent Safeguarding Board.

Members were advised in the previous report of the Children Wales Act (2020). The Act is to help protect children's rights by prohibiting the physical punishment of children by parents and those acting in loco parentis within Wales, including visitors to Wales. In doing so, children in Wales now have the same legal protection from physical punishment as adults. In practice this might typically involve a smack given as a telling-off to a child (whether on the child's bottom, legs or other part of the body). The definition is not limited to smacking. A case where a parent shook a child, or poked a child in the chest or pulled their hair, as a punishment for perceived wrong-doing, for instance, will also be caught. The change brought clear duties on local authorities to ensure that not only practice is in place to manage and support citizens in relation to these changes but also in relation to our recording/ reporting duties being in place in advance (safeguarding specific quality performance indicators). The NCC performance team ensured that the new reporting requirements are built into the WCCIS system to capture the required data in relation to this required data; eg:

CH/ 005a Of those contacts received during the year: The number where physical punishment by a parent or care was a factor
CH/ 005b The number where physical punishment by a parent or carer was the only factor

1.2 Scrutiny Recommendations (2020/2021)

Scrutiny requested that some Freedom Of Information requests are put onto the website so that the team do not have to do the work twice when receiving similar queries from journalists and the public. This recommendation has been duly noted and will form a wider workstream around the Digital Strategy Process. This is will be a priority area of work with a devised programme of implementation to evidence transparency and to make the best use of the digital technology offer Newport has available.

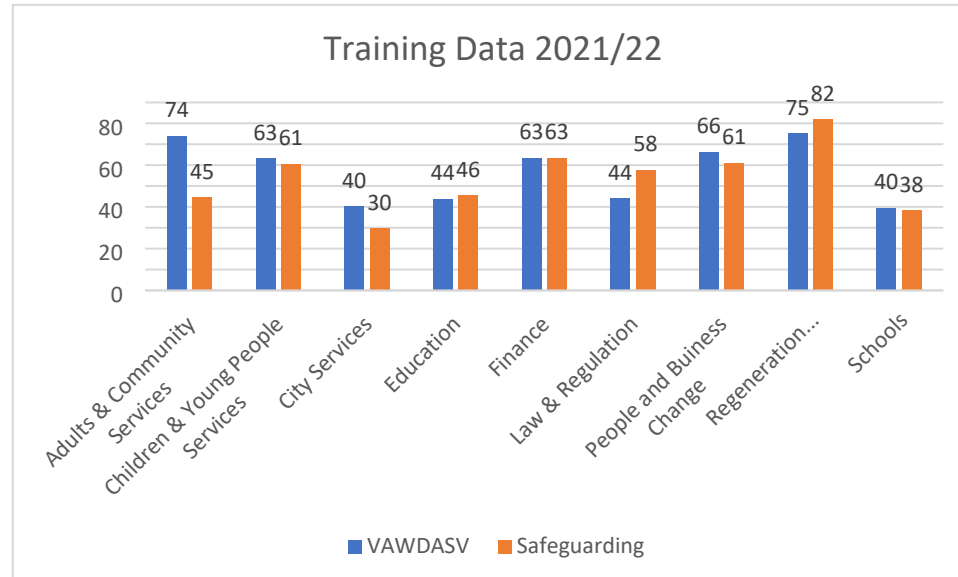
Scrutiny requested more clarity in signposting for the Transparency page, and that the Transparency page is more consistently updated with information. This action is covered above. There will be a program devised to look at how digital technology can reflect the work.

Members of Committee expressed a desire to review the design and usage of the website at some point. This recommendation is a priority and will be part of an implementation plan linked to the revised website from September 2022

2. Safeguarding Training Data and Outcomes

- 2.1** Compliance rates with Mandatory Safeguarding Training for ALL employees, as well as elected members and volunteers, remains low this year. There are 3 specific mandatory courses with associated regulatory requirements for council employees to complete, these are the General Data Protection Regulations Training (GDPR); Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence and “Safeguarding Involves Us All- Awareness Training”.
- 2.2** It is important to continue to stress that there are mitigating factors for training figures being low in this period which must be taken into account. These factors have also been given due regard by regulatory bodies as they have not issued fines/ regulatory actions during this period, however, this continued acceptance will rightly not be continually extended. The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on many of the workforce itself being affected in some way (directly with caring responsibilities; in shielding; family losses; illness and so on) resulting in their work patterns changing and reducing the number of staff physically working over the period. The pandemic has prevented the opportunity to provide face to face learning resulting with a number of service areas being unable to access the mandatory training as they have limited/ no e-learning opportunity. It is to be noted that the circumstances have prompted positive consideration to training delivery and how these can be more accessible and flexible.
- 2.3** The “Safeguarding Involves Us All- Awareness Training” e-learning module was launched in May 2020. Face to face sessions have not been deliverable to date due to the pandemic but creation of a training schedule will commence from September 2022. National Safeguarding weeks in November 2020 and 2021 were used to promote the mandatory requirement by a campaign utilising staff communications such as newsletters, bulletins and announcements. The Safeguarding Champions have continued to provide targeted communications to their service area, including informing team managers of those who cannot access staff intranet facilities e.g. some school staff.

2.4

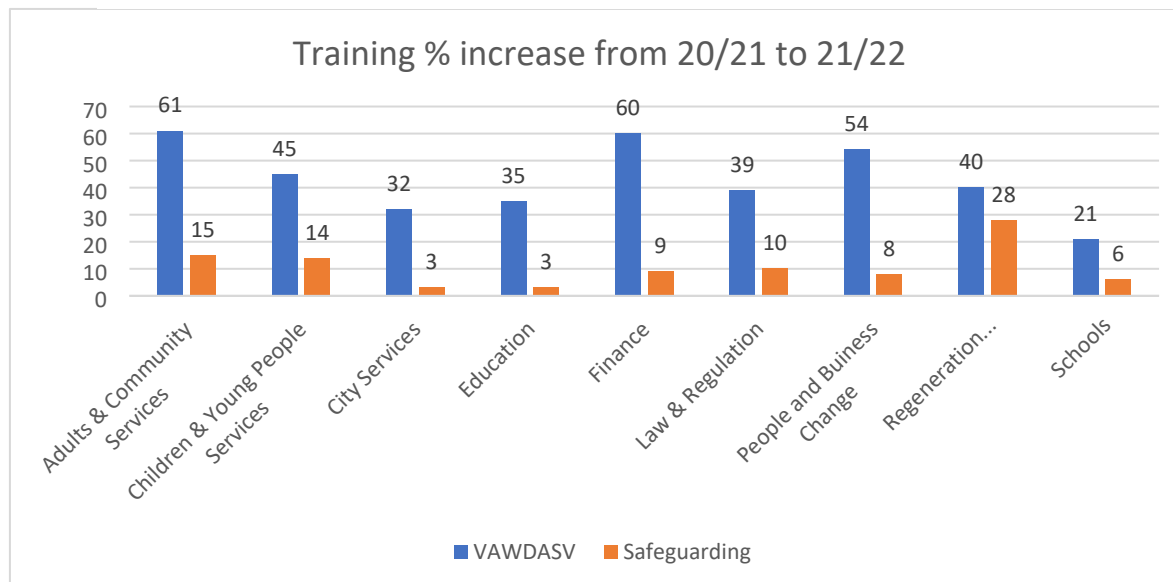


The data table at 2.4 shows the completion of the two of the mandatory courses for e-learning only as a % for the service area workforce. 20/21 data demonstrated that the campaign for the Safeguarding course had a significant impact on the uptake of course completion. There has been an 8% completion increase over the course of the following year which is below desired completion. Following the review of this annual data capture, an action is to evaluate how to target those services areas with lowest completion rates, with quarterly reviews while continuing to seek the ambitious 90% completion rate across all services with campaigns.

**2021/2022 E-Learning Information Security Training
(Via Teams) by staff number**

Adult and Children Services (combined) 167
 City Services 26
 Education 76
 Finance 18
 Law & Regulation 60
 People & Business Change 23
 Regeneration Investment & Housing 67
Total = 437

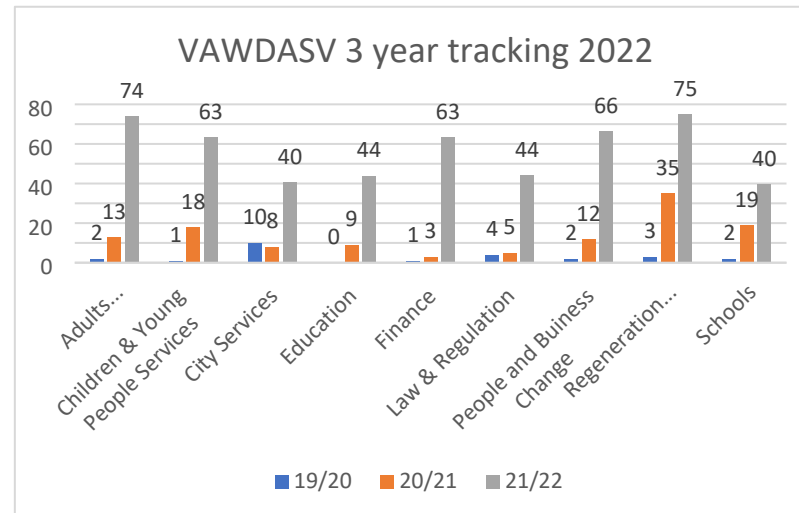
The Information Management Training completion reflects the positive impact the launch made in 2020/21 and demonstrates a lower completion rate for 2021/22 across service areas. The team however deliver the training via several methods, have increased their face to face and teams training programme and participant numbers. This provides flexibility and availability for staff to complete their training. Information Management also recommends as part of policy that if a data breach is made, the staff members involved attend a Teams or face to face session within the next quarter, as part of constructive action.



Overall compliance for the entire workforce for both courses is at 46%. It is to be noted that there has been a large percentage increase in relation to the VAWDASV e-learning module completion across all service areas. This evidences that the campaign during National Safeguarding week, prompting VAWDASV and bulletin to Safeguarding Champions had impact. VAWDASV was specifically emphasised, due to Newport Local Authority returning the lowest rates across Gwent Local Authorities, Aneurin Bevan Health Board and emergency services in the previous years.

From the Safeguarding Champion’s work, the Safeguarding team are aware of which service areas require in-person training and these sessions will be launched as part of the September schedule. In lieu of the training, those team managers have been asked to remind their remote workers of their corporate responsibilities for safeguarding, where the safeguarding policies can be accessed and the name of their Safeguarding Champion if they have any questions. City Services have highlighted to the Safeguarding team that they require in person sessions to reach all remote workers and staff with limited access to IT equipment during their working day, this is an area addressed through the self-assessment audit feedback and work plan (2021/2022).

2.5 The data at 2.5 shows the participation rates across the last 3 years for the e-learning module only. The current requirement for the VAWDASV training is to complete the course once. The training is delivered via in person sessions but is not reflected here. The data reflects that the campaign in 2021 did influence the uptake/ completion of the VAWDASV training in all service areas across the council significantly, however, the compliancy rate for the course is still below the 90% expectation.



The VAWDASV team have stated that their specialist additional training has had a low uptake across 2021/22 period however there was attendance by Newport employees to all courses offered, with 26 people completing the Ask and Act Group 2 sessions.

Specialist Syllabus Training

Understanding Domestic Abuse and Coercive Control – 3
Risk and MARAC – 7
Domestic abuse and the Affect on Children and Young People – 8
Understanding Sexual Violence – 6
Understanding Perpetrators – 5
Understanding HBA, FM and FGM – 4
Understanding and Working With Male Victims – 2
Vicarious Trauma and Wellbeing – 4
Perpetrators in the Workplace – 1
Trauma bonding – 1
Sexuality and Gender Diversity Awareness – 1
Neurodiversity and Trauma – 2

National Training Framework

Ask and Act Group 2 – 26
Ask and Act Group 3 – 3

- 2.6** This continued trend in the low uptake in mandatory training across the workforce requires collective oversight by the council. Regulatory bodies have accepted mitigating factors to date and there have been improvements seen across the service areas for some courses, however, the council requires a corporate steer from People and Business Change to ensure that “Mandatory Safeguarding Training” is completed for all new starters and current employees which is formally tracked and appropriate review/ action taken when not complied with. Colleagues from within People and Business Change are able to reassure that the ‘on boarding’ process of completing all mandatory training for every new starter, including volunteers is now in place.
- 2.7** As part of the training schedule under construction for a September 2022 launch, a review of the Safeguarding Involves Us All e-learning module will be made. This will include creating a revised version to prevent duplication with the Welsh Government module within the All Wales Basic Safeguarding Training pack, which is a single consistent safeguarding training module launched for public and voluntary sector staff across Wales in November 2021. Newport City Council’s module will continue to include the specific policies and supporting documents to ensure employees are not only aware of their duty to be vigilant for the signs of abuse but their corporate responsibilities including duty to report and the safeguarding expectations upon them when working for the council.
- 2.8** It is therefore a strong recommendation to Members that Cabinet endorse the work plan action (2022/2023) for People and Business Change to adopt new ways of working into their priority planning for both new starters to the authority and current employees (including volunteers and members) in completing mandatory Safeguarding training in order to improve compliance rates; meet the objectives of the Council’s commitment to ensuring “Safeguarding Involves Us All”; and in ensuring fines or regulatory action are not taken by governing bodies against Newport City Council.

3 Developments this year

3.1 Volunteers/ Chaperones Register for Newport City Council

Members are advised that a mapping exercise across all Council service areas has been undertaken and a project group between the Safeguarding Unit and People and Business Change is in place to effectively manage and implement a central register of volunteers/ chaperones used across the organisation as per Welsh Audit Office recommendations (2019 inspection). The project has identified where volunteers (paid/ unpaid) and chaperones are used currently/ or potentially could be used. The current “Volunteer Policy” will then be reviewed within the next quarter and updated following the agreements relating to procedural changes made linked to the recruitment/ training/ updating of volunteers details with central HR.

3.2 Newport Safeguarding Hub update

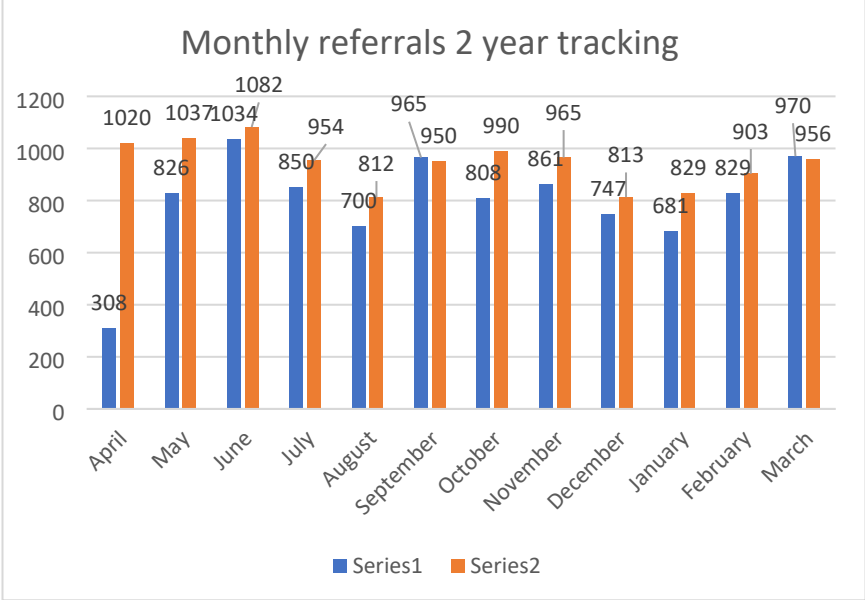
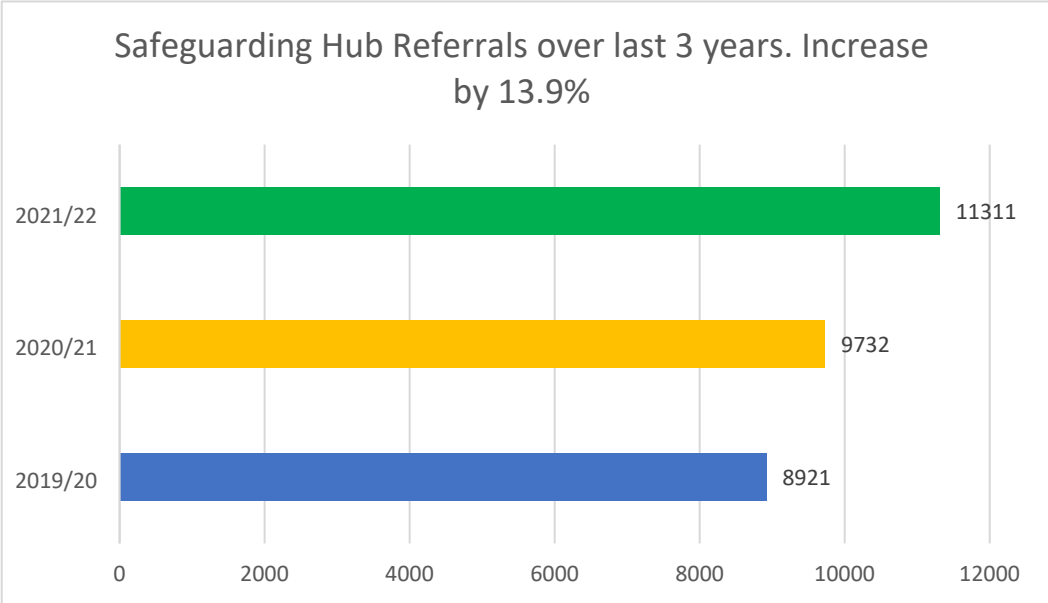
The Newport Safeguarding Hub is the authority's 'front door' process with the co-location of Police and Social Services personnel enabling sharing of immediate information and improved and timelier decision making for safeguarding children and adults. It remains clear that the safeguarding Hub, would be further enhanced with an improved interface between Health and Education representatives which goes beyond single points of contact (SPOC). There has been a particular challenge in resourcing a greater presence. Wider partnership co-location in the hub such as the Early Intervention Team responding to PPN's (police notifications) and joint agency decision making remains effective.

The Newport Safeguarding hub model and its successes has resulted in the model being adopted regionally. There are now 2 Safeguarding Hubs in Gwent split East and West, with the East covering Newport and Monmouthshire while the West covers Caerphilly, Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent. Although the two areas have slight differences in terms of structure, the vision of the Safeguarding Hub is the same, and that is to have Police and Children's Services co-located at the Front door to allow for timely decision making, improved quality of referrals and improved early intervention.

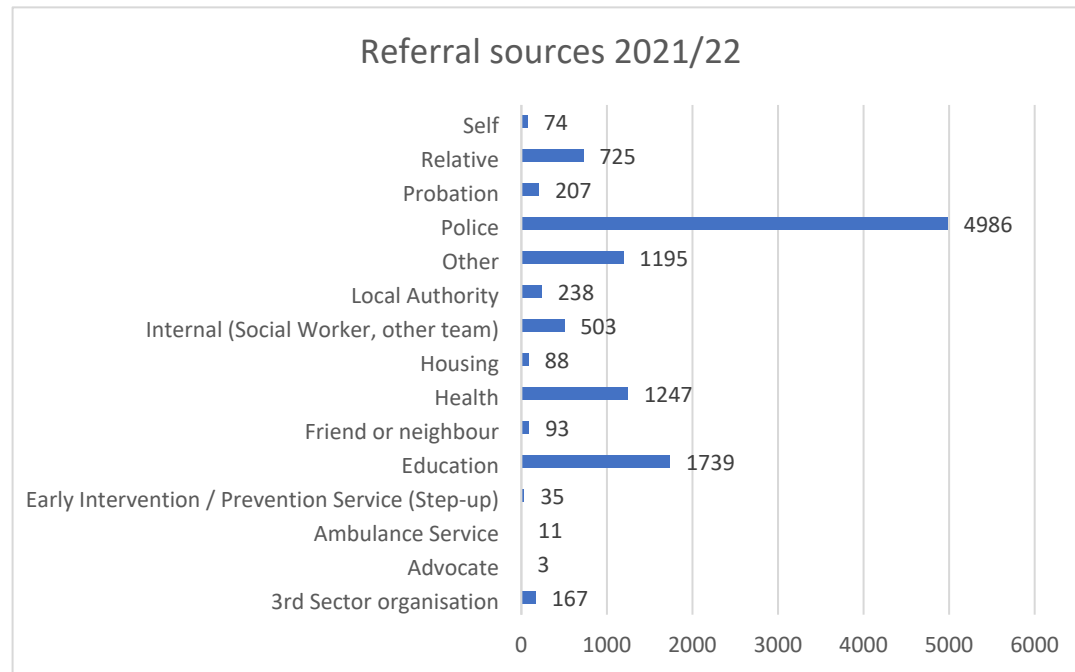
The "adult at risk" safeguarding pathway process is still presenting through two referral pathways through both the Safeguarding Hub and First Contact Team. The single pathway for all adults at risk (duty to enquire referrals) to be managed through one point of access and determine the initial action requires further work and remains an outstanding area of stress/ risk. This means the reliability of data still comes from two referral points and from a practice perspective the management of the process when responding to the regulatory timescales/ requirements on which team will undertake the process may be compromised. Having one streamlined process would alleviate any discrepancies. This is work in progress and an updated service proposal will be available in September.

The quality measures (performance indicators) for the Newport Safeguarding Hub are now clearly the reporting responsibility of the Annual Director's Report for Social Services. However, as discussed there are safeguarding performance measures captured at The Safeguarding Hub which will be presented for Member's awareness to assure them of the authority's performance in terms of statutory responsibilities; Children's safeguarding processes (contacts/strategy discussions/ initial conferences); Adults at Risk (duty to enquire); which will be presented here. Members are also directed to Section 5 for additional Key Data for Safeguarding.

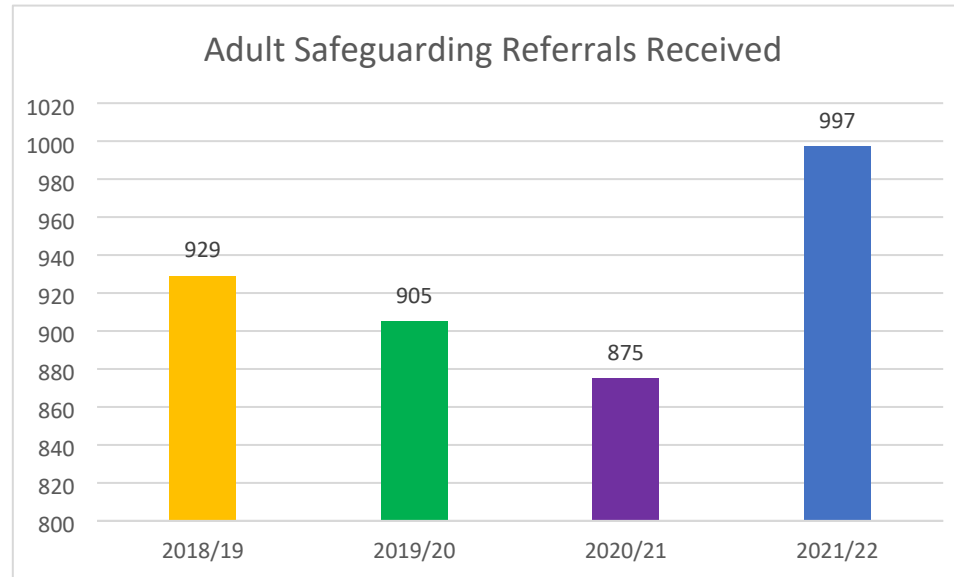
There was a significant downturn in referrals (Children’s Services) in April 2020 due to the initial pandemic lockdown, this would be expected. However, since then the number of referrals that have progressed through the Hub has accelerated and with continued acceleration across 2021/22.



Referrals to the Safeguarding Hub (Children’s Services) have overall increased by 13.9% compared to 2020/21. Police referrals are the most frequent referral source. The current resource provision of early intervention support with a step up- step down model via the prevention service and children’s duty team is the correct practice model in place to address the needs of families in acute stress, responding to need and escalating only those families where thresholds are appropriate. The data suggests that there are effective controls within the safeguarding HUB, that there is compliancy and effective safeguarding arrangements in terms of children’s decision making and the statutory responsibilities for timely decision making.



Total Adult Duty to Reports received	997
Total No. of Adults at risk	753
From which Adult suspected of being at risk (of the 997 DTR's 783 required enquires to be made)	783
Breakdown of non-criminal investigations	73
Breakdown of criminal investigations	67
Breakdown of ABUHB Adult Safeguarding cases **DTR cases owned by Health DLM	44



The total number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk received in 2019/20 was 905. The trend of a 3% drop per year did not continue and 92 more referrals were received, increasing by 9.2%. It is to be noted that 753 Adults were the "victims" reported via the 997 DTR's, hence some Adults reported more than once. Health professionals and care providers accounted for 54% of the referrals, evidencing strong multiagency working.

3.3 National Referral Mechanism pilot for young people. Newport are piloting devolved decision making around the NRM referral process on behalf of The Home Office. Newport are leading on this for the Gwent region. This enables us to dovetail cases of modern slavery/trafficking/exploitation with safeguarding at a local level. This is one of ten UK pilots that will run until March 2023. It is highly likely that this devolved decision making will be a duty for all Local Authorities in the future as local responses to presenting local issues better safeguard children and young people.

4 Reviewed Annual Corporate Safeguarding Work Plan 2020/2021

What outcomes do we want to achieve? (objectives to achieve)	How will we make this happen?	When will we achieve this?	How will we know it's making a difference? (performance measures)	RAG status	Reviewed Status
<p>1. Mandatory safeguarding training compliance to be corporately addressed by People and Business Change urgently via new ways of working for both new starters to the authority (via on-boarding process) and for current employees (via I-Trent tracking and employee check ins and if necessary, capability procedures for non completion) in order to avoid fines/ regulatory action for continued non-compliance.</p>	<p>People and Business Change to ensure that Mandatory Safeguarding Training is addressed as part of their priority planning for 2021/2022.</p> <p>New starters- via on-boarding process: Project currently being reviewed by Jane Westwood (PBC April 2021)</p> <p>Current Employees- via I-trent/ employee check-ins. Proposed by Rachael Davies (PBC April 2021)</p>	<p>Proposed for PBC to progress as a matter of urgency</p>	<p>Compliance rates for mandatory safeguarding training will improve across all service areas and the council will not receive fines or regulatory action.</p> <p>The council will be able to easily track compliance with mandatory training and address with service areas where there are issues with low up take and identify if barriers exist and address these swiftly.</p> <p>Completion of mandatory safeguarding training for all employees will result in a work force that is aware of its duties and responsibilities.</p>	<p>RED</p>	<p>AMBER</p> <p>People and Business Change had Mandatory Safeguarding Training as part of their priority planning for 2021/2022. PBC are finalising the mandatory training booklet including safeguarding (to replace the employee version via NHS portal due to challenges of access/IT skills).</p> <p>The onboarding process is in place where the mandatory training is to be completed. Further structures need to be in place to review impact of onboarding process and regular re-training schedule monitoring.</p> <p>Work within I-Trent ongoing.</p>
<p>2. Re- Launch e-learning basic safeguarding training for ALL employees and</p>	<p>- E-learning side of module successfully launched; implementation of face to face (F2F) facilitation to be established</p>	<p>- F2F training date tbd in relation to endemic situation</p>	<p>All new employees will have completed basic safeguarding awareness training and know their council duties and</p>	<p>AMBER for Face to Face learning</p>	<p>AMBER</p> <p>Face to face learning schedule to launch September 2022.</p>

<p>members- ensure compliancy across all service areas within the first year for course completion is as close to target 90%</p>	<p>as soon as endemic relaxation will allow.</p>	<p>- On boarding process tbc by PBC by July 2021</p>	<p>responsibilities prior to commencing their position.</p> <p>Target completion rate of existing employees and members will be met and be up to date with basic safeguarding awareness and their council duties and responsibilities.</p> <p>This can be scrutinised and tracked through the data within the annual figures within Corporate SG report and where non-compliance is identified the service area can be challenged.</p>	<p>and on-boarding process for new starters</p>	<p>Onboarding process for new starters in place as for July 2022.</p> <p>Overall completion rate since launch is 46%.</p> <p>Revisions of the package required to reflect All Wales Basic Safeguarding Training pack from Welsh Government</p>
<p>3. Develop a corporate register of volunteers/ chaperones/ mentors (paid/ unpaid) for all Council Service areas</p>	<p>Creation of a register where Volunteers, etc. may be used within service areas and what training/ checks would be required for their role- this requires to be linked to the Volunteers Policy and then publicised; cascaded to staff through varying forums. (to be completed in collaboration with POD & training).</p>	<p>- PBC to collate the details of the current list of volunteers/ chaperones across the organisation (May 2021)</p> <p>- PBC (with support of SG Unit) to update Volunteers Policy to ensure new</p>	<p>There will be a centrally located register held by POD of all volunteers used across all council service areas. Should information be required about a volunteer (ie. their training/ safeguarding check status) then this information can be quickly accessed.</p>	<p>AMBER</p>	<p>GREEN</p> <p>The 'central register' has been set up in I-Trent (and we have populated volunteer details where they have been provided by service areas)</p> <p>Combined application form/on-boarding to capture details of any agreed volunteer (which will include sign-off that they've read and understood the mandatory training) in final stage. The</p>

		<p>processes reflect requirements and Corporate SG requirements regarding mandatory training (July 2021)</p> <p>- Campaign/ dissemination/ SG champ forum of revamped Volunteers Policy in August 2022</p>			<p>volunteer will be issued with a 'contract' setting out principles/expectations of volunteering for NCC</p> <p>Update the final version of the Policy/Guidance for Volunteers to be completed July 2022, with a planned campaign of promotion across Council to ensure managers are signposting their volunteers to complete all our processes</p> <p>An item on the council jobs page to ask any speculative enquiry about volunteering for NCC so PBC can review and send to relevant service area for consideration</p>
<p>4. Develop a tiered safeguarding training framework for all roles across the organisation (including volunteers) to be clear on the level of safeguarding training and safeguarding check they must have in order to undertake their role</p>	<p>Early stages of the project with Social Services training department, identifying roles within services areas. Collaboration with POD is being arranged to develop this project.</p>	<p>Arrange project meeting with Safeguarding Unit; Training Department and PBC- lead officers Claire Broome (SS Training) and Lynsey Thomas (Safeguarding</p>	<p>There will be a clear safeguarding training framework which staff/ managers from all council service areas can access to identify what level of safeguarding training is required for their employment role (including volunteers) to ensure compliancy in terms of safeguarding training.</p>	<p>AMBER due to roll over from previous work plan task</p>	<p>AMBER</p> <p>Initial project meetings held with Safeguarding Unit; Training Department and PBC- lead officers Claire Broome (SS Training) and Lynsey Thomas (Safeguarding Unit) in July and August 2021. Due staff changes and circumstance this project had been paused.</p>

		Unit) – July 2021	This tiered training framework could also be developed as a future project to be linked to the clear review and personal development plans of employees.		Within July and August 2022, this wider project will be discussed when creating a face to face training schedule for Safeguarding training.
<p>5. Improve how “safeguarding” information is communicated externally to the citizens of Newport in order to ensure that our citizens know who to contact if they need information, advice or assistance and to promote the Council’s commitment to safeguarding by communicating essential information and highlighting where changes have or will be made (ie. legislation/ policy/ council procedures).</p> <p>“Communicating Information to Citizens about the Children-Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment Law” in 2022 is</p>	Review the current Newport.gov webpages to ensure that the information is up to date/ useful/ engaging	<p>1) Content development of pages and ratification of content by CSMT by August 2021</p> <p>2) Dissemination strategy to be agreed with Comms & Marketing department upon agreement of information content IT web page content development and launch by September 2021)</p>	Citizens of Newport report that they can access information, advice and assistance and feel that the information is communicated to them clearly.	AMBER	<p>AMBER</p> <p>Content development undertaken however due to additional streamlined resources developed by the Welsh Government, how want a cross Wales approach, additional work has begun to reflect this requirement. Proposed pages will be submitted to CSMT by end of September 2022 with proposed launch of November 2022 to coincide with National Safeguarding week.</p> <p>Meetings with Comms and Marketing team to be arranged for August 2022.</p>

<p>promoted on Newport.gov website.</p>					
<p>6. Child Protection Conference Process quality assurance review and audit</p>	<p>Audit and evaluation of the process changes and feedback from practitioners/ partners/ service users.</p>	<p>1) Virtual conference change occurring early summer (June/ July 2021), therefore, 1st audit review within 3 months approx. October 2021</p> <p>2) Case file audit of WCCIS form development for Child Protection Conference to assure quality to coincide with virtual conference changes at 1.</p> <p>3) Practitioner/ child/ agency feedback on process changes to inform review</p>	<p>Child Protection Conferences in Newport are a collaborative process which engage all of those participants involved, promoting the voice of the child and central to the process.</p>	<p>Green</p>	<p>1) Blended Case Conferences working well with 90% parents attending the meetings face to face. Blended meeting have also helped with meeting attendance and quoracy.</p> <p>2) This is ongoing. Case Conference forms were simplified. This has led to them being completed more fully. Parents understand the form.</p> <p>3) Positive feedback on the form</p>

		and audit-findings to CSMT December 2021			
7. Campaign Promoting the role of the “Designated Safeguarding Lead/Officer” (<i>ie. person responsible for making child/ adult at risk referrals</i>) and the differences with the “Safeguarding Champion” for the Service Area (<i>ie. person who disseminates information about Safeguarding and takes a corporate lead for information sharing</i>)- it is vital employees know who to report their concerns to and that those with DSL/O responsibilities and duties have the adequate training/ resources/support to fulfil these obligations.	A clear need for a new campaign on identifying who the DSL/O is for every team in every service area is needed and ensuring that those people are adequately trained for the role/ supported and that they are known and promoted to their teams/ service areas as the person responsible for making child/adult at risk referrals.	<p>- Individual service area feedback from self evaluations commencing June 2021</p> <p>- SG Champions forum highlighting information (September 2021)</p> <p>- DSL/O Campaign September 2021</p>	<p>Within the 2022 annual corporate safeguarding self assessments there will be a more informed knowledge base and response across the entire service area that it is the role of the “DSL/O” as the person who makes child/ adult at risk referrals.</p> <p>Improved knowledge across all service areas in safeguarding terminology/ language.</p> <p>Every employee knows who to report their concerns to if they have concerns for a child or adult at risk and the names of designated safeguarding leads/ officers are known/ displayed amongst teams/ departments.</p>	GREEN	<p>GREEN</p> <p>Safeguarding Champions to be addressed by directorates due to staffing changes</p>
8. Liberty Protection Safeguard training across Newport adult and children services		Regional consortium training calendar tbc	Adequately skilled workforce who have received the specialised regional training who are able to adapt to the	GREEN	<p>GREEN</p> <p>Completed within Adult Services, with new starters</p>

prior to regulation changes in 2022			transition from DoLs to LPS when it is applied in 2022. (No date set for implementation yet due to consultation of the new Code of Practice to be completed across the UK, possibly 2023)		receiving the support for adaption from DoLs to LPS.
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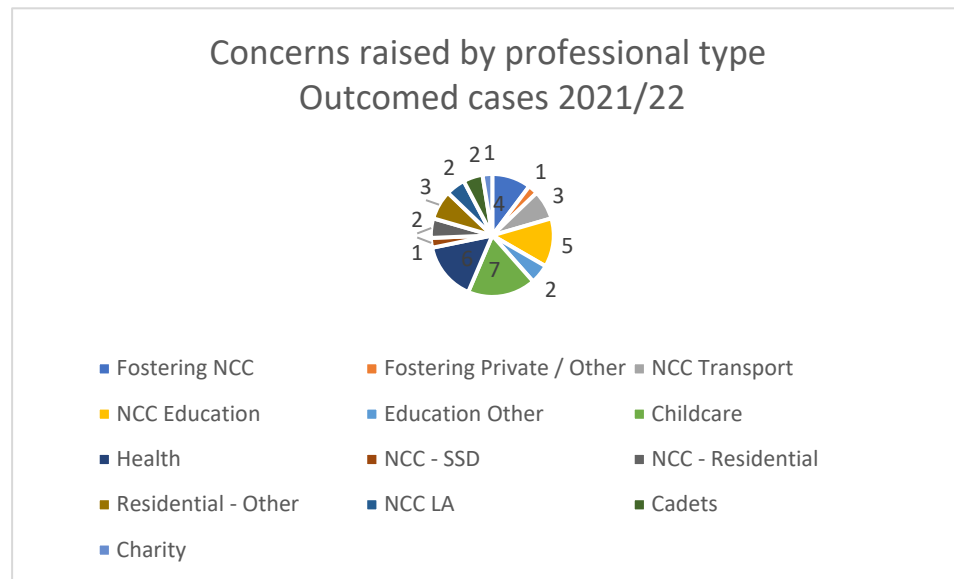
5 Key Data for Safeguarding

5.1 This section comprises the data required. Thus Members will be routinely provided with the performance data regarding referrals to the Local Authority Designated Officer (DOS/LADO); the performance figures provided to Welsh Government relating to the number of children named on Newport’s Child Protection Register as at 31st March each year; the number of children “looked after” as at 31st March and the number of children accommodated during the course of the year. The adults at risk (duty to enquire) statistics and reporting in relation to child assessment through to child protection processes will also be routinely provided.

5.2 Professional concerns

	Total PSM (Cases)	Substantiated	Un-substantiated	Unfounded	Deliberately invented or malicious	Threshold not met / Awaiting outcome
2019	93	33	22	5	0	40
2020	90	22	17	10	0	51
2021	81	31	11	5	1	52

	Total PSM (Cases)	Substantiated	Un-substantiated	Unfounded	Deliberately invented or malicious	Threshold not met / Awaiting outcome
2019	93	33	22	5	0	40
2020	90	22	17	10	0	51
2021	81	31	11	5	1	52



The table and graph at 5.2 provide data on the number of professional strategy meetings convened by the LADO, their outcomes, and the referral sources over the past 3 years. Members are advised that there has been a change in the outcome category introduced by the Wales

Safeguarding Procedures. Thus malicious and demonstrably false are no longer used and a new category, “deliberately invented or malicious”, has been introduced from 2020.

There has been no significant trend or concern identified within the professional strategy meetings (professional concerns) occurring within this period. Processes are in place and are well controlled.

5.3 The number of children named on Newport’s Child Protection Register as at 5.7.22 was 143.

Members are advised this is a low/medium average with other Gwent Local Authorities. There is a continued commitment to collaborative working with families and risk reduction.

5.4 The number of children “looked after” as at 5.7.22 was 341, a reduction from 376 previously.

The number of children who ceased to be “looked after” rose by 28 during the course of the year from 92 to 120. Members are reminded that ceasing “Child Looked After” status can be favourable for a number of reasons including “Turned 18 years old and continuing to live with foster parent/s in a ‘When I Am Ready arrangement’; Adoption; returned home to live with parents, relatives, or other person with parental responsibility (not under a residence order or special guardianship order); Special guardianship order made to former foster carers; Transferred To Care Of Adult Social Services).

Comparatively to last year’s Child Looked After figures there has been a reduction. The per 10,000 rate of children who are looked after continues to be the lowest in Gwent and below the Wales average. The number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children has increased by 66% and this continues to distort the number of children who are looked after in Newport. Significant work with our early intervention and prevention services to support families to stay together anticipates a further drive in safely reducing the child looked after population and returning “out of authority” placements to in-house provisions. Newport continues to develop our in house residential services working on at a Gwent level to increase emergency provision. Newport has a short breaks home for children with disabilities, 3 x four bed children’s home which also have 1 emergency bed available for up to 6 weeks. There is also a smaller home which accommodates one young person. Newport is developing, in partnership with health, a 4 bed regional children’s home which is short term provision to step down or prevention escalation for those children with high level emotional/behavioural needs. Newport is also developing regional emergency accommodation, 4 annexes that can accommodate 1 or 2 children depending on need. Newport has approximately 130 foster carers. Newport’s children placed with private fostering numbers continue to decrease as the teams work hard to return children to Newport or prevent them from leaving by providing

alternative care. The Programme for Government elimination of profit agenda has had a significant impact on external private providers and will mean that Newport will need to continue to build in house provision and plan to return children from private provision.

6 Annual Review of Newport City Council Corporate Safeguarding Self -Assessment Audit

6.1 Review period

We are reviewing the self assessment tool following the issuing of the Welsh Government guidance on Corporate Safeguarding. We are working Gwent wide with Safeguarding Service Manager counterparts to merge existing forms to reflect the shared issues. This will enable benchmarking and commonality of approach. We are including the audit recommendations into this work. We have met collectively and have another date to further look at this in September. In Newport, we are keen to establish a reporting cycle for corporate Safeguarding to ensure that all colleagues are aware of the timescales for Case file audits, Safeguarding Self Assessments and the annual report. This was significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

6.2 Quality of returns

Service areas have returned self assessments with various approaches. It has been useful to capture positive practices that are already fully embedded across the council. The process has highlighted to managers areas of improvement to refine safeguarding practices for their staff and the citizen who use their services. The method of completion was varied and resulted in different quality returns. Corporate Safeguarding will need to provide tailored support and guidance for the next completion of returns, to ensure there is deep level of scrutiny across all teams, to gain accurate insight and to help improve practices. Individual feedback with specific goals for each service area will be provided by September 2022. Corporate Safeguarding have plans to work in partnership with the Gwent Safeguarding Board and neighbouring local authorities to create a South East Wales regional self-assessment tool for safeguarding. This will enable common themes and gaps to be identified and tackled across the region as well as sharing good practice.

6.3 Themes per Standard

Standard 1 Policy & Practice (Robust) How robust are your safeguarding practices in your service area?

Strengths

All service areas report they utilise the suite of corporate safeguarding policies, including the Safer Recruitment process and recognise the responsibility for the associated training for all employees to be completed. Services were able to reference specific service area policies that relate to safeguarding, which further evidence a commitment to embedding these within their

processes. Service areas were able to clearly respond to questions regarding checks and volunteers, demonstrating an understanding of each topic.

Actions

Training – All areas are aware of the mandatory requirement of the training packages for all employees. Service areas confirmed that the onboarding process for new starters ensured applicable staff completed the courses in the first stages of employment. Tracking training and refresher completion of existing colleagues is an improvement most service areas identify. Managers are keen to address training gaps during team meetings or supervisions, to ensure safeguarding is prioritised and monitored regularly. Suggestions included regular reports for each service area to be issued by the training host or integrating training records and reminders with iTrent.

Actions: Delivery of in person training to be arranged as a priority for employee's who have limited access to e-learning packages. Training tracking to be discussed with HR partners and implemented.

DBS Checks – Service areas reported DBS checks are completed for roles where regulated activity occurs.

Action – refresher training for managers to ensure all are aware of what constitutes regulated activity and how frequency of activity requires different levels of checks.

Designated Safeguarding Lead/Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSL/DSO) – Although individuals are made aware of their Duty to Report, most service areas were unsure who their DSL/DSOs were. This lack of clarity needs to be addressed as a priority to ensure the Duty to Report process is clear, to prevent any referrals being missed or delayed.

Actions: A regularly updated list of DSL/DSO's needs to be accessible with each service areas shared spaces including electronic and physical locations.

The DSL/DSO needs to be displayed in spaces where the public attend and have sight.

Safeguarding Champions role – All areas were aware of the Safeguarding Champions, with some commenting on usefulness of cascaded information. Within some areas, the Champions role was confused with the DSL/DSO role. However, other areas were very keen to increase the number of Champions per area to ensure Safeguarding remained a priority within team meetings.

Actions: Relaunch Champion role with clear comparison between the DSL/DSO role made and recruit active, motivated participants.

Volunteers – Areas were able to identify if they work with volunteers and in which sectors of their service area. All were unable to confirm if a register is kept and how this is monitored across the service.

Actions: Link in with People and Business Change to promote their work on the new centrally held Volunteers Register and remind all it is part of a commitment to safeguarding by following the associated policy and procedures.

Professional Concern referrals – No area holds data on how many referrals are made from that service area, in relation to concerns about professionals who work with children or adults at risk. This links in with lack of clarity across the council of who the DSL/DSOs are.

Actions: Corporate Safeguarding to work with WCCIS team to collate that data and share with service areas annually. This will evidence that the policies in place are effective and employee's are following the duty to report process.

Audits – Adult Services and Children and Young People Services were the only teams who could identify audits where safeguarding had been a focus.

Actions: Work with Safeguarding Champions to identify areas within audits where safeguarding can be focussed on to ensure practices and procedures are regularly assessed for their robustness in terms of Safeguarding.

Standard 2 Environment (Safe)- How safe does your service area feel to citizens that access your services, and to your staff working in your service area?

Strengths

Service areas are confident that citizens and staff feel safe and informed when at sites and accessing services. Security measures are complied with in terms of those on premises as well as risk assessments. Staff who work directly with the public have additional and specific safeguarding training suitable to their role. Services areas were able to provide examples of how they have managed any concerns received by other citizens or professionals. Service areas were reflective of procedures in relation to contractors attending properties and identified areas of improvement.

Actions

Citizens awareness of safeguarding – Although areas can example that safeguarding concerns are raised by staff and citizens, without clarity on DSL/DSO within service areas, the robustness of these procedures need to be improved.

Actions: DSL/DSO's identified and widely communicated, with timely reviews as a priority. The quality of public displays of across sites and online sources needs scrutiny to ensure best practice is established.

Other premises risk assessments – Service areas where staff visit other premises utilise logging and communication processes. However, the pandemic changed some practices with physical logbooks to digital or phone calls made post visit, ensuring new agreed practice is in place.

Actions: Champions to highlight the need for these new practices to be reviewed in a timely manner as the working practices continue to evolve due to blended working.

Standard 3 Culture (Effective) - How Effective is your service area approach to safeguarding?

Strengths

All areas stated that their strategic planning takes into account the need to safeguard citizens and to promote their welfare. Some were able to reflect on what has gone well and areas for improvement. Most areas were able to demonstrate that new learning is embedded into practice and planning in relation to consent to share and safeguarding children and adults at risk. Gaps in service area approach to safeguarding were mainly identified, showing willingness to accept change will be required to improve and uphold safeguarding standards.

Actions

Training – All areas again commented on the need for better monitoring of training and will undertake snap audits to test the effectiveness.

Actions: Utilise Champions to provide prompts for regular training and testing of safeguarding understanding.

Commissioned services – Some areas stated that they have dispensed with services due to standards issues but this is not captured/recorded regularly. Consideration to link in with LADO if appropriate.

Actions: Further discussion and quality checks required with Service Areas to ascertain if a comparison tool for those assessing a commissioned service safeguarding practices is in line with Newport City Council's.

7 Future Work, Areas of stress/ risk, and Recommendations

7.1 The impact of Covid-19 pandemic this has resulted in further delays in actions from the previous year's work plan targets either being met or commenced for some work streams. The outstanding work has therefore been rolled over into this year's work plan (2022- 2023) and new target dates have been set. Members are respectfully asked to remember that given the ever-changing climate that we remain in that the service will always need to remain adaptable and reflexive, and the proposals stated will need to have a degree of flexibility to their completion.

7.2 The Safeguarding Unit, collaboratively with the Social Services Training Department and People and Business Change Department, will continue to progress on the secondary phase of "skill-scanning" of all job descriptions within the council

(including volunteers) to ensure that every post is reviewed to ensure that the correct level of safeguarding training and checks required for that role is “assigned” and then can be reviewed by the responsible line manager at the correct intervals. This work is identified on the Work Plan (2022/ 2023).

7.3 As highlighted to Members, there is an area of risk to the Council in relation to poor performance for mandatory training where fines/ regulatory action may be taken regarding safeguarding training. Although there have been mitigating factors affecting performance (including the pandemic; access issues for specific service areas) which have been acknowledged by both the Senior Children/ Adult Management Team and Welsh Government to prevent action being taken currently, this on-going low performance and non-compliance requires to be formally addressed. It is therefore a strong recommendation to Members that Cabinet continues to endorse the work plan action at 1. for People and Business Change to adopt new ways of working into their priority planning for current employees in completing mandatory Safeguarding training in order to improve compliance rates; meet the objectives of the Council’s commitment to ensuring “Safeguarding Involves Us All”; and in ensuring fines or regulatory action are not taken by governing bodies against Newport City Council.

7.4 Safeguarding Champions. We will refresh this role and look at a role profile for the champions to ensure that they are clear about this position. We plan to reinstate the regular meetings with the champions and look at how they are integral to the corporate Safeguarding plan for information exchange.

7.5 Audit cycle for children services. We are going to implement a case audit cycle in Children’s Services from 1st September and have devised a process for all managers, Team Manager and above to audit a case bi monthly. This will be managed by the Quality Assurance team. From this we will gain oversight into case themes and subsequent strengths as well as improvements.

8 Corporate Safeguarding Work Plan (2022/ 2023)

What outcomes do we want to achieve? (objectives to achieve)	How will we make this happen?	When will we achieve this?	How will we know it’s making a difference? (performance measures)	RAG status
1. Mandatory safeguarding training compliance to be corporately addressed by People and Business Change	People and Business Change to ensure that Mandatory Safeguarding Training is	Proposed for PBC to progress as a matter of urgency	Compliance rates for mandatory safeguarding training will improve across all service areas and the	AMBER Processes in place for new

<p>urgently via new ways of working for current employees (via I-Trent tracking and employee check ins and if necessary, capability procedures for non completion) in order to avoid fines/ regulatory action for continued non-compliance.</p>	<p>addressed as part of their priority planning for 2022/2023.</p> <p>Current Employees- via I-Trent/ employee check-ins.</p>		<p>council will not receive fines or regulatory action.</p> <p>The council will be able to easily track compliance with mandatory training and address with service areas where there are issues with low up take and identify if barriers exist and address these swiftly.</p> <p>Completion of mandatory safeguarding training for all employees will result in a work force that is aware of its duties and responsibilities.</p>	<p>starters and volunteers. Current employees have access to all the training and Safeguarding Champions and campaigns promote these.</p> <p>F2F sessions are being schedule to capture those without IT access.</p>
<p>2. Develop a tiered safeguarding training framework for all roles across the organisation (including volunteers) to be clear on the level of safeguarding training and safeguarding check they must have in order to undertake their role</p>	<p>Early stages of the project with Social Services training department, identifying roles within services areas. Collaboration with POD is being arranged to develop this project.</p>	<p>Arrange further project meeting with Safeguarding Unit; Training Department and PBC- lead officers</p>	<p>There will be a clear safeguarding training framework which staff/ managers from all council service areas can access to identify what level of safeguarding training is required for their employment role (including volunteers) to ensure compliancy in terms of safeguarding training.</p> <p>This tiered training framework could also be developed as a future project to be linked to the clear review and personal development plans of employees.</p>	<p>AMBER due to roll over from previous work plan task (20/21)</p>

<p>5. Improve how “safeguarding” information is communicated externally to the citizens of Newport in order to ensure that our citizens know who to contact if they need information, advice or assistance and to promote the Council’s commitment to safeguarding by communicating essential information and highlighting where changes have or will be made (ie. legislation/ policy/ council procedures).</p>	<p>Review the current Newport.gov webpages to ensure that the information is up to date/ useful/ engaging</p>	<p>1) Content ratification of content by CSMT by August 2022</p> <p>2) Dissemination strategy to be agreed with Comms & Marketing department upon agreement of information content IT web page content development and launch by November 2022)</p>	<p>Citizens of Newport report that they can access information, advice and assistance and feel that the information is communicated to them clearly.</p>	<p>AMBER due to roll over from previous work plan task (20/21)</p> <p>Proposed development pages being finalised</p> <p>Communicating Information to Citizens about the Children-Abolition of Defence of Reasonable Punishment Law was prompted by the council social media channels</p>
<p>6. Self assessment tool – regional work</p>	<p>Ongoing meetings with Gwent counterparts. Managed by Safeguarding Service Managers with help from the Safeguarding Board Business Unit</p>	<p>Spring 2023 for the new reporting cycle</p>	<p>More robust self assessment will mitigate N/A answers as well as allow for benchmarking against WAO recommendations and regionally agreed performance indicators.</p>	
<p>7. Audit Cycles</p>	<p>Process is devised and ready to implement</p>	<p>Sept 2022</p>	<p>Case themes, strengths and improvements</p>	

9 Resource implications (employment and financial)

There are no resource implications currently other than corporate Safeguarding being a part of everyone's role. This is being managed without a budget.

Appendix 1 – Glossary of terms

Acronym	Term
ABUHB	Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
CSMT	Children Services Management Team
DoL	Deprivation of Liberty
DSL/O	Designated Safeguarding Lead / Officer
DTR	Duty to refer
F2F	Face to face
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FM	Forced Marriage
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations
HBA	Honour Based Abuse
LAC / CLA	Looked After Child / Child Looked After
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
LPS	Liberty Protection Safeguards
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences

NCC	Newport City Council
PBC	People and Business Change
PPN	Police Protection Notification
PSM	Professional Strategy Meeting
SG	Safeguarding
SPOC	Single points of contact
VAWDASV	Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence
WCCIS	Welsh Community Care Information System

Appendix 2 – Welsh Government Corporate Safeguarding Good Practice Guidance



WG Corp
Safeguarding Policy