

ISLE OF ANGLESEY COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO :	Scrutiny
DATE:	24.07.14
SUBJECT :	Regional and Local Arrangements to Safeguard Children and Adults.
PORTFOLIO HOLDER(S):	Ken Hughes, Housing and Social Services
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1.0 Recommendations

R1- That Members of the Scrutiny Committee, following scrutiny, support the proposal that will be presented to the Executive in its meeting on the 8th September, to agree the structure for the regional SCB, to be known as the North Wales Safeguarding Children Board, as shown in this report.

2.0 Reasons

2.1 It is our view that this is the best arrangement to ensure that the council is well prepared to support the requirement of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act, and to also develop a North Wales best fit solution, based on evidence of what works in relation to Safeguarding.

3.0 Background

3.1 Local Safeguarding Children Boards are statutory partnerships. The objective of Local Safeguarding Children Boards, to co-ordinate and ensure the effectiveness of partners' safeguarding activities, is established in the Children Act 2004. Regulations further expand on the functions of an LSCB, and specify membership of the board.

3.2 Three sub-regional Safeguarding Children Boards have been in place for some time across North Wales: Gwynedd & Mon LSCB, Conwy & Denbighshire LSCB, and Flintshire & Wrexham LSCB. Following announcements from Welsh Government in the autumn of 2011, the three sub-regional LSCBs have taken steps to promote greater integration and collaboration, and to move towards a regional structure, ahead of the forthcoming Social Services & Wellbeing Act.

- 3.3 The Social Services & Wellbeing Bill proposes putting safeguarding adults on to a similar statutory footing as that for children, including the requirement for Adult Safeguarding Boards. The Social Services & Wellbeing Act also requires agencies to establish regional safeguarding boards. The regions are defined according to the Local Health Board foot print: North Wales is the defined region for our area.
- 3.4 A two-tier system of Safeguarding Boards has been in place across North Wales since early 2013. A Regional board was established, but the statutory functions remained with the three sub-regional LSCBs. The two-tier system has had successes, but there have also been tensions.
- 3.5 A regional approach has been adopted throughout most of the other regions across Wales, although many have proceeded to regional boards in their totality and have ceased to convene local boards. The two-tier model and the fully regional model have both been evaluated by Sheffield University and a detailed report is available on request.

4.0 Preferred Option

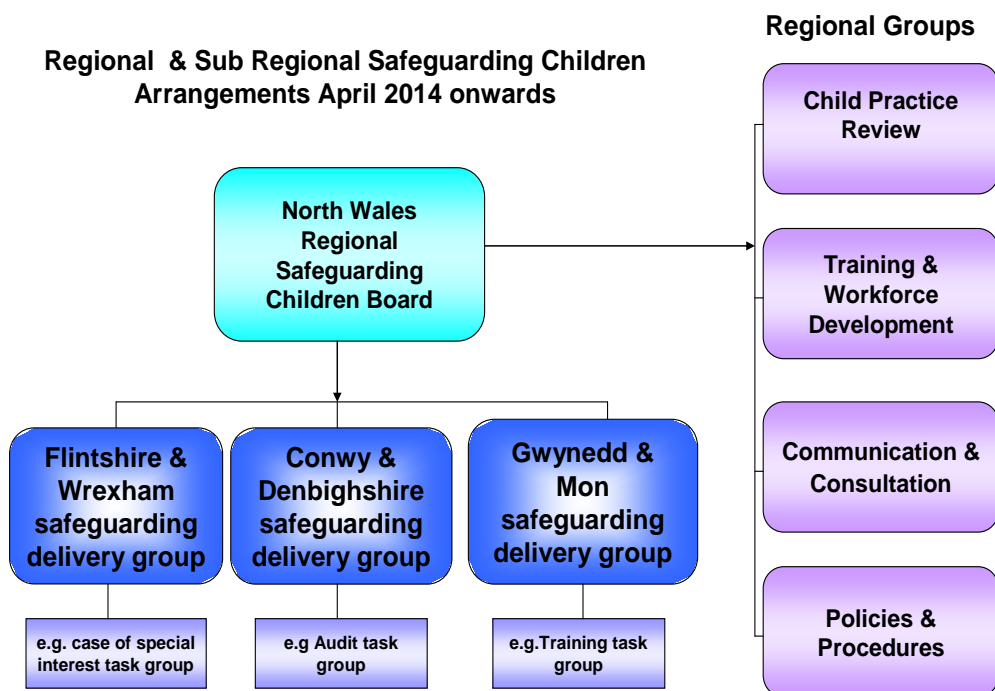
- 4.1 In response to the lessons learned from the operation of the two-tier system, it is now proposed that a structure is put in place which maintains a strong local presence whilst also resolving the tensions between the regional and local boards. It is proposed that statutory functions will rest with the North Wales Safeguarding Children Board (NWSCB), and that sub regional groups will ensure that local practice meets local need. The North Wales regional SCB used the findings of the ADSSW / WLGA evaluation study and the Independent Safeguarding Panel's report to inform discussion and decision making at its development day on 4th April 2014.
- 4.2 The regional SCB recognised that there was a need to reduce the duplication of roles, responsibilities and representation at regional and sub-regional levels, whilst maintaining mechanisms to deliver regional direction and engage professionals at a local level. Draft revised structures were developed at the development session, and were then formally considered and agreed at the regional SCB meeting on 8th April 2014. The proposed revised structure places responsibility and accountability with the regional board, and replaces the sub regional LSCBs with local safeguarding delivery groups. Representation will be at the level directed in statute on the Regional SCB, and at Head of Service/ operational manager level on the local delivery group. The proposed amended local structure is shown in Diagram below.

4.3 The revised structure addresses the concerns initially identified:

- Local needs, culture and language are supported via the local safeguarding delivery groups;
- Statutory Directors of Social Services can continue to report to Elected Members in local Authority Areas;
- Local and Regional structures will be supported by representatives at different levels, reducing the pressures on very senior representatives
- The regional Board will be able to make decisions and promote swifter progress.

4.4 The lessons learnt from the Safeguarding Children Board pilot can now be applied to the development of regional and sub regional structures for safeguarding adults.

Proposed Sub Regional Structure April 2014 onwards



5.0 Resource Implications

5.1 The move to a regional approach will provide a more efficient use of staff time and resources.

6.0 Risk and links to the corporate risk register.

6.1 Clearly the risk that we fail to safeguard children is paramount and is sighted in the corporate risk register and service risk register. It is essential we seek solutions that ensure we deliver the most secure and suitable safeguarding services to the authority's children and families. We must also recognise the strength of the regional agenda particularly working alongside our regional partners such as the Police and Health who also have clear responsibilities to protect and safeguard children.

7.0 Driver and Implications

7.1 Safeguarding children supports our corporate priority for an Anglesey where people are healthy and safe.

7.2 The Local Safeguarding Children Board is a statutory requirement and contributes to the delivery of the council's responsibilities for vulnerable children.

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