



Cwm Taf Morgannwg Bwrdd Diogelu Safeguarding Board



Annual Plan 2022/2023



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FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIR OF THE CWM TAF MORGANNWG SAFEGUARDING BOARD

Welcome to the Annual Plan of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board.

This Plan identifies what the Board will be focusing on during 2022-2023, in pursuit of our aim to ensure that the people of Cwm Taf Morgannwg are safeguarded from abuse, neglect or other forms of harm.

Members of the Board met in January 2022 to reflect on the past year and to agree the key priority areas that needed to be focussed on in the coming year. Board members acknowledged that the COVID pandemic has continued to have a major impact on service delivery and staffing capacity but despite this some good progress has been made and we need to continue to build on this and learn from the lessons over the past year.

Our priorities this year stem from these lessons and an analysis of the current and prevalent safeguarding issues affecting the region. These priorities will be carried out alongside and in addition to the Board's core statutory safeguarding functions. Underpinning these priorities is the need to ensure that our staff working across the region are supported appropriately to carry out their duties and that promoting staff well-being is a core objective for all partner agencies.

Whilst we were developing this Annual Plan, we have become aware of the crisis in Ukraine and the urgent requirement on partner agencies to respond to the obligation to offer Ukrainian refugees shelter in the UK. This will inevitably have an impact on safeguarding across the region as we will need to ensure that satisfactory safeguarding arrangements are in place to protect these vulnerable people. It is important, therefore, that Board priorities are kept under review to address any changing demands on services.

We are keen to promote opportunities for people to engage in our work and anyone wishing to find out more about safeguarding in Cwm Taf Morgannwg can visit our website www.ctmsb.co.uk or contact our Regional Safeguarding Board Business Unit via the following email ctmsafeguarding@rctcbc.gov.uk



Paul Mee, Chair of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Mee', written in a cursive style.

1. SAFEGUARDING IN CWM TAF MORGANNWG

The area of Cwm Taf Morgannwg covers the local authority areas of Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf with a total population of almost 450,000¹.

The **Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board (CTMSB)** is a statutory partnership made up of the agencies that are responsible for safeguarding children and adults at risk in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region. The Board ensures that agencies responsible for safeguarding have effective arrangements in place to ensure that people of all ages are protected from abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm. This also involves preventing abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm from happening.

The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board carries out its objectives in line with the national statutory guidance as set out in Part 7 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. This legislation provides the framework for the [Wales Safeguarding Procedures](#) which supports practitioners to apply the legislation and the statutory guidance with an aim to improve person-centred outcomes for children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect.

Our Objectives

The two key **safeguarding** objectives around **protection** and **prevention** underpin the work of the Board and inform the priorities that we have agreed in this Annual Plan for the financial year 2022-2023.

Keeping children and adults at risk safe is everyone's responsibility and all agencies have a duty to report suspected abuse and/or neglect (see page 15 for details)

¹ Source: StatsWales

What is Abuse and Neglect?

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

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs

In the Cwm Taf Morgannwg region there are two Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) that report to the Board:

The **Cwm Taf (Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf) Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)** and the **Bridgend Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**.

The purpose of the MASH is to act as the single point of contact for all professionals to report safeguarding concerns. MASH provides the opportunity for a higher standard of safeguarding by providing all professionals with more information on which to make better, more informed decisions. This has significantly improved the sharing of information between agencies, helping to protect the most vulnerable children and adults from harm, neglect and abuse.

Although the concept of the MASH involves co-location, partner agencies have responded to the different ways of working over the past two years, including remote working, without compromising the need for prompt information sharing and actions to safeguard people. As part of the Board priority linked to Recovery, we intend to seek ways to strengthen our MASH arrangements by identifying opportunities to collaborate across the region.

Who are the Members of the Regional Safeguarding Board?

The Lead Partner for the Board is Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and the membership complies with the statutory guidance issued under Part 7 of the Social Services and Well Being Act 2014. A list of members is attached as Appendix 1.

What are the Core Functions of the Regional Safeguarding Board?

Every Regional Safeguarding Board has a statutory responsibility to carry out core functions in relation to multi-agency safeguarding. The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board carries out these day to day functions via specific committees and sub groups (see Appendix 2). These include:

- Contributing to the development, implementation and monitoring of protocols and procedures that support the protection of adults and children and to prevent abuse
- Raising awareness of the Board's objectives to protect and prevent adults and children from becoming at risk of abuse, neglect and other forms of harm, and to provide information about how this might be achieved
- Reviewing the efficacy of measures taken by agencies to implement the objectives of the Board and to make and monitor recommendations
- Undertaking child practice reviews, adult practice reviews, audits, investigations and other reviews as are required in pursuance of its objectives and to disseminate learning and information arising from these reviews
- Reviewing the performance of the Board and its partners and bodies represented on the Board in carrying out its objectives
- Facilitating research into protection from, and prevention of, abuse and neglect of children and adults at risk of harm
- Review the training needs of practitioners working in the area of the Board in order to identify training to assist in the protection and prevention of abuse and neglect of children and adults at risk of harm

2. WHAT ARE THE OUTCOMES THAT WE PROPOSE TO ACHIEVE THIS YEAR?

In January 2022, Board members met to identify the priorities for 2022/2023. These were agreed as:

- 1: Keeping our Communities Safe by Working Together**
- 2: A Renewed Focus on Prevention and Early Intervention**
- 3: Moving Beyond the Pandemic – Recovery and Reflection**

A detailed work plan for the Board and its Sub-Groups will sit underneath this Strategic Annual Plan to identify specific objectives to deliver the improvements that have been agreed. The work plan will include the actions required to achieve these improvements, including: who is responsible, timescales and measures of success.

The progress of the work plan will be monitored and reviewed on a quarterly basis and will form the basis of the Annual Report for 2022-2023.

An overview of what the Board intends to do to achieve its priorities for the coming year is provided below.

Strategic Priority 1: Keeping our Communities Safe by Working Together

What does this mean for the Regional Safeguarding Board?

In our Annual Plan for 2021-2022, we set out plans to approve our approach to tackling specific public protection concerns. We aimed to have in place by March 2022, a Regional Exploitation Strategy to set out how we will respond to this ever-growing area of concern with an emphasis on protecting both children and adults at risk from all forms of exploitation.

A significant amount of work has been undertaken already to scope out the governance arrangements across the region in respect of tackling exploitation. A multi-agency workshop was held in 2021 to support this work and a detailed action plan has been developed to oversee the development and implementation of our strategy, ensuring that this links with national initiatives and policy.

This year, with our draft strategy in development, we need to continue with this work to address the prevalent issues linked to exploitation. We need to do this in collaboration with other partnerships and structures across the region (see Section 3 of this plan).

Priority Area	What improvements do we need to make?	How will we measure progress?
Exploitation	<p>In 2022-2023, the Board will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Finalise our Regional Exploitation Strategy which will set out how our partner agencies will recognise and understand exploitation, safeguard and empower victims, and disrupt perpetrators ▪ Develop supporting documentation for practitioners, including toolkit, assessments, and referral pathways ▪ Ensure that appropriate governance and reporting structures are in place to manage and respond to exploitation across the region ▪ Respond to national policy and guidance on exploitation to ensure that we are aligned to Wales-wide approaches ▪ Consider the potential impact of the Ukrainian refugee crisis and any increasing risks of exploitation in relation to these vulnerable people. 	<p>A detailed work plan will be developed to oversee this priority area and will include the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The development of an exploitation dashboard across the region to enable us to identify, quantify, and measure exploitation ▪ A shared understanding and agreement on how agencies can respond to exploitation ▪ Receive reports from partner agencies on how they are raising awareness of exploitation ▪ Monitor the impact of the strategy

Strategic Priority 2: A Renewed Focus on Prevention and Early Intervention

What does this mean for the Regional Safeguarding Board?

In the last two years, the COVID pandemic has had a significant impact on services, with our partner agencies needing to prioritise critical areas of work to safeguard our most vulnerable people. The closure of some services such as schools, community facilities and day services during lockdowns has inevitably had an impact on children and adults. In many cases, the nature of this impact is yet unknown, and partner agencies need to be prepared and flexible to respond to changing demands.

In addition to this, we are experiencing increasing levels of deprivation in our communities as a result of austerity measures and an increase in the cost of living. We are aware from Education colleagues that more children are being electively home educated, children with complex needs and behaviours are starting school later, and from a youth justice perspective there has been an increase in street disposals and anti-social behaviour.

Partner agency data and learning from reviews has indicated that isolation in adults, and in particular older people, has become more prevalent, and in some cases this has had a detrimental effect on mental well-being.

Agencies are keen to learn the lessons from the unprecedented demands on services and to refocus activities on early intervention and preventing people from becoming at risk of abuse and neglect.

Priority Area	What improvements do we need to make?	How will we measure progress
<p>Early Intervention and Prevention to Support Adults and Older People</p>	<p>In 2022-2023, the Board will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve engagement and opportunities to access provision for adults at risk by identifying and overcoming any challenges and barriers ▪ Increase our communications and information sharing around preventing abuse and neglect ▪ Receive updates on how care homes are returning to normal visiting arrangements and how any safeguarding concerns are being addressed ▪ Make links with the third sector and partner agencies community co-ordinators to identify support and signposting services in the community 	<p>A detailed work plan will be developed to oversee this priority area and will include the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish clear pathways for signposting and referrals for professionals and public ▪ Reports in relation to safeguarding in care homes presented to the Board and improvement actions addressed ▪ An increase in communications and information regarding safeguarding and community services/provision ▪ Increase in website on-line traffic and social media access
<p>Early Intervention and Prevention to Support Children and Young People</p>	<p>In 2022-2023, the Board will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish links with the local authority Early Help Hubs to monitor the effectiveness of provision for children, young people, and their families 	<p>A detailed work plan will be developed to oversee this priority area and will include the following measures:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve engagement and opportunities to access provision for children and young people by identifying and overcoming any challenges and barriers ▪ Increase our communications and information sharing around preventing abuse and neglect ▪ Receive regular update reports from Education and Youth Offending Services on how children are being supported and address any identified areas of concern ▪ Receive regular data reports from CAMHS to monitor referrals/activity and to identify opportunities to improve safeguarding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reporting arrangements established to monitor the effectiveness of early intervention and prevention ▪ An increase in communications and information regarding safeguarding prevention for children and young people ▪ Increase in website on-line traffic and social media access
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Strategic Priority 3: Moving Beyond the Pandemic – Recovery and Reflection

What does this mean for the Regional Safeguarding Board?

The Regional Safeguarding Board has responded to a number of changes over the years. When the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act came into force in April 2016, this set out strengthened arrangements for Safeguarding Boards, particularly in relation to safeguarding adults. The separate adults and children Boards joined together, along with many of the respective sub-groups, to make ‘safeguarding for all’ a priority across the then Cwm Taf region.

In April 2019, the geographical footprint of the region expanded, and the Bridgend County Borough joined with Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf to become a new Cwm Taf Morgannwg region.

The safeguarding agenda has continued to cross over into the world of community safety and mental health and new structures have been established to tackle suicide prevention and domestic abuse.

The coronavirus pandemic in 2020 presented new challenges for the Board, different ways of working were adopted, and priorities were refocussed on those in most need of support.

In 2021, an independent rapid review was commissioned by the Board following a number of child deaths in the Bridgend area, none of which were connected. The recommendations from this review, alongside our reflection on the lessons learned over the years, have prompted the Board to seek opportunities to review its structure and governance arrangements.

A renewed focus on learning and the development of a learning culture across all partner agencies has become an integral part of how we improve safeguarding across the region. In 2022, the introduction of a new Single Unified Safeguarding Review process will mean that the Board will have more responsibility for safeguarding reviews in relation to Domestic Homicides and Mental Health Homicides, in addition to the existing arrangements for Child and Adult Practice Reviews.

Our overall aim is to become a more streamlined, effective, evolving, and challenging Board to enable us to prepare and respond promptly to risks, issues and opportunities to improve.

Priority Area	What improvements do we need to make?	How will we measure progress?
<p>Review the governance and reporting arrangements of the Board</p>	<p>In 2022-2023, the Board will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review the structure, Terms of Reference, membership, purpose, role profiles and remit of the Board and all of its Sub-Groups, in line with the statutory guidance ▪ Establish/strengthen our escalation processes and how we challenge each other constructively ▪ Review and improve our existing quality assurance and performance frameworks ▪ Review the current MASH arrangements and processes and agree key performance information that needs to be reported to the Board 	<p>A detailed work plan will be developed to oversee this priority area and will include the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ By the end of March 2023, the Board will have a revised structure in place, with clear terms of reference for all groups ▪ Board Development Sessions to be held to engage with all members and share new arrangements ▪ An effective escalation and challenge process to be adopted ▪ A new quality assurance and performance framework to be adopted ▪ Opportunities for MASH collaboration to be identified and implemented

<p>Practice Reviews and the Single Unified Safeguarding Review process</p>	<p>In 2022-2023, the Board will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implement the new Regional Learning Framework ▪ Train more people to become independent Panel Chairs and Reviewers ▪ Set up a Task and Finish Group to oversee the implementation of the Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) process and manage the impact on the Board 	<p>A detailed work plan will be developed to oversee this priority area and will include the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence that learning is making a difference to safeguarding practice ▪ An increased pool of independent chairs and reviewers ▪ The SUSR is implemented and managed accordingly
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3. CROSS CUTTING THEMES

This year, the Board has agreed the following cross-cutting themes that will underpin our priorities:

Participation

We will continue to seek opportunities to engage with children, adults at risk, and families in our work and provide them with opportunities to participate in the work of the Board. We will do this through our Participation Strategy to assist with engaging with our communities and to agree the key topics/areas of work, linked to this Annual Plan, that we want people to be involved in. We will also maximise the opportunities that National Safeguarding Week brings to improve our communications and engagement activities.

Staff Wellbeing

We will continue to promote staff well-being through different ways of working, maximising virtual means of engaging with staff and promoting training and awareness raising of how individuals can improve their own wellbeing and how they can access additional support. Partner agencies will be asked to report to the Board on how they are ensuring that staff wellbeing is fully supported.

4. WHO DO WE INTEND TO COLLABORATE WITH TO ACHIEVE OUR PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES?

Effective collaboration with other partnerships and agencies, whether it be on a regional or national basis, is key to the effective delivery of the Board functions.

Who will we collaborate with?	Areas to collaborate?
Welsh Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Policies and legislation in relation to safeguarding ▪ Implementation of the Single Unified Safeguarding Review process ▪ The development of Practice Guides for safeguarding adults ▪ Business Managers and Chairs quarterly meetings
National Independent Safeguarding Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seeking advice on regional and national safeguarding issues
Third Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Actively encourage their participation in the work of the Regional Safeguarding Board, specifically linked to the identified Strategic Priorities
Other Regional Safeguarding Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consistent policies and processes across Wales ▪ Sharing learning and best practice
Cwm Taf and Bridgend Community Safety Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Exploitation ▪ Single Unified Safeguarding Review
Regional Partnership Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participation of children and young people
Together for Mental Health Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Suicide and Self Harm Prevention

Religious Establishments

- Consideration to be given to developing a specific safeguarding policy to cover these establishments, where there isn't one currently in existence

5. OUR BUDGET FOR 2022-2023

The Board budget for the year will be resourced by financial contributions from the statutory partner agencies. The budget set will enable the Board to delivery its priority outcomes as set out in this Annual Plan and will be allocated as follows:

Business Management Unit Staff Costs and Accommodation: £295,280
General Expenditure: £16,490

Are You Concerned About Someone?

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

In Rhondda Cynon Taf: 01443 425006
In Merthyr Tydfil: 01685 725000
In Bridgend: 01656 642320

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

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

In Rhondda Cynon Taf: 01443 425003
In Merthyr Tydfil: 01685 725000
In Bridgend: 01656 642477

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

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

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

If you would like to report a non-urgent incident, or have a problem or general query, you can call 101, the 24 hour non-emergency number for the police. ***Use 101 when the incident is less urgent than 999.***

Remember - safeguarding is everybody's business!

For more information and advice visit: www.ctmsb.co.uk

APPENDIX 1 - BOARD MEMBERSHIP

NAME	TITLE	AGENCY
Paul Mee (Chair)	Director of Community and Children's Services	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Lisa Curtis-Jones (Vice Chair)	Director of Social Services	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Claire Marchant (Vice Chair)	Director of Social Services and Wellbeing	Bridgend County Borough Council
Cheryl Emery	Head of Public Protection	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Jackie Neale	Adult Safeguarding Service Manager	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Neil Elliot	Service Director, Adult Services	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Julie Clark	Head of Safeguarding and Support (Children)	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Gaynor Davies	Director of Education and Lifelong Learning	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Annabel Lloyd	Service Director, Children Services	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Cara Miles	Head of Legal - Community Care and Children	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Jon Eyre	Safeguarding Principal Manager	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Alyn Owen	Chief Officer, Community Regeneration	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Susan Walker	Chief Officer, Education	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Taryn Stephens	Head of Children Services	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Angela Edevane	Head of Adult Services	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

Carys Kennedy	Head of Legal and Governance	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Jacqueline Davies	Head of Adult Social Care	Bridgend County Borough Council
Laura Kinsey	Head of Children's Social Care	Bridgend County Borough Council
Nicola Echanis	Head of Education and Family Services	Bridgend County Borough Council
Greg Dix	Director of Nursing, Midwifery & Patient Services	Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
Louise Mann	Assistant Director for Quality and Safety	Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
Mark Attwell	Superintendent, Northern BCU	South Wales Police
Sue Hurley/Beth Aynsley	Independent Protecting Vulnerable Person Manager	South Wales Police
Eirian Evans	Assistant Chief Officer	National Probation Service
Sharon Richards	Chief Officer	Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil
Maria James	Third Sector Representative, Merthyr Tydfil	Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil
Lyndon Lewis	Head of Service	Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service
Virginia Hewitt	Designated Nurse (National Safeguarding Team)	Public Health Wales
Nikki Harvey	Assistant Director Quality, Safety & Patient Experience	Welsh Ambulance Service Trust
Jason Evans	Head of Young Person's Unit	HM Prison & Young Offenders Institute, Parc
Ian Coles	Interim Deputy Director	HM Prison & Young Offenders Institute, Parc

APPENDIX 2:
Board Organisation Chart

