

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL  
MUNICIPAL YEAR 2017/18**

**26<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017**

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

**Agenda Item No. 6**

**CWM TAF SAFEGUARDING  
BOARD ANNUAL REPORT  
2016/17**

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**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to share with Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee the Annual Report for 2016/17 for the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board (Children, Adults and the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)).

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee:

- 2.1 Consider the content of the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board Annual Report for 2016/17

**3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The Cwm Taf Safeguarding Boards for adults and children have a statutory responsibility to publish Annual Reports on 31st July each year, setting out how they have exercised their functions in the preceding financial year.

**4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Safeguarding involves both the protection of children and adults at risk from abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm and preventing them from becoming at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm.
- 4.2 The Cwm Taf Safeguarding Adults Board and the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board are the multi-agency partnerships that have responsibility for safeguarding children and adults at risk in Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil.

- 4.3 The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) sits within the structure of the Boards to enhance safeguarding practice, with agencies working together in one place to receive all safeguarding referrals and share relevant agency information to make collaborative decisions.
- 4.4 In 2016/17 the Safeguarding Adults Board and the Safeguarding Children Board, in conjunction with the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub, have continued to collaborate to safeguard people of all ages. This has resulted in the creation of a joint regional multi-agency Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board and the production of the first Cwm Taf Safeguarding Annual Report for all ages.

## 5. **ANNUAL REPORTS 2016/17**

- 5.1 The purpose of the Annual Report is twofold; it is a tool of accountability and a tool for evaluation. Accountability has three components:

- accountability to the public;
- accountability to the statutory partner agencies of the Board; and
- accountability to the inspectorate bodies.

- 5.2 The required content of the Report is set out in the statutory guidance under Part 7 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. A summary of some of the key achievements included in the report is provided below:

### 5.3 **Safeguarding Adults**

- Expanded the scope of the existing Protocol for the Immediate Response to Critical Incidents Protocol to include critical incidents involving adults at risk.
- There were 3551 safeguarding reports received for RCT in 2016/17, of which 581 proceeded to an enquiry. The risk was reduced or removed at case closure for 97.3% of these enquiries.
- Managing Adult Large Scale Safeguarding Investigations protocol developed which enhances multi-agency communication, co-ordination and ensures availability of appropriate resources when large scale abuse is suspected.
- Ten individual case audits were completed during the year, in addition to 2 thematic audits on repeat referrals and cases in an NHS setting.
- Supported the completion of one Domestic Homicide Review, commissioned by the Cwm Taf Community Safety Partnership, which is due to be published in 2017.

***Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards*** - 514 DoLS assessments and re-assessments were completed by the Cwm Taf Supervisory Bodies, i.e.

RCTCBC, MTCBC and the Cwm Taf UHB. This was an increase from the previous year's figures (480 total assessments and re-assessments). However, the number of new requests continue to rise, from 1,448 in 2015/16 to 1,786 in 2016/17 and therefore the waiting lists for assessments are still high. This has been recognised as a risk that is being monitored by the Board.

**Adult Reviews** - 7 new cases considered, which is a 75% increase compared to 2015/16. This is likely to be due to the strengthened governance arrangements, including clearer criteria for referrals.

Two Adult Practice Reviews (APR) commenced and another one continued from the previous year.

#### 5.4 Safeguarding Children

- The Immediate Response to Critical Incidents Protocol was used once during the year to address the risks associated with 5 individuals who were placing themselves in danger through their joint behaviour. A multi-agency approach was put in place to deal with these issues which resulted in positive outcomes for all those involved.
- The priorities for tackling neglect in for 2016/17 have focussed on improving the usage of the Assessment Tool for Neglect amongst practitioners.
- During 2016/17 the number of children on the Child Protection Register decreased by 9% for Rhondda Cynon Taff.
- Development of a Protocol for Responding to Challenging Cases for children on the Child Protection Register which provides practitioners with guidance on the process to be followed in cases where a Care and Support Plan is not reducing the risk.
- Implemented an extensive quality assurance and audit programme which has generated learning that has been shared with practitioners.

**Child Sexual Exploitation** - The continued implementation of the regional CSE Action Plan has been fully supported by the Board CSE Champion and a CSE Consultant Social Worker, seconded to work with the Board by Barnardos. A CSE needs assessment and an audit of CSE cases was carried out which enabled the Board to share learning and resulted in the implementation of CSE Strategy Meetings and Multi-Agency CSE (MACSE) meetings to share intelligence.

**Child Practice Reviews** - 17 cases were considered; including all unexpected deaths in children, but none met the criteria for a Child Practice Review. Two Adult Practice Reviews commenced in 2016 and both established a joint child/adult approach to learning due to the age of the individuals. One Child Practice Review, carried out in 2015 was

published by the Board in 2016/17 and one Multi-Agency Practitioner Forum was held to consider the learning in relation to one case that did not meet the criteria for a CPR.

## 5.5 MASH

- Governance arrangements strengthened to oversee the ongoing development and improvement of the MASH.
- A comprehensive accommodation review carried out with alteration works subsequently in place to expand and improve MASH accommodation by Autumn 2017
- Completed a multi-agency review of MASH processes and a thresholding review/screening pilot of children's referrals into MASH. This has led to the proposal for a Cwm Taf co-ordinated thresholding approach to be developed in 2017/18
- The total numbers of referrals/contacts that were triaged by the MASH for 2016/2017 were 24,644. 2,511 met the threshold for child protection, adult protection or high risk domestic abuse, an increase of 12% compared to the previous year.
- There has been a reduction in repeat referrals by 3.59% for Child Protection in RCT during the second year of MASH, meeting the MASH objective to reduce repeat referrals.
- The percentage of repeat reports for Adult Safeguarding in RCT CBC has increased by just over 5% compared to 2015/16 (from 38% to 43.7%).

## 5.6 Joint Safeguarding Functions

- A programme of engagement, participation and communication activities was delivered during the year, including Safeguarding Week, November 2016, which involved over 40 agencies delivering over 70 events across Cwm Taf.
- Over 2,000 people received safeguarding training via the Cwm Taf Social Care Workforce Development Partnership.
- Collaboration activities took place with a range of other agencies, partnerships and Boards.

## 6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) screening form has been prepared for the purpose of this report. It has been found that a full assessment is not required at this time.

## 7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Annual Report has been approved by the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board and shared with the Welsh Government, the National

Independent Safeguarding Board and the five other Regional Safeguarding Boards.

- 7.2 A copy of the report has been published on the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Boards website [www.cwmtafsafeguarding.org](http://www.cwmtafsafeguarding.org)

## **8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

- 8.1 None.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED**

- 9.1 The Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 sets out the responsibilities and the functions of the Regional Safeguarding Boards.

## **10. LINKS TO THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE PLAN/OTHER CORPORATE PRIORITIES/SIP**

- 10.1 At a strategic level, this approach to safeguarding supports the delivery of the Council's three priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan,

1. **People – Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone**
2. **Place – Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live**
3. **Economy – Building a strong economy**

It also supports the work the Council undertakes in partnership to meet the Vision of the Council and its partners in the Single Integrated Plan i.e.

### **People in Rhondda Cynon Taf are safe, healthy and prosperous**

At an All Wales level, keeping people safe contributes to the Wellbeing goals as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act to **improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales**. The Safeguarding Board connects with the Public Service Board by reporting on safeguarding activity and supports the Council's priority to ensure that Children and Adults at risk are protected from harm.

## **11. CONCLUSION**

- 11.1 The Annual Report for 2016/17 for the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board (Children, Adults and the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) highlights the work that the Board undertook during 2016/17 toward our overall aim, which is to ensure that the people of Cwm Taf are safeguarded from abuse, neglect or other forms of harm. The report highlights that this can only be achieved through our strong partnership, where all Board agencies work together proactively and productively.





**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**AS AMENDED BY**

**THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

**RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**HEALTH & WELLBEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**5<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017**

**REPORT OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, COMMUNITY AND CHILDREN'S  
SERVICES IN DISCUSSION WITH THE RELEVANT PORTFOLIO HOLDER,  
COUNCILLOR HOPKINS**

**CWM TAF SAFEGUARDING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17**

**Background Papers:**

Part 7 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

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# Foreword - Co-Chairs of the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board

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Welcome to the first Safeguarding Annual Report for Cwm Taf.

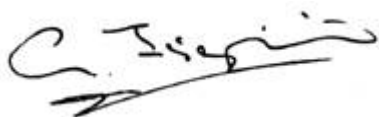
In 2016/17 the Safeguarding Adults Board and the Safeguarding Children Board, in conjunction with the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub, have continued to collaborate to safeguard people of all ages. This has resulted in the creation of a joint regional multi-agency Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board.

This Report highlights the work that the Board undertook during 2016/17 toward our overall aim, which is to ensure that the people of Cwm Taf are safeguarded from abuse, neglect or other forms of harm. This can only be achieved through our strong partnership, where all Board agencies work together proactively and productively.

This year, our partners have further demonstrated their commitment to multi-agency safeguarding practice by formalising their financial contributions to support the effective working of the Board. This has ensured that there is a structure in place to ensure our compliance with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

We continue to seek opportunities to further develop and improve safeguarding in Cwm Taf and we recognise that this can only be achieved through effective collaboration. We will therefore continue to collaborate with partner agencies, Welsh Government and other partnerships and safeguarding boards to enhance practice and to share learning.

We also endeavour to engage with children and adults and offer them opportunities to participate in our work. We would encourage anyone who would like to be involved to contact our Business Management Unit on 01443 484523 or email: [cwmtafsafeguarding@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:cwmtafsafeguarding@rctcbc.gov.uk)



# What does Safeguarding in Cwm Taf look like?

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Safeguarding involves both the **protection** of children and adults at risk from abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm and **preventing** them from becoming at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm.

Adults at risk are defined as those who have needs for care and support and as a result of those needs are unable to protect themselves against abuse or neglect or the risk of it. The term care and support is used to describe the help that some adults need to live to improve their quality of life.

**Abuse** means physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse.

Financial abuse includes:-

- having money or other property stolen;
- being defrauded;
- being put under pressure in relation to money or other property;
- having money or other property misused.

**Neglect** means a failure to meet a person's basic physical, emotional, social or psychological needs, which is likely to result in an impairment of the person's well-being.

Cwm Taf covers the local authority areas of Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT), covering a population of around 300,000.

Safeguarding in Cwm Taf is overseen by the regional multi-agency Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board (from hereon in known as the Board) with responsibility for:

- Safeguarding Adults
- Safeguarding Children
- The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

The responsibilities and functions of the Board are set out in the statutory guidance under Part 7 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. It has an overall responsibility for challenging relevant agencies so that;

There are effective measures in place to protect children and adults at risk who are experiencing harm or who may be at risk as the result of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm; and

There is effective inter-agency co-operation in planning and delivering protection services and in sharing information.

## **i. Who are the Members of the Safeguarding Board?**

The Lead Partner for the Board is Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and the membership complies with the guidance issued under Part 7 (Section 134(2) of the SS&WB Act 2014). A list of members is attached as Appendix 1.

## **ii. What Did We Aim to Achieve in 2016/17**

The Board published two Annual Plans on 31 March 2016, setting out the priorities for safeguarding adults and for safeguarding children in 2016/17. These priorities were agreed by all Board partner agencies at a Board Development Day earlier in 2016.

The Annual Plans for 2016/17 can be accessed at [www.cwmtafsafeguarding.org](http://www.cwmtafsafeguarding.org) or by contacting the Safeguarding Business Management Unit on 01443 484524.

In relation to the structure of the Board the agreed outcome for 2016/17 was:

***To have a well established structure and governance arrangements in place that supports its effective operation and its compliance with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.***

### How Did We Achieve this?

The Board has been operating as a joint Board for children and adults since 2015. There are clearly defined Terms of Reference as well as role profiles for Board members to ensure that each agency represented promotes its effective functioning.

The functions of the Board are implemented via a number of committees and sub groups which sit within the overall structure. A performance and risk management framework is in place to enable these groups to report on key issues to the Board.

The Board is supported by the Safeguarding Business Management Unit which provides effective management, co-ordination and administrative support to ensure compliance with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

The Board structure, including the MASH, is set out in Appendix 2.

# Safeguarding Adults in Cwm Taf

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## OUR VISION

*To ensure that adults in Cwm Taf, over the age of 18, are protected from abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm and are prevented from becoming at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm and they live in an environment that promotes their wellbeing.*

*The Board will engage with, listen to and hear the views of adults.*

### i. What Did We Aim to Achieve in 2016/17

The Board identified the following priority outcomes in relation to safeguarding adults for 2016/17:

The Board anticipates and identifies where there may be specific groups of adults at risk and in need of safeguarding and works with service providers to develop earlier identification and preventative services.

The Board is assured that there are effective inter-agency safeguarding practice and processes in place, supported by robust quality assurance and information sharing systems

### ii. How Did We Deliver Our Priorities?

The Board has a robust Sub Group structure in place which is continuously being reviewed and improved to support the delivery of its key objectives and priorities.

Whilst the Board focuses on the strategic direction for safeguarding in Cwm Taf, holding partner agencies to account on the effectiveness of safeguarding measures, the business in relation to adults at risk is overseen by the **Adults Operational Committee (AOp)**. The AOp is responsible for the implementation of an Annual Work Plan which is further supported and implemented by the Board Sub Groups.

### **iii. What Did We Achieve in Relation to Safeguarding Adults in 2016/17?**

#### **SAFEGUARDING SPECIFIC GROUPS OF ADULTS AT RISK**

##### **PREVENTATIVE SERVICES**

###### **Why was this a Priority?**

Part 7 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 describes the function of the Board to; 'anticipate and identify where there may be specific groups of adults at risk in need of safeguarding and work with service providers to develop earlier identification and preventative services.'

###### **What did we achieve in relation to this Priority?**

The Board reviewed of third sector preventative services within Cwm Taf was carried out in October 2016. The following preventative services were identified:

- DEWIS 'Find a group' service covers Cwm Taf third sector services for all ages;
- ICF Community Coordinators have knowledge of third sector services for adults aged 50+ including micro mapping of individual areas across Cwm Taf.
- Supporting People Services - provides a number of housing related support to adults aged 18+ including pre tenancy, tenancy, emergency accommodation, mental health services and floating support.
- Recovery Link – Community Mental Health Teams - support provided, including Street Smart and homeless crisis intervention for individuals accessing services.
- Age Alliance Wales - an alliance of 21 national voluntary organisations working with, and for, older people.

Links to these services are now on the Board's website:

[www.cwmtafsafeguarding.org](http://www.cwmtafsafeguarding.org)

###### **What is left to do in relation to this Priority?**

Further work will be undertaken in 2017/18 to evaluate the effectiveness of preventative support for adults in Cwm Taf.

#### **SAFEGUARDING OLDER PEOPLE LIVING IN CARE HOMES**

###### **Why was this a Priority?**

In 2015/16, care homes were the highest category of place where alleged abuse occurred in Merthyr Tydfil and the second highest in RCT.

In November 2015, the Board held a workshop to receive information on the review into 'Operation Jasmine - In search of Accountability' report around abuse in care homes in a neighbouring local authority. This led to the development of an improvement action plan for the Board.

### **What did we achieve in relation to this Priority?**

In 2016 the Board strengthened the links between the improvement actions identified following the Operation Jasmine workshop and the Older People Commissioner's Care Home Review: A Place to Call Home. The specific actions achieved relate to:

Using opportunities to share good practice amongst Care Home providers

Making links with the community and the third sector as a source of support

Reinforcing emotional neglect as a form of abuse

Effective use of advocacy to support people to ensure that their voices are heard

Raising an awareness amongst professionals of the importance of good care and ensuring that there is appropriate safeguarding training being delivered

### **What is left to do in relation to this Priority?**

In 2017/18 the Board plans to do some specific work around safeguarding concerns in relation to people lacking mental capacity or who suffer from dementia.

## **PREVENTING SUICIDE AND SELF HARM**

### **Why was this a Priority?**

In the Annual Plan 2016/17 the Board identified a need to make clearer links with the Together for Mental Health Partnership to support this priority.



### **What did we achieve in relation to this Priority?**

In 2016/17, the Board engaged with other partnerships, including the Together for Mental Health Partnership and expanded the scope of the existing Protocol for the Immediate Response to Critical Incidents Protocol to include critical incidents involving adults at risk.

### **What is left to do in relation to this Priority?**

The Board member for Health will continue to be the link between the CTSB and the Together for Mental Health Partnership.

## **DEPRIVATION OF LIBERTY SAFEGUARDS (DoLS)**

### **Why was this a Priority?**

The aim of the DoLS is to provide legal protection for people who lack the capacity to consent to their care arrangements in care homes and who are deprived of their liberty. When a person lacks the mental capacity to make decisions about the care or treatment they need, and may be at risk if that care is not provided, it is sometimes in their best interests to deprive them of their liberty. The aim of this is to prevent them from coming to harm.

### **What did we achieve in relation to this Priority?**

A governance structure, sitting under the Board, has been established (see Appendix 2) to ensure that the responsibilities of partner agencies are carried out in accordance with the relevant legislation.

In 2016/17 a total number of 514 DoLS assessments and re-assessments were completed by the Cwm Taf Supervisory Bodies, i.e. RCTCBC, MTCBC and the Cwm Taf UHB. This was an increase from the previous year's figures (480 total assessments and re-assessments). However, the number of new requests continue to rise, from 1,448 in 2015/16 to 1,786 in 2016/17 and therefore the waiting lists for assessments are still high. This has been recognised as a risk that is being monitored by the Board. Mitigating actions continue to be introduced, including an increase in staffing capacity to carry out assessments.

The graphs below evidence these figures.

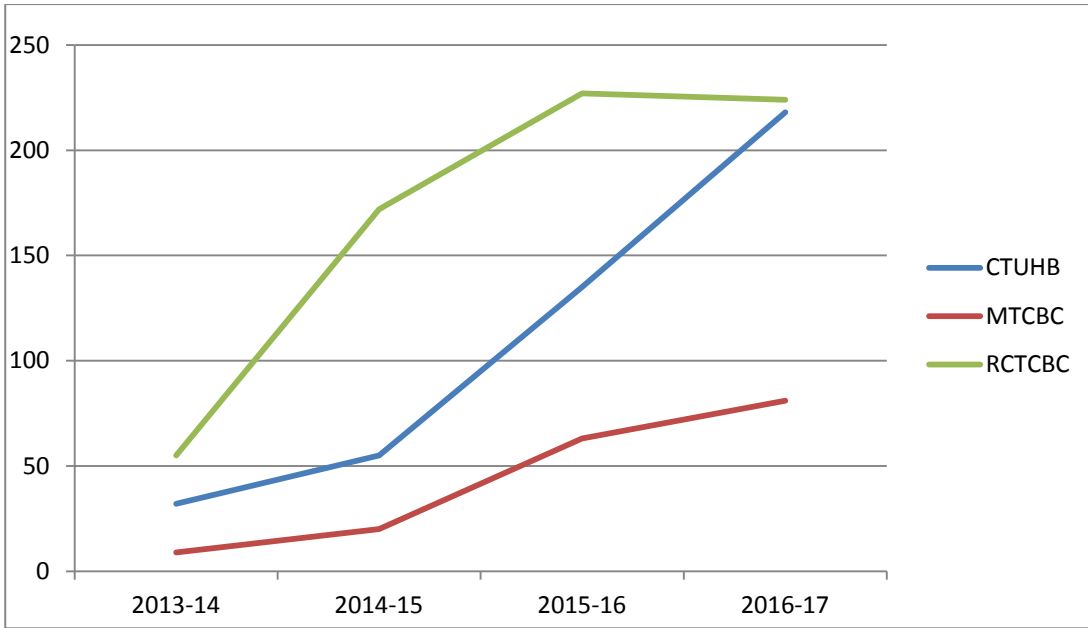


Figure 1: DoLS assessments undertaken

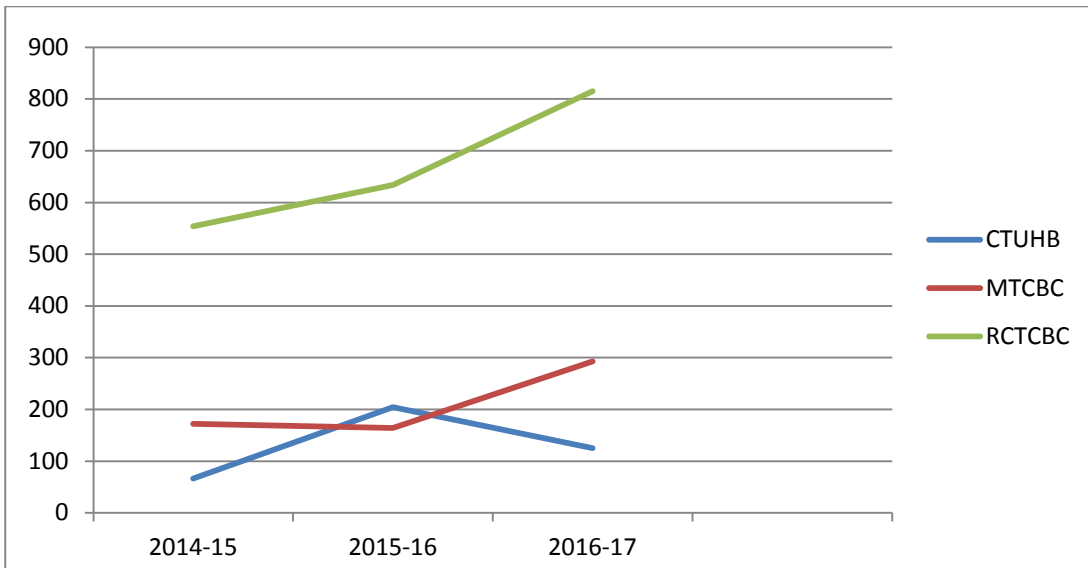


Figure 2: Waiting lists for DoLS Assessments

**What is left to do in relation to this Priority?**

In the coming year the quality assurance framework for DoLS will be further developed and the risks associated with the waiting lists for assessments will continue to be monitored.

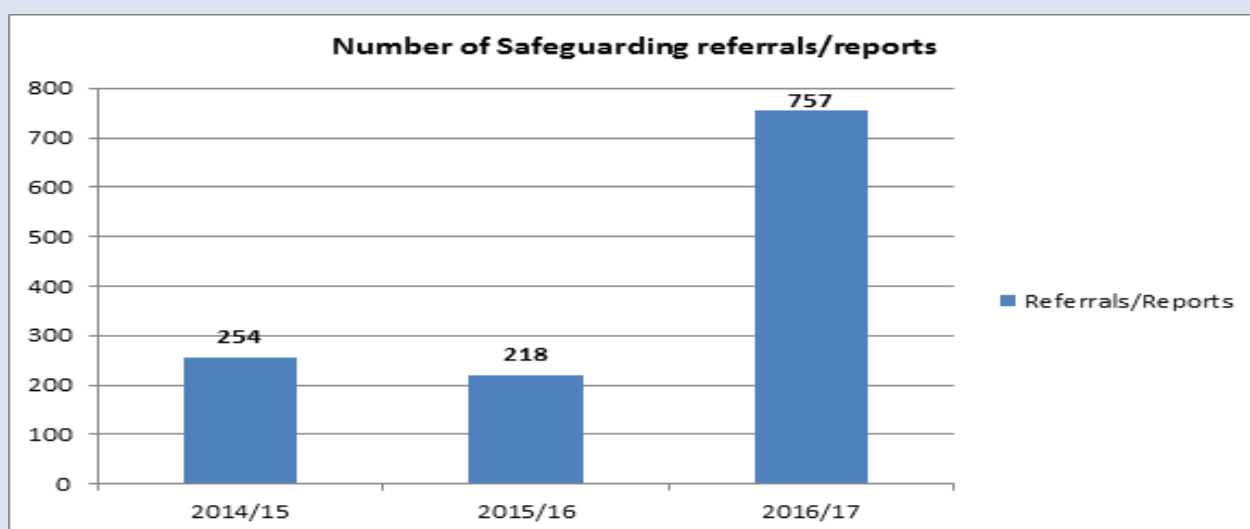
## EFFECTIVE INTER-AGENCY SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE

The Social Services and Wellbeing Act has caused us to change our categories and recording methods, as a result some of the data for 2014-15 and 2015-16 is not comparable with the 2016-17 data below.

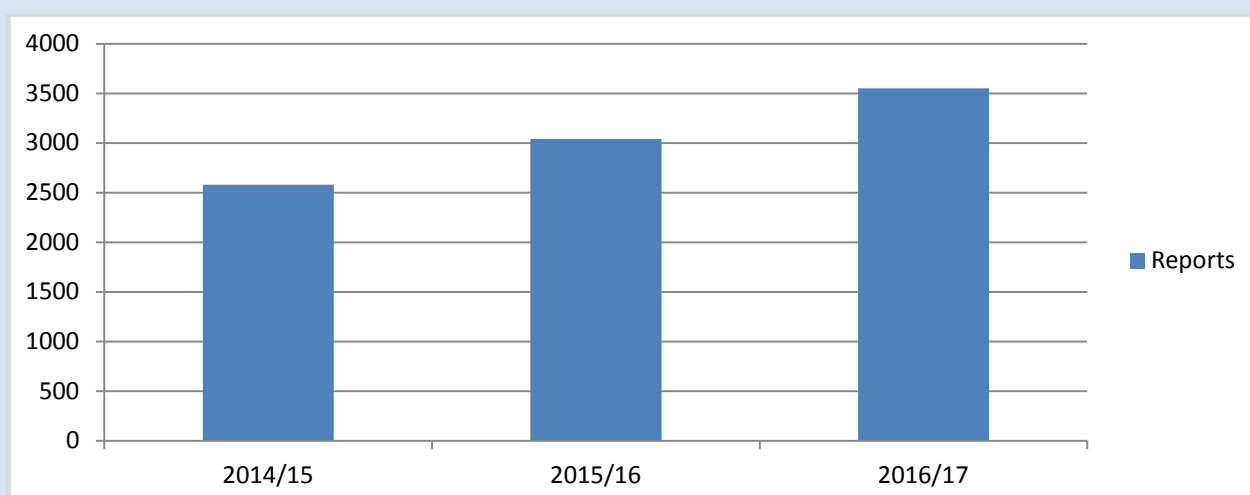
### REFERRALS FOR 2016/17

There were 3551 safeguarding reports received for RCT in 2016/17, of which 581 proceeded to an enquiry, and 757 safeguarding reports received for Merthyr Tydfil, of which 43 proceeded to an enquiry.

The graph below shows the number of Safeguarding reports received in Merthyr.



The graph below shows the number of Safeguarding reports received in RCT.



The increase in reports for 2016/17 was due to the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act duty to report and the changes that have been made in recording Adult at Risk enquires.

The highest category of abuse for 2016-17 was Emotional/Psychological and the place where the highest level of abuse occurred was within an individual's own home.

The risk was reduced or removed at case closure for 97.3% of enquires in RCT and 95.8% of enquiries in Merthyr Tydfil. This is an improvement compared to 96.15% for RCT and 95% for Merthyr Tydfil in 2015/16.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Board has a Protocols and Procedures Group (PPG) which ensures that there is a clear process in place for the development and review of protocols and procedures to safeguard children and adults at risk.

During 2016/17, the following document was developed to support and enhance effective adult safeguarding in Cwm Taf:

**Managing Adult Large Scale Safeguarding Investigations** - enhances multi-agency communication, co-ordination and ensures availability of appropriate resources when large scale abuse is suspected. Monitoring data will be made available in the 2017/18 Annual Report.

## **QUALITY ASSURANCE**

The Adults Quality Assurance (AQA) Sub Group has the responsibility for undertaking audits, reviews and investigations of cases and examining practice issues to ensure that adult safeguarding practice is effective.

In 2016/17 a work plan and audit programme was developed to generate learning and improvements in relation to good practice and areas for development. A new case audit tool and learning tool were developed to support this.

Ten individual case audits were completed during the year, in addition to 2 thematic audits on repeat referrals and cases in an NHS setting. Actions emerging from the thematic audits are being carried forward into 2017/18. The learning generated from these audits has included:

1. The critical role of the social worker/care manager in adult safeguarding
2. Barriers experienced by the adult at risk in reporting concerns.
3. The need to involve service users and/or their families throughout the safeguarding process
4. The need for referring professionals to establish facts before reporting concerns to the Local Authority.
5. The need to improve administrative processes and for professionals to prioritise safeguarding meetings so that they can happen quickly.

Learning points from audits are disseminated to staff via a number of different methods, including Sub Group members, Safeguarding E-Bulletin, Safeguarding website and learning events/fora.

## **ADULT REVIEWS**

The Adult Review Sub Group (ARG) ensures that the Board discharges its functions in relation to Adult Practice Reviews and other appropriate reviews where an adult has died, completed suicide or has been subject to potentially life threatening injuries.

In 2016/17 the ARG considered 7 new cases, which is a 75% increase compared to 2015/16. This is likely to be due to the strengthened governance arrangements, including clearer criteria for referrals.

Two Adult Practice Reviews (APR) commenced and another one continued from the previous year. Two of these have now been completed and will be published in August 2017.

Of the 5 cases that didn't progress to an APR:

- 2 are awaiting further investigations
- 1 was subject to further consideration by another Safeguarding Board area
- 1 was subject to a review by the provider organisation
- 1 was remitted to the Adults Quality Assurance Sub Group for review

The Board has also supported the completion of one Domestic Homicide Review, commissioned by the Cwm Taf Community Safety Partnership, which is due to be published in 2017.

## **ADULT PROTECTION AND SUPPORT ORDERS (APSOs)**

Chapter 4 of the statutory guidance issued under Part 7 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 sets out the arrangements for these civil orders to be used by a local authority to enable an authorised officer to speak in private with a person suspected of being an adult at risk.

The Board has ensured that nominated staff have been appropriately trained and that a regional process has been put in place. To date, no orders have been sought in Cwm Taf.

# Safeguarding Children in Cwm Taf

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## OUR VISION

*To ensure that children and young people in Cwm Taf, up to the age of 18, are protected from abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm and are prevented from becoming at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm and they live in an environment that promotes their wellbeing.*

*The Board will engage with, listen to and hear the views of children and young people.*

### i. What Did We Aim to Achieve in 2016/17

The Board identified the following priority outcomes for safeguarding children in 2016/17:

Children and young people who are particularly vulnerable have been identified and the Board is assured that there are measures in place to protect them and to prevent them from becoming further at risk.

The Board is assured that there are effective inter-agency safeguarding practice and processes in place, supported by robust quality assurance and information sharing systems

### ii. How Did We Deliver Our Priorities?

The Board has a well established Sub Group structure in place which is continuously being reviewed and improved to support the delivery of its key objectives and priorities.

Whilst the Board focuses on the strategic direction for safeguarding in Cwm Taf, holding partner agencies to account on the effectiveness of safeguarding measures, the business in relation to children is overseen by the **Children Operational Committee (COp)**. The COp is responsible for the implementation of an Annual Work Plan which is further supported and implemented by the Board Sub Groups.

### **iii. What Did We Achieve in Relation to Safeguarding Children in 2016/17?**

#### **SAFEGUARDING SPECIFIC GROUPS OF CHILDREN**

At the Development Day partner agencies identified priority areas relating to specific groups of children and young people who are particularly vulnerable, ensuring that there are measures in place to protect them and to prevent them from becoming further at risk.

To support this, Champions were appointed to act as a positive focus for the Board in respect of the relevant priority area so as to ensure that full consideration is given to the impact of the Board's activities and decisions upon the specified group.

#### **PREVENTION OF SUICIDE AND SELF HARM**

##### **Why was this a Priority?**

In 2016/17, following a Cwm Taf wide partnership review, it was agreed to fully integrate the work of the Reduction of Suicide and Self Harm Steering Group into the governance arrangements of the Safeguarding Board. This includes monitoring the delivery of the Welsh Government Strategy 'Talk to Me 2' which has a specific remit for the under 25 year old age group.

##### **What did we achieve in relation to this Priority?**

Actions completed during the year included:

- An awareness raising/training session was delivered on a multi-agency basis.
- The Protocol for Immediate Response to Critical Incidents was reviewed and updated to adopt an all age approach.
- The Protocol was used once during the year to address the risks associated with 5 individuals who were placing themselves in danger through their joint behaviour. A multi-agency approach was put in place to deal with these issues which resulted in positive outcomes for all those involved.
- The Cwm Taf Education Psychology Service has provided advice to a number of schools in relation to incidents of deliberate self harm.

##### **What is left to do in relation to this Priority?**

The Prevention of Suicide and Self Harm will remain a priority for the Board in 2017/18, with a specific emphasis on supporting children and young people with mental health and emotional wellbeing needs.

A review of the training delivery group is planned for 2017/18 to increase the number of sessions delivered.

## **CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)**

### **Why was this a Priority?**

Tackling CSE is a Welsh Government priority which continues to be addressed across Cwm Taf via co-ordinated implementation of the actions within the Regional Action Plan.

### **What did we achieve in relation to this Priority?**

The implementation of the regional CSE Action Plan, has been fully supported by the Board CSE Champion and a CSE Consultant Social Worker, seconded to work with the Board by Barnardo's.

A CSE needs assessment and an audit of CSE cases was carried out which enabled the Board to share learning and resulted in the following actions being implemented:

Identification of the need to improve the management and co-ordination of a multi-agency response to young people who are at risk of harm due to CSE. A revised and improved process has been introduced and will be in place in Cwm Taf from April 2017.

Delivery of training on CSE and Sexually Harmful Behaviour and increased staff awareness and training in the use of the SERAF risk assessment tool.

Engagement and communications activities with professionals and public.

CSE Training and awareness raising has taken place with wider agencies such as transport, licensed premises, voluntary sector and schools .

A multi-agency process (MACSE) has been developed for pooling intelligence in relation to perpetrators, locations and our most vulnerable young people with a view to enhancing the focus of criminal and safeguarding interventions.

### **What is left to do in relation to this Priority?**

CSE will continue to be a priority for the Board. Data in relation to the prevalence of CSE and any trends/issues will be captured in 2017/18.



## **NEGLECT**

### **Why was this a Priority?**

The percentage of children on the Child Protection Register under the category of Neglect has decreased from 44% to 42% for RCT and from 28% to 25% for Merthyr during 2016/17. Despite this Neglect remains the highest category of abuse for RCT, and the second highest category for Merthyr.

### **What did we achieve in relation to this Priority?**

The priorities for tackling neglect in for 2016/17 have focussed on improving the usage of the Assessment Tool for Neglect amongst practitioners. This has identified a need to review and update the guidance that supports the tool.

### **What is left to do in relation to this Priority?**

Neglect will continue to be a priority in the coming year. There will be a need to update the guidance that supports the Assessment Tool for Neglect and incorporate the tool into the new Cwm Taf Multi Agency Risk Assessment Framework (MARAF). This will enable agencies to work more consistently with complex families.

## **CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER**

### **Why was this a Priority?**

The proportion of children looked after (CLA) across Cwm Taf is over a third more than the Welsh average. Whilst there is always a need to safeguard and look after some children, we believe that, by working more effectively together with our partner agencies we can reduce the number of children who need intensive interventions.

The number of Children Looked After at 31st March 2017 in Cwm Taf was as follows:

**RCT 690**

**Merthyr Tydfil 145**

When a child in the care of the local authority is also on the Child Protection Register this is known as dual status. At the end of 2016/17 there were 45 children who were classed as dual status in Rhondda Cynon Taf and 9 children in Merthyr Tydfil. This is a decrease compared to 51 children in RCT and 7 children in Merthyr Tydfil in 2015/16.

The table below shows that across Wales the average number of children in the care of the local authority has increased slightly. However despite this, the

average number of children in care of the local authority across RCT and Merthyr Tydfil has decreased.

(per 10,000 population)	2014	2015	2016
Wales	91	89	90
RCT	130	124	124
Merthyr Tydfil	140	131	113

Themes within Merthyr:

- There was an increase in the number of CLA, noting that there was a small number of families known to the service for some time where neglect or neglect/domestic abuse was an issue.

Themes within RCT:

- 21% increase in admissions in the period April 16-March 17 when compared to the same period in 2015-16
- 53% of admissions in this period are below 4 years old. (55% in the period April 16-March 17)
- 61% of admissions were open less than 6 months at time of becoming looked after. (57% in the period April 16-March 17)

### What did we achieve in relation to this Priority?

Work was undertaken in relation to developing a statement of intent for achieving positive outcomes for children and young people who are looked after.

This included a consultation event with a group of looked after young people which led to the production of a DVD. The messages obtained from young people were compelling and will lead priority in terms of delivery. These included:

- Its important to have somebody you can trust to talk to e.g. foster carer, a teacher, a support worker, a friend who had been through the same thing
- Things that would make it better included:
  - Photographs of myself as a baby
  - Life Story Work
  - Explaining to me why I am looked after
  - Talking to somebody else who is also looked after
- The young people told us that every young person who becomes looked after should have the following help:
  - Photographs of the place where you will live.
  - Meet the foster carer before moving to live there
  - Have an explanation of what is happening so they can understand

The Board has identified some areas for development linked to the placement of children and young people in Cwm Taf from other areas. One case has resulted in a review which has been escalated to the South Wales Safe Children Forum with

a recommendation for a cross-border review. Further concerns in relation to other cases have been addressed via the Board's Immediate Response Group.

### **What is left to do in relation to this Priority?**

The Cwm Taf Partnership Shared Regional Children Young People and Families Strategy continues to be developed.

Safeguarding in relation to Children Looked After continues to be a priority for the Board. There is a specific focus this coming year on safeguarding those children and young people that are placed outside of the area and those that are placed within Cwm Taf from other local authorities.

## **EFFECTIVE INTER-AGENCY SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE**

The Board is required to ensure that agencies are effective in carrying out their safeguarding responsibilities. Systems are in place to review and challenge the contribution being made on an inter-agency basis across Cwm Taf.

The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) forms an integral part in ensuring that safeguarding in Cwm Taf is effective. The MASH is the front door for the receipt and assessment of all adult and child safeguarding referrals, and the Board continues to set and monitor priorities and objectives for the MASH.

## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PERFORMANCE**

During 2016/17 the number of children on the Child Protection Register has increased by 12% across Merthyr Tydfil and decreased by 9% for Rhondda Cynon Taff, with 0-4 years being the highest age range for registrations across Cwm Taf.

The number of re-registrations for children who have had 1 previous period of registration is 32% (132 children) for Rhondda Cynon Taff and 23% (26 children) for Merthyr Tydfil for 2016/17. This has remained consistent across RCT with a slight increase for Merthyr Tydfil compared to 2015/16.

## **PROTOCOLS AND PROCEDURES**

The Board has a Protocols and Procedures Group (PPG) which ensures that there is a clear process in place for the development and review of protocols and procedures to safeguard children and adults at risk.

During 2016/17, the following documents were reviewed/developed to support and enhance effective safeguarding for children in Cwm Taf:

- Protocol for the Management of Self Harm in the Community - supports the implementation of the Strategy for the Reduction of Suicide and Self Harm by Young People in Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil by providing information for professionals about how to manage disclosures or suspicions of self harm in children and young people.
- Schools Child Safeguarding Policy - further amendments incorporated to support safeguarding in schools
- Guidance and Information for Foster Carers and Kinship Carers when an Allegation has been made against you
- Protocol for Responding to Challenging Cases who are on the Child Protection Register - provides practitioners with guidance on the process to be followed in cases where a Child Protection Care and Support Plan is not reducing the risk to a child or young person

The Cwm Taf Education Psychology Service has developed a Critical Incident Policy for schools and during the year was able to support schools in respect of 5 sad events. This process was considered helpful by Head Teachers.

## **QUALITY ASSURANCE**

The Quality Assurance Sub Group (QASG) for children has the responsibility for undertaking audits, reviews and investigations of cases and examining practice issues to ensure that safeguarding practice for children is effective and continually improving.

During the year, an audit programme was implemented which looked at a number of areas including:

- Multi-agency case audits - emerging themes included domestic abuse, substance misuse, neglect and repeat and prolonged registration, cross border issues. The complexity of many of these cases was clear and resulted in the development of the Challenging Cases Protocol (mentioned previously).

- Children on the child protection register for more than 2 years, annual audit completed where examples of good practice were identified.
- Increase in numbers on the child protection register in Merthyr Tydfil during quarter 3 (October - December)– recommended collaboration between Children Services and Adult Mental Health and support for young parents.
- Re-registration audits – emerging themes included domestic abuse and substance misuse.
- Annual Child Protection medicals audit - a decrease in numbers since 2011, from 153 in 2011/12 to 81 in 2015/16. In 2016/17 there was a slight increase to 112 medicals.

Other QA development and improvement activities during the year included:

- Audit tools and processes for case audit feedback to partner agency practitioners were reviewed and updated
- Monitoring arrangements put in place in relation to young people being held in custody in police stations overnight
- 4 complaints were received and resolved in relation to child protection conferences, an increase of 2 since 2015/16.
- 68 cases were considered where the police used their powers of protection to remove children at risk - an increase compared to 50 cases during 2015/16.
- 8 young people entered custody for the first time compared to 4 young people during 2015/16.

## **SHARING LEARNING**

The process for identifying and sharing learning as a result of audits and reviews has been further improved during the year. Methods of dissemination include the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Website, via individual members of the group within their own agencies, via the bi-annual E-Bulletin and through staff meetings/practitioner forums.

Learning themes identified during the year include:

Dealing with escalating challenging behaviour in children and young people

The complexity of some cases and the need to manage these on a multi-agency basis

Parental alcohol and substance misuse

The need to ensure the voice of the child is heard

The need for accurate and up to date recording

Areas of good practice identified included:

- Initial concerns raised and acted upon quickly
- Good multi-agency meetings held to manage cases
- Aspects of good engagement with children and their families

### **CHILD PRACTICE REVIEWS**

The Board's Child Review Group (CRG) has responsibility for considering all child deaths and potentially life threatening injuries or permanent impairment of development, with the exception of children who have died as a result of life limiting illnesses or victims of road traffic accidents.

Where the criteria for a Child Practice Review are met the CRG makes a formal recommendation to the Co-Chairs of the Board to undertake the review.

In 2016/17, 17 cases were considered; including all unexpected deaths in children, but none met the criteria for a Child Practice Review. Two Adult Practice Reviews commenced in 2016 and both established a joint child/adult approach to learning due to the age of the individuals.

One Child Practice Review, carried out in 2015 was published by the Board in 2016/17 and one Multi-Agency Practitioner Forum was held to consider the learning in relation to one case that did not meet the criteria for a CPR.

The learning identified for these cases included:

The need for the Board to engage with the community, raising an awareness of safeguarding and how to report concerns. This learning has been incorporated into the Board's Communications Strategy.

Managing cases where families are not co-operating with safeguarding concerns - guidance and training reviewed.

Reinforcing the duty of agencies to report concerns via training

Areas of good practice identified included the following:

- Responsiveness of the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust
- Effective communication between multi agency partners
- The dedication of workers to achieve positive impacts for children and young people

# The Cwm Taf Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

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## *Our Vision*

*That children and adults at risk in the Cwm Taf area are able to live safe lives*

The Cwm Taf MASH has been fully operational since 7 May 2015. The MASH (located at Pontypridd Police Station) was set up to enhance safeguarding practice, with agencies working together in one place to receive all safeguarding referrals and share relevant agency information to make collaborative decisions.

MASH activity comprises:

- Child Protection / Safeguarding
- Adults at Risk Safeguarding
- Domestic Abuse (MARAC - Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference)

Cwm Taf MASH Partners are:

- Cwm Taf University Health Board
- South Wales Police
- Merthyr Tydfil CBC and Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC:
  - Adult Social Services
  - Children's Services
  - Education
  - MARAC
  - Emergency Duty Team (EDT)
- National Probation Service
- Wales Community Rehabilitation Company

The original objectives that were set for MASH related to the following themes:

Objective One: Improved coordination and consistency of threshold/decision making when a concern is raised

Objective Two: Improved response times leading to earlier interventions

Objective Three: Reduction of repeat referrals

## **i. What Did We Aim to Achieve in 2016/17?**

The Board identified the following improvement outcomes for the MASH in 2016/17:

- The operation of the MASH is supported by a sustainable infrastructure that facilitates the effective management of accommodation, resources and systems.
- The MASH has an agreed framework in place to measure and evaluate performance and outcomes and this is underpinned by quality assurance processes to support continuous improvement.
- The operational delivery of the MASH is supported by effective information-sharing, consistent processes and an integrated approach to thresholding.

## **ii. How did we deliver our Priorities?**

The MASH Executive Group was set up to provide the overall direction for the MASH. The Group oversees and evaluates the work of the MASH Operational Committee in delivering the goals to improve safeguarding and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk.

A MASH sub-group has been set up to support the ongoing development of the MASH to ensure it continues to achieve its goals.

This structure sits within the overall governance of the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board (see Appendix 2).

## **iii. What did we achieve in relation to the Cwm Taf MASH in 2016/17?**

### **SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ACCOMMODATION, RESOURCES AND SYSTEMS**

- Established the MASH Operational Committee and Sub Group to support MASH processes and systems
- Resolved specific ICT issues via the deployment of a new system release of the multi-agency information sharing platform (Mhub)
- Carried out a comprehensive accommodation review with recommendations for all agencies within MASH. Accommodation alteration works are subsequently in place to expand and improve MASH accommodation by Autumn 2017

### **MEASURE AND EVALUATE PERFORMANCE AND OUTCOMES WITH QUALITY ASSURANCE TO SUPPORT CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

- Carried out an audit to investigate Children's Section 47 fallout data, with actions identified



- Carried out an audit to look at repeat referrals for Children, with actions identified
- Integrated MASH performance into CTSB Quality Assurance performance indicator reporting scorecards

### **EFFECTIVE INFORMATION-SHARING, CONSISTENT PROCESSES AND AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO THRESHOLDING**

- Completed a multi-agency evaluation of MASH process maps and agreed a joint approach for amendments and improvements
- Carried out a thresholding review / screening pilot of children's referrals into MASH which led to the proposal for a Cwm Taf single thresholding approach to be developed in 2017/18

The following table shows the number of MASH referrals that met the threshold for child protection, adult protection and high risk domestic abuse. The number of incidents is comparable with the previous year's data, with a slight increase overall.

<b>Cwm Taf MASH Information Sharing (Total Mhub incidents)</b>	
<b>2015/16 (over 11 months as MASH commenced in May 2015)</b>	2236
<b>2016/17 (12 months)</b>	2511

The data is indicative of the thresholding and triaging of all types of referrals that enter the MASH through agencies front door. The total numbers of referrals/contacts that were triaged by the MASH for 2016/2017 were **24,644**. The data represents a **90%** reduction and break in demand demonstrating only the referrals with the most significant risk are processed through the MASH.

### **REDUCTION OF REPEAT REFERRALS (CHILDREN)**

There has been a reduction in repeat referrals for Child Protection in RCT during the second year of MASH, meeting the MASH objective to reduce repeat referrals. Merthyr Tydfil referrals have risen by 0.43% which is a slight increase, however these were appropriate and for differing reasons.

<b>Percentage of Children referrals that are re-referrals within 12 months (Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC)</b>	
<b>April 2015 to March 2016</b>	24.12%
<b>April 2016 to March 2017</b>	20.53%
<b>Reduction of:</b>	3.59%

Percentage of referrals that are re-referrals within 12 months (Merthyr Tydfil CBC)	
<b>April 2015 to March 2016</b>	1.02%
<b>April 2016 to March 2017</b>	1.45%
<b>Increase of</b>	0.43%

Due to current differences in the process between RCT and Merthyr Children services assessments, direct comparisons of the above data would not produce any meaningful outcomes.

### **REDUCTION OF REPEAT REFERRALS (ADULTS)**

The percentage of repeat reports for Adult Safeguarding in RCT CBC has increased by over 5% compared to 2015/16 performance data (from 38% to 43.7%). For MT this percentage has increased by 3% (from 19% to 22%). The increase is due to differing concerns relating to Adults at Risk which are often complex and require safeguarding intervention.

### **DAILY DOMESTIC ABUSE DISCUSSIONS IN MASH**

In September 2015 the MASH introduced daily domestic abuse multi-agency strategy discussions in Cwm Taf. Information sharing and early intervention measures take place at these discussions, allowing agencies an opportunity to discuss associated child protection and adult protection issues. This is proving to be a more efficient way of working for agencies in terms of time saved, improved response times, and better risk management, with one strategy discussion being held as opposed to separate meetings.

Over 70 discussions take place on average each month in Cwm Taf. We believe that this activity is not replicated elsewhere in Wales. The figures for the daily discussions are as follows:

	<b>MT</b>	<b>RCT</b>	<b>Totals</b>
<b>2015/16 (commenced Sept)</b>	111	375	486
<b>2016/17</b>	221	627	848

Formal MARAC meetings continue to take place for the majority of these cases, however these meetings are now more succinct due to key decisions and actions having already been agreed and/or implemented during the daily discussions.

National data has demonstrated that in Cwm Taf the number of cases discussed at MARAC has increased from 707 in 2015/16 to 758 in 2016/17. However the number of repeat cases was considerably lower than the national figure of 25% in 2015/16 at 14% for RCT and 14% in Merthyr Tydfil. Similarly, in 2016/17, this has reduced further to 12% in RCT and 14% in Merthyr Tydfil, with the national figure

being 26%. These figures are also considerably lower in comparison to the Safe Lives (the national charity dedicated to ending domestic abuse) recommended figure of 28% - 40% in each year.

MARAC is also now supported via the Drive project which is aimed at identifying the Perpetrators of High Risk Domestic Violence Victims and to put a case management plan in place with the aim to work with both victim and perpetrator to stop further instances of domestic violence.

## **CWM TAF MASH CASE STUDIES**

### **Child Case Study**

- Referral in to MASH regarding concern for two young children as their Mother was experiencing mental health issues and hearing voices telling her to harm one of the children.
- Multi-agency information shared within a few hours and revealed that there were also domestic abuse concerns and previous child protection proceedings relating to neglect and poor home conditions.
- The MASH strategy discussion involved Health partners and conference calls to Community Mental Health Team to discuss a diagnosis for mother. Contact was also made with a neighbouring local authority as there was previous relevant family involvement.
- Section 47 Child Protection procedures commenced to prioritise immediate safeguarding arrangements for children.

### **Adult Case Study**

- Disclosure made via a Children Services visit that the child's Mother was sexually abused as a child by both her father and uncle.
- MASH Children Services informed MASH Adult Services about the disclosure and multi-agency information sharing commenced immediately.
- Support for the Adult victim of the abuse was put in place along with safeguarding arrangements for the grandchild of the Adult victim, who until this point had regular contact with one of the abuse perpetrators.
- Criminal investigation commenced early on in the process, with perpetrators arrested and proceedings ongoing.

### **Domestic Abuse Case Study**

- Victim of domestic abuse was subjected to ongoing stalking and harassment from her ex-partner. The Victim was also a client of Adult Services and had ongoing support needs.

- Information shared in MASH including new Police information that the perpetrator had previous convictions including possession of weapons and several offences of harassment.
- The Perpetrator had absconded to another area in England so the Police for that area were contacted and intelligence shared with them.
- The case was discussed at the daily domestic abuse discussion and referred to MARAC. By the time the MARAC meeting took place the perpetrator had been located and arrested and the Victim continued to be supported by both Adult Services and the IDVA service.
- Due to the dynamic way in which MARAC is now dealt with in Cwm Taf the victim intervention from support services took place within 24 hours and a prompt response from law enforcement services resulted in the perpetrator being arrested within the normal timeframe that a conventional case would have been heard through the traditional MARAC route.

### **PARTNER CONSULTATION**

In 2015 and 2016 individuals representing a range of partner agencies were invited to participate in a consultation survey to assess their understanding and perceptions of the MASH. This survey has been repeated for a third time in 2017, and responses from the latest consultation survey demonstrate that most respondents feel that the MASH has made a positive difference to safeguarding in Cwm Taf. Key conclusions are noted below (from a total of 91 responses):

- 94% feel that MASH has improved safeguarding in Cwm Taf, compared to 87% in the previous year's survey
- 83% of 91 respondents feel that information sharing is effective
- 82% of 91 respondents feel that risk management between agencies is effective

#### **iv. What is left to do in relation to the MASH?**

The ongoing review and development of the MASH is being driven via the MASH Executive Board on behalf of the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board. In 2017/18 further work will be undertaken to further streamline the work of the MASH. A review will be carried out to explore how the administration of the MASH safeguarding process can be combined to provide greater resilience, common processes and more consistent thresholding of risk.

# Joint Safeguarding Functions

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Many of the achievements of the Board have been beneficial to both children and adults at risk. The Board continues to seek opportunities to improve safeguarding for all ages and there have been a number of joint initiatives taking place over the past year.

## **i. What Did We Aim to Achieve in 2016/17**

In relation to safeguarding functions relevant to both children and adults, the Board identified the following priority outcomes for 2016/17:

The Board is proactive in engaging with its communities and children, young people and adults are given the opportunity to participate in the work of the Board.

The Board ensures that safeguarding inter-agency training and dissemination of learning and research is used to support a more confident and knowledgeable multi agency workforce.

The Board actively pursues opportunities for collaborative working with other agencies, partnerships and boards to support the pursuance of its objectives

## **ii. Engagement, Participation and Communication**

The Board is required to actively seek opportunities to raise awareness of safeguarding and for children, young people and adults to have opportunities to participate in the work of the Board.

In pursuance of this, the Board has developed a Communications Strategy and a supporting Participation Strategy to provide a framework to deliver this important function. Activities and events held during the year included:

- The creation of an Engagement, Participation and Communication Sub Group
- Participation included as standard item on the Board agenda
- A review has been carried out of the CTSB website by young people in Merthyr.
- Children and young people helped to design promotional items for Safeguarding Week 2016.
- Spectacle interactive theatre session for children and young people around Safeguarding Awareness – designed by children and young people for Safeguarding Week.

- Service Users from RCT People's First designed an accessible leaflet for adult safeguarding.
- Children and young people designed a leaflet around reporting concerns.

In 2016 the Board hosted its second Safeguarding Week. Over 40 agencies across Cwm Taf worked in collaboration to deliver a total of 72 events during the week, of which over a third were public events involving children, young people and adults.

Agencies held a variety of events to engage the public and professionals including:

- Scam awareness
- Cyber security
- CSE learning event
- Hate crime awareness
- Domestic violence advice
- Deprivation of liberty and safeguarding/mental health act
- LGBT
- Mental health awareness
- Alcohol awareness
- Healthy relationships
- Extremism workshops

### **iii. Training and Learning**

The Board is required to ensure that practitioners in the area are receiving or have access to safeguarding training to support a more confident and knowledgeable multi agency workforce.

During 2016/17, the local authority Cwm Taf Social Care Workforce Development Partnership delivered 113 safeguarding children related courses to 1,833 delegates across 14 different agencies. There were 21 safeguarding adults training courses delivered during the year, attended by 320 people from 7 different agencies. In addition, DoLS and Mental Capacity Act training was delivered to 179 people across Cwm Taf.

The Board hosted one Multi-Agency Practitioner Forum event for a case involving a child. The learning identified included:

- Practitioners need to develop skills in working with hostile families
- An effective case transfer system needs to be in place when there is a change of worker
- The need to escalate cases when risks are not being reduced and the importance of supervision to staff to manage these cases

One Practitioner Feedback event was held in relation to 2 adults. Learning shared included:

Timely interventions should be sought to enable safe care planning and delivery

The importance of good record keeping

The need for the correct application of the Mental Capacity Act

#### **iv. Collaboration with other Agencies, Partnerships and Boards**

The Board has been proactive in collaborating and consulting with other agencies, partnerships and Boards during 2016/17.

##### ***Other Safeguarding Boards***

There is a well established network in place across Wales to share learning, good practice and all-Wales initiatives. This includes bi-monthly Regional Business Managers meetings with Welsh Government and working jointly to deliver the annual National Safeguarding Week.

An agreement has been reached with the other regional Safeguarding Boards in Wales to share published Child and Adult Practice Review to share learning and more joint initiatives are planned in the coming year.

Requests for information and participation in the Adult Practice Reviews and the Immediate Response Group have involved collaborating with some Safeguarding Boards in England, including Staffordshire, Milton Keynes, Dorset and Leicester.

Cwm Taf MASH has worked in partnership with the new Cardiff MASH, providing guidance and support to Cardiff MASH during the implementation of the multi-agency information sharing system (MHub) and liaising jointly with the system supplier and agency ICT departments.

Other visitors to the MASH have included Waltham Forest Council and the Metropolitan Police who spent two days observing the MASH to make improvements to their own MASH structure.

##### ***Other Partnerships***

Public Service Board (PSB) - the Board continues to make links with the PSB via the Co-Chairs of the CTSB and a reporting process.

Community Safety Partnership (CSP) - to manage the safeguarding aspect of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy, the Board ensures that there is representation on this Steering Group. In addition, the Safeguarding Business Unit has supported the co-ordination of a Domestic Homicide Review on behalf of the CSP.



Together for Mental Health - representation on this partnership by the CTSB and Board members' involvement in the associated work streams.

### **Welsh Government**

The Board has collaborated with the Welsh Government via the Regional Business Managers meetings, consultations and participation in other groups such as the CSE Task Group.

Cwm Taf MASH also hosted a visit from Carl Sargeant AM (Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children) in November 2016. Mr Sargeant wrote to the MASH following his visit and remarked:

*I found the visit very informative and was impressed with the commitment and co-ordination between agencies and partners involved. Safeguarding is a priority of the Welsh Government and my visit demonstrated the benefits of a single point of access for all safeguarding concerns to maximise the combined knowledge of multi-agencies to keep children and vulnerable adults safe from risk of harm.*

### **National Independent Safeguarding Board**

The Cwm Taf representative from the National Independent Safeguarding Board attends CTSB meetings and acts as a point of contact in relation to the national approach to safeguarding.

### **Local Authority Public Protection**

A collaborative approach was agreed with local authority Trading Standards colleagues to prevent and protect vulnerable residents from financial harm causes through telephone 'Scams'.

### **Children's Commissioner**

A response provided in relation to queries relating to Achieving Best Evidence interviewing and the current practice in Cwm Taf. There is also Cwm Taf representation on the Children's Commissioner Round Table meetings.



## v. Protocols and Procedures

The Board encourages the development of joint approaches to safeguarding across children and adults. In 2016/17 the following joint protocols were developed:

**Resolving Concerns About Inter-Agency Safeguarding Practice** - supports practitioners in finding a resolution when they have a professional disagreement or concern. Monitoring data will be made available in the 2017/18 Annual Report.

**Disclosure of Childhood Abuse by a Person who is now an Adult** - provides guidance to practitioners to respond appropriately when adults disclose abuse that they experienced as a child

**Protocol for the Immediate Response to Critical Incidents** - to provide support to manage the consequences of critical incidents in Cwm Taf in order to ensure that those who are affected, including friends, family, professionals and the wider community, are effectively supported

## vi. Holding Agencies to Account

The Board continues to review the effectiveness of measures taken by partners and other bodies in relation to safeguarding via quality assurance, audits and performance management. All the required statutory partner agencies in Cwm Taf are represented on the Board, Operational Committees and Sub Groups and attendance is monitored at these meetings.

Between April 2016 and March 2017, there were four Board meetings held. Attendance by each of the partner agencies was as follows:

<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE ATTENDANCE</b>
<b>RCT Children Services</b>	100%
<b>RCT Adult Services</b>	100%
<b>RCT Housing/Public Protection</b>	75%
<b>RCT Education</b>	100%
<b>Merthyr Tydfil Children Services</b>	100%
<b>Merthyr Tydfil Adult Services</b>	100%
<b>Merthyr Tydfil Housing/Public Protection</b>	50%
<b>Merthyr Tydfil Education</b>	0%
<b>Cwm Taf University Health Board</b>	100%
<b>South Wales Police</b>	100%
<b>National Probation Service</b>	100%
<b>Wales Community Rehabilitation Company</b>	50%
<b>Third Sector</b>	100%
<b>Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service</b>	25%
<b>Public Health Wales</b>	50%
<b>Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust</b>	25%
<b>National Independent Safeguarding Board</b>	75%

Individual agencies are requested to report to the Board on the outcome of internal agency reviews and inspections to support effective challenge at a multi-agency strategic level. In 2016/17, this included:

- CSSIW Inspection of Safeguarding in Rhondda Cynon Taf
- HM Inspection Report - Probation
- South Wales Police Internal Vulnerability Inspections
- Cwm Taf University Health Board Quality Outcome Framework
- Public Health Wales Audit of CP Medicals

The specific responsibilities of the partners during the year were as follows:

- Cwm Taf UHB:
  - Chair of the Children's Operational Committee
  - Chair of the Challenging Cases Group

- Member of Complaints Panel x 2
- Champion for the Prevention of Suicide and Self Harm
- Chair of the Adult Review Group
  
- MTCBC
  - Chair of Protocols and Procedures Group
  - Co-Chair of the Board
  - Co-Chair of the MASH Executive Group
  - Chair of CSE Task Group and CSE Champion
  - Independent Chair of Adult Practice Review Panel
  - 2 x Independent Reviewers for Adult Practice Reviews
  - Member of Complaints Panel x 2
  - Neglect Champion
  - Chair of the DOLS Operational Committee
  
- RCTCBC
  - Chair of Children's Quality Assurance Sub Group
  - Chair of the Adults Quality Assurance Sub Group
  - Chair of the Adults Operational Committee
  - Chair of Engagement, Participation and Communications Sub Group
  - Co-Chair of the Board
  - Host of the CTSB Business Unit
  - 2 x Independent Reviewers for Adult Practice Reviews
  - Independent Chair of Adult Practice Review Panel
  - Champion for Children Looked After
  
- South Wales Police
  - Chair of the Training and Learning Group (until January 2017)
  - Chair of the MASH Operational Committee
  
- Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service:
  - Chair of the Training and Learning Group (from February 2017)
  - Independent Chair of a Multi Agency Practitioner Forum Panel
  - Member of Complaints Panel x 2
  
- National Probation Service
  - Member of Complaints Panel x 2
  
- Voluntary Sector
  - Chair of the CRG
  - Public Health Wales 2 x Independent Reviewers for Adult Practice Reviews

## Managing Our Resources in 2016/17

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In 2016/17 the Board agreed a funding formula for all statutory partners to contribute to the costs of managing the business of the Board. This enabled the Business Unit to increase its staffing capacity to support the functions of the Board. It has also supported the purchase of promotional materials and the hosting of events to raise awareness and share learning.

## Priorities for 2017/18

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In January 2017 the Children and Adults Boards held their second joint Development Day to identify the achievements of the Board in 2016/17 and to evaluate and agree the priorities for 2017/18.

These priorities have been agreed based on identified areas for development and improvement, taking into consideration emerging themes and statutory requirements. These have been incorporated into the Board's Annual Plan for 2017/18 which can be found at [www.cwmtafsafeguarding.org](http://www.cwmtafsafeguarding.org) or by contacting the Safeguarding Business Unit on 01443 484523.

## Are You Concerned About Someone?

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If you suspect that a **child or young person** is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed then you have a duty to report it immediately. All calls concerning worries about children are treated seriously. Contact your local Safeguarding Team on the numbers provided below:

In Rhondda Cynon Taf: 01443 425006  
In Merthyr Tydfil: 01685 725000

Opening Hours:  
Monday - Thursday 8.30am - 5.00pm  
Friday - 8.30am - 4.30pm

If you suspect that an **adult** is being harmed or is at risk of being harmed then you have a duty to report it immediately. All calls concerning worries about vulnerable adults at risk are treated seriously. Contact your local Safeguarding Team on the numbers provided below:

In Rhondda Cynon Taf: 01443 425003  
In Merthyr Tydfil: 01685 725000

Opening Hours:  
Monday - Thursday 8.30am - 5.00pm  
Friday - 8.30am - 4.30pm

To contact Children or Adults Services outside office hours, at weekends and bank holidays, ring Cwm Taf Emergency Duty Team on 01443 743665.

**If you suspect that a child, young person or an adult is at immediate risk of harm call 999 and speak to the Police.**

If you would like to report a non-urgent incident, or have a problem or general query, you can call 101, the 24 hour non-emergency number for the police.

***Use 101 when the incident is less urgent than 999.***

**Remember - safeguarding is everyone's business!**

**For more information and advice visit: [www.cwmtafsafeguarding.org](http://www.cwmtafsafeguarding.org)**

# Glossary of Terms

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## **Achieving Best Evidence**

Good practice in interviewing victims and witnesses, and in preparing them to give their best evidence in court

## **Assessment Tool for Neglect**

Helps professionals measure the quality of care being given to a child

## **Child Sexual Exploitation**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Children in exploitative situations and relationships receive something such as gifts, money or affection as a result of performing sexual activities or others performing sexual activities on them.

## **Children Looked After**

A child is looked after by a local authority if a court has granted a care order to place a child in care, or a council's children's services department has cared for the child for more than 24 hours.

## **Children's Commissioner**

The Children's Commissioner in Wales works for children and young people in Wales under 18, or 25 years old if they have been in care

[www.childcomwales.org](http://www.childcomwales.org)

## **Community Safety Partnership**

Statutory partnership to develop and implement strategies to tackle crime and disorder including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment.

## **Critical Incident**

An event, or series of events;

- Where an immediate effective response requires multi-agency co-ordination to manage threat, risk and harm; and
- it is sudden and unexpected; and
- it has resulted in (or could have caused) death, life threatening injury or sustained serious and permanent impairment of health or development; and
- it impacts on a group of individuals and / or the wider community.

## **DEWIS**

A website which holds information about well-being in Wales

[www.dewis.wales](http://www.dewis.wales)

## **Domestic Homicide Review**

A Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) is a locally conducted multi-agency review of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by:

- a person to whom he or she was related, or with whom he or she was or had been in an intimate personal relationship; or,
- a member of the same household as himself or herself.

## **Floating Support**

A free service that provides housing-related support to vulnerable people for short periods of time from a few weeks up to two years

## **IDVA Service**

Independent Domestic Violence Advisors who address the safety of victims at high risk of harm from intimate partners, ex-partners or family members to secure their safety and the safety of their children.

## **Kinship Carers**

Kinship Care is an arrangement where a child who cannot be cared for by their parent(s) goes to live with a relative or a family friend.

## **MARAC**

A monthly risk management meeting where professionals share information on high risk cases of domestic violence and abuse and put in place a risk management plan.

## **National Independent Safeguarding Board**

Provides support and advice to safeguarding boards and reports on the adequacy and effectiveness of arrangements to safeguard children and adults in Wales

## **Public Service Board**

Improves the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being in its area by strengthening joint working across all public services in Wales

[www.ourcwmtaf.wales](http://www.ourcwmtaf.wales)

## **Repeat Referrals**

Referrals that are made within a defined timescale (usually 12 months) following an earlier referral.

## **Safe Lives**

A national charity dedicated to ending domestic abuse for good

[www.safelives.org.uk](http://www.safelives.org.uk)

## **Section 47**

Under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989, if a child is taken into Police Protection, is the subject of an Emergency Protection Order or there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is suffering or is likely to suffer Significant Harm, a Section 47 Enquiry is initiated. This is to enable the local authority to decide whether they need to take any further action to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

## **SERAF**

Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Framework - draws on evidenced sexual exploitation vulnerabilities and risk indicators.

## **Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014**

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act is the law for improving the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support.

## **Strategy Meeting**

A meeting for social workers and other professionals to plan what they are going to do next about a case.

## **Supervisory Bodies**

The supervisory body is the local authority or local health board that is responsible for considering a deprivation of liberty request, commissioning the statutory assessments and, where all the assessments agree, authorising deprivation of liberty.

## **Talk to Me 2**

The Welsh Government's strategy and action plan to reduce suicide and self harm in Wales



## APPENDIX 1 - BOARD MEMBERSHIP

TITLE	AGENCY
Director of Community and Children's Services (Co-Chair)	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Head Of Community Housing Services	
Adult Safeguarding Service Manager	
Service Director, Adult Services	
Head of Safeguarding and Support (Children)	
Temporary Director for Education and Lifelong Learning	
Service Director, Children Services	
Head of Legal - Community Care and Children	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Chief Officer for Social Services (Co-Chair)	
Safeguarding Principal Manager	
Chief Officer Community Regeneration	
Head of Service (Learning)	
Head of Children Services	
Head of Adult Services	
Head of Legal and Governance	Cwm Taf University Health Board
Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Patient Services	
Head of Safeguarding	South Wales Police
Superintendent	
Independent Protecting Vulnerable Person Manager	National Probation Service
Assistant Chief Officer	
Assistant Chief Executive	Wales Community Rehabilitation Company
Chief Officer	Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil
CTSB Business Manager	Cwm Taf Safeguarding Boards Business Unit
Head of Service	Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service
Director / Interlink Chair	TEDS (Treatment and Education Drug Service)
Designated Nurse (National Safeguarding Team)	Public Health Wales
Assistant Director for Quality, Safety and Patient Experience	Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust
Board Member	National Independent Safeguarding Board

# APPENDIX 2 - BOARD STRUCTURE

