



South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board  
Working Together For Children

## South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board Partnership Agreement

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## 1. THE SOUTH EAST WALES SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

This Partnership Agreement sets out the priorities, aspirations, commitments and standards of the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB). The South East Wales region is made up of the areas covered by the local authorities of Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire, Torfaen and Newport. The agreement sets out how the organisations across the South East Wales region will meet their statutory duty co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children across South East Wales. It is a working document and will be reviewed annually by the SEWSCB in line with other policy documents relating to children and young people.

The SEWSCB comprises representatives from South East Wales's Social Services, Aneurin Bevan Health Board, Gwent Police, All Wales Probation Trust, Barnardos, Youth Offending Services, Housing and Voluntary Sector agencies.

The Partnership Agreement is an essential part of all planning, management, commissioning and provision of services for Children, Young People and their Families, and is endorsed by all the Partners below:

<b>PARTNERS</b>	<b>REPRESENTATIVE</b>
Caerphilly Social Services Directorate	Gareth Jenkins, Assistant Director, Children's Services
Blaenau Gwent Social Services Directorate	Liz Majer, Director of Social Services Tanya Evans, Acting Head of Children's Services
Monmouthshire Social Services Directorate	Simon Burch, Director of Social Services and Chair of the Board Vanessa Glenn, Head of Children's Services and lead for Safeguarding in Education
Torfaen Social Services Directorate	Ruth Derrick, Head of Children's Services
Newport Social Services Directorate	Sally Jenkins, Head of Children's Services
Aneurin Bevan Health Board	Denise Llewellyn, Director of Nursing Jayne Elias, Assistant Director of Nursing Linda Brown, Named Nurse Safeguarding
Gwent Police	Detective Chief Superintendent Peter Keen
Wales Probation	Nic Davies, Assistant Chief Executive, Head of Gwent LDU Andrew Bush, Deputy Head of Gwent LDU
Barnardos	Liz Baker, Assistant Director
Youth Offending Service representative for region	Michaela Rogers, Service Manager, Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly
Safeguarding Children Service of Public Health Wales	Lin Slater, Designated Nurse Nigel Farr, Lead GP Safeguarding
Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations	Glenda Genner, Assistant Director
Torfaen Voluntary Alliance	Peter Kennedy, Director
Education Directorates*	Darren Joseph, Head of Safeguarding in Education, Torfaen

	Jackie Garland, Service Manager, Social Inclusion, Caerphilly Pauline Marston, Acting Assistant Head of Education (Inclusion), Newport Vanessa Glenn, Head of Children's Services** Nicola Allan, Education Advisory Service
BAWSO	Miriam Elmirghani, Regional Manager
Representative of the Lead Officers, Gwent Local Authority Housing group	Graham North, Public Sector Housing Manager, Caerphilly
Representative of the Housing Associations operating within the region	Duncan Forbes, Chief Executive, Bron Afon Community Housing
Representative of the Regional Domestic Abuse Forum	Immy Lee, Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator, Torfaen and Chair of the Regional Domestic Abuse Forum

\*Due to varying structures across the region this will sometimes include Leisure Services as well

\*\*Vanessa Glenn, Head of Children's Services in Monmouthshire also has the lead for safeguarding children in Education in that Local Authority and therefore has a dual role on the Board.

**This partnership agreement will be reviewed in June 2014.**

## **2. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this Partnership Agreement is to provide a basis for all agencies, statutory and voluntary, to develop the effective safeguarding measures required to maintain safeguarding on a statutory footing. This Agreement and the Board's Strategic Plan 2013-2016 sets out how the SEWSCB will provide the strategic lead in the development of safeguarding services and the arrangements for scrutinising how Partner Agencies are embedding robust safeguarding children systems within the operation of their services.

Through raised awareness, good practice and robust systems and procedures, staff will be supported to ensure the safeguarding and promotion of welfare of children is effective and their outcomes are improved.

All services for South East Wales' Children, Young People and their families, are united across professional boundaries in their aim to ensure that all children grow up safely, with their families where possible, in their own community and that they enjoy the best possible health and education, and develop to their maximum potential.

The South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB) recognises that agencies and organisations are undergoing organisational change and the impact this can have on delivery of services. It is therefore essential that the Board has the lead role in co-ordinating and improving services to **safeguard** children and young people in the South East Wales region. To enable the SEWSCB to carry out this function effectively all agencies have given a commitment:

- There will be effective accountability across and between all agencies to raise the priority of safeguarding children.
- Clear practice standards, policies and procedures will be implemented to ensure the early intervention and effective safeguarding and promotion of welfare of children.
- SEWSCB and services to safeguard children will have adequate resources.
- All agencies are committed to collaboration and continuous improvement of services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- The skills, effectiveness and competency of the Children's and Adult's Workforce will be enhanced by interagency training.
- All agencies are committed to sharing information in a relevant and purposeful way at a strategic and operational level, in order to safeguard children and young people
- All agencies will promote a culture of openness and learning within their organisations and in their partnership work with the Board and member agencies

Equalities statement:

The South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board will work actively against all forms of discrimination towards and by children and young people, regardless of their individual background and circumstances. Our equalities commitment covers ethnic origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious beliefs or non-belief, use of Welsh language, BSL and other languages, nationality, responsibility for any dependents or any other reason which cannot be shown to be justified.

### **3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE SEWSCB**

#### **The Role and Responsibilities of the Chair and Vice Chair**

- Manage all aspects of SEWSCB meetings, including agenda setting, chairing of meetings, agreeing minutes and monitoring actions to be taken;
- In consultation, ensure that key national, regional and local issues are brought to the attention of the SEWSCB;
- Oversee and provide support in the production of the Board Plans and Annual Reviews;
- Maintain good liaison throughout the SEWSCB structure and visibly support the work of sub groups of the Board;

- Determine the need for Child Practice Reviews with advice from the Child Practice Review Panel;
- Maintain regular liaison with all the Local Authorities Chief Executives and Chairs of other strategic partnerships and Local Service Boards across the region;
- Contribute to regulation, inspection and corporate assessment processes as required by all agencies within the partnership;
- Respond to the requirements of Overview and Scrutiny across the 5 Local Authority areas in relation to all aspects of safeguarding, and support other partners as required.
- Contribute to the strategic co-ordination of the SEWSCB in relation to other strategic partnerships;
- Are the public face of the SEWSCB;
- Hold to account members of partner agencies in ensuring they provide support and resources to the nominated member of the SEWSCB;
- Champion Children's rights;
- Ensure links to the Children's Commissioner;
- Lead the evaluation of the effectiveness of the role of members.

### **The Role and Responsibilities of Members**

Members of the SEWSCB are individuals with a strategic or advisory role in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children within their agency/organisation. They are in a position to:

- Speak for their agency/organisation with authority
- Commit their agency/organisation on policy and practice matters
- Will be responsible for the delivery of the individual agency's commitment to the Board
- Translate SEWSCB aims into activity within their own agency
- Actively contribute to the development of the SEWSCB and provide appropriate challenge and support to the Board as required

In addition many members have specific responsibilities or expertise to contribute to the effective functioning of the Board.

The SEWSCB will meet bi-monthly with a maximum of two further development days for all Board members to attend annually. This will be reviewed after one year and meetings will then become quarterly.

Members are expected to prioritise attendance at Board meetings. Deputies must be of a senior level and agreed with the Board beforehand. A minimum of 50% plus 1 of agencies must be present for the meeting to be considered quorate.

## **BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

### **Chair**

*Director of Social Services, Monmouthshire Local Authority*

### **Social Services**

*Director of Social Services, Blaenau Gwent*

*Heads of Children's Services Divisions from the 5 Local Authorities*

*Manager, Emergency Duty Team*

### **Youth Offending Services**

*Youth Offending Service Manager*

### **Directorates of Education and Leisure**

*Head of Safeguarding, Torfaen*

*Service Manager, Caerphilly*

*Assistant Director, Newport and Blaenau Gwent*

*Head of Service, Monmouthshire*

### **Safeguarding Children Service, Public Health Wales**

*Designated Professional*

*Lead GP*

### **Aneurin Bevan Health Board**

*Director of Nursing, Safeguarding and Public Protection*

*Assistant Director of Nursing*

*Named Nurse Safeguarding*

### **Gwent Police**

*Head of Crime Work Stream, Gwent Police*

### **Wales Probation**

*Assistant Chief Executive, Head of Gwent LDU*

*Deputy Head of Gwent LDU*

### **Housing**

*Representative from Housing Associations*

*Representative from Chief Officers, Local Authority Housing*

### **Voluntary Sector**

*Assistant Director, Barnardos*

*Assistant Director Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations*

*Director Torfaen Voluntary Alliance*

*Director, BAWSO*

## **Regional Domestic Abuse Forum**

*Chair of Forum*

**The Board and its members will be supported by the Business Manager, Development Officers, Administrative Officer and Clerical Assistant**

### **4. DEFINITION OF SAFEGUARDING**

The term “safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children’ is well understood within the context of the Children Act 1989 which provides the statutory framework for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in need. In this partnership agreement, welfare is defined, as in the Children Act 1989, in terms of children’s health and development, where health means “physical or mental health” and development, “physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development”. The term children, refers to all children and young people up to 18.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children are defined in Safeguarding Children Working Together under the Children Act 2004 (Welsh Assembly Government 2006) as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment.
- Preventing impairment of children’s health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and creating opportunities to enable children to have optimum life chances such that they can enter adulthood successfully.

### **5. THE AIM OF SOUTH EAST WALES SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD**

The Board’s vision is:

**‘All children and young people in South East Wales are protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination, live in safe homes and communities and are supported to achieve their full potential.’**

The SEWSCB will have a lead role in ensuring children are protected from abuse and neglect.

Aspirations and targets for the SEWSCB are taken from:

- The Children Act 2004
- The National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services
- The Welsh Assembly Government seven Core Aims:
  - have a flying start in life;
  - have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities;
  - enjoy the best possible health and are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation;
  - have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities;
  - are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised;

- have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional wellbeing; and
  - are not disadvantaged by poverty
- Single Plans from each of the 5 Local Authority areas

Further detail in relation to the aims and objectives of the SEWSCB can be found in the Board's Strategic Plan 2013-2016.

## **6. ROLE OF THE SEWSCB**

'Safeguarding Children: Working Together under the Children Act 2004' (WAG 2006) states that the focus of Safeguarding Children Boards (SCBs) should remain the protection of children from abuse and neglect. That policies and practice should therefore be primarily targeted at those children who are suffering, or at risk of significant harm.

Ensuring that effective policies and working practices are in place to protect children and that they are properly co-ordinated remains a key role for the SEWSCB. Only when these are in place will the Board look to the wider remit of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children.

'Safeguarding Children: Working Together under the Children Act 2004' defines the following key functions for the SCB:

- Developing policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authorities.
- Communicating to persons and bodies in the area of the authorities the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising their awareness of how this can best be done and encouraging them to do so.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by the Local Authority and Board partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advise them on ways to improve.
- Participating in the local planning and commissioning of children's services to ensure that they take safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children into account.
- Undertaking reviews of cases where a child has died or has been seriously harmed in circumstances where abuse or neglect is known or suspected and advising on lessons that can be learned.

Across the South East Wales region the following key roles will be undertaken by the SEWSCB:

- Provide the strategic lead in the continued development of safeguarding services.

- Co-ordinate and scrutinise safeguarding arrangements and multi agency safeguarding children practice
- Ensure the effectiveness of the safeguarding children elements of Local Authority single plans.
- Ensure safeguarding is planned within all service development.
- Ensure that lessons are learnt from children's deaths and serious incidents.
- Promote safeguarding strategies to minimise the requirement for protection.
- Contribute to the wider goals of improving the wellbeing of all children, but with particular focus on 'free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation' (Core Aim 3) and 'children having a safe home and community' (Core Aim 6).

In undertaking these roles and working with other strategic groups and planning forums we aim to maximise the safety of children and young people in relation to:

- Children who are experiencing neglect
- Adolescents who are exhibiting harmful behaviour e.g. self harm
- Children who are affected by parental substance misuse, domestic abuse and/or parental mental health issues

## **7. CO-ORDINATING THE LINKS TO SINGLE PLAN ARRANGEMENTS IN THE FIVE LOCAL AUTHORITY AREAS**

The Local Service Boards in each Local Authority area will have the overarching strategic role for partnership work and delivering on the single plan for the Local Authority area. Mechanisms will be established to enable the Local Service Boards to hold the SEWSCB to account for its work, achievements etc and vice versa. Initially this will be in the form of an Annual Report.

## **8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF AGENCIES/ORGANISATIONS REPRESENTED ON THE SEWSCB**

Each agency has a responsibility as a member of the SEWSCB to uphold the standards of the Board and communicate the work of the Board within their agency/organisation in order to promote positive outcomes for children. An awareness and appreciation of the role of others is also essential to achieve effective working together and shared responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The key responsibilities of organisations in this respect are defined in Section 28 of the Children Act 2004. Each agency, therefore, is required to make a formal commitment to the work of the SEWSCB in order for the work of the Board to be achieved.

## **9. COMMON RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD**

All agencies and organisations providing services for children will have in place:

- A clear commitment from senior management as to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare.
- A clear line of accountability within the organisation for work relating to the safeguarding children.
- Recruitment and human resources management procedures that take account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children including appropriate checks on new staff, existing staff and volunteers.
- Appropriate procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against members of staff and volunteers.
- Appropriate training arrangements to ensure all staff are trained to undertake their responsibilities effectively and understand their establishment's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This will include regular training updates as necessary.
- Appropriate and effective policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare that are in accordance with their inter-agency procedures.
- Effective arrangements for working with other organisations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children including arrangements for sharing information.
- Appropriate whistle blowing procedures and a culture that enables safeguarding issues to be addressed.
- The Member Agencies of SEWSCB agree that sound multi-agency assessment, planning, intervention and review lies at the heart of effective practice in safeguarding children.
- In addition to these responsibilities, all agencies and organisations will undertake profession specific roles, to contribute to the overall objective of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. Key responsibilities are defined below:

**Five Local Authorities in the region; Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire, Torfaen and Newport**

- Each local authority discharges the key statutory roles for Social Services, Education & Leisure Services, Housing and Community Safety and the Lead Member and Director roles for Children and Young People's Services and Planning.
- They will ensure that there are mechanisms in place to enable these functions are carried out in cogent and co-ordinated ways.
- The key responsibilities of the Councils across the areas described above are set out below:-
  - deliver safe, accessible and comprehensive services and involve children and young people as appropriate in service development;

- identify children who may be vulnerable or at risk of harm and complete appropriate assessments and interventions;
- provide children with safe home, school and other environments and ensure they are educated about managing risk and improving resilience;
- ensure all agencies within the Councils and across its various Partnerships work together in the best interests of children and young people, and share information as necessary to secure this aim;
- plan services by ensuring the above values and the Welsh Government's seven core aims for children and young people are met.

### **Social Services**

Under Section 6 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970, every Local Authority has a statutory duty to appoint a Director of Social Services. Further to this, the Welsh Government has issued guidance on the statutory role of the Director of Social Services. The guidance sets out the responsibilities of the Director as follows:

- Providing clear, professional leadership across Social Services
- Having direct access to and advising the Chief Executive and Councillors on Social Services matters and on the directions and actions the Authority should take in fulfilling its Social Services responsibilities
- Ensuring that there are strong performance management arrangements in place across Social Services and reporting at a corporate level and reporting on a corporate level and to Councillors on the Authority's performance in relation to this
- Fulfilling overall responsibility for Social Services workforce planning, training and professional development
- Ensuring that there are adequate arrangements in place for Social Services to work with others, both within and outside the Authority, in fulfilling its Social Services functions and in contributing to the achievement of wider policy objectives

In addition to this Social Services will:

- Deliver safe and accessible services and involve children and young people as appropriate in service development.
- Identify children who may be vulnerable or at risk of harm and complete appropriate assessments and interventions.
- Provide children with safe environments and ensure they are educated about managing risk and improving resilience.
- Work across the Adult and Children's Services divisions to promote the sharing of information and co-ordination of services as an effective way of ensuring safeguarding responsibilities.

## **Education and Leisure Directorates**

The Education & Leisure Directorate will exercise its statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, as set out in Safeguarding Children: Working Together under the Children Act 2004 guidance, 2006. This includes:

- Creating and maintaining a safe teaching and learning environment for children and young people.
- Identifying where there are child welfare concerns and taking action to address them, where appropriate in partnership with other agencies.

## **Public Health Wales**

- Provide independent expert advice from a Welsh NHS perspective
- Support the development of best practice in the NHS across Wales.

## **Aneurin Bevan Health Board**

- Create and maintain safe healthcare environments for children and young people
- Provide opportunities for staff to access training to enable them to be alert to the indicators of child abuse and neglect
- Implement policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding children and young people
- Support the work of the SEWSCB

## **Gwent Police**

- Ensure a protocol is in place to support the sharing of information with SEWSCB members to support the safeguarding of children.
- Work to prevent crime against or involving children and minimise the potential for children to become victims.
- Implement clear policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding with appropriate links to other agencies, and a proactive approach.

## **Wales Probation**

Wales Probation will make arrangements to safeguard and promote children's welfare. This includes the management of adult offenders in ways that reduce the harm they may present to children through skilful assessment, the delivery of well-targeted quality intervention and risk management planning.

- Recognition of factors that are a risk to children's safety and welfare and the implementation of agency procedures to protect children from harm.
- Provide a service to child victims of serious sexual assault or violence offences.

- Provide a service to women victims, of male perpetrators of domestic abuse by providing accredited domestic violence programmes. Further they will have regard for the needs of any dependent children within the family.
- The Probation Service will ensure a clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

### **Youth Offending Services**

Youth Offending Services will exercise their statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by ensuring that functions set out in Safeguarding Children: Working Together under the Children Act 2004 are appropriately discharged. These include:

- All those working with the Youth Offending Service will understand their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Observing the National Standards on assessment and intervention is set out within the key elements of effective practice issued by the Youth Justice Board.

### **Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO) and Torfaen Voluntary Alliance (TVA)**

GAVO and TVA will represent the voluntary sector on the Board and contribute to the development of the links between the Board and the voluntary sector. They will also ensure that all those voluntary organisations that they are engaged with, have appropriate systems in place to safeguard children and young people.

GAVO has established a voluntary sector safeguarding sub group and this group will be responsible for ensuring that key messages from the Board are disseminated throughout the sector and that key issues raised by the sector are communicated promptly to the Board. The group will also contribute to raising awareness of the Board, its work and of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

### **Barnardos Cymru**

The Assistant Director of Barnardos represents their organisation and links with other large charitable organisations in Wales. All the work the organisation undertakes is in relation to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. Robust safeguarding systems are in place to protect children and young people Barnardos are working with.

### **Housing**

The strategic housing team will take into account their responsibility for safeguarding of children when discharging their homelessness responsibilities and allocating funding for supporting people services.

Local authority landlords and housing associations have regular contact with and play a key role in working with many families in need and young people leaving the care system as well as often providing a range of other support, care services and

supported housing. They will ensure that all their staff are familiar with safeguarding principles and that appropriate referral arrangements are in place where concerns are identified. They will take account of safeguarding when setting their allocation policies.

## **10. SEWSCB STRATEGIC PLAN - MONITORING AND EVALUATION ARRANGEMENTS**

The Board has developed a three year strategic plan which includes outcomes to be achieved which relate to children and young people and their carers across the South East Wales region including those from diverse cultures or with diverse needs who may require additional input in order for their safeguarding needs to be met.

The Board will assess it's effectiveness against agreed measures which will directly relate to it's strategic priorities and will publish an annual review setting out the progress it is making towards achieving these outcomes for children, young people and their families.

Each of the former LSCBs in South East Wales compiled a legacy statement to ensure that good practice and areas for improvement are carried forward into the new regional arrangements.

Key achievements included:

- Developed 'Thistle' – a resource for teachers, youth workers, social workers and other workers, to help raise awareness of child sexual exploitation with children and young people
- Developed Neglect guidance for volunteers and workers to help support them in working with families where neglect is an issue.
- To support the guidance, we have delivered a rolling programme of Working with Neglect training for the past 2 years
- Trained thousands of volunteers and workers to be able to identify and report concerns about children and work with families where there are issues about abuse and/or neglect
- Consulted with children and young people in a variety of ways including developing Junior Boards and using a questionnaire to gather the views of children and young people who are subject to the child protection process
- Consulted with parents and developed a range of leaflets with advice and guidance
- Developed websites that provide advice and guidance for children and young people, parents and carers, the public and professionals
- Developed guidance on safeguarding for mosques and muslim schools
- Delivered practice improvements in working with complex families and 'stuck' cases

Using the former LSCBs strategic plans as a basis combined with some further development work, the Board has identified 4 priorities for the period 2013-2016:

1. Children and young people experiencing neglect
2. Adolescents who exhibit harmful behaviours
3. Children and young people who are affected by domestic abuse, parental mental health issues and/or parental substance misuse

#### 4. Establishing an effective Safeguarding Children Board

The outcomes that the Board wants to achieve are:

- Children and young people who are experiencing neglect receive the support they need at the earliest stage and have improved outcomes.
- Adolescents are not being harmed by sexual exploitation, going missing, self harm and/or suicide, engaging in anti social or criminal behaviour or engaging in drug and/or alcohol misuse, get the support they need at an early stage and have improved outcomes.
- Children and young people who are living with domestic abuse, parental mental health issues and/or parental substance misuse get the support that they need at an early stage and have improved outcomes.

Further information about the work programme of the SEWSCB can be found in the Strategic Plan 2013-2016.

The Board will monitor the effectiveness of the Board and the progress it is making towards the aforementioned outcomes in a number of ways:

- Developing a data set that is directly linked to the priorities it has identified. This data will be monitored by local Learning and Reviewing groups on a quarterly basis and by the Board on a bi-annual basis. The data will be used to identify areas for further work, for example, case audit.
- The local Learning and Reviewing groups will undertake an annual programme of audit as determined by the Board and this will identify qualitative information about the child's journey and whether intervention has made a difference to their lives or not.
- The Board will be developing a programme of engagement with children, young people and their families to find out what they think is working well and whether intervention has made a positive difference to their lives.
- Work plans for each of the regional and local sub groups will be determined by the Board each year. The groups will then be required to report to the Board on a bi-annual basis on the progress they are making on their work plans. Work plans will include timescales for the achievement of tasks and groups will be held accountable for the timeliness in which they deliver the work plan and the quality of the work they have undertaken.
- The Board will require member agencies to complete an audit of their safeguarding systems on an annual basis and this will include policies and procedures, arrangements for training staff etc. The findings of the audits will be shared with the Board and agencies will be required to develop and implement an action plan for any areas they have identified as requiring improvement. Agencies will be held accountable for completion of their actions plans by the Board.
- Each year the Board will undertake a self assessment which will explore how effective the Board is in fulfilling its statutory obligations and in making a difference to children's lives. This self assessment will be used to determine actions for the following year and will be incorporated into the strategic plan.
- Each year the Board will publish an Annual Review detailing the work it has completed within the year and the progress it has made towards the outcomes it is trying to achieve and this will be shared with partners, the five Local Service

Boards, the five Councils and published on the website so that the public and professionals can access it.

- The Board will be subject to joint inspections as determined by various inspectorates and safeguarding children is an element of inspections that will be undertaken in member agencies.

For the year 2013-214, the Board has identified neglect as an area it wants to explore in more detail. We will be looking at data about neglect and then we will identify a number of cases across the region in which there are concerns about neglect and audit them, to better understand what works well and what we need to do better.

This work will give the Board a better idea as to how we can effectively intervene in the lives of families to reduce child neglect. We will use this approach each year to explore each of the priorities in more depth.

## **11. GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SEWSCB**

The Chair of the SEWSCB is accountable to the Chief Executives of the five Local Authorities in the region, and hence to their Councils, for the effectiveness of their work as SEWSCB Chair and the work of the SEWSCB. In order to inform the Chief Executives of the above the Chair will meet with the G7 group on a bi-annual basis to update them on the progress of the SEWSCB and any issues that will require their attention. Reports will also be provided to the Scrutiny Committees in each Local Authority.

The SEWSCB will also be accountable to Welsh Government and the National Safeguarding Children Board when this is formed. Quarterly reports will be provided to Welsh Government in respect of the grant monies they have provided to the Board from the Collaboration Fund.

Each member of the SEWSCB and its sub groups has a corporate responsibility to keep their own agency and organisation informed of the work of the SEWSCB and particularly to highlight through their organisational governance arrangements, any risks associated with that organisation not meeting its statutory responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children.

A key role of the SEWSCB will be to monitor the effectiveness of each agency/organisation operating in South East Wales, both individually and whilst working in partnership to deliver the desired outcomes for children within South East Wales.

Agencies and organisations are accountable to the SEWSCB as a statutory Board. The SEWSCB will hold agencies and organisations individually and in partnership to account for their performance in delivering the identified strategic outcomes.

If the Board identifies that a Board partner is failing to meet its commitments to safeguarding children, it can require that agency or organisation to submit an action plan to the Board identifying how the failings will be addressed.

The Board may also:

- Place a specific item as to performance on the next available SEWSCB agenda and require the defaulting agency or organisation to submit a formal report or presentation to the SEWSCB;

and/or

- Require the agency or organisation in question to report through its own governance arrangements any associated risks in the agency/organisation not meeting its statutory obligations in safeguarding children. The agency/organisation will then be expected to formally report back to the SEWSCB with mechanisms to address those risks;

and/or

- In exceptional circumstances the Chair of the SEWSCB, with full agreement from the Board, may request the attendance of the Chief Executive of the partner agency/organisation to the next available meeting of the SEWSCB in order to explain the performance failings of that member agency/organisation, and the Chair of the Board may then if appropriate, explain the concerns of the Board to the relevant inspectorate and if necessary, the Safeguarding Children Department in Welsh Government, Welsh Government Minister, National Safeguarding Board and/or the Children's Commissioner.

### **External Monitoring and Inspection Arrangements**

All members of the SEWSCB will provide information about arrangements in place within their agency or organisation to safeguard the welfare of children, to external regulators and inspectors as required. The safeguarding elements of inspection reports should be presented to the Board along with any action plan developed to respond to the Inspection.

## **12. SEWSCB STRUCTURE AND SUB GROUPS**

The SEWSCB will meet bi monthly for the first year, to review the work of the Board and that of the agencies, organisations and sub-groups. The administration to the Board will be provided by the Business Unit and each member will have the opportunity to agenda items. Minutes will be available and these will be subject to any Freedom of Information (FOI) request that may be made.

In assisting the SEWSCB to fulfil its responsibilities in relation to its objectives it has established a sub group structure. These are based on fulfilling the statutory functions of the Board and are standing groups. In addition, task and finish groups will be established when required.

SEWSCB have in place the following sub-groups:

- *Policy & Procedures Sub Group*
- *Training Sub Group*
- *Case Review and Practice Development Sub Group*
- *Engagement & Communication Sub Group*
- *5 Local Learning & Review Groups (1 in each Local Authority area)*

All sub-groups have a Terms of Reference and a work plan that links to the outcomes and priorities identified in the SEWSCB strategic plan 2013-2016. The sub-groups will provide bi-annual reports to the SEWSCB in respect of their activity and progress.

### **Policy and Procedures sub group**

The group will support the work of the SEWSCB in contributing to the development of children's safeguarding arrangements, by reinforcing and promoting best practice in inter-agency working across the region. This will be by managing and co-ordinating the development and regular review, of guidance, policies and protocols applicable to the safeguarding of children and young people at a regional level, and by working with the other regional groups to ensure these are embedded into practice.

### **Training sub group**

The regional training sub group aims to ensure all those who work with children and young people and with adults who are parents or carers, are provided with the appropriate level of training, knowledge and skills to enable them to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. The SEWSCB training will be delivered on a multi-agency basis and will complement that which is provided by individual agencies. The Training sub group will also look to disseminate information in respect of changes in law, guidance, and regional procedures.

### **Case Review and Practice Development sub group**

The purpose of the group is:

- To develop a proactive culture of learning and ensure that the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB), constituent agencies and practitioners fully understand any lessons that may be learnt from Child Practice reviews, Child Death reviews, Homicide Reviews, public enquiries undertaken in the region or those relevant elsewhere in the UK and arising from the programme of audit undertaken annually by the local Learning and Reviewing groups.
- The group will be responsible for referrals from SEWSCB to consider cases that meet the criteria for a Child practice Review and make recommendations to the Chair of the Board in this respect. Local Child Practice Review Panels will be established to undertake individual reviews. Members of the CRPD group with no case involvement may be requested to Chair panels.
- To oversee the implementation of action plans arising from Child Practice reviews.

### **Engagement and Communication sub group**

The group will support the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board, by delivering on the statutory function to engage with and communicate with children and young people, parents and carers, the general public and professionals.

## **Learning and Reviewing groups**

One of these groups will be established in each Local Authority area. These local groups will be informed about and seek to improve the quality of inter-agency safeguarding arrangements and practice at a local level and promote a direct link between the South East Wales Safeguarding Children Board (SEWSCB) and its sub-groups and front-line practice across the region. The groups will promote a culture of multi-agency learning and increased accountability within local authority areas supported by the Board business unit.

## **National Safeguarding Fora**

The SEWSCB will maintain existing links with All Wales Child Protection Fora to build upon shared learning, develop common protocols and develop learning and inter-agency working. Links will also be made with the National Safeguarding Board, Wales Safeguarding Children Network and other SCBs.

## **13. PRINCIPLES ON WHICH THE AGREEMENT IS BASED-**

The Partnership Agreement relates to provision of services to all children and young people with a range of diverse needs, irrespective of culture, religion, ethnic background, disability.

The work of the Board will be underpinned by the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Partnership Agreement applies to all staff and agencies/organisations involved in the protection of children, both directly and indirectly and also to all staff and volunteers working with children and young people.

This Partnership Agreement will be utilised in all Service Level Agreements for member agencies.

## **14. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE CONTRIBUTION**

It is recognised that to function effectively the work of the Board needs to be adequately resourced.

The Board has been successful in a bid to the Regional Collaboration Fund for monies to establish and maintain the Board for three years. The Welsh Government will monitor how the Board uses this money and reports will be provided to them on a quarterly basis. Decisions about budget allocations will be made by the Board, reviewed annually and signed off by the Chair and the Business Manager will be responsible for monitoring and managing the budget on a daily basis.

The host agency for the fund will be Caerphilly Social Services Directorate.

The Chair of the Board will work with key personnel from member agencies to develop a formula for continued funding of the Board and its work from Year 3 onwards if a national funding formula is not available.

The Board will be provided with a budget report at the end of each financial year by the Business Manager.

## **Governance Issues**

A financial statement will be proposed and confirmed within the arrangements for the SEWSCB business planning, contributions will be set each year bearing in mind inflation uplift and resources required for developments. Any dissensions will be addressed at the business planning stage.

Budget allocations to projects and developments will be determined by the submission of a business case to the Board for approval.

## **Access to the Budget**

The following criteria will determine access to the budget; the Board must ensure that value for money is achieved by any budget outlays.

Recommended criteria are:

- The work contributes to improvements in outcomes for children and young people in relation to safeguarding matters.
- To undertake Child Practice Reviews
- The work has a multi-agency perspective.
- The work links to the SEWSCB priorities and/or statutory functions.

The purpose of clear resourcing arrangements is to ensure the outcomes set by the Board can be achieved.

## **15. CONCLUSION**

The SEWSCB is committed to the principles and objectives outlined in this agreement and will work both as a Board and as member agencies/organisations to achieve the desired outcomes in order to ensure that safeguarding and promotion of welfare is achieved for children across the five South East Wales Local Authority areas of Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire, Torfaen and Newport.