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**Date: 11th September 2019**

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **Cabinet** will be held in the **Sirhowy Room, Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Wednesday, 18th September, 2019** at **10.30 am** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda. You are welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, a minimum notice period of 3 working days is required should you wish to do so. A simultaneous translation will be provided if requested.

All Committee meetings are open to the Press and Public, observers and participants are asked to conduct themselves with respect and consideration for others. Please note that failure to do so will result in you being asked to leave the meeting and you may be escorted from the premises.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chrissy'.

**Christina Harrhy**  
INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

## AGENDA

1 To receive apologies for absence.

2 Declarations of Interest.

Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal

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and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on the agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.

To approve and sign the following minutes: -

- |   |                                 |        |
|---|---------------------------------|--------|
| 3 | Cabinet held on 10th July 2019. | 1 - 8  |
| 4 | Cabinet held on 1st August 2019 | 9 - 12 |

To receive and consider the following reports on which executive decisions are required: -

- |   |   |         |
|---|---|---------|
| 5 | Social Services Reserves.   | 13 - 22 |
| 6 | Welsh Government - Looked After Children Reduction Expectations.      | 23 - 34 |
| 7 | Wales Audit Office Review of the Council's Safeguarding Arrangements. | 35 - 68 |
| 8 | Cabinet Forward Work Programme.                                       | 69 - 76 |

**Circulation:**

Councillors C.J. Cuss, N. George, C.J. Gordon, Mrs B. A. Jones, P.A. Marsden, S. Morgan, L. Phipps, D.V. Poole and Mrs E. Stenner,

And Appropriate Officers.

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# Agenda Item 3



## CABINET

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN ON WEDNESDAY, 10TH JULY 2019 AT 10.30 A.M.

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#### PRESENT:

Councillor D. Poole - Chair

#### Councillors:

N. George (Neighbourhood Services), C.J. Gordon (Corporate Services), Mrs B. Jones (Finance, Performance and Governance), P. Marsden (Education and Achievement), S. Morgan (Economy, Infrastructure and Sustainability), L. Phipps (Homes and Places) and E. Stenner (Environment and Public Protection).

#### Together with:

C. Harrhy (Interim Chief Executive), M. S. Williams (Interim Corporate Director - Communities), S. Harris (Interim Head of Business Improvement Services and Interim S. 151 Officer).

#### Also in Attendance:

L. Lane (Head of Democratic Services and Deputy Monitoring Officer), S. Richards (Head of Education, Planning and Strategy), M. Lloyd (Head of Infrastructure), M. Johnson (Senior Engineer), K. Peters (Corporate Policy Manager), R. Roberts (Performance Manager), A. Dallimore (Team Leader – Urban Renewal) and A. Dredge (Committee Services Officer).

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C.J. Cuss, R. Edmunds (Corporate Director for Education and Corporate Services), D. Street (Corporate Director for Social Services and Housing) and R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer).

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor D. V. Poole declared a personal interest at the commencement of the meeting in relation to Agenda item 5 – Federation of Schools – Consultation Response Report. Details of which are recorded with the respective item.

#### 3. CABINET – 26TH JUNE 2019

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 26th June 2019 were approved as a correct record.

## **MATTERS ON WHICH EXECUTIVE DECISIONS WERE REQUIRED**

### **4. REVIEW OF CORPORATE PLAN (2018-2023) 2019**

The report presented Cabinet with the updated Corporate Plan 2018-2023 following a review to consider whether the Plan is still fit for purpose.

The Council's Corporate Plan was endorsed by Council on the 17th April 2018 and published thereafter. The Plan has six Well-being Objectives which are long term and set within the Sustainable Development Principle (the five ways of working). Following the review they are still judged 'relevant', fit for purpose and critical to improving quality of life for the Local Authority's citizens. Under the Local Government Measure (2009) there is an 'expectation' (section 15.2 and 15.3) that an 'Improvement Plan' will be published every year. However, as most authorities now publish longer term plans in keeping with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales Act) 2015 and / or in the life of an Administration, reviewing the Plan annually to check it is still fit for purpose, meets this requirement. It was noted that Wales Audit Office (WAO) is required to check whether an Authority has complied with their statutory duty as noted in paragraph 4.1 and to issue a 'certificate of compliance' in response.

Cabinet noted the substantive changes highlighted within the plan and reflect the addition of the Transformation Strategy, what this means in terms of vision and an update to the Performance, Planning and Improvement Framework which underpins it.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's Report, the amendments to the reviewed Corporate Plan 2019 (Appendix B) for its re-publication, be endorsed.

### **5. FEDERATION OF SCHOOLS - CONSULTATION RESPONSE REPORT**

Councillor D. V. Poole declared an interest at the commencement of the meeting in relation to this item as he is an LEA appointed Governor at both Fleur de Lys Primary School and Pengam Primary School. As the interest was personal only he was not required to leave the meeting when the report was presented and could take part in the debate and vote.

The report, which had been presented to the Education Scrutiny Committee on the 2nd July 2019 provided details of the outcome of the formal consultation process and sought Cabinet approval to formally federate the following groups of schools from 1st September 2019:

Gilfach Fargoed Primary School and Park Primary School  
Fleur de Lys Primary School and Pengam Primary School  
Bedwas Junior School and Rhydri Primary School  
Cwmfelinfach Primary School and Ynysddu Primary School.

Cabinet noted that the Governing Bodies of the schools have already been working on a collaborative basis for a number of years and requested that the Authority support them in the process to move to formal federation. The request to proceed to formal consultation in partnership with the Governing Body of each school was agreed by Cabinet on the 11th July 2018. The formal consultation period for each school ran between 22nd October 2018 and 10th December 2018. On 6th November 2018 Education Scrutiny Members were consulted on the proposal to formally federate the 4 groups of schools and were unanimously in support. A summary of the responses, which are detailed in the main body of the report, have been discussed in detail with each Governing Body and have all unanimously confirmed their agreement to proceed with the proposal to federate. At its meeting of the Education Scrutiny

Committee held on the 2nd July 2019, Members unanimously supported the recommendation to federate the 4 groups of Schools.

It was noted that should Cabinet approve the recommendation then the new Instrument of Governance for each federated Governing Body will be drafted and the separate Governing Bodies will be dissolved and the new Governing Bodies will be established in readiness for the start of the new school year.

Cabinet discussed the report and in particular the resilience and sustainability this process provides for these schools. The Cabinet Member for Education and Achievement acknowledged that this has been a learning process for all concerned. She added that Caerphilly is the only Local Authority in Wales to have 4 groups of federated schools and felt this will be a useful model in moving forward. Cabinet thanked the Officers within the Authority, Staff in the Schools and the Governors for their involvement and input during the engagement process.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's Report, Officers proceed to formally federate the groups of schools identified in paragraph 1.1, as follows:

Gilfach Fargoed Primary School and Park Primary School;

Fleur de Lys Primary School and Pengam Primary School;

Bedwas Junior School and Rhydri Primary School;

Cwmfelinfach Primary School and Ynysddu Primary School.

## **6. 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION BAND B PROGRAMME**

The report which had been presented to the Education Scrutiny Committee on the 2nd July 2019 updated Cabinet on the 21st Century Schools and Education Band B programme which runs between 2019 and 2026. The Band B proposals were agreed by Cabinet on 25th April 2018 and Council agreed on 21st February 2019 to allocate £5.475 million to the 21st Century Schools and Education programme match funding. The priority schemes identified for Phase 1 of the programme are an expansion of provision at Trinity Fields School and relocation and expansion of Ysgol Gymraeg Cwm Gwyddon on the former Cwmcarn High. The Scrutiny Committee fully endorsed this recommendation on the 2nd July 2019.

It was noted that the intervention rates for the programme have changed, as outlined in the body of the report. This has resulted in a reduction in the Council's contribution to the overall programme from £39.15 to £26.8 million. The initial specification of the expansion proposed for Trinity Fields has led to a recommendation to increase the allocation for this project from £5 million to £10 million. This money would be transferred from the refurbishment programme and is in line with WG's expectation for projects to be innovative and to be seen as a "once in a lifetime opportunity". In order to achieve this and "future proof" the school the increase in investment to £10 million is essential.

Cabinet noted that both projects outlined in paragraph 2.3 in the report are in the early developmental stage and Officers will ensure that Members are updated on a regular basis in relation to all aspects of the proposal e.g. financial, business case, consultation process etc. The Councils current projected match funding contribution to deliver both schemes is currently estimated at £5.1 million. If the increase for Trinity Fields is agreed this would reduce the Council's overall contribution from £26.8 million to £26.3 million.

Cabinet were pleased to support the recommendation and acknowledged this is a significant step forward with the increase in intervention rate representing substantive 'value for money' for both proposals. Members thanked Officers for their comprehensive report. In respect of Trinity Fields School, Officers added that this proposal is a 'once in a lifetime opportunity' and Caerphilly will be a leading Authority in moving forward by creating a Centre of Excellence. Officers are working together with Health and Social Services with this project and this will continue beyond the completion stage creating further amazing opportunities for children within the school.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's Report, the contribution for Trinity Fields School be increased from £5 million to £10 million.

## **7. REGENERATION BOARD - PROJECT PROPOSALS (TRANCHE 3)**

The report sought Cabinet approval for Tranche 3 projects identified by the Regeneration Project Board and assessed by the Assessment Panel to be endorsed and funded through the Regeneration Board Project Development Fund.

At its meeting on 30th May 2018, Cabinet agreed that the Regeneration Project Board be set up with a cross party political representation of Councillors to include key Officers. This group is supported by a Regeneration Assessment Panel consisting of Officers from a range of service areas. The Regeneration Assessment Panel and Regeneration Project Board have met to consider the first seven projects which have been identified by the Board to progress to Assessment Stage. It was noted the first tranche of these projects (four in number) were approved at Cabinet on 13th February 2019 whilst the second tranche were approved on the 29th May 2019.

Cabinet discussed the four projects that have been assessed and considered, namely, Masterplan for Public sector land in Ystrad Mynach, Viability work for the Powerhall (former Penallta Colliery), Coach drivers facilities, Caerphilly castle and Ty Du – additional employment additional units. Officers advised that the first two projects did not score highly enough in the assessment process to be advanced for Cabinet Approval and further work is required to fully scope out these projects. The second two projects scored well and the Regeneration Project Board recommends that Regeneration Development Funding be awarded to these projects to further their development. Details of each of the projects considered and assessed are set out in paragraph 5 of the Officer's report.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officers Report:

- (i) the progress of the Tranche 3 Projects, be endorsed;
- (ii) £90,000 of the remaining Regeneration Board Project Development Fund of £1.21m be allocated to the Tranche 3 Priority schemes, identified by the Regeneration Project Board.

## 8. INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT - COMMUTED SUMS

The report outlined proposals relating to the charging of commuted sums payable by developers for future maintenance and associated works of eligible infrastructure assets (not privately owned) offered for adoption for the lifetime of the development.

Cabinet were advised that in view of the current variation in the use and application of commuted sums by different services within the Council, it was recommended that a consistent approach be adopted for calculating commuted sum payments from developers for the future maintenance and replacement of adopted assets. Given the increasing emphasis on providing sustainable development and sustainable places to live, local authorities and other public bodies are facing increased pressures which would normally preclude such enhanced developments from being maintained to the appropriate standard unless payment is sought from the developer for the costs involved.

It is intended for both the local authority and developers to use the commuted sum methodology, which will provide a transparent and consistent approach to the calculation of commuted sums, and will place no unacceptable burden on CCBC maintenance budgets or the public purse. The clarity of approach will help remove the uncertainty and risk for developers at an early stage in the development process, and will also provide a sustainably funded mechanism for local authority departments, enabling development to progress with much more certainty regarding the overall requirements and commitment. The methodology for commuted sums has been developed in line with industry standard guidance prepared by the CSS (County Surveyors Society) and has also been recommended by the Welsh Government through the statutory guidance document as part of the statutory Sustainable Drainage Approval Body (SAB) function.

The report had been considered by the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee on 25th June 2019 and Members unanimously supported the recommendations within paragraph 3 of the Officer's report.

Cabinet acknowledged and supported the need to introduce a consistent approach for the calculation of these sums in order to improve clarity for both developers and the various departments across the Local Authority. Members were pleased to note that Officers from the Engineering Team have been shortlisted for an award as Susdrain SuDS Champions 2019. They have pioneered the interpretation of Welsh sustainable drainage solutions for Caerphilly County Borough Council who is at the forefront of establishing innovative SuDS. In addition Welsh Government (WG) has requested that the team develop a model that can be delivered to all Local Authorities across Wales, which will also need to be managed and maintained.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's Report:

- (i) a consistent approach to the calculation and implementation of charges to developers in relation to commuted sums be implemented, which will cover the future maintenance costs of all eligible infrastructure assets offered for adoption for the lifetime of the development;
- (ii) a requirement be placed on all developers entering into SAB (Sustainable Drainage Approval Body), s.38 and s.278 Highway Agreements, and s.106 Planning Agreement or any other type of Legal Agreement entered into with Caerphilly CBC, to be charged commuted sums for the future maintenance and replacement requirements of the works constructed by them and adopted by the Council;

- (iii) utilisation of a discount rate of 2.0% and lifetime of development of 60/12 years depending on the asset proposed for adoption, be approved;
- (iv) Officers report to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on a 6 monthly basis in relation to all commuted sums received by the Authority;
- (v) the agreed process be reviewed after 2 years of operation and where alterations are required, a future report be presented to Scrutiny and Cabinet.

## 9. **CONSIDERATION OF CALL-IN REQUEST - PROPOSED CHANGES IN FEES AND CHARGES**

Cabinet were reminded that at their meeting on the 27th March 2019, Members considered a report on Proposed Changes in Fees and Charges, and unanimously supported the recommendations contained in the Officer's report:

- (i) the services where fee and charge changes need to be applied be noted, and authorisation be given to the relevant Head of Service in consultation with the Director, relevant Cabinet Member and Head of Corporate Finance to implement changes in line with inflationary and/or commercial conditions prevailing for the service; and
- (ii) the relevant Head of Service records and posts any increases in fees and charges in accordance with the Authority's scheme or delegation.

The report was subsequently called-in and considered by the Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on the 28th May 2019. Following consideration of the report and in supporting the call-in request, the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee unanimously recommended to Cabinet that:-

- (i) the report on the Proposed Changes in Fees and Charges be reconsidered alongside the views of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee; and
- (ii) that a cap equating to the previous September's Consumer Price Index level in respect of any proposed fee increases be implemented, and that any increases above this level be referred to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee and thereafter Cabinet for determination, with any changes below this level being authorised under the delegated powers as set out in the original report to Cabinet on 27th March 2019.

Cabinet was asked to consider the report and the above recommendations and take into account the views of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee, and to note that the imposition of a cap will need to be incorporated into the financial regulations.

Cabinet fully considered the concerns expressed by the Scrutiny Committee as set out within paragraphs 1.5 to 1.8 in the covering report. In terms of paragraph 1.7, it was confirmed that the Finance Team had explored the amount of revenue that could be generated for the service areas where delegation is proposed and confirmed that each 1% increase equated to circa £79k. Clarification was provided in that service charges are competing with the commercial sector and examples of service areas were provided such as commercial waste, merchandise and catering which are competitive and it was noted that many of these are discretionary services.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the original recommendations in the report considered by Cabinet on the 27th March 2019, be approved and that an additional recommendation be added *that the wider approach across the Council in respect of increases in fees and charges should be reviewed and proposals for future years*



*be incorporated into the Commercial and Investment Strategy that will be considered by Cabinet in October 2019. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.*

RESOLVED that subject to the foregoing:

- (i) the services where fee and charge changes need to be applied be noted, and authorisation be given to the relevant Head of Service in consultation with the Director, relevant Cabinet Member and Head of Corporate Finance to implement changes in line with inflationary and/or commercial conditions prevailing for the service(s), and
- (ii) the relevant Head of Service records and posts any increases in fees and charges in accordance with the Authority's scheme of delegation;
- (iii) that the wider approach across the Council in respect of increases in fees and charges should be reviewed and proposals for future years be incorporated into the Commercial and Investment Strategy that will be considered by Cabinet in October 2019.

## **10. ARMED FORCES - GUARANTEED INTERVIEW SCHEME**

The report sought Cabinet approval to implement a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for Armed Forces Service leavers, reservists, veterans and spouses if they meet the vacancy essential criteria and to agree to engage with Career Transition Partnership (CTP) in the recruitment of service leavers.

It was noted that Caerphilly County Borough Council is a signatory to the Armed Forces Covenant, launched in 2011 by the UK Government, to promote and support the Armed Forces Community. The Armed Forces Covenant places an expectation on signatories that they will ensure that the Armed Forces Community are treated fairly and not disadvantaged as a result of their service. CCBC became a voluntary signatory to the Covenant in 2013. The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) comprises of Bronze, Silver and Gold awards for employers (including local authorities) that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to defence and the Armed Forces Community, and inspire others to do the same. CCBC are currently holding the Silver Award. A supportive measure of this award, although not an essential requirement, is to implement the Guaranteed Interview Scheme for the Armed Forces Community. Members were pleased to note that an application for the Gold Award has been submitted.

Cabinet noted that the Scheme does not guarantee appointment to a vacant position and that selection procedures will still ensure the best candidate is appointed to the vacancy. Members were proud to support this excellent scheme which also demonstrates the Council's commitment to defence and the Armed Forces Community.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's Report:

- (i) a Guaranteed Interview Scheme for service leavers, veterans, reservists and spouses, be implemented;
- (ii) Officers to work with the Career Transition Partnership ([www.ctp.org.uk](http://www.ctp.org.uk)), a no cost recruitment service for organisations seeking highly motivated and experienced veterans, who are leaving the Armed Forces.

## 11. CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The report sought Cabinet's endorsement of the Forward Work Programme for the period July to September 2019. The Forward Work Programme is updated on a weekly basis to reflect any amendments that are made to it since it was first agreed on 22nd January 2014.

Cabinet were advised that 3 further dates had been populated to the Programme since its publication, namely, 16th October 2019 to consider the Corporate Volunteering Report, and the 30th October 2019 to consider the Heads of the Valleys Masterplan Report. In addition, the Cabinet Forward Work Programme has been scheduled for the meeting on the 11th December 2019.

Following consideration and discussion and subject to the foregoing, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that subject to the following updates and for the reasons discussed at the meeting, the Cabinet Forward Work Programme be published to the Council's website:

- (i) a meeting of Cabinet to be held on 16th October 2019 to consider the Corporate Volunteering Report;
- (ii) a meeting of Cabinet to be held on 30th October 2019 to consider the Heads of the Valleys Masterplan;
- (iii) the Cabinet Forward Work Programme Report be added to the meeting of Cabinet on the 11th December 2019.

The meeting closed at 11.20am.

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on the 4th September 2019.

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CHAIR



## CABINET

### MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN ON THURSDAY, 1ST AUGUST 2019 AT 10.30 A.M.

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#### PRESENT:

Councillor D. Poole – Chair

#### Councillors:

C. Cuss (Social Care and Wellbeing), N. George (Neighbourhood Services), C.J. Gordon (Corporate Services), B.A. Jones (Finance, Performance and Governance) and E. Stenner (Environment and Public Protection).

#### Together with:

C. Harrhy (Interim Chief Executive), D. Street (Corporate Director - Social Services and Housing), M. S. Williams (Interim Corporate Director - Communities)

#### Also in Attendance:

R. Hartshorn (Head of Public Protection, Community & Leisure Services), L. Lane (Deputy Monitoring Officer and Head of Democratic Services) C. Edwards (Environmental Health Manager), M. Godfrey (Team Leader, Pollution Control) and A. Brown (Environmental Health Officer) and E. Sullivan (Senior Committee Services Officer).

#### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from P. Marsden (Education and Achievement), S. Morgan (Economy, Infrastructure and Sustainability), L. Phipps (Homes and Places), R. Edmunds (Corporate Director – Education and Corporate Services) and R. Tranter (Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer).

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

#### MATTERS ON WHICH EXECUTIVE DECISIONS WERE REQUIRED

#### 3. HAFOD-YR-YNYS AIR QUALITY FEASIBILITY STUDY – FINAL PLAN

In February 2018 Welsh Government issued an Air Quality Direction to Caerphilly County Borough Council to undertake a feasibility study for the area to determine a preferred option or basket of options which would achieve compliance with the Ambient Air Quality Directive air quality limited value for nitrogen dioxide in the shortest time possible.

At its meeting on the 27th March 2019 Cabinet expressed strong concerns at the prospect of residents being pushed into financial hardship by any compulsory purchase process and had not wanted to see young families or older people facing a negative equity position. Having completed a public consultation exercise on the 'Do Minimum' option and taking into account the views of the Environment and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee, on the 26th June 2019 Cabinet endorsed the final plan which was then submitted to Welsh Government.

The Cabinet Member for Environment and Public Protection confirmed that the response from the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs had been received and its content was detailed. It was noted the Minister considered that the preferred option required further work to ensure that the plan would deliver compliance with the limit value in the shortest time possible and made the following additional requirements:

The demolition option should proceed immediately on the basis assessments completed to date show this is the most likely option to achieve the legal requirement with strong modelled reductions in nitrogen dioxide and the potential to reduce below the threshold. However, further modelling and assessment of the demolition option and complementary measures should be undertaken.

Further modelling of a Clean Air Zone option should be undertaken to more convincingly assess its potential to achieve the legal requirement.

Complementary measures should be modelled to increase certainty the legal requirement can be met.

Caerphilly County Borough Council should satisfy the additional requirements in the soonest time possible and in any event within 7 calendar months.

NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations measured at Hafodyrynys automatic monitoring site should be assessed regularly to ensure plans in place are on course to achieve compliance.

Officers confirmed that a further meeting with Welsh Government would be held on the 6th August 2019 regarding the required measures and advised that they were on the whole comfortable with the content of the Direction and authority to commence demolition. However Officers were disappointed with the Minister's view that the final plan did not fully comply with the Direction, as they were of the opinion that final plan had been compliant and requested that this position be reflected in the response from the Interim Chief Executive.

Cabinet were advised that Officers had contacted residents either by telephone or by letter posted to their homes with regard to the Minister's response and there would be further one to one discussions organised.

The Leader and Cabinet wished to place on record their thanks and appreciation to C. Edwards, M. Godfrey and the Environmental Health Team for their hard work and dedication throughout this complicated and emotive process and paid tribute to their commitment and the compassionate way in which they worked with residents.

The Interim Chief Executive formally thanked Officers for their effort on what was a very complex and hard piece of work and in particular, how they had been very mindful of the impact on residents throughout the entire process.

In response to the decision of the Welsh Ministers and for the reasons outline above, it was moved and seconded that the following recommendations be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that: -

1. the decision of the Welsh Ministers be noted and the implementation of the demolition option in accordance with the timetable set out in the Final Plan be approved;
2. Officers to commence negotiations in accordance with the parameters in the final approved plan with a view to achieving voluntary sale/acquisition of the properties and to progress with the resultant plans for demolition and re-alignment of the footpath and the approval of the detailed terms in respect of the acquisitions is delegated to the Interim Head of Property Services in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Homes and Places;
3. Cabinet to receive a further report to initiate the making of a Compulsory Purchase Order, which will operate in parallel to the favoured approach of purchasing properties by agreement in order to minimise any delays in the project timescales;
4. Officers to undertake further modelling in accordance with the Air Quality Direction 2019 issued by Welsh Government;
5. The Interim Chief Executive to submit a written response to Welsh Ministers.

The meeting closed at 10:45

Approved and signed as a correct record subject to any corrections made at the meeting held on 18th September 2019.

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CHAIR

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## CABINET – 18TH SEPTEMBER 2019

**SUBJECT: SOCIAL SERVICES RESERVES**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR - SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING**

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To seek the approval for a range of proposals for the use of Social Services service reserves.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report identifies around £734k of social services reserve balances that were earmarked for specific purposes in earlier years which, as a result of recent investment in the Social Services revenue budget by both Welsh Government and Caerphilly C.B.C., are no longer required for their original purpose.
- 2.2 Consequently, it is proposed to re-invest those earmarked balances to enable a range of one-off investments and time limited arrangements to address some immediate workload pressures, relieve increasing demand for social care or to improve outcomes for service users.
- 2.3 The report also proposes that a £281k service reserve that was earmarked for “social services invest to save schemes” should be used to:-
- a) pilot a scheme which will provide additional support to families with parents with learning disabilities which is expected to reduce the likelihood of children becoming looked after.
  - b) Purchase specialist equipment that will enable certain home care calls to be undertaken by a single carer rather than requiring two carers, thereby reducing the demands on the domiciliary care market and reducing costs.
- 2.4 Additionally, the report confirms that the transfer £242k from Social Services general reserves approved by Cabinet on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2018, to create an earmarked reserve to fund the 2018/19 implications of increases in foster carer fees is no longer necessary. However, it is proposed that this £242k is used to create an additional earmarked reserve for capital works to be undertaken at Adult Services direct care establishments to improve bathroom facilities and Wi-Fi capabilities.
- 2.5 The report considers Social Services Service reserves only and the proposals contained in the report would have no impact on the Council’s general fund balance which currently stands at £11.7million (net of current commitments) or 3.45% of the Council’s net revenue budget for 2019/20.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Cabinet approves the proposed re-direction of Social Services reserves set out in this report and summarised in appendix 1.

#### 4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To use Social Services reserves to address some immediate workload pressures, mitigate increasing demand for social care and improve outcomes for service users.

#### 5. THE REPORT

##### 5.1 Surplus Earmarked Reserves Available for Re-investment

- 5.1.1 On 19<sup>th</sup> July 2017, Cabinet approved a number of temporary additional posts in response to increased demand in Children's Services. Service reserves amounting to £206k were earmarked for this purpose but due to difficulties in recruiting to these posts around £110.7k of this earmarked reserve remained unspent as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019. Additional Welsh Government Grant funding has provided a more sustainable funding stream for these additional posts moving forward, which means that the unspent balance of earmarked reserve funding is no longer required.
- 5.1.2 On 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018, Cabinet considered an Update on Reserves from the Acting Director of Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer. As a result, earmarked reserves were created to fund Caerphilly's contributions towards the Gwent Safeguarding Partnership and a shared POVA Co-ordinator post. These two earmarked reserves were intended to fund these services for a five year period through to 2021/22, allowing time to identify a permanent source of funding to be identified. The growth funding of £1.5million awarded to Social Services in 2019/20 provided that permanent source of funding so the unspent balances of reserve funding as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, amounting to £212.6k and £72.5k respectively are no longer required.
- 5.1.3 Also as a result of the Update on Reserves on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018, an earmarked reserve of £250k was set aside to pilot schemes within Social Services that could mitigate increasing demand for social care. A further update on reserves presented to Cabinet on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2019 subsequently increased this earmarked reserve to £281k. However, no specific pilot schemes drawing upon this reserve have been approved to date.
- 5.1.4 Cabinet approved the creation of a further earmarked reserve of around £338.7k on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2019 in respect of additional social worker posts and market supplements payable to staff in children's services locality teams. The reserve was intended to fund the cost of these arrangements during the 2018/19 financial year only, with the recurring revenue costs to be funded from the growth funding awarded to Social Services in the 2019/20 Corporate budget settlement. However, one-off Welsh Government funding was subsequently awarded in 2018/19 which was used instead of the earmarked reserve. As a result, the £338.7k reserve is no longer required.
- 5.1.5 As a result of the issues identified in paragraphs 5.1.1 to 5.1.4, earmarked reserves totalling £734,449.51 are no longer required for their original purposes and a further £281,043.35 of earmarked reserves are available to allow trials of "invest to save" schemes:-

<b><u>Description of Earmarked Reserve</u></b>	<b><u>Balance</u></b>
Children's Services Pressures	£110,681.47
Gwent Safeguarding Partnership	£212,635.00
POVA Co-ordinator	£72,467.04
Additional Social Workers & Market Supplements	£338,666.00
<b>Sub Total of Surplus Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>£734,559.51</b>
Invest to Save Trials	£281,043.35
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves available for re-investment</b>	<b>£1,015,492.86</b>



## 5.2 Proposals for Re-investment of Surplus Earmarked Reserve Balances

- 5.2.1 ICF funding has been secured in 2019/20 only to kick-start a Family Aid scheme which will provide support to families with parents with learning disabilities. It is believed that this additional support will reduce the likelihood of children from these families entering the care system. This in turn is expected to lead to better outcomes for the children involved and be a more cost effective approach. However, to enable an effective evaluation of this scheme to be undertaken it is proposed to continue the scheme for a further 18 months, utilising around £257.5k of the “invest to save” earmarked reserve identified in paragraph 5.1.3 above. At the end of this period, the impact of the scheme will be assessed to determine whether sufficient savings in looked after children costs have been achieved to provide ongoing funding for the scheme.
- 5.2.2 It is proposed to utilise the remaining £23.5k of the “invest to save” earmarked reserve along with a further £128.3k of surplus earmarked reserves to introduce specialist equipment that will enable single handed home care calls. Around £100k of this investment will be used to purchase specialised equipment with the balance being used to fund a senior occupational therapist for 12 months to support the installation of equipment and provide training and advice in its use. Not only will this reduce the cost of many home care calls, it will also relieve some of the staff shortages experienced within the domiciliary care market. If this initiative proves successful then ongoing funding for the arrangement could be considered from the savings delivered through the reduction in double handed calls.
- 5.2.3 The Adults Services Division currently provides financial deputyship services for service users from some neighbouring local authorities and Aneurin Bevan University Health Board. It is proposed to re-direct £56.8k of surplus earmarked reserves to employ a grade 11 officer for 12 months to undertake a study in to the feasibility of providing this service on a regional basis. The post will end when the study is complete but other posts may be required depending on the outcome of the study and provided additional income can be generated from a regional arrangement.
- 5.2.4 The growth of the Intermediate Care Fund and other regional and national initiatives over recent years has created additional demands on divisional management teams in both Adult Services and Children’s Services. Therefore, it is proposed to re-direct around £160.7k of surplus earmarked reserves to employ a Service Manager within Adult Services for 24 months and a further £160.7k to employ a Service Manager within Children’s Services for 24 months. The responsibilities of these posts would include the oversight of developments resulting from the Intermediate Care Fund, project management of the development of the new Children’s Centre and delivery of Welsh Government’s expectations in respect of reducing looked after children numbers.
- 5.2.5 It is proposed to re-direct a further £100k of surplus earmarked reserves to fund the construction of a self-contained flat in the grounds of Ty Ni Residential Home for Children. This flat would be used as move-on accommodation for young people previously accommodated at Ty Ni, to prepare them for independence and ultimately achieve a better outcome for the young person. A similar development is proposed for the Ty Isaf Residential Home for Children but is likely to cost less as there is the possibility of converting the existing garage on the site. Therefore a re-direction of £50k is proposed for the Ty Isaf move-on accommodation. There would be no additional staffing required to support young people accommodated in these flats so the on-going revenue implications would be limited to maintenance costs and utility costs during vacant periods. It is felt that these costs could be met through savings in other leaving care services.
- 5.2.6 Social Services own a number of Multiple Passenger Vehicles to enable day to day transport for services users based at establishments such as Ty Ni, Ty Hapus and some supported living accommodation for adults with learning disabilities. Due to the age of some of these vehicles they are becoming increasingly expensive to maintain. Therefore it is proposed to re-direct the remaining £78k of surplus earmarked reserves to enable some vehicles to be

replaced which will help to reduce the overspend anticipated against the Directorates Transport budget.

- 5.2.7 As a result of the proposals identified in paragraphs 5.2.1 to 5.2.6, surplus earmarked reserves totalling £1,015,492.86 would be re-directed to create the following new earmarked reserves:-

<b><u>Description of Earmarked Reserve</u></b>	<b><u>Balance</u></b>
Family Aid Scheme	£257,500.00
Enabling Single Handed Calls	£151,800.00
Regional Deputyship Service Feasibility Study	£56,800.00
Children's Centre Project Management	£160,700.00
Children's Services Service Management Capacity	£160,700.00
Move on Accommodation at Ty Ni	£100,000.00
Move on Accommodation at Ty Isaf	£50,000.00
Vehicle Replacement	£77,992.86
<b>Total New Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b><u>£1,015,492.86</u></b>

### 5.3 Proposed Appropriation from General Service Reserves to Earmarked Service Reserves

- 5.3.1 On 30<sup>th</sup> May 2018, Cabinet approved the transfer of £242k from Social Services general reserve balances to fund the in-year implications of increases in foster carer fees approved during the 2018/19 financial year. Subsequently, in December 2018, Welsh Government announced additional one-off grant funding which could be used to mitigate existing pressures within children's services. Consequently, a delegated decision was taken by the Corporate Director for Social Services and Housing to fund the 2018/19 foster carer fee increases from the new grant and to defer the transfer of reserves until 2019/20. However, the allocation of £1.5m growth for Social Services in the 2019/20 corporate budget settlement meant that the on-going financial implications of the fee increases could be funded from core budgets and therefore the £242k transfer from general reserves is no longer required.
- 5.3.2 Instead it is proposed to transfer the £242k to an earmarked reserve to enable capital works to be undertaken at a number of Adult Services direct care establishments in order to improve bathroom facilities and to enable Wi-Fi access.
- 5.3.3 If this proposal is approved the Social Services general reserve balance would stand at just over £2million which is around 2.31% of the Social Services revenue budget for 2019/20. This is around £0.6million below the corporate cap of 3% but is considered to be a reasonable balance to hold in case of (i) potential increases in demand for social care; (ii) potential price increases caused by market uncertainties and (iii) unfavourable outcomes in respect of on-going legal challenges.

### 5.4 **Conclusion**

- 5.4.1 The re-direction of surplus earmarked reserves proposed within this report would ensure surplus balances are re-invested in services that contribute towards the Council's Well-being Objectives and either (i) provide potential for longer term savings/cost avoidance; (ii) address immediate capacity concerns or (iii) provide better outcomes for service users.

## 6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

- 6.1 There are no assumptions included in this report.

## 7. **LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES**

- 7.1 The effective utilisation of service reserves will ensure that the Authority is well placed to

achieve its stated aims and contribute towards national objectives.

## 7.2 Corporate Plan 2018-2023

Appendix 2 provides details of how the services funded through re-directed service reserves could contribute towards the Corporate Well-being Objectives included in the Corporate Plan for 2018-2023.

## 8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

8.1 Effective financial management including the effective utilisation of service reserves is a key element in ensuring that the Well-being Goals within the Well-Being and Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 are met.

## 9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 An EIA screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's Strategic Equality Plan and supplementary guidance. No potential for unlawful discrimination and/or low level or minor negative impact has been identified; therefore a full EIA has not been carried out.

## 10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 As detailed throughout the report and summarised in appendix 1.

## 11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Posts funded from service reserves have the potential to be at risk if a longer term funding stream cannot be identified. Wherever possible this risk is mitigated through fixed-term appointments to such posts.

## 12. CONSULTATIONS

12.1 All consultation responses have been incorporated into this report.

## 13. STATUTORY POWER

13.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2003 and the Council's Financial Regulations.

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Appendices: Appendix 1 – Proposed Movements in Social Services Reserves  
Appendix 2 - Potential Impact on Wellbeing Objectives of Social Services Reserves Proposals.

## Proposed Movements in Social Services Reserves

	Current Balances	Proposed Virements	Draw Upon Invest to Save Reserve	Proposed Balances	Comments	Exit Strategy
	£	£	£	£		
<b>General Reserve</b>					2.31% of 19/20 budget to be held in case of placement pressures/price increases and pending Supreme Court ruling.	
Social Services	-£2,328,335.23	£242,000.00		-£2,086,335.23		
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>-£2,328,335.23</b>	<b>£242,000.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>-£2,086,335.23</b>		
<b>Earmarked Reserves</b>						
Finance IT System	-£26,285.16			-£26,285.16	For future developments in WCCIS	Additional resource to be removed once changes have been implemented.
Frailty Invest to Save Loan repayment	-£131,438.00			-£131,438.00	Instalments due in 2019/20 and 2020/21	Loan repaid in full by 2020/21.
Learning Disability Social Workers	-£91,000.00			-£91,000.00	2 Social Workers for 12 months to tackle review backlog	Temporary additional staffing capacity removed once backlog is cleared.
AMHP Training Backfill	-£72,000.00			-£72,000.00	1 Snr Social Worker in Mental Health & 1 Social Worker in Hospital Discharge	Temporary additional staffing capacity removed once training is completed.
PSYA Co-ordinator	-£72,467.04	£72,467.04		£0.00	Core funded from 2019/20 growth allocation	
Grant Safeguarding Partnership Social Worker Recruitment	-£212,635.00	£212,635.00		£0.00	Core funded from 2019/20 growth allocation	
Children Services Pressures incl. Legal Costs	-£338,666.00	£338,666.00		£0.00	Core funded from 2019/20 growth allocation	
Invest to save trials	-£110,681.47	£110,681.47		£0.00	Grant Funded from 2019/20	
Family Aid for Parents with Learning Disabilities	-£281,043.35		£281,043.35	£0.00	Time limited, delivering recurring savings to offset increasing demand	
Equipment to Enable single-handed home care calls	£0.00		-£257,500.00	-£257,500.00	5 grade 6 Child Care Support Workers from April 2019 to March 2021	If successful, posts could be made permanent, funded from reductions in LAC placements. £170k annual saving required to fund ongoing cost which would be around 10 in-house fostering placements or 1 residential placement.
	£0.00	-£128,256.65	-£23,543.35	-£151,800.00	£100k equipt + 1 grade 10 Snr OT for 12 months for installation/training	Would need to deliver savings of around 65 hours per week to fund a permanent Snr OT plus around 12.5 hours per week for every £10k of equipment required.

	Current Balances	Proposed Virements	Draw Upon Invest to Save Reserve	Proposed Balances	Comments	Exit Strategy
	£	£	£	£		
Feasibility Study for Regional Deputyship Service	£0.00	-£56,800.00		-£56,800.00	1 grade 11 post for 12 months	Temporary additional staffing capacity removed once review is complete and Regional Service is in place (if feasible).
Additional Service Manager Capacity	£0.00	-£321,400.00		-£321,400.00	2 Hay grade C posts for 24 months to support ICF developments and LAC reduction expectations and project manage the development of the new children's centre	Temporary additional staffing to be removed once developments are completed.
Move on Accommodation at Ty Ni for Children Leaving Care	£0.00	-£100,000.00		-£100,000.00	Revenue Contribution towards Capital Outlay for new build	Ongoing revenue implications will be limited to upkeep of the property and utility costs when the property is vacant. There are no additional staffing requirements.
Move on Accommodation at Ty ISAF for Children Leaving Care	£0.00	-£50,000.00		-£50,000.00	Revenue Contribution towards Capital Outlay for garage conversion	Ongoing revenue implications will be limited to upkeep of the property and utility costs when the property is vacant. There are no additional staffing requirements.
Replacement MPVs and minibuses	£0.00	-£77,992.86		-£77,992.86	Ty Ni, Ty Hapus and Learning Disability Establishments.	Should help to reduce transport overspend through reduced maintenance costs.
Capital Works at Adult Services Establishments	£0.00	-£242,000.00		-£242,000.00	Wi-fi and Bathroom Upgrades	One-off capital works with no on-going revenue implications.
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>-£1,336,216.02</b>	<b>-£242,000.00</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>-£1,578,216.02</b>		

Potential Impact on Wellbeing Objectives of Social Services Reserves Proposals

Proposed Use of Earmarked Reserves	Proposed Value	Well Being Objective Contributed Towards	Specific Outcome Achieved
Family Aid for Parents with Learning Disabilities	£257,500.00	1.Improve education opportunities for all.	8.Safeguard all children and young people in order to create a climate for learning, particularly for those most vulnerable.
		6.Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being.	1. Support people to 'help themselves' by providing comprehensive advice and information including signposting to other services.
			3.Provide support to reduce the need for higher tier statutory interventions.
			4.Identify and support carers.
Equipment to Enable single-handed home care calls	£151,800.00	6.Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being.	1. Support people to 'help themselves' by providing comprehensive advice and information including signposting to other services.
			3.Provide support to reduce the need for higher tier statutory interventions.
Feasibility Study for Regional Deputyship Service	£56,800.00	6.Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being.	6.Continue to identify opportunities to work collaboratively wherever appropriate.
Additional Service Manager Capacity	£321,400.00	1.Improve education opportunities for all.	8.Safeguard all children and young people in order to create a climate for learning, particularly for those most vulnerable.
		5.Creating a county borough that supports a healthy lifestyle in accordance with the Sustainable Development Principle within the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.	1.Aim to reduce inequalities in health across the county borough.
		6.Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being.	3.Provide support to reduce the need for higher tier statutory interventions.
6.Continue to identify opportunities to work collaboratively wherever appropriate.			

Proposed Use of Earmarked Reserves	Proposed Value	Well Being Objective Contributed Towards	Specific Outcome Achieved
Move on Accommodation at Ty Ni for Children Leaving Care	£100,000.00	1.Improve education opportunities for all.	8.Safeguard all children and young people in order to create a climate for learning, particularly for those most vulnerable.
		6.Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being.	3.Provide support to reduce the need for higher tier statutory interventions.
Move on Accommodation at Ty ISAF for Children Leaving Care	£50,000.00	1.Improve education opportunities for all.	8.Safeguard all children and young people in order to create a climate for learning, particularly for those most vulnerable.
		6.Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being.	3.Provide support to reduce the need for higher tier statutory interventions.
Replacement MPVs and minibuses	£77,992.86	6.Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being.	3.Provide support to reduce the need for higher tier statutory interventions.
Capital Works at Adult Services Establishments	£242,000.00	1.Improve education opportunities for all.	5. Improve 'Digital Skills' for all ages.
		3.Address the availability, condition and sustainability of homes throughout the county borough and provide advice, assistance or support to help improve people's well-being.	4.Deliver adaptations to support the health and well-being of people in their homes and maximise the delivery and appropriate use of accessible homes.
		6.Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being.	3.Provide support to reduce the need for higher tier statutory interventions.

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## CABINET – 18TH SEPTEMBER 2019

**SUBJECT: WELSH GOVERNMENT – LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN REDUCTION EXPECTATIONS**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR – SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To advise Cabinet of Welsh Government's expectation on all Council's to safely reduce the numbers of children Looked After in Wales and seek endorsement of the proposed actions to be undertaken in Caerphilly in response.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The First Minister for Wales made a manifesto pledge to reduce the numbers of children Looked After in Wales by 2022.
- 2.2 In February 2019, Welsh Government advised that they would be visiting each Local Authority to discuss local plans to reduce Looked After numbers. Their visit to Caerphilly took place at the end of March 2019 and the Council was invited to submit a reduction plan to Welsh Government by the end of April 2019. Subsequently, Welsh Government amended the report template and the final version that was submitted in July is attached for information at Appendix 1.
- 2.3 In recognition of the challenges facing Local Authorities, Welsh Government announced additional Integrated Care Funding (ICF) specifically focussed on supporting the reduction of the number of Looked After Children. This report includes details of how this funding will be utilised within Caerphilly.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Cabinet are requested to note the content of this report and the Welsh Government Template attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 Cabinet are requested to support the service developments detailed within this report aimed at achieving an overall reduction in Looked After numbers by the end of March 2022.
- 3.3 Cabinet are requested to consider including the 'Safe Reduction of Children Looked After' within Wellbeing Objective 6 of the Corporate Plan: Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being.

### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 To ensure Cabinet is fully aware of the expectations of Welsh Government to safely reduce the number of children Looked After and to endorse the plans to achieve this within

Caerphilly.

## 5. THE REPORT

### Welsh Government Reduction Expectations

- 5.1 Cabinet will note that for the current financial year, the Council is predicting a continued rise in Looked After numbers because the proposed actions and new service developments will not be fully implemented until the end of 2019/20.
- 5.2 Based on previous annual increases, it is predicted that by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020, the Council could be looking after 490 children. It is proposed that, based on 490 children, we will aim to achieve a 10% (49) reduction by the end of March 2022.
- 5.3 Cabinet are fully aware that children Looked After are the most vulnerable children receiving services from the Council. It is therefore really important to acknowledge that any reduction can only be made where it is deemed safe to do so for that individual child.
- 5.3 As the attached template reports, we will work to try to achieve this reduction through a number of different ways including:
- The systematic review of all children placed with parents who are subject of Care Orders to consider revocation of those Orders
  - The systematic review of all children placed with relative foster carers on Care Orders where the Order could transfer to Special Guardianship
  - Reducing the number of children entering care through the development of Family Group Meetings and improved long term Family Support services
  - Increased use of Section 76 (voluntary) care placements for periods longer than 16 weeks
- 5.4 Welsh Government are concerned about the number of children Looked After placed out of county. Caerphilly's strategic intention is to place children as 'close to home' as possible which can sometimes mean an out of county placement is preferable. For example, a child from Rhymney may be better placed in Merthyr or Ebbw Vale in order to maintain links with family and school rather than being placed with Caerphilly carers in Risca.
- 5.5 There are currently 113 children placed out of area. 41 are placed with Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA's) with the majority being placed within reasonable travelling distance of Caerphilly. Cabinet are already aware that increased recruitment of foster carers in Caerphilly has resulted in a reduction of 27 IFA placements. It is also important to note that 46 children are placed with Caerphilly approved foster carers out of area – 20 with relatives and 26 with mainstream foster carers. 19 children are placed in residential settings out of area. These placements are made based on the individual needs of the children and the lack of local residential provision.
- 5.6 Welsh Government also expect Local Authorities to reduce the numbers of children Looked After outside of Wales. Caerphilly currently has 10 children placed out of Wales. This is a very low percentage of the total number (2%/449). Committee Members will see from the attached report that there are no plans to change the placements of 8 of those 10 children because it would not be in the best interests of the individual children. The report also acknowledges that there will always be a need to place outside Wales for specialist services that may not be available in Wales.
- 5.7 Finally, Welsh Government expect to see a reduction in the number of children removed from the care of parents who have a learning disability. Caerphilly has a very robust process in place to assess the cognitive ability of parents and specialist assessments are completed wherever necessary. The number of children removed from parents with a diagnosed Learning Disability is not considered disproportionate in Caerphilly and as a result no specific

actions have been identified to address this. However, it is recognised that the development of enhanced family support services will assist children to remain at home where parents have learning difficulties (not diagnosed disability).

### **Integrated Care Funding (ICF) Grant**

- 5.8 To support the First Minister's Manifesto Pledge, Welsh Government has released additional ICF funding to support regional proposals to reduce Looked After numbers.
- 5.9 Working in partnership with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and the four other Gwent Local Authorities, a regional service model approach was agreed that could be delivered in each Local Authority area. This consists of four key strands:
- Family Group Meetings
  - Special Guardianship Supports
  - Enhanced 'Edge of Care' services and
  - Mediation services for children facing homelessness

### **Family Group Meetings**

- 5.10 A Family Group Meeting is a way for families, including wider family and close friends to come together to discuss a concern or problem which involves the children or young people in the family. They can be held in a range of circumstances from help for a family early on when they are beginning to experience difficulties right up to when families are involved with Child Protection services and children may be at risk of becoming Looked After.
- 5.11 The aim of the Meeting is to make a plan to support the child or young person that everyone is engaged in and supports. Families can be 'experts' on themselves. They are often the best people to make safety plans for their children and the meeting is an opportunity for families to take control of the decision making in their lives, helping families to identify their own strengths and solutions to their difficulties.

### **Special Guardianship Support:**

- 5.12 This proposal is aimed at delivering a consistent Gwent wide 'offer' of support to Special Guardians to both assist them in their caring role but also to assist the Courts in having a viable alternative to adoption and long term fostering.
- 5.13 If a child or young person cannot be cared for by their parent(s), Local Authorities have a duty to find permanent alternative carers for them. A Special Guardianship Order (SGO) provides a legally secure placement for a child until they reach the age of eighteen years. It can be a positive alternative to adoption because it retains the child's sense of identity and belonging. The Special Guardians have Parental Responsibility to care for the child and make all the decisions about their upbringing.
- 5.14 The aim is for each Local Authority to 'offer' the following range of supports:
- Improved assessment and ongoing support
  - Establishing education priority status for children subject to SGO's in each Local Authority
  - Providing support to remain in education provision and enhance academic achievement (similar to that provided to children Looked After)
  - Develop daytime and evening peer support groups for Special Guardians
  - Provide a training programme for Special Guardians
  - Offer out of hours telephone contacts in line with foster carers

- Organise family days, social events and activities
- Provide advice and assistance including signposting to other services
- Provide mediation to assist with new or existing contact arrangements
- Access to Psychology consultation and support

#### **Enhanced Edge of Care Support:**

- 5.15 Edge of Care Services are those aimed at preventing the need for a child to become Looked After and supporting care experienced children to be able to return home to their families wherever possible. Caerphilly has historically invested in this type of service through the development of the Intensive Support Team. This was enhanced last year through dedicated funding by Welsh Government and continues to be a priority specifically referred to in this new tranche of ICF funding.
- 5.16 The proposal is to expand the Intensive Support Team to include Psychology support, an Education worker, a children's Community Connector and additional Family Support Workers.
- 5.17 In addition, it is proposed to utilise service specific reserves to fund a team of Family Aides/Support Workers to offer practical parenting and emotional support to those families where parents have learning difficulties and where children can be supported to remain at home with the additional support. This support may need to be for longer periods of time but will reduce the need for removal.

#### **Mediation support for young people facing homelessness:**

- 5.18 The best place for young people to live is within their families but sometimes there may be difficulties which make it hard to live in the family home. Mediation is a structured process where individuals try and resolve differences and problems with the support of an impartial mediator.
- 5.19 Outcomes from successful mediation include:
- The young person can remain at home or return home with a level of support
  - The young person remains at home or returns home temporarily whilst accommodation options are fully explored and a planned move is able to be achieved rather than moving in a crisis
  - The young person is unable to return home but relationships within the family are positively repaired and maintained for the longer term

#### **Risks for the Council**

- 5.20 Children's Services are actively supporting Social Work Teams to manage more risks outside Court proceedings. We are encouraging Social Workers to support families to identify their own solutions where the parenting standards are considered to be 'good enough' and where it is safe to do so. We also intend to use voluntary care i.e. where there is no court order, for longer periods of time. Currently, there is an expectation from the Judiciary that court proceedings should be issued if a child has been in voluntary care for 16 weeks however, historically, voluntary care has been able to be used as a positive family support.
- 5.21 All of the above actions are likely to lead to criticisms from the Judiciary and CAFCASS if we subsequently have to issue court proceedings and it is important that Cabinet are aware of this risk.

## **6. ASSUMPTIONS**

- 6.1 This section should set out what assumptions have been made in proposing the recommendations in the report. The assumptions could include, amongst other things, inflation, costs, expenditure, population, policy, service demand etc. If no assumptions have been made or were thought necessary, then this should be stated.

## **7. LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES**

- 7.1 Social Services & Well Being (Wales) Act 2014.

### **7.2 Corporate Plan 2018-2023.**

The content of this report contributes towards Well Being Objective 6: Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being

## **8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS**

- 8.1 The content of this report contributes to the following Well Being Goals:

- A resilient Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

The report is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act as follows:

- Long Term – the provision of safe care and accommodation for children in the greatest need is, and always will be, a key strategic priority for the Council. Improving outcomes for children Looked After will deliver longer term improvements for them individually.
- Prevention – Children’s Services is committed to preventing the escalation of need and subsequent demand on higher tier statutory services through the delivery of early intervention and family support services.
- Integration – Service developments across Children’s Services and the region are increasingly integrated with Health and other professionals eg. MyST, Gwent Attachment Service, Psychology support to Supporting Family Change, Intensive Support and Fostering Teams
- Collaboration – the developments funded through the WG ICF funding have been agreed across the five Local Authorities and the Regional Partnerships.
- Involvement – all key stakeholders have been consulted and involved in the development of the WG Reduction Expectations Plan and service developments.

## **9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The Council’s full Equality Impact Assessment process does not need to be applied.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 Any increase or reduction in the number of children Looked After by the Council has a direct impact on the Children’s Services and Social Services budget.
- 10.2 The service development proposals outlined in this report rely on the use of the Welsh Government ICF funding made available to support the reduction in Looked After Numbers. However, this funding is currently due to end in March 2021.

## **11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no personnel or HR implications arising from this report.

## **12. CONSULTATIONS**

12.1 The report is for information purposes and reflects the views of consultees.

## **13. STATUTORY POWER**

13.1 Social Services & Well Being (Wales) Act 2014

Author: Gareth Jenkins, Assistant Director – Children’s Services  
jenkig2@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Christina Harrhy – Interim Chief Executive  
Steve Harris – Head of Business Improvement & Section 151 Officer  
Rob Tranter – Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer  
Lynne Donovan – Head of People Services  
Councillor Carl Cuss, Cabinet Member for Social Services  
Councillor Lyndon Binding – Chair of Social Services Scrutiny Committee  
Councillor John Bevan – Vice Chair of Social Services Scrutiny Committee  
Dave Street, Corporate Director – Social Services  
Social Services Senior Management Team  
Children’s Services Divisional Management Team

Appendices: Appendix 1 -Welsh Government Reduction Expectations Template July 2019

July 1, 2019

## Caerphilly County Borough Council – Children’s Services

### Service Description:

Caerphilly Children’s Services provides a full range of statutory services to safeguard children and young people and to support them to achieve their full potential. Working in partnership, our aim is to co-produce appropriate Care & Support Plans that meet the individual needs of children, young people and their families and carers. We rely on the co-operation of other key statutory partner agencies and third sector providers to ensure the services provided are responsive to need and support families at the lowest possible level of need.

Children’s Services are committed to the following four strategic priorities and these underpin all the work that we do:

- 1. To support families to stay together** and reduce the need for children to be Looked After by ensuring a focus on early intervention and prevention across all service provision for children, young people and their families.
- 2. To manage risk confidently and provide support at the ‘edge of care’** by making sure that need is accurately assessed, resulting in the right children being accommodated at the right time. This includes supporting families to avoid children becoming accommodated unnecessarily and by making arrangements within their wider family networks.
- 3. To provide and commission a flexible and affordable mix of high quality placements** to meet the diverse range of children’s needs.
- 4. To give children and young people clearly planned journeys through care** which remain focused on achieving outcomes, preventing drift and enabling reunification with family and friends wherever safe to do so. We will work on achieving placement stability and ensuring positive move on for children and young people leaving the care system.

### Headline performance measures:

- reduction in the number of children in care
- reduction in the number of children placed out of county
- reduction in the number of children placed out of Wales
- reduction in the number of children removed from parents with a learning disability

**Proposed Reduction Expectations – numbers of children in care**

**Year One (2019/20):** Aim to remain below the projected increase in numbers for 2019/20 (estimated to be 54 per year) giving a potential total number of 490 children Looked After by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020

Plus:

- To introduce the enhanced support package for Special Guardians
- To further develop enhanced ‘edge of care’ supports including the development of Family Group Meetings
- To develop an intensive family support service for parents with learning difficulties

**Year Two (2020/21):** Based on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 figure, we will then aim to reduce the overall number of children Looked After by 10% by the end of Year 3.

(for example: based on 490 projection @ 31.03.20 this will be a target of 49 over the two years)

Plus:

- Continue to systematically review all children on Care Orders who are placed at home with parents and the conversion of Care Orders to Special Guardianship Orders wherever appropriate to do so

**Proposed Reduction Expectations – numbers of children placed out of county**

**Year One (2019/20):** Caerphilly has already reduced out of county IFA placements by 27 in the current year

**Year Two (2020/21):** Aim to reduce by 5 more

**Year Three (2021/22):** Aim to reduce by 5 more

As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, there were 113 children Looked After in out of county placements broken down as follows:

Placement Type (903 Return)	No of children
F6: Out Of County, placement with Foster Carer through Agency	41
F4: Foster placement with relative or friend, Out of County	20
F5: Placement with a CCBC Foster Carer – Out of County	26
H4: Children Homes & Hostels Outside LA boundary	19
H5: Residential Accommodation Not Subject To Childrens Homes Regs.	4
R2:Other Res Setting:-NHS/health Trust Estab Medical Or Nursing	1
R3:Other Res Setting:- Family Centre Or Mother And Baby Unit	1
R5:Other Res Setting:- Young Offender Institution Or Prison	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>113</b>

Caerphilly’s intention is to place children and young people ‘closer to home’ which can often mean an out of county placement is the preferred choice. For



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To reduce the rate of entry into care through the full implementation of Family Support, Family Group Meetings and Edge of Care services</li> </ul> <p><b>Year Three (2021/22):</b> As detailed in Year 2 above</p> <p>Plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the use of Section 76 accommodation for periods longer than 16 weeks ie reduce the rate of issue (against current Judicial practice)</li> <li>Increase the use of ‘other family arrangements’ without having to make children Looked After to do so (against current Judicial practice)</li> </ul>	<p>example, a child from Rhymney will be better placed in Merthyr Tydfil or Blaenau Gwent in order to maintain links with their school, family and community than being placed with in-house carers in Risca.</p> <p>It is important to note that 46 children are actually placed with CCBC Foster Carers (mainstream and relative) even though they are technically out of county</p>
<p><b>Proposed Reduction Expectations – numbers of children placed out of Wales</b></p> <p><b>Year One (2019/20):</b> 2 current children placed in residential care who could potentially return to CCBC or Wales. Targets beyond that are unable to be set for the reasons outlined below</p> <p><b>Year Two (2020/21):</b> unable to set target</p> <p><b>Year Three (2021/22):</b> unable to set target</p> <p>Caerphilly has 10 children Looked After out of Wales. This is a very low percentage at 2.3% of the total number of children Looked After. Of the 10 children:</p>	<p><b>Proposed Reduction Expectations – numbers of children removed from parents with a learning disability</b></p> <p><b>Year One (2019/20):</b> unable to set target</p> <p><b>Year Two (2020/21):</b> unable to set target</p> <p><b>Year Three (2021/22):</b> unable to set target</p> <p>As reported in the May 2019 Template:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Caerphilly has a very clear process to enable practitioners to support parents with learning disability and learning difficulties</li> <li>Any parent where there may be concerns about their ability to comprehend or their capacity are subject of an independent</li> </ul>

<p>2 are placed with a parents          4 are placed with relatives          1 is in an IFA – matched as Long Term          2 are in residential placements and          1 is in Great Ormond Street Hospital</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a result 8 of the 10 placements cannot be changed – it would not be in the children’s best interests to be moved from parents, relatives, long term matched placement or hospital</li> <li>• It is important to acknowledge that some specialist provision eg Secure Accommodation or Mental Health provision will inevitably be outside of Wales while the current placement resources in Wales remain limited.</li> <li>• All out of county and out of country placements are considered by the multi agency Complex Needs Panel</li> </ul>	<p>Cognitive Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This Cognitive Assessment identifies the most appropriate approaches to be utilised when working with the parent or will determine the need for a Parenting Assessment Manual (PAM’s) assessment</li> <li>• Caerphilly does not consider the number of children removed from parents with a diagnosed LD as being disproportionate in this local authority</li> </ul>
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**Please briefly provide an explanation of your overall approach to out of county and cross-border placements and your plans to increase placement capacity?**

The Local Authority’s approach to out of county / out of country placements is outlined in the above sections – as reported in the May 2019 Template.

In relation to increasing in county provision:

- We have increased foster carer recruitment by 100% in the last 12 months – 20 new carers compared to 10 in 2017/18
- We have developed a bespoke residential placement for a particularly challenging and hard to place child to maintain them in-county and have a second such placement under development for a child currently in secure accommodation.
- We will increase in-house residential provision by 4 beds by the end of 2019 which will assist with a reduction in the reliance on out of county placements

It is important to acknowledge that in certain circumstances placing out of county is the most appropriate option for a child eg where there are Child Sexual Exploitation, Harmful Sexualised Behaviour or Mental Health concerns

**Any additional text to describe your rationale?**

Please refer to the previous template submitted by the Local Authority in May 2019

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## CABINET – 18TH SEPTEMBER 2019

**SUBJECT: WALES AUDIT OFFICE REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S CORPORATE SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR – SOCIAL SERVICES AND HOUSING**

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Cabinet of the Wales Audit Office (WAO) Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements within Caerphilly County Borough Council undertaken in May 2019 and report on the implementation of an action plan in response to the recommendations made by the Review.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The WAO undertook a follow up review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements for Children in Caerphilly in May 2019. The subsequent report was presented to Corporate Management Team for approval in June 2019 and the Performance Audit Manager from WAO also presented the report findings to the Corporate Safeguarding Board in June 2019.

- 2.2 The Review report is attached as Appendix 1 and concluded that;

*Although the Council has made some progress in addressing our previous recommendations, the Council needs to further strengthen its corporate safeguarding oversight and assurance arrangements*

- 2.3 In response, the Council was required to complete a Management Response and this is attached for information at Appendix 2. The Corporate Safeguarding Board has developed an action plan to address both the strategic recommendations made and the areas of good practice for consideration identified in the Review and this is attached as Appendix 3. The WAO Auditor acknowledged that there were many positive developments in place and planned to address the areas for improvement but because some of them were yet to be fully realised, their conclusion was that further work is needed to strengthen corporate governance and oversight.

- 2.4 It is really important to note that this was a review of the corporate governance of safeguarding arrangements and did not consider safeguarding children practice and procedure.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Cabinet are requested to note the content of the WAO Review report and the progress made in implementing the recommendations detailed in the Council's Action Plan.

#### 4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ensure Cabinet is fully aware of the findings of the WAO Review and supports the Corporate Safeguarding Board to oversee implementation of the Action Plan.

#### 5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The full WAO Review Report is attached as Appendix 1 for information.
- 5.2 The Review identifies 5 areas for improvement in line with the National Recommendations published in 2015. The Council's Management Response to the Review is attached for information at Appendix 2.
- 5.3 In addition, the Review identified good practice that the council *could* consider and the Corporate Safeguarding Board agreed to include all these good practice areas in the detailed Action Plan that is attached as Appendix 3.
- 5.4 Cabinet will be able to note that many of the actions identified are relatively straight forward to implement and achieve and as a result the timescales set are within the current financial year.
- 5.5 The key findings fall into the following themed areas:

##### **Corporate Safeguarding Board:**

- increased frequency of meetings
- increased performance reporting
- development of a Training Framework for all service areas
- development of a self assessment tool
- consider the inclusion of Corporate Safeguarding on Risk Registers
- improved access to the policy and the Annual Report

##### **Designated Safeguarding Officers:**

- complete the self-assessment tool
- implement the Training Framework

##### **Human Resources:**

- implement the Safer Recruitment Policy
- develop a tracking system for DBS checks for all staff who require them
- support the implementation of the Training Framework through the use of ITrent

##### **Procurement and Contract Monitoring:**

- ensuring contractors and volunteers have received appropriate training and DBS checks

##### **Internal Audit:**

- Staff to be trained
- Role to be clarified

- 5.6 The Corporate Safeguarding Board will oversee the implementation of the Action Plan and will report progress made in the next Annual Report for 2019/20.

#### 6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 There are no assumptions made or presumed in this report.

## **7. LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES**

7.1 Social Services & Well Being (Wales) Act 2014

7.2 **Corporate Plan 2018-2023.**

The content of this report contributes towards:

- Well Being Objective 6: support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being; and
- Cabinet Commitment 5: to protect the most vulnerable people in our society and make safeguarding a key priority

## **8. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS**

8.1 The content of this report contributes to the following Well Being Goals:

- A resilient Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities

The report is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act as follows:

- Long Term – safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults is and always will be a priority for the Council and it is essential that all employees, volunteers and contractors fully understand their personal and professional responsibility to safeguard vulnerable individuals.
- Prevention – robust Corporate Safeguarding arrangements should help prevent the escalation of need and subsequent demand on higher tier statutory services
- Integration – Caerphilly's Corporate Safeguarding Policy reinforces that safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults is everybody's business within Caerphilly
- Collaboration – the Corporate Safeguarding Board and the Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO) Development Group ensures that every service area is represented, has a DSO identified and provides training and support to those DSO's to fulfil their corporate safeguarding responsibilities.
- Involvement – the Corporate Safeguarding Board consists of representatives from key service areas to ensure that there is a whole Council approach to safeguarding.

## **9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 This report is for information purposes only, so the Council's full Equality Impact Assessment process does not need to be applied.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 There are no funding implications arising from this report.

## **11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are no personnel or HR implications arising from this report.

## **12. CONSULTATIONS**

12.1 The report reflects the views of consultees.

### 13. STATUTORY POWER

#### 13.1 Social Services & Well Being (Wales) Act 2014

Author: Gareth Jenkins, Assistant Director – Children’s Services  
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Consultees: Christina Harrhy – Interim Chief Executive  
Steve Harris – Head of Business Improvement and Section 151 Officer  
Rob Tranter – Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer  
Lynne Donovan – Head of People Services  
Councillor Carl Cuss, Cabinet Member for Social Services & Chair of the Corporate Safeguarding Board  
Councillor Lyndon Binding – Chair of Social Services Scrutiny Committee  
Councillor John Bevan – Vice Chair of Social Services Scrutiny Committee  
Dave Street, Corporate Director – Social Services  
Social Services Senior Management Team  
Nicola Barrett – Service Manager with responsibility for safeguarding

Appendices:

Appendix A Wales Audit Office – Follow-up Review of Corporate Arrangements for the Safeguarding of Children – Caerphilly County Borough (June 2019)  
Appendix B Caerphilly County Borough Council – Management Response (June 2019)  
Appendix C Caerphilly Corporate Safeguarding Board Action Plan (June 2019)





WALES AUDIT OFFICE  
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

Archwilydd Cyffredinol Cymru  
Auditor General for Wales

# Follow-up review of corporate arrangements for the safeguarding of children – **Caerphilly County Borough Council**

Audit year: 2018-19

Date issued: June 2019

Document reference: 1326A2019-20

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The team who delivered the work comprised Gareth Jones, managed by Non Jenkins under the direction of Huw Rees.

# Contents

Although the Council has made some progress in addressing our previous recommendations, the Council needs to further strengthen its corporate safeguarding oversight and assurance arrangements.

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## Summary

### What we reviewed and why

- 1 We undertook this review to seek assurance that the Council has effective corporate arrangements in place for safeguarding children. We considered the findings of our 2014 report into the Council's arrangements to support safeguarding of children<sup>1</sup>. We also considered the Council's progress in implementing the recommendations contained in the Auditor General's report, 'Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements in Welsh Councils' (July 2015)<sup>2</sup>.
- 2 We undertook the review during May 2019. The Council provided a self-assessment of its progress in addressing the recommendations and proposals for improvement made in 2014 and 2015. The Council provided documents to support its self-assessment. We then interviewed key officers and the lead member for Corporate Safeguarding.
- 3 Our review has been limited to reviewing the Council's self-assessment of its progress against our previous recommendations and proposals for improvement. We have not tested the effectiveness of the Council's safeguarding arrangements in practice as part of this review.

### What we found

- 4 Our review sought to answer the question: **Has the Council acted upon the recommendations and proposals for improvement contained in the national and local reports of the Auditor General published in 2014 and 2015?**
- 5 Overall we found that: **Although the Council has made some progress in addressing our previous recommendations, the Council needs to further strengthen its corporate safeguarding oversight and assurance arrangements.**
- 6 Based on the work we have done, the Council needs to further strengthen its oversight and assurance of its corporate safeguarding arrangements. In particular, the Corporate Safeguarding Board has a very extensive remit but only meets annually. The Council does not currently include Safeguarding in its corporate risk register nor service area risk registers. The Council should strengthen the oversight of the assurance provided by its Corporate Safeguarding Board to ensure that the Council's procedures for safeguarding children and adults are robust. The role of the Cabinet, Audit Committee, Internal Audit and Scrutiny in relation to Corporate Safeguarding need to be clarified.
- 7 The Council's Cabinet commitments include safeguarding as a key priority, and the

<sup>1</sup> Auditor General for Wales, **Local Authority Arrangements to Support Safeguarding of Children – Caerphilly County Borough Council**, October 2014

<sup>2</sup> **Auditor General for Wales, Review of Corporate Safeguarding Arrangements in Welsh Councils**, July 2015

Council's ethos is that 'Safeguarding is Everybody's Business.' However, it has yet to fully address a number of our previous national recommendations as shown below. **Exhibit 2** that follows sets out our assessment of the Council's progress in implementing each national recommendation and local proposal for improvement.

**Exhibit 1: National recommendations that have yet to be fully addressed**

The table below sets out the national recommendations that the Council has not yet fully addressed

<b>National recommendations that have yet to be fully addressed</b>
<p><b>R3</b> Strengthen safe recruitment of staff and volunteers by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring that Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and compliance with safe recruitment policies cover all services that come into contact with children;</li> <li>• creating an integrated corporate compliance system to record and monitor compliance levels on DBS checks; and</li> <li>• requiring safe recruitment practices amongst partners in the third sector and for volunteers who provide services commissioned and/or used by the council which are underpinned by a contract or service level agreement.</li> </ul>
<p><b>R4</b> Ensure all relevant staff, members and partners understand their safeguarding responsibilities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring safeguarding training is mandated and coverage extended to all relevant council service areas, and is included as standard on induction programmes;</li> <li>• creating a corporate-wide system to identify, track and monitor compliance on attending safeguarding training in all council departments, elected members, schools, governors and volunteers; and</li> <li>• requiring relevant staff in partner organisations who are commissioned to work for the council in delivering services to children and young people to undertake safeguarding training.</li> </ul>
<p><b>R6</b> Improve accountability for corporate safeguarding by regularly reporting safeguarding issues and assurances to scrutiny committee(s) against a balanced and council-wide set of performance information covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• benchmarking and comparisons with others;</li> <li>• conclusions of internal and external audit/inspection reviews;</li> <li>• service-based performance data;</li> <li>• key personnel data such as safeguarding training, and DBS recruitment checks; and</li> <li>• the performance of contractors and commissioned services on compliance with council safeguarding responsibilities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>R7</b> Establish a rolling programme of internal audit reviews to undertake systems testing and compliance reviews on the council's safeguarding practices.</p>
<p><b>R8</b> Ensure the risks associated with safeguarding are considered at both a corporate and service level in developing and agreeing risk management plans across the council.</p>

**Exhibit 2: assessment of the Council's progress in addressing the national recommendations**

The table below sets out our assessment of the Council's progress in addressing the national recommendations and local proposals for improvement.

Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
<p><b>R1</b>                      Improve corporate leadership and comply with Welsh Government policy on safeguarding through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the appointment of a senior lead officer who is accountable for safeguarding and protecting children and young people with corporate responsibilities for planning improvements;</li> <li>2. the appointment of a lead member for safeguarding; and</li> <li>3. regularly disseminating and updating information on these appointments to all staff and stakeholders.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Summary – Fully met</b></p> <p>The Council has improved corporate leadership and compliance with Welsh Government policy on safeguarding through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. appointing a senior lead officer (Director of Social Services and Housing) who is accountable for safeguarding and protecting children and young people with corporate responsibilities for planning improvements;</li> <li>2. appointing a lead member for safeguarding (Cabinet Member for Social Services &amp; Housing); and</li> <li>3. regularly disseminating and updating information on these appointments to all staff and stakeholders.</li> </ol> <p>The Council could consider the following options to further strengthen its arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring that the Corporate Safeguarding Policy is more easily accessible from the main Council Intranet page and not solely through the Children's Services pages;</li> <li>• ensuring that Designated Safeguarding Officers' contact details are displayed prominently on service area intranet pages;</li> <li>• ensuring visibility of key officers and the lead member on intranet pages and in training materials; and</li> <li>• collecting ongoing data about staff and stakeholders' awareness of the key Corporate Safeguarding roles.</li> </ul>

Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
<p><b>Local Proposal for Improvement 2</b></p> <p>The Council should clarify who designated officers with responsibility for safeguarding are.</p>	<p><b>Summary – Fully Met</b></p> <p>The Council has clarified who the designated officers with responsibility for safeguarding are and this is outlined in the policy clearly as shown below:</p> <p><b>The Chief Executive</b></p> <p>4.1 The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring arrangements for safeguarding of children and adults are effective across the Council. The Chief Executive is responsible for developing effective governance arrangements and ensuring there is an effective safeguarding policy in place.</p> <p>4.2 Through one to one meetings with the Corporate Director of Social Services, the Chief Executive is kept informed of relevant safeguarding issues.</p> <p>4.3 In addition, any exceptional matters relating to safeguarding could be reported to the G7 meeting by the Chief Executive. The G7 is a strategic meeting of the Chief Executives of the five Gwent Local Authorities, the Police and the Health Board.</p> <p><b>Lead Member for Safeguarding (Cabinet Member for Social Care and Wellbeing)</b></p> <p>4.4 The Lead Member for Safeguarding is responsible for providing political scrutiny to ensure the Council fulfils its duties and responsibilities for safeguarding. The Lead Member will chair the Corporate Safeguarding Board and support Elected Members to scrutinise and appropriately challenge the safeguarding performance of the Council.</p> <p>4.5 The Lead Member will be briefed on any sensitive cases that may be considered for Child or Adult Practice Reviews or may otherwise become a matter of public interest. The Lead Member will periodically visit front line services to meet with staff and managers</p> <p><b>Statutory Director of Social Services</b></p> <p>4.9 The Statutory Director of Social Services has final and ultimate responsibility for ensuring the Council has appropriate safeguarding measures in place to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Statutory Director is responsible for reporting the effectiveness of these arrangements on a corporate level to the Chief Executive, Corporate Management Team and to Elected Members.</p>

Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
	<p>4.10 The Statutory Director is the point of contact for all other Corporate Directors to report serious safeguarding concerns which may occur in their own service areas. The Statutory Director is responsible for ensuring appropriate action is taken including reporting to the Chief Executive and the Lead Cabinet Member as necessary.</p> <p>4.11 The Director delegates the lead responsibility for operational and strategic safeguarding to the Assistant Directors for Adult Services and Children's Services. The Assistant Directors ensure the Director is kept informed of safeguarding issues through one to one meetings and as the need may arise outside these meetings.</p> <p>4.12 The Director is responsible for providing an Annual Report to the Council and CSSIW on the progress and performance of Social Services which includes the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements.</p>
<p><b>R2</b> Ensure there is a corporate-wide policy on safeguarding covering all council services to provide a clear strategic direction and clear lines of accountability across the council.</p>	<p><b>Summary – Fully Met</b></p> <p>The Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy states that 'Safeguarding is Everybody's Business' and it covers;</p> <p>'all Council and education employees, Elected Members, Volunteers and contractors. While employees, Elected Members, volunteers and contractors are likely to have varied level of contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults as part of their duties, everyone should be aware of the potential indicators of abuse and neglect and be clear about what to do if they have concerns.'</p> <p>Safeguarding is also a key priority within the Cabinet's commitments.</p> <p>The Council's policy was last updated in 2018 and reflects a range of Safeguarding related topics including modern day slavery, child sexual exploitation, counter terrorism and the risk of radicalisation, Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence and these topics are covered in the training materials.</p> <p>The Council has recently introduced a self-assessment toolkit for all service areas to complete around safeguarding which reinforces the responsibilities of all service areas.</p> <p>Designated Safeguarding Officers are in all public facing service areas to help with distributed leadership on Safeguarding. These officers provide a lead on Safeguarding within their service areas.</p>



Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
	<p>The Council could consider the following options to further strengthen its arrangement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>revising its policy statement to enable the existing Designated Safeguarding Officers to be a council wide resource and not only appointed for deployment in specific service areas where there is direct contact with the public. This would better promote the Council's ethos that safeguarding is 'Everybody's Business'.</li> <li>revising its Corporate Safeguarding Policy to ensure that the role of Internal Audit, Audit Committee, Scrutiny and Cabinet are clarified.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Local Proposal for Improvement 1</b> Develop a Corporate Safeguarding Policy that clearly specifies roles, responsibilities and procedures for safeguarding.</p>	<p><b>See narrative above</b></p>
<p><b>R3</b> Strengthen safe recruitment of staff and volunteers by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensuring that Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and compliance with safe recruitment policies cover all services that come into contact with children;</li> <li>creating an integrated corporate compliance system to record and monitor compliance levels on DBS checks; and</li> <li>requiring safe recruitment practices amongst partners in the third sector and for volunteers who provide services commissioned and/or used by the council which are</li> </ol>	<p><b>Summary – Partially met</b></p> <p>The Council has acted to ensure that Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and compliance with safe recruitment policies cover all services that come into contact with children. It has created an integrated corporate compliance system to record and monitor compliance levels on DBS checks for staff.</p> <p>The Council has developed a useful draft Safer Recruitment policy that better reflects the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and should ensure that when recruiting staff and volunteers the Council is ensuring that safe recruitment is embedded consistently.</p> <p>The Council's Human Resources team has reviewed all posts and considered the level of DBS check required for all posts across all service areas and the HR team monitor any proposed changes to those agreed checks, for example, when post holders change.</p> <p>The Council sets out in its contractual agreements that commissioned services are required to undertake safe recruitment practices .</p>

Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
<p>underpinned by a contract or service level agreement.</p>	<p>However, at the time of our fieldwork we found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there is not a council wide approach to monitoring the compliance of contractors with safe recruitment practices. Monitoring arrangements are set within service areas. The Council's safer recruitment policy was yet to be finalised, agreed and applied.</li> <li>• although the Council has developed an integrated system to oversee DBS checks and safer recruitment checks for employees it has yet to establish a central system to oversee those checks for volunteers and contractors.</li> </ul> <p>As such, the Council has further work to do to fully address this national recommendation. In doing so, the Council should also look to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure that its monitoring systems enable tracking of safe recruitment for volunteers and contractors as well as staff;</li> <li>• strengthen its arrangements for monitoring that services commissioned by the Council undertake safe recruitment practices; and</li> <li>• ensure that all managers undertake training on the revised safe recruitment process and highlighting the need to ensure safe recruitment of volunteers and contractors.</li> </ul>
<p><b>R4</b> Ensure all relevant staff, members and partners understand their safeguarding responsibilities by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ensuring safeguarding training is mandated and coverage extended to all relevant council service areas, and is included as standard on induction programmes;</li> <li>2. creating a corporate-wide system to identify, track and monitor compliance on attending safeguarding training</li> </ol>	<p><b>Summary – Partially Met</b></p> <p>The Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy places a responsibility on Corporate Directors to ensure that staff within their Directorates are appropriately trained to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns. The Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy is provided in hard copy to all newly appointed staff and those staff must sign to confirm receipt of the policy.</p> <p>Although safeguarding training is not mandated for elected Members, the Council has taken proactive steps to ensure that Members receive basic safeguarding training. The Council has arrangements to ensure that those Members who are unable to attend those sessions are made aware of the Council's Corporate Safeguarding policy and training materials.</p>

Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
<p>3. in all council departments, elected members, schools, governors and volunteers; and requiring relevant staff in partner organisations who are commissioned to work for the council in delivering services to children and young people to undertake safeguarding training</p>	<p>However,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Council does not currently mandate safeguarding training to staff in all relevant services areas. As a result, the Council's Designated Safeguarding Officers group has developed a revised training framework with training appropriate to the level of contact staff have with children. This new framework will be implemented by the end of 2019.</li> <li>• Designated Safeguarding Officers currently deliver training in their service areas. Whilst this approach ensures that all staff, including those who do not have regular access to a computer, receive training, the Council has recognised that the recording of this training information has been inconsistent to date and is now acting to address this.</li> <li>• The Council's Safeguarding policy is less clear on the requirement to ensure that relevant staff in partner organisations who are commissioned/contracted to work on behalf of the Council in delivering services to children and young people should undertake safeguarding training.</li> </ul> <p>As such, the Council has further work to do to fully address this national recommendation.</p> <p>In doing so, the Council should also look to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure that staff training is recorded consistently to enable refresher training to be undertaken in a timely fashion;</li> <li>• agree a minimum timescale within which staff, volunteers and contractors undertake basic initial training upon appointment;</li> <li>• ensure that its monitoring systems enable tracking of training for volunteers and contractors as well as staff;</li> <li>• report the take up of initial and refresher training in the revised training framework to the Corporate Safeguarding Board;</li> <li>• collate a percentage breakdown of safeguarding training (initial and refresher) compliance for staff in each service area and for volunteers and contractors;</li> <li>• explore the use of e-learning as part of its training framework; and</li> <li>• clarify how safeguarding training for contractors will be monitored.</li> </ul>

Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
<p><b>Local Proposal for Improvement 4</b> Ensure all elected members and staff who come into contact with children on a regular basis receive training on safeguarding and child protection issues and the Council's corporate policy on safeguarding. This should also include volunteers.</p>	<p><b>See narrative above</b></p>
<p><b>R6</b> Improve accountability for corporate safeguarding by regularly reporting safeguarding issues and assurances to scrutiny committee(s) against a balanced and council-wide set of performance information covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• benchmarking and comparisons with others;</li> <li>• conclusions of internal and external audit/inspection reviews;</li> <li>• service-based performance data;</li> <li>• key personnel data such as safeguarding training, and DBS recruitment checks; and</li> <li>• the performance of contractors and commissioned services on compliance with council safeguarding responsibilities</li> </ul>	<p><b>Summary – Partially Met</b></p> <p>The Council's Corporate Safeguarding Policy sets out that the Cabinet has delegated responsibility 'for monitoring the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements across the Council' and the production of the Annual Corporate Safeguarding report to the Council's Corporate Safeguarding Board.</p> <p>The Corporate Safeguarding Board has a clear and comprehensive remit as set out in the Corporate Safeguarding Policy. The Board's terms of reference can be found in <a href="#">Appendix 1</a>.</p> <p>A key aspect of the Board's responsibilities is to monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements across the Council and to act strategically to assure the Council that procedures for managing safeguarding concerns are robust.</p> <p>The Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report is published on the elected Members' Portal for information and can be 'called in' to scrutiny by any elected Member</p> <p>The Council has recently introduced a self-assessment process for Designated Safeguarding Officers to complete in their service areas. Those self assessments will not be returned until after the 2019 annual meeting of the Corporate Safeguarding Board. The Council acknowledges that it could use the Red, Amber, Green ratings provided in the self assessments to inform the 2019-20 Annual Corporate Safeguarding report as well as improvement actions across the Council during 2019-20.</p> <p>However,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• it is unclear how the Corporate Safeguarding Board discharges its full oversight and assurance remit given that it meets once a year to receive a draft of and agree the Annual Corporate Safeguarding report.</li> </ul>

Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Annual Safeguarding Board's report has not been called into scrutiny to date and neither Cabinet nor Audit Committee receive a report in relation to the effectiveness of Corporate Safeguarding arrangements.</li> <li>• the Corporate Safeguarding Board's report does not currently provide sufficient assurance to the Council that its procedures for managing safeguarding concerns are robust. The 2018 report focussed mainly on operational issues rather than the strategic overview that the Board is responsible for.</li> <li>• the data due to be reported in the Board's 2018-19 Annual report whilst relevant to Safeguarding does not reflect the broader safeguarding activity undertaken by the Council and does not as previously recommended;</li> <li>• provide benchmarking and comparisons with other Councils;</li> <li>• refer to the conclusions of internal and external audit / inspection reviews;</li> <li>• provide service-based performance data;</li> <li>• provide clear data on safeguarding training undertaken and also safe recruitment processes; and</li> <li>• outline the performance of contractors, partners and volunteers on compliance with council safeguarding responsibilities.</li> </ul> <p>As such, the Council has further work to do to fully address this national recommendation to assure itself that it has robust oversight and assurance of the effectiveness of its safeguarding arrangements.</p> <p>In doing so, the Council should also look to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure that the Corporate Safeguarding Board is supported to discharge its responsibilities effectively;</li> <li>• ensure effective oversight of the annual Corporate Safeguarding report to provide assurance; and</li> <li>• develop a wider set of performance measures as previously recommended to reflect the Corporate Safeguarding Policy's intentions and provide greater assurance around the operation of the policy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Local Proposal for Improvement 3</b>          Improve the range, quality and coverage of safeguarding performance reporting to members to provide adequate assurance that corporate arrangements are working effectively.</p>	<p><b>See narrative above</b></p>

Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
<p><b>R7</b> Establish a rolling programme of internal audit reviews to undertake systems testing and compliance reviews on the council's safeguarding practices.</p>	<p><b>Summary – Partially met</b></p> <p>The Council has established a programme of regular safeguarding audits across schools which are undertaken on a three yearly cycle and those provide insight and assurance around safeguarding in schools. Summary reports are then provided to senior leaders on the outcomes of those audits.</p> <p>Internal Audit consider that safeguarding considerations are embedded in each of their audits.</p> <p>However,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apart from its approach to safeguarding audits in schools, the Council has not clearly established a rolling programme of internal audit reviews to test systems and compliance with the Council's Corporate safeguarding policy.</li> <li>• we did not find evidence of a regular mechanism for Internal Audit to share Safeguarding related issues with lead Corporate Safeguarding officers or to inform the Annual Corporate Safeguarding report, or the Audit Committee that governance arrangements for safeguarding are robust.</li> <li>• whilst the Council's annual governance statement process requires heads of service to provide assurance around staff being aware and receiving training around Corporate Safeguarding, this assurance only focusses on staff and does not provide assurance relating to volunteers and contractors so does not fully reflect the scope of the Council's own Corporate Safeguarding policy.</li> </ul> <p>As such, the Council has further work to do to fully address this national recommendation.</p> <p>In doing so, the Council should also look to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clarify the role of Internal Audit and Audit Committee in relation to assuring the effective operation and governance of Corporate Safeguarding arrangements, including within the Corporate Safeguarding Policy;</li> <li>• ensure that relevant information and insight from Internal Audit's programme of work is shared and feeds into the Council's oversight and assurance framework for safeguarding including with the Corporate Safeguarding Board; and</li> <li>• provide safeguarding training and refresher training to Internal Audit Staff.</li> </ul>

Recommendation from the 2015 report	Wales Audit Office assessment of Council's progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Local Proposal for Improvement 5</b> Identify and agree an appropriate internal audit programme of work for safeguarding.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Partially met (see above narrative)</b></p>
<p><b>R8</b> Ensure the risks associated with safeguarding are considered at both a corporate and service level in developing and agreeing risk management plans across the council.</p>	<p><b>Summary – Not met</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council does not include safeguarding as one of its Corporate Risks and it is not part of Children's Services risk register.</li> <li>• The Council has not provided clear evidence of safeguarding risks being considered at a either corporate and service level. In part, the Council considers that in Social Services and Education safeguarding is viewed as being embedded within the service areas' activities. However, evidence provided shows that there is limited contract monitoring that focusses on safeguarding aspects.</li> <li>• The Council's recently introduced self-assessment tool may provide some insight into risks that exist across service areas, but the Council has not yet articulated how it will use that evidence to develop its approach to safeguarding risks.</li> </ul> <p>The Council has therefore not made progress in addressing this national recommendation.</p>

# Appendix 1

## Corporate Safeguarding Board

### Terms of Reference

#### Purpose

The responsibility for maintaining an overview of safeguarding arrangements across the Council has been delegated to the Corporate Safeguarding Board by Cabinet.

The Main responsibilities of the Board are to ensure that robust arrangements for safeguarding children and adults are in place within and across the Council.

#### Membership of the Board:

- Lead Member for Corporate Safeguarding (Chair)
- The Designated Safeguarding Officers from each Service area
- Assistant Director – Children's Services
- Education Safeguarding Lead
- Service Manager – Safeguarding, Social Services
- Workforce Development Manager
- Legal Services
- Other Officers will be co-opted as required and agreed by the Group

#### Key responsibilities of the Board will be to:

- Assure Cabinet that the Council's procedures for safeguarding children and adults are robust.
- Ensure cross Directorate / interdepartmental working and corporate communication in relation to safeguarding is effective.
- Support the functions and duties of the Statutory Director for Social Services.
- Approve policies and guidelines for safeguarding for each Service area of the council and receive information about their respective performance management arrangements in relation to their safeguarding responsibilities to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and statutory guidance.
- Ensure the Designated Safeguarding Officers are supported to collaborate and share information and to identify any gaps in the Council's safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Identify and resolve any barriers that could prevent the implementation of effective safeguarding procedures.



- Identify any gaps in Corporate policies and guidelines and ensure they are addressed.
- Ensure effective working relationships are maintained with the Regional Safeguarding Boards (Children's and Adults) and the Business Unit.
- Ensure appropriate training is available for Officers and Elected Members.
- Receive and consider corporate safeguarding performance information and identify any actions required.
- Receive and consider information about trends in relation to allegations of professional abuse and adopt action plans to respond to any issues should the need arise.
- Consider the implications of any Child or Adult Practice Review or Domestic Homicide Review and ensure that the Council responds effectively to recommendations as they may apply to the Council.
- Periodically review and update the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and the content of the Intranet Portal.
- Produce an Annual Report.

**Meeting conduct:**

- The meetings will be held annually.
- The meetings will be chaired by the Lead Member for Corporate Safeguarding.
- The meetings will be administered by Children's Services Business Support.
- All members are able to submit items for consideration.
- Agenda, minutes and relevant papers will be circulated ahead of the meetings.
- Membership and Terms of Reference for the Board will be reviewed annually/or as required.

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## Management Response

## Appendix B

**Local Authority:** Caerphilly County Borough Council

**Report title:** Corporate Safeguarding arrangements for children follow up

**Issue date:** June 2019

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Ref	Proposal for Improvement	Intended outcome/benefit	High priority (yes/no)	Accepted (yes/no)	Management response	Completion date	Responsible officer
	<p><b>R3</b> Strengthen safe recruitment of staff and volunteers by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>ensuring that Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and compliance with safe recruitment policies cover all services that come into contact with children;</li><li>creating an integrated corporate compliance system to record and monitor compliance levels on DBS checks;</li></ul>	Ensure that the Council can assure itself that safe recruitment is carried out across all relevant service areas, including the use of contractors and volunteers	Yes	Yes	<p>Implement Safer Recruitment Policy across the Council</p> <p>Internal Audit to monitor compliance in any audit work undertaken</p> <p>HR systems to be reviewed and improved</p>	<p>October 2019</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>October 2019</p>	<p>Lynne Donovan</p> <p>Richard Harris</p> <p>Lynne Donovan</p>

Ref	Proposal for Improvement	Intended outcome/ benefit	High priority (yes/no)	Accepted (yes/no)	Management response	Completion date	Responsible officer
Page 58	and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>requiring safe recruitment practices amongst partners in the third sector and for volunteers who provide services commissioned and/or used by the council which are underpinned by a contract or service level agreement.</li> </ul>				Work with Procurement and Commissioning Officers across all Council services to develop a system to ensure compliance which can then be monitored	December 2019	Liz Lucas
	2	<b>R4</b> Ensure all relevant staff, members and partners understand their safeguarding responsibilities by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensuring safeguarding training is mandated and coverage extended to all relevant council service areas, and is included as standard on induction programmes;</li> <li>creating a corporate-</li> </ul>	Ensure that induction and ongoing training is provided to relevant staff, members, contractors and volunteers so that all can deliver their responsibilities in relation to Corporate Safeguarding of children.	Yes	Yes	Fully implement the Training Programme across the Council through DSO Group supported by Children's Services  ITrent to be adapted	December 2019 Review @ 6 & 12 months

Ref	Proposal for Improvement	Intended outcome/ benefit	High priority (yes/no)	Accepted (yes/no)	Management response	Completion date	Responsible officer
	<p>wide system to identify, track and monitor compliance on attending safeguarding training in all council departments, elected members, schools, governors and volunteers; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>requiring relevant staff in partner organisations who are commissioned to work for the council in delivering services to children and young people to undertake safeguarding training.</li> </ul>				<p>to record all training using agreed drop down options. Retrospective training to be recorded</p> <p>Work with Procurement and Commissioning Officers across all Council services to develop a system to ensure compliance which can then be monitored</p>	<p>October 2019</p> <p>December 2019</p>	<p>Lynne Donovan</p> <p>Liz Lucas</p>
3	<b>R6</b> Improve accountability for corporate safeguarding by regularly reporting safeguarding issues and assurances to scrutiny committee(s) against a balanced and	Provide a clear picture of the performance of the Council against its Corporate Safeguarding policy	Yes	Yes	Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report will be presented to Social Care & Well Being Scrutiny Committee and to	July 2019 and ongoing	Gareth Jenkins & Committee Services

Ref	Proposal for Improvement	Intended outcome/ benefit	High priority (yes/no)	Accepted (yes/no)	Management response	Completion date	Responsible officer
Page 60	<p>council-wide set of performance information covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• benchmarking and comparisons with others;</li> <li>• conclusions of internal and external audit/inspection reviews;</li> <li>• service-based performance data;</li> <li>• key personnel data such as safeguarding training, and DBS recruitment checks; and</li> <li>• the performance of contractors and commissioned services on compliance with council safeguarding responsibilities</li> </ul>	and identify areas for further development.			<p>Audit Committee rather than being posted for information as it currently is.</p> <p>The Report will be posted for information on all other Scrutiny Committees and can be called in as appropriate.</p>		

Ref	Proposal for Improvement	Intended outcome/ benefit	High priority (yes/no)	Accepted (yes/no)	Management response	Completion date	Responsible officer
Page 61	<b>R7</b> Establish a rolling programme of internal audit reviews to undertake systems testing and compliance reviews on the council's safeguarding practices.	Provides internal assurance as to the effective operation of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy.	Yes	Yes	Work with Internal Audit to review forward work programme and incorporate Corporate Safeguarding arrangements into audits going forward	September 2019 and ongoing	Richard Harris & Nicola Barrett
	<b>R8</b> Ensure the risks associated with safeguarding are considered at both a corporate and service level in developing and agreeing risk management plans across the council.	Ensure that Corporate Safeguarding risks are effectively considered at a service and corporate level to allow appropriate action to be taken to address the identified risks	Yes	Yes	On the basis of the Review findings, the risks will be included on the Social Services Risk Register and the Corporate Director for Social Services will progress inclusion on the Corporate Risk Register through CMT.	July 2019	Dave Street, CMT & Gareth Jenkins

WAO Corporate Safeguarding Action Plan – July 2019  
 Reviewed 29<sup>th</sup> August 2019

**APPENDIX C**

WAO Recommendation	Action	Actions/Requirements	Who	Progress/Completion
R3	Safer Recruitment policy to be ratified	<p>Policy to be agreed by HR Strategy Group, CMT and Cabinet</p> <p>All managers to be trained on safer recruitment policy – training package to be developed and implemented</p>	<p>HR</p> <p>HR</p>	<p>Draft Policy is due to be presented to Education Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) on the 25<sup>th</sup> of September 2019. This will be followed by presentation at Corporate JCC, followed by Scrutiny and Cabinet.</p> <p>Training will be developed and implemented once policy is ratified</p>
	<p>DBS checks for volunteers and contractors</p> <p>Contractors compliance with safeguarding policy and their awareness of the policy</p>	<p>Task and Finish Group to look at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DBS checks for contractors</li> <li>• Safeguarding training for contractors</li> <li>• Contractors access to safeguarding policy</li> </ul> <p>Agree process of how this is to be monitored</p>	<p>Establishment of a Task and Finish Group to include Procurement / Commissioning/ HR/ Internal Audit/ Relevant DSO's</p>	<p>On going, membership and dates yet to be agreed, awaiting response from Liz Lucas and Lynne Donovan</p>



WAO Corporate Safeguarding Action Plan – July 2019  
 Reviewed 29<sup>th</sup> August 2019

WAO Recommendation	Action	Actions/Requirements	Who	Progress/Completion
R4	Implement Training Framework	<p>Tiered approach to safeguarding training to be agreed by Board and written up in framework and disseminated via DSO for implementation across the LA.</p> <p>Tier 2 training package to be developed and agreed and delivered across service areas</p>	Training Task & Finish Group/ DSO's/ Managers/ Safeguarding Unit	<p>Draft Framework to be signed off by Corporate Safeguarding Board on the 16<sup>th</sup> of September , once agreed this will be disseminated via DSO's</p> <p>Tier 2 training package has been developed. There are 3 training sessions scheduled for the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of October to be delivered by Mike Portlock and Deb Lewis</p> <p>DOS' have been nominating staff from service areas to be trained to deliver Tier 2 training package- Understanding Safeguarding Children and adults ( half day), dates for Train the Trainer sessions are 24<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of October. Those nominated will attend both days and then form part of a delivery group, support by Deb Lewis, Mike</p>

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WAO Recommendation	Action	Actions/Requirements	Who	Progress/Completion
				Portlock and Rhiannon Thorn
	<p>Backdating of training already completed to be inputted on to ITrent</p> <p>Development of Tracking system for training for staff, volunteers and contractors</p>	<p>Individual services areas to input training to ITrent that has already been completed. Managers to collate this data and ensure permissions in ITrent to record the training</p> <p>ITrent to be developed to incorporate codes in line with Safeguarding Training framework</p>	<p>DSO's with support from HoS and CMT</p> <p>HR</p>	<p>Update regarding backdating of training into Itrent is required at next DSO Practice Development Group</p> <p>Codes have been agreed to record the trained under the Corporate Safeguarding Training Framework. HR are in the process of updating Itrent to support this. Meeting is being held on the 11<sup>th</sup> on September to assess progress</p>
	<p>Agree timescales for new starters, volunteers and contractors to undertake basic initial training</p>	<p>Ensure staff and volunteer induction processes include Corporate Safeguarding as a mandatory requirement</p> <p>Council tenders and contracts to make expectations on contractors explicit.</p>	<p>HR/ DSO's</p> <p>Procurement/ Commissioning/ Internal Audit</p>	<p>Corporate Safeguarding training Framework outlines that basic Safeguarding awareness is part of all inductions for staff and volunteers – Tier 1 training</p>

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 Reviewed 29<sup>th</sup> August 2019

WAO Recommendation	Action	Actions/Requirements	Who	Progress/Completion
	Training update to be reported to Corporate Safeguarding Board to monitor compliance in each service area- staff, volunteers and contractors	Quarterly Reports to the Corporate Safeguarding Boards and inclusion in the Annual Report.	Gareth Jenkins/ Nicola Barrett	This matter will go forward once training framework has been signed off ad codes implement in Itrent
	Explore e learning packages	Current e learning packages available to be explored	Training Task & Finish Group/ DSO's/ Managers/ Safeguarding Unit	Caerphilly does currently have it packages to support the development of learning with the ability to track completion ( Learning management system( LMS)  Powerpoint presentation can be utilised along with knowledge test via snap survey ( this was used for Mandatory Data Protection eLearning). Further exploration of this is required.  RCT have an eLearning module but do have a LMS system to track completion.

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 Reviewed 29<sup>th</sup> August 2019

WAO Recommendation	Action	Actions/Requirements	Who	Progress/Completion
				<p>Leisure services use an e learning package (IHASCO), however this has cost implications. 3000 credits is a cost of £4500</p> <p>WFD have software to develop a video presentation (with voice over) that can be utilised for Tier 1 training/refresher of Tier 1. This could also be used to send to commissioned services as part of the contracting process, with the expectation that providers complete and record that the training is completed and this could form part of internal audit process.</p>
R6	<p>Increase frequency of Board Meetings</p> <p>Timings of Board meetings to be reviewed to comply with Scrutiny and</p>	<p>Corporate Safeguarding Board to meet quarterly of next 12 months to monitor the implementation of the Action Plan and frequency will then be reviewed</p>	Gareth Jenkins/ Nicola Barrett	Completed

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WAO Recommendation	Action	Actions/Requirements	Who	Progress/Completion
	Audit Committee deadlines			
	Annual Report to provide more robust assurance of safeguarding arrangements within the LA  Bench marking of arrangements with other LA's	Annual report to include performance data regarding training compliance across staff, volunteers and contractors Key data set to be updated to include a wider set of data cross service areas Comparison data with other LA's to be sought to inform Annual report		Key data set to include more detailed performance data was agreed at last Board meeting- need to be updated to Corporate safeguarding Policy.  Nicola Barrett to discuss with Gwent Counterparts comparison data to inform annual report at next safeguarding leads meeting on the 18 <sup>th</sup> of September
	Corporate Safeguarding to be included on the Risk Register	WAO Review Report and Action Plan to be included on Social Services Risk Register  CMT to consider inclusion on the Council Risk Register	Gareth Jenkins  Dave Street	Completed  Ongoing consideration by CMT
	Policy to be made available on front page of the intranet, to include access to	Corporate Safeguarding icon to be visible on front page Links to be made in Policy and Service Area Tabs	Liz Lucas/ Nicola Barrett	Meeting scheduled for the 5 <sup>th</sup> of September to discuss

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WAO Recommendation	Action	Actions/Requirements	Who	Progress/Completion
	Annual Report and list of DSO's			
R7	Role of Internal Audit	<p>Links with other LA's as to how they undertake internal audits for Corporate Safeguarding</p> <p>Develop mechanism of internal audits, focus of audits, frequency etc</p> <p>Corporate safeguarding policy to be updated to reflect internal audit responsibilities</p>	Internal Audit/ Nicola Barrett	<p>Meeting held with Richard Harris on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August, links made with other LA's (Newport and Monmouthshire) Richard Harris in process of developing internal audit tool. Awaiting update from Richard Harris on progress with this.</p> <p>Policy will be updated once intern audit process is confirmed</p>
	Internal Audit to receive Corporate Safeguarding training	Team training session to be arranged		Booked for the 25 <sup>th</sup> of September
R8	Self-assessment tool to be implemented	DSO's to return completed Self-Assessment Tool by the 15 <sup>th</sup> of July, with attached action plans to strengthen corporate safeguarding arrangements across service areas	DSO's	Self assessment tools have been returned, to be reviewed and discussed at the next DSO Practice Development group on 21 <sup>st</sup> of October



## CABINET – 18TH SEPTEMBER 2019

**SUBJECT: CABINET FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR – EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek Cabinet endorsement of the Forward Work Programme for the period September to December 2019.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The report outlines a proposed Forward Work Programme of future Cabinet reports.
- 2.2 The Forward Work Programme is updated on a weekly basis to reflect any amendments that are made to it since it was first agreed on 22nd January 2014.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approve the Forward Work Programme as outlined in Appendix 1.

### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 To satisfy legislative requirements and to ensure more transparent and effective decision-making.

### **5. THE REPORT**

- 5.1 The Cabinet Forward Work Programme sets out the key reports that Cabinet expects to receive in the coming months. It is a legal requirement that such programmes are published. The programme is an important way of tracking progress against targets set in the Council's Improvement Plan.
- 5.2 Appendix 1 to this report sets out details of the Cabinet Forward Work Programme for the period September to December 2019.
- 5.3 It should be noted that urgent and unanticipated reports could be added to the Cabinet Forward Work Programme.
- 5.4 Members will be aware that, following the Scrutiny Review and recommendations approved by Council on 6th October 2015, it was agreed that the format of the Forward Work Programme be reviewed so that it gives more detailed narratives. This has been undertaken and presented at Appendix 1.

## 5.5 **Conclusion**

The work programme is for consideration and amendment by Cabinet prior to publication on the Council's website.

## 6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 No assumptions are necessary.

## 7. **LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES**

7.1 The Council is required to publish a Cabinet Forward Work Programme to assist in open and transparent decision-making.

### 7.2 **Corporate Plan 2018-2023.**

The Cabinet Forward Work Programme contributes towards and impacts upon the Corporate Well-being Objectives by ensuring that decisions are made on behalf of the Council, with the Corporate Objectives being met, which are:

Objective 1 - Improve education opportunities for all

Objective 2 - Enabling employment

Objective 3 - Address the availability, condition and sustainability of homes throughout the county borough and provide advice, assistance or support to help improve people's well-being

Objective 4 - Promote a modern, integrated and sustainable transport system that increases opportunity, promotes prosperity and minimises the adverse impacts on the environment

Objective 5 - Creating a county borough that supports a healthy lifestyle in accordance with the sustainable Development Principle within the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

Objective 6 - Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being

## 8. **WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS**

8.1 The Forward Work Programme contributes to the following Well-being goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015, by ensuring that decision making is made against the following goals

- A prosperous Wales
- A resilient Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language
- A globally responsible Wales

8.2 It is consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act in that it ensures that the Cabinet Forward Work Programme is regularly published and publically available, thus informing the public and stakeholders of upcoming reports and key issues and offering them the opportunity to attend and observe executive



decisions, thus promoting openness and transparency.

## **9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The principles of good governance are directly linked to the Council's Strategic Equality Objectives, stemming from duties under the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011 and the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. Equalities Implications are a standard part of all committee reports in order to ensure that due consideration has been given to the views of individuals and groups from the communities of Caerphilly County Borough, regardless of their background and circumstances.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **12. CONSULTATIONS**

- 12.1 There are no consultation responses that have not been reflected in this report.

## **13. STATUTORY POWER**

- 13.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000

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Consultees: Corporate Management Team

Appendices:  
Appendix 1 Cabinet Forward Work Programme

## Forward Work Programme - Cabinet

Date	Title	Key Issues	Author	Cabinet Member
18/09/19	Looked After Children Targets	To appraise CMT of the authority's response to Welsh Government expectations around setting targets within Children's Services.	Street, Dave; Jenkins, Gareth	Cllr. Cuss, Carl J.
18/09/19	CCBC Corporate Safeguarding Report	To discuss the report and endorse the action plan.	Jenkins, Gareth	Cllr. Cuss, Carl J.
18/09/19	Social Services Reserves	To seek approval for use of Social Services Reserves	Jones, Mike J	Cllr. Cuss, Carl J.
18/09/19	Cabinet Forward Work Programme	For discussion and update.	Tranter, Robert J.	Cllr. Jones, Barbara
02/10/19	Updated Code of Corporate Governance and Terms of Reference	To approve the updated code	Harris, Stephen R	Cllr. Jones, Barbara
02/10/19	Authorisation of Officers in Public Protection- EU Exit	To inform Cabinet of changes to the legislation required as a result of the UK's exit from the European Union to ensure a seamless transition of Public Protection functions after this event. The Monitoring Officer will amend the constitution to reflect this change.	Hartshorn, Robert	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned;

02/10/19	Hafodyrynys Air Quality Direction - Compulsory Purchase Order Process	To obtain Cabinet agreement on the Compulsory Purchase process on Hafodyrynys Road.	Godfrey, Maria	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned
02/10/19	Pentrebane Street, Caerphilly - Possible use of CPO Powers	This report seeks Cabinet approval to instigate CPO proceedings on three freeholders of properties at Pentrebane Street that are identified for demolition to facilitate a mixed use regeneration scheme in partnership with Linc Housing Association. A mixture of Welsh Government Targeted Regeneration Investment funding, WG Social Housing Grant and Linc's own finances have been identified to fund the demolition and redevelopment.	Kyte, Rhian	Cllr. Morgan, Sean
02/10/19	National Development Framework Consultation Response	To seek Cabinet approval for a response to the consultation on the National Development Framework.	Kyte, Rhian	Cllr. Stenner, Eluned
02/10/19	ERDF 4.4 Funding opportunities - The Lawn Industrial Estate, Rhymney and Ty Du, Nelson	This report outlines the opportunities open to the Council to bid for additional ERDF monies for for each of these live European funded employment new build projects. The report requests the necessary match funding be made available to secure these additional funds.	Kyte, Rhian	Cllr. Morgan, Sean
16/10/19	Annual Improvement Report 2018/19	To present the Annual Improvement Report for 2018/19	Harris, Stephen R	Cllr. Jones, Barbara

16/10/19	Annual Performance Report 2018	To discuss and present the draft Annual Performance Report	Roberts, Ros	Cllr. Jones, Barbara
16/10/19	Corporate Volunteering	To consider our options for the establishment of a Corporate Volunteering Scheme on a Directorate or Whole Organisation basis.	Peters, Kathryn; Street, Dave	Cllr. Cuss, Carl J.
16/10/19	Land at Pontymister Industrial Estate	The matter has been consulted on with local Risca members and 2 of the 5 members have raised objections to the proposed sale principle. While any development would be subject to planning considerations, the scrutiny committee's views are being sought on the principle of the sale prior to consideration by cabinet.	Williams, Mark	Cllr. Phipps, Lisa
16/10/19	Free Swim Initiative	Changes to Grant Funding to deliver the Welsh Government Free Swimming Initiative	Reynolds, Jeff	Cllr. George, Nigel
30/10/19	Future Management Arrangements - Cwmcarn Drive	For Cabinet to consider a partnership agreement with NRW in respect of future management arrangements for the re-opening of the forest drive.	Kyte, Rhian	Cllr. Morgan, Sean
30/10/19	Chartist Gardens - Development Options	To seek approval of the development proposal and associated financial model prior to submitting scheme for planning approval.	Couzens, Shaun; Williams, Mark	Cllr. Phipps, Lisa
30/10/19	Respite Care Provision	Possible relocation of current respite facilities to a bespoke facility dependent on funding from WG	Williams, Jo	Cllr. Cuss, Carl J.

30/10/19	Community Sport - Regional agenda	To consider future delivery options for community sport on a regional (pan "Gwent") basis.	Lougher, Jared	Cllr. George, Nigel
13/11/19	20/21 Draft Budget Proposals	To discuss the draft budget proposals	Harris, Stephen R	Cllr. Jones, Barbara
13/11/19	Proposed Use of Reserves	To consider proposals for the use of reserves.	Harris, Stephen R	Cllr. Jones, Barbara
13/11/19	Integrated Wellbeing Hubs	To provide an update to Cabinet	Street, Dave	Cllr. Cuss, Carl J.
13/11/19	(9) Structured programme of service reviews to be agreed	Strategic Action Plan - item to be agreed.	Harris, Stephen R	Cllr. Jones, Barbara
13/11/19	(11) Commercial and Investment Strategy to be drafted and approved by Cabinet	Strategic Plan - item to be approved	Harrhy, Christina	Cllr. Poole, David
27/11/19	Renewable Energy Generation - Tredomen Campus	To present a basket of options to Cabinet for achieving carbon neutrality at the Tredomen Campus	Williams, Mark	Cllr. Morgan, Sean
11/12/19	Cabinet Forward Work Programme	For discussion and update	Tranter, Robert J	Cllr. Jones, Barbara

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