

Report To: Corporate Governance Committee

Date of Meeting: 28 September 2015

Lead Member / Officer: Ivan Butler - Head of Internal Audit

Report Author: Ivan Butler - Head of Internal Audit

Title: Internal Audit Report - Corporate Safeguarding

1. What is the report about?

This report is to inform the Committee of a recent Internal Audit report on Corporate Safeguarding that received a 'Low' assurance rating.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

The Committee receives an Internal Audit Progress report for each meeting that includes details of Internal Audit reports issued. These are normally 'High' or 'Medium' assurance reports.

When we issue a 'Low' or 'No' assurance rating in a report, the Committee will receive the report as part of its agenda to ensure that it is fully aware of the report and can discuss the improvements to be implemented with the relevant manager.

3. What are the Recommendations?

The Committee comments on the Internal Audit report and agrees the assurance it needs that the action plan within the report is being implemented effectively and within the agreed timescales.

4. Report details

The full Internal Audit report is included as Appendix 1 to this covering report. The key message arising from the report is that, while the Council has measures in place to manage safeguarding, these are not robust and have not been embedded across all of the Council's functions.

Safeguarding needs to be seen as a 'corporate' area, rather than just an area for Social Services or Education, so the Council needs to raise awareness through launching the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and ensuring that its elected members and officers are sufficiently trained.

The Internal Audit report includes an action plan that raises 12 areas for improvement. The Corporate Safeguarding Panel has taken

ownership of the action plan through the Corporate Director: Communities, and actions, responsibilities and timescales have been agreed to address all of the issues.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

There is no decision required on this report.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

There are no costs attached to this report.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision?

This report does not require a decision or proposal for change, so there is no impact on people who share protected characteristics.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

The report has been discussed and agreed with the Corporate Director: Communities and Corporate Safeguarding Panel

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

There are no financial implications attached to this report.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

The Council has a statutory duty to protect children and vulnerable adults, so failure to address the action plan and have robust safeguarding arrangements can have serious implications in the event of an incident, both legislatively and reputational.

11. Power to make the Decision

There is no decision required on this report.