

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Audit Committee
Date of Meeting:	14 December 2016
Subject:	Monitoring of Safeguarding Audit
Report of:	Richard Kirk, Interim Head of Community Services
Corporate Lead:	Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Councillor Mrs K J Berry, Lead Member for Community
Number of Appendices:	1

Executive Summary:

To provide an update in relation to the recommendations arising from the safeguarding audit.

Recommendation:

To CONSIDER the progress made in relation to the recommendations arising from the safeguarding audit.

Reasons for Recommendation:

The audit identified a number of controls and actions that needed to be implemented.

Resource Implications:

None specific for 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 annually. The Council's Audit Team will undertake a

further safeguarding audit in quarter 4 of 2016/17. Officers within the Housing Services Team will undertake an annual Section 11 audit in accordance with the Monitoring of Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board, to measure compliance under the Children Act 2004, to ensure the functions are discharged to safeguard and promote child welfare.

Environmental Implications:

None arising from this report.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

1.1 In November 2013, the Safeguarding Children Self-Assessment toolkit was completed. Reviews were carried out in September 2014 and December 2015 and a series of recommendations were made.

1.2 In 2014/15 an audit was carried out, which gave assurance that the toolkit was a fair reflection of the Council's safeguarding arrangements. Where areas of partial or non-compliance were identified, an action plan was created with an implementation date of April 2014. The audit at that time identified that the implementation dates had lapsed and all the actions remained outstanding. This led to a 'limited' audit opinion and was reported to Audit Committee as such.

1.3 A follow-up report was then produced by the Group Manager concerned and reported to Audit Committee on 18 March 2015 as to the progress of the internal audit recommendations and the current position at the time. At this Committee, the Group Manager stated that an annual report would be produced to give assurance that satisfactory arrangements were being implemented – this report is therefore the first annual report.

2.0 PROGRESS AGAINST RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM SAFEGUARDING AUDIT

2.1 An internal self-assessment has been carried out to measure progress against the actions. The progress of actions identified are summarised in **Appendix 1**. All issues identified within the audit have been actioned.

2.2 Since the audit, further opportunities have been identified. Safeguarding children is now clearly embedded throughout the organisation:

- Councillor Berry, as the Lead Member for Community which includes safeguarding,

receives regular updates at the Portfolio Briefings each month.

- An annual update on safeguarding is provided to the Audit Committee.
- Training on child sexual exploitation – following on from our success at delivering training to licenced taxi drivers in 2015, it was agreed at Licensing Committee on 13 October 2016 that training should be part of the Licensing Policy and it is now mandatory for all drivers.
- Safeguarding training is mandatory for all staff and elected Members. All new starters complete e-training, followed up by more comprehensive induction training. This training now forms part of an HR process and ensures training has been delivered to all members of staff and elected Members. To date, the uptake of training by Members has been limited, but further action has been taken to encourage participation with the e-learning module, following the discussion at Executive Committee on 23 November 2016.
- The Section 11 Audit issued by Gloucestershire County Council is anticipated, but has not yet been received for completion for 2016. It is understood that it is currently under review and the manner in which audit responses will be collected in future will be in the form of an online survey. Recommendations for additional actions may follow when the Section 11 online survey for 2016 is received and completed.
- The Safeguarding Policy has been reviewed and updated – the review identified new requirements relating to young people and vulnerable adults and the Policy has been re-written to reflect these. The revised Safeguarding Policy was approved for adoption by the Executive Committee on 23 November 2016.
- As the Council is a member of the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB), the reviewed South West Procedure is automatically incorporated in to the Council's updated Policy.
- All housing staff undertook free GSCB e-learning domestic abuse training in August 2016. All Housing Officers have additionally attended one day GSCB Domestic Violence and Abuse (Part 1) training to gain a more comprehensive understanding of domestic abuse and coercive control.

2.3 As well as the internal self-assessment that has been carried out to measure progress against the actions, a further review will be carried out by Internal Audit in quarter 4 of 2016/17.

2.4 Given the work that has been completed to date, and the outcome of the self-assessment exercise on the whole safeguarding framework, it is considered that the safeguarding arrangements in place for the Council are now adequate, but will be the subject of further scrutiny by Internal Audit in quarter 4.

3.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 None.

4.0 CONSULTATION

4.1 None.

5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

- 5.1**
- Safeguarding Policy.
 - Code of Conduct.
 - Disciplinary procedure and Rules.

- Disclosure Policy and Procedure.
- Equality Statement and Equality Scheme.
- Grievance Policy and Procedure.
- Harassment and Bullying procedure.
- Recruitment and Selection – Code of practice.
- ICT User Policy.
- Data Protection Policy, Procedure and Guidance.
- Complaints Procedure.

6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

- 6.1**
- Statutory Guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (HM Government 2005).
 - Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (HM Government 2015).
 - Guide to the Care Act 2014 – The Implications for Providers.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

7.1 Ongoing training costs and staffing establishment costs contained within budget.

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

8.1 None

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

9.1 Matters relating to equalities and human rights are contained within the revised Safeguarding Policy. Any appropriate referrals will help to ensure that children, young people and vulnerable adults are kept safe.

10.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

10.1 None

Background Papers: None

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Appendices: Appendix 1 - Safeguarding Action Plan 2015/16