

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Audit and Governance Committee
Date of Meeting:	28 March 2019
Subject:	Annual Safeguarding Update
Report of:	Head of Community Services
Corporate Lead:	Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Lead Member for Community
Number of Appendices:	One

Executive Summary:

This report provides the Committee with an update on how the Council is fulfilling its safeguarding responsibilities.

This year there was no requirement to carry out a Section 11 self-assessment due to the changes to the Children's Safeguarding Board procedures as set out in the body of the report.

Appendix 1 is an update on the actions identified as part of an internal audit of Safeguarding.

Recommendation:

To CONSIDER the annual report giving assurance as to the level of the Council's compliance with its safeguarding duty.

Reasons for Recommendation:

Tewkesbury Borough Council is committed to the principles of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children, young people and vulnerable adults. Our employees and any contractors working on the Council's behalf are briefed and understand the definitions of children and vulnerable adults in the context of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act and the legislative framework of measures to protect these groups from harm. This report provides the Committee with the reassurance that safeguarding is being managed correctly by the Council.

Resource Implications:

None arising from this report.

Legal Implications:

None arising directly from this report; however, the Children Act 2004, the safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Care Act 2014 place duties on the Council to ensure its functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Risk Management Implications:

None arising directly from this report; however, the Council has a duty of care for the children, young people and vulnerable adults who take part in activities, or access services that it provides. The Council recognises that all children and young people have a right to be safe and to be protected from abuse and harm. By not complying with the recommendations made in the safeguarding audit, children, young people and vulnerable adults could be exposed to an increased risk of abuse and this in turn could damage the Council's reputation.

Performance Management Follow-up:

The Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed in 2019 to ensure that it is still fit for purpose.

Environmental Implications:

None

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Tewkesbury Borough Council recognises and accepts its responsibilities to ensure, as far as possible, that young people and vulnerable adults are protected from harm.
- 1.2 Historically, district and borough councils were required to carry out a self-assessment in order to demonstrate their compliance with Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004. This has not been a requirement this year due to the changes in the working of the Gloucestershire Children's Safeguarding Board which is currently in development as set out below.
- 1.3 As part of ensuring that we are dealing with safeguarding appropriately, the internal audit team carried out a review of how the Council complies with this requirement. Appendix 1 to this report is an update on the activity that has been carried out with regard to the actions identified. Members will note that the action plan is virtually complete.

2.0 WORKING TOGETHER

- 2.1 Children's safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and, historically, the County Council was the lead authority although there was a formal duty for the Police and the Clinical Commissioning Groups and other public authorities to cooperate.
- 2.2 The Children Act 2004, as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017, strengthens this already important relationship by placing new duties on key agencies in a local area. Specifically, the Police, Clinical Commissioning Groups and the local authority are under a duty to make arrangements to work together, and with other partners locally, to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area.
- 2.3 Locally, this has led to a review of the way that the Local Safeguarding Children Boards operates. From 29 June 2018, local authorities must begin their transition from Local Safeguarding Children Boards to safeguarding partner and child death review partnerships. The transition must be completed by 29 September 2019. New Section 11 requirements will be incorporated into the review.

3.0 TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL SAFEGUARDING POLICY

3.1 Tewkesbury Borough Council has a Safeguarding Policy which it has committed to reviewing every year. In light of the transition taking place at county level, a light touch review has taken place this year and the policy is currently still fit for purpose. A further full review will incorporate any new arrangements in line with the new county-wide arrangements.

3.2 Any new Section 11 requirements for the Council will also be incorporated into this policy review.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 None

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 None

6.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

6.1 Tewkesbury Borough Council Safeguarding Policy

7.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

7.1 Safeguarding Children and Young People – July 2014
Adult Safeguarding: Statement of Government Policy – May 2011.

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

8.1 None

9.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social/Community Safety/Cultural/ Economic/ Environment)

9.1 None

10.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money/Equalities/E-Government/Human Rights/Health And Safety)

10.1 None

Background Papers: None

Contact Officer: Head of Community Services
01684 272259 Peter.Tonge@tewkisbury.gov.uk

Appendices: Appendix 1 - Internal Audit of Safeguarding – Action plan Update.