

BDPCT

BWRDD
DIOGELU PLANT CWM TAF

CTSCB

CWM TAF
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

CYNLLUN BLYNYDDOL ANNUAL PLAN

2017 - 2018



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Cwm Taf
University Health Board



STRONG HERITAGE | STRONG FUTURE
RHONDDA CYNON TAF
TRETTADAETH GADARN | DYFODOL SICR



MERTHYR TYDFIL
County Borough Council
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol
MERTHYR TUDFUL



Rhondda Cynon Taf

Gwasanaeth Prawf
Cenedlaethol
National Probation
Service



Cwmni Adsefydlu Cymunedol
Cymru
Wales
Community Rehabilitation Company



VOLUNTARY
ACTION
MERTHYR TYDFIL
GWEITHREDU
GWIRFODDOL
MERTHYR TUDFUL



INTRODUCTION

The Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board (CTSCB) is the multi-agency partnership which has responsibility for safeguarding children in Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr Tydfil.

The CTSCB operates within the statutory guidance set out in Section 139 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and in exercising its functions under the Act the CTSCB will have due regard to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The CTSCB monitors how well agencies and other partnerships undertake their work with regard to safeguarding children and ensures safeguarding is embedded in all working practices.

The CTSCB will make this Annual Plan public by placing it on the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Boards website (www.cwmtafsafeguarding.org) by 31 March 2017.

OUR VISION

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

The Cwm Taf Safeguarding Children Board will work within the ethos of Voice and Control and engage with, listen to and hear the views of children and young people.

**Giovanni Isingrini (Co-Chair)
Director of Community and Children's
Services
Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC**

**Lisa Curtis-Jones (Co-Chair)
Chief Officer (Social Services)
Merthyr Tydfil CBC**

WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING

Safeguarding is about protecting children from abuse or neglect and educating those around them to recognise the signs and dangers.

The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples for each of the categories of abuse and neglect:

- physical abuse - when an adult deliberately hurts a child
- sexual abuse - for example where a child has been forced to take part in sexual acts or in the taking of inappropriate photographs
- emotional abuse - such as a child being unfairly blamed for something or told they are stupid and made to feel unhappy
- neglect - a failure to meet a child's basic needs, which is likely to result in an impairment of their wellbeing
- bullying - calling names, damaging property, stealing, spreading rumours or cyber bullying
- domestic violence - when one adult in a family or relationship threatens, bullies or hurts another member of the family
- financial - when a parent or caregiver uses a child's inheritance or compensation in a way that does not contribute to the child's wellbeing

One of the most important principles of safeguarding is that it is everyone's responsibility. Each professional and organisation must do everything they can, to ensure that children at risk are protected from abuse.

A child at risk is a child who:

- a) is experiencing or is at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm, and
- b) has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs).

The objectives of the Safeguarding Children Board are:

- a) to protect children within its area who are experiencing, or are at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm, and
- b) to prevent children within its area from becoming at risk of abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm.

THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE CWM TAF SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

The Lead Partner of the CTSCB is Rhondda Cynon Taf (RCT) County Borough Council. The CTSCB is chaired jointly by the Director of Community and Children Services (RCT County Borough Council) and the Chief Officer for Social Services (Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council).

The membership of the Board complies with the guidance issued under Part 7 (Section 134(2) of the Act and is as follows:

CWM TAF SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD MEMBERSHIP	
Director of Community & Children Services (RCT) - Co-Chair	Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC The Pavilions, Clydach Vale, Rhondda Cynon Taf, CF40 2XX
Chief Officer for Social Services (Merthyr Tydfil) - Co-Chair	Merthyr Tydfil CBC Unit 5, Pentrebach Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 4TQ
Head of Safeguarding Cwm Taf University Health Board	Cwm Tâf University Health Board LHB Headquarters, Ynysmeurig House Abercynon, CF45 4SN
Head of Children's Services (MTCBC)	Merthyr Tydfil CBC Unit 5, Pentrebach Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 4TQ
Executive Nurse Director Cwm Taf University Health Board	Cwm Taf University Health Board LHB Headquarters Ynysmeurig House, Abercynon, CF45 4SN
Superintendent	South Wales Police Pontypridd Police Station, Berw Road, Pontypridd, CF37 2TR
Assistant Chief Executive	National Probation Service 4 -9 Broadway Pontypridd, CF37 1BA
Assistant Chief Executive	South Wales 2, Wales Community Rehabilitation Company Bridgend Probation Office, Tremains House, Tremains Road, Bridgend, CF31 1TZ
Chief Officer	Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil (VAMT), Voluntary Action Centre, 88-90 High Street, Pontmorlais, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8UH
CTSB Business Manager	Ty Catrin, Maritime Industrial Estate Maesycoed Pontypridd, CF37 1NY
Service Director, Adult Services (RCTCBC)	Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC Ty Elai, Dinas Isaf East, Williamstown Tonypany, CF40 1NY
Head of Safeguarding & Support (RCTCBC)	Tŷ Catrin, Maritime Industrial Estate, Maesycoed, Pontypridd, CF37 1NY
Principal Safeguarding Manager	Merthyr Tydfil CBC Unit 5, Pentrebach Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 4TQ

CWM TAF SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD MEMBERSHIP	
Head of Cwm Taf Youth Offending Service	Youth Offending Service Unit 2 Fairway Court Tonteg Road Treforest Industrial Estate Pontypridd, CF37 5UA
Service Director for Schools and Community (RCTCBC)	Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC Tŷ Trevithick Abercynon, CF45 4UQ
Head of Service - Learning (MTCBC)	Merthyr Tydfil CBC, Unit 5, Triangle Business Park, Pentrebach, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 4TQ
Service Director, Children Services (RCTCBC)	Ty Trevithick, Abercynon, Mountain Ash, CF45 4UQ
Head of Legal - Community Care and Children (RCTCBC)	Rhondda Cynon Taf Legal Services Taff Ely Principal Office Court House Street Pontypridd
Director / Interlink Chair	TEDS (Treatment & Education Drug Service), Engine House, Depot Road, Aberdare, CF44 8DL
Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children and Looked After Children	Public Health Wales Unit 1 Charnwood Court Heol Billingsley Parc Nantgarw Cardiff, CF15 7QZ.
Named Professional for Safeguarding	Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust Ty Conwy /Conwy House 1st Floor, Castle Court Phoenix Way Swansea, SA7 9LA
Chief Officer Community Regeneration	Merthyr Tydfil CBC Civic Centre, Castle Street, Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 9AN

THE STRUCTURE OF THE CWM TAF SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

The CTSCB has a committee and sub group structure in place to support the delivery of its objectives and to carry out its functions effectively. This enables the Board to focus on its overall responsibility of setting the strategic direction for its

partner agencies and challenging them on the effectiveness of safeguarding measures.

The responsibilities of each of the Groups are as follows:

Children Operational Committee - key to the overall effectiveness of the CTSCB. In delivering this Annual Plan, it will ensure that the priorities of the Board and the work of the Sub Groups are taken forward and that performance is managed.

SUB GROUPS

Quality Assurance and Standards Sub Group - encourages high standards of practice through the auditing, monitoring and evaluation of performance and reviewing the work undertaken by partner agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children across Cwm Taf.

Case Review Group - ensures that the CTSCB discharges its functions in relation to Child Practice Reviews¹ and promotes a positive culture of multi-agency learning and more effective sharing of that learning. The Group also ensures that action plans arising from reviews are monitored and implemented.

JOINT GROUPS

Protocols and Procedures (PPG) Sub Group - this is a joint Children and Adults Group that is responsible for developing, reviewing and updating policies, protocols and procedures to co-ordinate what is done by each representative body to safeguard children and adults.

Training and Learning (TAL) Sub Group - has a responsibility to ensure that safeguarding training is co-ordinated and delivered to a consistently high standard, and that a process exists for evaluating the effectiveness of training.

Engagement Participation and Communication (EPC) Sub Group - ensures that there are clear processes for the identification of engagement and participation needs as well as effective mechanisms in place for information sharing and good practice.

TASK GROUPS

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) - this Group has been set up oversee the Board's Regional Action Plan to address CSE.²

¹ A Child Practice Review takes place after a child dies or is seriously injured and abuse or neglect is thought to be involved

² Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a type of sexual abuse. Children in exploitative situations and relationships receive something such as gifts, money or affection as a result of performing sexual activities or others performing sexual activities on them

THE CWM TAF MULTI AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB (MASH)

The Cwm Taf Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is the first point of contact for all professionals to report safeguarding concerns in Merthyr Tydfil and RCT.

Since it was set up in 2015 the MASH has significantly improved the sharing of information between agencies, helping to protect the most vulnerable children and adults from harm, neglect and abuse.

The MASH directly receives safeguarding concerns from professionals such as teachers and doctors and police; as well as members of the public and family members via Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC and Merthyr Tydfil CBC contact centres.

The MASH governance arrangements sit within the structure of the Safeguarding Boards. The MASH Executive Board oversees its ongoing development to ensure it continues to achieve its goal to improve safeguarding and promote the welfare of children, young people and adults at risk. The Board is supported by a MASH Operational Committee and a working group, and these consist of appropriate partner representatives from all MASH agencies.

THE CWM TAF SAFEGUARDING BUSINESS UNIT

The work of the Children and Adults Boards and the MASH is supported by the Safeguarding Business Unit which ensures that the Boards deliver their safeguarding responsibilities effectively. The team drives forward the day-to-day business in relation to the Boards' core functions, and provides administrative and organisational support for activities associated with the Boards committees, sub groups and task groups.

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE THIS YEAR?

The CTSAB has identified the following as its priority outcomes to support the achievement of its objectives for the coming year:

1. GOVERNANCE

INTENDED OUTCOME:

The Board has a robust structure and clear governance arrangements in place that supports its effective operation and its compliance with the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

The Act sets out the core functions of the Board. To enable the Board to carry out these functions there must be a strong structure in place. Each Safeguarding Board partner has a responsibility to ensure that the Board is operating effectively.

The Board is required to co-ordinate the activities of each Board partner in relation to protecting and preventing abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm to children and to ensure the effectiveness of those activities.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

- The Board has a clear structure in place for delivering its functions and to report on its effectiveness.
- Risks are identified and managed appropriately.
- The Safeguarding Business Unit has been established to support the effective operation of the Board.
- The work of the Board is underpinned by a range of national and local protocols and procedures.

WHAT IMPROVEMENTS DO WE NEED TO MAKE?

In 2017/18 we will:

- 1.1. Ensure that the structure of the Board is sustainable and continues to be effective by regular performance reporting and stimulating effective challenge amongst partner agencies
- 1.2. Review the capacity of the Business unit so that it is sufficiently resourced to support the statutory functions of the Board
- 1.3. Work with the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Steering Group to ensure that partners fulfil their statutory duties under the VAWDASV (Wales) Act 2015³
- 1.4. Ensure that the Welsh Government's new guidance on Handling Individual Cases is integrated into safeguarding practice
- 1.5. Contribute to the work of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015⁴ and the Cwm Taf Population Needs Assessment to enhance safeguarding practice
- 1.6. Consider the impact of the new regulation and inspection framework for social services

2. SAFEGUARDING SPECIFIC GROUPS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

INTENDED OUTCOME:

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

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Keeping children and young people safe is everyone's responsibility. This means feeling safe and being safe with those with whom they live and who support and care for them, as well as being safe in environments outside the home where

³ The Act seeks an improved collective public sector response, stronger leadership and a more consistent focus on the way we tackle these issues in Wales and help victims, but more importantly it seeks to stop the abuse happening in the first place.

⁴ The Well-being of Future Generations Act is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales.

they may live, travel, play, learn, work or undertake sport, cultural, leisure and other activities.

This responsibility lies primarily within the family or with carers and within the wider community. However, there are some groups of children who are particularly vulnerable, perhaps as a result of their own behaviour or as a result of compromised parenting. The Board has a responsibility to ensure that a proportionate response is adopted to protect these groups of young people and actions are in place to prevent them from becoming at further risk of abuse, neglect or harm.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

In 2016/17 the Board appointed individual Board members to champion specific areas of vulnerability. These were:

- Children subject to neglect
- Children looked after⁵
- Children at risk of suicide and self harm
- Children at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

WHAT IMPROVEMENTS DO WE NEED TO MAKE?

In 2017/18 we will:

- 2.1. Work with the Together for Mental Health partnership to support children and young people with mental health and emotional wellbeing needs
- 2.2. Share lessons from recent Practice Reviews to ensure that the transition to adulthood for young people is managed more effectively to reduce the risks of harm.
- 2.3. Develop a process for managing the placement of children looked after outside of Cwm Taf and for those being placed in Cwm Taf from outside of the area
- 2.4. Continue progressing actions to address CSE, including identifying the links with human trafficking, unaccompanied asylum seekers and modern slavery
- 2.5. Consider the outcome of the national work on neglect and adopt any recommendations for the Board
- 2.6. Ensure that all new Board reports, protocols and policies are subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment

3. COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

INTENDED OUTCOME:

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

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

The Board needs to develop relationships and build trust within the community, raising awareness of the need to protect and prevent abuse and harm to children and young people.

⁵ The term 'children looked after children' is generally used to mean those children who are looked after by the local authority

Children and young people who are, or may be, affected by the exercise of a Safeguarding Board's functions must be given the opportunity to participate in the Board's work. The Board must work within the ethos of the theme of Voice and Control to support people to achieve their personally identified outcomes.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

- The Board has recently established the Engagement, Participation and Communications Sub Group which oversees the development of a Communications and Engagement strategy
- The Safeguarding Boards website is well established
- An E-Bulletin for sharing information with professionals is published twice yearly
- Plans are underway for Safeguarding Week 2017, following on the success of the previous two years.

WHAT IMPROVEMENTS DO WE NEED TO MAKE?

In 2017/18 we will:

- 3.1. Implement the Board's Communications and Engagement strategy
- 3.2. Implement the Board's Participation component of the Communications and Engagement strategy to improve our engagement with children and young people
- 3.3. Further develop the Board's website and continue publishing the E-Bulletin for practitioners, giving consideration to producing this as a public document
- 3.4. Use Safeguarding Week 2017 to further improve our engagement with the wider community, children, young people and parents/carers
- 3.5. Ensure that there is a clear connection between the Boards and the DEWIS database of voluntary organisations
- 3.6. Ensure that there is appropriate public-facing literature published to raise awareness of safeguarding and the work of the Board

4. SAFEGUARDING PRACTICE

INTENDED OUTCOME:

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

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

The Board is required to co-ordinate the activities of each partner represented on the Board in relation to protecting and preventing abuse, neglect or other kinds of harm to children and young people. It must ensure that these activities are effective by challenging agencies and ensuring that there is effective inter-agency co-operation in planning and delivering protection services and in sharing information.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

- All partner agencies represented on the Board have responsibilities for safeguarding children.
- Protocols and procedures are in place to escalate issues to the Board.
- The Board ensures that there are adequate systems in place to enable the effective sharing of safeguarding information amongst all agencies.
- Information Sharing protocols are in place for the MASH.
- A new Information System for social care and some elements of the NHS is to be introduced by the end of 2017.
- The Board's Quality Assurance Group monitors, audits and quality assures the effectiveness of local organisations' and individuals' work to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children.

WHAT IMPROVEMENTS DO WE NEED TO MAKE?

In 2017/18 we will:

- 4.1. Identify how the safeguarding module of WCCIS⁶ will link to the governance of the Board and ensure that a process is in place to manage this
- 4.2. Implement the Challenging Cases protocol for children on the child protection register and monitor via the Quality Assurance Sub Group (QASG)
- 4.3. Influence the implementation of the new national procedures for child protection
- 4.4. Share the outcome of the Board's quality assurance work with partners, including those who work in adult safeguarding, to share good practice

4a. Cwm Taf Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

- An evaluation of the MASH following its first year of delivery identified a need to review the current processes to ensure that they are achieving the best possible outcomes for children and adults at risk.
- A survey carried out with a range of professionals identified that the MASH has made a positive difference to safeguarding in Cwm Taf.

WHAT IMPROVEMENTS DO WE NEED TO MAKE?

In 2017/18 we will:

- 4.5. Complete the review of the children safeguarding processes and the thresholds for decision making, in line with the new Welsh Government guidance
- 4.6. Ensure that there is a robust performance management framework in place for the MASH which is aligned to the work of the Board's QA Sub Group.
- 4.7. Ensure that the MASH Mhub data sharing platform continues to support the safeguarding process
- 4.8. Ensure that the accommodation within the MASH remains fit for purpose
- 4.9. Review the governance of the MARAC domestic abuse service in conjunction with the VAWDASV Steering Group

⁶ Welsh Local Authorities and NHS Wales organisations are working in partnership towards an electronic solution—The Welsh Community Care Information System (WCCIS)-which will enable safe sharing of information and help to deliver improved care and support for people across Wales.

5. TRAINING AND LEARNING

INTENDED OUTCOME:

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

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

The Board should ensure that information is widely shared across partner agencies to inform staff of best practice and learning arising from reviews, audits and other Board activities.

The Board should also ensure that practitioners are receiving or have access to the training they need in child protection and the prevention of abuse, neglect or other forms of harm.

Understanding the nature and extent of abuse, neglect and other forms of harm and the effectiveness of services to prevent and protect children from harm are important. The Board should therefore provide for research and evaluation studies, either by undertaking or commissioning small scale studies or by co-operating with and encouraging agencies to co-operate with studies being undertaken locally or nationally.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

- In 2016/17 the Board established the new joint adults and children Training and Learning Sub Group (TALG).
- A Children Safeguarding Training Calendar has been developed and themes from audit and reviews are being collated to inform future training and learning events.

WHAT IMPROVEMENTS DO WE NEED TO MAKE?

In 2017/18 we will:

- 5.1. Agree an approach to carrying out research into safeguarding and make better use of staff and academic agencies to carry out this research
- 5.2. Address any gaps in the provision of safeguarding training, including the prevention of suicide and self harm, domestic violence (in partnership with the VAWDASV Steering Group) and training on the new national child protection procedures
- 5.3. Identify other relevant training frameworks that sit outside of the Board and establish relevant links
- 5.4. Develop a programme of Multi Agency Practitioner Events to share learning from audits and reviews with a wide audience of practitioners involved in safeguarding
- 5.5. Contribute to the rewrite of the PRUDIC⁷ guidance to ensure that there is a safe, consistent and sensitive response to unexpected deaths in infancy and childhood

⁷ Procedural Response to Unexpected Deaths in Childhood

- 5.6. Increase the pool of appropriately skilled people who are able to carry out Child Practice Reviews on behalf of the Board

6. COLLABORATION

INTENDED OUTCOME:

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

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Effective collaboration and multi-agency working are pre-requisites to the delivery of a Board's responsibilities.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

- Locally, the collaboration of the Children and Adults Safeguarding Boards has brought about opportunities to integrate safeguarding measures with an all-age focus.
- Highlight reports are submitted to the Public Service Board and within individual agencies' management structures.
- Links are established with the Cwm Taf Community Safety Partnership and joint working has already been undertaken through the Domestic Homicide Review process.
- Nationally, the Board has established a good working relationship with the National Independent Safeguarding Board
- Close links have been established with the Welsh Government through the All-Wales Groups and the Safeguarding Boards Business Managers network.
- Collaboration between Safeguarding Boards has also been a key area of activity when carrying out adult practice reviews.

WHAT IMPROVEMENTS DO WE NEED TO MAKE?

In 2017/18 we will:

- 6.1. Continue to seek opportunities to develop strong working relationships with other partnerships
- 6.2. Continue to collaborate with other Safeguarding Boards to improve safeguarding arrangements nationally.

OUR RESOURCES FOR 2017/18

The Cwm Taf Safeguarding Boards for Adults and Children will have an agreed budget in place to support both Boards in 2017/18. The Business Manager for the Boards will manage this budget within the financial regulations set by Rhondda Cynon Taf CBC, the Lead Partner for the Boards.

The Boards are jointly funded by the statutory partners i.e. both Merthyr Tydfil and Rhondda Cynon Taf local authorities, Cwm Taf University Health Board, South Wales Police National Probation Service and the Community Rehabilitation Company. Contributions are split in line with the guidance published under Part 7 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014.

The resources allocated to the Safeguarding Business Unit will be utilised in accordance with the requirements under the Act to have an effective infrastructure to support the work of the Boards. All resources will support the delivery of our priority outcomes as set out in this Annual Plan.

HOW TO REPORT A CONCERN

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:

For Members of the Public call:
Rhondda Cynon Taf: 01443 425006
Merthyr Tydfil: 01685 725000

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

For Professionals call the MASH:
Rhondda Cynon Taf: 01443 742928
Merthyr Tydfil: 01685 743619

Out of Hours Emergencies (for both RCT and Merthyr Tydfil):
To contact Children's Services outside office hours, at weekends and public holidays, ring **Cwm Taf Emergency Duty Team on 01443 743665**.

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

If it is found that a child is being abused or is at risk of significant harm professionals will work together with the family to ensure that the child can be protected.

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

Further information can be found at www.cwmtafsafeguarding.org or you can e-mail cwmtafsafeguarding@rctcbc.gov.uk