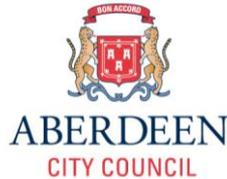


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To: Councillor Taylor, Convener; Councillor Carle, Vice-Convener; Councillors Donnelly, Boulton, Cooney, Copland, Lesley Dunbar, Flynn, Greig, Hutchison, Len Ironside CBE, Laing, Malik, Nicoll, Noble, Samarai, Jennifer Stewart, Townson and Young; and Mrs A Bowyer (Parent Representative (Primary Schools and ASN)), Mr S Duncan (Teacher representative - Primary Schools), Mr M Paul (Teacher representative (Secondary Schools)), Mr A Rafferty (Parent Representative (Secondary Schools)), Mrs A Tree (Third Religious Representative) , Mrs I Wischik (Roman Catholic Religious Representative) and Vacant (Church of Scotland Representative).

Town House,
ABERDEEN 01 September 2016

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

The undernoted items are circulated in connection with the meeting of the **EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE** to be held here in the Town House on **THURSDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 2016 at 2.00 pm.**

FRASER BELL
HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

BUSINESS

AT THIS JUNCTURE EXTERNAL MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE WILL DEPART

8 CHILDREN

8.2 Scottish Child Abuse Enquiry (Pages 3 - 10)

Please note this report replaces the one that was in the first circulation.

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<http://committees.aberdeency.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13009&path=13004>

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Emma Parr,
Tel 01224522607 or email emparr@aberdeency.gov.uk

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services
DATE	8 September 2016
DIRECTOR	Gayle Gorman
TITLE OF REPORT	Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry
REPORT NUMBER	ECS/16/050
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Committee on the background and scope of the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, and the Council's proposed response.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Committee note the Council's approach to establishing readiness for the requirements of the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, as follows:

- A strategic group has been established comprising of internal council services and external stakeholders
- Information sources are being collated spanning the historical timeframe 1945-2014
- Communication and training requirements are being scoped to ensure all our staff and customers are aware of the Inquiry and have access to additional information and/or supports if required.
- Sourcing of support services are being collated to ensure a comprehensive package of support can be proactively promoted and accessed by staff and customers at any point in the future
- A local helpline and email address will be set-up to ensure maximum privacy, care and sensitivity are provided for people to make enquiries or seek support.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications at this time

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Over the decades, child welfare has been regulated by a variety of legislation and care has been provided by numerous organisations (including the Council) and individuals. It is unclear at the moment what information and records exist beyond what the Council currently holds. In the spirit of supporting the 'within living memory' aspect of our children in care, we are taking a lead in bringing together a multi-sector grouping to produce a consolidated inventory and coordinated plan of action. This will ensure that we balance the priorities of the Inquiry demands at a national as well as local level with the appropriate care and sensitivity for the children and young people of Aberdeen past and present, our staff and broader public interest.

5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

There has been growing evidence that many children and young people have experienced abuse whilst in care. The Scottish Government acknowledged this in 2004 and offered a public apology and commitment to provide support for survivors. The National Strategy for Childhood Abuse was launched in 2005 and since then a number of further consultations, reviews and scoping exercises have been undertaken to inform Terms of Reference for the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry.

The Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry is looking at the abuse of children in care. It was set up on 1 October 2015. The Inquiry will raise public awareness of the abuse of children in care. It will provide an opportunity for public acknowledgement of the suffering of the children. It will be a forum for validation of their experience and testimony. The Inquiry will report to Scottish Government Ministers within 4 years with recommendations for the future to improve the law, policies and practices in Scotland. The report must also be presented to the Scottish Parliament.

The Inquiry is currently taking evidence from people who were abused. 170 people have contacted the Inquiry since the call for survivors to come forward opened in March 2015.

The Inquiry's remit covers a time period "within living memory", up until such date as the Inquiry Panel Chair may determine, but no later than 17 December 2014. Provisionally, we have been asked to treat the timescale as starting in 1945, although no formal decision has been taken about this.

The Inquiry's definition of "children in care" includes children in institutional residential care such as children's homes (including residential care provided by faith based groups); secure care units including List D schools; Borstals; Young Offenders' Institutions; places provided for Boarded Out children in the Highlands and Islands; state, private and independent Boarding Schools, including state funded school hostels; healthcare establishments providing long term care; and any similar establishments intended to provide children with long term residential care. The term also includes children in foster care. For now, the scope does not include children who have experienced abuse within natural or adoptive families, nor short term stays in hospital, but this may change.

Guidance received from the Inquiry team to date has stipulated the Council ensure:

- A hold on the destruction of any relevant records
- Funding to meet compensation claims
- Psychological supports for individuals affected

The Council has begun to create and action a strategic plan in collaboration with our colleagues internally. This includes colleagues from: Education and Children's Services, Legal, Finance, Information Management and Communications – and external – Police Scotland, Third Sector and NHS - that aligns to the Inquiry requirements known to date:

- **Information** - Identify and collate records inventory and link with external stakeholders
- **Support** – collate details of local/national support services
- **Training** – Prepare training/briefings/support programme for all staff
- **Communication** – Prepare communication plan for staff, Survivors, stakeholders and general public

6. IMPACT

Improving Customer Experience –

The Council's approach to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry detailed in this report demonstrates the importance we place on supporting the children and young people of Aberdeen, past and present with the care and sensitivity they deserve. This aligns with our Integrated Children's Service themes to ensure that all our children 'Get the Best Start in Life', 'Achieve their Potential', are 'Responsible and Included Citizens', are 'Safe and Protected' and experience 'Successful Transitions to Adulthood'. In circumstances where this does not happen, every possible attempt will be made to redress this at a local and national level.

Improving Staff Experience -

This report outlines an approach that will provide staff with the knowledge, training, and supports that align with the corporate customer service charter and guidelines: we are here to help, listen, and answer your queries with the respect and privacy that is required.

Improving our use of Resources –

This report advocates an approach that embraces our legal and moral duty to be open, transparent and accountable for the allocation of public funds.

Corporate -

This report embraces the core purpose of our Shaping Aberdeen vision to protect the people of Aberdeen; to make sure that all of our citizens have the chance to reach their potential, especially those most vulnerable within our communities past, present and future.

Public –

The Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, and the Council's response to it, is very likely to generate a high level of interest both locally, and nationally. This report outlines the approach the Council intends to take to ensure the privacy and rights of Aberdeen's children past, present and future are respected with the dignity they deserve.

Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) and Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) have been completed.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

From a people perspective, the impact of the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry and the timespan it covers (1945-2014) could be far reaching for the children of Aberdeen, some of whom will now be adult. In addition, the Council must consider the effects of the Inquiry on other individuals including the relatives of our children (now adults) and our employees; some of whom may have worked in the historic and residential establishments in scope (see point 5). Similar Inquiries in Jersey and Ireland have demonstrated that the distress and turmoil individuals may experience from having any involvement cannot be overestimated. With this in mind, the Council must exercise caution in the handling of this situation to ensure we apply the proper mechanisms from an operational processing perspective as well as attending to the supportive human and emotional side.

The implementation of the strategic plan outlined in this report is a key means of mitigating the risks of harm toward the children in our care past, present and future. This approach will provide us with the controls to manage the adverse impact from any claims of alleged abuse and claims for financial compensation. More broadly, this approach will enable us to develop a clearer understanding of the types of care for children that have evolved historically within Aberdeen which some individuals may find useful to reclaim some of their lost childhood.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry](#)

9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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7- EHRIA Summary and Action Planning				
Report Title	Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry			
Assessment completed	As a result of completing this assessment, what actions are proposed to remove or reduce any risks of adverse outcomes which were identified.			
Identified Risk and to whom:	Recommended Actions:	Responsible Lead:	Completion Date:	Review Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to provide organisational response to fully meet the needs of the Inquiry and the citizens of Aberdeen 	Strategic Inquiry Group established A strategic group has been established comprising of internal council services and external stakeholders	Anne Donaldson, Lead Service Manager, Children's Social Work/ Caroline Anderson Information Manager		17 August 2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to locate, preserve and provide access to records 	Working group created and research/collation established Information sources are being collated spanning the historical timeframe 1945-2014	Caroline Anderson Information Manager		17 August 2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to provide appropriate communication and training for staff and customers 	Working group and action areas identified to scope communication and training requirements to ensure all our staff and customers are aware of the Inquiry and have access to additional information and/or support if required	Anne Donaldson Lead Service Manager, Children's Social Work/Stella Evans Communication Officer		17 August 2016

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to provide access to comprehensive support services to support staff and customers 	<p>Working group and action areas identified to source support services and ensure a comprehensive package of support can be proactively promoted and accessed by staff and customers at any point in the future</p> <p>A local helpline and email address will be set-up to ensure maximum privacy, care and sensitivity are provided for people to make enquiries or seek support. This will be provided through our existing Family Information Service (FIS)</p>	<p>Bill O'Hara Principal Educational Psychologist/Catriona Sim FIS Manager</p>		<p>17 August 2016</p> <p>17 August 2016</p>
8: Sign off				
Completed by (Names and Services) :		Caroline Anderson, Information Manager, IT & transformation		
Signed off by (Head of Service) :		Bernadette Oxley, Head of Children's Social Work and Chief Social Work Officer		
<p>Only sections 7 and 8 will be attached to the committee report</p> <p>The full EHRIA will be published on Aberdeen City Council's website under http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/xeq_EHRIA_Search.asp</p> <p>Please send an electronic format of the full EHRIA without signature to showard@aberdeencity.gov.uk</p>				