

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Thursday, 23 July 2026
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Live Well Scrutiny Committee
Item which the Chair has decided is urgent (Part I) (If yes, why)	Not applicable
Urgent Decision Procedure Used (15.14 of the Constitution) (If yes, why)	Not applicable
Item Type	Part I
Report Title:	Corporate Safeguarding Annual Report 2025-26
Portfolio Holder:	Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health
Strategic Leadership Team:	Director of Social Services
Lead Officer:	Operational Manager, Safeguarding and Service Outcomes

1.0 What is this report about?

- 1.1 This Annual Report provides an overview of the Corporate Safeguarding activities taking place across the Council.
- 1.2 It provides context of the responsibilities and commitments of corporate safeguarding across the Council.
- 1.3 Attached at Appendix 1 is the annual report that brings together safeguarding activity undertaken by the Social Services, Learning and Skills, Corporate Resources and Environment and Housing. This provides a holistic representation of safeguarding activity across the Council. The report provides a composite of activity across the directorates. There is a section within the appendix that outlines the purpose, key principles and activity of the Corporate Safeguarding Group (CSG).

2.0 What are the Recommendations?

	Recommendations – What and How?	Reason for Recommendation – Why?
2.1	That Cabinet notes the corporate arrangements for safeguarding and protecting children and adults.	To ensure that Cabinet is aware of corporate arrangements for safeguarding.
2.2	That Cabinet continues to receive annual reports on work carried out to improve Corporate Safeguarding arrangements and the effectiveness of relevant Policies.	To allow Cabinet to exercise effective oversight of this key area of corporate working and be assured of effective safeguarding taking place.

3.0 What is the background to this report?

- 3.1 Corporate safeguarding means **a whole-Council approach to keeping people safe**, where **every service and every staff member plays a part** in preventing harm and promoting wellbeing.
- 3.2 Our corporate safeguarding arrangements ensures that all directorates, services and employees know and understand their role in safeguarding our citizens.
- 3.3 Corporate safeguarding focuses on our overall commitments and the arrangements that the Council has in place to safeguard people.

4.0 What issues are there to be considered?

- 4.1 A set of national safeguarding procedures, Wales Safeguarding Procedures were launched in November 2019. They detail the essential roles and responsibilities for practitioners to ensure that they safeguard children and adults who are at risk of abuse and neglect. The procedures are designed to standardise safeguarding practice across all of Wales and between agencies. These procedures support Local Authorities in fulfilling their statutory roles and functions to adults and children at risk. They continue to be updated and enhanced through an all-Wales Safeguarding Procedures Board which is led by the Director of Social Services in the Vale of Glamorgan and supported by the Vale of Glamorgan's Safeguarding Lead for which we receive funding from Welsh Government.
- 4.2 The Corporate Safeguarding Group (CSG) is made up of identified safeguarding leads from each of the Councils' directorates and meet once a quarter. The Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health is also a member of CSG. The Place directorate will send a representative to the meeting for 26/27 and so will be included in next year's annual report.
- 4.3 This group oversees the strategic functions of corporate safeguarding across the Council and adherence to our Corporate Safeguarding Policy and responsibilities and is chaired by the Director of Social Services.

4.4 The refreshed Member Development Strategy (for May 2027 onwards) includes mandatory training for Elected Members on equalities and Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV). This was endorsed by the Democratic Services Committee in June 2026 and will be reported to Cabinet for final approval. This approach supports the Council's safeguarding responsibilities by strengthening Members' understanding and oversight of these key areas.

4.5 **Data and Performance Management** - A Corporate Safeguarding dashboard has been developed that enables us to review data across a number of key areas of safeguarding activity, to enable real time oversight and analysis in the following areas of activity:

- **Safe Recruitment, Selection and Management** including Section 5 allegation reports and process
- **Safe Workforce** safeguarding training & awareness
- **Safe Practice** duty to reports; child protection; adult protection; exploitation; Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDSV)
- **Safe Partnerships** commissioning arrangements; Licensing; regional safeguarding board representation and support

5.0 How has evidence been used to inform the report, including the views of others?

5.1 Regular data monitoring and analysis that has informed a number of the directorate reporting submissions.

5.2 Contribution and collaboration from a range of officers across the Council and external partners.

5.3 Development of a regional safeguarding priority that support "Real Voices, Real Experiences" in shaping services and responding to safeguarding matters.

6.0 What are the next steps if the recommendations are approved?

6.1 Cabinet would continue to receive annual reports on work carried out to improve Corporate Safeguarding arrangements and the effectiveness of relevant Policies.

7.0 How does this report support Vale 2030 and Reshaping?

7.1 **Supporting and protecting those who needs** commitment across Council services and directorates to safeguard citizens and support wellbeing.

7.2 **Being the best Council we can be** collaboration and collective focus creating a safeguarding culture and leadership approach.

8.0 How does this demonstrate the Five Ways of Working?

- 8.1 Long-term – Considering the ability across Directorates to meet long-term demands and continue horizon scanning in relation to our safeguarding responsibilities.
- 8.2 Integration – Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each other of the well-being goals, on their objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.
- 8.3 Involvement – Ensuring voices of children and adult at risk are acknowledged and respected in all our interactions and service planning.
- 8.4 Collaboration – Cross Directorate ownership, accountability and understanding of our safeguarding roles and responsibilities.

Resources

9.0 Finance

- 9.1 There are no direct resource implications arising from the Corporate Safeguarding work. However, the increased awareness of safeguarding and the responsibility to respond to concerns of those who may not be eligible for our services has brought about significant pressures within social services teams. Continued growth in volumes in the context of the Council's medium term financial plan, which requires savings in social care, is challenging to respond to and cost pressures will need to be considered in the future.

10.0 Workforce

- 10.1 There are no workforce implications as a result of this report.

11.0 Legal and Equalities

- 11.1 **Does an Equalities Impact Assessment need to be completed? If not, why?**
No an Equalities Impact Assessment has not been completed because this report does not represent a policy change.
- 11.2 Legislation requires the Local Authority to make arrangements for ensuring the function to discharge their duties, having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk. The Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and codes of practice issued under the Act, makes it clear that Safeguarding Children and Adults at risk of abuse and neglect is everyone's responsibility.
- 11.3 The Director of Social Services must ensure effective safeguarding arrangements are in place, both within the Local Authority and by relevant Partners. The Director of Social Services must oversee and report to Councillors, on a consistent basis regarding the operation, monitoring and improvement of child and adult safeguarding systems within the Local Authority. Defined arrangements with other Officers within the Local Authority,

particularly the Head of Adult Services and Head of Children Services must be clear in relation to delegation and reporting arrangements relating to safeguarding issues.

12.0 **Key Contacts**

12.1 **Who are the primary officers to contact with any comments and/or queries on the report?**

Lead Officer: Natasha James Operational Manager Safeguarding and Service Outcomes	Democratic Services Officer Matt Swindell Cabinet and Committee Services Officer. mlswindell@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk
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Appendix

Appendix 1 : Directorates' Annual Corporate Safeguarding Report 25-26.

Background Document

[Report](#) presented to Cabinet, 17th July 2025 ([Minute No. C63](#)).

Appendix 1

Corporate Safeguarding Vale of Glamorgan Council

Annual Report

April 2025 – March 2026



Cyngor Bro Morgannwg
Vale of Glamorgan Council

The purpose of this report is to reflect on safeguarding activity during 2025/26 across the Vale of Glamorgan Council. The report outlines key activities on a corporate basis for the following:

Section A: Social Services

Section B: Learning and Skills

Section C: Corporate Resources (Safer Recruitment)

Section D: Environment and Housing (Housing; Community Safety; Shared Regulatory Services)



Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol Social Services

A. Safeguarding in Social Services

This section of the report brings together key safeguarding activity that has taken place across the three Divisions of the Social Services Directorate during the period **April 2025 – March 2026**.

The following activities will be addressed in turn:

- Child Protection (Conferences & Registration)
- Adult Safeguarding (Adults at Risk)
- Allegations against Professionals and Those in Positions of Trust – Section 5 Wales Safeguarding Procedures
- Cardiff and Vale Regional Safeguarding Board (includes information in relation to Practice Reviews)

Children's Safeguarding & Review Child Protection

Children's Safeguarding & Review: Child Protection Overview

Child Protection Conferences are multi-agency meetings involving children, their families, and professionals. These are convened when Section 47 enquiries (under the Children Act 1989) identify a child at ongoing risk of significant harm. These enquiries, led by social workers and informed by multi-agency input, assess the child's situation within their family context.

The **Resource Management and Safeguarding Division** independently chairs these conferences, ensuring objectivity and robust scrutiny. This independence supports effective risk management, amplifies children's voices, and promotes positive outcomes.

2025/26 Key Data

Strategy meetings held that progressed to Section 47 enquiries	395
Section 47 enquiries completed that progressed to Initial Child Protection Conference	149
Number of children who became subject to registration and child protection plan	132
Number of children who did not require child protection registration but have needs for care & support	12
Number of children on child protection register and subject to plan as of 31st March 2025	84

Average number of days children are subject to registration and child protection plan

245 days

Understanding Registration

A child is registered when they are deemed at continued risk of significant harm. Not all child protection conferences result in registration — it may be identified that care and support services are needed. Decisions are made during the conference, based on identified risks.

Categories of risk include:

- Physical Abuse
- Emotional/Psychological Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Financial Abuse
- Neglect

Children may be registered under one or more categories.

Trends and Developments

As of 31st March 2025 there were **101** children subject to registration and child protection plan. This is an increase from the **84** children at the same period last year. Whilst this is an increase, this reflects where we would expect the numbers of children on our CPR in the Vale of Glamorgan – taking account of size; demographics and areas of deprivation. Audit activity undertaken identified that decisions were appropriate for all these children and child protection plans were required.

Adult Safeguarding: Adults at Risk

Safeguarding adults is both **preventative** and **protective** under the *Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWBA)*. It extends beyond protection from abuse to promoting well-being, choice, and independence.

What is Safeguarding?

Safeguarding means:

- Ensuring **safe and effective care**
- **Preventing** abuse, neglect, and harm
- **Promoting well-being**, choice, and control
- **Preventing** deterioration in health and development

Safeguarding is a **shared responsibility** across agencies, but the SSWBA sets out specific legal duties for **Local Authorities**, **Health Services**, and **Police**.

Legal Duties and Procedures

Duty to Report: All relevant partners must report an **adult at risk** to the Local Authority.

Duty to Enquire: Where there is reasonable cause to suspect risk, the Local Authority must undertake a **Section 126 enquiry**.

Enquiries should be:

- Person-centred
- Completed within 7 working days
- Focused on assessing risk and identifying appropriate support or protection plans

1. Safeguarding Activity Data (2019–2025)

Year	Reports Received
2019/20	619
2020/21	602
2021/22	816
2022/23	823
2023/24	825
2024/25	800
2025/26	917

- **Trend:** Following a spike from 2020–2023, the number of reports has **stabilised** over the past three years. It is of note that there has been a significant increase in the number of reports received this year.

- This reflects increased awareness due to the **SSWBA** and **Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2020)**

Enquiries and Outcomes (2024–2025)

- **Total Reports Received:** 917
- **Reports Proceeding to Enquiry:** 212
- **% Enquiries Completed in 7 Days:** 195 (91%)

Insight: Fewer cases are progressing to statutory enquires, due to effective **screening** and signposting to **more suitable interventions**, ensuring timely and proportionate responses for those in real need. However, we have reviewed our practice during this year to ensure that the responsibilities and scope for statutory enquiries are consistently applied.

2. Conclusion

The Adult Safeguarding Team continues to respond effectively to adults at risk. The stabilisation in reporting volumes, combined with high performance in timely enquiries, reflects:

- Strong application of safeguarding duties
- Effective multi-agency collaboration
- A mature safeguarding system that balances risk, rights, and proportionate responses

Section 5 – Safeguarding Allegations Against Practitioners/Those in Positions of Trust

In early 2020, the **Wales Safeguarding Procedures (2019)** were implemented, introducing a unified approach to managing safeguarding allegations against practitioners and those in positions of trust working with **children and adults at risk**. This combined approach, known as **Section 5**, has been adopted by both adult and children safeguarding teams in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Role of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The **LADO** is responsible for managing allegations against individuals whose work or volunteering brings them into contact with vulnerable groups. In the Vale of Glamorgan, this role is fulfilled by the **Operational Manager for Safeguarding**, with some responsibilities delegated to the **Children's and Adult Safeguarding Team Managers**.

Scope of Section 5 Procedures

Section 5 procedures apply to a broad range of allegations/concerns, including but not limited to:

- Harm or potential harm to a child or adult at risk.
- Criminal offences involving or impacting vulnerable individuals.
- Behaviour indicating unsuitability to work with children or adults at risk.

These procedures are triggered regardless of whether the incident occurred in a professional or personal context.

Case Management and Multi-Agency Coordination

When an allegation is made, the LADO or delegated officer:

- Coordinates **multi-agency strategy discussions and meetings**.
- Monitors the progress of any associated **criminal or internal investigations**.
- Ensures **risk management** and **support plans** are in place for those who have had allegations/concerns made against them and the cohort the individual meets by virtue of
- Maintains a **comprehensive record** of the allegation and its outcome.

Referral Data: April 2025 – March 2026

Total referrals received: 155

- **Children/Children's Workforce related:** 67
- **Adults at risk/Adult Workforce related:** 88

Adults at Risk

- **56 of 88 referrals** progressed to strategy discussions.
- Most practitioners referred worked in **Health and Social Care**.
- **Highest referring agencies/organisation:** Health & Police.

Children

- **35 of 67 referrals** progressed to strategy discussions.
- Most professionals worked in **Education**, followed by Social Care.
- **Highest referring agencies/organisations:** Police, Education, and the Local Authority.

Nature of Concerns

Referrals that did not progress typically involved conduct issues manageable through internal employment procedures and persons in roles that are not considered within these processes.

Allegations/concerns related to individuals' private lives included:

- **Domestic abuse**
- **Driving offences** (e.g., drink/drug driving)
- **Drug offences**
- **Physical and sexual assaults**
- **Historical abuse allegations**
- **Involvement with children's services** (child(ren) on the Child Protection Register or involved in Care Proceedings)

Support for Practitioners

Efforts are ongoing to ensure that individuals facing allegations:

- Receive appropriate **support and information**.
- Are informed of **processes and outcomes**.

Updates/Developments

During this period a child practice review was published via North Wales Safeguarding Board. This review had significant recommendations for practice across Wales with specific recommendations for safeguarding partners linked to Section 5 Allegations practice, monitoring and oversight. The "*Our Bravery Brought Justice*" Child Practice Review highlighted how several young people experienced significant sexual exploitation/abuse and grooming over time, perpetrated by the Head Teacher of the school setting over a number of years. The report can be accessed [here](#).

In response all local authorities and statutory agencies have been required to develop action plans to detail how they are responding to the recommendations made with oversight from Regional Safeguarding Boards. There has also been notification that

there will be a joint inspection of our Section 5 Allegations processes from Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW); Estyn and Health Inspectorate Wales (HIW). There will also be revisions to Section 5 procedures within the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.

The Wales Safeguarding Procedures revisions and the practice review has resulted in a significant amount of focus being required for this area of safeguarding practice and are reflected in the Social Services' Directorate Plan. Our education colleagues are awaiting national guidance and policy revisions on allegations management handling in schools; along with a review of the responsibilities, functions and training for schools governing bodies.

Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Board

The Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Boards ensure that effective arrangements are in place to protect children within the region who are at risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation. The Board also ensures appropriate arrangements are in place to protect adults within its area who have needs for care and support (whether or not a local authority is meeting any of those needs) and are experiencing, or are at risk of, abuse or neglect. The Board aims to prevent those adults within its area, from becoming at risk of abuse and neglect.

To achieve these aims the Boards:

- Promote the development of strategies to prevent risk effectively.
- Ensure that agencies are able to challenge themselves and partners in delivering their individual and shared accountability for safeguarding effectively.
- Ensure that the voice of the person is heard and recognised in its deliberations.
- Promote a culture of critical analysis and review to ensure that lessons are learned when people suffer harm because of gaps in policy, systems or practice.

The Director of Social Services, Vale of Glamorgan is a co-chair of the Regional Safeguarding Board. Officers from across the Vale of Glamorgan are represented at the Regional Safeguarding Boards and continue to provide consistent participation and engagement across all areas of work. This ensures there is a shared ownership, accountability and understanding of safeguarding priorities across the region.

The [Cardiff & Vale Regional Safeguarding Board Annual Plan 2026-27](#) sets out the key priorities for the coming year.

Single Unified Safeguarding Reviews (SUSR)

Practice Reviews

Multi-agency practice reviews are undertaken where circumstances of a significant incident where abuse or neglect of a child or adult at risk is known or suspected.

November 2024 saw the implementation of new safeguarding reviewing arrangements, referred to as the Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) process, throughout this year there has been a period of consolidation from the previous approach to the new SUSR framework.

The SUSR incorporates all reviews in Wales. The criteria for conducting an SUSR needs to meet one of the following:

- Adult or Child Practice Review
- Domestic Homicide Review
- Mental Health Homicide Review
- Offensive Weapons Homicide Review

The overall purpose of safeguarding reviews is to promote a positive culture of multi-agency learning and reviewing in local areas, for which Regional Boards and partner agencies hold responsibility. To achieve this, it sets in place a foundation for learning together by professionals from different agencies and, in those circumstances where a more formal review is required when there are serious incidents resulting from abuse or neglect.

During 2025/26 there were no published Adult/Child Practice Reviews; Mental Health Homicide Reviews in relation to incidents within or in respect of Vale of Glamorgan citizens. There are currently 2 practice reviews (Child) in progress that will be concluded this year. There is also a Multi Agency Practitioner Forum (a safeguarding review) in relation to non-recent allegations of sexual abuse where the perpetrator was subsequently convicted of child sexual abuse offences, this individual worked within a school in the Vale and later (outside the timeframe of offences for which they were convicted) was an elected member within the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

When the reports are published, they will be shared and considered along with any recommendations for learning within the CSG and monitored via our safeguarding group arrangements.

A number of officers from across the Vale of Glamorgan Council have supported these reviews by fulfilling the role of independent reviewers or chairs.



Dysgu a Sgiliau Learning and Skills

B. Safeguarding in Learning and Skills

Safeguarding activity in the Learning and Skills Directorate continues to evolve and progress in line with requirements of national, regional and local developments in legislation, guidance and policy. There are two Safeguarding Officers in post who continue to develop and make progress in new and innovative ways to educate, support and offer guidance across the Directorate.

The Directorate Management Team (DMT) consistently monitors operational safeguarding practice across the Directorate, this includes a standing safeguarding agenda item at monthly DMT meetings that has a particular focus on safer recruitment, safeguarding training and allegations against employees and volunteers.

Since April 2025 the compliance rate for adherence to the Safer Recruitment policy has been 100% for 10 of the months, with 2 months seeing compliance at 90% within schools and the Learning & Skills Directorate. Breaches featuring in May and December, totalling 2 individuals that were promptly recognised, immediately addressed and support put in place for the schools in question.

For the academic year to date there have been 8 referrals made under Section 5 Wales Safeguarding Procedures (allegations of professional concern) that have reached threshold for referral. These have been made against teachers, supply teachers, LSAs, school staff and transport drivers. There are a number of additional cases we have requested consultation from the DOS for decision making prior to referral being made.

Directorate Safeguarding Policies, guidance and standard forms are available to support safeguarding practice for all employees and volunteers in the Directorate, Schools, Youth Service, Libraries and Adult Community Learning for consistency in practice across the Directorate. These are regularly disseminated to all staff.

All Vale schools have in place a current Model Safeguarding Policy provided by the Directorate that is consistent with Welsh Government guidance, this Policy was revised in March 2025.

February 2024 saw the publication of the reviewed Vale of Glamorgan Trans Inclusion Schools toolkit, a guide to supporting transgender and gender variant children and young people in school. The Safeguarding Officers are currently in the process of thoroughly reviewing the Transgender Toolkit, in light of the implications of the recent UK Supreme Court ruling. As we consider the practical implications of this judgment, we are also awaiting further guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission. We will ensure that any necessary adjustments to the Transgender Toolkit and practices are made in accordance with this guidance to maintain compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and to uphold our commitment to equality and non-discrimination.

Following the publication in 2026 of the Child Practice Review (our Bravery Brought Justice), an action plan to respond to the 27 recommendations has been devised in conjunction with Children services ensuring that the recommendations outlined at Local Authority level and school level are implemented.

Mandatory annual safeguarding training is delivered consistently across the Directorate to standards set by Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Board (RSB) and all employees and volunteers are expected to comply with statutory and local guidance in relation to safeguarding children and adults. An iDev Level 1 safeguarding package continues to be rolled out to all school and Directorate staff. This ensures a consistent and standardised approach to safeguarding training is maintained. This was reviewed in May 2025 to ensure compliance with Group A Safeguarding training as mapped against the Social Care Wales framework.

Level Two training for Designated Safeguarding Person (DSPs) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Person (DDSPs) is delivered on-line every half term to maximise the opportunities for attendance. All School & Directorate-based staff, including DSPs now have access to iDev accounts that will facilitate much easier maintenance of safeguarding training and the ability to monitor in real time training compliance rates of all staff. This training was reviewed in August 2025 and complies with Group B and C training, as set out by Social Care Wales framework, the content and slide deck was delivered in March 2026 to Directorate Youth Service staff as a pilot model and adapted in response to participant feedback, this training will be rolled out fully to school staff in 2026-27.

School-based DSPs, 51 of the 54 are in compliance

School based DDSPs, 65 of the 73 are in compliance

Directorate based DSPs, all 14 are in compliance.

All staff who are currently non-compliant, are either off work on long-term sickness or they are booked to attend the final training session on 12/03/2026.

DSPs, DDSPs, Designated Safeguarding Governors (DSGs) and other staff have access to a bespoke programme of subject-specific safeguarding training delivered termly, with content developed in response to national, regional and local priorities. Current training priorities for the Learning and Skills Directorate include, Radicalisation and Extremism, Sexually Harmful Behaviour, Sexual Harassment and LGBTQ+ discrimination. Regular briefings or training opportunities are shared with all staff to offer further support in these areas.

Schools continue to develop a recognised Safeguarding Team that includes DSP, DDSP and DSG. Schools are encouraged to include their Designated Safeguarding Governor in development of the Safeguarding Self Evaluation Report (SER), this document is shared with Safeguarding Officers to offer support and guidance in this area. In addition, the review of policies and compliance with training, along with safer recruitment and in monitoring the general effectiveness of safeguarding practice within the school. Using this approach is strengthening support across the school or area to ensure a robust network.

The Directorate Safeguarding Officers in partnership with the Governor Support Unit, offer termly bespoke training for those in the Designated Safeguarding Governor (DSG) role. All training is evaluated and reviewed to facilitate regular development and ensure that safeguarding training is fit for purpose and meets need.

All other governors are directed to and access HWB e-learning safeguarding modules, compliance is monitored by schools and all governors are encouraged to take part in Safeguarding training.

The Directorate continues to demonstrate regulatory compliance in relation to licensing children in employment and entertainment, including the licensing of chaperones. The Inclusion Manager and dedicated CIEE licensing and data Officer are liaising closely with colleagues in neighbouring LAs to ensure greater parity of approach for this area and have revised processes accordingly. There have been several amendments to the overall process in respect of new candidates checks, revoking of licences and licence suspension should concerns be raised.

The Safeguarding Officers and other Senior Officers continue to represent the Directorate at the Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan RSB and on all RSB sub-groups, thereby strengthening working relationships with partner agencies.

The Safeguarding Officers also contribute to the Wales Safeguarding in Education Group and to national and regional multi-agency groups in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation, Modern Slavery / Human Trafficking, Children in Employment and Entertainment and Elective Home Education.

The Safeguarding Officers also participates in local multi-agency activity such as the Cohesion and Engagement Steering Group, VAWDASV Steering Group and Regional Channel Panel. More recently developing the subgroup for Education based upon the Local Authorities response to the Serious Violence duty.

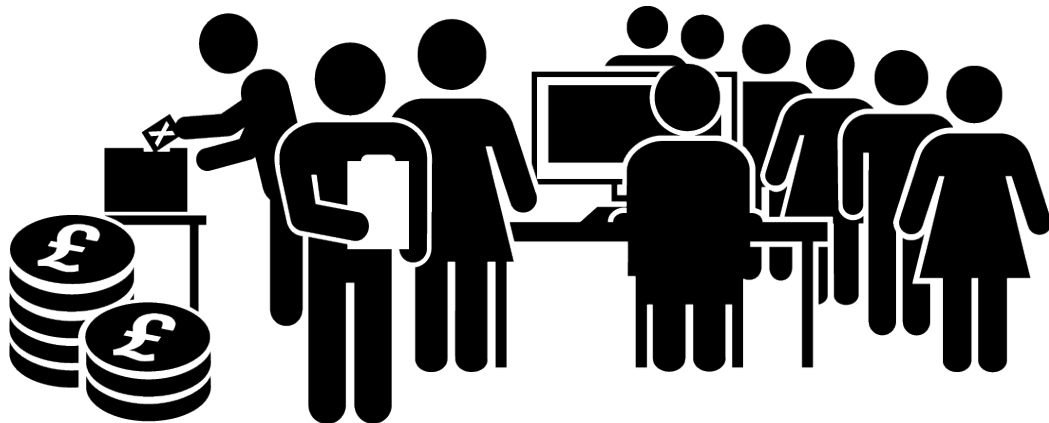
The Safeguarding Officers continue to participate in national groups working on revised editions of key All-Wales safeguarding and child protection guidance documents. Participation in national and local groups ensures that the Directorate has access to up-to-date safeguarding information and is able to influence the development of national and local strategies and guidance.

The Safeguarding Officers deliver training to staff as part of the national roll-out programme of Ask and Act for VAWDASV for Group 2. The development of training materials and an annual delivery plan has been established for the academic year 2026-27 to incorporate a combined approach from the Vale of Glamorgan and Cardiff.

The Vale of Glamorgan domestic abuse Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) continues to develop and refine its processes and the participation of a Safeguarding Officer to represent the Directorate enables appropriate information-sharing to develop robust support for children experiencing domestic abuse. Schools respond promptly and appropriately to requests for information and are implementing strategies to support individual pupils following MARAC feedback.

The Directorate and Vale schools continue to receive Police Protection Notifications (PPNs) from South Wales Police, which significantly enhances the knowledge of the child's lived experience in relation to domestic violence, missing person and incidents of serious violence and allow the development of appropriate support for the relevant child.

The Safeguarding Officers also liaise with Senior Officers with responsibility for wellbeing and nurture, to ensure that all activity relating to child welfare is linked and supported. The Directorate continues to review the effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies and recognises the impact of unresolved bullying on wellbeing outcomes for children. A revised Anti Bullying Policy was developed in consultation with young people from across the Vale of Glamorgan and was published to all schools in February 2026.



Adnoddau Corfforaethol Corporate Resources

C. Corporate Resources Directorate – Safe Recruitment

The Corporate Resources Directorate report outlines ongoing progress in relation to compliance with the Council's Safer Recruitment Policy for the period 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026 in comparison to the same period in the previous year.

Overall Compliance – April 2025 to March 2026 (Schools and Corporate Services)

1. Compliance with the policy for April 2025 to March 2026 for all appointments was 99% (3 breaches), which remains the same percentage, 99% but with lower breaches (7 breaches), from the same reporting period last year (April 2024 to March 2025). A full breakdown of figures can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Compliance Rates for Corporate and Schools New Starters

Month	Number of new starters under Safer Recruitment	Number of employees with all documentation or RA in place	April 2025 to March 2026	April 2024 to March 2025
April	24	24	100%	100%
May	22	21	95%	100%
June	21	21	100%	100%
July	31	31	100%	100%
Aug	13	13	100%	100%
Sept	219	218	99%	99%
Oct	21	21	100%	95%
Nov	41	41	100%	100%
Dec	27	26	96%	100%
Jan	52	52	100%	98%
Feb	19	19	100%	90%
Mar	28	28	100%	96%
Total	518	515	99%	99%

Schools

1. Compliance with the policy for April 2025 to March 2026 for school appointments was 99%, which remains the same as last year's reporting period (99%).
2. Members will note that for the month of September 2025 (which represents the highest recruitment activity within the school academic year), compliance was 99% which remains the same as last years reporting period September 2024 (99%). The number of new starters decreased slightly from 196 in September 2024 in comparison to 181 in 2025.

3. The current escalation process requires a discussion with the Head Teacher regarding non-compliance and monitoring of repeated non-compliance by particular schools throughout the year.
4. A full breakdown of compliance rates for schools and actual figures can be found in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Compliance Rates for Schools New Starters

Month	Number of new starters under Safer Recruitment	Number of employees with all documentation or RA in place	April 2025 to March 2026	April 2024 to March 2025
April	13	13	100%	100%
May	10	9	90%	100%
June	11	11	100%	100%
July	10	10	100%	100%
Aug	1	1	100%	100%
Sept	181	180	99%	99%
Oct	7	7	100%	92%
Nov	21	21	100%	100%
Dec	12	11	92%	100%
Jan	32	32	100%	100%
Feb	5	5	100%	100%
Mar	9	9	100%	100%
Total	312	309	99%	99%

Corporate

5. The compliance rate for Corporate Services for April 2025 to March 2026 was 100%, which is higher than the reporting period last year (95%).
6. A full breakdown of compliance rates and actual figures can be found in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Compliance Rates for Corporate New Starters

Month	Number of new starters under Safer Recruitment	Number of employees with all documentation or RA in place	April 2025 to March 2026	April 2024 to March 2025
April	11	11	100%	100%
May	12	12	100%	100%
June	10	10	100%	100%
July	21	21	100%	100%
Aug	12	12	100%	100%
Sept	38	38	100%	100%
Oct	14	14	100%	100%
Nov	20	20	100%	100%
Dec	15	15	100%	100%
Jan	20	20	100%	95%
Feb	14	14	100%	87%
Mar	19	19	100%	90%
Total	206	206	100%	95%

Return of Risk Assessments (Schools and Corporate Services)

7. Human Resources continue to monitor the return of risk assessments for both Schools and Corporate services. Over the reporting period of April 2025 to March 2026, 3 new starters commenced employment without all the required checks in place or a signed risk assessment as allowed for by the policy.

On-going measures

8. The e-learning facility is available to all Vale of Glamorgan Council employees within corporate Directorates who have access to the Council's StaffNet through the new iDev system. Currently all Schools have access to the Council's StaffNet to enable access the Safer Recruitment and DBS policy and supporting documentation.
9. The Safer Recruitment escalation process requires Human Resources to identify and monitor outstanding documentation at the 8th, 10th and 12th calendar week following the employee taking up employment. Discussions are then held with the Head Teacher who in turn meets with the member of staff and confirms the outcome with Human Resources. The Directorate Safeguarding Officer for Learning and Skills is also informed at the 8th week. Human Resources continue to monitor weekly and also inform the Chair of Governors and Safeguarding Governor if the documentation remains outstanding at the 10th week and 12th week. At the time of reporting there are no schools' appointments and one corporate appointment at the 8th / 10th / 12th week.
10. DBS Checks are undertaken through the e-Bulk system introduced in 2019 and this increases the speed of pre-employment checks. The disclosure outcome will be available in the majority of cases within 24/48 hours.
11. Communication with relevant Head Teachers where issues are identified remains in place as well as when necessary, including the subject on the agenda for Head Teacher meetings, Head Teacher Steering group meetings and Designated Senior Person for child protection DSP Forum meetings attended by school safeguarding leads.
12. HR continue to look at ways to ensure applicants and Head Teachers are made aware of outstanding checks – a regular message will continue be sent to both parties to ensure all checks are in place.
13. In addition, compliance of the policy is discussed at each corporate safeguarding group meeting to continually review the effectiveness of the policy.

14. With the role out of the Oracle Fusion system, data relating to safer recruitment will be stored electronically which will make reporting and monitoring more effective, together with sending out automatic reminders as required.

Conclusion

15. Compliance with the Safer Recruitment Policy remains slightly less than the expected 100% compliance, however, with only 3 breaches, this is an improvement on previous year's compliance.
16. The measures outlined in this report will need to continue to be applied to support this.
17. Compliance in corporate services remains high and this will need to remain closely monitored going forward to ensure this trend continues.



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D. ENVIRONMENT & HOUSING (includes Housing; Safer Vale; VAWDASV; Shared Regulatory Services)

HOUSING

Safeguarding remains a key priority for the Housing team and a number of activities and events have taken place over the last 12 months to strengthen processes and raise awareness amongst staff, tenants and partners. The Departmental Management team monitors any safeguarding concerns regularly and these are fed down through team meetings to front line staff. Safeguarding is also standard agenda item at staff meetings and 1-1s.

All Housing staff receive regular training in Safeguarding and related themes.

Staff from Housing are represented on the Cardiff and Vale Regional Safeguarding Board and the Local Safeguarding Operational Group as well as several subgroups looking at issues around Exploitation, case reviews and Policies, Procedures and Practice. Members of the Housing team have now been trained to be able to undertake Single Unified Safeguarding Reviews (SUSR's), acting as the Chair or Reviewer and have conducted Reviews on behalf of the Board.

Members of the Housing Teams regularly convene and attend multi agency meetings in regard to people identified as particularly vulnerable and work alongside social services colleagues to identify suitable accommodation options.

Front line staff have continued to promote Safeguarding and have attended awareness raising sessions related to Single Unified Safeguarding reviews during the last 12 months. In addition, Safeguarding remains a fixed agenda item on all team meeting agenda's which allows for general discussions to take place about a range of related issues, including referral mechanisms, warning signs, shared learning and things to look out for when undertaking day to day work.

Front line staff have also worked closely with partners to tackle domestic abuse. This has included a nominated representative attending the MARAC meetings and sharing updates on behalf of colleagues in the Housing Management, Rents and Homelessness Teams. Where appropriate, support providers are also contacted to attend and to update about victims or perpetrators. Training has ensured staff remain able to identify concerns and work with partners to minimise risks and protect victims. Members of the Housing Team also attend regional VAWDA-SV strategic and operational groups as well as play a key role in the Vale Domestic Abuse Forum.

The Housing Support Grant funds a range of activities related to domestic abuse and vulnerable families, including 12 units of refuge accommodation, floating support for victims of domestic abuse, target hardening and accommodation and support for vulnerable families.

The need to identify and target support towards vulnerable people is being developed further by a new Tenant Profiling project. This 'intelligence led' approach has been designed to gather detailed personal information about tenants with a view to focussing interventions towards and maintaining close contact with those households most likely to be experiencing difficulties.

As the range of Resettlement Schemes has expanded, a need for training on honour-based violence and forced marriage has been identified. Welsh Government have agreed to arrange the necessary training for the Resettlement Teams, but this training will also be rolled out to staff within the Housing Solutions Service to ensure a wider understanding.

Housing Services staff record all MARF and Adult Safeguarding referrals on a spreadsheet. During 2025-2026, the Housing team submitted the following number of MARF's and Adult Safeguarding referrals:

Service Area	No. of MARFs	No. of Adult Safeguarding Referrals
Housing Solutions	0	2
Supporting People	0	0
Housing Strategy	0	0
Customer Liaison Team	0	0
Accommodation Solutions Team	0	0
Resettlement	1	1

Housing Management and Rents	2	9
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When a MARF or Adult Safeguarding referral is submitted by Housing staff a response should be received to advise what action, if any, is being taken by Children's or Adult Services. If after 48 hours, this information is not received it is chased up by a phone call. If any concerns the staff member will escalate to their manager who should contact a Senior Officer in Social Services to discuss the case and voice any concerns.

In light of sustained housing pressures, the use of temporary accommodation has remained high over the last twelve months and includes the use of bed and breakfast accommodation. Whilst this has been occupied predominantly by single people, there are instances of families with dependent children placed at hotels during 2025-2026. This is usually when a family becomes homeless unexpectedly e.g. following a fire, flood etc and there is no alternative, self-contained accommodation available for them to move into, straight away. When this happens, all efforts are made to minimise the stays in bed and breakfast type provision. However, there are still a significant number of families with dependent children staying in temporary accommodation. This is mainly at the Heol Croeso development in Llantwit Major. The units are high quality, modern, self-contained accommodation and is used until longer term housing options can be secured for families.

Considering the risks identified, a risk assessment has been completed and a range of mitigations are in place to assist those placed in hotel accommodation. The Housing Solutions & Supporting People Team introduced the following processes in respect of safeguarding:

- The Housing Solutions Team has made welfare calls to hotel residents by telephone and are in frequent contact with the B&B providers. Housing Solutions staff also visit the hotels.
- All individuals placed in temporary accommodation and B&B hotels during this period are referred for floating support via the telephone to Pobl's One Stop Shop Service who are specialist support providers commissioned by the Council.
- Members of the Housing Solutions Team and Resettlement Team work from a unit at Heol Croeso and contact households regularly to check on the welfare of clients and ensure the site is well maintained etc.
- Due to the change in the type of accommodation provided, with self-contained units being used for families, the Housing Solutions Team have changed the approach to submitting MARFS for all children placed into temporary accommodation, and now only submit them where a potential need is identified.

Safeguarding activity within Community Safety (Housing and Building Services) Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV)

There were 254 MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) cases during 2025/2026. These are cases presented at multi-agency meetings to address safeguarding concerns for victims of domestic abuse who have been assessed as high risk.

Following the 2024 review, the Vale continues to hold weekly MARAC meetings. These multi-agency discussions are designed to strengthen safeguarding measures by enabling earlier intervention and support.

A national review of MARAC also took place in 2025/2026. The Vale is currently working with partners across South Wales to implement and lead on the recommended changes arising from this review.

In May 2025, South Wales Police revoked access to the NICHE system, preventing the DAARC from using it. As an interim measure, all standard and medium Public Protection Notices (PPNs) have been shared directly with the specialist commissioned provider. Since April 2025 a total of 652 victims have been referred to Vale Domestic Abuse Service to access the support they need. This approach will be incorporated into a revised service model as part of the forthcoming domestic abuse services tender.

The Supporting People team and Welsh Government provide funding to Community Safety to provide Target Hardening equipment for victims of domestic abuse. This service is tailored to the needs and risk of the victim, for example CCTV, intruder alarm, door locks and lighting is offered in order to make the victim feel safer and enable them to remain living in their own home. During 2025/2026, 95 victims received target hardening which was an 38% increase from the previous year.

The Local Authority is in the process of implementing the National Training Framework. In 2025/2026, 5,414 staff members were compliant with Group 1 requirements. A total of 858 staff completed Group 2 Ask and Act awareness training during 2025–26, bringing the overall number of staff trained at Group 2 level to date to 3,507. In addition, 26 staff members have been trained as Group 3 Ask and Act champions.

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 enacted new provisions aimed at reforming the anti-social behaviour rules and tools previously available. The changes have made it easier for the Vale of Glamorgan to respond swiftly to reports of anti-social behaviour.

The Community Safety Team within the Council co-ordinate the multi-agency Problem Solving Group (PSG) which meets monthly to discuss incidents of ASB to ensure that early identification and intervention can be offered to perpetrators and to put in place safeguarding measures for victims of ASB.

A total of 1,486 ASB incidents were reported, representing a 20% decrease compared to the same period last year. This resulted in 1,154 referrals, a 21% year-on-year decrease, comprising 268 adult referrals (an 8% increase), 235 youth referrals (a 43% decrease), and 389 area referrals (a 16% decrease). Preventative options were reviewed for each case, with multi-agency responses co-ordinated where appropriate. The highest wards for adult referrals were Castleland, followed by Cadoc, while youth referrals were highest in Baruc, followed by Buttrills. Baruc also recorded the highest number of reporting persons, followed by Castleland. Neighbour-related issues were the most common ASB type for adults, whereas alcohol and verbal abuse were the most frequently reported concerns within youth-related incidents. Overall, the most common ASB category was youth annoyance, followed by neighbour issues.

In response, 11 Multi-Agency Problem Solving meetings were held to address individuals and locations of concern and to agree actions to reduce ASB impact, while 7 action plans were discussed during 2025/26, representing a 41% reduction compared to the same period last year. Additionally, 39 Task and Finish meetings were conducted to address complex neighbour disputes, and 33 door knocks were undertaken in response to issues such as disputes, drug-related reports, youth annoyance, and vehicle-related ASB. Ongoing collaboration with substance misuse partners strengthened information sharing and supported effective housing arrangements, with continued partnership work alongside CAVDAS.

Operation Elstree was relaunched in April 2025 as a weekly multi-agency initiative running throughout the spring and summer to ensure coastal areas and country parks remain safe and enjoyable, with no incidents of concern reported during this period. The Community Safety Officer also carried out 252 patrols and submitted 36 ASB referrals and Police intelligence logs.

Channel Panel (Prevent)

Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The programme uses a multi-agency approach to protect vulnerable people by:

- Identifying people at risk
- Assessing the nature and extent of that risk
- Developing the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.

There is a regional Cardiff and Vale multi-agency Channel Panel that meet to discuss the referrals and to ensure that the appropriate action is taken. There were 10 referrals



to Channel in 2025/2026 for the Vale. Plans are in place for the creation of a PREVENT Partnership Board to oversee the Prevent Delivery Plan for the Vale. This will include a training matrix to ensure that all professionals understand the parameters and pathways for referring into the Channel Panel.