

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY –

Introduction

An audit of the Council's Safeguarding Children arrangements was undertaken in September/October 2009. This review was requested by the Corporate Director and was added to the planned work for the year 2009/10.

Survey Results

Full results of our survey are appended to this Report (App 1C).

Overall, there was a very good response rate to our questionnaire with 54 survey sheets returned (84%). Of those Council members and staff who returned their forms 35 confirmed that they talk with families and/or children in their homes or at Council offices (65%) and 19 said they did not (35%).

Of those 35 Council members and members of staff who confirmed that they talk with families and/or children in their homes or at Council offices 25 were aware of the Safeguarding Children Policy (71%), 19 had been given a copy or had seen it on the Intranet (54%) and 17 had read it and confirmed their understanding of it (49%).

The survey also asked whether if, in the course of their duties, Council members and members of staff had witnessed a circumstance involving a child that might have needed to be reported. Eight recipients confirmed this to be the case, with 6 of them in the current year (2009/10). We can confirm that 3 were passed to the Head of Housing & Social Inclusion as per the requirements of the Policy. The remaining 3 were dealt with in another way, and in our opinion this was satisfactory.

Actions

The Corporate Director will:

- Email the key staff teams who have shown a lack of awareness of the Policy
- Ensure the 'Safeguarding Children' DVD produced by DCC is shown to staff members attending the 'News & Views' briefings
- Ensure the survey results are reproduced within the Council's 'Team Brief' to highlight the issue again
- Ensure the Democratic Services Manager (DV) updates the Members' webpage with the Policy (and PJ to bring it to their attention)
- Update the Corporate Risk Register specifying the existence of the Safeguarding Children Policy and the Council's adherence to it. (See Corporate Risk Register, bottom of page 2)

Conclusion

In our opinion and after careful consideration our overall conclusion would be that a 'positive opinion' is appropriate and we further offer 'adequate assurance' overall.