



# Cwm Taf Morgannwg Bwrdd Diogelu Safeguarding Board



**STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-26**

**YEAR 2 2024-2025**



**GIG  
CYMRU  
NHS  
WALES**  
Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
Cwm Taf Morgannwg  
University Health Board

**Gwasanaeth Prawf  
Cenedlaethol  
National Probation  
Service**



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## FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIR OF THE CWM TAF MORGANNWG SAFEGUARDING BOARD

### *Welcome to the 3-year Strategic Plan of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board.*

This Plan identifies what the Board will be focusing on over the next two years, 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 February 2024 to reflect on the past year and review the key priority areas that need to be focussed on in the coming year. Board members agreed that to achieve measurable improvements to safeguarding practice there needed to be a longer-term plan for the Board so that we can set ourselves short-, medium- and longer-term targets.

These priorities stem from the lessons that we have learned over previous years and an analysis of the prevalent and emerging 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.

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](http://www.ctmsb.co.uk) or contact our Regional Safeguarding Board Business Unit via the following email [ctmsafeguarding@rctcbc.gov.uk](mailto:ctmsafeguarding@rctcbc.gov.uk)



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa Curtis-Jones".

**Lisa Curtis-Jones, Chair of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board**

## 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 442,000<sup>1</sup>.

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.

The two overarching **safeguarding** priorities around **protection** and **prevention** underpin the work of the Board and inform the strategic direction for our Plan for 2024-2026.

***Keeping children and adults at risk safe is everyone's responsibility and all agencies have a duty to report suspected abuse and/or neglect.***

### 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Office for National Statistics (Census 2021)



## Who are the Members of the Regional Safeguarding Board?

The membership of the Board complies with the statutory guidance issued under Part 7 of the Social Services and Well Being Act 2014. This includes:

- The three local authorities in the region
- The chief officer of police
- The Local Health Board
- NHS Trust
- Probation services
- HMP Parc

The Lead Partner for the Board is Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, which hosts the Board's Business Unit and manages the Board budget.

A list of members is attached as Appendix 1.

## 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 enables the effective sharing of information between agencies, helping to protect children and adults from abuse and neglect.

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.

## **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 subgroups (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 and neglect.
- 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 OUR KEY PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT 2 YEARS?

The overarching priority for the Safeguarding Boards is twofold:

- **The protection of children and adults who are in need of care and support from abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm.**
- **The prevention of children and adults from becoming at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm.**

These two key priorities are the strategic drivers of the Boards' work over the next two years. To best achieve these overarching priorities, we will work with the following principles in mind:

1. We have **established** where we are and where we need to be.
2. We have **learned** by reflecting on the past year and agreeing how as a Board we can make a difference to safeguarding practice.
3. We have agreed on how we can **develop** as a Board to maximise opportunities to improve.

*An overview of what the Board intends to do to achieve its priorities in the next two years is provided in the table below.*

A detailed work plan for each of the Sub-Groups will sit underneath this which will identify specific actions to deliver these improvements, including who is responsible, timescales and measures of success. The progress of these work plans will be monitored and reviewed on a half yearly basis and will form the basis of our future Annual Reports.

## THEME 1: Establishing where we are at the start of each year and where we want to be

Priority Area	Description	What improvements do we need to make?	How will we measure progress?
<b>Management of Risks</b>	We need to ensure that the Board uses its Risk Register to identify the priority issues that need to be addressed.	At the start of each year, we will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify what the highest risks are for the Safeguarding Board</li> <li>Assign ownership of these risks</li> <li>Identify the required actions to mitigate these risks</li> </ul>	The Risk Register will be monitored to ensure that risks are managed, reduced and/or eliminated
<b>Raising the profile of Abuse and/or Neglect</b>	The role of the Board in raising awareness of abuse and/or neglect is a key objective that requires a continued focus.	We will develop a Strategy for the Board, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>public awareness campaigns (encompassing specific priority areas such as exploitation and recommendations from reviews and audits) which will also aim to secure trust and confidence from the public.</li> <li>identifying all key stakeholders and service providers that we can work with to develop earlier identification and preventative services and maximise opportunities for early help.</li> <li>identifying specific populations at risk of harm and working with the third sector, community groups and organisations to target communications to ensure the duty to report is highlighted.</li> <li>using inter-agency training and dissemination of learning and research to help build a more confident and knowledgeable multi-agency workforce.</li> <li>use performance data and intelligence to understand and address early indicators of abuse and neglect, analysing patterns of referrals and re-referrals and links to thresholds</li> </ul>	We will identify a series of performance measures to measure the effectiveness of our work, linked to the Board's Performance Framework



<b>Partnership Working</b>	<p>Working in partnership with a range of stakeholders is essential in fostering effective collaboration to safeguard our communities.</p>	<p>We will review our current links with existing partnerships and develop strong collaborative relationships. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community Safety Partnerships</li> <li>▪ Public Service Board</li> <li>▪ Regional Partnership Board</li> <li>▪ Together for Mental Health Partnership</li> </ul> <p>We will need to encourage cross partnership collaboration with all of the above and any other strategic groups to rationalise current workstreams.</p> <p>We will seek opportunities to improve collaborative links with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Primary Care and Mental Health services</li> <li>▪ Third sector</li> <li>▪ Community and sports organisations</li> <li>▪ Faith groups</li> <li>▪ Universities and colleges</li> </ul> <p>Encouraging the participation of the public in the work of the Board will remain a cross cutting theme for the Board.</p>	<p>We will use a range of methods to engage with stakeholders, including practitioner workshops, virtual briefing sessions and 7-minute briefings.</p> <p>Our aim will be to break down barriers, improve collaboration and reduce duplication to achieve a shared approach to specific areas of work.</p>
<b>Workforce</b>	<p>All staff working across our partner agencies must feel valued and supported, despite the continued pressures on our services.</p>	<p>We will continue to promote staff well-being through a range of different means. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promoting training and awareness raising of how individuals can improve their own wellbeing and how they can access additional support.</li> <li>▪ Staff briefings with senior leaders</li> <li>▪ Encouraging improved professional practice, inter-agency respectful relationships and culture</li> </ul>	<p>Partner agencies will be asked to report to Board on how they are ensuring that this priority is being addressed. This will assist in providing assurance that the Board holds agencies to account for safeguarding.</p>

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## THEME 2: LEARN – Reflecting on the past year and agreeing on how we can improve safeguarding practice

Priority Area	Context	What improvements do we need to make?	How will we measure progress
<b>Learning Framework</b>	In 2022/2023 the Board launched its Learning and Improvement Framework which sets out how we will identify, disseminate and implement learning to improve safeguarding practice. We want to maintain a continuous learning and improvement cycle.	<p>Across the Board partner agencies and with other stakeholders, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promote the Board's Learning Framework to support the identification, sharing and evaluation of learning.</li> <li>▪ Identify and share areas of good practice.</li> <li>▪ Monitor recommendations and action plans arising from Reviews.</li> </ul> <p>We will also learn from others by receiving reviews from other Boards and maximise the opportunities available to us via national forums.</p>	<p>We will use a range of different methods to measure progress including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learning themes database</li> <li>▪ Reviewing action plans</li> <li>▪ Providing opportunities to share our learning.</li> <li>▪ Provide regular news updates</li> <li>▪ Endorse the use of 7 minute briefings</li> </ul>
<b>Communications and Engagement</b>	The Board is required to provide positive communication opportunities with both professionals and wider communities.	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make the best use of a range of methods to communicate and engage with our staff and the public and to share learning.</li> </ul>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use the partner agency compliance audits to measure the effectiveness of this priority.</li> </ul>

	<p>As part of developing a positive culture of learning the Board also needs to ensure that information is widely disseminated within the workforce to inform them about best practice and learning arising from Board activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improve our mission statement that promotes communications to include empathy and respect for all staff and service users.</li> <li>▪ Prioritise capturing the voice of children, young people and adults by promoting participation in the work of the Board.</li> <li>▪ Develop/promote public awareness campaigns led by the Board and other agencies.</li> <li>▪ Deliver/develop staff briefings, drop-in sessions and Q&amp;A sessions to promote interagency communication and an understanding of roles and responsibilities.</li> <li>▪ Utilise Teams channels to improve the way in which we communicate.</li> <li>▪ Be flexible and creative in increasing the number of practitioner events to share learning and to evaluate their effectiveness.</li> <li>▪ Increase the number of face-to-face learning sessions</li> <li>▪ Improve access to and use of our website as a trusted resource for professionals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make the best use of evaluations and feedback to measure success.</li> <li>▪ Encourage open two-way communication about the work of the Board</li> </ul>
<b>Staff and Service Pressures</b>	<p>The Board wants to learn from previous years to ensure that the challenges in relation to staffing and service pressures are adequately addressed by our partner agencies.</p>	<p>Board partner agencies must ensure that the Board is updated on critical areas of concern and assurances given that issues are being identified and addressed. The Board will provide appropriate challenge and solutions where appropriate.</p>	<p>Reports to the Board and its subgroups</p>

### THEME 3: DEVELOP EFFECTIVE WORK STREAMS – to maximise opportunities for improvement

Priority Area	Context	What improvements do we need to make?	How will we measure progress?
<b>Harm reduction work stream</b>	In our previous Annual Plans, we set out our approach to protecting both children and adults at risk from all forms of exploitation. This year we have included the reduction of serious violence, the National Child Sexual Abuse action plan and work to combat cybercrime. We acknowledge that we need to do this work in collaboration with other partnerships and structures across the region.	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finalise Phase One our Regional Exploitation Strategy which will set out how our partner agencies will recognise and understand exploitation, safeguard and empower victims, and disrupt perpetrators.</li> <li>Develop our understanding of the support that 18-25-year-olds need, to ensure they have a positive experience of transition into adulthood.</li> <li>Commence Phase Two of the Exploitation Strategy, which will set out how our partners will respond, safeguard and empower all adult victims, and disrupt perpetrators.</li> <li>Work closely with other regional partnerships to provide a cohesive and collaborative approach to the reduction of violence in our communities.</li> <li>Adopt the most recent National Action Plan on Child Sexual Abuse and endorse the actions across our constituent agencies and contribute to the Child sexual Abuse National delivery plan.</li> <li>Work with colleagues across a range of agencies to minimise the effect of cybercrime on the individuals for whom we provide services.</li> </ul>	<p>The following measures are being put in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development of an exploitation dashboard across the region to enable us to identify, quantify, and measure exploitation. This will include performance measures and outcomes.</li> <li>A shared understanding and agreement on how all agencies can respond to the reduction of harm.</li> <li>Reports from partner agencies on how they are raising awareness of the dangers of violence in our communities.</li> <li>Promote the use of toolkits to equip our</li> </ul>

			<p>children and adults at risk about the dangers of cybercrime.</p> <p>Promotion of strategies to support staying safe whilst using digital media.</p>
<p><b>Single Unified Safeguarding Review process</b></p>	<p>The introduction of a new Single Unified Safeguarding Review process in 2023 will mean that the Board will have more responsibility for safeguarding reviews in relation to Domestic Homicides, Offensive Weapons Homicide Reviews and Mental Health Homicides, in addition to the existing arrangements for Child and Adult Practice Reviews.</p>	<p>We will need to support the implementation of the Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) process across Wales and in our region and manage any impact on the workload of the Board and its Business Unit.</p> <p>We will utilise the funding allocated to us by the Welsh Government to enhance Business Unit resources to co-ordinate and manage SUSR implementation. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consultation and roll-out of the new SUSR Statutory Guidance</li> <li>▪ Contributing to the development and delivery of training resources to support the new process.</li> <li>▪ Aligning our governance arrangements to meet the requirements of the SUSR.</li> <li>▪ Providing any support required to the development of the national repository.</li> <li>▪ Participating in national groups to support and influence the development and delivery of the SUSR.</li> <li>▪ Managing an increased number and diverse nature of Reviews</li> <li>▪ Supporting independent Chairs and Reviewers to carry out their functions in relation to SUSRs</li> </ul>	<p>The Board will ensure that progress is monitored via a dedicated SUSR Task and Finish Group.</p> <p>We will actively participate in externally funded training packages for prospective Chairs, Reviewers, and panel members of upcoming reviews.</p> <p>We will build resilience and sustainability into this process by encouraging staff in our region to participate in the SUSR process.</p> <p>We will encourage practitioners to mentor colleagues and share skills to enable a larger pool of experienced staff to facilitate these reviews.</p>



<b>Regional Consistency</b>	<p>The Cwm Taf Morgannwg region is made up of three local authority areas. We want to continue to look for opportunities to achieve consistency in the way we carry out our safeguarding responsibilities.</p>	<p>We want to continue to seek ways of collaboration across the two Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Options for a hybrid approach to working.</li> <li>▪ Processes involved in initial decision-making (thresholding)</li> <li>▪ A streamlined regional information sharing system</li> </ul> <p>We will implement a new regional Performance Framework for the Board, based on a series of key questions that can provide assurances to the Board that safeguarding across the region is effective.</p> <p>We want to develop a multi-agency approach to the delivery of safeguarding training across the region. This should be needs-led and delivered by multi-agency practitioners.</p>	<p>Reports to the Board on progress.</p> <p>Monitoring of the regional Performance Framework.</p>
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#### 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 of collaboration
Welsh Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Policies and legislation in relation to safeguarding.</li><li>▪ Implementation of the Single Unified Safeguarding Review process</li><li>▪ The development of Practice Guides for safeguarding adults</li><li>▪ Business Managers and Chairs quarterly meetings</li></ul>
National Independent Safeguarding Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Seeking advice on regional and national safeguarding issues</li></ul>
Third Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Actively encourage their participation in the work of the Regional Safeguarding Board</li></ul>
Other Regional Safeguarding Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Consistent policies and processes across Wales</li><li>▪ Sharing learning and best practice</li></ul>
Community Safety Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Exploitation</li><li>▪ Single Unified Safeguarding Review</li><li>▪ Domestic Violence</li></ul>
Regional Partnership Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Participation of children, young people and adults</li></ul>

<b>Public Service Board</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Working with Co-production Network for Wales and refreshing the Wellbeing Plan</li> </ul>
<b>Wales Violence Prevention Unit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase in violent offending</li> <li>▪ Framework for Violence Prevention, linked to YOS and Exploitation</li> <li>▪ Serious Violence Duty</li> <li>▪ Offensive Weapons Pilot</li> </ul>

## 5. OUR BUDGET FOR 2023-2024

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: £383,260  
General Expenditure: £46,870

## 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](http://www.ctmsb.co.uk)

## APPENDIX 1 - BOARD MEMBERSHIP

TITLE	AGENCY
Director of Social Services (Chair)	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Director of Social Services and Wellbeing (Vice Chair)	Bridgend County Borough Council
Director of Social Services (Chair of the Joint Operational Committee)	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Adult Safeguarding Service Manager	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Director, Public Health, Protection and Community Services	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Head of Partnerships (Children)	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Director of Education and Inclusion Services	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Service Director, Children Services	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Head of Legal - Community Care and Children	Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Prison Director	His Majesty's Prison Parc, Bridgend
Head of Safeguarding	Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
Named Doctor	Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
Deputy Executive Nurse Director	Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board
Head of Service	Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service
Head of Service	Youth Justice Service, Bridgend



<b>Named Lead for Safeguarding</b>	Public Health Wales
<b>Designated Nurse (National Safeguarding Team)</b>	Public Health Wales
<b>Head of Probation</b>	Probation Service
<b>Director of Education</b>	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
<b>Head of Public Protection</b>	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
<b>Head of Adult Services</b>	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
<b>Principal Safeguarding Manager</b>	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
<b>Head of Children Services</b>	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
<b>Head of Adult Social Care</b>	Bridgend County Borough Council
<b>Head of Children's Social Care</b>	Bridgend County Borough Council
<b>Head of Education and Family Services</b>	Bridgend County Borough Council
<b>Group Manager</b>	Bridgend County Borough Council
<b>Head of Public Protection</b>	Bridgend County Borough Council
<b>Head of Adult Safeguarding and Secure Estate</b>	Bridgend County Borough Council
<b>Superintendent</b>	South Wales Police
<b>Head of Protecting Vulnerable Persons</b>	South Wales Police
<b>Assistant Director Quality, Safety &amp; Patient Experience</b>	Welsh Ambulance Service Trust

<b>NISB Member</b>	National Independent Safeguarding Board
<b>Safeguarding Lead Officer</b>	South Wales Fire & Rescue Service

APPENDIX 2 – BOARD STRUCTURE

