

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**22<sup>ND</sup> JANUARY 2013**

**REPORT OF GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

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**CWM TAF SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To advise Cabinet of the Annual Report of the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board 2012/13.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Members note the contents of the report.

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) replaced the old Area Child Protection Committees (ACPCs) in Wales in October 2006 and placed the need for agencies to work together on a statutory footing.

3.2 "Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004" sets out how all relevant agencies and professionals in Wales should work together to safeguard and promote children's welfare and protect them from harm, as well as how this should be co-ordinated by LSCBs.

Welsh Government has in the context of the Social Services and Well Being Bill set a new direction in the establishment of six regional Safeguarding Boards across Wales.

3.3 The concept of "safeguarding" is wide-ranging and is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health and development
- Ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the safe and effective care and creating opportunities to enable children to have optimum life chances such that they can enter adulthood successfully

3.4 The core business of a SCB is to ensure there is collective accountability for those children and young people that are the subject of child protection processes under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989.

- 3.5 The key responsibility of a SCB is to co-ordinate the work of partners to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and ensure its effectiveness.
- 3.6 Cabinet approval for the merger of the Merthyr Tydfil LSCB and the Rhondda Cynon Taf LSCB was provided in early 2012. Consequently, Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board (CTSCB) came into being on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2012
- 3.7 Attached is the first annual report of the Board's work for 2012/13. It provides a comprehensive account of its achievements and outcomes in a very busy period, as it addressed major changes in its operation and structure to establish the new regional Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board.
- 3.8 The attached Annual Report has been approved by the CTSCB.

**Appendix 1**

**Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board**

**CWM TAF**  
**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2012 / 2013**

## **Introduction**

This is the first annual report of Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board (CTSCB). It summarises the work undertaken in the past year, and identifies areas of development for the coming year, April 2013 to March 2014.

The CTSCB is the operating title of the former Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) Local Safeguarding Children Board and Merthyr Tydfil (MT) Local Safeguarding Children Board which merged in June 2012 to form the Cwm Taf Board. It is the multi-agency partnership which has responsibility for safeguarding children in our area. It is made up of the following statutory partners, Cwm Taf Local Health Board, South Wales Police, Wales Probation Trust, RCT and MT Children's Services, Education, Youth Offending Service, Housing Services and the Voluntary Sector. It monitors how well agencies and other partnerships undertake their work with regard to safeguarding and ensures safeguarding is embedded in all working practices.

***The Vision of the Board is that Children and Young People in Cwm Taf, up to the age of eighteen years are protected from abuse and neglect and their welfare is safeguarded and promoted.***



**Ellis Williams and Giovanni Isingrini  
Joint Chairs of the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board**

## **HOW THE BOARD IS ORGANISED**

The Board is currently chaired jointly by Ellis Williams the Group Director for Community and Children's Services and the lead director for Children and Young People within the RCTCBC and Giovanni Isingrini, the Director of Community Services for Merthyr Tydfil CBC and lead director for young people within MTCBC

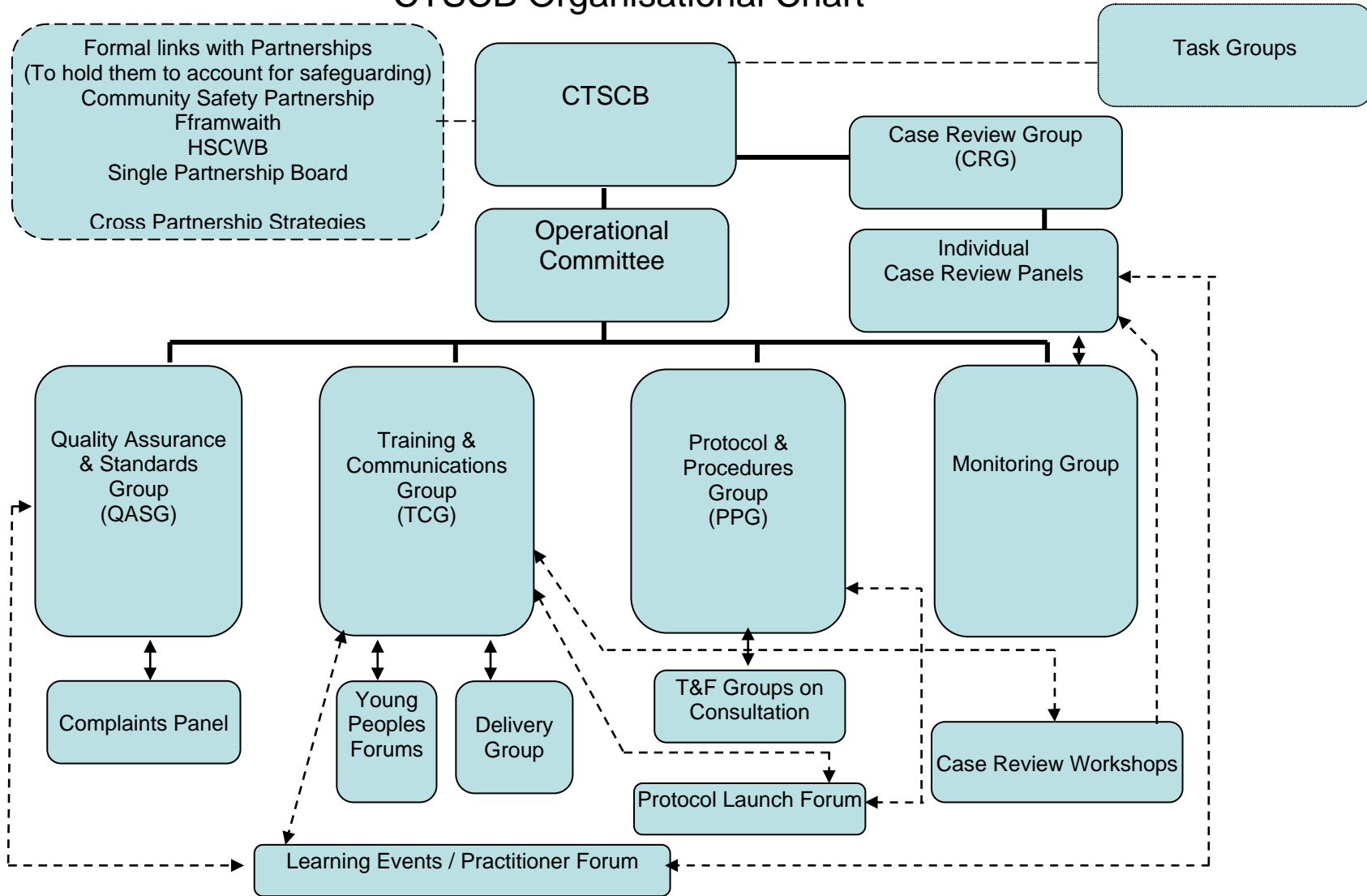
The Vice Chair of the Board is Jane Randall, Head of Safeguarding for Cwm Taf Health Board.

The membership of the Board complies with the Welsh Government (WG) national guidance on safeguarding 'Working Together 2006' a membership list is attached, at the end of this report, for information.

The CTSCB is an independent body which has become a driving force for safeguarding across the Cwm Taf region. The CTSCB meets five times a year, and holds one development day per year. The CTSCB members are senior managers who are able to hold their own organisations to account and speak with authority. The basic day to day expenses of the Board are funded by an annual contribution from each statutory partner agency,

The CTSCB has a number of sub-groups which drive forward the annual work plan. In carrying out this work the seven core aims for children and young people, the ten entitlements for young people aged eleven to twenty five and the Wales strategy for youth offending are overarching principles. The details of the subgroups are set out below:

### CTSCB Organisational Chart



CTSCB will make this report public by placing it on the each local authority's website and will also ensure it is presented to the Local Authority, its Elected Members and the key statutory partnerships within the County Borough.

## **Definition of Safeguarding**

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children are defined in "Safeguarding Children: Working Together under the Children Act 2004" (WAG 2006) as:

### **1. Protecting children from maltreatment by ensuring that:**

- The strategic direction for protecting children from maltreatment is set
- Child protection processes are in place and work effectively
- Staff are well trained competent and are performing effectively
- Quality Assurance systems are in place to evaluate organisational performance and outcomes for children.

### **2. Preventing impairment of children's health and development by:**

- Contributing to development and monitoring of relevant strategic plans
- Campaigning, challenging and holding organisations to account for their responsibilities and roles in relation to safeguarding children.

### **3. Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and creating opportunities to enable children to have optimum life chances such that they can enter adulthood successfully by:**

- Raising awareness of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in communities and specific community based groups
- Collaboration with other LSCB and national and regional fora.

## **Aims**

The CTSCB will work together in partnership with children, young people and the community, statutory and voluntary partners and key strategic partnerships to achieve this vision.

The CTSCB will actively develop and encourage collaborative working with neighbouring Safeguarding Children Boards to improve outcomes for those children and young people in need of protection and safeguarding.

The CTSCB will be clear about what it is accountable for, what statutory partners should deliver, what other strategic partnerships are accountable for and what the CTSCB can contribute to these agendas.

The CTSCB will raise awareness about safeguarding children and young people influence the local strategic agenda and monitor and review its effectiveness.

***CTSCB will listen to, and hear the views of children and young people.***

## **Key Accountabilities**

**CTSCB's primary responsibility is to co-ordinate the work of partners to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and ensure its effectiveness. The CTSCB has identified the following groups of children for which it has key responsibility:**

- Children and young people in need of protection;
- Children and young people who are looked after;
- Children and young people with complex needs;
- Children and young people who are disabled;
- Children and young people who are adversely affected by carers' compromised parenting capacity; due to issues including substance misuse, domestic abuse, poor mental health, learning difficulties.
- Children and young people who are being or likely to be sexually exploited;
- Children and young people who display sexually harmful behaviour;
- Children and young people who go missing;
- Children and young people who place themselves at risk including through, self-harm, substance misuse and behaviour.

The CTSCB has contributed to the elements of the work of the Community Safety Partnership, Health Social Care and Well Being Partnership, the Children and Young People's Partnership in the Rhondda Cynon Taff area, and the Single Partnership Board in Merthyr Tydfil which relate to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and to the specific accountabilities listed above. It will also contribute to the development and delivery of the Single Integrated Plans in both RCT and Merthyr Tydfil from April 2013.

The CTSCB will hold partner agencies to account for their safeguarding work in general and in relation to these key accountabilities.



## **What we have achieved from April 2012 to March 2013**

### **CWM TAF SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD**

This year we have:

- Become the recognised operating body for the former Merthyr Tydfil Local Safeguarding Children Board and the Rhondda Cynon Taf Local Safeguarding Children Board
- Reviewed and updated the membership of the Board and all its sub groups
- Reviewed and updated the Terms of Reference for each sub group and appointed suitable chair persons
- Monitored the effectiveness of private fostering arrangements
- Commissioned work to develop a multi-agency safeguarding hub which will provide an initial risk assessment, through information sharing by a number of partners, to ensure that informed decisions are made about safeguarding children and families and vulnerable adults
- Held a development day to self assess how effective our collaborative work has been and to implement further changes

### **OPERATIONAL COMMITTEE**

This new group drives the strategic agenda and work plan of the Board and monitors its effectiveness. This year we have:

- Agreed Terms of Reference and a work programme for the committee
- Reviewed the role profiles of the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board Chair, Vice Chair and members, and reinforced their roles as safeguarding champions
- Contributed to the development of Single Integrated Plans in both RCT and Merthyr Tydfil
- Ensured that safeguarding is an integral part of these plans
- Produced a business plan which covers the Cwm Taf region
- Identified a number of strategic priorities and associated actions which have been allocated to sub groups to ensure these are delivered
- Produced a risk register to ensure that key potential safeguarding risks are identified and regularly reported to Board members, along with actions to mitigate these
- Ensured the risk register is adopted and regularly updated by all sub groups
- Driven changes to the cross partnership protocol for dealing with unexplained death in young people by incorporating good practice highlighted by a multi-agency group of professionals with proven experience in this field
- This cross partnership protocol has been aligned to the procedural response to unexplained death in childhood (PRUDIC)

## QUALITY ASSURANCE AND STANDARDS GROUP

This group audits the quality of multi-agency practice for child protection and safeguarding processes in the region. This year we have:

- Undertaken a variety of audits of cases the findings of which have been brought to the attention of managers
- Results of these audits have been fed back to practitioners along with guidelines for improvement
- Completed a number of programmed audits which are required on a cyclical basis over a given number of years
- Reported findings back to Operational Committee and the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board by exception
- Commissioned a number of practitioner events to raise awareness of themes identified by the audits and improve practice
- Processed two complaints about child protection conferences and held panels to respond to those complaints, which family members are encouraged to attend and participate in
- Neglect has been identified as a key issue for children and young people involved in the child protection process in Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil. Work is underway to review existing guidelines for multi-agency staff who work with families where neglect is a factor and a toolkit for practitioners has been produced and piloted
- Prioritised the needs of children on the child protection register who live with parents / carers who misuse substances following the results of research which illustrates this was of high importance

## TRAINING AND COMMUNICATIONS GROUP

This group is responsible for the training function of the Board along with engagement with young people, the public and professionals. This year we have:

- Reviewed our multi agency training strategy to ensure it is fit for purpose across Cwm Taf
- Reviewed and delivered training packages across three agreed levels to ensure that safeguarding training is delivered consistently to agencies and partnerships in the area
- Contributed to the ongoing development and delivery of the training programme to support the reduction of suicide and self harm across the region
- Driven the work of young people's groups in both Merthyr and Rhondda Cynon Taf to establish their views on safeguarding. This will ensure that their views on the effectiveness of safeguarding across Cwm Taf are heard
- Helped young people to give their views to the Welsh Government on the national consultation documents for draft legislation
- Ensured that safeguarding has become integral to both local authority's awareness raising through strong participation in the corporate induction process and citizen information days

- Raised awareness of safeguarding through the programme of specifically targeted training which is delivered annually to in excess of 350 staff and volunteers

### PROTOCOL AND PROCEDURES GROUP

This group is responsible for reviewing national and regional guidance and policy and for producing and developing local protocols which enhance practice. This year we have:

- Reviewed a number of local protocols which were previously owned by either Merthyr Tydfil or Rhondda Cynon Taf LSCB's. They have been made fit for purpose across Cwm Taf
- Improved the effectiveness of safeguarding practice for front line staff by working with practitioners to produce a number of guidance documents and toolkits
- Reviewed and expanded the guidelines for dealing with complaints about child protection conferences, which has been endorsed and adopted across the Cwm Taf region
- Begun work on our local protocol for dealing with allegations against professionals to ensure it can be used in both Merthyr and Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Used the newly published national Child Practice Review guidance to hold a raising awareness workshop for multi-agency practitioners, to enable reviews to be undertaken in a timely and effective manner

### CASE REVIEW AND MONITORING GROUP

This group reviews all cases of child death or serious injury when abuse or neglect is a suspected cause, and makes a recommendation about meeting the criteria to hold a child practice review. The Monitoring Group checks progress of all action plans resulting from completed Reviews against agreed timescales, and reports by exception to the strategic Board. This year we have:

- Met on two occasions to examine case details
- Made two recommendations to the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board co-chairs that reviews should take place
- Agreed the composition of each of the review panels
- Committed resources to ensure that reviews are undertaken in a timely and efficient manner
- Appointed suitable panel chairs and reviewers in each review
- Monitored the progress of each on-going action plan resulting from completed serious case reviews and child practice review pilots
- Developed a process to ensure practitioners involved in child practice reviews are able to fully participate in learning events
- Worked on a multi agency basis to ensure best use of software to enhance the learning experience

## **Further Areas for development from April 2013 to March 2014.**

In addition to completing their work plans and striving to achieve their allocated strategic priorities, each group has been given the following tasks for the forthcoming year:

### **CWM TAF SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD WILL:**

- Develop the collaborative work which has already begun across Cwm Taf to ensure that safeguarding children arrangements are effective across the region via CTSCB and all of its sub groups
- Contribute to the delivery streams of the Single Integrated Plans for both RCT and MT
- Continue the development of the multi agency safeguarding hub which will provide a 'multi agency risk assessment' to ensure informed decisions are made about safeguarding children and families

### **OPERATIONAL COMMITTEE WILL:**

- Continue to strengthen links with other strategic partnerships to ensure that a response to critical safeguarding incidents is provided on a neighbourhood basis through existing protocols
- Continue the development work to provide a co-ordinated response for young people who display risk taking behaviour which will result in the production of an overarching strategy that will have a number of work streams feeding into it.
- This will address many of the identified complexities of working with a number of groups of children and young people identified in our key accountabilities, such as children who go missing, those at risk of sexual exploitation and those displaying sexually harmful behaviour.

### **QUALITY ASSURANCE AND STANDARDS GROUP WILL:**

- Conclude the multi-agency project around neglect
- Hold a series of workshops to inform practitioners and launch the toolkit across the region

### **TRAINING AND COMMUNICATIONS GROUP WILL:**

- Take forward the work that has already begun on safeguarding Children and Young People in the world of Information Technology, including social networking sites, the internet and mobile communications
- Complete the work on the safeguarding website which will provide a resource for professionals and citizens who have safeguarding concerns

PROTOCOL AND PROCEDURES GROUP WILL:

- Undertake further work to align the policies and local protocols used by practitioners across the Cwm Taf region
- Have the flexibility to develop new local protocols as required across the region

CASE REVIEW AND MONITORING GROUP WILL:

- Continue to develop the skills of a 'pool' of local social care staff to undertake child practice reviews
- Continually review process to ensure that practitioners gain the maximum benefit from participation in the child practice reviews

The list of Members of Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board is below:

<b>Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board</b>	
Co-chair	Director of Community & Children's Services The Pavilions, Clydach Vale, Rhondda Cynon Taf CF40 2XX
Co-chair	Director of Community Services, MTCBC, Civic Centre, Castle Street, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8AN
Vice Chair/ Head of Safeguarding	Cwm Taf Health Board LHB Headquarters, Ynysmeurig House, Abercynon, CF45 4SN
Service Director, Children's Services	Rhondda Cynon Taf Children's Services Tŷ Pennant Catherine Street Pontypridd Rhondda Cynon Taf CF37 2TB
Head of Children's Services	Merthyr Tydfil CBC Children's Services, Civic Centre, Castle Street, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8AN
CTSCB Business Manager	Tŷ Pennant Catherine Street Pontypridd Rhondda Cynon Taf CF37 2TB

Acting Named Doctor for Safeguarding	Cwm Tâf Health Board Prince Charles Hospital
Superintendent	South Wales Police Pontypridd Police Station Berw Road, Pontypridd CF37 2TR
Service Director Commissioning, Business & Housing Systems	Rhondda Cynon Taf Children's Services Ty Elai Dinas Isaf East Williamstown Tonypandy CF40 1NY
Assistant Chief Officer	Wales Probation Trust 4 -9 Broadway Pontypridd Rhondda Cynon Taf CF37 1BA
Director of Customer Services	Merthyr Tydfil CBC Civic Centre, Castle Street, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8AN
Head of YOS	Youth Offending Service Unit 2 Fairway Court Tonteg Road Treforest Industrial Estate Pontypridd CF37 5UA
Service Director for Schools & Community	Rhondda Cynon Taf Tŷ Trevithick Abercynon CF45 4UQ
Chief Education Officer	Merthyr Tydfil CBC Civic Centre, Castle Street, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8AN
Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children & LAC, Public Health Wales	Public Health Wales Unit 1 Charnwood Court Heol Billingsley Parc Nantgarw Cardiff CF15 7QZ

Executive Nurse Director Cwm Taf Health Board	Cwm Taf Health Board LHB Headquarters Ynysmeurig House, Abercynon, CF45 4SN
Head of Safeguarding, Performance & Quality	Merthyr Tydfil CBC Civic Centre, Castle Street, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8AN
Head of Safeguarding & Standards	Rhondda Cynon Taf Children's Services Tŷ Pennant Catherine Street Pontypridd Rhondda Cynon Taf CF37 2TB
Head of Mental Health & Substance Misuse Service	Rhondda Cynon Taf Community Services Ty Elai Dinas Esaf East Williamstown Tonypany CF40 1NY
Principal Manager, Adult Mental Health Services	Merthyr Tydfil CBC Unit 5, Triangle Business Park, Pentrebach, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 4TQ
Principal Solicitor	Rhondda Cynon Taf Legal Services Taff Ely Principal Office Court House Street Pontypridd
Manager / Interlink Chair	TEDS (Treatment & Education Drug Service), Engine House, Depot Road, Aberdare, CF44 8DL
Chief Officer	Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil Voluntary Action Centre 89-90 High Street Pont Morlais Merthyr Tydfil CF47 8UH

