

CHILDREN’S RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT

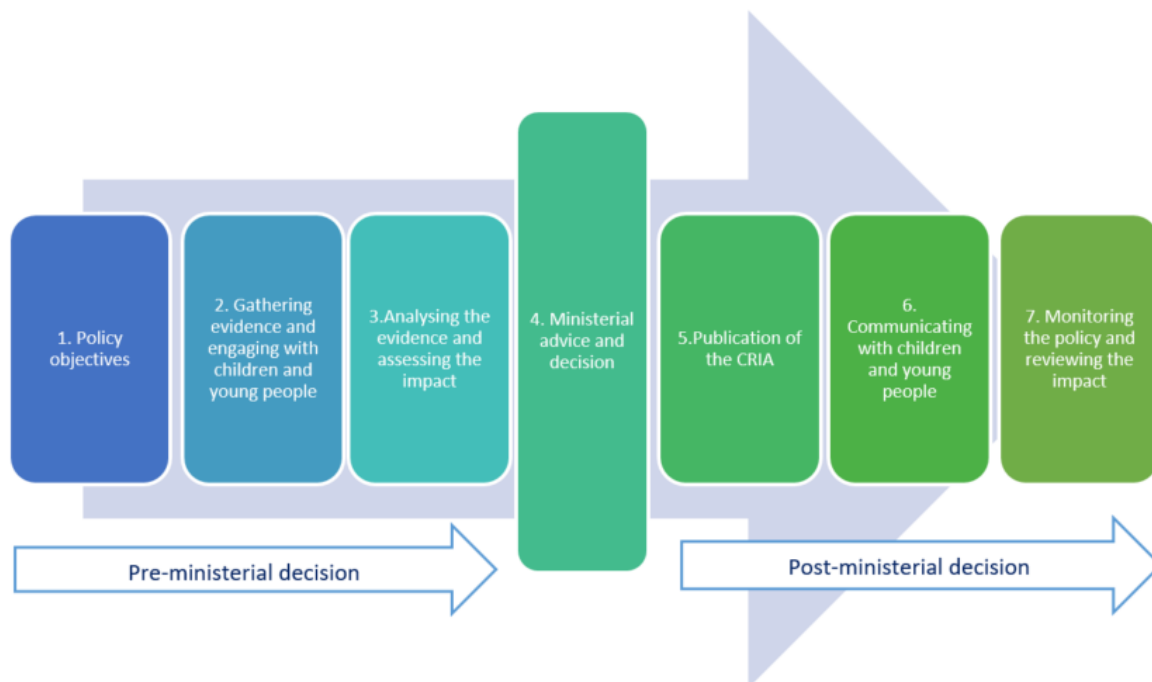
Title of Proposal	Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR)
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All completed Children’s Rights Impact Assessments must be sent to the CRIA@gov.wales mailbox

The Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure 2011 places a duty on the Welsh Ministers to pay due regard to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and its Optional Protocols when exercising any of their functions.

The CRIA process is the agreed mechanism officials should use to support Ministers to meet this duty and ensure they give balanced consideration to children’s rights in their decision making. A CRIA should be used to inform ministerial advice and **must** be completed prior to a ministerial decision being made. Once a decision has been reached, your CRIA must also be published.

Please note we have an established Children’s Rights Advisory Group (CRAG), comprising the Children’s Commissioner for Wales’s office, UNICEF, the Wales Observatory on Human Rights of Children and Young People, and Children in Wales, who can be used to discuss or test your draft CRIA. Please contact the Children’s Branch CRIA@gov.wales for further information.



For further advice and guidance on the CRIA process, please consult the Children’s Rights Manual for Staff or contact the Children’s Branch CRIA@gov.wales

1. Policy objectives

- What decision are you impact assessing?

The Child Practice Review process will be replaced by the Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) process.

The development of the Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) in Wales has been undertaken to build upon the good practice that emerged from the creation of the Adult Practice Review and Child Practice Review processes which replaced the former Serious Case Review guidance in April 2016. The Adult Practice Review and Child Practice Review processes were laid down in the *Safeguarding Boards (Functions and Procedures) (Wales) Regulations 2015*¹ to enable a greater understanding of what happened during an incident and why it happened. The approach improves the understanding of impacts that actions of organisations and agencies had and whether different actions may have resulted in different outcomes for the subject of the review. The overall aim is to create a learning environment.

2. Gathering evidence and engaging with children and young People

The SUSR will implement the findings of the 2018 academic review led by Professor Amanda Robinson (2018)² from Cardiff University and a Welsh Government practitioner's review by Assistant Chief Constable Liane James (2018)³. The reports analysed the existing safeguarding review landscape alongside a sample of Domestic Homicide Reviews, Adult Practice Reviews, Child Practice Reviews and Mental Health Homicide Reviews. These reports highlighted the need for co-ordination, collaboration, communication, and governance to be improved when conducting reviews in Wales. The reports made recommendations based on their findings which are reflected in the new processes of the SUSR system. The reports also exposed the complexity of devolved and non-devolved bodies undertaking reviews in isolation and in some cases without Welsh Government knowledge or involvement. This ultimately resulted in the recommendation for a single review process.

Based on the above research, the SUSR has been developed to strengthen the review landscape within Wales. The SUSR aims to:

- create a single review process which incorporates a multi-agency approach where the criteria for **one or more** of the following reviews is met:
 - Adult Practice Review;
 - Child Practice Review;
 - Domestic Homicide Review;
 - Mental Health Homicide Review; and

¹ *Safeguarding Boards (Functions and Procedures) (Wales) Regulations 2015*.
<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2015/1466/contents/made>

² Robinson, A., Rees, A. and Dehaghani, R. (2018) *'Findings from a thematic analysis of reviews into adult deaths in Wales: Domestic Homicide Reviews, Adult Practice Reviews and Mental Health Homicide Reviews'*

³ James, L. (2018) *'Domestic Homicide Reviews in Wales: Illuminate the Past to Make the Future Safer'*

- Offensive Weapons Homicide Review⁴.
- eliminate the need for families to take part in an onerous and traumatising cycle of information-giving and waiting for the conclusions of multiple reviews;
- ensure the subject and family are at the heart of the process;
- use the insight and learning gained from the Review process to deliver positive change in practice to prevent future harm;
- provide an improved support network, which will ensure Welsh Government oversight of recommendations for both devolved and non-devolved services in Wales. This will be achieved where escalation of issues to the Ministerial Board is necessary;
- provide national support to the Safeguarding Boards which fulfils a co-ordination/operational role to oversee the end-to-end process via the SUSR Co-ordination Hub;
- ensure clear linkages between local, regional, and national bodies while respecting regional and local variations in arrangements;
- retain the final SUSR reports in a central repository (the Wales Safeguarding Repository) and facilitate pan-Wales training and local, regional, national, and international learning; and
- use the Wales Safeguarding Repository and associated learning to support any changes to practices, processes and cultures which will prevent future harm.

The whole process has been developed in collaboration with stakeholders, practitioners, liaison with the Children’s Commissioner and third sector agencies who work with children and young people. They have been able to evidence the positive impacts that this proposal will have on children and young people throughout the development process to ensure that it is fit for purpose in practice. A SUSR Victim and Family Reference Group has also been established and is providing guidance on developing the SUSR process and how we develop good practice when engaging the subject of the review, family members and principal individuals including children and young people.

- Using this research, how do you anticipate your policy will affect different groups⁵ of children and young people, both positively and negatively? Please remember policies focused on adults can impact children and young people too.

The SUSR will create a simplified yet concentrated approach to reviews which reduces trauma to the subject of the review and/or their families, duplication of effort, utilises resources and achieves best value. It will ensure that the victim and family impacted is at

⁴ Offensive Weapon Homicide Reviews are to be piloted (2023) using the SUSR process in Wales and therefore may be subject to change.

⁵ You may, for instance, consider how your policy would affect the following groups of children and young people differently: early years, primary, secondary, young adults; children with additional learning needs; disabled children; children living in poverty; Black, Asian and minority ethnic children; Gypsies, Roma and Travellers; migrants; asylum seekers; refugees; Welsh-language speakers; care experienced children; LGBTQ+ children. Please note that this is a non-exhaustive list and within these cohorts there will not be one homogenous experience.

the heart of the review process.

- What participatory work with children and young people have you used to inform your policy? If you have not engaged with children and young people, please explain why.⁶

The whole process has been developed in collaboration with stakeholders and practitioners who work with children and young people. They have been able to evidence the positive impacts that this proposal will have on children and young people throughout the development process to ensure that it is fit for purpose in practice. We were careful to avoid re-traumatisation for the children and young people by working with their advocates and third sector organisations who work with them rather than the children and young people themselves. This ensured that their voices were heard as their experiences were captured, but they were not subject to meetings or large groups of practitioners themselves.

SUSR pilots have been undertaken by Safeguarding Boards in Wales. If there were children involved in the case (either as direct victims, or as family members of the subject of the review), then they would have had contact with the SUSR as part of this process.

A SUSR Victim and Family Reference group was also established to provide a forum for

For advice on participatory work with children and young people, please contact the Children's Branch. We have an established relationship with Children in Wales, who may be able to help you work with children and young people through their Young Wales programme.

victim and family voice across Wales, to inform the delivery of the SUSR. Membership of the group includes representation from the National Youth Advocacy Service and Children's Commissioner for Wales, as well as other third sector agencies. The Terms of Reference support direct involvement of victims and families themselves when and where appropriate.

The SUSR consultation process included Easy Read and Young Peoples versions of the Statutory Guidance. Once the guidance is finalised new versions of each will also be made available in English and Welsh.

For advice on participatory work with children and young people, please contact the Children's Branch. We have an established relationship with Children in Wales, who may be able to help you work with children and young people through their Young Wales programme.

3. Analysing the evidence and assessing the impact

⁶ Article 12 of the UNCRC stipulates that children have a right to express their views, particularly when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account.

- Using the evidence you have gathered, what impact is your policy likely to have on children and young people? What steps will you take to mitigate and/or reduce any negative effects?

The SUSR will create a simplified yet concentrated approach to reviews which reduces trauma to families, duplication of effort, utilises resources and achieves best value. It will ensure that the victim and family impacted is at the heart of the review process.

Engagement guidelines for interacting with children and young people are included within the SUSR Statutory Guidance in the '*Engagement of Family and Principal Individuals in the Single Unified Safeguarding process*' section. This was created with practitioners (including third sector organisations) who work with children and young people in review processes. This section offers guidance to practitioners who will be engaging with victims and families (including children) throughout the whole process. Practitioners will also be given SUSR training which will include an evidence-based section setting out the process for engagement.

A SUSR Engagement Flow Chart is being developed (as good practice) by the SUSR Victim and Family Reference Group as a result of feedback received from the consultation and SUSR development work. It will be used by practitioners alongside the SUSR Statutory Guidance to inform their engagement activity, help assess and identify needs of individuals early and provide any support needed to enable Children and Young People to contribute to a review in the most appropriate manner.

- How does your proposal enhance or challenge children's rights, as stipulated by the UNCRC articles and its Optional Protocols? Please refer to the [articles](#) to see which ones apply to your own policy.

UNCRC Articles or Optional Protocol	Enhances (X)	Challenges (X)	Explanation
Article 1 Everyone under 18 years of age has all the rights in this Convention	X		Simplified process which reduces trauma. The outcomes are then used to prevent further harm and similar incidents.
Article 3 All organisations concerned with children should work towards what is best for each child.	X		The SUSR process will produce learning and disseminate this across Wales to all organisations which have contact with children and vulnerable adults as a service. This will help to improve practice to ensure that communities are receiving the best support for their needs. The Inclusion of the Reports within the Wales Safeguarding

			Repository will enable practitioners to search relevant themes and recommendations relating to Children and Young People
<p>Article 12</p> <p>Children have the right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account.</p>	X		Children (who are the subject of the review or are related in some way to the subject) will be involved with the SUSR process if they wish to be (and provided the support needed to do so). This will give them the opportunity to share their own experiences from their perspectives. They will have a say on whether they want to be involved and to what degree.
<p>Article 13</p> <p>Children have the right to get and to share information as long as the information is not damaging to them or to others.</p>	X		Children (who are the subject of the review or are related in some way to the subject) will be able to access appropriate information on the review process and will receive updates on what is happening during their review.
<p>Article 19</p> <p>Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for, and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.</p>	X		The SUSR process will produce learning and disseminate this across Wales to all organisations which have contact with children and vulnerable adults as a service. This will help to improve practice to ensure that communities are receiving the best support for their needs.
<p>Article 27</p> <p>Children have a right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and mental needs. The Government should help</p>	X		The review process will produce learning which can be used to improve services which are designed to help children and young people. These services can then be improved based on evidence. The services will then be

families who cannot afford to provide this.			better equipped to help children and to improve their standard of living.
<p>Article 32</p> <p>The Government should protect children from work that is dangerous or might harm their health or their education.</p> <p>Article 33</p> <p>The Government should provide ways of protecting children from dangerous drugs.</p> <p>Article 34</p> <p>The Government should protect children from sexual abuse.</p> <p>Article 35</p> <p>The Government should make sure that children are not abducted or sold.</p> <p>Article 36</p> <p>Children should be protected from any activities that could harm their development.</p>			Protecting children and vulnerable adults from harm is the overarching aim of the SUSR process. From the learning produced and disseminated from the reviews, services to prevent this type of abuse will be improved and updated to meet the changing needs of communities in Wales.
<p>Article 39</p> <p>Children who have been neglected or abused should receive special help to restore their self-respect.</p>			The SUSR process seeks to help to improve services which support children and young people who have been neglected or abused.

- Consider whether any EU Citizens Rights (as referenced in the Equality Impact Assessment) relate to young people up to the age of 18.

Not Relevant

For further information on the *UNCRC* and its *Optional Protocols*, please visit the *Children's Rights Intranet Page*.

4. Ministerial advice and decision

- How will your analysis of these impacts inform your ministerial advice?

The impact assessment will be included as part of the ministerial advice to approve the SUSR statutory guidance and implementation of the process in Wales.

- *Once completed, your CRIA must be signed off by your Deputy Director.*
- *Your CRIA findings should be integrated into your ministerial advice to inform their decision.*

5. Publication of the CRIA

- *Following the ministerial decision, the CRIA should be published on the Welsh Government website.*
- *Send sections 1 and 8 of your IIA and the CRIA (Annex A) to your departmental web manager for publishing.*
- ***All*** completed CRIAs must also be sent to the *CRIA@gov.wales* mailbox.

For further information and support on this process, please visit the *Children's Rights Intranet Page* which contains a range of resources.

6. Communicating with Children and Young People

- If you have sought children and young people's views on your proposal, how will you inform them of the outcome?

The 'Summary of Responses' document was sent to all of those who sent in a response to the SUSR statutory guidance public consultation. This document included an analysis of the

If your policy affects children and young people, remember to produce child-friendly versions of any public document relating to your proposal. Please contact the Children's Branch for further advice.

responses received and Welsh Government's proposed next steps post consultation. To

view this document, please visit the following link: <https://www.gov.wales/single-unified-safeguarding-review-statutory-guidance>

The consultation responses highlighted the need for children's experiences throughout the review process to be more thoroughly addressed and ensure that Reviewers feel properly equipped to engage effectively with them. As a result, the SUSR Victim and Family Reference Group are developing a good practice Engagement Flow Chart to assist those conducting the review to engage with all individuals involved with a review. This will include specific references on how best to engage with children and young people.

The consultation responses also highlighted the need to ensure that recommendations and actions linked to children were monitored to ensure that they were implemented and delivered the desired outcome. Monitoring of the actions and their delivery will be an ongoing role for the Safeguarding Boards and the Co-ordination Hub. There will be reports to the Strategy Group and the Ministerial Board. These are new levels of support which were not available previously.

A Children and Young Person's version of the SUSR Statutory Guidance will be published in both English and Welsh.

If your policy affects children and young people, remember to produce child-friendly versions of any public document relating to your proposal. Please contact the Children's Branch for further advice.

7. Monitoring and Review

It is essential to revisit your CRIs to identify whether the impacts that you originally identified came to fruition, and whether there were any unintended consequences.

Where you are taking forward secondary legislation, it will not be sufficient to rely on the CRIA for the primary legislation; you will need to update the CRIA to consider how the details of the proposals in the regulations or guidance may affect children.

The policy lead can revisit the published version of their CRIA, rename it as a review of the original CRIA, and update the evidence of impact. The reviewed impact assessment should be presented to Ministers with any proposals to amend the policy, practice or guidance. This review CRIA should also be published.

- Please outline what monitoring and review mechanism you will put in place to review this CRIA.
- Following this review, are there any revisions required to the policy or its implementation?

Once the SUSR is implemented delivery of all SUSRs will be monitored by the Co-ordination Hub, including through collection of 'Review Reflections' forms at the end of each review. These forms include a specific section on engagement and provide the opportunity for review teams to collect feedback on the review process from those engaged. The SUSR

Victim and Family Reference Group will also be engaged in the monitoring process. This Integrated Impact Assessment will form part of this review work and feed into regular evaluation points to ensure consideration of those issues identified are addressed or work continued where necessary.

In addition, all SUSR Recommendations and associated actions will be monitored and outcomes analysed. Any barriers to the implementation of recommendations and associated actions will be reported to the Strategy Group and if necessary, the Ministerial Board in order to be addressed.