

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**COPORATE PARENTING BOARD****MUNICIPAL YEAR 2014 – 2015****COPORATE PARENTING BOARD****19th JANUARY 2015****REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR
OF COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S
SERVICES****Agenda Item No: 3****SAFEGUARDING ACTION PLAN
REPORT**

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Corporate Parenting Board of progress made in respect of the Children's Services Safeguarding Action Plan (SAP).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the Corporate Parenting Board notes the progress report.

2.2 That the Corporate Parenting Board receives a further progress report in 12 months.

3. BACKGROUND

As members will be aware from previous reports; following the publication of the Serious Case Review regarding the death of baby Peter in Haringey at the end of 2008, CSSIW required a series of actions from all Local Authorities (LAs) and Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs), to be satisfied about the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in Wales.

Children's Services were therefore required to carry out an audit of the Council's compliance at that time with the recommendations from the Victoria Climbié inquiry report, published in 2003.

Subsequently Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) inspectors visited RCT in April 2009 to conduct an inspection to verify the reviews of effectiveness undertaken by both Children's Services and the then RCT LSCB. The final inspection reports were received at the end of October 2009.

Furthermore RCT LSCB was subject of a multi inspectorate inspection during February 2011 the resulting report was published in October 2011 and was subject of a report to CPB in November 2011.

In addition during the latter part of 2011, RCT LSCB published an executive summary of the Serious Case Review (SCR) for Child MM and a combined executive summary for the SCRs for Child K, Child N and Child R.

Subsequently Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board (RCT LSCB successor body) has been involved in piloting Child Practice Reviews (CPR) the arrangements which replace Serious Case Reviews; and published individual reports in both January and December 2013 as well as June 2014

A looked after children safeguarding report was produced and reported to CPB in May 2013.

4. CHILDREN'S SERVICES SAFEGUARDING ACTION PLAN (SAP)

Members will appreciate that the actions that are required to ensure effective safeguarding, stem not only from external inspection processes but also from internal reviews and audits, from Child Practice Reviews, from national reports, from national policy shifts and from collaborative developments with partners. Actively progressing, integrating and monitoring the actions required is therefore both a highly complex undertaking and subject to change over time.

The Head of Safeguarding and Standards therefore, developed a Safeguarding Action Plan (SAP) as a management tool to enable managers across the service to sustain the process of improvement and review progress regularly.

This current SAP incorporates all of the relevant actions stemming from the CSSIW Inspection; those remaining that were identified as part of the audit of compliance with the requirements of the Victoria Climbié Report 2003; and those resulting from Serious Case Reviews/Child Practice Review reports and the looked after children safeguarding report.

Progress against the SAP is reported to Corporate Parenting Board annually as previously agreed.

5. CURRENT POSITION

The established SAP review group which has representation from across Children's Services continues to meet on a quarterly basis to monitor progress. The SAP is a regular agenda item for the Children's

Services Management Team meetings. Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board (CTSCB) also monitors implementation of the Children's Services SCR/CPR action plans. The SAP is therefore the vehicle for ensuring such reports are available.

Listed below are the key achievements and difficulties associated with actions contained within the SAP for 2014:-

- Considerable progress has been made working with partners to develop and implement a multi agency safeguarding hub (MASH). Both Cwm Taf Adult and Children Safeguarding Boards have endorsed the model which is at the point of implementation. In essence the purpose of the MASH is to risk assess all safeguarding contacts for children and adults on a multi agency basis and decide upon the required response. Its aim is to make better informed decisions in a more timely way and therefore improve outcomes for vulnerable children and adults. MASH will utilise a specifically designed electronic system MHUB. Plans are in hand for implementation in April 2015 for Children's Services. It is anticipated EDT will be located within MASH during January 2015.
- The Child H SCR action plan for Children's Services has now been completed and signed off by CTSCB. A review of Child In Need cases open for a year has been conducted across the 3 districts and an initial report has been received by the CTSCB Quality Assurance sub group (QASG); a final report is scheduled for January 2015 This review will become part of the QASG annual work plan. Child R remaining action relates to safe care arrangements over public holiday periods. Arrangements have now been made to ensure progress on this outstanding matter by CTSCB to ensure consistent practice across the region.
- Business support to Child Protection Conferences and core groups has been reviewed and some additional resources provided.
- Considerable progress has been made with the LAC Safeguarding report actions.
 1. Long term visiting guidance has now been produced and agreed across Cwm Taf. This relates to children placed in long term education or health settings. These children are not looked after but can be very vulnerable given the complex nature of their needs and the fact they are placed away from home for long periods. The guidance sets out the frequency and requirements of visits and also ensures an IRO will now be made available for each child although this will need to be with parental agreement
 2. In addition specific guidance has been produced regarding the expectations of staff when children are placed with 'non-framework' providers of external placements, this includes accreditation and placement visiting requirements. Such placements are those outside of the 4 C's arrangements and

only used when all other avenues have proved unsuccessful. Children and young people are therefore likely to have significant additional needs.

3. Lastly a review has been conducted of the panel arrangements, both statutory and operational that makes decisions about looking after children. The process has been considerably streamlined, accountability clarified and a QA process established. All of which will become operational in January 2015.
- Access to the new YOS database has been provided for the performance information manager previous plans to give access to the Initial Assessment teams in the districts have now been shelved in favour of providing this via MASH
 - Work has concluded on developing risk assessment and risk management guidance in relation to young people at risk for example through going missing, being sexually exploited, misusing substances or displaying sexually harmful behaviour. This is work was led by a CTSCB task group of which Children Services were a key part; practitioners making an extremely valuable contribution. The aim being to safeguard and protect young people by ensuring risk is consistently assessed and managed as effectively as possible on a multi agency basis. This will include an escalation process to a key group of senior CTSCB managers for the critical few most at risk. The guidance has been signed off by the Safeguarding Board Implementation is currently being planned along with the necessary training.
 - The main area where progress has been problematic continues to be the implementation of the electronic Childrens Case Management System. Some progress has been made with implementation of a combined initial and core assessment during November. This is now a key priority in Children's Services and is a crucial element of the remodelling work currently being undertaken particularly given the decision to use one specific assessment model for the whole service. This will be a challenging proposition given the fundamental changes required and the technical support required to achieve it. This action now sits within the Children's Services priorities rather than the SAP given the ongoing work outlined above.

The SAP has been amended to reflect the progress outlined above and completed actions removed. The existing SAP group will continue to monitor the completion of work associated with the SAP and report to CPB and CSMT at the agreed frequency.