

Public Document Pack



To: Councillor Stewart, the Depute Provost, Convener; Councillor Lesley Dunbar, Vice Convener; and Councillors Allard, Duncan, Greig, Houghton, MacGregor, Townson and Wheeler.

Town House,
ABERDEEN 19 April 2021

PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

The Members of the **PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE** are requested to meet remotely on **WEDNESDAY, 28 APRIL 2021 at 10.00 am.**

FRASER BELL
CHIEF OFFICER - GOVERNANCE

In accordance with UK and Scottish Government guidance, meetings of this Committee will be held remotely as required. In these circumstances the meetings will be recorded and available on the Committee page on the website.

B U S I N E S S

NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

- 1 There is no urgent business at this time

DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS

- 2 There is no exempt business at this time

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 3 Members are requested to intimate any declarations of interest (Pages 5 - 6)

DEPUTATIONS

- 4 Deputations - none expected until after the final agenda is published

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 5 Minute of Previous Meeting of 9 March 2021 (Pages 7 - 12)

COMMITTEE PLANNER

- 6 Committee Planner (Pages 13 - 16)

NOTICES OF MOTION

- 7 No notices of motion have been received

REFERRALS FROM COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES

- 8 Referrals from Council, Committees or Sub Committees

BUILDING STANDARDS

- 9 Building Standards Activity Report - COM/21/083 (Pages 17 - 22)

PROTECTIVE SERVICES

- 10 COVID-19 Update – Environmental Health & Trading Standards - OPE/21/087
(Pages 23 - 32)

POLICE AND FIRE RESCUE SERVICE

- 11 Police Scotland - Thematic Report on Complaints - POL/21/081 (Pages 33 - 40)
- 12 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Six Monthly Performance Report - SFR/21/082
(Pages 41 - 58)

CHILD AND ADULT PROTECTION

- 13 Corporate Parenting Updated Plan 2021-2023 - OPE/21/084 (Pages 59 - 118)
- 14 Assurance on Child Poverty Action Plan - CUS/21/086 (Pages 119 - 208)
- 15 Adult Protection Committee Biennial Report 2018-20 - ACHSCP/21/089 (Pages 209 - 250)

- 16 Inspection of justice social work services - ACHSCP/21/088 (Pages 251 - 284)
- 17 Statutory Appropriate Adult Service - ACHSCP/21/091 (Pages 285 - 288)
- 18 Aberdeen Violence Against Women Partnership Progress Report - CUS/21/085
(Pages 289 - 330)

LOCAL RESILIENCE

- 19 EU Exit – Current Position - COM/21/080 (Pages 331 - 334)
- 20 Date of Next Meeting - Wednesday 23 June 2021 at 10:00am

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DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

You must consider at the earliest stage possible whether you have an interest to declare in relation to any matter which is to be considered. You should consider whether reports for meetings raise any issue of declaration of interest. Your declaration of interest must be made under the standing item on the agenda, however if you do identify the need for a declaration of interest only when a particular matter is being discussed then you must declare the interest as soon as you realise it is necessary. The following wording may be helpful for you in making your declaration.

I declare an interest in item (x) for the following reasons

For example, I know the applicant / I am a member of the Board of X / I am employed by... and I will therefore withdraw from the meeting room during any discussion and voting on that item.

OR

I have considered whether I require to declare an interest in item (x) for the following reasons however, having applied the objective test, I consider that my interest is so remote / insignificant that it does not require me to remove myself from consideration of the item.

OR

I declare an interest in item (x) for the following reasons however I consider that a specific exclusion applies as my interest is as a member of xxxx, which is

- (a) a devolved public body as defined in Schedule 3 to the Act;
- (b) a public body established by enactment or in pursuance of statutory powers or by the authority of statute or a statutory scheme;
- (c) a body with whom there is in force an agreement which has been made in pursuance of Section 19 of the Enterprise and New Towns (Scotland) Act 1990 by Scottish Enterprise or Highlands and Islands Enterprise for the discharge by that body of any of the functions of Scottish Enterprise or, as the case may be, Highlands and Islands Enterprise; or
- (d) a body being a company:-
 - i. established wholly or mainly for the purpose of providing services to the Councillor's local authority; and
 - ii. which has entered into a contractual arrangement with that local authority for the supply of goods and/or services to that local authority.

OR

I declare an interest in item (x) for the following reasons.....and although the body is covered by a specific exclusion, the matter before the Committee is one that is quasi-judicial / regulatory in nature where the body I am a member of:

- is applying for a licence, a consent or an approval
- is making an objection or representation
- has a material interest concerning a licence consent or approval
- is the subject of a statutory order of a regulatory nature made or proposed to be made by the local authority.... and I will therefore withdraw from the meeting room during any discussion and voting on that item.

Public Protection Committee

ABERDEEN, 9 March 2021. Minute of Meeting of the PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Stewart, the Depute Provost, Convener; Councillor Lesley Dunbar, Vice-Convener; and Councillors Allard, Duncan, Greig, Houghton, MacGregor, Mason MSP (as substitute for Councillor Wheeler) and Townson.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1

The Convener invited Members to declare any interests in the business before the Committee.

There were no declarations.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 2 DECEMBER 2020

2

The Committee had before it the draft minute of its previous meeting.

Members heard a question regarding Article 11 – Resilience Annual Report – COM/20/226 specifically with regard to EU Exit arrangements and its current position.

The Chief Officer – Governance reminded Members of the previous communication circulated just before New Year and updated the Committee that none of the risks had become issues and that the Council remained active in participation at a national level to monitor all developments.

The Chief Officer – Governance agreed that a report would follow to a future meeting and feature in the Committee Planner.

The Committee resolved :-

to approve the minute as a correct record.

COMMITTEE PLANNER

3

The Committee had before it the Committee Planner.

Members heard that the planner represented current and future business and were reminded that there had been a circulation on behalf of the Convener seeking themes for future reporting by Police Scotland and the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to maintain an assurance overview.

Members suggested themes and heard that these would be discussed with the respective organisations and be planned for future reporting.

PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

9 March 2021

The Committee resolved :-

- (i) to note the planner; and
- (ii) to programme the suggested themes for thematic reporting by Police Scotland and SFRS into future planning.

POLICE SCOTLAND - VERBAL UPDATE : CURRENT LOCKDOWN**4**

The Convener advanced this item from its agenda position to facilitate Police Scotland to provide a 'here and now' position of policing in the City before continuing to the reports presented.

Members heard from the Local Police Commander who presented a verbal overview of the operations, challenges and observations being experienced during the current lockdown.

Members were advised of positive partner working with ACC Services and acknowledgement of frustrations experienced by citizens. Responding to a question on staff morale, the Local Police Commander advised that Police Scotland remained observant and mindful on staff welfare and that absenteeism levels, whilst lower than normal, were monitored and that there was an introduction of fatigue within policing which was being addressed with adaptive welfare consideration.

The Local Police Commander confirmed that a lessons learned exercise was live and captured benefits and efficiencies that had developed during changes to policing throughout Scotland whether by legislation, guidance or public behaviours and expectations, to ensure a 'new normal' would evolve within policing.

The Committee resolved :-

to acknowledge the verbal update provided.

POLICE SCOTLAND PERFORMANCE REPORT : APRIL - SEPTEMBER 2020 - POL/21/058**5**

The Committee had before it the report from the Local Police Commander, Police Scotland.

The report presented the Police Scotland Performance Report for the period April to September 2020 for Committee scrutiny.

Members heard from the local Police Commander who provided a summary of the report and responded to Members' questions.

PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

9 March 2021

The report recommended : -

that the Committee discuss, comment on and endorse the report.

The Committee resolved :-

to approve the recommendation.

**POLICE SCOTLAND THEMATIC REPORT - VIOLENCE TOWARDS POLICE STAFF
- POL/21/059**

6

The Committee had before it the report from the Local Police Commander, Police Scotland.

The report provided information to the Committee on the rise in Police Assaults and abusive behaviour towards Police Officers and Police Staff and the associated approach of Police Scotland and North East Division to protecting our people.

Members heard from the local Police Commander who provided a summary of the report and addressed Members' questions.

The report recommended : -

that the Committee discuss, comment on and endorse the report.

The Committee resolved :-

- (i) to approve the recommendation; and
- (ii) to note the increased instances of violence towards Police Officers and Staff and to record their abhorrence at such activity.

**POLICE SCOTLAND - LETTER REGARDING NORTH EAST DIVISION SENIOR
MANAGEMENT CHANGES**

7

The Committee had before it the letter from the Local Police Commander which had been previously circulated to all Elected Members.

The letter provided information on North East Division - Senior Management Team Changes.

Members heard that the Local Police Commander wished to continue community focused Policing and provide Elected Members with contact points within their communities and the wider management team.

The Committee resolved :-

to note the updated information.

PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

9 March 2021

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE - VERBAL UPDATE : CURRENT LOCKDOWN**8**

The Convener introduced the Local Area Commander (LAC), Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS), acknowledged awareness of the increased challenges upon SFRS and sought assurance that there had been no impact on service delivery.

The LAC provided a verbal update on the activities undertaken by SFRS during the pandemic lockdown to address the required adaptations to maintain an effective and safe service delivery.

Members heard that staff and public safety requirements were foremost, and several reviews had amended all functions beginning from the initial request for an SFRS service whether by answering of a call or receipt of correspondence through to completion; whether that be non-emergency or emergency situations.

The LAC advised Members that safe working practices within stations had been adapted and that legislative requirements around fire safety and inspection had been maintained through innovative use of technology.

Members heard that SFRS intended to capture learning and best practice from adaptations implemented during the pandemic period to inform enhanced SFRS service delivery.

The LAC concluded with examples of where Firefighters had responded to community needs. Responding to a question on staff morale, the LAC provided examples of positive welfare and activity by staff to overcome the difficult situation and indicated that combined with low levels of absenteeism, high levels of staff morale were evident.

The Committee resolved :-

to acknowledge the verbal update provided.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES - VERBAL UPDATE : CURRENT LOCKDOWN**9**

The Convener introduced the Protective Services Manager (PSM), Operations and Protective Services, and acknowledged the additional demands that had been placed upon this service area and approved deviation from presentation of a report to provision of a verbal update to provide assurance Members on continued public protection.

The PSM advised members that officers from both Environmental Health and Trading Standards continued to operate as a unified, integrated team to deliver the business

PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

9 March 2021

restrictions and investigation of clusters of cases associated with business premises and the pandemic.

Members heard that Protective Services continued to operate at both local and national levels and had strong partner working with Police Scotland.

The PSM advised Members that much of the proactive activity of his teams had been reduced however much of this reduction was linked with the high volume of closed or restricted businesses together with pandemic guidance or restriction which precluded close proximity working.

Members enquired of the levels of staff morale and heard that whilst early signs of fatigue were now being seen, staff were performing well which was acknowledged by a Member evidencing positive constituent feedback.

The PSM concluded by seeking to assure Members that Protective Services service delivery was being properly delivered to the priority areas particularly pandemic related.

The Committee resolved :-

to acknowledge the verbal update provided.

- **Councillor Jennifer Stewart, Convener**

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	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER The Business Planner details the reports which have been instructed by the Committee as well as reports which the Functions expect to be submitting for the calendar year.								
2	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Directorate	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
3	2 0 2 1								
4	28 April 2021								
5	Police Scotland - Thematic Report on Complaints - POL/21/081	At Committee on 26.02.2020, during presentation of the Performamnce report. a request was made for a future Thematic Reports on Complaints. On 27.10.2020 at Committee, this was expanded to consider the Chief Constable's pledge to reduce violence against Police Officers which is now within the seperate Assaults Thematic	Complaints will be reported on 28.04.2021 in line with Police Scotland reporting timelines.	George Macdonald	Police Scotland	Police Scotland	5.7		
6	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Six Monthly Performance Report - SFR/21/082	To present the most recent 6 monthly Performance Report		Bruce Farquharson	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	5.6		
7	Building Standards Activity Report - COM/21/083	At its meeting on 10 October 2019, the Committee agreed to six monthly assurance reporting		Gordon Spence	Place	Governance	4.1		
8	Corporate Parenting Updated Plan 2021-2023 - OPE/21/084	On 04.12.2019, the Committee resolved to (iii)to instruct the Chief Officer Integrated Children and Family Services to bring Aberdeen City's refreshed Corporate Parenting Action plan to the Public Protection Committee in April 2021	for 28 April 2021	Graeme Simpson	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Operations	1.2		
9	Aberdeen Violence Against Women Partnership Progress Report - CUS/21/085	At Committee on 07.10.2020, during presentation of the AVAW Strategy, it was requested that future reports and updates be presented, as approved by the Aberdeen City Executive Group for Public Protection.		Derek McGowan	Early Interventions and Community Empowerment	Customer	1.2		
10	Assurance on Child Poverty Action Plan - CUS/21/086	To provide assurance to the Committee that the Child Poverty Action Plan Report 2019/20 has been agreed by Operational Delivery Committee.		Derek McGowan	Early Interventions and Community Empowerment	Customer	1.1.3, 1.5		
11	COVID-19 Update – Environmental Health & Trading Standards - OPE/21/087	To provide an update on Protective Serrvices operations during the pandemic period		Andrew Mottrison	Operations	Operations	3.1		
12	Inspection of justice social work services ACHSCP/21/088	To provide assurance followoing the recent Care inspectorate review		Claire Duncan	ACHSCP	ACHSCP	1.1.3, 1.4		

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2									
13	Adult Protection Committee Biennial Report 2018-20 - ACHSCP/21/089	To provide assurance to Committee on the work of the Adult Protection Committee		Sandra Macleod	ACHSCP	ACHSCP	1.1, 1.2		
14	Statutory Appropriate Adult Service - ACHSCP/21/091	On 07.10.2020, PPC requested a further update on the topic be presented on 09.03.2021	Due to the operational response to the pandemic during Operation Snowdrop by the ACHSCP and NHS Grampian in partnership, together with staff abstractions, this report will be delayed until PPC on 28.04.2021	Carol Simmers	ACHSCP	ACHSCP	1.1		
15	EU Exit – Current Position - COM/21/080	On 09.03.2021 Committee requested an update to its next meeting		Ronnie McKean	Governance	Commissioning	2.4		
16	23 June 2021								
17	Police Scotland - Thematic Report : Sudden Death	It is suggested that this theme be - Sudden Unexplained Death in Infancy/Offshore Deaths		George Macdonald	Police Scotland	Police Scotland	5.7		
18	Police Scotland - Thematic Report : Cyber	Detailing current Fraud types and threat, how this impacts on the most vulnerable and the ongoing activity to prevent and disrupt Fraud and support those targeted.							
19	SFRS - Thematic Report ; Recruitment and Retention	As suggested by Members on 9 March 2021		Bruce Farquharson	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	5.7		
20	Child Protection Committee Annual Report	To present the Child Protection Committee annual report.		Graeme Simpson	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Operations	1.1, 1.2		
21	Prevent Multi-Agency Panel (PMAP) Duty Guidance for Scotland	To provide information on the Prevent Multi-Agency Panel (PMAP) Duty Guidance for Scotland		Derek McGowan	Early Interventions and Community Empowerment	Customer	2.5		
22									
23	27 October 2021								
24	Police Scotland - Police Scotland - Thematic Report : Domestic Abuse	An update on 'Coercive Control' following the implementation of the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018.		George Macdonald	Police Scotland	Police Scotland	5.7		
25	Police Scotland - Police Scotland - Thematic Report : Mental Health & Wellbeing Support	To provide information to the Committee on the approach to mental health matters for all staff, in particular front line Officers in regard to the recognition and treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.		George Macdonald	Police Scotland	Police Scotland	5.7		
26	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Six Monthly Performance Report	To present the most recent 6 monthly Performance Report		Bruce Farquharson	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	5.6		

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2									
27	SFRS - Thematic Report ; Community Engagement	As suggested by Members on 9 March 2021		Bruce Farquharson	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	5.7		
28	Scottish Government update on new Building Regulations	At its meeting on 10 October 2019, the Committee agreed to receiving a future update in Autumn 2021	for Autumn 2021	Gordon Spence	Place	Governance	4.1		
29	Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report	To present the Chief Social Work Officer annual report.	This report is due to be prepared in Autumn and will be presented to PPC on 27 October 2021	Graeme Simpson	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Operations	1.6		
30									
31	07 December 2021								
32	Police Scotland - Thematic Report : National Assets	To provide Committee an update on availability and employment of national assets		George Macdonald	Police Scotland	Police Scotland	5.7		
33	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service : Thematic Report : Inspections	As suggested by Members on 9 March 2021	alternative meetings for Performance then Thematic	Bruce Farquharson	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	5.6		
34	Building Standards Activity Report	At its meeting on 10 October 2019, the Committee agreed to six monthly assurance reporting	for December 2021	Gordon Spence	Place	Governance	4.1		
35	Annual Committee Effectiveness Report			Fraser Bell	Governance	Governance	GD 7.4		
36	Resilience Annual Report	As per ToR's; 2.1 monitor compliance with the Council's duties relating to resilience and local emergencies; this includes reviewing staffing arrangements and systems for incident management; 2.3 receive assurance that services are maintaining and reviewing Business Continuity Plans in accordance with the priorities allocated to them; and 2.5 monitor the Council's response to the National CONTEST strategy and associated plans relating to Counter Terrorism.	Last reported on 02.12.2020	Vikki Cuthbert	Governance	Governance	2.1, 2.3, 2.5		
37	2022								
38	Meeting 1/2022 (Feb)								
39									
40	Police Scotland - Thematic Report	As suggested by Members		George Macdonald	Police Scotland	Police Scotland	5.7		
41	SFRS - Thematic Report : Rescue and Specialist Support	As suggested by Members		Bruce Farquharson	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	5.7		
42									
43	Meeting 2/2022 (Apr)								
44									
45	Police Scotland - Thematic Report	As suggested by Members		George Macdonald	Police Scotland	Police Scotland	5.7		
46	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Six Monthly Performance Report	To present the most recent 6 monthly Performance Report		Bruce Farquharson	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	5.6		
47	SFRS - Thematic Report : Managing Automatic Alarms/ False calls	As suggested by Members		Bruce Farquharson	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	5.7		
48									
49	Meeting 3/2022 (June)								
50									
51	Police Scotland - Thematic Report			George Macdonald	Police Scotland	Police Scotland	5.7		
52	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service – Annual Scrutiny Report			Bruce Farquharson	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service			

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2									
53	Building Standards Activity Report	At its meeting on 10 October 2019, the Committee agreed to six monthly assurance reporting		Gordon Spence	Place	Governance	4.1		
54	UKAS Annual Audit of Scientific Services	To present Annual Audit of Scientific Services by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service			Operations and Protective Services	Operations	3.1		
55									
56	Meeting 4/2022 (October)								
57									
58	Police Scotland - Thematic Report	As suggested by Members		George Macdonald	Police Scotland	Police Scotland	5.7		
59	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Six Monthly Performance Report	To present the most recent 6 monthly Performance Report		Bruce Farquharson	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	5.6		
60	SFRS - Thematic Report	As suggested by Members		Bruce Farquharson	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	5.7		
61	Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report	To present the Chief Social Work Officer annual report.	This report is due to be prepared in Autum and will presented to PPC on 27 October 2021	Graeme Simpson	Integrated Children's and Family Services	Operations	1.6		
62									
63	Meeting 5/2022 (December)								
64									
65	Police Scotland - Thematic Report	As suggested by Members		George Macdonald	Police Scotland	Police Scotland	5.7		
66	SFRS - Thematic Report	As suggested by Members		Bruce Farquharson	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	5.7		
67									
68	Resilience Annual Report			Vikki Cuthbert	Governance	Governance	2.1, 2.3, 2.5		
69	Building Standards Activity Report	At its meeting on 10 October 2019, the Committee agreed to six monthly assurance reporting		Gordon Spence	Place	Governance	4.1		
70									

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Public Protection Committee
DATE	28 th April 2021
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Building Standards Activity Report
REPORT NUMBER	COM/21/083
DIRECTOR	Angela Scott
CHIEF OFFICER	Gale Beattie
REPORT AUTHOR	Gordon Spence
TERMS OF REFERENCE	4.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide assurance and an overview of Council responsibilities in relation to securing dangerous buildings and protecting public safety, as well as activity on unauthorised building work and unauthorised occupation of buildings.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Committee:-

- 2.1 a) Notes and endorses the contents of the report and appendix and
b) agrees to 6 monthly assurance reporting – next update 28th October 2021.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Aberdeen City Council act as verifier to administer the Building (Scotland) Act 2003 which is intended to secure the health, safety, welfare and convenience of persons in or about buildings and of others who may be affected by buildings or matters connected with buildings. In addition, the Building Standards team complete enforcement duties under the above Act with the objective of

protecting the public from harm caused by buildings. This report provides an update to the committee report of 7th October 2020 which covered the reporting period of Aug 2019 to July 2020. It was agreed at that committee to provide 6 monthly assurance reporting.

3.2 Details of formal and non-formal enforcement activity can be found in Appendix 1 relating to:

- Public Safety and dangerous buildings
- Unauthorised building work; and
- Unauthorised occupation of buildings without a completion certificate

Where informal discussions with an owner do not result in a speedy resolution to remove a danger to the public, a Notice will be served to set a deadline for resolution for completion of any necessary work. Where the deadline is exceeded, the Local Authority can complete the necessary work and seek expenses from the owner.

3.3 It should be noted that these activities do not have targets or performance measures as each case is dealt with in accordance with the Regulators Code of Conduct supported by the Building Standards Enforcement Charter.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The costs of verification and enforcement activities undertaken are included in the Building Standards revenue budget. There are no increased financial implications in relation to on-going activities.

4.2 Details of the Covid impact on the service are outlined in Appendix 1. No additional costs are being incurred from resuming inspections.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Occasional legal input required to determine ownership / responsibility especially in relation to buildings with common ownership prior to serving enforcement action.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Strategic Risk	None		
Compliance	Failing to meet statutory obligations in terms of public safety	M	Dangerous building processes and procedures established, 24 hour on call service established, regular

			staff training and lessons learned sessions
Operational	Sufficient qualified staff to provide the service	L	Seven members of staff operate the dangerous building call out
Financial	Potential increase in work completed by Building Standards	L	Legislation permits monies to be retrieved from owners of buildings
Reputational	Delay in processing building warrant applications	M	Management of resources system in place
Environment / Climate	None		

7. OUTCOMES

The proposals in this report have no impact on the Council Delivery Plan.

UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes	The report provides evidence which fulfils the requirements placed upon the Council by the Building (Scot) Act 2003, Section 29 – Dangerous Buildings.
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8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	Full impact assessment not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

10. APPENDICES (if applicable)

Appendix 1 – Building Standards Activity

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Gordon Spence
Title	Building Standards Manager
Email Address	gspence@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Appendix 1 – Building Standards Activity

Period	Live Notices at start of period	Notices Served during period	Notices Closed during period	Live Notices at end of period
01/08/20 – 28/02/21				
Public Safety and Dangerous Buildings	18	3	1	20
Unauthorised Building Work	6	0	0	6
Unauthorised Occupation of Buildings	1	0	0	1

Number of visits resulting in formal or informal action	12 visits
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For information – a Notice is principally served in 2 instances:

1. When negotiations seeking a speedy resolution to removing a danger have failed e.g. informal action
2. When a building has suffered a substantial incident and requires a higher degree of control to maintain public safety e.g. fire damaged.

Once a Notice is served, there is a statutory period of 21 days to allow an owner to appeal the notice. Thereafter, there is an expiry date by which the terms of the Notice must be met.

Position at the start of the period showed 25 live notices, because of the activity in this period there are now 27 live notices. The activity breakdown of the notices is:

2 notices are currently live and within the expiry period.

6 notices where the 21 day time period has been stopped to discuss options with owner. Building Standards are satisfied there is no direct public safety risk.

3 notices the Council are making safe the building.

15 notices where the time period has expired, further action being considered.

1 notice is pending approval of building warrant application to regularise the work and is therefore in the process of being closed

COVID Impact

During periods of lockdown, Building Standards site inspections have been restricted except for the 24-hour emergency dangerous building call out which is deemed a critical service.

The availability for owners to access contractors has been restricted during periods of lockdown and therefore delayed the successful closure of some notices.

Notices under consideration will be re-visited and a dialogue resumed with owners with the intention to close out Notices once restrictions are lifted – the indicative timetable for work in people's homes to resume is 26th April 2021.

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COMMITTEE	Public Protection Committee
DATE	28 April 2021
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	COVID-19 Update – Environmental Health & Trading Standards
REPORT NUMBER	OPE/21/087
CHIEF OFFICER	Mark Reilly
REPORT AUTHOR	Andrew Morrison
TERMS OF REFERENCE	3.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide an update on the Environmental Health and Trading Standards response to COVID-19, noting that the update is current with Scottish Government directions and guidance as at date of submission.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 That the Committee notes and endorses the update of Protective Services' (Environmental Health & Trading Standards) response to COVID-19.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Environmental Health and Trading Standards have continued focusing on the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020. Environmental Health and Trading Standards are a Critical Service and accordingly were not stood down so that it could provide a public health focused service primarily in relation to Covid-19 throughout. Appropriate safeguards, risk assessments and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) have been in place to support this operation being conducted safely. It has been a joint effort between the Environmental Health & Trading Standards teams. The significant role of Trading Standards along with Environmental Health in responding to the pandemic cannot be overstated. Throughout this report, the term Officer should be interpreted as referring to both Environmental Health and Trading Standards.

Legislation

- 3.2 Scottish Government introduced the current legislation, the [Health Protection \(Coronavirus\) \(Restrictions and Requirements\) \(Local Levels\) Scotland Regulations 2020](#) in November 2020 replacing the [Health Protection \(Coronavirus\) \(Restrictions and Requirements\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2020](#). The regulations have subsequently been amended 19 times. The regulations and accompanying guidance provide for a system of five levels of restrictions from Level 0 to Level 4. Due to the peak of the second wave, an enhanced Level 4 was introduced. They provide for restrictions on businesses and also restrictions on the movement and gathering of the public. The regulations provided for enforcement of the business restrictions by both Local Authorities and Police Scotland, whilst only Police Scotland could enforce the requirements relating to the general public. Within Aberdeen City Council (ACC), as per all Scottish Local Authorities (LAs), the business restrictions have been enforced by officers from Environmental Health and Trading Standards.
- 3.3 The [Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(Directions by Local Authorities\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2020](#) were introduced on 28 August 2020. With the enforcement guidance and appeals procedure in place, local authorities can use these powers where it is necessary and proportionate to do so.
- 3.4 For the purposes of this report, the term the Covid Regulations should be considered in relation to the initial regulations, the relevant amended regulations, and/or the new regulations as appropriate.

Approach to Enforcement

- 3.5 An agreement with Police Scotland provides for LAs to take primacy for enforcement of the business rules, with Police Scotland only undertaking enforcement in emergency situations. The exception to this relates to the requirement for face coverings to be worn within certain premises. The enforcement of this provision is reserved to Police Scotland.
- 3.6 Enforcement of the Covid business restrictions is undertaken in relation to both the Covid Regulations themselves and also relevant Health & Safety legislation. A UK wide agreement was implemented with the Health & Safety Executive, that in relation to premises that fall within their remit (manufacturing, farming, construction, schools, colleges and universities etc) the Covid restrictions would be enforced by them. The exception to this was premises that were trading whilst required by the regulations to remain closed, as Health & Safety legislation could not be used in these circumstances.
- 3.7 In line with all Scottish LAs and Police Scotland, ACC has taken a '4 Es' approach to enforcement. This consists of Engagement, Education, Encouragement and Enforcement. Formal enforcement is only utilised where other approaches have failed to achieve the desired outcome. Since the last report in October, the following formal enforcement action has been undertaken.
- Directions were served in relation to four hospitality premises. These directions were served in relation to the apparent breach of Covid restriction by customers.
 - A Prohibition Notice was served in relation to a business which was trading whilst required to be closed.
- 3.8 Environmental Health and Trading Standards have continued to enforce the restrictions and provide support, advice and assistance to businesses in relation to compliance with the restrictions.

- 3.9 To date, 5,250 interventions with businesses have been undertaken. This has been supplemented by e-mails to the various sectors, social media messaging, website updates and webinars. A breakdown of the intervention data is included in Appendix 1. This has necessitated diverting resources from other statutory duties across Environmental Health and Trading Standards based on a public health prioritisation. Priority areas of work have been maintained alongside the Covid response.
- 3.10 Two additional fixed term Public Health Compliance Officer posts have been created and recruited to assist with the enforcement of business restrictions. These posts have been financed through a specific Scottish Government grant.

Hotels for Managed Isolation of International Travellers

- 3.11 Aberdeen Airport is one of three hubs for international travellers arriving or returning to Scotland. With limited exceptions, travellers require to isolate within a dedicated hotel facility for at least 10 days and be tested twice for Covid. Officers have been undertaking interventions to ensure that the hotels, security and transport operations have appropriate and effective controls to operate in a Covid secure manner.

Route Map

- 3.12 Following the Scottish Government's announcement on 16th March 2021, the Environmental Health and Trading Standards teams immediately started formulating a plan to support the safe re-opening of businesses in line with the route map. This will involve pre-emptive communications by e-mail, social media and updates on the website targeted at the relevant sectors in the period immediately before they can re-open or the restrictions on the sector change. Where appropriate, webinars will also be organised to assist businesses with preparations. Immediately following changes being implemented a suite of pro-active inspections and assessments will be undertaken to relevant premises. Due to the scale of the issue, it will not be possible to assess every premises. Premises will be selected through a combination of random selection and intelligence based related to previous compliance, complaints etc. The Service will of course continue to respond timeously to requests for advice from businesses, and complaints regarding non-compliance will be assessed and investigated as appropriate.
- 3.13 The Service is liaising with colleagues from Aberdeenshire and Moray Councils to share resources and deliver a pan Grampian approach where possible.

LRP Recovery Sub-Group

- 3.14 The Grampian Local Resilience Partnership has established a short-life Recovery "Staycations" Sub-Group to manage risks in relation to increased visitor footfall across the Grampian area, including the movement of residents of Grampian, as the restrictions start to ease from 2nd April. This is managing risks in five thematic areas: Venues (tourist attractions, hospitality, accommodation); Traffic Management; Travelling Visitors; Public Health and Safety; and Open Spaces. Through workstream leads across all partners, the Sub-Group is planning how to open up the North East in a way that optimises safety and minimises risk for both visitors and residents. The Environmental Health Manager is providing the Environmental Health and Trading Standards input to the group on behalf of the three LAs. This work aligns with the actions planned at 3.11 above to support businesses.

Scottish Elections

3.15 Officers are working with colleagues in the Elections Unit, Aberdeenshire & Moray Councils, and the Public Health team of NHS Grampian to ensure that effective arrangements are in place to for voting and the count for the Scottish Elections on 6th May to be undertaken in a Covid secure manner.

Liaison Arrangements

3.16 Officers represent Environmental Health and Trading Standards as national representatives at regular Scottish Government led Regulators Forum to help shape policy and guidance in relation to business restrictions. The Environmental Health and Trading Standards teams have also continued to help lead the LA enforcement response throughout Scotland. Officers from both Environmental Health and Trading Standards are key participants in the expert group of the Society of Chief Officers of Environmental Health in Scotland (SoCOEHS) and the Society of Chief Officers of Trading Standards in Scotland (SCOTSS) (the ETC-19) which ensures consistency across Scotland and provides a focal point for communications with Scottish Government and other partner organisations. The main activities undertaken are:

- Provision of enforcement advice to LA colleagues and the formulation of FAQs;
- Collation of data on interventions, complaints and enforcement action undertaken;
- Consultation on Scottish Government, Partner and Industry guidance; and
- Liaison with Scottish Government.

3.17 Additional frequent liaison arrangements are in place within Grampian with colleagues from NHS Grampian, Police Scotland, and Aberdeenshire and Moray Councils.

EU Exit

3.18 Officers have continued to provide leadership on a national basis in relation to the preparation for EU Exit, the delivery of Export Health Certification and the supporting processes since 01/01/21, and preparation for Import controls from 01/10/21.

3.19 Officers have provided support to businesses in the City involved in exporting fishery products to the EU. This has involved ensuring compliance with the requirements, providing advice on support on the necessary processes, provision of export certification and the provision of attestations to support certification at export hubs, facilitating groupage of consignments.

Impact on Staff and Other Duties

3.20 Significant resource has been devoted to ensuring public health is protected through the application of the regulations and guidance in relation to the business restrictions. This has required the resources to be diverted from other statutory duties and performance indicators. In some areas, for example, food law, specific derogations have been provided, but in other areas this has been undertaken on the basis of prioritising on the public health priority. Visits to domestic premises have been limited to emergency situations. As we start to recommence 'Business as Usual' activities, this will require to continue to be balanced against additional demand on the Council to ensure compliance with Covid related legislation and guidance.

3.21 Although resource has been diverted from routine activity to support the Covid response, other priority areas have continued to be undertaken. These include:

- high priority public health complaints such as blocked drains causing sewage to back up in to domestic properties;
- product safety and doorstep crime; and

- serious food hygiene complaints
- 3.22 Scottish Ministers through Food Standards Scotland (FSS) provided derogations in relation to routine food law official controls. On 25th March, FSS wrote to LA Chief Executives confirming that the resumption of a full programme of food law interventions is neither feasible nor desirable at this time. FSS acknowledges that any 'start date' for Local Authority Intervention Programmes should be in line with relaxations against COVID-19 restrictions according to the Scottish Governments Route Map and to the extent that allows food business activity to resume. It is not possible to predict with certainty at this time, when food establishments will be permitted to trade in a manner close to 'normal'. It is also possible that the easing of restrictions on trading will be on a Local Authority rather than a national basis. The former scenario could see some Local Authorities able to recommence programmed interventions while others are still experiencing trading restrictions – as well as infection suppression measures which might preclude on-site assessment of businesses. In the light of this continuing uncertainty, **FSS has opted to set a nominal 're-start date' of 1 September 2021**. It is averred that current epidemiological trends as well as Government and scientific projections provide a reasonable level of confidence that 'conventional' food law interventions will be feasible by that time. However, it is acknowledged that Local Authorities might, on either an individual or national basis, be able to recommence interventions before this date. If this were to be the case, there would be no obstacle to bring interventions forward.
- 3.23 Officers have worked extremely hard under difficult circumstances and tight deadlines to ensure that effective controls are implemented. This has necessitated very long hours and significant evening and weekend working. Officers across Environmental Health and Trading Standards have put themselves forward to deliver this. Officer workloads will continue to be carefully managed to ensure the capacity to provide the service is maintained.

Aberdeen Scientific Services

- 3.24 In addition to the impact on Environmental Health & Trading Standards, the pandemic has also impacted on the laboratory arm of Protective Services. During the initial period of lockdown the laboratory was stood down with the exception of urgent analysis and examinations required for significant public health issues including for example the analysis of hand sanitisers to ensure they met legal requirements and were effective. The laboratory explored a number of novel opportunities to assist with the co-ordinated response to the pandemic. These included the offer of staff to assist with contact tracing, and to assist within NHS laboratories, the production of hand sanitiser and the potential to undertake the analysis of Covid swabs on half of oil sector clients. Unfortunately, these opportunities were not realised as there were legal and compliance barriers that could not be overcome and clients amending their plans.
- 3.25 In order to support business clients, with essential and some statutory sampling, the laboratory operations have expanded back towards normal operations, with effective Covid controls in place.
- 3.26 LA sampling activity has remained low throughout the pandemic and has primarily been focused on Private Water Supplies.
- 3.27 In February, the laboratory was subject to the annual UKAS accreditation audit. For the second year running, Covid necessitated this being a virtual audit. The initial audit report has been received and an action plan developed to resolve the few issues identified. A report on the UKAS accreditation will be provided to a future Committee.

3.28 The laboratory undertakes an annual customer satisfaction survey. The responses this year have identified an exceptional degree of satisfaction in the service provided. Given the very challenging conditions that the laboratory has been operating under this year, this is an outstanding achievement.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Funding, for two additional fixed term Public Health compliance officer posts has been provided by Scottish Government. Additional expenditure related to the Covid response has been captured with finance. In line with other Scottish LAs, the response to Covid-19 has predominantly achieved by diverting existing resources from other statutory roles by prioritising the public health response to Covid-19. However, officers have been undertaking considerable excess hours in order to deliver the necessary public health protection measures, which has necessitated a mixture of overtime payments and TOIL from within existing budgets.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

6.1 The capacity to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic has only been possible by prioritising this activity over other areas of statutory work. As the need to recommence these activities increases, the ability to manage this effectively could be compromised.

6.2 Additionally, the fact that routine activities to protect public health and consumer safety have to a large extent been suspended increases the potential for public health and consumer safety in these areas to be compromised.

6.3 Activity continues to be prioritised primarily on the basis of public health risk, with activity in relation to high risk areas continuing to be undertaken.

6.4 EU Exit has also placed additional responsibilities on Protective Services in relation to exports.

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Strategic Risk			
Compliance	Risk that statutory duties for Environmental Health and Trading Standards are not met.	H	Resources are focused on public health, consumer protection and essential business support. SG and CoSLA kept informed of service prioritisation

Operational	Risk of staff being overworked	M	Officer workloads managed to ensure the welfare of staff and capacity to provide the service is maintained.
Financial	Additional costs associated with enforcement of Covid-19 business restrictions	M	Additional costs captured within financial returns.
Reputational	Risk of negative publicity regarding enforcement of Covid-19 controls	M	Resources prioritised to Covid-19 business restrictions. 4Es approach to enforcement of the requirements. Consistency of approach across Scottish LAs and Police Scotland

7. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	The activity outlined in this report supports the ACC Policy Statement through protection of public health, provision of advice and support to businesses and enforcement of the business restrictions
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Economy	The activity outlined in this report supports the Prosperous Economy element of the LOIP through provision of advice and support to businesses in relation to the business restrictions, assessing the controls implemented, undertaking a 4Es approach to enforcement and ensuring that businesses within Aberdeen can operate safely in relation to Covid-19.
Prosperous People	The activity outlined in this report supports the Prosperous People element of the LOIP by ensuring effective public health protection measures are implemented across business establishments in the City, both in relation to the workforce and the general public. The activity has supported businesses re-opening and operating safely.
Prosperous Place	The activity outlined in this report supports the Prosperous Place element of the LOIP by ensuring that appropriate assurances were in place to facilitate reopening of the hospitality sector
UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes	The activity outlined in this report supports the Scottish legislative and policy programme through provision of an effective and proportionate enforcement of the regulation and promotion of the guidance.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	Full impact assessment not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Duty of Due Regard / Fairer Scotland Duty	Not applicable

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Health Protection \(Coronavirus\) \(Restrictions and Requirements\) \(Local Levels\) Scotland Regulations 2020](#)
[Health Protection \(Coronavirus\) \(Restrictions and Requirements\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2020](#)
[Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(Directions by Local Authorities\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2020](#)
[Health Protection \(Coronavirus, Restrictions\) \(Aberdeen City\) Regulations 2020](#)
<https://www.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/>

10 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 –Covid-19 Interventions undertaken by ACC Environmental Health & Trading Standards

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Appendix 1

Covid-19 Interventions undertaken by ACC Environmental Health & Trading Standards

	Requests from business	Enquiries / complaints about business	Open premises - interventions	Intervention follow ups	Social media releases	Written warnings	Prohibition notices	Directions
Period 1 - 26/3 - 1/5/2020*	0	103	751	25	0	0	0	
Period 2 - 2/5 - 15/5*	0	30	238	50	0	0	0	
Period 3 - 16/5 - 29/5	19	28	432	14	29	0	0	
Period 4 - 30/5 - 12/6	26	22	313	13	20	2	1	
Period 5 - 13/6 - 26/6	15	34	183	26	12	0	0	
Period 6 - 27/6 - 10/7	9	13	111	2	21	0	0	
Period 7 - 11/7 - 24/7	12	17	205	2	13	0	0	
Period 8 - 23/7 - 7/8	48	100	560	1	12	0	0	
Period 9 - 8/8 - 21/8	23	34	110	5	9	0	0	
Period 10 - 22/8 - 4/9	50	62	393	19	16	0	0	
Period 11 - 5/9 - 18/9	53	39	58	3	12	0	0	
Period 12 - 19/9 to 2/10	49	56	77	0	13	0	0	
Period 13 - 3/10 to 16/10	36	38	38	0	7	0	0	
Period 14 - 17/10 to 30/10	31	38	21	1	5	0	0	

Period 15 - 31/10 to 13/11	16	80	18	0	2	0	0	1
Period 16 - 14/11 to 27/11	19	51	42	0	0	0	0	3
Period 17 - 28/11 to 11/12	11	37	16	0	0	0	0	0
Period 18 - 12/12 - 8/1/21	65	70	17	1	5	0	0	0
Period 19 - 9/1/21 - 22/1/21	43	46	55	<u>1</u>	8	0	0	0
Period 20 - 23/1/21 - 5/2/21	5	16	45	0	6	0	0	0
Period 21 - 6/2/21 - 19/2/21	8	17	44	1	2	0	1	0
Period 22 - 20/2/21 - 5/3/21	10	13	35	2	3	0	0	0
Totals	548	944	3762	166	195	2	2	4

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Public Protection
DATE	28/04/2021
EXEMPT	No
REPORT TITLE	Complaints About The Police
REPORT NUMBER	POL/21/081
DIRECTOR	
CHIEF OFFICER	
REPORT AUTHOR	Superintendent Richard Craig, North East Division, Police Scotland
TERMS OF REFERENCE	5.7

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide information to the Committee on Police Scotland’s Complaints process and the local context in respect of figures, recurring themes and insight into work undertaken to improve both our response to Complaints About the Police and to reduce the volume of such reports.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 The Committee discuss, comment on and endorse the report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Police Scotland takes Complaints About the Police seriously in order to reflect our commitment to providing members of the public with an excellent Local Policing service and to ensure our communities are safe.
- 3.2 Police Scotland continually strives to improve relations with the community and the service provided. This practice is implemented by continual scrutiny of complaints received by Police Scotland and data received from User Experience Surveys conducted with members of the public.

Complaint Investigations

- 3.3 There are a number of different ways in which individuals can express their dissatisfaction with Police Scotland and when any complaint is received it is logged and assessed by the Professional Standards Department.

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- 3.4 Complaints About the Police are divided into three key categories namely:
- **On Duty** with 12 sub categories including 'Irregularity in Procedure', 'Unlawful Arrest' and 'Incivility';
 - **Quality of Service** with three sub headings namely 'Policy & Procedures', 'Service Delivery' and 'Service Outcome';
 - **Off Duty**
- 3.5 Criminal investigations involving Police Officers are investigated solely by the Professional Standards Department.
- 3.6 For non-criminal investigations, the majority of the complaints received within Aberdeen City are resolved through the 'Front Line Resolution' process which affords the complainer an opportunity to ask questions and receive an explanation regarding the actions taken by Police.
- 3.7 Where complaints are not resolved by Front Line Resolution, they are allocated to the Service Delivery Unit where a full and thorough investigation is conducted. This model ensures consistent investigations are carried out in a timeous manner. North East Division consistently performs well above the national average in terms of progression and completion of outstanding complaints within strict deadlines.
- 3.8 Each month, members of the public who have contacted Police Scotland are asked questions regarding the service they received. These User Experience Surveys allows us to capture learning and identify areas for improvement.
- 3.9 The Service Delivery Unit collate and scrutinise the complaints received along with the results from the User Experience Surveys where common themes of complaints and dissatisfaction are identified. This information is shared across the Division to further enhance our performance and meet the expectations of the public.
- 3.10 It is worthy of note that among the challenges of complaints there are also frequent letters of thanks received from members of the public reflecting positively on the level of service provided.
- 3.11 On average Officers within Aberdeen City deal with 200 incidents per day, 6,098 per month and 73,179 per year. Complaints average at 276 per year and therefore represent 0.4% of incidents in the City.

Complaints and Satisfaction in Aberdeen City 1 April 2020 - 28 February 2021

Indicator	5 Year Average	Apr 2020-Feb 2021	Apr 2019-Feb 2020	Difference	%Change 2019/20 v 20/21
Overall Satisfaction of How Police Dealt With Your incident ²	N/A	72.0%	84.0%	-	-12.0%
Complaints Received About The Police	N/A	315	236	+79	+33.47%
On Duty Allegations Raised	N/A	405	273	+132	+48.35%
Off Duty Allegations Raised	N/A	1	1	0.0%	0.0%
Quality of Service Allegations	N/A	105	53	+52	+98.11%
Total Allegations	N/A	511	327	+184	+56.26%

- 3.12 Levels of overall satisfaction with Police remain high at 72% in line with the national average. In January 2020, the User Experience Survey process changed from telephone based interactions with members of the public to online and text message feedback. This change in process for communication is thought to contribute to the overall reduction in satisfaction and is replicated nationally.
- 3.13 There have been notable increases in the number of Complaints About the Police and associated allegations made during the above time frame.
- 3.14 With any rise in complaint numbers there is also a rise in the number of allegations, particularly so in light of recommendations from the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner (PIRC) which aim to ensure each aspect of a complaint is recorded separately. Ultimately this can result in one complaint generating several allegations.
- 3.15 By far the most common allegation raised by the public in Aberdeen City is 'Irregularity in Procedure' which generally involves a lack of understanding of Police procedures such as grounds for search, forced entry to premises and recording of personal information.
- 3.16 Similarly, a large proportion of local allegations stem from 'Quality of Service' matters. Issues raised include perceived failure to take action, levels of response and lack of satisfaction particularly during this unprecedented time.
- 3.17 The Coronavirus pandemic has resulted in dynamic and evolving laws, regulations and guidance throughout the reporting period. This has resulted in swift and, at times difficult, decisions around Officer deployment and attendance in our efforts to keep both the public and our officers safe. Of the 315 complaints received, 40 (13%) can be directly attributed to Coronavirus incidents although it is considered that many others have been influenced by people's behaviour, general tolerance levels and frequently changing legislation over the last year.

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3.18 Further statistical analysis of the above figures has been carried out in order to provide context to the rise in the number of complaints received within Aberdeen City:

- Of the 315 complaints received at the Professional Standards Department, 239 were resolved by the Officers within this Department including the use of Front Line Resolution. 76 (24%) complaints were allocated to the Service Delivery Unit for further investigations;
- Of the 76 complaints by the Service Delivery Unit, 218 allegations were generated and investigated with 26 (11.9%) of these 'upheld'.

Reducing and Improving our Response to Complaints About the Police

3.19 Police Scotland strives to improve performance and all complaints are scrutinised to ensure early identification of any common themes or issues. Any learning points are issued monthly to Officers in order to reduce the number of complaints being received and for Officers to have an understanding of the nature of complaints received.

3.20 Specific guidance has been provided to Officers to better communicate Police Procedures to the public and where possible to explain all available and proportionate lines of enquiry at the outset an investigation.

3.21 If any particular Officer is repeatedly involved in complaints appropriate measures are put in place to mitigate against further complaints.

3.22 Learning points from the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner are circulated to ensure Officers of Police Scotland are providing a consistent high level of service to the public.

3.23 Inputs are also provided to Supervisors and Probationary Officers by the Service Delivery Unit to ensure a consistent and informed approach.

3.24 It has been suggested previously by Elected Members that in order to reduce the number of complaints relating to knowledge of Police powers and procedures that this information should be provided to members of the public. It is, however, assessed that given the volume of legislation and Police powers used by Officers there would be challenges producing a concise guide on all of this information.

3.25 Should members of the public require any additional information in this regard there are several helpful websites which allow members of the public to conduct research on Police powers, should they so wish. One such website is <https://www.askthe.scottish.police.uk/content/@1.htm>.

3.26 A recent review led by the Rt Hon Dame Elish Angiolini DBE QC in relation to Police Complaint handling, investigations and misconduct, made 81 recommendations, 36 of those relating directly to Police Scotland. The report advocated increasing the powers of the Police Investigations and

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Review Commissioner and expanding the use of Police Officer Body Worn Video Cameras, which is already well established within North East Division.

3.27 Further key recommendations include:

- All Complaints About the Police to be retained and investigated by the Professional Standards Department who will receive additional mediation and unconscious bias training;
- The Police Scotland website to be made easier to navigate for making complaints and complaint guidance to be updated;
- Making the complaints process more accessible to hard to reach groups and better communicate with external agencies to ensure individuals from diverse backgrounds are aware of how to make complaints;
- Improvements to be made in the recording and dissemination of learning points to operational Police Officers;
- Police Scotland to collate data on the gender/ethnicity of complainers.

3.28 It is assessed that Officers within Aberdeen City are providing members of the public with a quality service and appropriate measures are implemented to ensure Officers are provided with guidance to carry out their duties to a consistently high standard.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

	Risk	Low (L), Medium (M), High (H)	Mitigation
Financial	N/A		
Legal	N/A		
Employee	N/A		
Customer	N/A		
Environment	N/A		

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Technology	N/A		
Reputational	N/A		

7. OUTCOMES

Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes	
	Impact of Report
Prosperous People	Police Scotland are key partners within Community Planning Aberdeen and help contribute to the shared vision for 2026 that 'Aberdeen is a place where all people can prosper' and towards the achievement of the LOIP theme which aims to make people more resilient and protect them from harm; where every child, irrespective of their circumstances, is supported to grow, develop and reach their full potential; and where all people in Aberdeen are entitled to live within our community in a manner in which they feel safe and protected from harm, supported when necessary and fully included in the life of the City.
Prosperous Place	Police Scotland are key partners within Community Planning Aberdeen and help contribute to the shared vision for 2026 that 'Aberdeen is a place where all people can prosper' and towards the achievement of the LOIP theme which aims to support individuals and communities to live in healthy, sustainable ways; and the development of sustainable communities with strong and resilient communities.

Design Principles of Target Operating Model	
	Impact of Report
Governance	The Council has an oversight role of the North East Division of Police Scotland in terms of its performance and delivery of the Local Police Plan.
Partnerships and Alliances	The Council and Police Scotland are Community Planning Aberdeen partners with a shared commitment to deliver the LOIP.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment	Not required.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.

Duty of Due Regard/Fairer Scotland Duty	Not applicable.
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9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

10. APPENDICES (if applicable)

N/A

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Superintendent Richard Craig
North East Division
Police Scotland

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Public Protection
DATE	28 April 2021
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Annual Performance Report 2020/21
REPORT NUMBER	SFR/21/082
DIRECTOR	Area Commander Bruce Farquharson, Local Senior Officer, SFRS
CHIEF OFFICER	Group Commander Scott Symon, SFRS
REPORT AUTHOR	Bruce Farquharson, Local Senior Officer, SFRS
TERMS OF REFERENCE	5.6

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present the performance of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) against the objectives contained within the Aberdeen City Local Fire and Rescue Plan

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 That the Committee consider and note the performance data provided in **Appendix A** in relation to the SFRS 2020/21 Performance Report

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This report invites you to review the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Aberdeen City Performance for Reporting Year 202/21
- 3.2 This update shows the progress being made by the SFRS locally against the priorities and objectives for Aberdeen City as outlined in the Local Fire Plan.
- 3.3 This report allows scrutiny from Local Authority Partners to ensure that the priorities of the SFRS Strategic Plan, and the Aberdeen city Local Outcome Improvement Plan are being delivered.

3.4 Due to reporting timelines the data in this report has not been subject to the full SFRS Quality Assurance process and is, therefore, provisional and subject to change. At time of writing 46 incidents were still to be processed.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no significant financial implications for the Council.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no significant legal implications for the Council.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

6.1 Not applicable

7. OUTCOMES

Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes	
	Impact of Report
Prosperous Economy	Whilst not specific to any Stretch Outcome, the paper seeks contribution to fire safety which will assist achieve a safer place to live, work and visit.
Prosperous People	<p>The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following LOIP Stretch Outcomes</p> <p>8. 25% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026</p> <p>9. 25% fewer people receiving a first ever Court conviction each year by 2026.</p> <p>10. 2% fewer people reconvicted within one year of receiving a community or custodial sentence by 2026</p> <p>11. Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026</p> <p>The paper seeks contribution to the Strategic Plan to reduce instances of deliberate fire setting and improve fire safety and prevention.</p>
Prosperous Place	Whilst not specific to any Stretch Outcome, the paper seeks contribution to fire safety which will assist achieve a safer place to live, work and visit.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment	N/A
Privacy Impact Assessment	N/A
Duty of Due Regard / Fairer Scotland Duty	Not required.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

10. APPENDICES (if applicable)

Appendix A – SFRS Aberdeen City 2020/21 Annual Performance Report

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Working together for a safer Scotland

North Service Delivery Area
Aberdeen City
2020/21 Annual Performance Report



The figures included in this report are provisional and subject to change as a result of quality assurance and review. The statistics quoted are internal management information published in the interests of transparency and openness.

The Scottish Government publishes Official Statistics each year which allow for comparisons to be made over longer periods of time.

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Introduction

This report provides detail on the performance of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) in the Aberdeen City area. In doing so it outlines our progress in the delivery of local priorities as set out within the Local Fire and Rescue Plan and the SFRS framework document.

The Scottish Government provides an overarching vision for public services. This vision is supported by 16 national outcomes, which demonstrate commitment to creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable growth. The SFRS can make a significant contribution to improving these outcomes for Aberdeen City by contributing to the Community Planning arrangements across the area.

The national priorities for the SFRS are set out in the Fire and Rescue Framework (Scotland) 2016. The SFRS Strategic Plan 2016-2019 outlines how the SFRS will deliver against these priorities and the outcomes against which this delivery can be measured.

The SFRS Local Fire and Rescue Plan for the Local Authority Area of Aberdeen City is the mechanism through which the aims of the SFRS Strategic Plan 2016-2019 are delivered to meet the agreed needs of Aberdeen City's communities.




The Plan sets out the priorities and objectives for SFRS within Aberdeen City and allows our Local Authority partners to scrutinise the performance outcomes of those priorities. The SFRS will continue to work closely with our partners in Aberdeen City to ensure we are all "Working Together for a Safer Scotland" through targeting risks to our communities at a local level.

The SFRS aspires to deliver the highest standards to our communities and our current performance is testament to the commitment, professionalism and dedication of our staff and the positive local partnerships embedded within Aberdeen City Community Safety working groups.

Performance Summary

We measure how well we are meeting our priorities using the 6 key indicators depicted below.

Key	1/4/20 to 31/3/21					RAG rating
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	YTD
All accidental dwelling fires	300	240	262	257	219	GREEN
All accidental dwelling fire	31	23	40	42	28	GREEN
All deliberate fires	346	361	446	356	335	GREEN
Non-domestic fires	108	98	118	105	88	GREEN
All deliberate other building fires	11	18	16	16	15	GREEN
False Alarm - UFAS	1471	1412	1349	1428	1209	GREEN

	Red	>9% higher than the previous YTD period.
	Amber	Up to 9% higher than the previous YTD period.
	Green	Equal to or improved upon the previous equivalent YTD period.

Note
RAG rating = the cumulative total of all quarterly performance in the current year compared to cumulative total of all quarterly performance in the previous year.

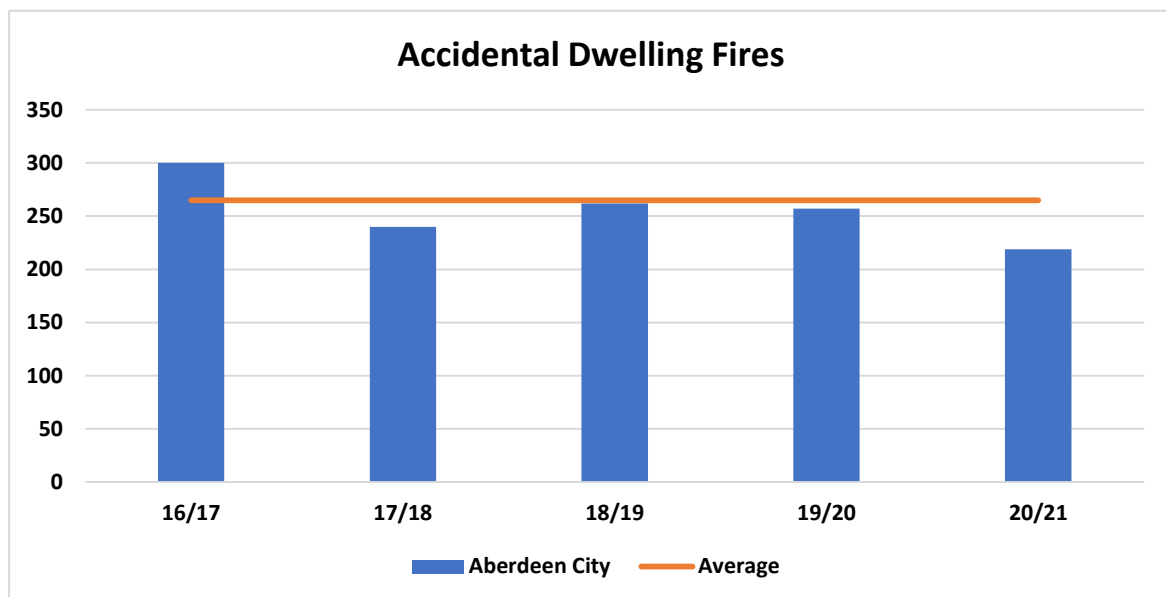
Progress on local fire & rescue plan priorities

LPI Assessment 1: Domestic Safety and Wellbeing

The main areas of measurement of Domestic Safety and Wellbeing are:

- Accidental Dwelling Fires
- Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties and Fatalities
- Number of high risk Home Fire Safety Visits delivered
- Number of referrals for Home Fire Safety Visits received from partners

Accidental Dwelling Fires:



Analysis

Dwelling fires can have a significant negative impact upon both individuals and the community and are financially costly to householders and housing providers in terms of repair and the reinstatement of homes. By giving safety advice and fitting smoke detectors, SFRS have reduced the risk of fire and its associated human and financial costs as well as enhancing community safety.

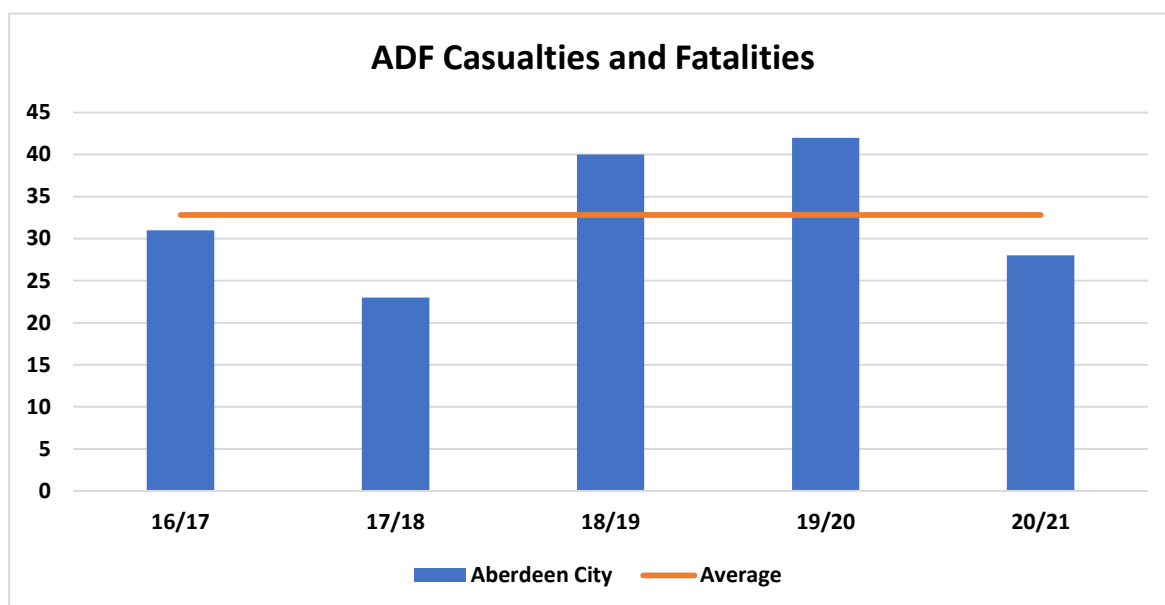
The annual figure of 219 incidents represents a decrease of 15% from the same reporting period in 2019/20 (257) and is below the preceding 4yr average of 265.

These figures represent a welcomed downward trend in accidental dwelling fires and is representative of the focus local community safety education personnel have placed on improving home safety. Even through the Covid-19 pandemic local personnel have used all resources available to them and have adapted their work to continue to deliver against local community safety priorities.

Cooking activity continues to be the highest cause of accidental dwelling fires. Over the reporting period cooking accounted for 112 of the 219 incidents (51%).

Distraction/falling asleep were contributory factors in 88 of the 219 (40%).

Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties and Fatalities



Analysis

Fire casualty and fatality rates provide an indication of the severity of fires being experienced across Aberdeen City. This statistic is a key indicator of the success of our risk reduction and community engagement strategies.

The reduction of fire fatalities and casualties is linked to the reduction in dwelling house fires and is at the core of prevention activities. The vulnerable in our communities continue to be those most at risk. Older people, those with disabilities, those who live alone and those with alcohol and drugs dependencies provide the SFRS with challenges in engagement and reduction strategies. Working with partner organisations with single shared assessments and signposting of vulnerable persons proves an effective method of identification and engagement. Fire casualties are also more likely to occur in the areas with highest operational demand.

In the reporting period there have been 18 casualties as a consequence of accidental dwelling fires in Aberdeen City. This is a decrease of 2 compared with the same period the previous year and a decrease of 4 against the preceding 4yr average.

Tragically, during the reporting period, there were 3 fire fatalities, an increase of 3 on the previous year and above the preceding 4yr average of 2.

The decrease in all casualties but increase in fire fatalities in Aberdeen is reflected nationally. When conditions allow multi-agency case conferences will be held to discuss the circumstances of each of these fatalities and any learning identified and actioned.

Of the 25 non-fatal casualties reported 1 received a precautionary check, 13 received first aid at the scene and 11 were taken to hospital with slight injuries.

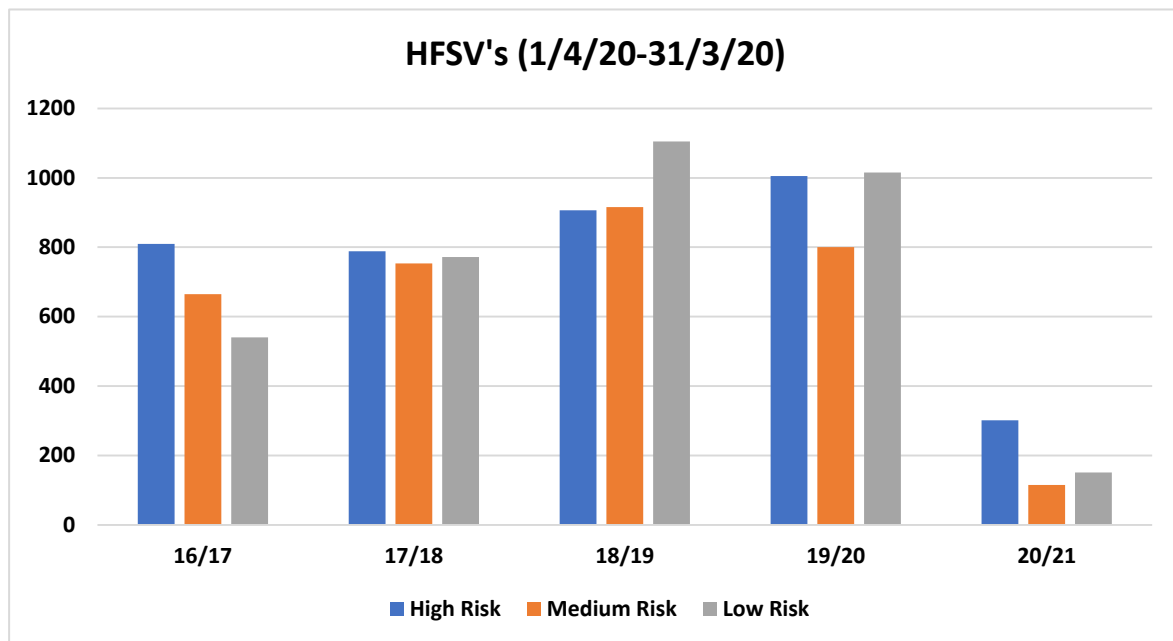
Cooking activity was the primary cause of fire in 12 of the 28 casualties. Detection was present on 27 occasions operating and raising the alarm for 18 of the casualties.

Following all domestic incidents, SFRS personnel initiate effective and meaningful community engagement' through our Post Domestic Incident Response process. We

engage with neighbouring households, and the wider community, offering Home Fire Safety Visits and providing community fire safety advice, guidance and reassurance.

Number of high risk Home Fire Safety Visits delivered:

A Home Fire Safety Visit is a comprehensive assessment by our Firefighters or Community Action Team which examines the levels of fire risk within the home. It provides a means to mitigate the risk through the provision of guidance, advice and, if required, the installation of battery operated smoke alarms and heat alarms where additional risk has been identified. Where appropriate, the HFSV will permit the occupier to be referred to other agencies for additional support.

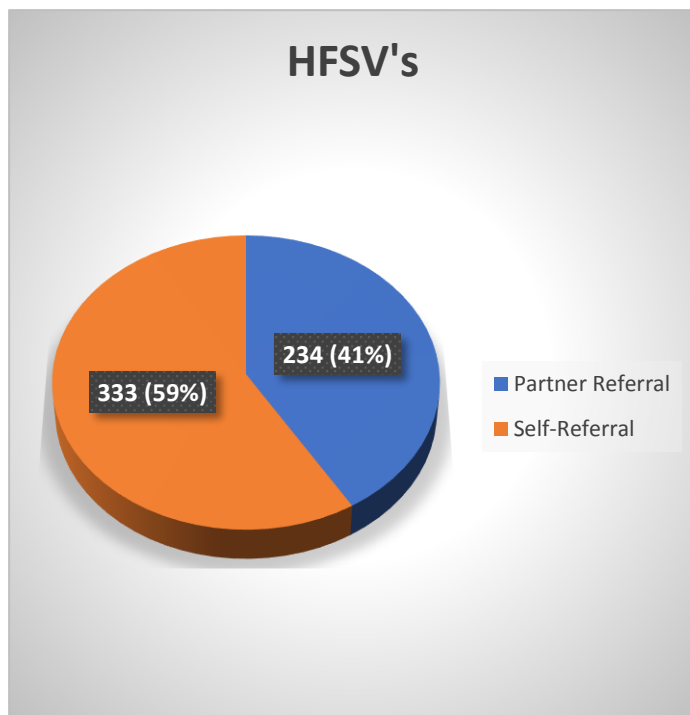


Analysis

The restrictions that Covid-19 has brought has severely limited our ability to undertake physical HFSV's. During this time personnel have engaged with householders in different ways, working in partnership with CFINE to deliver 15,000 "Make The Call" campaign leaflets, have made contact with over 400 addresses on our HFSV pending list to offer advice and continue to install detection where none is present and distribute fire-retardant bedding where required.

Through engagement with partners involved in the Community Planning Partnership, referral pathways have been put in place to allow partners to refer "High Risk" vulnerable members of the community to SFRS for a comprehensive free Home Fire Safety Visit to be carried out. Visits are also carried out in the vicinity of accidental dwelling fires, this aids SFRS in reaching those at high risk of fire in specific wards of Aberdeen City.

Number of referrals for Home Fire Safety Visits received from partners:



As part of our commitment to building a safer Scotland we offer everyone in Scotland a free home fire safety visit. We can also fit smoke alarms free of charge if your home requires them.

Get in touch with us, it's easy to arrange:

- call [0800 0731 999](tel:0800 0731 999)
- text "FIRE" to 80800 from your mobile phone
- complete our online form
- call your local fire station

Analysis

41% of all completed Home Fire Safety Visits were originally referred to us by partner agencies. This is below our aspirational target of 50%, however this percentage split reflects the limitations we have faced during this period and is measured against much lower numbers than we would normally aim to do.

Our aim is to ensure that our resources are directed to those most vulnerable from fire, this part of the community can be the most difficult to reach, therefore partner referrals are key in assisting SFRS to create the opportunity to deliver lifesaving advice and increase smoke alarm ownership.

We are always looking for opportunities to expand our referral pathways to ensure the most vulnerable are flagged to us as timeously as possible.

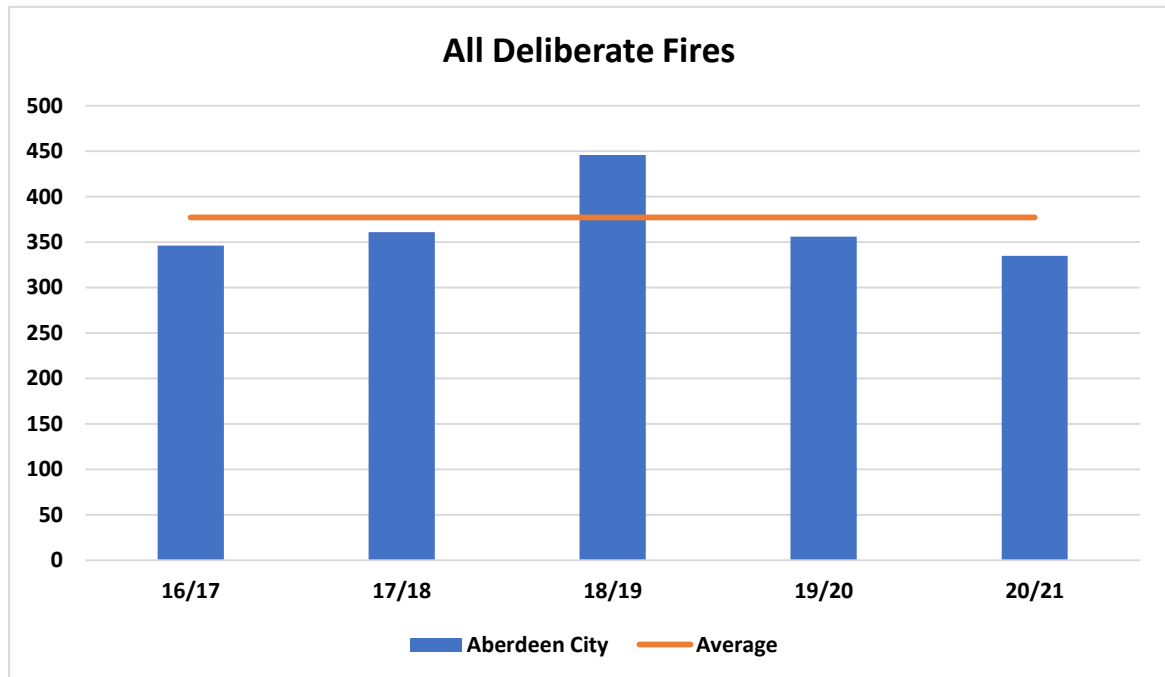
The referral pathways we have in place are regularly reviewed to ensure they are efficient and effective.

LPI Assessment 2: Deliberate Fire Setting

The main areas of measurement of Deliberate Fire Setting is:

- All deliberate fires

All Deliberate Fires:



Analysis

During the reporting period there were 335 deliberate fires across Aberdeen City. This represents a decrease of 6% against the same period the previous year and a decrease of 11% against the preceding 4yr average. This represents a slight downward trend over the 5yr period.

Wheelie bins (48 incidents) were the highest occurring property type with a particular spike in the Torry area in the first half of the year, however, through strong partnership work, sharing relevant incident information Police Scotland identified and apprehended an individual considered responsible for a large number of these incidents.

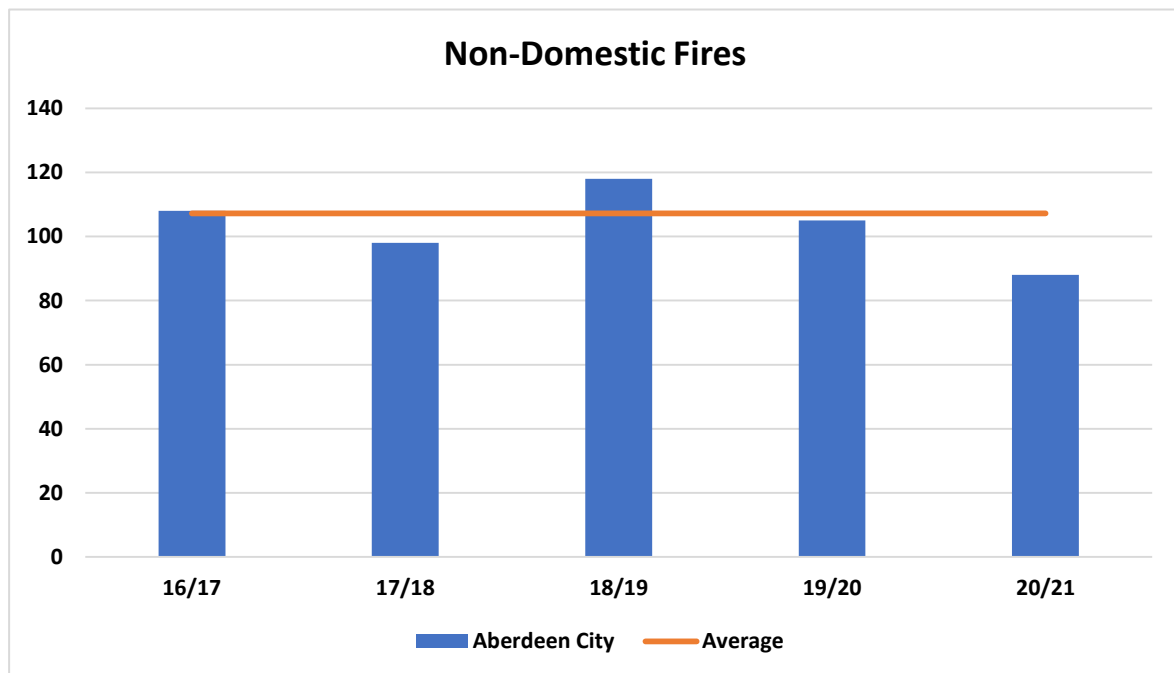
43 incidents were categorised as grassland in gardens which corresponds with the closure of recycling centres in the early part of the year and an increase in individuals burning garden waste. Whilst these fires are deliberately set they are not of an anti-social nature.

LPI Assessment 3: Non Domestic Fire Safety

The main areas of measurement of Domestic Safety and Wellbeing are:

- All non-domestic fires
- Number of Fire Safety Audits completed
- Deliberate fires in non-domestic properties

All non-domestic fires:



Analysis

Over the reporting period there were 88 incidents, a decrease of 17 from the corresponding period the previous year and a decrease against the preceding 4yr average (107). Fires in non-domestic premises are showing a downward trend over the 5yr period.

Most fires in non-domestic premises are accidental in nature (75%) with over a quarter (23) attributed to cooking activity. Hospitals and Student Halls of Residence were the property types with the most number of incidents (12 and 11 incidents respectively) although incidents are spread across a range of property types.

It was anticipated that the lockdown restrictions the Covid-19 pandemic brought would see a decrease in non-domestic incidents and this appears to have been borne out both locally and nationally.

Through our risk based fire safety audit programme our Fire Safety Enforcement Officers carry out fire safety audits. Working in partnership with duty holders to meet their legislative fire safety requirements we assist them to ensure that their buildings are safe for the building users.

Our operational crews undertake Operational Intelligence visits to higher risk premises. This allows them to gather relevant operational information which is available to them in the event of an incident via our 'mobile data terminals' on appliances.

Number of Fire Safety Audits completed:-

Fire safety legislation aims to ensure the safety of employees, residents, visitors or customers; it sets out rights and responsibilities in respect of fire safety.

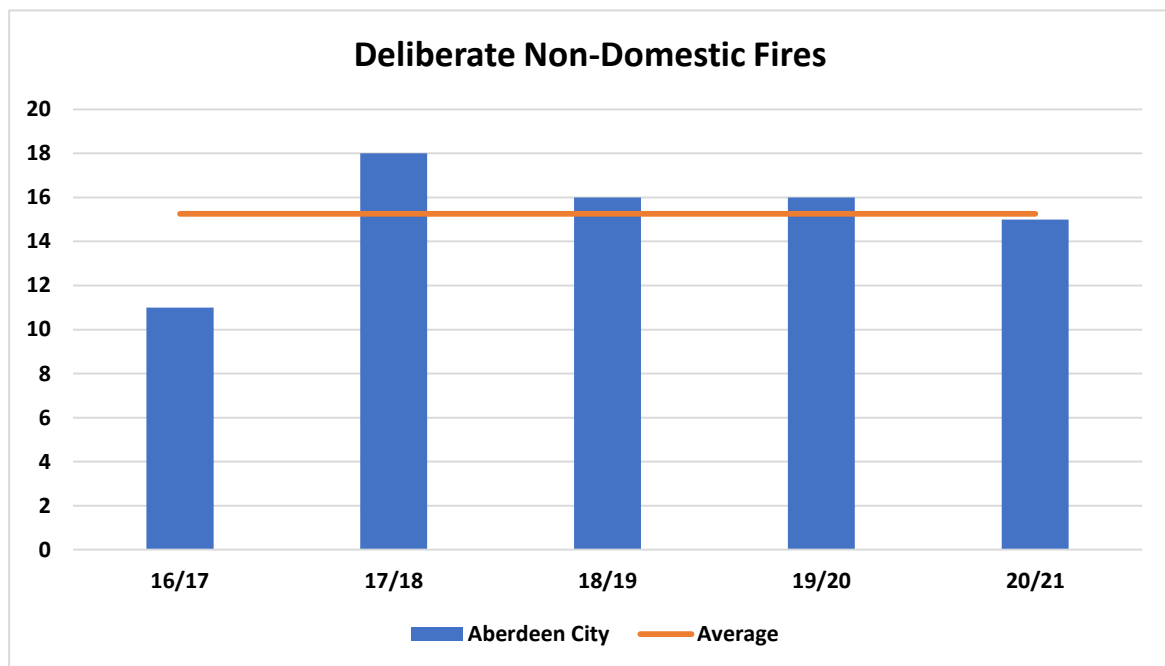
Anyone who has control, to any extent, of any premises will have some responsibilities for ensuring that those occupying the premises are safe from harm caused by fire.

The legislation places a duty on those responsible for fire safety within relevant premises to carry out a fire risk assessment. These people are defined in the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 as Duty Holders.

The restrictions imposed by Scottish Government, and the SFRS response to these restrictions, severely limited our abilities to undertake the quantity of legislative fire safety audits that we would normally aim to do. Local personnel have maintained contact with higher risk premises ensuring they continually review their risk assessments to reflect any changes introduced as a reaction to the need for social distancing and isolation.

They have also been key in introducing a national “remote audit” procedure and have used these procedures to undertake 192 audits over the reporting year. For context we would normally undertake approx. 500 legislative fire safety audits each year.

Deliberate fires in non-domestic properties:



Analysis

There were 15 incidents over the reporting period, 1 below the corresponding period for the previous year and slightly below the average for the preceding 4yr average.

The 5yr trend is upwards, however, the number of incidents being analysed is very low.

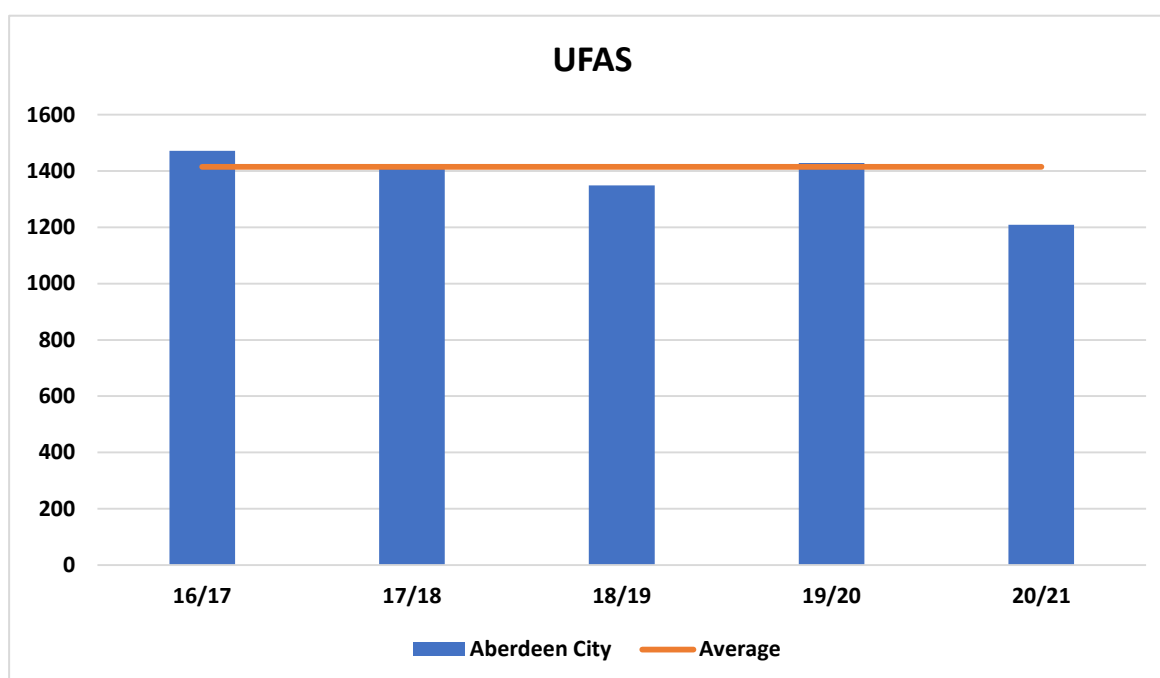
Our analysis shows that hospitals/medical centres and primary schools are the highest occurring property type accounting for 3 incidents each.

Through our risk based fire safety audit programme our Fire Safety Enforcement Officers carry out fire safety audits. Working in partnership with duty holders to meet their legislative fire safety requirements we assist them to ensure that their buildings are safe for the building users.

LPI Assessment 4: Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS)

The main areas of measurement of UFAS is:

- Number of UFAS incidents



Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) are defined as incidents where an automated fire alarm system activates and results in the mobilisation of SFRS resources, when the reason for that alarm turns out to be something other than a fire event. The SFRS are committed to working with partners and other stakeholders to reduce UFAS mobilisations.

False alarms account for 60% of all incidents during the reporting period with UFAS (as a sub-category of “All False Alarms”) accounting for 34% of all incidents. Working to reduce these is a key priority of The SFRS to reduce operational demand and create capacity to expand our work in other areas.

Analysis

There have been 1209 UFAS incidents during the reporting period which represents a 15% reduction against the the previous reporting year, and a 15% reduction against the preceding 5yr average. There is a welcomed downward trend of incidents of this nature.

The decrease seen over the reporting period is highly likely to be as a direct consequence of the significant reduction in people within business premises during this time. UFAS can be broadly split into 2 categories; human interactions and system faults, therefore it is logical that the decrease in human activity has positively impacted on the reduced number of UFAS incidents.

Hospitals are the property type causing the most incidents during the reporting period and are consistently the property type with the most activations. This is due to a number of factors, principally the size of these buildings and the number of detector heads required to sufficiently cover buildings which contain some of the most at-risk people in the event of a fire. Additionally, as one of the few premises types that have continued to operate during this reporting period it is to be expected that these premises would report highly against these incidents.

SFRS has an electronic system for recording UFAS activity and providing an audit trail for all engagement undertaken. Officers manage the system and provide reports on progress. SFRS aims to reduce the number of UFAS calls and are currently working with partners at a local level to reduce these calls by applying national policy and process to ensure a consistent approach.

This approach has seen significant investment from partners in order to reduce UFAS incidents across Aberdeen City. SFRS will continue to support duty holders in minimising the impact of false alarms on their day to day business and the subsequent impact on SFRS resources.



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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Public Protection Committee
DATE	28/04/21
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Corporate Parenting Updated Plan 2021-2023
REPORT NUMBER	OPE/21/084
DIRECTOR	Rob Polkinghorne
CHIEF OFFICER	Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Andrea McGill
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.2

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To respond to the Committee's request for an annual report on the progress of our Corporate Parenting responsibilities and a refreshed and updated Corporate Parenting Plan 2021-2023.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that Committee:

- 2.1 Note and endorse progress and activities against key Corporate Parenting duties.
- 2.2 Note the updated Corporate Parenting Plan 2021-2023 (Appendix 1).
- 2.2 Note the Champion's Board Plan 2021-2023 (Appendix 2)
- 2.3 Note Aberdeen Care Experience (ACE) Participation report May 2020-March 2021 (Appendix 3)
- 2.4 Note that a further annual update will be presented to the committee in April 2022.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 This is the fifth annual report to Committee providing a progress update and overview of key Corporate Parenting duties. Previous reporting to Committee has linked care experienced young people's inclusion and engagement with Champions Board development, to the broader attainment of Corporate Parenting Outcomes. The Committee in October 2020 requested that the updated Corporate Parenting Plan, 2021-2023 be presented to them for consideration. The updated and refreshed plan is an appendix to this report along with the refreshed Champions Board plan for 2021-2023.

3.2 The refresh of these plans reflects the completion of Life Changes Trust grant funding which had been awarded to Aberdeen City Council during the period 2016-2021. The Life Changes Trust award has supported activities which have linked the voice and views of those with lived experience of the care system, to those Corporate Parent representatives of the Champions Board. The cessation of grant funding has given a legacy and strong foundation from which participation and engagement with care experienced young people will be consolidated. The partnership commissioned from Who Cares? Scotland has been continued by way of a contract which will be reviewed in 2024.

3.3 The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, legally embeds the concept of corporate parenting and defines the role and activities of corporate parents as, collectively *'designed to ensure that the attention and resources of various publicly funded organisations are explicitly focused on the task of safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of looked after children and care leavers'* (Centre for Excellence for Children's Care and Protection CELCIS, Corporate Parenting Implementation Notes, 2016).

3.4 Part 9 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 identifies the key objectives of the role of Corporate Parent:

- Providing safe, secure, stable and nurturing homes for looked after children and care leavers.

- Enabling looked after children and care leavers to develop and maintain positive relationships with their family, friends, professionals and other trusted adults.
- Upholding and promoting children’s rights.
- Securing positive educational outcomes for looked after children and care leavers.
- Ensuring ‘care’ is an experience in which children are valued as individuals, and where support addresses their strengths as well as their needs.
- Ensuring physical or mental health concerns are identified early and addressed quickly.
- Increasing the number of care leavers in education, training and employment.
- Reducing the number of looked after children and care leavers who enter the youth and criminal justice system.

3.4 The above are reflected in our Local Outcome Improvement Plan (2019-2026) where the following objectives are set for Corporate Parenting:

“All care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in education, emotional wellbeing and positive destinations as their peers by 2026.”

3.5 The updated Corporate Parenting and Champions Board Plans continue to reflect these duties and commitments, additionally threading the principles of *The Promise* and findings from the *Independent Care Review*. Particularly in shaping how we measure and hold ourselves to account in our effectiveness as Corporate Parents.

https://www.carereview.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/The-Promise_v7.pdf

3.6 The Independent Care Review reported that for a majority of the care community:

Being loved and told they were loved, receiving physical affection and having lifelong support were all a normal part of life for those growing up around them, but for many care experienced people, these experiences were largely absent from their lives. This lack of love served to highlight a broader pattern of stigma, which singled them out as different from their peers. The Care Review heard about the sense of isolation and loneliness many care experienced people felt, along with low expectations of life and

difficulties in being able to look positively to the future. This also affected children's view of themselves, and a great many spoke of their feelings of shame and self-blame, and that they were undeserving of love or the same opportunities as others. Feelings of pride, confidence and trust were all heavily impacted by experiencing a lack of love while in care. (Independent Care Review Evidence document 2020)

The impact views of those who are beneficiaries of Corporate Parenting are significant in our current and ongoing reporting. The Corporate Parenting Plan 2021-2023 is presented as a draft document to allow time before finalising to seek views of care experienced young people. It is planned to share the document with them during April and May 2021. Going forward, the development of our Corporate Parenting and Champions Board plans will continue to be shaped by the voice of lived experience.

The Independent Care Review reported that the term 'Corporate Parent' was perceived by care experienced young people as 'cold and impersonal' and, as such, at odds with an approach that sought to uphold relationships that make children feel loved, safe and respected. The updated reports (appendix 1-3) in support of this Committee report should all demonstrate how a relational approach is embedded across these plans and offer examples of relational co-production. Any change by our Champions Board in the use of terminology will follow the guidance of the work of The Promise Implementation Team as they take effect to the Independent Care Review.

3.7 Corporate Parenting Plan

3.8 Our refreshed and updated Corporate Parenting Plan 2021-2023 and Champions Board plans remain congruent with LOIP priorities. The vision for the refreshed Champions Board Plan 2021-2023 remains unchanged 'our care experienced children, young people and care leavers have a right to participate in decision-making about their own lives and have their voices heard'. To do so we have identified the following priorities:

- Increase the number of corporate parent mentors to support engagement with MCR (Motivation Commitment Compassion) Pathways.
- Promote the uptake of the mandatory online Corporate Parent training.

- Promote and support attainment of #KeepThePromise.
- Embed trauma recovery approaches in our practice as Corporate Parents.
- Support workforce awareness and partner recognition that those with care experience can be overrepresented in criminal justice systems and seek to reverse this trend.
- Reduce stigma by adopting Write Right About Me as a multi themed approach to improving how Corporate Parents narrate the experiences of those who are care experienced.
- Develop an access scheme which serves to expand digital connection opportunities for care experienced young people in line with peers,
- Continue our partnership with Who Cares? Scotland in the delivery of participatory opportunities which seek to build the capacity of care experienced young people to share their views.
- Seek to use earlier and broaden the application of the Mind of My Own app to extend the reach to those with care experience who are part of protection processes.

3.9 Corporate Parenting Performance and Improvement Group

3.10 The Corporate Parenting Performance and Improvement Group have oversight of the LOIP Improvement Project Stretch aim 5; *95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in education, emotional wellbeing, and positive destinations as their peers by 2026.* The above multi agency group will provide oversight of the Improvement project actions(at 3.8 above) which will support this achievement aim and for linking the Corporate Parenting Plan activities for 2021-2023 to the context of this strategic framework. The Corporate Parenting Performance and Improvement group has specific governance, oversight and monitoring role in relation to the updated Corporate Parenting Plan.

3.11 The numbers of young people who are looked after by Aberdeen City Council remain relatively static, from 548 reported in 2019 declining to 543 (Q3/ 2020). With multi agency focus on shifting the balance of care toward recognising how we safely support care plans where young people can be supported to be looked after at home and equally, looked after within Kinship arrangements.

3.12 The Corporate Parenting Improvement and Performance group plan to address the issue of representation from the care experienced community in terms of group membership and to seek representation from the care experienced community in terms of group membership. This will be in place by May 2021.

3.13 The Corporate Parenting mandatory workforce training digital module is finalised. The plan supporting the uptake of this training will be supported at a number of levels given the significant priority in improving general workforce and elected member knowledge of Corporate Parenting. The recent webinar outlining our Corporate Parenting plan and supporting the launch of the training is available here:

[Watch the Video](#)

3.14 Virtual School

3.15 Due to the impact of Covid19 and the late release of national validated data about the attainment and initial destinations of school leavers, it was not possible to include attainment and initial destination data in the Virtual School annual report for period 2019/2020. A supplementary report will be published in April 2021. As a result of Covid-19, attendance and exclusion data for academic session 2019/20 has been impacted upon. The following is reportable from this Virtual School annual report:

.. this reporting period suggests there was an emerging picture of a decrease in the unauthorised absence of Looked After children in all placement types. This will be monitored through session 2020/21.

The headlines from the above report additionally reflect that:

- *The most vulnerable Looked After children identified by social work and education accessed the Hub provision for learners.*
- *70% of those who attended Hub provision for learners were Looked After at home with a >90% attendance rate.*

- *MCR Pathways has been commissioned to support Looked After children with a focus on those who are Looked After at home who have the lowest attendance rates and also the key transition stages where there is evidence that attendance falls.*
- *exclusion incidents have continued to reduce over the past 3 years and the projection based on the data to March 2020 and previous data on exclusion incidents during the period from April to July 2019 of the academic year would suggest that this trend was continuing.*

3.16 The number of care experienced young people accessing further and high education options supported by the Youth Team has increased by 30% over the last 3-year period. Increasing from 26 in 2018: 30 in 2019/20 to 34 in 20/21. This is a positive indication of partnership activity including the promotion of access to the Care Experienced Grant, student support with rent and accommodation costs and more recently digital connectivity support.

3.17 Housing, Council Tax Exemption

3.18 Young people placed in alternative to family care are being encouraged to stay put in care placements on a Continuing Care basis. This has a beneficial impact on future success. There has been an increase in the numbers of young people aged 18 years and over remaining in our local children's homes this has increased from 30% in 2019 to 38% in 2020/21. In addition, 22 young people are in Continuing Care with foster carers. This is an investment in future capacity and is considered preventative in reducing future dependencies and demand. It also contributes to decreased homelessness.

3.19 The Youth Team are supporting 82 young people who have a permanent Local Authority tenancy, a 28% increase from 64 in 2019. This improvement is reflective of the partnership approaches with Housing Access where sustainable, safe accommodation, is a mutual priority. To support improvements and development in this key area, the post of Housing Support Officer will be co-located in the Youth Team from April 2021, with the post holder having a case holding role for care experienced young people.

3.20 It was agreed at the meeting of the Full Council in March 2020, to take forward a Rent Support Scheme which supports care experienced young people. The beneficiaries of the scheme are care experienced young people who are Aberdeen City Council tenants and are students enrolled in higher or further education. It can be reported that this Scheme is now operational and in 2020/21 benefitting 14 young people, an increase from 8 in 2020.

3.21 The Youth Team have been part of a coordinated approach, promoting the uptake of Council Tax exemption for care experienced young people. In collaboration with Revenue and Benefits and Housing Access, processes identify eligible young people. This system is also utilised to identify young people who are eligible for the exemption of Council Tax. There has been a 131% increase in uptake since this scheme was introduced in 2018. At March 2021, with 109 exemptions and 9 discounts, an increase from 88 exemptions and 10 discounts in 2019 and from 47 in 2018.

3.22 Aberdeen Care Experience (ACE) and Champions Board

3.23 The updated Champions Board Action Plan (appendix 2) highlights the themes which Champions will prioritise over the duration of the plan. Despite the challenges of Covid19, the Champions Board continued to meet regularly in 2020 with 5 Champions Boards meetings taking place utilising an online platform. The ACE report for May 2020 March 2021 provides a comprehensive overview of the key themes addressed with Champions and the progress made over this challenging period.

3.24 The ACE Report May 2020-March 2021 (appendix 3) demonstrates how challenges in connecting and engaging were overcome during the lockdown periods of this pandemic. This report serves to demonstrate the significant impact on the health and wellbeing of these young people in the absence of available family relationships and the importance of alternative access to trusting contacts. Significantly, the impact on many of these young people of structural inequalities can be equally demonstrated by the use of hardship support which had a high and positive uptake by this care experienced group (and by their family members who have carer roles). The Lord Provost Hardship Fund provided £10,000 of financial support to 73 care experienced

young people, with an additional 27 receiving assistance from Who Cares? Scotland helpline and hardship fund. There was in addition an amount of £5000 which has been utilised to support the immediate digital connection needs of care experienced young people. Recent research published by CELCIS *Bridging the Digital Divide* highlights how inequality of access to digital technology has a specific impact on the care experienced community <https://www.celcis.org/news/news-pages/digital-connection-and-inclusion-should-be-basic-right-care-leavers/> At the recent meeting of Full Council (March 2021) funding in support of a local approach (and access scheme) to digital inclusion for care leavers was agreed.

3.25 The ACE report indicates that there have been 119 individual young people, who were engaged through ACE across 115 activities, with 54 of these activities taking place on-line. Report data notes that there is a core group of 18 young people who can be described as ACE advisors and who have assumed a direct role in sharing voice and experience.

3.25 The ACE annual report for 2019/20 (previously shared with Committee by way of a service update in October 2020) provided a strong sense of the relational connection offered by this model of participation practice. The report demonstrated the capacity building approaches being utilised and the focus on participation and capacity building opportunities for young people to lead in voice, direction and decision making.

Belonging meetings are an opportunity for young people to arrange activities themselves, invite and engage participants, decide on actions etc. Advisor meetings are held with members of a core group of young people who act as Advisors to ACE, the Development Officer, and the Champions Board. These meetings are where discussions, feedback etc are conducted. Advisors represent the voice of Care Experienced young people looked after by Aberdeen City, and with the Development Officer meeting just over 42% of the Care Experienced young people living in Aberdeen (see data below), not to mention to many other young people Advisors know, Champions Board, the local Authority and Corporate Parents can be confident that the voice they hear, IS the voice of Care Experienced young people in Aberdeen. (ACE Report 2020)

3.27 Children's rights, Mind of My Own participatory practice

3.28 The Aberdeen Young Person's Rights Service (formerly Children's Rights Service) are key supporters of care experienced young people in their engagement with the Champions Board and in improving dialogue with Corporate Parents. Care Experienced Young People were key stakeholders in the Functional Review of Aberdeen Young Person's Rights Service, which concluded in January 2020. The functional review of the service was framed around the key issues of:

- Participation, have your say and be listened to
- Protection, to be safe
- Provision, to be well looked after

3.29 Following review, the service has rebranded with an extended remit to include children and young people involved in child protection processes as well as expanding the age range of those who can be referred up to 26 years. The Aberdeen Young Person's Rights Service (AYPRS) is effectively utilised, with a 43% increase in referrals in 2019/20 from the previous year. Covid19 has required a service refocus to digital connections which are effective if limiting by nature. In 2021, the AYPRS has been involved in 4 Child Protection Case Conferences and 2 Care and Risk Management Meetings, indicating progress in improving responses and involvement with children and young people in conflict with the law. In addition to supporting the provision of independent advocacy support to 4 Children's Hearings.

3.29 The Service has been working hard to extend its reach, including: a webpage, with links to 'Aberdeen Getting It Right' and an updated co-produced leaflet, increasing use of social media, producing a quarterly participation and rights-related bulletin, which has served to share key legislative changes with the workforce including the adoption into domestic law of the UNCR <https://www.gov.scot/news/landmark-for-childrens-rights/> and setting up fortnightly virtual information 'drop-ins' for professionals, including carers. These approaches have all contributed to extending support to more children and young people who are looked after at home, in kinship care or who may be involved in child protection processes. There are plans to extend 'drop-in' provision to children, young people and young adults.

3.30 In March 2019 Children's Social Work, purchased the Mind of My Own app, the app is the only digital tool that supports Article 12 of UNCRC. [MOMO APP](#) and [MOMO WEBINAR](#). Since adoption in 2019, use of the app has grown from 122 young people Mind of My Own accounts, to 194 in March 2021; worker accounts have increased during this period from 352 to 386 and statements from 225 to 878.

3.31 Aberdeen City have received three awards from the device creators, most recently, in March 2021, as having both the second and ninth highest rate of use by two Children Social Work practitioners, nationally (there are over 30 000 users). Care experienced young people have continued to have a key role within the Mind of My Own Champions group as app trainers and facilitators. There will be further targeting of the Children's Social Work workforce and teams to seek increased uptake both at an early stage of contact where protection concerns are being investigated and with those young people whose placements are at distance from local support, both are areas where safeguarding practice can be consolidated.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Corporate Parenting duties included in Part 9 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 are designed to ensure that the attention and resources of various organisations are explicitly focused on the task of safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of looked after children, young people and care leavers. This part extends the duties of corporate parents and the reporting responsibilities of local authorities.

5.2 Aberdeen City Council has a duty to report to Scottish Government Ministers every three years on how it is meeting its corporate parenting responsibilities as detailed in the Children and Young People Act 2014. The second submission, by way

of sharing key documents, to the Scottish Government was provided in March 2021. The Council has a responsibility to continue to comply with its statutory obligations.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Strategic Risk	That the multi-agency workforce training delivery plan is insufficiently supported	M	There is a robust delivery plan and support at a senior level
Compliance	The Council has responsibility to comply with its statutory corporate parenting responsibilities	L	The updated Corporate Parenting plan has partnership support
Operational	Care Experienced Children and Young People are a vulnerable cohort whose needs require to be recognised and met. Competing resource demands may have an impact	L	These are duties which have been incorporated across existing structures and will be consolidated in practice
Financial	n/a		
Reputational	A failure of Aberdeen City Council to comply and meet its Corporate Parenting	L	There is a strong legacy of positive practice and sharing of success in this area

	responsibilities would reflect negatively on the Council		
Environment / Climate	n/a		

7. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	The proposals in this report have no impact on the Council Delivery Plan.
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	<p><i>(Review and update of LOIP may amend priorities as listed)</i></p> <p><i>The proposals in the report have direct link specifically to the delivery and attainment of stretch outcome 5 and 8.</i></p> <p><i>95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in education, emotional wellbeing, and positive destinations as their peers by 2026.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Increase the number of care experienced young people accessing a positive and sustained destination by 25% by 2022.</i> <i>• Increase in the number of inhouse foster and kinship placements by 2021.</i> <i>• Increase the number of care experienced people who receive appropriate support when accessing their records by 2022.</i> <i>• Increase the number of children and young people remaining in a placement between 16-18 years old by 2021.</i> <i>• Increase the number of care experienced young people receiving appropriate multiagency throughcare by 2021.</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Increase the number of staff, including carers who report increased understanding and skills to respond to children who have adverse childhood experiences (ACE) by 20% by 2021.</i> • <i>Reduce the length of time that care experienced children and young people wait for an initial Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) appointment to less than 4 weeks by 2021.</i>
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8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	Not Required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

<https://www.carereview.scot/conclusions/independent-care-review-reports/>

10. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Corporate Parenting Plan 2021-2023

Appendix 2 Champions Board Plan 2021-2023

Appendix 3 Aberdeen Care Experience Report May 2020-March 2021

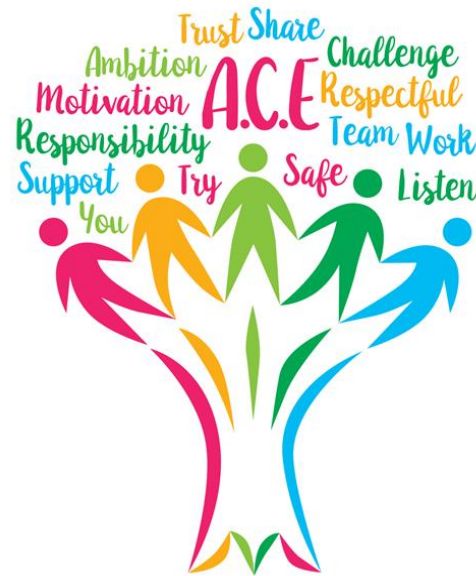
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APPENDIX 1

GETTING IT RIGHT FOR ABERDEEN'S CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Aberdeen City #KeepThePromise Corporate Parenting Plan
2021-2023



The best Corporate Parents we can be

The impact of Covid-19 on the wellbeing and welfare of our care experienced children and young people has served to emphasise the vital role that we have as corporate parents, which extends beyond our quarterly participation at Champions Boards. We have an active group of care experienced young people (ACE) in Aberdeen and they have ensured regular meetings of Champions have taken place despite challenges. They have supported us as champions to fully embrace digital technology as the main means of sharing connection and taking the time to keep in touch. The list below represents the least we can and will do, to support our care experienced children and young people, and over the life of this plan we will have their voice at the centre of our actions.

- *Considering their wellbeing, and being alert to anything which might affect this;*
- *Assessing their need for services and support;*
- *Promoting their interests;*
- *Making sure their voices and opinions are heard;*
- *Providing opportunities for them to promote their wellbeing, and taking action to help them access those opportunities;*
- *Providing advice and assistance when they're needed;*
- *Making sure services are easy to access for them.*

Angela Scott
Chief Executive Officer



Corporate Parenting: Our Vision

Aberdeen City Integrated Children’s Services Plan (ICSP) has a clear vision, role and partner remit for the development and improvement of planning for children’s services. Within our Local Outcome Improvement Plan (2019-2026) we have set the following objectives for Corporate Parenting:

“All care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in education, emotional wellbeing and positive destinations as their peers by 2026.”

To achieve this, Corporate Parents will evidence improvement by progressing the following areas in our refreshed plan for 2021-2023:

How will we monitor our progress?

The Corporate Parenting Plan activities for 2021-2023 will be reviewed quarterly by the multi-agency Corporate Parenting Performance and Improvement group which has a specific governance, oversight, and monitoring role in relation to this plan. It is planned to seek representation from the care experienced community in terms of group membership. This will be in place by May 2021.

<i>What are our aims?</i>	<i>What will we do?</i>
Improve education outcomes for care experienced children and young people.	Increase number of corporate parent mentors to support engagement with MCR Pathways. This has been commissioned across six secondary schools. This approach will support us in the implementation of the Promise with one of the 5 key foundations stating: <i>‘The children that Scotland cares for must be actively supported to develop relationships with people in the workforce and wider community, who in turn must be supported to listen and be compassionate in their decision-making and care’.</i>
Improve the knowledge and skills of the workforce in relation to their Corporate Parenting duties and responsibilities and by doing so highlight the pervasive impact of care experience on opportunities and life chances.	Promote the uptake of mandatory online Corporate Parent training. Develop with partners, targeted approaches to this training, dependent on status and role, which is supported by a series of webinars.
Feature and promote the recommendations of The Independent Care Review across key systems, processes, and partnership practice.	Promote and support attainment of #KeepThePromise (link here to local statement) and local plan .

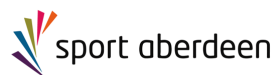
<p>To work in ways which recognise the life- long impact of trauma, placing recovery principles at the forefront of Corporate Parenting planning.</p>	<p>Support care experienced young people in accessing supports which enable and offer them physical and emotional wellbeing benefits. Support work force awareness and partner recognition that those with care experience can be overrepresented in criminal justice systems and seek to reverse this trend. 'Write Right About Me' will be supported as a multi themed approach to improving how we narrate the experiences of those who are care experienced in the reduction of stigma.</p>
<p>Continue to develop participation and engagement opportunities with and for our children and young people.</p>	<p>Expand digital connection opportunities for care experienced young people in line with peers, by developing a local approach and access scheme as well as e.g. building on Phase Two of Connecting Scotland which has provided 110 devices, (Chromebooks; iPads and MiFi connectivity) to care leavers. Enabling them to stay connected to key relationships and wider social and employment inclusion. Continue our partnership with Who Cares? Scotland in the delivery of participatory opportunities which seek to build the capacity of care experienced young people to share their views.</p>
<p>Seek creative ways to listen to and capture children and young people's voices and views. Build on the strong foundations we have developed to expand the impact of the Champions Board and the role of Corporate Parents in Aberdeen.</p>	<p>Seek to use earlier and broaden the application of the Mind of My Own App to extend the reach to those with care experience who are part of protection processes. Seek to celebrate Care Day and Care experienced week with twice per year workshop and themed events.</p>

Who is the Plan for?

This Plan is both our commitment to children and young people who are care experienced and for our partners in Aberdeen City who, along with ourselves, have corporate parenting responsibilities. Collaboration and participation both with care experienced young people and partners are at the core of our actions if our vision for Corporate Parenting is to be realised.

There are 24 organisations who can be identified in the [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014 Section 56](#) as having "Corporate Parent" status. In Aberdeen City, our representative members include:

Aberdeen City Council, NHS Grampian, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, North East Scotland College (NESCOL), Robert Gordon University and University of Aberdeen, Sport Aberdeen, Children’s Hearings Scotland, the Scottish Children’s Reporters Administration (SCRA) and third sector partners, represented by Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations (ACVO).



Why do we have a Plan?

The [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) came into force on 1 April 2015. The duties in [Part 9](#) of the Act legally embed the concept of corporate parenting and collectively are *'designed to ensure that the attention and resources of various publicly funded organisations are explicitly focused on the task of safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of looked after children and care leavers'* ([CELGIS, Corporate Parenting Implementation Notes, 2016](#)).

The concept of Corporate Parenting is not new. These duties build upon previous commitments such as [‘These Are Our Bairns: A Guide for Community Planning Partnerships on Being a Good Corporate Parent’](#) (Scottish Government, 2008).

In looking at what a Corporate Parent is, the Children and Young People’s Commissioner Scotland states that *‘in simple terms, a corporate parent is intended to carry out many of the roles a loving parent should. While they may not be able to provide everything a parent can, but they should still be able to provide the children and young people they’re responsible for with the best possible support and care’*.



Corporate Parenting Duties

The Children and Young People’s Commissioner Scotland sets out that *‘corporate parent responsibilities are intended to encourage people and organizations to do as much as they can towards improving the lives of care experienced and looked after children, so that they feel in control of their lives, and are able to overcome the barriers they face’*.

Our Refreshed Plan, in summary

This is the refreshed Corporate Parenting Plan for 2021-2023, with our Champions Board Action Plan running alongside. The period since March 2020 has been challenging for care experienced young people and their families and as Corporate Parents, we have been very mindful of the impact of isolation and disconnection experienced by many of them. Positively, the support networks offering support to care experienced young people unified quickly in introducing digital ways of keeping in touch. With care leavers **Youth Team** increasing the use of the team Facebook page by over 400% and in the distribution of over 250



resource provisions to care experienced young people through welfare packages and direct contact. We can also report on our success in accessing digital devices in phase two of Connecting Scotland and in our commitment to ongoing improvement of digital access for care experienced young people in Aberdeen City, recently supported as part of our future budget commitments in 2021. **We will develop an access scheme for the promotion of digital inclusion for care leavers in 2021.**

The Virtual School ensured **all** Looked After Children in Aberdeen City had access to digital technology which supported them to continue with their learning throughout lockdown restrictions, including video links with key members of staff to support connection. **MCR Pathways** had commenced in 2 city academies prior to lockdown, digital devices and connectivity in place ensured that mentor support could be continued virtually. This support is now in **6 academies across Aberdeen City**. All Looked After Children who are educated outside of Aberdeen City were also able to access digital technology through the Virtual School.

From June 2020, our **Champions Board** has moved to a digital forum. Feedback from Aberdeen Care Experience (ACE) advisors has been positive. Digital connection can be focused on maintaining contact with young people, many of whom are placed at some distance from their local areas. Our refreshed plan **shares positive** examples of our **progress** as Corporate Parents, we will expand and replicate these in 2021-2023. This includes focusing on how Corporate Parents will support the local **#KeepThePromise** commitment.



How good are we as Corporate Parents?

What have Care experienced young people told us about Corporate Parenting?

Participation and Champions Board

"I really feel like we are making progress now, big decisions and working with Corporate Parents better says one of the young people about our Champion care experienced young people and continues to reflect the themes we intend to advance in this planning period". (ACE advisor)



Mind Of My Own

Since March 2019 we have received 885 statements from young people either independently or supported by their worker.

199 young people have their own accounts which they can use in their own time. The three most popular scenarios are:

- My Worker is Visiting
- Share My Good News
- Prepare for a meeting

The box below captures activities the participation officer has co-produced with care experienced young people and continues to reflect the themes we intend to develop.

Participation Activities 2021-2023

Our core activities and outcomes		
	Activity	Outcome
1	Youth engagement and participation	Care experienced young people will have opportunities to share their views across a range of media.
2	Young people development	There will be examples of young people making contributions to Aberdeen City Champions Board.
3	Partnership working	Core partners will engage in Champions Board and each will demonstrate and impact.
4	Information, awareness-raising, and promotion	Co-produce events which highlight corporate parenting role.
5	Monitoring and evaluation	Gather, hold evaluate information concerning core activities impact on young people and investment in exit planning strategies.

Supporting Care Experience Participation

The Aberdeen Care Experienced Group (ACE) have been supported to grow and build their capacity and voice, there have been great examples of collaboration,

“It’s going well but we will always need support from (the Development Officer) to make sure we get our voice heard and don’t become a ‘decoration”.

This was what one young person said in reference to her voice and the use of the Participation ladder at a Champions board meeting. The reference to ‘*decoration*’ refers to the stage on the ladder (see previous page) and the risk she feels will always exist of young people “*being seen and not heard*”.

How Corporate Parents have actively engaged and listened to young people’s voice

Monthly Cooking together with Champs as part of the activity calendar
Phone bank which has redistributed redundant devices from ACC to care experienced young people
Celebrating Success awards held annually to celebrate achievements with and for young people
ACE and Saltire Awards presented to group members annually in light of their volunteering hours in support of ACE
Champs Camp as part of Life Changes Trust
Promoting uptake of the Council Tax exemption for care leavers
Introducing a rent support scheme for students who are ACC tenants
Being successful in our Connecting Scotland bid for digital devices and connection for over 100 young care leavers
Renewing our partnership with Who Cares? Scotland to work together to support opportunities for lived experience to be better represented across systems and services which impact on them
Multi-agency Corporate Parent Training
Write Right about Me and the prominence of voice

Key Successes and Going Forward

Education

The Virtual School has supported our looked after young people, targets for 2021-2023

- The program with partners **Sport Aberdeen** is being further developed to support key transitions and build relationships. This forms part of the wider achievement program which is being expanded as a means by which the local authority can seek to fulfil Corporate Parent duties.
- In order to support learning and continued engagement throughout lockdown, a number of Looked After children identified by social work and education accessed the Hub provision.

- Young people **looked after at home** had priority placements in hub provision, **70%** of those who attended were Looked After at home and overall, there was a **>90% attendance rate**.
- MCR Pathways has been commissioned to support Looked After Children in secondary with a key measure being attendance. There will be a focus on those who are Looked After at home who have the lowest attendance rates and also the key transition stages where attendance falls.
- Overall numbers of **exclusion incidents have continued to fall since 2019**, the projections for 2021-23 suggest that this trend will continue.
- The local authority **Exclusion Policy** and guidance has been refreshed reflecting recommendations within **The Promise**.
- The Virtual School Education Support Officer will continue to co-work alongside schools and partner agencies including No one left behind and SDS to **ensure planning for all senior pupils** who are Looked After Children is robust.
- The new program to support planning for positive destinations was developed in partnership with the Virtual School to ensure cognisance was taken of the specific needs of Care Experienced Young People and Corporate Parent duties were delivered on, this will be further developed and linked to locally targeted employability options for care leavers

Balance of Care

- Data from 2016-2020, at chart 1 below suggests that numbers of Looked After Children in Aberdeen City remains relatively stable ranging from 590 to 543. As Corporate Parents are responsible for alternative family care planning, we will take effect to the **foundations** identified by the Independent Care review which will influence how we offer support:
- **Voice:** Children must be listened to and meaningfully and appropriately involved in decision-making about their care, with all those involved properly listening and responding to what children want and need. There must be a compassionate, caring, decision-making culture focussed on children and those they trust.
- **Family:** Where children are safe in their families and feel loved they must stay – and families must be given support together to nurture that love and overcome the difficulties which get in the way.
- **Care:** Where living with their family is not possible, children must stay with their brothers and sisters where safe to do so and belong to a loving home, staying there for as long as needed
- The goal for 2021-23 is to **increase by 3%** the number of children and young people who can be looked after at home and looked after within Kinship networks, shifting our use of resource where from where we are (majority of Aberdeen looked after young people are placed in foster care (Q3 of 2020)) 46.7% of our total number of looked after children are accommodated in foster care.

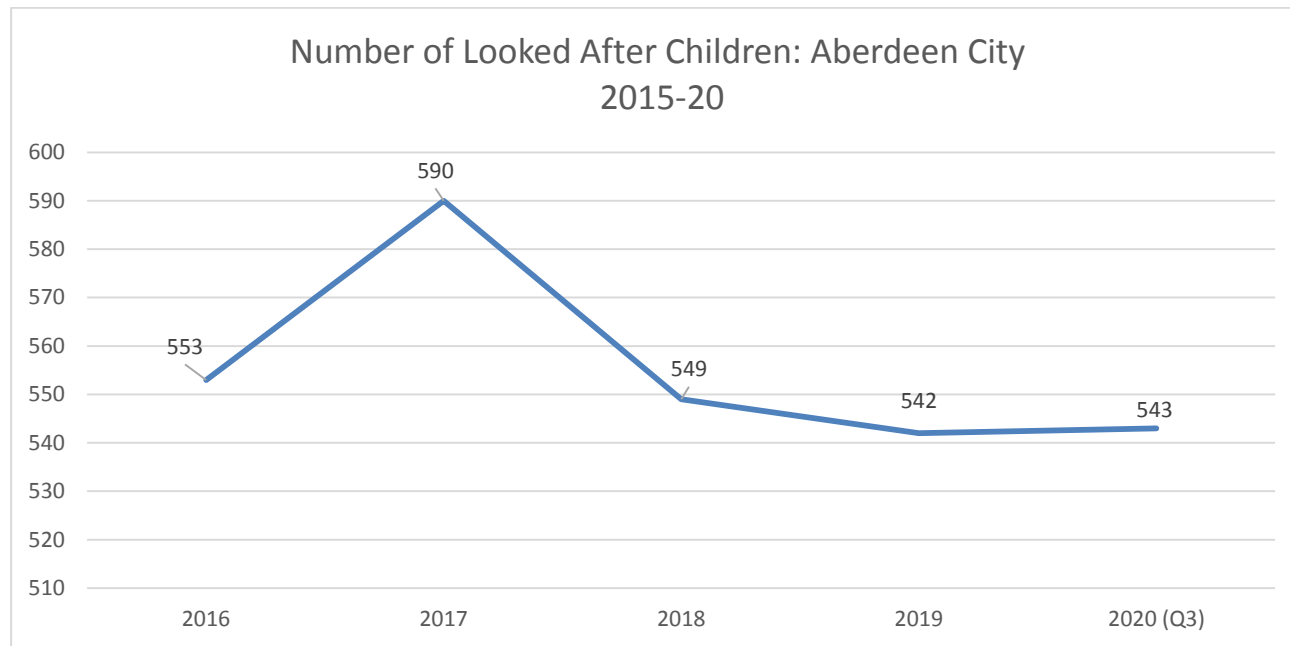


Chart 1.

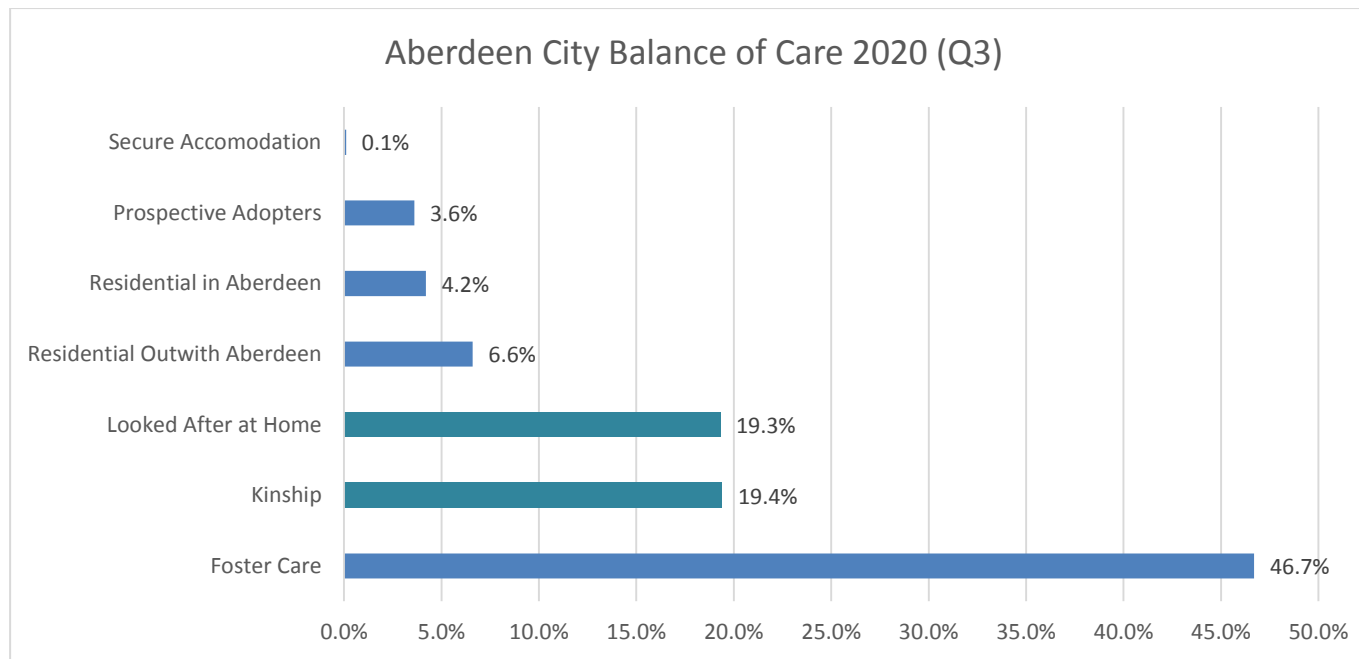


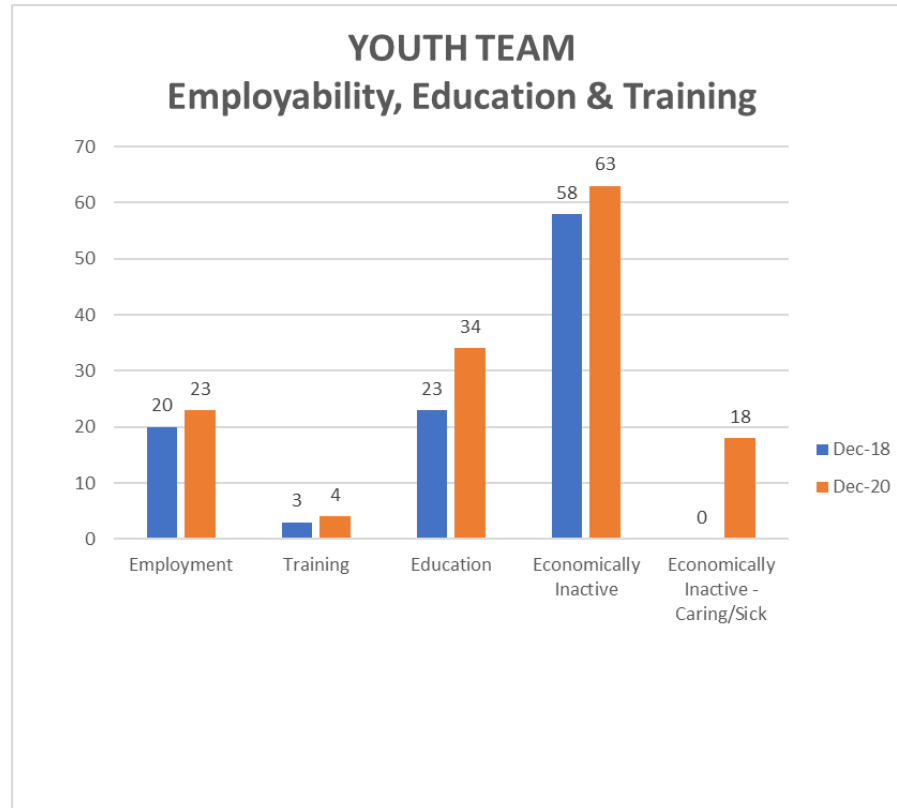
Chart 2

- Chart 3 above provides the % of looked after young people based on placement type, shift in the balance of care is a local priority within our Local Outcome Improvement Plan (2019-2026)

Our care leavers

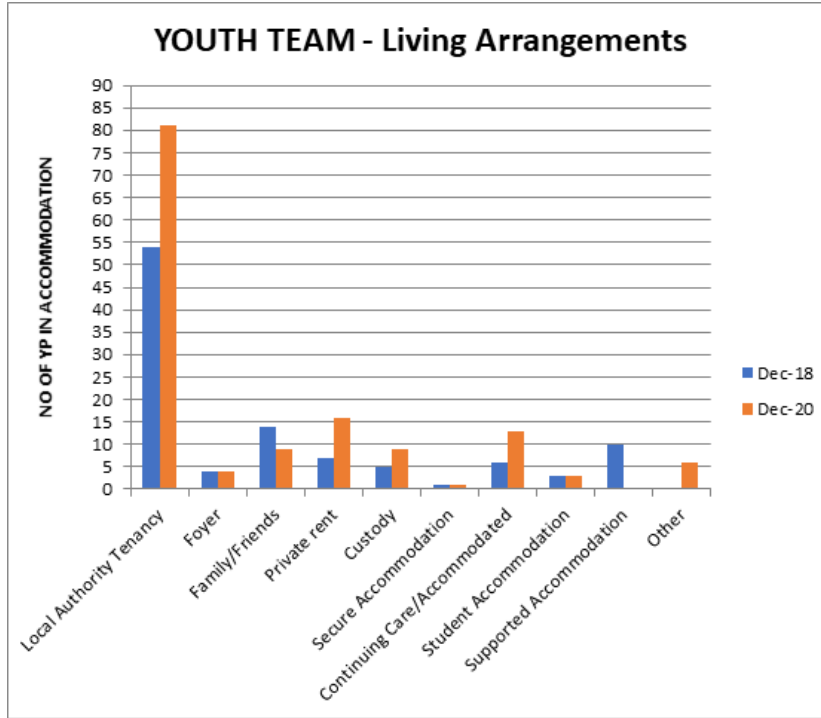
Employability and Education:

- Improved partnership working is supporting improvements in care leavers accessing **No One Left Behind** and Skills Development Scotland, **16 care experienced young people were** referred in 20/21.
- Six care experienced young people are engaging with providers Working Rite in 20/21, there will be 12 spaces available for care experienced young people with this provider.
- The process of guaranteed interviews for ACC roles, for care experienced young people has been introduced and a system where **apprenticeship opportunities** are shared and highlighted with Youth Team continues to be developed.
- Numbers of care leavers engaging with the Youth Team who are considered economically inactive has **reduced** from 56% in 2018 to 44% in 2021.
- There has been a **47% increase** in those supported in further education and taken up college or university places from 2018-2020.
- The introduction in 2020 of the supported rent scheme for care experienced young people who are students and ACC tenants is being accessed by approx. 14 young people across further and higher education options, with anticipated increases of around 20% in each year until 2023.



Care Leavers Living Arrangements

- The **Throughcare Housing Protocol** recognises the statutory duties toward care experienced young people and the requirement to support access to housing resource, reducing the risk of homelessness and associated vulnerabilities which can be of lifelong duration.
- The post of **Housing Support Officer** will be co-located in the Youth Team from **April 2021** and seek to offer earlier and preventative supports, the success of the role will be evaluated in **2023**.
- Since 2018/19, increasing numbers of young people have been able to move on to positive sustainable living destinations when they have left care, with increasing numbers **sustaining a permanent tenancy** and decreased use of temporary accommodation arrangements.
- The comparative information below also indicates the growing numbers of looked after young people remaining in placement on a Continuing Care basis, thus promoting their opportunities for successful transition.



Digital Connection

- From March 2020 to date there has been an over 400% increase in followers on the **Youth Team Facebook** page, this will be further developed in light of new and emerging technology during the period of this plan.
- Online activities which young people have attended including **cooking, movie nights and crafts** will continue, supporting the young people to continue to feel connected to others and reduce periods of isolation.
- In February 2021 **Connecting Scotland provided 100 of our care leavers with either an iPad, Chromebook or 2-year MiFi device.**
- **Digital connection** for care leavers scheme will be developed in 2021.

Aftercare support and keeping connected

- There has been an increase of 52% of numbers of young people receiving Aftercare Support from the Youth Team, increasing from approx. 70 in 2018 to **152** young people receiving **Aftercare Support**.
- Duration of contact and **maintenance of relationships** between care experienced young people and the workforce has also positively increased.
- This is now a planned and structured local residential **aftercare** programme delivered as part of core local residential children's home support.
- The local residential aftercare provision supports **20 young people** in the community with the same relationships utilised in their aftercare supports based in the children's home they lived in.
- 180 support hours per month has been allocated across local children's homes to support their sustainment of moving on options delivered to young people by those with whom they have **existing trusting relationships**.



The **Aberdeen Young Person's Rights Service**, previously known as the Children's Rights Service, actively promotes a rights-respecting and trauma-informed stance in the delivery of children's social work with colleagues and partners. Voice and participation are core to the ethos of the Service. A **functional review** of the Rights Service was undertaken during 2019. The review was underpinned by a clear set of objectives, including ensuring 'best fit' with wider strategic priorities and alignment with the UNCRC and its incorporation into domestic law. The service is underpinned by **'three P's of Children's Rights'**:

- **P**articipation – to have your say and be listened to.
- **P**rotection – to be safe.
- **P**rovision – to be well looked after.

Another **'P'** - in the context of (Corporate) Parenting- represents the cultural backbone of the Service.

Young People's Rights Service - Participation in practice:

- **Expanded** its care experienced remit to include children and young people who are or have been involved in child protection processes which may lead or have led to Child Protection Registration. This was in response to review feedback and to findings within the Aberdeen City joint inspection on services for children and young people in need of care and protection (2019) to **seek to increase** these referred by 10% from 2021-2023.
- Consulted with young people to 'vote' on the **new Service name** to better reflect the 0-26 age range and the characteristics, circumstances and needs of those it should be accessible to.
- Co-produced a new [Service Leaflet](#) showing that the Service is available to a large number of children, young people and young adults in need of care and protection.
- Seek to support greater numbers of **care experienced young people in conflict with the law** during the period of this plan.
- The Service has contributed to a range of single and multi-agency training/development activity related to rights and participation e.g. multi-agency **corporate parenting training**, training for newly qualified social workers, the provision of regular 'bulletins' focusing on rights and participation related issues and 'drop-in' information sessions for workers and carers. **Offer 4 work force skills development** sessions each year of this plan.
- This runs alongside commitment to **supporting participation** through, e.g., the Champions Board and Mind of My Own. The Service is also working on developing a more human approach to data in keeping with key messages reflected within **#KeepThePromise**.
- The impact and challenges presented by Covid-19 has essentially affirmed the functional review findings and sharpened focus moving forward. This is well represented by this [Visual](#), pulled together during the summer of 2020, highlighted what our young people told the Service, what the Service did and how this is informing planning for the future.

Summary

Our Corporate Parenting Plan for 2021-2023 will be developed from a position of strength, building on our capacities for engagement and participation, we will do so by continuing the investment in our partnership with Who Cares? Scotland in seeking to expand opportunities for collaboration and co-production in our role as Corporate Parents. We will do this while being mindful that in their evidence to the Independent Care Review, many of those with lived experience shared their experiences of being parented in the care system which was without the investment and love they required. The recommendations of **The Promise** seek to activate cultural, systems and service shifts to create care experiences which provide more opportunities for compassion and recovery to be voiced. This is at the heart of our role as Corporate Parents. To be effective Corporate Parents we must seek opportunities to make these changes and to shift away from a term which fails to properly describe relational commitment. ('corporate parent' reported in ICR as a term that feels demeaning and an example of cold, process driven relationships)


We must ensure in its delivery our Corporate Parenting practices reflect compassion and love in how children and young people experience the care which we provide for them.



Aberdeen City Champions Board

#KeepThePromise Plan 2021-23

No.	Corporate Parenting Objectives
1.	Providing safe, secure, stable, and nurturing homes for looked after children and care leavers.
2.	Enabling looked after children and care leavers to develop or maintain positive relationships with their family, friends, professionals, and other trusted adults.
3.	Upholding and promoting children's rights.
4.	Securing positive educational outcomes for looked after children and care leavers.
5.	Ensuring 'care' is an experience in which children are valued as individuals, and where support addresses their strengths as well as their needs.
6.	Ensuring physical or mental health concerns are identified early and addressed quickly.
7.	Increasing the number of care leavers in education, training, and employment.
8.	Reducing the number of looked after children and care leavers who enter the youth and criminal justice systems.

No.	 The Promise Foundations
1.	Voice - Children must be listened to and meaningfully and appropriately involved in decision-making about their care, with all those involved properly listening and responding to what children want and need. There must be a compassionate, caring, decision-making culture focussed on children and those they trust.
2.	Family - Where children are safe in their families and feel loved they must stay – and families must be given support together to nurture that love and overcome the difficulties which get in the way.
3.	Care - Where living with their family is not possible, children must stay with their brothers and sisters where safe to do so and belong to a loving home, staying there for as long as needed.
4.	People - The children that Scotland cares for must be actively supported to develop relationships with people in the workforce and wider community, who in turn must be supported to listen and be compassionate in their decision-making and care.
5.	Scaffolding - Children, families and the workforce must be supported by a system that is there when it is needed. The scaffolding of help, support and accountability must be ready and responsive when it is required.

OUR CHAMPIONS BOARD:

VISION:

Our care experienced children and young people have a right to participate in decision-making about their own lives and have their voices heard.

Participation = consulting together, acting together, deciding together, learning better together.
Trust and positive relationships between children/young people and adults are key to effective participation.

APPROACH:

- Build a culture which demands and values participation, using **co-production**.
- Strengthen practice by improving ways of engaging children and young people to support their participation individually and as a group.
 - Develop structures to make sure that planning and service delivery takes account of children and young people's views
- Review these structures to evaluate the impact of children and young people's participation on decision-making and outcomes.

STANDARDS:

- Our children and young people are listened to and free to express their views on all matters that affect them.
 - These views directly influence decision-making at all levels.
- **Our children and young people are diverse and are given equal opportunities to be involved in participation activities.**
- We make sure adults are trained to effectively listen to and support them using a range of different participation methods.
- Our children and young people are safeguarded within all participation activities and experience participation as positive and empowering.

Participation approaches will reflect a range of capacity building opportunities alongside opportunities to play, have fun and feel connected.

OUTCOMES

Participation = improved individual outcomes for children and young people alongside improved services, now and into the future.

Champions Board - Delivery Plan 2021-2023

Champions Board Plan and Commitment

Outcome	Actions	Timescale
<p><u>As Champions we will act:</u></p> <p><u>LISTEN TO AND LEARN FROM THE VOICE AND EXPERIENCE OF OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE</u></p> <p>When children and young people make their contribution to champions they will be listened to, understood and be able to hold champions to account for their follow up actions.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The MOMO App (https://mindofmyown.org.uk/) has been effective in gaining the views of our children and young people. This is one example of how we are developing our creative connections. <p><i>Champions will have a quarterly report on the themes raised by young people who are using Mind of My Own App. The use of this App will be targeted to those young people looked after at home, kinship, and those for who we have child protection concerns.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. We provide a model of engagement which young people agree meets their needs for a forum. Learning from COVID 19 has demonstrated the positive options afforded by digital technology. We will be mindful that not all care experienced young people can access devices or connections. <p><i>The Champions Board will be operating as a digital platform and will seek to secure reliable connectivity and devices for care experienced young people.</i></p>	<p><i>April 2021-April 2022</i></p> <p><i>April 2021-April 2022</i></p> <p><i>By June 2021</i></p>

	<p>3. Digital platforms will be fully used to keep in touch and better progress actions. It is hoped that there will be capacity for one physical Champion Board session in support of a larger co-production session.</p> <p><i>Direct connection sought for care experienced young people with Champions Board supporters and allies.</i></p> <p>4. In partnership with Who Cares? Scotland we will seek to recruit a Participation Officer who will take forward and co-produce Champions Board engagement and activities which can be accessed by Aberdeen care experienced young people.</p> <p><i>Activities and planning engagement actions will take account of the range of placement options from Aberdeen live in. Reaching out to such a dispersed group and capturing their voice will be a priority. Audit activity will be undertaken by WCS post holder to establish the baseline for approaches.</i></p> <p>5. Promotion and awareness raising around Corporate Parenting duties is fundamental to the role of Champions Board members. Each member should represent their own organisation's training plan around Corporate Parenting and able to report back on levels of uptake and impact.</p> <p><i>The Champions Board planning group which is supported by care experienced young people will request twice yearly information from Champions on their plans for the above, and in the adoption of the multi-agency Corporate</i></p>	<p><i>April 2021-Dec 2021</i></p> <p><i>April 2021</i></p> <p><i>April 2021-Sept 2021</i></p>
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	<p><i>Parenting training launched in Oct 2020. The rate of change toward an equitable position between those who are care experienced and peers remains high. Rates of prosecution and involvement in criminal justice systems are high.</i></p>	
<p><u>As Champions it is our aim to seek and promote opportunities which bridge the gap:</u></p> <p><u>OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE THE SAME LIFE OPPORTUNITIES AS THEIR PEERS</u></p> <p>Care Exp young people have been impacted on by COVID 19 in particular ways which reflect their, at times, social and emotional connections, and networks (any ask of CB around this?)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Champions will contribute their information to a baseline dataset which allows comparisons to be made regarding the outcomes for care experienced children and young people with their peers. <p><i>Each champion will be accountable for how their service, area or ward promotes our children and young peoples' access to and understanding of 'what's out there'.</i></p> <p><i>The Corporate Parenting performance and Improvement Group will share information provided by Champions to create a data set which monitors this performance.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. We will establish a range of participatory and engagement opportunities for our children and young people of all ages and stages. <p><i>Regardless of age or stage there will be opportunities for all care experienced young people to have their views shared and expressed. MOMO and digital connection is available to all care experienced young people and care leavers.</i></p>	<p><i>April 2021-April 2023</i></p> <p><i>May 2021-April 2023</i></p>

	<p>3. Accommodation and housing resources which support young people to access good quality accommodation and sustain relationships will be promoted.</p> <p><i>The Care Leavers Housing Procedure will be adopted and supported in its delivery by co located Housing role within Care Leavers service.</i></p>	
<p><u>As Champions our behaviours and decision seek to:</u></p> <p><u>EMBED A CHILDREN’S AND YOUNG PERSON RIGHTS APPROACH INTO SERVICES</u></p> <p>Policy and procedures update will be compliant with and informed by children’s rights in realising our Corporate Parenting responsibilities.</p>	<p>1. Policy and Procedures being updated will reflect and be influenced by both international and national convention.</p> <p><i>Champions Board members will be Promise Keepers acting with the intention of supporting the Transformational Change activities being developed by the local Promise Implementation Plan.</i></p> <p><i>The principles and support intentions of the Children (Scotland) Act 2020 will be carried out with children’s views foremost in mind.</i></p> <p><i>Each Champion will support the adoption of the Incorporation of the UNCRC into practice within their own areas of responsibility.</i></p>	<p><i>June 2021-April 2023</i></p>

	<p>2. Support the three P's, <i>Participation, Protection and Provision</i> of Children's Rights in our engagement opportunities with children and young people.</p> <p><i>Aberdeen Young Person's Rights Service will facilitate awareness raising session around key themes of children's rights.</i></p> <p><i>We will join with colleagues to create a unified approach to children and young peoples' participation in Aberdeen which is mindful of their needs in their communities of origin.</i></p>	<p><i>April 2021-April 2022</i></p>
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Aberdeen Care Experienced

ACE

Annual report: May 2020 to March 2021



At a Glance

This is the final report of the current Life Changes Trust funding arrangement. May 2020 through to March 2021, has been an exceptionally challenging and difficult time for Care Experienced young people. The impact of the lockdowns, restrictions and changes has been enormous. In addition, the inability to meet and participate together in ways we are used to, has been very difficult to manage.

Nevertheless, we have managed some amazing achievements. Developing creative responses to the crisis that has impacted us for the past 12 months, has meant that we have moved a number of activities online. This has meant greater levels of direct participation and influence by young people. We have developed highly responsive approaches to meet the emerging needs of young people. We also successfully applied for more than £15,000 in grants to distribute and directly support children, young people, and families.

In addition, we have been able to forge greater collaborative responses with Corporate Parents and others to ensure the best outcomes for young people. None of these achievements would have occurred had it not been for the critical need to respond to these needs in the midst of the COVID crisis.

ACE Update

Throughout 2020 and into 2021, we have managed to maintain the same numbers of ACE Advisors as the previous period. This has meant much higher level of additional support, being available late at night and into the early hours of the morning for some and being aware of and

sensitive to the fatigue and support issues many young people experienced throughout this period.

Our LCT funding comes to an end in March 21. Aberdeen City Council have shown their commitment to ongoing participation and voice by securing funding to continue the Development Officer post for a further 3 years covering 2021 – 2024, with a possibility of two further years beyond 24. This allows for a moment to review the scope and purpose of the post and work on reaching a wider mix of care experienced children and young people who are from Aberdeen. We are very excited about this further period and what it could bring.

Peter Melrose, our current DO has made the decision to return to his home in Australia and although he will be leaving the post, he is committed to staying in touch with the group and helping to make some global connections. Our virtual online practice during lockdown has shown us that distance is no barrier to connection and we will plan regular Scotland/Australia catch ups with Peter.

Our Core Activities and Outcomes		
	Activity	Outcome
1	Youth engagement and participation	Care experienced young people will have opportunities to share their views across a range of media.
2	Young people development	There will be examples of young people making contributions to Aberdeen City Champions Board.
3	Partnership working	Core partners will engage in Champions Board and each will demonstrate and impact.
4	Information, awareness-raising, and promotion	Co-produce events which highlight corporate parenting role.
5	Monitoring and evaluation	Gather, hold evaluate information concerning core activities impact on young people and investment in exit planning strategies.

DATA May 2020 to March 2021

Data for this year reflects the unique challenges of the work and how this necessitated a different approach in the period 01/05/2020 through to 31/03/2021, compared to the two previous years. A number of the previous data points have changed in line with the new activities that have taken place. For a start, we had to stop meeting face to face, and almost all of our activities had previously relied on face-to-face meeting. Next, we had to develop new responses to emerging issues such as meeting wellbeing needs related to self-isolation, fears and anxieties. This meant the Development Officer needed to be far more available out of hours to young people and on a more flexible one to one basis.

Who Cares? Scotland developed a helpline to respond to a range of challenges young people were experiencing, and also made crisis funds available to pay for things such as food, utilities etc. The Development Officer was involved connecting young people from Aberdeen with this and understanding their needs.

The following data has been collected from a combination of the Who Cares? Scotland database where our ACE and helpline/crisis aid activities are recorded and local data collection by the DO.

ACE Meetings and one to one sessions

Number of activities 115

Age	Total
0-5	0
5-12	0
12-16	1
16 - 19	5
19 +	11
TOTAL	18

This consists of 54 ACE meetings which are online meetings with more than 2 young people, and 54 one to one sessions with individual young people these including wellbeing checks and being available after hours to young people.

Who Cares? Scotland funds and helpline (Aberdeen only)

Number of activities - 27.

Age	Total
0-5	0
5-12	0
12-16	0
16 - 19	15
19 +	12
TOTAL	27

These figures represent the numbers of care experienced young people from Aberdeen who reached out to the national helpline and who were then followed up by our DO. This includes 8 young people from Aberdeen but who live away from the city and throughout Scotland, due to their living arrangements or college. The individual young people were offered emotional, practical and financial support.

ACE Hardship Fund – 73 children and young people across 38 applications for support. £10,000 received and £10,000 spent.

Age	Total
0-5	23
5-12	28
12-16	12
16 - 19	5
19 +	5
TOTAL	73

The Development Officer successfully applied for £10,000 from the Lord Provost Hardship fund for activities that would create positive memories (see below for a full description).

The referrals for this are considered individual activities due to the amount of work involved in each referral.

Wi-Fi Fund – 9 young people. Received £5000 and spent £1514.

Age	Total
0-5	0
5-12	0
12-16	0
16 - 19	4
19 +	5
TOTAL	9

The Development Officer successfully applied for a grant of £5000 to provide Wi-Fi connection for young people to assist with connection college etc. At the same time, ACC were involved in pursuing a larger scale investment from the Connecting Scotland Project.

The Development Officer worked collaboratively with ACC to modify the initial funding which was for 12 months of Wi-Fi funding to pay for more short-term Wi-Fi until the Connecting Scotland project was successful and implemented in Aberdeen.

Data Summary

There was a total of 119 individual young people to the age of 26 years, who were engaged at some level for the past 12 months, across 189 separate events. Who Cares? Scotland data notes that there remains a core group of 18 young people, these are made up of ACE Advisors and a few others who will get involved in some activities. Importantly, there remains a core group even with the effects and impacts of COVID on face-to-face participation.

The positive impact on the representation of children aged up to 16 years, and in foster and kinship care or 'edge of care' is the direct result of successfully applying for a funding grant and our ability to directly support children in this regard.

The Challenges

May 2020 saw a deepening of the global COVID crisis. As noted in the previous report, we were beginning to experience a number of activity cancellations due to lockdown and redeployment of partner organisations. In fact, it was challenging to find Corporate Parents (mainly executive level) to engage in any activities due in large part, to redeployment and needing to respond to COVID issues. Although the impact of COVID during this time cannot be overstated, the re-deployment of staff left care experienced young people feeling disconnected from many of their Corporate Parents, especially as in the previous year there had been many successful connection activities with them and more communication.

However, these issues only deepened through May and beyond. All of our planned activities were cancelled by May 2020, primarily due to lockdown and restrictions on movement, as well as a lack of availability from partner organisations and their personnel.

Young people were isolated and afraid, personnel and partner organisations were responding to a range of crises that would arise and anxiety levels in young people and colleagues began to rise as well. Across the Country groups of staff and organisations worked together to create local solutions to emerging issues until the nationwide crisis settled a bit and more strategic plans were in place.

The Achievements

Many of these achievements have resulted in advancing practice in general, using technology, rapid responses to emerging needs, rallying partner organisations, accessing funding options to meet increasing needs and increasing participation in a range of areas for young people. These achievements will likely be in place for some time, and many will impact our work well into the future.

While balancing the issues directly related to the COVID crisis as it unfolded, we also had to develop rapid responses beyond the previous requirements of the Development Officer role. While trying to ensure participation, we also needed to work on ensuring that wellbeing and immediate needs were met and supported.

Immediate Responses

Initially, maintaining contact and ensuring wellbeing of young people became a focal issue for the Development Officer in Aberdeen. Contact was made with all young people working with ACE and any others known to the Development Officer within the first few weeks. This was via telephone and social media platforms.

- **Bug-in bags**

Just prior to lockdown announcements, the Development Officer consulted with young people about what would help them during self-isolation and together they developed 'Bug-In bags' which would include a range of emergency items and food to sustain a young person who was isolated for about two weeks.

The Aberdeen Youth Team were then able to gather the items and distribute these to the young people who would need them. This concept has inspired other Local Authorities to develop similar resources early on for isolated young people.

Over 200 'Bug-In Bags' were delivered across Aberdeen city to isolated young people, many of whom had no other way to obtain food and emergency provisions.



- **'Window Visits' (Wellbeing Checks)**

As young people with pre-existing conditions, or with increased anxiety about COVID were told to isolate, the Development Officer commenced 'window visits' whereby young people could be visited with and meet at their door, or window to talk and see what supports were required.

These visits would be later used to deliver food supplies as part of the **Cooking with...** activity which moved online in July, once Corporate Parents were available to engage in a roster of monthly cooking.

Nevertheless, these Window visits were an excellent way to informally meet and chat with young people, and assess any level of need, as well as to inform them of new supports as they became available.

In all, 12 vulnerable young people were visited this was and there were 17 such visits between May to June.

- **Mask Supply**

As part of the visiting concept, the Development Officer purchased masks for young people, many of whom said they did not have any, and distributed these to young people who needed them to go out if necessary.

A total of 15 masks were distributed to vulnerable young people who did not have masks previously.

Information Provision and Increased Use of Social Media

Getting reliable information to young people about changing rules, lockdown and restrictions proved a significant and ongoing challenge. It also fed into the increasing levels of anxiety experienced by many young people. Information about lockdown and restrictions was often confusing along with fears of contracting COVID.

In order to support this, we ensured that young people were linked into the ACE social media platforms including Facebook and messenger. This meant that the Development Officer was able to directly respond to any issues that arose. In addition, the Development Officer worked closely with Youth team staff to ensure that all young people were receiving some level of direct support. We would meet and discuss young people to ensure that relevant support personnel were aware of the needs and any issues. This proved to be a vital response as the Development Officer would pick up on areas of significant support needs for individual young people and we were able to develop highly responsive plans to support them together.

- DO ensured that information was provided by CPs to young people.
- Asked for messages of reassurance from CPs, several engaged.
- The Who Cares? Scotland Helpline provided a door through which to access the support of the DO.
- Young people living elsewhere said that this helped them to feel connected when they previously felt isolated and alone:

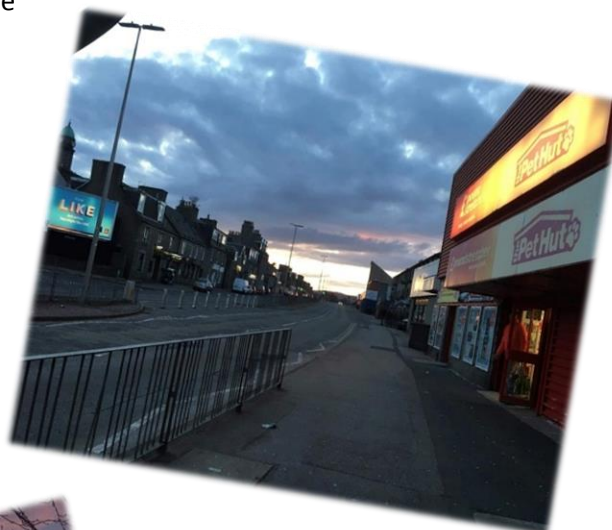
“It was so frightening feeling so isolated. It meant so much having (Development Officer) contact me and talk to me and provide support and tell me I would be okay... connection is so important just now”.

Photos of Home



With a focus on being inside, the Development Officer asked young people to take photos of what home meant to them. Some of these were to be used later (after the COVID crisis) when talking to Housing about the concept of home.

In the meantime, the quality of photos and creativity was so moving that we created a collage that was used in Speak Out, the National Who Cares? Scotland magazine.



COVID Report: Interviewing Young People

In August 2020, the Development Officer began writing a report on the lived experience of Care Experienced young people in Aberdeen during what would become the first lockdown. This became a collaborative effort with the Youth team and Children Rights Services also providing information from young people with whom that had spoken about similar issues.

This report, ***“I’m Scared I’m Going to Die Alone”***: ***Impact of LOCKDOWN on Care Experienced young people in Aberdeen***, directly informed how Corporate Parents can respond to young people who are experiencing isolation and the mental health and other issues this causes. It has since gone on to become a foundational element of a National report from Who Cares? Scotland which is going to inform outcomes nationally. [Link to the report](#)

Move to Online

One of the most significant shifts we achieved was to move all of our work into an online environment. While it does not seem like it now as so much of our work is now occurring in an online environment, at the time (just a few months ago) this was a major shift for many young people and for Corporate Parents, that presented a number of challenges for everyone.

One of the first challenges was people learning to use platforms, and actually getting used to online meetings becoming a regular and primary way of working. Many Corporate Parents, other workers and young people found this difficult to navigate initially. Another major issue was that local authorities throughout Scotland had effectively banned the use of the ZOOM platform by their staff, as they believed there were security issues, this meant that they were limited to Microsoft Teams. The issue is that this platform uses a great deal of bandwidth, and young people still have limited access to internet and hardware in order to use more complex platforms. In short, they could not use it reliably.

Access to tech and Wi-Fi was also a major barrier to young people being able to stay connected. Many only had their existing phone data packages for connection which did not support hours of being online on virtual platforms and they also had limited access to tablets or laptops.

Importantly, young people said that the online environment was no match for meeting face to face and being together. Young people soon began to get fatigue with online meetings and the use of ZOOM and other social media platforms.

Nevertheless, by everyone becoming more comfortable with online environments for meeting and getting things done, this had the effect of being able to broaden the role of the Development Officer further. It meant that we moved to a more fluid work environment that would often be more active in the evenings with young people in conversation than during the daytime.

Additional Supports After Hours

The Development Officer was able to respond to concerns and issues of young people directly and in a timely way. There were many distressed young people who often needed someone to respond to them after 7:00PM and we achieved this on Messenger which worked best for young people for conversations.

We held regular, short Messenger chats, video calls and text discussions together. These were very casual and often were essentially just checking in with young people. Young people have said that this flexible approach really had a comforting effect for them.

“This is such a hard time, but it’s good to know that (Development Officer) is around to chat to when I’m lonely and everyone else has gone home”.

Critical Issues Support

This was never more apparent than several occasions very late at night when young people were alone and frightened, or struggling. There were several reports of instances of young people self-harming, and other reporting this to the Development Officer, not knowing who else to contact. These occasions were after 11:00pm and sometimes after midnight. This meant that the Development Officer was able to ensure that young people were safe, calm other young people, share the risks, and ensure appropriate follow up.

“I was so frightened for (young person), it was after midnight and I had no one else to contact. I contacted (development Officer) and (he) talked to me and sorted it, even though it was so late. I was so scared, but it worked out”.

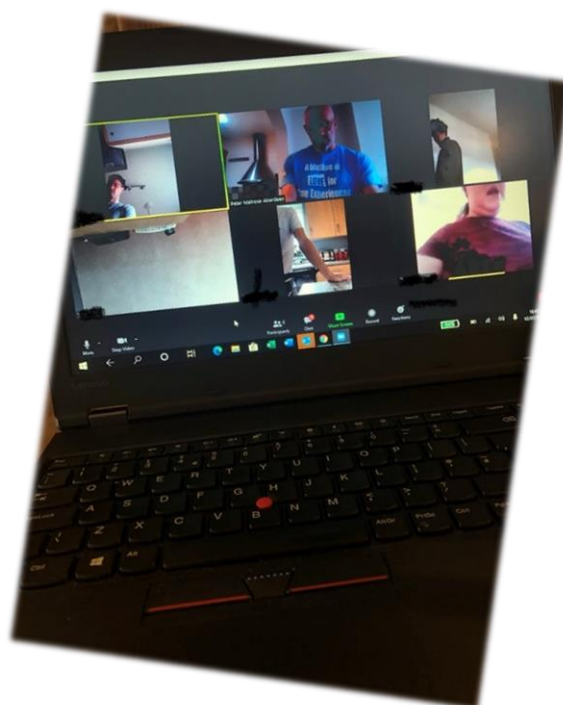
Champions Board Moves Online

Initial issues included working with current ACC policies regarding online platform usage. Young people cannot use Teams as it requires large bandwidth, and devices often beyond their availability.

So, the Champions Board has...Moved to Zoom.

Increased engagement by young people and confidence in the platform. This meant that adults were limited in number due to the online environment which meant that more young people could participate and ensure a 50/50 split. This was far better than having up to 9 young people in a room with up to 40 adults in the larger face to face Champions Board (CB) meetings.

Despite the challenges, we had 5 online Champions boards: April, June, July, September, and December 2020.



The Zoom platform increased their engagement significantly and resulted in many outcomes being achieved and quickly. Openness of communication was noticed by everyone. Young people said that they want to keep this online platform as the predominant way CBs occur and that this would be enhanced by two larger meetings each year, ensuring compliance with COVID restrictions.

Cooking with... sessions online.

Being able to encourage Corporate Parents to engage online added another dimension to this important activity. Being able to join together in our own homes, added a more relaxed level of interaction and conversations were lengthy, and more fruitful. For example, Corporate Parents and young people were able to build better relationships, more trust and to make plans to move issues forward.

We changed the name of the sessions to **'Cooking with... (name of the Corporate Parent)'**. A meal would be planned based on what young people said they wanted to learn, ingredients would be purchased by the Development Officer and young people would collect these from Westburn. In January 2021, this moved to depositing funds in each of their bank account for them to purchase the ingredients themselves. This was possible, because the confidence of those involved has grown significantly, along with their food and nutrition awareness. In addition, a number of young people participating have opened themselves up to vegetarian cooking and often meat alternatives are requested. This further increases their creativity and food awareness.

The cooking has become more complex as well, moving from pizzas when we first started, to vegetarian stews, lasagne, mac and cheese etc, all with multiple and unusual ingredients for them to use.



ACE Funds

Making Better Memories £10,000

The Development Officer successfully applied for a Hardship Grant of £10,000 from the Lord Provost Hardship Fund. These funds were distributed to children who are considered on the 'edge of care' and can have unique challenges.

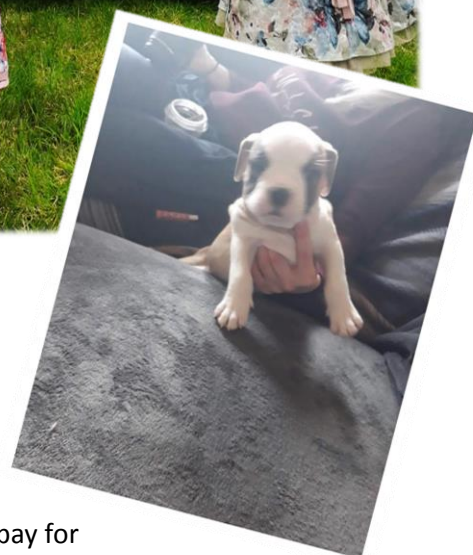
Distribution was decided by a panel of ACE advisors who provided additional lived experience and contextual awareness to the grant applications.

ACE chose to distribute funds to children based on experiences and items that they would like to improve life during lockdown and restrictions.

We wanted to create happy and positive memories out of a time of real crisis.

This included,

- Many bikes, scooters (and helmets) to enhance outdoor activities and time.
- Overnight trips away to visit family.
- Zoo and fun park visits.
- Bedroom decoration and furniture.
- Shared fun activities for communities, including a jumping castle.
- Specialist equipment for children with additional needs.
- Winter clothing for children and young people. £5,000 for Wi-Fi LP hardship fund



WIFI Fund £5000

ACE received a further £5000 for WIFI connectivity through the Lord Provost Fund. The Development Officer applied for a grant of £5000 to provide Wi-Fi connection for young people to assist with connection for college etc. At the same time, Aberdeen City Council had sought to participate in a larger connection project, Connecting Scotland. The Development Officer worked collaboratively with ACC to modify the initial funding which was for 12 months of Wi-Fi funding to pay for more short-term Wi-Fi until the Connecting Scotland project was successful and implemented in Aberdeen.

Cooking With... Corporate Parents! £500

As a result of the lockdown and move to more online activities, Who Cares? Scotland made funds available to support this. ACE successfully applied for £500 to assist with purchasing ingredients for the cooking session we held.

Walking Group Walk – Stonehaven.

Walking had become one of the most important activities that young people really enjoyed. Lockdown and restriction meant that this could no longer happen. Nevertheless, during a short reprieve from restrictions, we were able to organise a day walk at Stonehaven. While some other shorter, local walks were also arranged, weather and changing restrictions meant that these had to be cancelled.



In any event, the Stonehaven walk was a success, and young people really enjoyed the experience of being together and many had not been to Stonehaven before. We also were able to share fish and chips and an ice-cream making it a proper day at the beach.

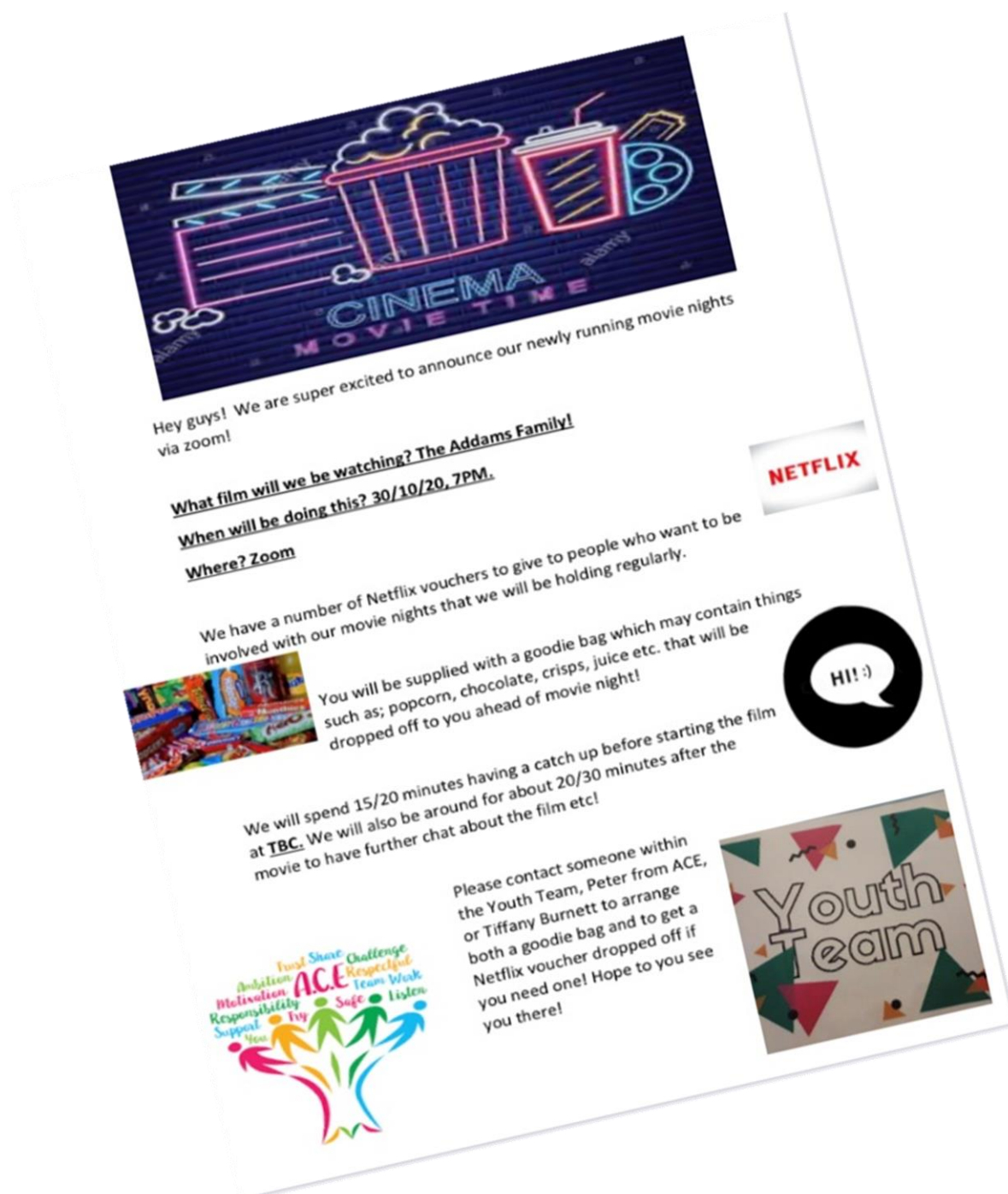
Previously we were successful in being awarded almost £3000 for hillwalking. While COVID restriction has meant that this could not be spent to date, we have been given an extension of this period until September 2021.



Movie nights

During the later stages of 2020, young people decided to arrange online movie nights together. The Development Officer supported this by purchasing and providing snacks for the evening.

Importantly though, young people arranged these nights, and organised the Netflix vouchers for each other. Currently, young people plan these on a week-by-week basis together and they have invited other young people along who would not ordinarily participate in other activities.




Hey guys! We are super excited to announce our newly running movie nights via zoom!

What film will we be watching? The Addams Family!

When will be doing this? 30/10/20, 7PM.

Where? Zoom



We have a number of Netflix vouchers to give to people who want to be involved with our movie nights that we will be holding regularly.



You will be supplied with a goodie bag which may contain things such as; popcorn, chocolate, crisps, juice etc. that will be dropped off to you ahead of movie night!

We will spend 15/20 minutes having a catch up before starting the film at **TBC**. We will also be around for about 20/30 minutes after the movie to have further chat about the film etc!

Please contact someone within the Youth Team, Peter from ACE, or Tiffany Burnett to arrange both a goodie bag and to get a Netflix voucher dropped off if you need one! Hope to you see you there!



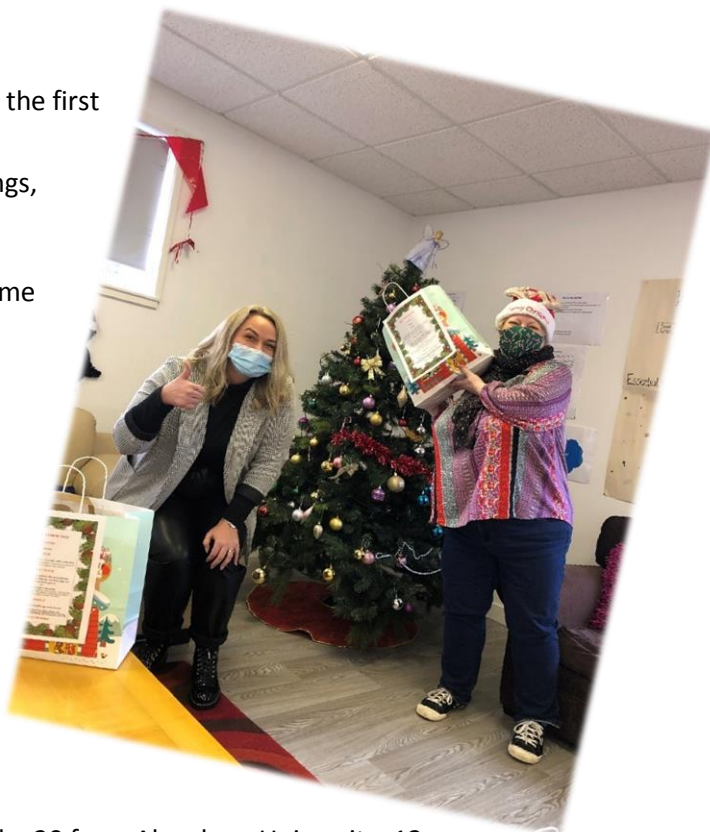
Christmas month

Christmas 2019 involved a huge Christmas party, the first such event for Aberdeen. However, changing restrictions and rules around COVID and gatherings, meant that we had to arrange a different event.

This became a Christmas month of online and some face-to-face activities (restrictions permitting). It was challenging to arrange as during the period rules were changing and a new lockdown was looming.

The calendar of over 15 different activities, were arranged in collaboration with many others who directly provided activities online including: craft making and cooking sessions, movie nights, quizzes, and get togethers. We also had a Christmas tree lighting event at Westburn.

A number of trees were donated for young people, 20 from Aberdeen University, 12 from Child protection Committee and Counsellor Lesley Dunbar also donated a Christmas tree. These were distributed to young people along with decorations.



While unable to have a Christmas Day party, Christmas Day also saw us work in collaboration with ACC and staff and many volunteers to deliver Christmas Dinner to around 30 families. This happened because of the uncertainty around us being able to have an actual Christmas party like last year. We were determined to still provide some connection and Xmas dinner for young people and families.



Since January 21

During the first week of Jan 21, Peter our Development Officer tested positive for COVID 19. He became increasingly unwell which resulted in a hospital admission and a long recovery period. Not only was this a very difficult time for Peter and his family, but it also significantly impacted on our ability to maintain our levels of connection and participation activities with young people.

The group of ACE advisors have been connecting with one of Peter's colleagues from Who Cares? Scotland, however due to capacity, this has been a more responsive approach rather than proactive.

In partnership with Aberdeen Libraries, we have been running Ace it with Poetry workshops which are focussed on the experiences of being young women growing up in care. These workshops are ongoing and will produce a video of the groups work.

A calendar of connection activities is currently being planned to maintain some connection throughout the next couple of months, until we appoint a new person to the DO post.

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Public Protection Committee
DATE	28 th April 2021
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Assurance on Child Poverty Action Plan
REPORT NUMBER	CUS/21/086
DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Derek McGowan
REPORT AUTHOR	Derek McGowan
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.3, 1.5

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide assurance to the Committee that the Child Poverty Action Plan Report 2019/20 has been agreed by Operational Delivery Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Committee:-

- 2.2 Notes that that the Council approved the Local Child Poverty Action Plan Report for 2019/20 in accordance with the requirements of the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 at the meeting of the Operational Delivery Committee on 13 January 2021;
- 2.2 Notes that following the Operational Delivery Committee on the 13th January 2021 the Local Child Poverty Action Plan Report for 2019/20 was submitted to the Scottish Government as required.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 (the Act) fully entered into force on the 1st July 2019. The Act sets out steps required by the Scottish Government, Local Authorities and Health Boards to tackle child poverty. The Act identifies four definitions for poverty; identifies targets to be achieved by 2030, and a requirement for Local Authorities and Local Health Boards to agree a Child Poverty Action Plan, to be reported to Scottish Ministers on this annually.
- 3.2 Poverty is defined in the Act under four different headings:
- Relative poverty
 - Absolute poverty
 - Combined low income and material deprivation
 - Persistent poverty
- 3.3 At Operational Delivery Committee on the 17th September 2019, the Council agreed to adopt the Local Outcome Improvement Plan as the Council's Child Poverty Action Plan for the years 2019-22. This was noted at the meeting of the Public Protection Committee on 4 December 2019. The attached Child Poverty Action Report satisfies the requirement to report annually to Scottish Ministers on progress towards meeting Child Poverty targets.

4 Child poverty targets

- 4.1 Section 1 of the Act sets out targets that the Scottish Ministers must meet by 2030. These are that, of children living in households in Scotland:
- (a) less than 10% fall within relative poverty
 - (b) less than 5% fall within absolute poverty
 - (c) less than 5% fall within section 5 combined low income and material deprivation
 - (d) less than 5% fall within section 6 persistent poverty
- 4.2 Section 2 of the Act sets out Interim targets, that must be met by the Scottish Ministers in the financial year beginning with 1 April 2023. These are, that, of children living in households in Scotland—
- (a) less than 18% fall within relative poverty
 - (b) less than 14% fall within absolute poverty
 - (c) less than 8% fall within combined low income and material deprivation
 - (d) less than 8% fall within persistent poverty
- 4.3 These measures cannot yet be defined at a Local Authority level. However, the most recent data [available](#) suggests that in Aberdeen 21.5% of children are living in poverty, defined as 'below 60% median income after housing costs'. This is reducing, having reached 22.8% in 2016/17. This demonstrates that the positive steps being taken by the Council and partners in tackling child poverty are having an impact.

5 Child poverty in Aberdeen.

- 5.1 The most recent Strategic Needs Assessment identifies that around 5500 children in Aberdeen are living in poverty. The priority around child poverty is also monitored through the Integrated Children's Services plan. It is important to note that this report does not include any of the responses to Covid-19, as these were almost entirely delivered in the financial year 2020/21 and will be accounted for in this year's report. However, it is anticipated that the number of children in Aberdeen living in Poverty will rise due to the effects of the pandemic.
- 5.2 The most recent data suggests that in year 2018/19, 21.5% of children living in Aberdeen were living in poverty, defined as 'below 60% median income after housing costs'. A key tool in identifying local measures required to tackle this is the Population Needs Assessment (PNA). The current PNA will be refreshed in early 2021 to inform the refresh of the LOIP. This will provide an opportunity to look afresh at poverty in all its forms across the City and ensure that the correct partnership approaches and measures are being taken to address the issue.
- 5.3 Due to the Act requiring joint reporting, this report consists of two separate submissions. The first, at Appendix A, is the joint Aberdeen City Council and NHS Grampian report for Aberdeen City, and this details the service level work that has been ongoing to tackle child poverty locally and satisfies the annual reporting requirements. The second report is the Annual Report on Aberdeen's Local Outcome Improvement Plan. This is the first annual report on the LOIP and demonstrates the partnership work being delivered to tackle child poverty locally following the adoption of the LOIP as the Child Poverty Action Plan. Together these provide assurance on the work being done by Aberdeen City Council on Child Poverty/

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this assurance report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this assurance report.

8. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

	Risk	Low (L), Medium (M), High (H)	Mitigation
Financial	Risk relates to non-achievement of targets long term, and failing to reduce demand through	M	Community Planning Aberdeen scrutiny of progress on outcomes at regular intervals;

	early intervention in key drivers. Failure to achieve the outcomes desired will mean residents requiring support from public agencies for longer.		commissioning intentions approved by Council
Legal	Risk relates to failure to comply with statutory requirements.	L	Adoption of the LOIP as Aberdeen City Child Poverty Action Plan. Provision of the Child Poverty Action Report 19/20 Provision of the LOIP annual report 19/20
Employee	None.	L	
Customer	Failure to meet statutory targets as outlined above.	L	This work will improve outcomes for children and families across the City.
Environment	Risk as opportunity.	L	Meeting the LOIP outcomes will improve the environment for children.
Technology	None.	L	
Reputational	Risk relates to failure to meet the statutory targets.	L	Meeting the LOIP outcomes.

9. OUTCOMES

Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes	
	Impact of Report
Prosperous Economy	This report demonstrates the positive range of work being undertaken at service and partnership level to improve the quality of life for families and children in poverty.
Prosperous People	This report demonstrates the positive range of work being undertaken at service and partnership level to improve the quality of life for families and children in poverty.
Prosperous Place	This report demonstrates the positive range of work being undertaken at service and partnership level to

	improve the quality of life for families and children in poverty.
Enabling Technology	This report demonstrates the positive range of work being undertaken at service and partnership level to improve the quality of life for families and children in poverty.

Design Principles of Target Operating Model	
	Impact of Report
Customer Service Design	This report places children at the heart of service planning and design. Children are our current and future customers and improvement made here will impact on their whole lives.
Organisational Design	The Organisational structure allows for work on child poverty to be delivered in a number of Clusters, as well as through strategic work such as the LOIP, Local Development Plan and Local Housing Plan. There is a focus on Early Intervention in tackling poverty and this is likely to be most evident in Early Intervention and Community Empowerment; Integrated Children and Family Services and Place Planning.
Governance	This relates to the tracking of the outcomes, which will be undertaken through existing scrutiny of the LOIP, and through Council governance structures at annual intervals.
Workforce	Roles and responsibilities are reviewed through service redesign to ensure work around poverty is captured and relevant.
Process Design	As new methods of undertaking work are identified processes will be updated and normalised to ensure children and families in poverty benefit.
Technology	As new methods of undertaking work are identified processes will be updated and normalised to ensure children and families in poverty benefit.
Partnerships and Alliances	We are confident that partners across the City have been involved in the creation of this plan, and are involved in delivering the outcomes identified.

10. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment	This will impact positively upon protected characteristics of age in that it will improve outcomes for children.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

Duty of Due Regard / Fairer Scotland Duty	Agreeing the use of the LOIP to act as the CPAR is a positive move in addressing socio-economic disadvantage. There is no disadvantage foreseen to any protected characteristics, and the aim of the LOIP is to improve outcomes for all.
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11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- A – Child Poverty Action Report 2019/20
- B – Annual report on the LOIP 2019/20

12. APPENDICES (if applicable)

None

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Aberdeen City Local Child Poverty Action Report 2019 - 2020

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Foreword

The publication of our second, joint Local Child Poverty Action Plan, coincides with the remobilisation of services as we emerge from lockdown and begin to shape what will be a very different future. Working hard to reduce inequalities as a result of poverty has always been high on the public health and wellbeing agenda, but now more than ever, the impact of Covid-19 compels us to place an even greater urgency on the actions that we need to take to support our communities.

Tackling poverty and addressing inequalities requires a multiagency approach and we have strong relationships and shared values across our Community Planning Partnerships that enable this. The complex origins of poverty require us to be creative in our response and this presents us with opportunities to work in innovative ways with our voluntary sector colleagues too. We will be exploring opportunities across our organisations to support our staff, many of whom may be experiencing the impacts of poverty in their own lives. We want them to feel supported and secure, and to know where to turn to for help. We also want them to be well equipped to identify and respond appropriately to those in their care who are experiencing poverty.

The most important stakeholders in helping us to understand the impacts of poverty and informing our actions to address it are those experiencing it. Children and families have been less visible during lockdown, and for that reason we know that there is a lot for us still to understand about their experiences during that time. What has been particularly difficult for them? What are their fears for the future? What would help them the most? We are committed to listening to the voices of children, young people, and families to help us shape our response to tackling child poverty in Grampian and you will read about our plans within the report.

We are fully committed to eradicating child poverty by 2030. Indeed, **Every Child** does deserve **Every Chance**.

Caroline Hiscox
Chief Executive
NHS Grampian
Council

Angela Scott
Chief Executive
Aberdeen City

Introduction

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017¹ (the Act) sets out four interim income targets to be met by 2023, and four statutory targets to be met by 2030, encouraging Local Authorities and Health Boards to work towards those targets. The Act introduced a statutory requirement that Local Authorities and Health Boards must jointly produce an annual report and action plan that outlines the actions that they are taking, and will take, to reduce child poverty.

It is a complex task to measure poverty accurately and as such, four measures have been introduced to aid in measuring against the targets set out in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017. The targets are set on an 'after housing costs' basis; the income families have left after they have paid for their housing:

- **Relative poverty:** a child is in relative poverty if they live in a household where equivalised income for the financial year in question is less than 60 per cent of the median equivalised net income for that financial year.
Target: Less than 10% of children will live in households that are in relative poverty
- **Absolute poverty:** a child is in absolute poverty if they live in a household with an income below 60 per cent of the median equivalised net income in 2010–11.
Target: Less than 5% of children will live in households that are in absolute poverty.
- **Combined low income and material deprivation:** a child is in combined low income and material deprivation if they live in a household with an income below 70 per cent of the equivalised median net income for that year and are unable to afford a number of basic goods and services (material deprivation).
Target: Less than 5% of children will live in households with combined low income and maternal deprivation
- **Persistent poverty:** a child is in persistent poverty if they have been living in Scotland and in relative poverty for three of the past four years.
Target: Less than 5% of children will live in households in persistent poverty

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2017/6/contents/enacted>

Context

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017, aligns with other statutory duties and local reporting requirements to support the direction towards tackling child poverty. The **Fairer Scotland Duty**² places an overarching statutory duty on public bodies to have due regard to exercising functions in such a way that is designed to reduce the inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage. The **Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014**³ (specifically Articles 3, 6, 12, 26 and 27) are of particular support to the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017.

The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**⁴(UNCRC) is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in the world, coming into force in the UK in 1992. The vision and ambition to help children and young people experience their rights has been set out within the 'progressing the human rights of children in Scotland: 2018-2021 Action Plan'⁵. This includes raising awareness of children's rights and involving them in policy decisions.

Each Community Planning Partnership (CPP) must prepare and publish a Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) which sets out local outcomes as prioritised by the CPP, and in doing so is required to endeavour to reduce inequalities to outcomes that result in socio-economic disadvantage. This is a duty placed on CPP's under the **Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015**⁶. In September 2019, Aberdeen City Council adopted Community Planning Aberdeen's LOIP as the Child Poverty Action Plan for the years 2019-22. Equally, the **Education (Scotland) Act 2016**⁷ requires that education authorities must apply due regard to the need to carry out school functions in a way designed to reduce inequalities of outcome for those pupils experiencing them as a result of socio-economic disadvantage.

² <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fairer-scotland-duty-interim-guidance-public-bodies/pages/>

³ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/contents/enacted>

⁴ <https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>

⁵ https://www.basw.co.uk/system/files/resources/progressing_human_rights_children_scotland.pdf

⁶ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2015/6/contents/enacted>

⁷ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2016/8/contents/enacted>

Child Poverty in Aberdeen City

In 2019 Aberdeen City was home to 228,700 people, and of these 35,423⁸ (15.4%) were children aged from birth to age 16. There are 48 primary schools and 11 secondary schools, and as of March 2019 there were 542 Care experienced children and young people in the city. 93.2% of school leavers achieved a positive destination. Of Aberdeen City's 283 data zones 29 are in the 20% most deprived, which is 2.08% of the national share. 104, 7.45% of the national share, are in the 20% least deprived.

78.5% of the population aged over 16 are employed which is slightly higher than the Scotland comparison (74.5%), with average gross weekly pay (by place of residence) being £599.40; slightly higher than the Scottish average of £577.70. 19.4% of those over age 16 in Aberdeen City are 'economically inactive'. This includes students, those with long or short term illness, retired people, people looking after family or home, and those that may be discouraged from working. Of these, 24.6% want to be working and are actively seeking employment. There are 13,900 workless households in Aberdeen City, however the sample size is too small to give an accurate estimation as to the number of these households with a child (or children) up to the age of 16.

The most recent Strategic Needs Assessment identifies that around 5500 children in Aberdeen are living in poverty. A standard definition of child poverty means growing up in families without the resources to 'obtain the type of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions and amenities' which are the norm in 21st century Scotland. Existing strategies to tackle poverty in Aberdeen include ['Towards a Fairer Aberdeen that Prospers for All 2017-2020'](#). This identifies a number of priorities that we have been tackling along with partners, placing an emphasis on a partnership approach. Activity against these priorities can be seen in our progress table later in this report. The [Local Housing Strategy 2018-2023](#) identifies six strategic outcomes including adequacy and improvement of housing supply; the prevention of homelessness; improvement in private sector renting, and reducing fuel poverty. These are supporting outcomes which create the right conditions for tackling child poverty through a focus on mitigation for all families.

⁸ <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/population/population-estimates/mid-year-population-estimates/mid-2019>

The Scottish Public Health Observatory (ScotPHO)⁹ gives us some high level data that enables a comparison against certain indicators as a gauge of poverty over recent years. These cannot be mapped across as a direct measure against the targets in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017, but can be used to monitor child poverty and its drivers at a local level.

Percentage of children living in poverty in 2017/18 by Parliamentary Constituency ¹⁰	Before Housing Costs	After Housing Costs	Percentage change since 2016/17 (after housing costs)
Aberdeen Central	18%	22%	+3%
Aberdeen Donside	13%	15%	-4%
Aberdeen South and North Kincardine	13%	14%	-3%

Values

NHS Grampian host a Child Poverty Working Group, chaired by the NHS Child Poverty Lead, with representation from the three Local Authorities. The objectives of the working group are to determine and manage child poverty actions that specifically relate to health that are deliverable on a Pan-Grampian basis, and to determine ways in which to support partnership delivery of actions against the wider impacts of poverty. In Aberdeen City the Tackling Poverty Action Group is chaired by Aberdeen City Council's Poverty Lead, with engagement and participation from NHS Grampian. The joint Child Poverty Action Report has passed through single agency and multiagency governance routes for ratification prior to publication. Within NHS Grampian the System Leadership Team have ratified and approved the plan. It also has the endorsement of both NHS Grampian and Local Authority Chief Executives.

Our joint Child Poverty Action Plan has been developed through the Community Planning Partnership, with a commitment from all partners to work together in tackling child poverty. Actions to address child poverty are also embedded throughout the LOIP. Specific child poverty actions are developed through the Tackling Poverty Action Group, which has good engagement from all Community Planning Partners, including the Third Sector. The Tackling Poverty Action Group is accountable to the Integrated Children's Services Board who has oversight of the LOIP as it relates to children and young people, and a responsibility to drive forward the integration of children's services.

⁹ https://scotland.shinyapps.io/ScotPHO_profiles_tool/

¹⁰ <http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/poverty-in-your-area-2019/>

Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC)¹¹ is the national approach to supporting children and young people. It is intended as a framework that will enable organisations who work on behalf of children and their families to provide a consistent, supportive approach for all. GIRFEC is based on children's rights and the principles reflected in the UNCRC¹². The aim is for children in Scotland to grow up feeling loved, respected and able to meet their full potential at home, at school and in the wider community. Every child and young person should be **Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included**. GIRFEC recognises that every child and young person is unique and that their wellbeing will be influenced by their own experiences and changing needs as they grow, therefore there are no set levels of wellbeing, but rather the provision of a framework by which to identify and address needs early. It is an approach that requires a united and integrated multiagency system, and is the foundation on which we develop our action plan to tackle child poverty in Grampian.

In February 2020 the Independent Care Review¹³ published a series of reports highlighted the strong link between poverty and looked after children, and the need for a systemic change in how we support families particularly by recognising and responding to the stresses of living in poverty. The **Promise**¹⁴ (and the **Pinky Promise**¹⁵ for younger readers) was informed by carefully listening to over 5,500 care experienced children and adults, families and the paid and unpaid workforce to properly understand what needs to change. The **Plan**¹⁶ outlines what we need to do to make sure that required change happens, and how Scotland can better invest in our children and families is reported in **The Money**¹⁷ and **Follow The Money**¹⁸. **The Rules**¹⁹ discuss the current legislative framework and how this must change to achieve the **Promise**. The Care Review identified foundations by which Scotland needs to focus its improvements to achieve better outcomes for children. One of these is 'family'. Families reported the difficulties and stress cause by worrying about not having enough money to live on, often having to make very difficult choices between basic needs. These are very important reports and they should inform our local planning in response to addressing inequalities as a result of poverty.

¹¹ <https://www.gov.scot/policies/girfec/>

¹² <https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/>

¹³ <https://www.carereview.scot/conclusions/independent-care-review-reports/>

¹⁴ https://www.carereview.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/The-Promise_v7.pdf

¹⁵ <https://www.carereview.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Pinky-Promise.pdf>

¹⁶ https://www.carereview.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/The-Plan_pages.pdf

¹⁷ <https://www.carereview.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/The-Money.pdf>

¹⁸ <https://www.carereview.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Follow-the-money.pdf>

¹⁹ https://www.carereview.scot/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/The-Rules_pages.pdf

Reflections on feedback for year one reports from the Poverty and Inequality Commission

In November 2019 the Poverty and Inequality Commission published their report following a review of the first set of LCPARs. 10 reports were selected to represent a range of local authority size, urban/rural coverage and rates of child poverty. There were several key areas that the Commission had a particular interest in; reference to the UNCRC, actions taken to support particular vulnerable groups (asylum seekers, homeless people, victims of domestic abuse for example), and how the reports are being communicated and disseminated.

The Commission was instructed to look for evidence of involving people with **lived experience**; not just whether or not the views of people with lived experience of poverty were being sought, but how their experience was being used to inform the development of local plans. Included in our priorities for 2020/21 are clear actions to capture the lived experience of children, young people and their families with regard to their experiences of poverty and within different contexts. We will take a strategic approach to ongoing engagement and will ensure that what we learn through the voice of lived experience is translated into action within our plans. To this end, a proportion of the annual Healthier, Wealthier Children funding allocated to Boards this year will be directed at enabling a research proposal through Robert Gordon University that will capture both women's experience, and professional's experience of the implementation of the Financial Inclusion Pathway. In addition, we have commissioned a project in partnership with CFINE (Community Food Initiatives North East)²⁰ to capture the experience of children living in poverty across Grampian, and while the impact of COVID-19 will delay initial timescales, this work will be prioritised when it is safe to proceed.

Tackling child poverty is one of our key priorities and it is acknowledged that **leadership** at all levels is crucial to achieving this. The Commission assessed how this was reflected at local level. While it is important to align our action plans specifically to the drivers of child poverty and that the steps taken to achieve progress towards the outcomes are explicit and detailed, it is also important to ensure that child poverty is realised as a priority locally, and work to raise the profile of the child poverty agenda is supported at the most senior level within the organisation. The adoption of the LOIP in Aberdeen demonstrates the desire to tackle Child Poverty using a Community Planning approach.

²⁰ <https://www.cfine.org/>

Year One reports showed good contextual knowledge of child poverty across the local area. Strengths, challenges and opportunities were well defined. There are challenges being faced by all local authorities in that the four **data** measures used in relation to the targets are not available at local authority level. While there are various data sources that provide a proxy measure and build a picture of poverty at a local authority level, these do not correspond to the measures precisely. Recent ISD Data published in December 2019 shows the three local authority areas across Grampian faring much better than the Scottish average with regard to the percentage of children living in low income families. In Aberdeen, the most recent assessment is that 21.5% of children are living in poverty, defined as 'below 60% median income after housing costs'. This is however, not representative of those pockets of our communities where we know hidden poverty and 'in work' poverty exists.

There is no single preferred measure of child poverty locally, so in year one we used a range of data sources to build a picture of where low income families are likely located. It is felt that even with clear local measure/s it would be very difficult to influence using local levers alone as there are too many external influences (wider political and economic shifts, or pandemics for example) that would make it difficult to set a local target with any confidence. However, including monitoring and evaluation targets is important in helping us to respond accordingly if actions are not having the desired impact.

Through taking a **partnership** approach to producing a shared report and action plan we can make our aspirations to tackling child poverty clear, enabling shared needs assessment, shared priorities and the development of greater clarity around governance. In an endeavour to share best practice we are encouraged to reflect on the successes and challenges of working in partnership, and to include local experiences within our reports. We should also look beyond our local authority/ health board partnerships and to consider how we engage with third sector and private sector partners. The plans that we have for this year, to capture lived experience and to expand our Financial Inclusion Pathway, will further build on relationships with our third sector partners and will extend to wider corners across all organisations.

The commission identified four categories of actions within the first year plans.

1. Actions which are fundamental to tackling poverty and are very closely linked to the drivers (payment of the living wage, maximising uptake of benefits, advice on reducing food and energy costs).

In Grampian we have embedded a Financial Inclusion Pathway into practice through routine enquiry within the Universal Health Visiting and Family Nurse Pathway. This includes routine enquiry about finances at pre-birth, 11-14 days, 13-15

months and 4-5 years. This complements Aberdeen City Council's Financial Inclusion Team by providing services in routine settings.

We are working hard with pregnant women to reinforce the importance of attending for antenatal care, with the aim to increase the number of vulnerable mothers eligible and in receipt of the Best Start Maternity grant.

2. Actions which tackle child poverty but need a clearer articulation of how they do so (expansion of early years childcare, closing the attainment gap)

We are continuing to grow and sustain Making Every Opportunity Count (MEOC) as an overall approach across public and third sector partners in Grampian to support cultural shift - with everyone, every system and service doing a little to enable people to live as well as they can.

We are endeavouring to put in place an intelligence led and evidence based approach for the Pupil Equity Fund, so that the allocation of funding to schools will help close the poverty related attainment gap.

3. Supporting actions which create the right conditions for tackling child poverty (transport, availability of affordable housing)

Aberdeen has seen significant investment in our housing stock, with work beginning on the Council's 2000 new Council House programme, and almost £33m invested in Affordable and Mid-Market rent properties in the City during the year 2019/20.

4. Actions which do not directly tackle child poverty but are around the mitigation of poverty or focused on all families.

The development of plans for Aberdeen to be awarded Child Friendly City status.

Community benefit clauses in procurement activities requiring tenderers to commit to undertaking some form of social benefit in addition to the core purpose of the contract.

The total amount awarded through the Scottish Welfare Fund in the year was £892,215

Poverty is defined against the reasonable expectation that everyone should be able to meet their basic needs; which includes the need to be able to function as a citizen of society. Child poverty in Scotland is mainly due to causes, or drivers, partially or wholly outside a parents control and usually completely outside children's control. These include aspects of social security, income from employment and the costs of living.

COVID-19

As we plan and prepare our report and action plan we are in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic which is having an unprecedented impact on our country. Many families are experiencing extensive challenges, such as loss of employment and financial insecurity, less support and protection with regard to pre-existing vulnerabilities, and the additional strain that lockdown may have placed on family relationships. We know that the impact of these challenges will be felt far into the future as our families and communities take time to establish a new 'normal' and this will be reflected in our action and improvement plans for the coming year and beyond. The significant measures taken to support families through the response to this Pandemic will feature as part of next year's report, as they have almost all been delivered since 1st April 2020.

Progress Overview: 2019/20

The following templates provide an overview of progress against the actions that we said we would take to start tackling child poverty in year one. Feedback from the Poverty and Inequality Commission has been particularly helpful in enabling us to refine our approach and applying this to the development of our future plans.

The three main drivers of Child Poverty:²¹

Employment: Income from parent's work and earnings is not sufficient to lift them from poverty

Household costs: The costs of living that household have to cover are too high

Social Security: Income from social security, particularly for families with children, and is now inadequate to lift families from poverty

	On target and within timescales.
	Some risk to targets or timescales. Mitigation required.
	Significant risk to targets, timescales or objective. Requires escalation.

²¹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/child-chance-tackling-child-poverty-delivery-plan-2018-22/>

Action Description	Poverty Driver Impacted	Responsible Services	Due Date	Review Date	RAG Status
<p>Reinforce and promote the importance of attending for antenatal care, with the aim to increase the number of vulnerable mothers eligible and in receipt of the Best Start Grant</p> <p>Income maximisation teams to continue supporting people to claim for their eligible benefits.</p>	Increased uptake of social security	<p>NHS Grampian</p> <p>ACC Department of Work and Pensions</p> <p>Social Security Scotland</p>	March 2022	March 2020	
Progress					
<p>A report on the take up of the Best Start Grant to the end of March 2020 gives an overview of high level statistics for the period December 2018 to December 2019; and for Best Start Foods (August 2019 to March 2020)²². 9,245 applications were received from households across the NHS Grampian - 6% of the total number of applications received. 69% of these were authorised. Quarterly figures are made available, however there is currently no function to compare each quarter.</p> <p>Aberdeen City Council, Department for Work and Pensions, and Social Security Scotland have made £4.7million available to households in backdated benefit claims through the work of Income Maximisation Teams.</p>					

²² <https://www.gov.scot/publications/best-start-grant-and-best-start-foods-high-level-statistics-to-31-march-2020/>

Action Description	Poverty Driver Impacted	Responsible Services	Due Date	Review Date	RAG Status
Promote the Neonatal Expenses Fund with the aim of identifying vulnerable parents who are eligible, so that they may can be supported so spend as much time as possible with their babies while they are receiving care in the neonatal unit.	Reducing the cost of living	NHS Grampian Friends of the Neonatal Unit	March 2022	March 2020	
Progress					
All parents who have a baby admitted to the neonatal unit are provided with the information that they require with regard to the Neonatal Expenses Fund. Through liaison within the clinical management structure, an application form has been included within the universal information pack provided to all families on admission. The aspiration for the future is to develop a mechanism for data collection, enabling an oversight of uptake of the fund and to use this information to further target promotion so that all vulnerable, eligible families can benefit.					

Action Description	Poverty Driver Impacted	Responsible Services	Due Date	Review Date	RAG Status
Provide more support to children and families in the earliest years through delivery of the Universal Health Visiting Pathway (UHVP) and Family Nurse Partnership Programme.	Increased uptake of social security Reducing the cost of living	NHS Grampian	March 2022	March 2020	
Progress					
<p>All Health Visitors and Family Nurses are talking to families about financial inclusion and income maximisation through routine enquiry within the UHVP. Generic email addresses have been set up with Financial Support Services in each of the three Local Authorities, and data requirements have been determined. There is still an Information Governance obstacle to overcome, in that NHSG IG have requested further information on the referral process and how information will be shared (with an agency external to NHSG).</p> <p>Health Visitors and Family Nurses feel that they would benefit from group workshops/ shared learning as to their experiences of implementation of the Financial Inclusion Pathway. This will present an opportunity to promote MEOC. Online training, events, updates will be added to the partnership websites.</p> <p>Online updates, training and shared learning opportunities will be applied to the NHSG website.</p>					

Action Description	Poverty Driver Impacted	Responsible Services	Due Date	Review Date	RAG Status
<p>Develop an intelligence led and evidenced based approach for the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF), so that the allocation of funding directly to schools will help to close the attainment gap</p> <p>Use of Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) Funding totalling £ 635,732.56 to benefit those pupils in each of the 7 identified Challenge Schools</p> <p>Minimise the costs of the school day and maximise the uptake of free school meals and school clothing grants by eligible families.</p> <p>All schools to consider poverty proofing within their own unique context</p>	<p>Reducing the cost of living</p> <p>Income from Employment</p>	<p>Partnership Child Poverty Action Groups</p> <p>Social Security Scotland Education and Children's Services Social Security Scotland Local Authority Poverty Action Groups</p>	<p>March 2021</p>	<p>March 2020</p>	<p style="background-color: green; color: white; text-align: center;">On Track</p>
Progress					
<p>Scottish Attainment Challenge (PEF) Funding totalling £ 2,845,080 has been used to benefit those pupils in receipt of free school meals. All schools analysing the poverty related attainment gap in their own context, and the impact of poverty on pupil attainment, to plan appropriate targeted interventions to address this. Around 2,400 children and young people across the city accessing targeted interventions in primary and secondary schools.</p> <p>7 SAC schools – 4 primary and 3 secondary utilising funding to minimise the impact of poverty on children and families and mitigate against its most adverse effects in respect of pupil attendance, engagement, attainment, opportunities and achievement.</p> <p>4 pledges have been agreed by the Education Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No child or young person will start school without a breakfast</i> • <i>All children and young people will have access to affordable school uniform and appropriate clothing for the North East</i> • <i>Costs will not prohibit the participation of children and young people in the life of the school</i> • <i>Parents, carers and children and young people will have easy access to financial advice</i> <p>A guidance leaflet has been developed for schools to inform thinking on how to reduce the cost of the school day.</p> <p>A visual guide on how DSM scheme will be influenced by the need to reduce the costs of the school day has also been developed.</p>					

Action Description	Poverty Driver Impacted	Responsible Services	Due Date	Review Date	RAG Status
Continue to grow and sustain 'Making every Opportunity Count' (MeOC) at a Community Planning Partnership level	<p>Reducing the cost of living</p> <p>Increased uptake of social security</p>	All services within the Community Planning Partnership	March 2022	March 2020	
Progress					
<p>The aspiration is that MeOC be the framework by which conversations could be had about all aspects of Financial Inclusion. It was agreed that the ethos and principles of MeOC would provide the structure for the development of the Child Poverty Action Report, incorporating all that is being delivered.</p> <p>Opportunities to introduce the MeOC model have been identified, however there is still work to be done to roll it out more widely and embed it as a sustainable framework.</p>					

Action Description	Poverty Driver Impacted	Responsible Services	Due Date	Review Date	RAG Status
Via Healthier, Wealthier Children: (Developing financial inclusion referral pathways in Scotland's funding plan) develop and implement a Midwifery and Early Years Practitioners pathway, policy and procedure to financial support services across Grampian.	Reducing the cost of living. Increased uptake of social security.	NHS Grampian Local Authority Poverty Action Groups Social Security Scotland	March 2021	March 2020	
Progress					
<p>Around £8k was allocated to NHSG through the Healthier, Wealthier Children's fund for 2018/19. This was used to fund Health Improvement staff to establish and implement the process, guidance, resources and governance for the Financial Inclusion Pathway. There is still an Information Governance obstacle to overcome, in that NHSG IG have requested further information on the referral process and how information will be shared (with an agency external to NHSG).</p> <p>An allocation of £22k has been issued for 2019/20. See planned actions for 2021/22 against the funding below.</p>					

Action Description	Poverty Driver Impacted	Responsible Services	Due Date	Review Date	RAG Status
Working with national and local partners to support the Universal Credit provision, including the creation of an advice booklet; assisted digital learning through Libraries, and training of Housing staff to ensure knowledge of the system and its impact	Reducing the cost of living. Increased uptake of social security.	Aberdeen City Council NHS Grampian Department of work and Pensions Police Scotland Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Community Food Initiatives North East (CFINE) Social Security Scotland	March 2021	March 2020	
Progress					
Housing staff have been trained, an advice pack has been created and is available. Assisted Digital learning is being provided.					

Action Description	Poverty Driver Impacted	Responsible Services	Due Date	Review Date	RAG Status
Investment in Scottish Housing Quality Standard , including replacement window and insulation work to address fuel poverty in homes	Reducing the cost of living	Aberdeen City Council	March 2021	March 2020	
Progress					
<p>The percentage of Aberdeen City households considered to be in fuel poverty is 21.1%. In 2018/19- 83.29% of homes met the Scottish Housing Quality Standards In 2018/19 245 new window installations were undertaken In 2018/19 299 new doors were installed</p>					

Action Description	Poverty Driver Impacted	Responsible Services	Due Date	Review Date	RAG Status
<p>Attainment and Transitions to Adulthood Improvement Group established to increase the number of young people living in priority areas who progress to a positive and sustained destinations</p> <p>Increase in the number of apprenticeships offered in priority areas</p>	Income from Employment	<p>Aberdeen City Council</p> <p>Skills Development Scotland</p>	March 2021	March 2020	
Progress					
In 2017/18 91.5% of school-leavers went on to a sustained positive destination.					

Action Description	Poverty Driver Impacted	Responsible Services	Due Date	Review Date	RAG Status
10,000 free meals will be provided to children through the award winning Food and Fun initiative	Reducing the cost of living	Aberdeen City Council CFINE ACVO Community Groups	March 2021	March 2020	
Progress					
In 2018/19 the number of meals provided was 10,699					




Action Description	Poverty Driver Impacted	Responsible Services	Due Date	Review Date	RAG Status
Continue to expand the provision of free sanitary products	Reducing the cost of living	Aberdeen City Council NHS Grampian CFINE	March 2021	March 2020	
Progress					
The number of sites where free sanitary products can be accessed continues to grow.					

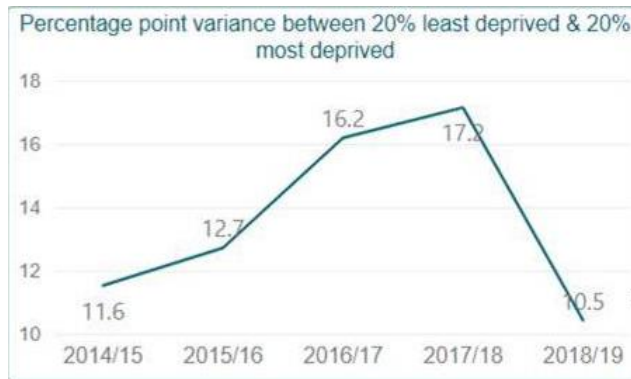
Action Description	Poverty Driver Impacted	Responsible Services	Due Date	Review Date	RAG Status
Development of UNICEF Child Friendly Cities accreditation programme	Reducing the cost of living	Aberdeen City Council NHS Grampian Police Scotland UNICEF	March 2021	March 2020	
Progress					
Action currently being refined with responsibilities shared across the partnerships.					

Activity undertaken	Partners involved in activity	Assessment criteria
Economy		
Support to those on, or transferring to, Universal Credit, and those on benefits.	<p>Aberdeen City Council</p> <p>NHS Grampian</p> <p>Department of work and Pensions</p> <p>Community Food Initiatives North East (CFINE)</p> <p>Social Security Scotland</p>	<p>All Housing Officers trained in advising and supporting on Universal Credit issues.</p> <p>At the end of 2019/20 there were 3976 Council tenants on Universal Credit.</p> <p>Financial Inclusion Team assisted 154 new households with children and 89 households with children that were opened before 1 April 2019 to access unclaimed benefits. This enabled a cumulative gain of £652,096.51 for these households in 2019/2020.</p>
Investment in Scottish Housing Quality Standard, including replacement window and insulation work to address fuel	Aberdeen City Council	<p>21.1% of households are believed to be in fuel poverty in Aberdeen.</p> <p>Number of homes meeting SHQS – 2019/20 – 88.14% (19,252 properties)</p> <p>Number of replacement windows</p> <p>Windows: 2019/20 – 291 properties</p> <p>Heating systems – 1245 energy efficient heating systems installed</p>

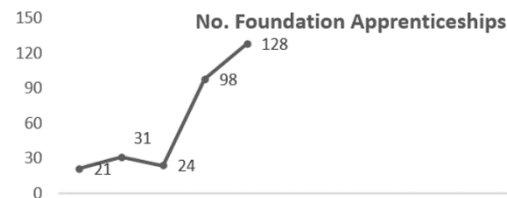
poverty in homes		Energy Efficient Standard for Scottish Housing (EESH) – 92.5% of properties within scope of EESH (20,285 are within scope)
Provision of Heat with Rent for Council Housing	Aberdeen City Council Aberdeen Heat and Power Ltd	Number of 2 bedroom or larger family homes benefitting from Heat with Rent – 1882
Use of Scottish Attainment Challenge (PEF) Funding totalling £ 2,845,080 to benefit those pupils in receipt of free school meals	Aberdeen City Council Third Sector partners School Communities	<p>All schools analysing the poverty related attainment gap in their own context, and the impact of poverty on pupil attainment, to plan appropriate targeted interventions to address this. All SAC plans quality assured by the central education quality team and by the Education Scotland Attainment Advisor.</p> <p>Around 2,400 children and young people across the city accessing targeted interventions in primary and secondary schools.</p> <p>The majority of city schools have implemented a range of interventions using PEF funding, some of these are targeted at specific pupils, others support a wider group. Many pupils, particularly in schools with high allocations of PEF funding, are accessing more than one intervention and it is therefore difficult to accurately identify which specific intervention has led to assessed improvements. In some cases, it is likely there has been a cumulative beneficial effect of several targeted interventions. Although this makes accurate evaluation and reporting more difficult, ultimately, of course, the result is positive for children and young people.</p> <p>Almost all schools report encouraging early evidence of improvements around mental health and wellbeing, resilience, emotional wellbeing and pupil engagement. As well as reference to specific data such as pupil attendance, schools report positive changes in areas such as improved pupil confidence in their own abilities and increased engagement in learning.</p>

		<p>The majority of schools are beginning to note improvements in attainment in literacy and numeracy for pupils targeted for specific interventions. In some schools this has led to a reduction in the poverty related attainment gap, as the rate of improvement for targeted pupils has outstripped others. This is particularly noticeable in the primary schools which also benefit from Scottish Attainment Challenge funding.</p> <p>Across the city there is evidence of the wider impacts associated with the additional funding. There has been an increase in collaborative working, both within and across schools and teachers planning and working together has contributed to the development of a more positive and collegiate ethos underpinned by the sharing of practice across individual schools and across Associated School Groups. In some cases, for example, this has included pooling of resources and collaborative working to source professional learning opportunities for staff on specific priorities e.g. The Visible Learning Approach.</p> <p>The majority of city schools have considered sustainability as part of their planning work, and this has led to a focus on building staff skills and capacity, sharing and embedding of practice, and improving use of data in planning and evaluation. However, it is recognised that the availability of additional resource has been key to achieving positive impacts, particularly for the most disadvantaged pupils.</p>
<p>Use of Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) Funding totalling £ 635,732.56 to benefit those pupils in each of the 7 identified</p>	<p>Aberdeen City Council Third Sector partners</p>	<p>7 SAC schools – 4 primary and 3 secondary utilising funding to minimise the impact of poverty on children and families and mitigate against its most adverse effects in respect of pupil attendance, engagement, attainment, opportunities and achievement.</p> <p>City schools have well-established relationships with a wide range of Third Sector partners, and we plan to continue to support and develop these partnerships to promote child and family learning. These include programmes such as breakfast clubs, designed to promote attendance and reduce lateness, activities to promote engagement and positive attitudes to learning, pupil counselling and family learning packages. Physical and mental health and wellbeing are fundamental to children and young people being able to engage fully with learning, as a result a number of partners are engaged in working with our schools to deliver programmes aimed at increasing confidence</p>

<p>Challenge Schools</p>		<p>& self-esteem, improving communication (talking & listening), improving literacy (reading & writing) and increasing motivation. A number of these focus on pupils participating in sporting activities, while others focus on developing social skills, supporting the wider family, establishing routines, offering practical advice and signposting other sources of support.</p> <p>There is evidence that some young children have delayed language acquisition and a subsequent need to ensure that we have a means of upskilling our workforce to address this. Our work with the PEEP (Parents as Early Educators) programme and recognises the importance of supporting parents in their vital role as early educators of their children. Post COVID-19 we will continue to work with our NHS colleagues to develop a shared, evidence-based approach to supporting the development of young children’s speech, language and communication skills.</p>
<p>Developing the Young Workforce</p>	<p>Aberdeen City Council</p> <p>Skills Development Scotland</p>	<p>Data for 2019/20 is not yet available. The tables below show the most recent data available.</p> <p> Variance Tables - Sustained Leaver De</p> <p> Variance Tables - Initial Leaver Destin:</p> <p> Positive Initial and Sustained Destinatic</p> <p>Attainment and Transitions to Adulthood Improvement Group established to increase the number of young people living in priority areas who progress to a positive and sustained destinations.</p>



Increase in the number of apprenticeships offered in priority areas



Children and Young People		
Provision of £1.6million Fairer Aberdeen Fund through Participatory Budgetting approach to support local organisations to deliver support to communities	Aberdeen City Council Aberdeen Council for Voluntary Organisations (ACVO) Community groups	Annual returns on activities as required under grant agreements from the following projects: Cummings Park Community Flat Printfield Community Project STAR Community Flat Tillydrone Community Flat CFINE Tackling Food Poverty Middlefield Community Project Under 11s Middlefield Youth Flat Fersands Youth Work Fersands Family Centre Twos Group and Family Support Worker St Machar Parent Support Project Home Start CAB Money Advice Outreach CFINE SAFE Pathways St Machar Credit Union
Free meals provided to children through the award winning Food and Fun initiative	Aberdeen City Council CFINE ACVO Community Groups	2019-20: 10,732 meals provided
Continuing support for	Aberdeen City Council	Recommissioning of Big Noise Torry for the period 2020-26. At mid-March 2020, Big Noise Torry was engaging regularly with around 530 children and young people from the Torry

Big Noise Torry / SISTEMA programme	SISTEMA Scotland	community. That included: around 15 babies/toddlers signed up to Little Noise; 125 Nursery children; 260 P1-3s receiving Big Noise sessions during the school day (including around 50 also participating in after-school); and 180 participating in the after-school club. An outline of the programme delivered is contained in the table below.		
		Little Noise	Weekly	Babies and Carers
		Nursery Sessions	Weekly	All children attending Walker Road and Tullos nursery classes
		Primary 1-3 In-school sessions	Twice Weekly	All P1-3 children at Walker Road and Tullos primary schools
		Additional Support Classes	Weekly	Targeted at young people across the stages in primary school. Focus on developing literacy skills
		Big Noise After-School Club	Delivered Monday to Thursday weekly	For young people from P3 – P7 from Walker Road and Tullos Primary Schools
		Big Noise Holiday Clubs	Delivered Monday to Thursday weekly	Open to all after-school participants for eight weeks during the spring, summer and October school holidays
		Priority Families Additional Support	Ongoing support as and when required	Targeted engagement with approximately 30 families to provide individual input / relationship building towards engagement.
		Adult Orchestra	Weekly	For parents and community members in Torry
		Volunteering Programme	Ongoing	Opportunities for adults from Torry community and across Aberdeen
	Aberdeen – Wide Holiday Programme	Defined weeks within holiday programmes	Extending the music education offer to children from across Aberdeen (working alongside the Big Noise Torry children)	
Provision of free sanitary products	Aberdeen City Council NHS Grampian CFINE	Free sanitary products are available in all primary, secondary schools as well as Westburn and Craigelea Children’s Centre. In 2019/20, approximately 159,264 products were delivered to these sites. 54 sites in total are providing access to free sanitary products.		

Expansion of Early Years provision	Aberdeen City Council	<p>Number of Pupil Support Assistants</p> <p>Early Years – 7.1 FTE</p> <p>Development of Integrated Children and Family Services family learning offer to ensure full utilisation from August 2020</p> <p>Development of Ready, Steady, Two to support delivery of high quality services to eligible 2s</p> <p>The Educational Psychology team have developed and offered Emotional Literacy for Support Assistants (ELSA). ELSA provides knowledge, practice and coaching on an incremental learning model for PSAs and mid-year evaluations are positive. In preparation for the expansion to 1140 hours of Early Learning and Childcare, the team have developed an invaluable Ready, Steady, Two resource to support staff to work with eligible 2s and those who have not met developmental milestones.</p> <p>Considerable work has been undertaken in preparation for the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare including the development of a new ELC admissions process. This will see the universal availability of PEEP in all ELC settings. The programme is currently being re-set in light of delays resulting from social distancing measures and will now be delivered virtually over 5 half day sessions. The course will cover the Why, What and How of the Peep Learning Together Programme (LTP), to enable staff to deliver it effectively to support the families that they work with. The LTP is an evidence-based programme that helps parents and carers to support their young children’s development by valuing and building on the play and learning opportunities in everyday life https://www.peeple.org.uk/ltp</p> <p>20 practitioners have recently undertaken the training with a further 3 suites of training fully booked which will result in 18 further trained practitioners. By August 2021 every ELC setting, both Local Authority and Funded Provider, will have a fully trained PEEP practitioner to work with and support families.</p> <p>Work has been undertaken to improve knowledge of the impact of poverty on families. The introduction of ELC Excellence and Equity practitioners has had a positive</p>
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		<p>impact on supporting children and their families in our priority areas. In partnership with community groups The Excellence and Equity Practitioners have been involved in initiatives such as 'Healthy Family Fun Day' which showcases a variety of services across the community that are available to support and advise families. Through the delivery of PEEP groups, outdoor learning sessions and Book Bug sessions they have supported the positive engagement of families in their children's learning. Early engagement with families through links with toddler groups has supported the building of relationships and smooth transitions into the ELC setting.</p>
GIRFEC	Aberdeen City Council	<p>Partnership Improvement Group in place to continually improve agreed partnership approaches</p> <p>A terms of reference has been agreed and the composition of the group is currently being refreshed.</p>
Aberdeen City Council National Improvement Framework Plan 2019/20 agreed.	Aberdeen City Council	<p>Scrutiny through Integrated Children's Services Board; Education Operations Committee and annual reporting to Council</p> <p>NIF self evaluation</p>
<p>Reducing the cost of the school day.</p> <p>Minimise the costs of the school day and maximise the</p>	Aberdeen City Council	<p>4 pledges were agreed by the Education Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No child or young person will start school without a breakfast</i> • <i>All children and young people will have access to affordable school uniform and appropriate clothing for the North East</i> • <i>Costs will not prohibit the participation of children and young people in the life of the school</i> • <i>Parents, carers and children and young people will have easy access to financial advice</i>

<p>uptake of free school meals and school clothing grants by eligible families.</p> <p>All schools to consider poverty proofing within their own unique context</p>		<p>Almost all schools have in place arrangements to ensure children and young people can access food at the beginning of the school day if they require it. Recognising that food poverty and the availability of affordable, healthy food at anytime of the day continue to be of major concern for families, schools continue to work with other agencies and the third sector to improve access for all. Schools work with a range of suppliers to offer choice and reduce the costs of school uniform, also promoting cheaper, non-badged versions of uniform items which are widely available at much lower cost than badged items. Most schools offer one of a range uniform “recycling” provisions where donated school uniform can be accessed for free or in exchange for outgrown items.</p> <p>A few schools use PEF funding to provide school uniform to all pupils and the clothing grant application process is signposted to all parents, with support to complete this if required. There are a few informal arrangements between schools where unwanted clothing is donated and available free to those who need it. A guidance leaflet and posters for primary and secondary schools have been developed to inform thinking on how to reduce the cost of the school day and all schools have reviewed their practice to ensure all learners can access the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. A few schools use PEF or other funding to support this.</p> <p>Schools continue to work with third sector and other agencies to signpost families to sources of financial support and advice.</p>
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Every child, every chance: poverty in schools

"Aberdeen a place where all children and young people can prosper"

Our policy and practice should be consistent: individual schools should:

The Scottish Government's ambition is for Scotland to be 'the best place to grow up and bring up children/young people'. All public bodies that work with, or for, children and young people are required to uphold and embed the Article of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in every level of service. These are summarised into three main aspirations:

1. **Maximise opportunities for all children and young people**
2. **Support to the best interests of the child**
3. **The right to life, survival and development**
4. **Participate in the world of the child**

Children from low-income families are disproportionately likely to experience poverty. The Scottish Government's ambition is for Scotland to be 'the best place to grow up and bring up children/young people'. All public bodies that work with, or for, children and young people are required to uphold and embed the Article of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in every level of service. These are summarised into three main aspirations:

1. **Maximise opportunities for all children and young people**
2. **Support to the best interests of the child**
3. **The right to life, survival and development**
4. **Participate in the world of the child**

What is the cost of your school day?

Education is free, but a lot of school things are not.

What is the cost of your school day?

What impact does your dress code policy have?

- Is it a uniform?
- Do you have a dress code?
- Are you allowed to wear your own clothes?
- Are you allowed to wear your own shoes?
- Are you allowed to wear your own accessories?
- Are you allowed to wear your own hair accessories?
- Are you allowed to wear your own jewellery?
- Are you allowed to wear your own shoes?
- Are you allowed to wear your own accessories?
- Are you allowed to wear your own hair accessories?
- Are you allowed to wear your own jewellery?

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What is the cost of your school day?

Attitudes and understanding

- Do you have a dress code?
- Are you allowed to wear your own clothes?
- Are you allowed to wear your own shoes?
- Are you allowed to wear your own accessories?
- Are you allowed to wear your own hair accessories?
- Are you allowed to wear your own jewellery?
- Are you allowed to wear your own shoes?
- Are you allowed to wear your own accessories?
- Are you allowed to wear your own hair accessories?
- Are you allowed to wear your own jewellery?

Learning

- Do you have a dress code?
- Are you allowed to wear your own clothes?
- Are you allowed to wear your own shoes?
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- Are you allowed to wear your own hair accessories?
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What is the cost of your school day?

What impact does your dress code policy have?

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Learning

- Do you have a dress code?
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Library provision and access	Aberdeen City Council	<p>Number of young people (Under 16) joining the Library service 2018/19 - 2168</p> <p>Number of Bookbug gifting bags, Baby, toddler and Primary 1 - 13,833</p> <p>Number of Early Years Bookbug outreach sessions - 29 involving 211 children</p> <p>Number of library visits by educational establishments 986 with 13,933 children</p> <p>Aberdeen Reading Challenge participation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 637 children and young people • 137 families <p>Number of children attending library service events 2018/19 – 20,512 (some were cancelled latterly due to the Covid pandemic)</p>
Transport	Aberdeen City Council	<p>Lochside Academy in Aberdeen opened in August 2018 merging 2 established secondary schools (Torry and Kincorth). The area of Torry is one of the poorest areas in Aberdeen and the move to the new school requires children from Torry to travel between 2 to 3 miles. Free transport is provided for all children attending Lochside Academy from Torry (approx. 450). The provision of supported bus services was in recognition of the distance and safety concerns of the walk to the school, although the provision is not statutory and in normal circumstances a fare would be required to be paid, taking into account the deprivation in the area Aberdeen City Council has provided free travel for the children from Torry and this includes free travel on commercial bus services also between 07:00 - 18:00, so children can participate in extra-curricular activities and fully engage in the school community.</p>
Adults		
Provision of £1.6million Fairer Aberdeen	Aberdeen City Council	<p>Annual returns on activities as required under grant agreements from the following projects:</p> <p>Cummings Park Community Flat</p> <p>Printfield Community Project</p>

Fund through Participatory Budgeting approach to support local organisations deliver support to communities	Aberdeen Council for Voluntary Organisations (ACVO) Community groups	STAR Community Flat Tillydrone Community Flat CFINE Tackling Food Poverty Middlefield Community Project Under 11s Middlefield Youth Flat Fersands Youth Work Fersands Family Centre Twos Group and Family Support Worker St Machar Parent Support Project Home Start CAB Money Advice Outreach CFINE SAFE Pathways St Machar Credit Union
Provision of free sanitary products	Aberdeen City Council NHS Grampian CFINE	Free sanitary products are available in all primary, secondary schools as well as Westburn and Craigielea Children's Centre. In 2019/20, approximately 159,264 products were delivered to these sites. 54 sites in total are providing access to free sanitary products.
Expansion of Early Years provision	Aberdeen City Council	Number of Pupil Support Assistants Early Years – 7.1 FTE
Improved knowledge of Adverse Childhood Experiences	Community Planning Partners Care Experienced Young People	The phased roll out of the MCR Pathways programme to offer support to Care Experienced young people across the city continues with evidence that almost all pupils engaged with the programme to date have been increasingly able to talk positively about their school experiences. The wider achievement programme with Sport Aberdeen has offered greater engagement with the creative arts. Both programmes have helped increase timely attendance, increased confidence and reduced exclusions.

		The Champions Board met regularly throughout 2019/20, allowing Care Experienced Young People the opportunity to raise issues directly with Community Planning partners, and shape how services are delivered.
Reducing the cost of the school day	Aberdeen City Council	Provision of free school meals – 2202 enrolled for these in addition to those in P1-P3 who are automatically entitled: P1 – 2015; P2 1967, P3 1964 Provision of school clothing grants - 1946 Number of families auto-enrolled for privileges – 90 enrolled for free school meals through this process.
Place		
Investment in affordable housing through Strategic Housing Infrastructure Plan (SHIP)	Aberdeen City Council Registered Social Landlords Developers Scottish Government	The Aberdeen City Affordable Housing Programme, developed by the council details a range of affordable housing projects including RSL and Council Social Rent. It also includes RSL mid-market rent and LAR Housing Trust mid-market rent as well as Low-Cost Home Ownership (LCHO) which are properties that housing developers will deliver directly. In 2019/20 there were 401 affordable housing completions which is the highest number of affordable homes delivered in Aberdeen through the affordable housing supply programme. In total during 2019/20 Aberdeen City Council's total allocation for affordable housing was £32.537m.
Community Learning and Development Strategy 2018-22 agreed.	Aberdeen City Council	568 activities run by CLD team: 239 Youth Work 113 Healthy Minds 113 Family Learning 103 Adult Learning

		<p>1087 unique participants:</p> <p>554 Youth Work 227 Adult Learning 203 Family Learning 111 Healthy Minds</p> <p>New enrolments:</p> <p>819 Youth Work 442 Adult Learning 357 Healthy Minds 295 Family Learning</p> <p>Total learner hours: 24533</p>
<p>Agreement of Local Housing Strategy 2018-23. Aim of ensuring people in Aberdeen live in good quality sustainable homes, which they can afford and that meet their needs.</p>	<p>Aberdeen City Council</p> <p>Community Planning Partners</p> <p>Private Rented Sector</p> <p>Local Housing Associations</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is an adequate supply of housing across all tenures and homes are the right size, type and location that people want to live in with access to suitable services and facilities. 2. Homelessness is prevented and alleviated. 3. People are supported to live, as far as is reasonably practicable, independently at home or in a homely setting in their community. 4. Consumer knowledge, management standards and property condition is improved in the private rented sector. 5. Fuel poverty is reduced which contributes to meeting climate change targets. 6. The quality of housing of all tenures is improved across the city.

<p>Development of UNICEF Child Friendly Cities accreditation programme</p>	<p>Aberdeen City Council Police Scotland UNICEF</p>	<p>Significant work has been undertaken to evaluate our current practices and approaches and to inform the creation of a joint action plan which will be supported and delivered by a range of our Community Planning Partners. Through discussion with a range of professionals and young people, we will be prioritising a number of key areas in accordance with the award framework. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture • Communication • Co-operation and Leadership • Place • Participating and, • Child-Friendly Services. <p>These focus areas require all services to child and young person friendly and to routinely apply a child rights-based approach (CRBA) to design, develop and commission services. They also ask that children and young people are genuinely considered throughout the decision-making processes.</p> <p>Work towards achieving CFC status has seen a steady increase in the number of committee reports which consider children's rights and council officers are now more consistently seeking direct engagement with children and young people on issues that directly affect them.</p> <p>Examples of this include the engagement of 3343 children and young people during consultation around the review of holiday patterns. As we work to become a Child Friendly City, we have worked closely with our digital partner, Microsoft, to develop an Equalities and Child Rights Impact Assessment. This will embed a greater understanding and broader understanding of the importance of children's rights and ensure that all Council decisions are informed by the extent to which they help uphold these.</p>
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Community Benefit Clauses	Aberdeen City Council	<p>Clauses within contracts and frameworks requiring tenderers to commit to undertaking some form of social benefit in addition to the core purpose of the contract.</p> <p>Training & recruitment; providing sub-contracting opportunities or otherwise improving the social, economic or environmental wellbeing of the local authority's area.</p> <p>For example, the provision of apprenticeship and placement schemes, Real Living Wage provision, employability engagement activities, promotion of adopting and fostering.</p>																
Scottish Welfare Fund	Aberdeen City Council	<p>During the year 2019/20 the following numbers of grants were distributed:</p> <p><u>Crisis Grants</u></p> <table> <tr> <td>Single parents</td> <td>1870</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Couples with children</td> <td>461</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other with children</td> <td><u>128</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>2459</td> </tr> </table> <p><u>Community Care Grants</u></p> <table> <tr> <td>Single parents</td> <td>809</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Couples with children</td> <td>158</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other with children</td> <td><u>48</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>1015</td> </tr> </table> <p>Total amount awarded - £892,215</p>	Single parents	1870	Couples with children	461	Other with children	<u>128</u>	Total	2459	Single parents	809	Couples with children	158	Other with children	<u>48</u>	Total	1015
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Priority Families	<p>Aberdeen City Council</p> <p>Action for Children</p> <p>Police Scotland</p>	<p>The Priority Families Service supports families who are affected by multiple problems and at risk of poor life outcomes. A whole family approach is delivered through a dedicated Support Worker and a Police Officer with families receiving up to 12 months of intensive and persistent support in their own home, school and community to address the issues affecting them. The team also comprises an Employment Coach and an Activity Support Co-ordinator and is registered with the Care Commission.</p>																

		<p>Outcomes for families supported in 2018/19 (comparing 6 months pre-intervention and 6 months post intervention) include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 96% reduction in criminal charges · 68% reduction in Police vulnerable person's reports · 62% improvement in parenting skills · 71% improvement in family routines · 58% improvement in home living conditions · 69% of children/young people and 83% of adults reported improved physical fitness/participation in sport and activities and an improved understanding of healthy living. · 76% of adults reported improved personal functioning and wellbeing · 84% of adults participated in employability activities
Fairer Scotland Duty	Aberdeen City Council NHS Grampian	Consideration of the impact of new strategies on socio-economic inequality.

Priorities for 2020/21

During 2020/21 there has been a very strong focus on mitigating the impacts of Covid-19 across the City, with high profile examples being the creation and disbursement of the Lord Provost's Charitable Fund; the distribution of Crisis Grants, delivery of free food packages; maintaining school lessons through Google classroom, and the development of the 'Fit Like' Hubs. This response will be reported on extensively in the Child Poverty Action Report for 2020/21, that will be delivered in mid 2021.

In addition to this work, work has continued where possible to work towards the LOIP outcomes through identified Improvement Charters. The following priorities have also been identified:

New Actions for 2020/21					
Via Healthier, Wealthier Children Fund (HWCF): Capturing the lived experience of children in poverty	Reduce the cost of living. Engagement and participation Enabling Tackling stigma	NHS Grampian Aberdeen City Council CFINE Robert Gordon University	March 2022	March 2021	
Update to March 2021					
In the generic feedback received against the first year LCPAR's, the need to capture the lived experience of people in poverty was highlighted as an opportunity whereby regions could strengthen their action plans by enabling those experiencing poverty in their communities to inform and influence planning activities. Further emphasis was put on this with the recommendations of the Independent Care Review (previously referenced) published in February 2020. The recommendations were based on the voices of care experienced children and young people; many of whom had experience of poverty.					

A proportion of the HWCF has been allocated to develop a creative approach to capturing the lived experience of children in poverty. A creative based approach to engage with children attending a holiday programmes with CFINE was intended, but has had to be deferred due to Covid-19. While this activity will indirectly give children and young people some knowledge and skills that may reduce the cost of living in the home (cost effective cooking, recycling), it will have added benefits not directly linked to the drivers of poverty, such as helping to tackle the stigma of poverty.

Seeking to understand the lived experience of children in poverty has become more important than ever as we begin to see the impacts of COVID-19 on our society. We will apply the GIRFEC framework in working with children to continue to hear their voices, and will support and enable them to inform and influence actions.


Via Healthier, Wealthier Children Fund (HWCF): Research into the implementation of the Financial Inclusion Pathway	Increasing uptake of social security Reducing the cost of living	NHS Grampian Robert Gordon University	March 2022	March 2021	
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Update to March 2021

A research proposal to understand the experiences of women, and of Health Visitors and family Nurses, around the implementation of the Financial Inclusion Pathway has gained ethics approval. Focus groups were due to start in summer 2020, however there is likely to be some delay due to Covid-19.

This research will let us know how women feel about enquiries being made with regard to their financial situation. The output will enable us to share learning with clinical colleagues and financial support agencies. If there are things that can be done to improve the pathway or make it more acceptable to women then modifications can be made at an early stage. Where the pathway is working well will share these experience, letting colleagues know that their efforts are valued by women.

The research report will be published and appended to our 2021/22 LCPAR.

<p>Capturing the lived experience of low income families</p>	<p>Increasing uptake of social security</p> <p>Reducing the cost of living</p> <p>Increasing income through employment</p>	<p>NHS Grampian</p> <p>Robert Gordon University</p> <p>CFINE</p> <p>Fersands Project</p>	<p>March 2022</p>	<p>March 2021</p>	
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Update to March 2021					
<p>NHSG has commissioned a study to capture lived experience of low income families. The study will be undertaken by Robert Gordon University in partnership with CFINE, the Woodside Pantry and the Fersands project. It had been anticipated that participants would be recruited and interviews conducted in March and April 2020, however this has been deferred due to Covid-19. It is hoped that the study will now be able to commence in late summer/ early autumn.</p> <p>Measures to determine 'in work' poverty are difficult to determine, but one of the indicators used is the number of working families claiming Working Tax Credits. In data published for 2017/18 showed that working families in Aberdeen City were least likely to be claiming Working Tax Credits, indicating that as a local authority area the comparative rates of in work poverty are less than other parts of Scotland.²³ However local data tells us that there are still families, where at least one adult is working, that are still experiencing poverty across Aberdeen. This is anticipated to be even more so, as we emerge from COVID-19.</p>					
<p>Providing more support to children and families in the hospital setting by providing advice, signposting and warm hand-overs to specialist financial support services, with regard to all aspects of income maximisation</p>	<p>Engagement and participation</p> <p>Tackling stigma</p> <p>Increasing uptake of social security</p> <p>Reducing the cost of living</p>	<p>NHS Grampian</p> <p>Aberdeen City Council</p> <p>SAMH</p>	<p>March 2022</p>	<p>March 2021</p>	

²³ <https://www.scotpho.org.uk/life-circumstances/income-and-employment/data/working-age-poverty>

Update to March 2021					
<p>SAMH has been commissioned to deliver pilot project for 6 months starting in summer 2020. A Primary Care Link Worker with experience in engaging with families, income maximisation/ financial inclusion knowledge, and strong links with support services would attend the hospital setting one day per week (RACH and Aberdeen Maternity Hospital) to offer direct support to families and/or provide warm hand-over to specialist financial support agencies as required. The service would include all aspects of 'money matters', including debt advice, support to apply for social security benefits, budgeting, and employability for example.</p> <p>Clinical staff would benefit from the increased confidence of having an 'expert' colleague to offer this support to families, and who will share their knowledge with the wider team as required. This work will also link well with Child Protection and neglect priorities.</p> <p>Anonymised data will be collected over the pilot period to provide information with regard to numbers of contacts, types of support required, onward referrals and outcomes. The pilot will be evaluated to inform a sustained service implementation. Unfortunately the pilot start has needed to be deferred due to the impact of COVID-19.</p>					
Promote and distribute information and resources designed to address aspects of poverty	<p>Increasing uptake of social security</p> <p>Reducing the cost of living</p> <p>Increasing income through employment</p>	<p>NHS Grampian</p> <p>Aberdeen City Council</p> <p>Third Sector Partners</p>	March 2022	March 2021	
Update to March 2021					

Several new measures to support people experiencing poverty as a result of COVID-19 have been introduced, such as the furlough scheme, and financial grants for certain groups. Many third sector agencies are also offering support, such as One Parent Scotland Families, Scotland who are launching an energy fund²⁴ on 12th June to support single parent families. We have a role in ensuring that those that can benefit from such opportunities are aware of them and can be supported to access them if required, and as such we will develop a forum/mechanism whereby people can access information easily, and in one place where possible.

Investment in affordable housing through Strategic Housing Infrastructure Plan (SHIP)	Reducing the cost of living	Aberdeen City Council Registered Social Landlords Developers Scottish Government	March 2022	March 2021	
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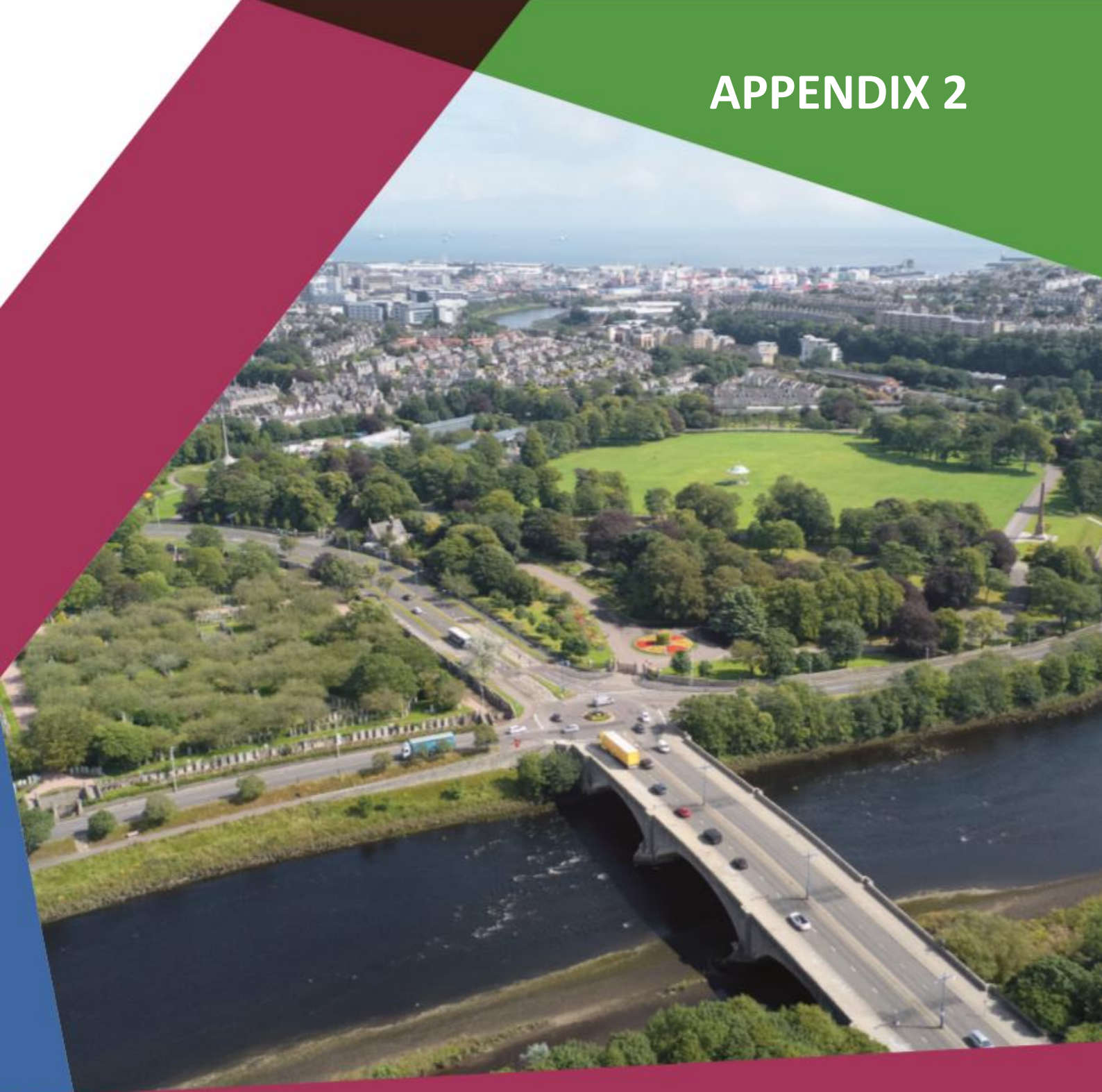
Update to March 2021

²⁴ <https://opfs.org.uk/get-involved/news-and-events/news/100k-funding-for-fuel-payments-secured-by-one-parent-families-scotland/>

351 units completed, £29.4m budget to deliver these.					
Improve knowledge of Adverse Childhood Experiences with a view to better understanding the long term impacts of poverty and interconnected work-streams	Reducing the cost of living Income from employment	Community Planning Partners Care Experienced Young People	March 2022	March 2021	
Update to March 2021					
Actions to engage directly with care experienced young people are reflected in Corporate Parenting action plans. Learning and reflection as a result of the recent Care Inspectorate report ²⁵ on the review of inspections for children and young people in need of care will be incorporated into our planning.					

²⁵

<https://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/5817/Review%20of%20findings%20from%20inspection%20programme%20for%20CYP%202018%20to%202020.pdf>



ANNUAL OUTCOME IMPROVEMENT REPORT

2019/20



Community Planning
Aberdeen

FOREWORD

By Councillor Jenny Laing and Chief Superintendent Campbell Thomson

This year's Annual Report is brought to you in exceptional circumstances. The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on every area of our society. Although the consequences are set to be grave, this has not impacted on our overall performance during 2019/20, given it arrived only a few weeks before the end of the reporting year. This report serves as an important reminder of what we had achieved just weeks prior to the pandemic hitting and, as we approach the fourth year of our [Local Outcome Improvement Plan](#) (LOIP) 2016-26, confirms that our shared vision and priorities for the City remain as relevant as ever.

To tighten up our commitments, we refreshed the LOIP in February 2019 and introduced 15 Stretch Outcomes which provide a clear route map to 2026. The Partnership's ethos of cooperation and collaboration and relentless determination has yielded great results during 2019/20 and it is with pleasure that we offer our third Annual Outcome Improvement Report in demonstration of the work of Community Planning Aberdeen.

Over the course of the year we have initiated 52 improvement projects which seek to tackle diverse issues and deliver wide ranging benefits for our economy, people and place. For example our work to support and sustain new businesses in priority growth sectors and create employment opportunities outwith the prominent oil and gas sector is starting to pay dividends. This year we can report a 4.8% increase in the number of people employed in growth sectors and 45 new enterprises starting up since last year. Digital is a growth sector which is growing rapidly and we are doing a lot of work to upskill our workforce and citizens to be able to take advantage of the opportunities this presents. Our latest City Voice survey of March 2020 shows an increase of 8% in the number of people who have basic digital tools since 2018. We are also delighted to report a 2.3% increase in people in living wage employment since 2018, with five more employers across the City receiving accreditation.

Our enduring ambition, and indeed duty, is to ensure that all people in Aberdeen can enjoy safety, prosperity and dignity. All of our improvement projects are focussed on improving outcomes for people in Aberdeen. From pre-birth to end of life, we are supporting people on their journey and it is fantastic to be able to celebrate in people's great achievements. This year we can report that 93.2% of our young people have reached a positive destination, which is up from previous years, including in the City's most deprived areas. Our work to improve levels of attendance keeps young people engaged in school and encouraging the uptake of foundation apprenticeships offers a solid basis to find employment. This year we saw a significant increase in the number of children undertaking and completing a foundation apprenticeship from 17 last year to 93.

But not all people experience such a positive start in life. Much of the work of the partnership deals with the consequences of adverse childhood experiences and supporting children, people and families to thrive in very challenging circumstances. Through the city's ambition to become a Unicef accredited 'Child Friendly City', we are working increasingly closely with children and young people to provide them with a range of opportunities to directly influence and shape the city they live in and the services that they access.

Our work to improve access to services for families who need additional support means that 93% of families are now receiving an offer of service within 30 days; which surpasses our aim of 80% and is a vast improvement on the 174 days some families had to wait back in 2016.

Care experienced young people face many barriers to achieving positive outcomes and we are taking forward a range of initiatives to help them overcome these. Enabling care experienced children and young people to remain in kinship care can have a very positive impact on mental and physical health and wellbeing and our improvement work in this area has resulted in an increase in 17% of kinship care placements this year. We are also able to report that the proportion of care experienced young people attaining one or more qualifications at SCQF level 4 has increased from 73.9% to 76% since 2016/17 and sustained positive destinations have increased from 73.9% to 79% during the same period.

We have been doing targeted work with our young people in Northfield and Torry to reduce anti-social behaviour which can lead to more serious offences. Working closely with the Police and communities to divert young people into community based activities, we have seen calls regarding anti-social behaviour drop in Northfield by 34% since February 2019. We are also seeing evidence of a similar trend in Torry. It is this type of multi-agency problem solving approach that is helping us divert individuals from the justice system and reduce offending. Latest data available at the end of 2019/20 shows that 743 people aged over 18 received a first court conviction; which is a reduction of 8% overall from data available last year.

The support that the Partnership is offering through our improvement projects this year promises to be life changing for many vulnerable people across the City: supporting people in the justice system get back into employment, helping individuals recover from being involved in cuckooing, organising activities for people with long term conditions to be more active, working with homeless people and others to define and achieve their personal health and wellbeing outcomes, early and preventative interventions for people using drugs and alcohol, and ensuring every person in Aberdeen has access to healthy, tasty ,affordable food.

Looking ahead to 2020/21 we are dealing with the impact of COVID-19, which continues to unfold in a challenging and potentially uncertain financial environment. We would like to take this opportunity to give our sincere thanks to staff across the Partnership for the invaluable work they have undertaken in response to the emergency; and for their contribution to the recovery process that lies ahead. Throughout the report we have identified priority areas for improvement during 2020/21, derived from the one year Aberdeen City Socio-Economic Rescue Plan, which will lead us into the scheduled refresh of the LOIP in 2021.

We are encouraged by the results we have achieved this year and know that it is only by continuing to work together, and with the private sector, to build on these achievements that we remain on track to realise our vision of Aberdeen as a place where all people can prosper.



Councillor Jenny Laing, Chair of Community Planning Aberdeen, Co-Leader of Aberdeen City Council



Chief Superintendent Campbell Thomson, Police Scotland, Vice Chair of Community Planning Aberdeen

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PROSPEROUS ECONOMY



Our Stretch Outcomes

SO1

10% Increase in employment in priority growth sectors by 2026



SO2

90% of working people will earn the living wage by 2026



Headline achievements during 2019/20

9% increase in working age people in employment since 2016

4.8% more people employed in growth sectors and 45 new enterprises

451 people attending our first Annual Business Festival

8% more people able to use digital tools

2.3% increase in people earning living wage and 5 mor employers accredited

Tillydrone community helping shape community benefit clause

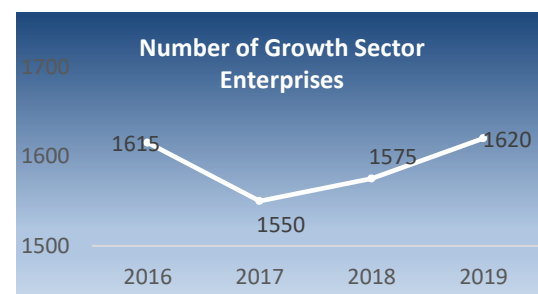
Progress made during 2019/20

Increase in Employment in Growth Sectors

Aberdeen City has one of the largest working age populations of any Scottish local authority areas at 69% compared to 64.5% for the rest of Scotland. The continued diversification of our economy from the prominent oil and gas sector into other growth sectors is vital to secure new and lasting employment opportunities for the people of Aberdeen. Latest data available at the end of 2019/20 showed that 79% of working age people in Aberdeen were in a job (up from 70% three years ago) and employment in growth sectors increased by 790 (4.8%), which is a continuing upward trend.



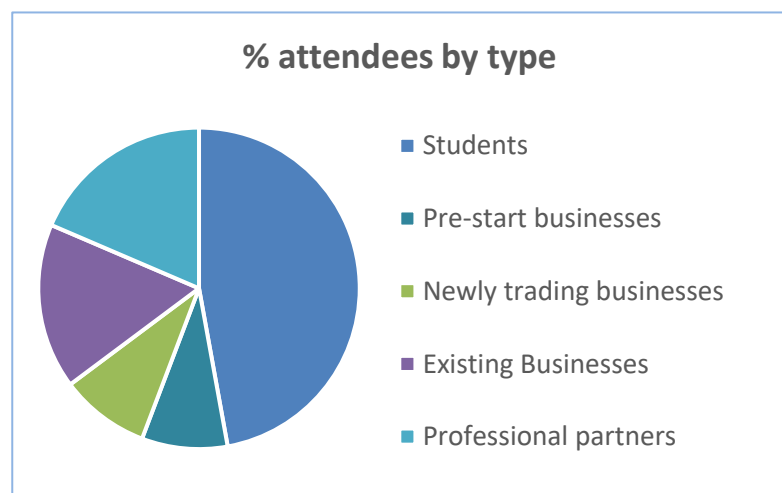
New companies can be the primary creators of new jobs and they also have an important role in sustaining jobs. This is why stimulating growth in start-up businesses across the nationally recognised growth sectors (digital/creative; food and drink; life sciences and tourism) and our locally identified priority sectors (health & social care and construction) is a priority for Community Planning Aberdeen. We are delighted to see that the number of growth sector enterprises is increasing, with 45 new enterprises starting up since 2018/19, offering the potential for more employment opportunities in these sectors.



As part of our improvement work to **increase the number of start-up businesses in growth sectors**, this year we held our first Annual Festival for businesses to: help business growth, challenge and stimulate, and draw attention to support available to new businesses. The event, led by community planning partners Elevator and Scottish Enterprise, was held in October 2019 and attracted 451 people. Feedback from the event was very positive and it is our intention to run it again during 2020/21.



451 people
attended our first
Annual Festival for
Business in October
2019

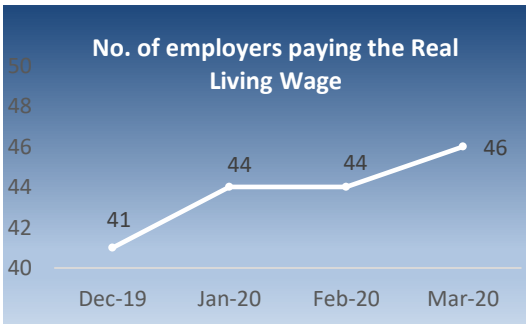
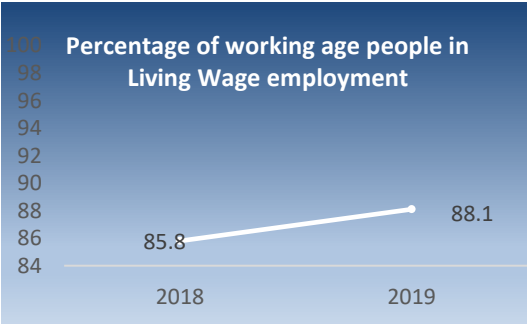


With an increase in jobs in growth sectors, comes an increase in demand for talent and a workforce equipped to support this diversification of business and economy. One of the growth sectors we have prioritised to support is the digital sector, which is growing rapidly, although it is not only the digital sector which is demanding digital skills. These skills are becoming ever more prevalent in roles across a range of sectors and occupations. We are working together to strengthen the talent pipeline for digital jobs through our improvement work to **increase qualifications in ICT and digital skills**. Our intention is to conduct market research in two schools in Aberdeen City to understand how we can encourage young people, especially females, to pursue a in this qualification in this much sought after area. We are particularly keen to support an increase in people with ICT and Digital skills at SCQF Levels 7 and 8 which we believe will enable them to take advantage of digital opportunities as they arise and ensure a pipeline of talent to fill digital roles in the future.

Gaining a formal qualification is not the only way of acquiring skills in digital technology and increasing employment opportunities is not the only benefit. Digital connectivity can help individuals at risk of isolation and inequality in our communities and we recognise the benefits of upskilling all citizens. Working with community groups such as the Aberdeen Silver Surfers, the Partnership aims to **increase the number of people in Aberdeen who feel comfortable using digital tools** through sharing resources, best practice and recruitment of volunteers. We have been trialling community drop-in sessions for customers to learn how to set up and use email at Tillydrone Library and feedback will inform more community events in the future. Data from our City Voice Survey conducted in March 2020, shows an increase in the percentage of people in Aberdeen who have basic digital skills from 70% to 78% since 2018.

Increase in People in Living Wage Employment

Latest data available at the end of 2019/20 showed that 88.1% of employees in the city were in living wage employment, which is 2.3% higher than 2018; giving us confidence that we are well on track to achieve our stretch outcome of 90% by 2026



The number of employers signed up to the real living wage has also increased. Based on data from Living Wage Scotland, there are currently 46 accredited Living Wage employers in the city, which is an increase of five since we started our improvement work to **increase employer sign up to the Real Living Wage**.



We hope to continue to build on this success through further promotion of the real living wage on Community Planning Aberdeen's new corporate social responsibility platform. The website raises awareness of the opportunity for businesses to support improved outcomes for the City by signing up as a real living wage employer. We are also seeking a champion from one of the 46 accredited organisations in the City to help us raise awareness of the benefits of being a real living wage employer to enlist more employers from the private sector.

An employer's round table is being held to discuss issues around the wage and low pay of people living in priority localities, focussing initially on Torry. Greater uptake of the Real Living Wage helps tackle pockets of in-work poverty within the city, with the added effect of increasing average earnings, productivity and boosting the wider economy. Data available at the end of 2019/20 shows an increase in the median gross weekly pay for Aberdeen from £578 in 2018 to £599 in 2019, which is above Scotland's median of £587.

Community benefits clauses are another way that businesses can contribute to improving the outcomes for communities across Aberdeen. They are included within contracts with Aberdeen City Council and commit the successful bidder to deliver some form of social, economic or environmental benefit in addition to fulfilling the core purpose of the contract. We have been working to improve how communities and partner organisations participate with the process to [increase the impact and measured value of partnership wide community benefits programme](#). Input from communities ensure requirements sought are welcomed, aligned to local need and wherever possible, build on existing initiatives.

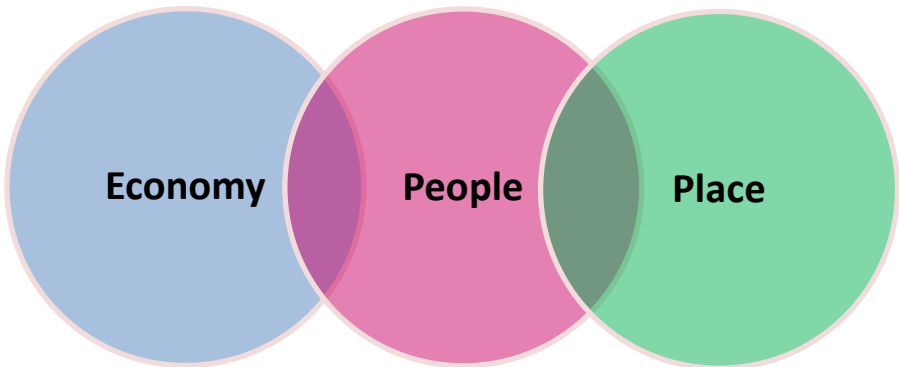
Our first opportunity to test this new approach has been in relation to the new primary school to be built on the site of former St Machar Primary School. We have engaged with various groups within the Tillydrone area and a community engagement session was facilitated in March 2020. As a result, community members have generated a number of ideas which the successful bidder will be asked to consider supporting.



Improvement priorities 2020/21

Next year our overarching priority will be to help the economy recover following the Covid-19 public health crisis, accelerating improvement work planned in the following areas:

- Job creation and skills development to address employment gaps in sectors such as health and care
- Promotion of job and learning opportunities through an online local jobs portal to increase access to jobs at all levels for city region residents
- Work with the business community to align corporate social responsibility efforts to our socio-economic recovery
- Promotion of opportunities for the digital sector to enable new ways of working long-term



Connecting Outcomes: Removing the barriers to employment

Page 183

Employability

Supporting people to get into employment contributes to improved outcomes across our economy, people and place.

Increasing the pool of available workers supports employers as well the wider community.

But being employed, or volunteering, offers much broader financial, health and wellbeing benefits for an individual.

We take a holistic approach to delivering the positives of employment to all our citizens.

How are we doing this?

Through our multi agency improvement projects we are putting in place changes that open up the options for working and volunteering, for all of our citizens, regardless of their circumstances.

We're taking a multi-faceted approach recognising that the challenges and benefits are interconnected and support the delivery of multiple stretch outcomes.



What changes are we currently testing?

- Employer focus groups/events to raise awareness of employment opportunities from targeted groups and to identify support required to remove barriers
- Developing opportunities for upskilling through training or volunteering
- Introduction of an apprenticeship information pack for guidance teachers
- Identifying single points of contact who can provide support/information to individuals
- Identifying methods that could be used to help support young mums to remain in education

What have we achieved?

- Increase of 76 young people completing a Foundation Apprenticeship or currently training since 18/19
- 951 people attain their own personal outcomes through link work support
- 36 volunteers support the community pantries
- 8 employers attended autism awareness session
- Established a Fair Start Scotland Health and Wellbeing Group

PROSPEROUS PEOPLE

Children & Young People



Our Stretch Outcomes

SO3

95% of children will reach their expected developmental milestones



SO4

90% of children/ young people report feeling mentally well by 2026



SO5

95% of care experienced children have similar outcomes to their peers



SO6

95% of children in localities sustain a positive destination



SO7

Child Friendly City by 2026



SO8

25% fewer young people charged with an offence by 2026



Headline achievements during 2019/20

1.7% more babies being exclusively breastfed at 6-8 weeks

93.2% of young people achieving a positive and sustained destination

More young people living in quintiles 1,2 & 3 with positive destination

Increased qualifications and positive destinations for care experienced young people

17% increase in the number of Kinship Care placements

82% Increase in the number of young people undertaking a Foundation Apprenticeship

34% Drop in the number of youth disturbance calls in Northfield

Progress made during 2019/20

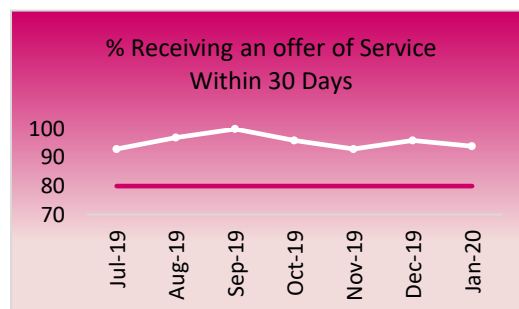
Support to Reach Developmental Milestones

The early years of a child's life are very important for his or her health and development. Developmental milestones offer important clues about a child's developmental health and reaching milestones at the typical ages shows a child is developing as expected. Latest data available at the end of 2019/20 shows, 78.3% of children met their developmental milestones at the time of their 27-30 month review.

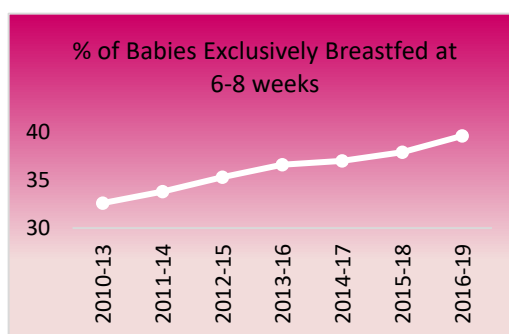


Parents are well supported in Aberdeen to understand the issues which have an impact on the health needs of their children and are able to put that knowledge into practice to help them reach their developmental milestones. However, we recognise that there are times that a family needs some extra support. In 2016 we discovered that some families were waiting as long as 174 days to be referred to specialist services. Since then we have worked with multiple partners to ensure families receive appropriate and timely support. At the time of refreshing our LOIP in 2019 we took this commitment a step further by setting an aim that 80% of families will receive an offer of an appropriate service within 30 days by 2021.

The development of a more effective referral system has achieved rapid improvement and over the past year families have consistently received an offer of service within 30 days at least 93% of the time. This improvement work involved creating a central referral system for all family support, enabling providers to identify and prioritise the families they felt best able to offer support to. Having achieved our aim, this year we aim to decrease the time it takes for our families to receive the service.



An area we seek to support mums with is breastfeeding. There is evidence demonstrating the health benefits of breastfeeding for both mothers and infants and it is recommended that every child should be exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months of life. Aberdeen shows an upward trend in breastfeeding with latest data showing a 1.7% increase from last year to 39.6% of babies being exclusively breastfed at 6-8 weeks. However, this is lower in our priority localities and we are working with local communities to test initiatives that might increase breastfeeding rates. For example, peer support groups to help first time mums to learn how to breastfeed; e-learning supports for dads; and linking in with business across the community to ask them to sign up to breastfeeding friendly Scotland.



Being a parent is one of the most rewarding jobs, but it can also be one of the most difficult. Many parents need support to cope with the change of having a new baby and this can be especially true for young mums. Whilst it is recognised that teenage pregnancy may be a choice and a positive experience, in many situations teenage pregnancy can be linked to adverse childhood experiences. Our improvement work to **reduce teenage pregnancy** tackles the issues which lead to pregnancy in young people, supporting choices and providing opportunities to improve their relationships and sexual health. Latest data at the end of 2019/20 shows that teenage pregnancies continue to reduce in Aberdeen and the rate of teenage pregnancies in under 16 is now lower than the Scottish average.

Young mums are less likely to complete their education, pursue positive post-school destinations (in employment or education), or to attain qualifications in adulthood. We also know from our family nurses that not all pregnant young women are known to their education system which means that they may not receive the support they need to remain. It has been shown that young school age women are considerably more likely to drop out of school if their needs are not met. As part of our work to help **increase the number of pregnant young women who are able to remain in education** during pregnancy we are testing ways to provide online learning opportunities and spaces such as breastfeeding areas/ childcare facilities at school. We are also raising the awareness of pupils, teachers and parents of how they can support pregnant young mums.

Early Intervention for Children’s Mental Health and Wellbeing

The mental health and wellbeing of our children and young people in Aberdeen is of paramount importance. Information from the latest biennial salsus survey (2018) shows that 31% of 13-year olds and 34% of 15-year olds in the city had significant emotional concerns. Further 26% of 13-year olds and 25% of 15-year olds reported peer relationship concerns.

To address the needs of our young people with mental wellbeing concerns we have been working in collaboration with the Pan-Grampian Child and Adolescent Mental Wellbeing group to share intelligence, insight and best practice in delivering interventions which can improve mental health and wellbeing. In response to a deeper understanding of challenges faced by secondary schools, we have invested in a permanent Immunisation Team to release capacity for school nurses to deliver mental health consultations to support children and young people with Tier 1 and 2 mental wellbeing concerns before they escalate. We are developing a more inclusive referral system to ensure that school nurses maximise the number of relevant referrals they receive for children and young people. This involves working with parents, pupils and teachers to increase their confidence to **recognise and respond to young people with mental health concerns**. This has led to the development of the resilience alphabet targeted at both Primary and Secondary Pupils.

We have begun testing interventions in 4 of our schools namely: Bucksburn, Bridge of Don, Hazlehead and Aberdeen Grammar. We’re also testing an app which allows pupils to report how they feel. This will allow us to gather a much more effective picture of the needs of our young people in the area of mental wellbeing

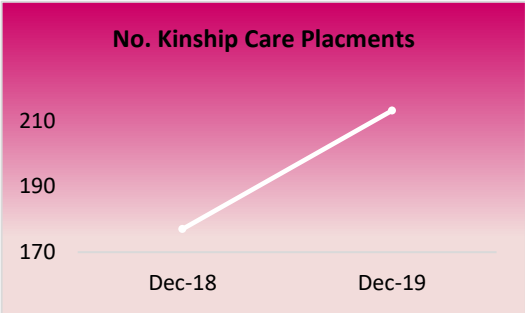


Supporting Improved Outcomes for Care Experienced Children

Care experienced young people face a variety of barriers to achieving positive outcomes. They are more likely to be impacted by adverse childhood experiences which can influence aspects such as attachment, nurture and attainment. However, latest data available at the end of 2019/20 for Aberdeen City shows that the proportion of care experienced young people attaining one or more qualifications at SCQF level 4 has increased from 73.9% to 76% since 2016/17 and sustained positive destinations of the cohort have also increased from 73.9% to 79% during the same time period.

Statistically care experienced young people are more likely to have Additional Support Needs, have disrupted learning, low attendance and ultimately struggle to go on to a positive destination on leaving school. This year one of our improvement projects has been working to provide targeted support for this cohort of young people with a view to **increasing their attendance and reducing exclusions**. Initial data has been very promising, the first young people we worked with saw an overall increase of attendance of 20% and a 10% reduction in exclusions.

Children who grow up within their families have an increased sense of identity and security where they are supported to achieve in all aspects of their wellbeing. It is also very much the case for young people in the care system, being placed within their family reduces the impact of being away from their community network and research tells us these losses impact on mental and physically health and wellbeing. Children being placed with kin at an early stage, minimises the need for unnecessary foster placements which research tells us is not in the best interests of the child. This year our improvement work in this area has resulted in an increase of 17% in **the number of care experienced children and young people who have been able to remain in kinship care**.

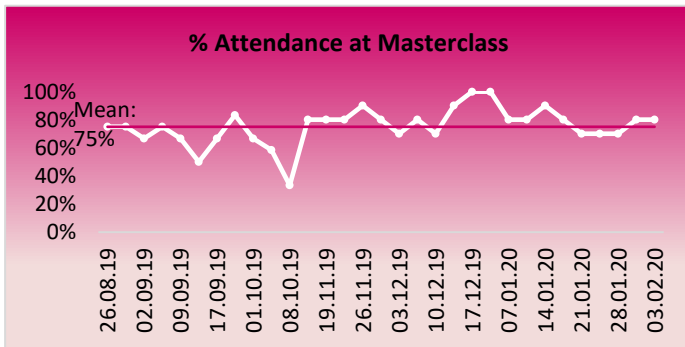


Recording is a crucial part of day to day practice, and for care experienced people, records hold deep meaning and represent their life history and identity. An individual’s decision to access their records is not taken lightly, and each person deserves the sensitive, person centred support they require to access and make sense of their records. We have been looking at ways that we can **support individuals to access their records** and train our staff in the gathering of information about our care experienced young people to ensure they feel their record accurately reflects their experience during and after being in care.

Increased Positive Destinations

We are committed to ensuring that our children have the best possible opportunities to enter education, employment or training on leaving school. To achieve this, we have been seeking to improve our support for our most vulnerable young people, those most likely to leave school without a positive destination. As a result, positive destinations among young people in the city has increased significantly. Latest data available at the end of 2019/20 shows that the percentage of young people achieving a positive and sustained destination has reached 93.2% city wide and 80% for young people living in our 20% most deprived communities.

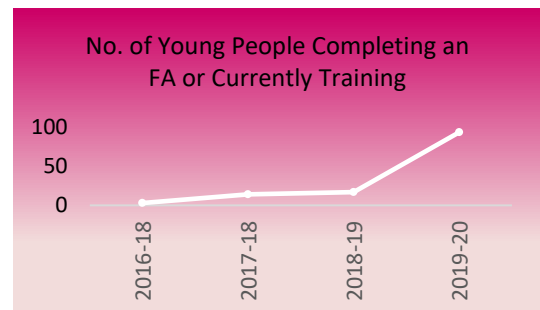
Improving attendance is an area that has a positive impact on achieving positive destinations. In St Machar we have been **working with a group of S2's considered at risk of disengaging from school** to improve their attendance and levels of engagement in school. This has involved providing an intensive masterclass to get young people to reflect on their strengths, weaknesses, aspirations and career choices. The aim has been to help the young people see the value of subject choice and the opportunities available to them on leaving school. The programme has seen attendance at the masterclass increase significantly over time, with the pupils involved indicating that they feel more confident about their career choices and their desire to stay on at school.



We are going to re-engage with those that completed the course this year in S3. Also testing the opportunity to provide these young people with the chance to become career ambassadors for the school and develop other roles to help the pupils gain additional skills for their CV.

An ideal opportunity for young people to secure a positive destination is the foundation apprenticeship. As well as being positive destinations in their own right, foundation apprenticeships also offer a solid basis to find employment on completion. However, uptake across schools can be variable as some communities value foundation apprenticeships more than others and it is not equitably promoted through schools.

This year we have focussed on informing school and parents about the value of **encouraging pupils to take up foundation apprenticeships**. This has had a positive impact and our initial findings have been that the guidance teacher packs promoting them have been well received, those involved reporting that they feel considerably more confident and knowledgeable about their use. Thanks to this, this year we have seen a significant increase in the number of young people undertaking and completing foundation apprenticeships in the city, from 17 to 93.



Progress in Becoming a Child Friendly City

Through the city's ambition to become a Unicef accredited 'Child Friendly City', we have worked increasingly closely with children and young people to provide them with a range of opportunities to directly influence and shape the city they live in and the services that they access.

As a partnership we are fortunate to have a range of staff dedicated to the promotion of children's rights, for example Education Support Officers, a Social Work Children's Rights Service, school nursing teams, school-based Police Officers and a good range of Third Sector supports which empower young people. These key individuals model and champion positive engagement and participation with children, young people and those who are care experienced and help ensure that working practices are challenged to support improvement.

This year, a range of professional learning opportunities on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) has taken place and those directly supporting children and young people now take better account of Children's Rights in daily practice. We plan to extend the offer across the wider workforce by collaborating with UNICEF to develop an accessible professional learning programme which tracks impact on practice.

Council People and Organisational Development have developed a range of opportunities for young people to gain work experience or employment opportunities within the Council and this focus is reflected in The Council Workforce Plan which was approved in June 2019. Apprenticeship routes are now opening up in the Health Service and from a range of other partner agencies.

There is a guaranteed interview scheme in place for young people aged 16 to 24 (and 29 for care experienced young people) applying for Modern Apprenticeship (MA) roles within the Council. These programmes provide the opportunity to undertake a recognised qualification whilst gaining employment experience in an established role in the Early Years, Social Care, Trades, Business Admin, Customer Service, Finance and Housing. An internship for Care Experienced Young People, positively discriminates for those whom we have Corporate Parenting responsibility for.

The changes required to implement a digital curriculum in light of Covid-19 school closures were implemented at pace. All children and young people were invited to help evaluate the impact of the approach and over 4000 responses were received and are being used to help refine approaches.

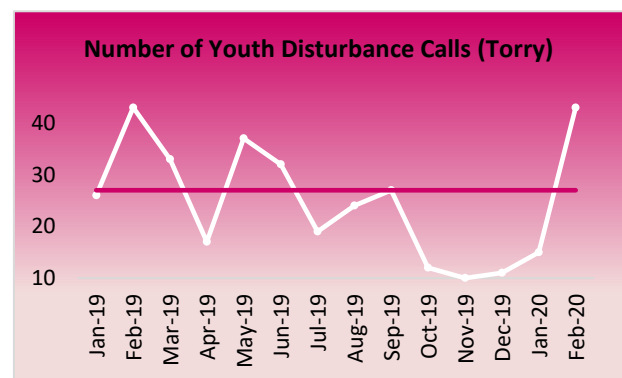
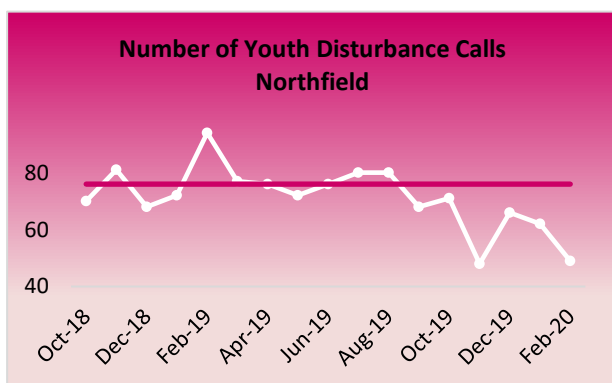
In collaboration with UNICEF, Staff from across the Partnership and Elected Members have taken part in 9 workshops to help raise awareness of children's rights. Elected Members have welcomed children and young people to the Council chamber to help determine how best children can influence the strategic decision making of partners. These workshops have informed the development of our Child Friendly Cities Plan and raised awareness of Children's Rights with decision makers.



Reduction in Youth Disturbance in Priority Localities

There is significant evidence that the younger people enter the criminal justice system, the more likely they are to remain there, and the lower their overall life outcomes will be. This is a complex narrative involving a host of different markers that lead to the point of entry – educational attainment, adverse childhood experiences and experience of poverty for example. It is clear that entering the criminal justice system also poses a significant milestone in the life of a young person, and that keeping them out of the system would be a benefit for both those individuals and public services.

It is on this basis that we are working to reduce anti-social behaviour by providing early intervention support for young people at risk of offending and diverting them to community based activities. This year initial testing in Northfield has progressed, and a shift can be seen in the data relating to the number of calls to the Police regarding anti-social behaviour; calls this year are down by almost 34% from their peak in February last year. We've also seen some initial positive impact in Torry with reduced calls there too, though we have seen a slight rise in recent months which we are investigating.



Improvement priorities 2020/21

Next year our planned improvement programme will be more relevant than ever as we support children and young people in the aftermath of Covid-19. To secure improved outcomes during this time we will want to prioritise improvement activity in the following areas:

- Providing support for mental wellbeing needs of children and young people at all stages through schools, community hubs and online forums
- Continuing to support young people to reach positive destinations, particularly our most vulnerable groups including care experienced young people and those living in priority localities
- Accelerating our Reboot programme to support winter leavers; and piloting an accredited course for young parents to aid them back into education or employment using Google classroom

Connecting Outcomes: Improving Outcomes in Priority Localities

Economy

People

Place

Equity of Outcomes

Young people growing up in areas of deprivation face significant barriers to achieving the same outcomes as their peers and this sets them up for an inequality of opportunity which continues into adulthood and old age.

The challenges priority localities face is multifaceted. Poverty, unemployment, crime, higher drug and alcohol levels among many other's make it difficult for families and children in these communities to have the same opportunities as those in the rest of the city.

Our Approach

Supporting young people living in areas of deprivation requires a whole community approach to give them the best possible start in life. This includes improving safety; working to tackle intergenerational poverty and unemployment; improving the health and wellbeing of residents; and supporting our local schools.



What changes are we currently testing?

Across our themes we have been and continue to test a number of interventions and supports, some of these include:

- Introducing Welcome to Breastfeed throughout local businesses and establishments
- Promoting the availability and eligibility of community pantries
- Working with community members to define community benefit requirements for local developments
- Supporting the educational outcomes care experienced young people in St Machar Academy

What have we achieved?

- An increase in the number of families signed up to the Best Start Pantry
- Improved Substance Misuse curriculum in schools
- A 20% increase in attendance of the Care Experienced young people supported in St Machar

PROSPEROUS PEOPLE Vulnerable Adults



Our Stretch Outcomes

SO9

25% fewer people receiving a first ever Court conviction each year by 2026



SO10

2% fewer people reconvicted within one year of receiving a sentence by 2026



SO11

Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026

70-73

SO12

Rate of harmful levels of alcohol reduced by 4% and drug related deaths lower than Scotland



Headline achievements during 2019/20

8% reduction in first ever court convictions

951 people have achieved their identified personal outcomes through the link working approach

17 individuals referred to the My Way To Employment project to-date.

An average of **188** referrals to the Aberdeen Links Service per month

Increase of **14** participants (**70%**) in the Housing First programme and **ALL** have reported improved health and wellbeing outcomes.

Decrease in drug related deaths and harmful levels of drinking

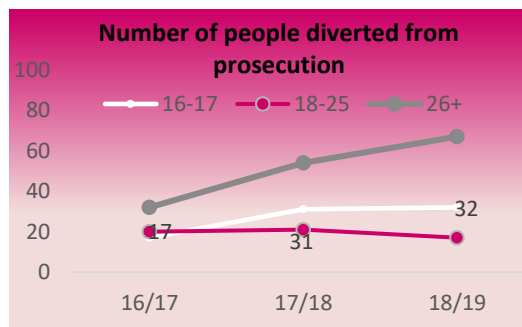
33 people trained in Alcohol brief interventions across new settings

Progress made during 2019/20

Reduction in First Court Convictions for over 18s

Evidence has found that the less contact an individual has with the justice system, the less likely they are to have further involvement in offending. Latest data available at the end of 2019/20 shows that 41 individuals aged under 18 and 743 aged 18+, received a first court conviction; which is a reduction of 8% overall from the baseline figures in the refreshed LOIP.

Diversion from prosecution provides an opportunity to explore and address the factors underlying someone's offending behaviour. This reduces the likelihood of reoffending, as well as related stigma and therefore improves the life chances of people within a community. Through our **Diversion from Prosecution** improvement project, we are raising the awareness of diversionary options and their benefits to increase the likelihood of these being considered (where appropriate). Such steps have seen 136 people referred for diversion and 16 fiscal work orders issued over the year.



Through this project we are extending the multi agency problem solving approach to all 16 and 17 years charged with an offence to reduce the likelihood of reoffending. This approach has seen us focus on key areas for those involved in offending behaviour such as early intervention and diversion by Police and COPFS, where appropriate. These approaches not only benefit the individuals, but also the community resulting from individuals reducing their involvement in offending from an early stage through diversion opportunities, and investing more positively in economic growth and citizenship.

People with Convictions Supported to Get Back on Track

Being employed can contribute to reducing the likelihood of someone reoffending, with the stability and quality of employment being key factors. People with convictions in the community, and those leaving prison, are often unnecessarily excluded from the labour market due to stigma and employer uncertainty. Through the **My Way to Employment (MWTE)** project we are increasing the number of individuals, who are in the community justice system, supported to make progress on the Employability Pipeline. This should result in positive outcomes for individuals, as well as for employers, such as the potential to address skills shortages. So far we have supported 17 individuals through MWTE which sees us half way towards achieving our aim of 30 people by 2021.

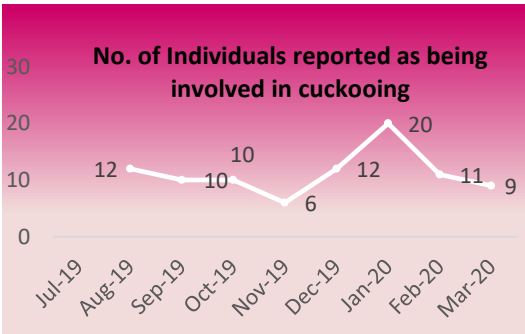
On average, one person a month is being referred to the MWTE project with positive impact on mental health of those referred. We now have a single point of contact in Criminal Justice Social Work Service (CJSWS) and have identified a lead professional to coordinate support for individuals; produced a handbook of project documentation and a flier for clients to explain about the project. Engagement with the Federation of Small Businesses has helped raise awareness and build links with local employers.



As part of our work to support the uptake and retention of people in the Justice System with drug and alcohol related problems in **specialist substance use services**, we have focused on improving co-ordination of care custody nursing and link working at police custody, in particular how prescribing can continue in custody. This year we have recruited a link worker located in Kittybrewster custody to support this co-ordination and to enable us to better understand the unmet needs of people entering the justice system. We're also trialling a clear process to improve case management on liberation from Court using the same systems and to notify ASAP of those liberated where return to HMP was expected.

Multi-Agency Approach to Tackling Cuckooing

'Cuckooing' in Policing terms is described as taking over a person's home by intimidation or other means, including the use of violence, by an Organised Crime Group (OCG) for the purposes of utilising the premises in the course of criminality. The Partnership has introduced a new **Cuckooing** project in Aberdeen, with initial testing in the Seaton, Tillydrone and Kittybrewster areas. The project aims to identify individuals who are 'victims' of cuckooing and then offer them advice and support to help them get out of the situation they have found themselves in. This includes supporting them to protect and maintain their tenancy by referral to appropriate services (eg addictions, mental health and housing services).



Creating partner relationships has been key to the project and although we will continue to develop these, they have already resulted in greater awareness and more efficient management of victim engagement, with engagement rates fluctuating between 45 and 50%. Through raising awareness with the public and partner services and agencies, the introduction of multi agency visits and a case management approach for challenging cases, we've seen between July 2019 (the start of the project) and the end of March 2020, 96 individuals

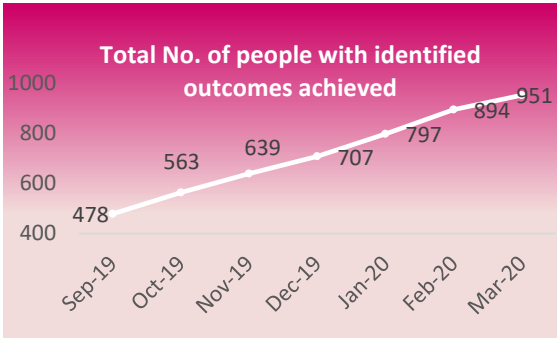
reported as being involved in Cuckooing. Of these, 23 'new' individuals started engaging with the Cuckooing 'service' and 10 were referred to support services for more specialised support. During this period, 119 multi agency visits were carried out.

Support for People to Live a Healthier Life

Healthy life expectancy has decreased in each of the last four years, from 64 years in 2013-15 for males and 68.2 years for females to 61 years for males and 63.4 years for females in 2016-18. Providing support to vulnerable and disadvantaged groups to help them enjoy a longer life in good health is a fundamental priority.

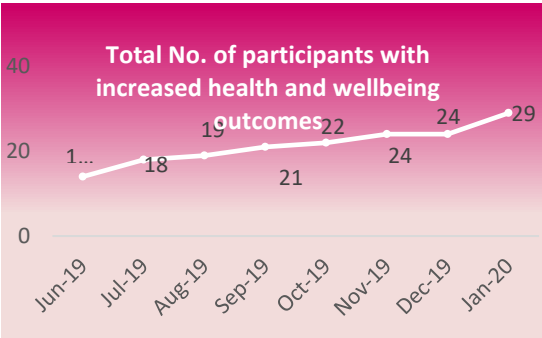
We have been supporting the participation of people with long term conditions to uptake a range of organised and informal activities, working directly with existing groups supporting people with diabetes, such as Living Well with Diabetes Peer Support Group. It is hoped this could encourage citizens to better manage their own long-term condition. Focusing, initially in Torry we have added additional health walk classes in the area, as well as further New First Steps classes to Walk Aberdeen. This approach has led to the increase in the number of health walk participants with long term conditions in Torry, with an average of 12 participants each month between July 2019 and January 2020. We have also increased the number of instructors with specialist GP referral qualifications which has increased the capacity to undertake referrals and we are working to further increase this with a programme to train the next cohort of instructors scheduled for Spring 2020.

The Aberdeen Links Service provides holistic care support to enable an individual to access the appropriate services to help them overcome their identified challenges. The service assists general practice teams to develop new capacities to become more effective in enabling patient self-management. This includes supporting people to live more interconnected lives which support their general wellbeing and sense of belonging. We have been working to extend the link working approach across



primary care to support 3,000 people attain their own identified outcomes by 2021. Through a number of changes made since August 2019 we've seen the total number of people with identified outcomes achieved more than double, an average of 188 referrals to the Aberdeen Links Service per month and a consistent increase in the number of people who attain their own personal outcomes.

Housing First is an innovative national pathfinder programme which ensures a holistic and joined up approach to improve the health and wellbeing in Housing First programme participants, who have a history of cyclical homelessness, chaotic mental health and substance misuse often entwined with repeat offending and custodial periods. Working collectively we aim to reduce their level of chaos and complexity and ultimately support each individual to maintain their own wellbeing and tenancy and reduce mental health and offending episodes.

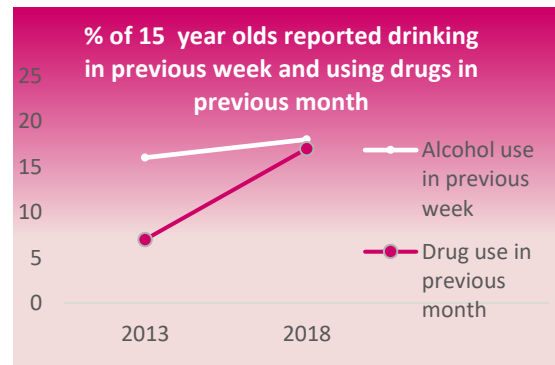


From July 2019 to January 2020 there has been an increase of 14 participants (70%) in the programme with a total of 29 as of January, all of whom have reported improved health and wellbeing outcomes. This work has seen a 70% increase in both the number of participants on the programme and the number of participants with increased health and wellbeing outcomes. There has also been a 7 day reduction in the average wait to move into home by the local authority to 69 days.

Reduction in drug related deaths and harmful levels of alcohol

Latest data regarding drugs and alcohol has shown that in 2018 there were 52 drug related deaths: (36 males and 16 females). While slightly lower than the number of deaths in 2017 (54), the rate of drug-related deaths in 2018 was 24.1 per 100,000 population compared to 22.8 in Scotland. Similarly, in 2015-18 an estimated 26% of the adult population was drinking to hazardous/harmful levels. This is down from 29% in 2014-17 but higher than the rate for Scotland of 25%.

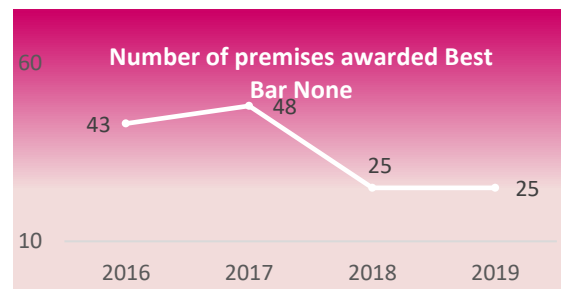
We are taking early intervention approach to alcohol and drugs through our work to develop a progressive, **cohesive and relevant substance misuse curriculum** for children and young people and **improving pathways** to educational support for care experienced children. Latest data at the end of 2019/20 shows 18% of 15 year-olds reported drinking alcohol in the previous week and 17% of 15 year-olds reported using drugs in the previous month. 43% of 15 year-olds reported they thought it was 'ok' for someone of their age to 'try taking cannabis to see what it's like'. Our improvement work aims to see a reduction in these figures going forward.



Although we are focussed on prevention we also need to minimise the harm to people for which drugs has become a problem. Our work to reduce the incidence of fatal drug overdose sees us testing innovative developments and **increasing the distribution of naloxone**. This year we started testing an outreach approach for the issue of naloxone with Police in Torry, targeting rough sleepers. A media campaign is planned to raise awareness of naloxone and enlist people to get involved.

To reduce harmful levels of drinking we have widened the setting for **Alcohol Brief Interventions (ABIs)** beyond the traditional settings of primary care, accident and emergency and maternity services. Since the project starting in December 2019 we have trained an additional 33 people to provide ABIs and are working with link workers, criminal justice social work and police custody health care teams to adopt the approach.

Best Bar None (BBN) was launched in Aberdeen in 2006 to work with the licensed trade to create a safer and more attractive environment. Aberdeen currently has an estimated 274 on-sales premises eligible to apply for BBN status and we are focussed on raising awareness of the scheme and increasing the number of licences premises across the city awarded **Best Bar None** status. This year we again saw 25 premises awarded BBN, with some new venues, both in the city centre and outwith awarded. Of the 25 awards, 17 were Gold Awards and 8 were Silver Awards.



Improvement priorities 2020/21

Covid-19 has undoubtedly impacted on the people of Aberdeen, particularly the most vulnerable, although the precise implications are yet to be fully understood. Many of the areas impacted by Covid-19 align to the improvement aims in the LOIP, but these areas need to be continued at pace:

- Providing measures to support mental wellbeing, such as the creation of a Lived Experience network or panel, increasing the awareness and availability of mental health support for adults and preventing suicide
- Supporting and sustaining the increased level of volunteering seen through Covid-19, by continuing to promote and provide opportunities for volunteering through the development of an adult volunteering scheme
- Increasing support for victims of domestic abuse and improving and providing quicker access to counselling services
- Providing a tailored approach to overcome personal challenges to improve employment prospects and ability to maintain tenancies
- Providing innovative developments to reduce the incidence of fatal drug overdoses

Connecting Outcomes: Changing Lives- Breaking the Cycle

Economy

People

Place

Changing Lives

Involvement in the justice can define a person’s life and impact negatively on them, their family and the wider community. A single intervention may have some impact, but we recognise that the barriers to enable a person to succeed outwith the justice system are multi faceted and the interventions to enable success also needs to be.

Our Approach

Through our cross cutting improvement projects we are putting in place changes that are connected and providing a whole person approach with a focus on early intervention.

What we’ve achieved?

- **136** referrals for diversion from prosecution during 2019/20
- **17** individuals referred to the My Way To Employment project to-date.
- Increase of **14** participants (**70%**) in the Housing First programme and **ALL** have reported improved health and wellbeing outcomes
- An average of **188** referrals to the Aberdeen Links Service per month

23



Outcomes for Martin

Martin – not his real name – left HMP Grampian in January and was supported by the My Way to Employment project. To prepare for his release, Martin gained work experience at the Mission Café on Union Street, Peterhead, where he helped out for a year as part of a day-release programme. Martin had battled against drug addiction over the course of several years and was suffering from leg ulcers almost certainly caused by intravenous drug use. Despite suffering from depression, Martin managed to reduce his methadone dose from daily collection on his release from prison to monthly collection. His ankle problems have healed, he has moved into permanent housing and has found work at a café.

Martin said, “I’m really enjoying it. The people are friendly, it’s great speaking to the customers – and the food at the café is good. I’m really pleased with the help I’ve had.” Mrs Ferguson, his Work Coach, said, “Martin has been on a journey and is a success story due to his hard work. He claims Employment & Support Allowance and, through the Permitted Work Scheme, can work up to 16 hours a week without losing that. He received help from Fair Start Scotland and his employer has been keen to help. Many ex-offenders who gain work, like Martin, get into a routine and build up confidence and become independent and – in the best way – they no longer need our help.”

PROSPEROUS PLACE



Our Stretch Outcomes

SO13

By 2026, no one in Aberdeen will go without food due to poverty



SO14

Addressing climate change by 2026 by reducing carbon emissions



SO15

38% of people walking and 5% of people cycling as main mode of travel by 2026



Headline achievements during 2019/20

2.5% Reduction in people worried about food

3% reduction in people who have had to skip a meal

52 families registered with the Best Start and Smile Pantry in Torry

36 volunteers support our 3 community pantries

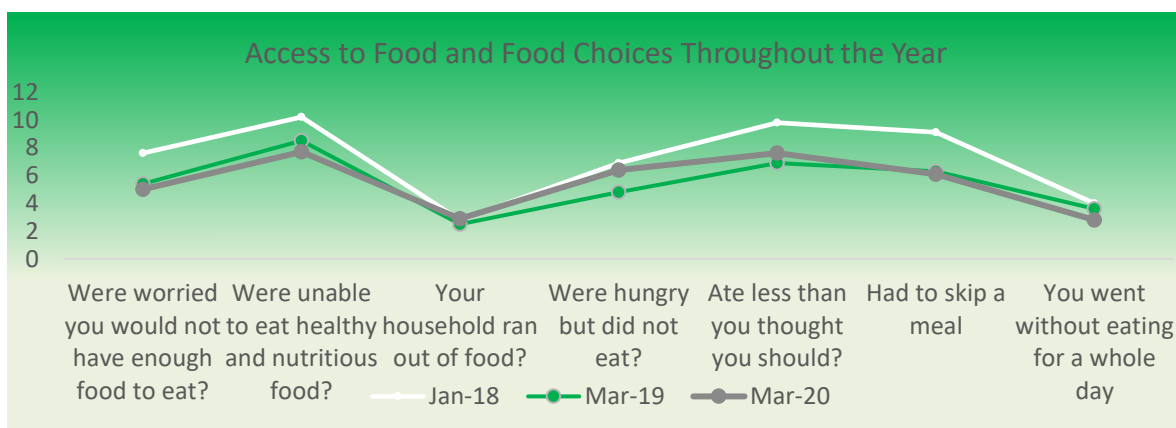
453 members of our 3 community pantries

Increase in the number of workplaces committed to growing food

Progress made during 2019/20

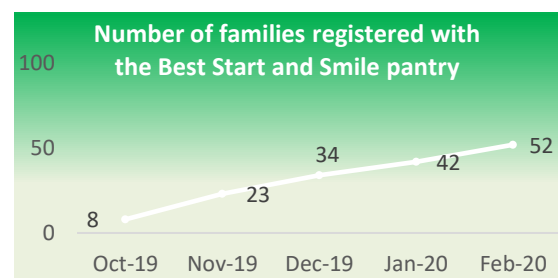
Reduction in Food Insecurity

A families ability to nourish themselves is a key factor in healthy life expectancy and helping people affected by household food insecurity has and continues to be a key focus for the Partnership. Through a number of initiatives, such as free school meals and supporting communities to grow their own food, we have seen improvements since 2018 in all except one area through the City Voice data regarding access to food and food choices as below. Most notably, since 2018 there has been a 2.5% reduction in the number of respondents worried they would not have enough food to eat has been achieved as well as a 3% reduction in respondents who had to skip a meal.



Through our **community food growing project** work is taking place with regards to advancing food growing in schools and communities. Across the City many communities, friends' groups and gardening groups are making use of Aberdeen's plentiful green space to create their own growing spaces. Schools are now more involved in community growing than ever before through project Craster. However, we aspire to build on the good work and further advance food growing in schools and communities and develop workplaces undertaking food growing. We held an awareness raising event for workplaces on 7 October 2019. Following the event, 3 organisations (50% of our target) have signed up to workplace growing so far (ACC, NHS and Scottish Fire and Rescue) and 21 expressions of interest in participating in food growing activities. We've also published a promotional video by NHS Grampian as a signed up workplace to promote workplace growing and sustainability.

Community Pantries are an alternative model to food banks that we have been supporting to provide access to food in a dignified way. While food banks address an immediate need, pantries provide an alternative for local communities by making fresh and healthy food affordable and available. Last year we worked with CFine to launch the Best Start and Smile Pantry (BSPP) and the CFine Community Food Pantry in Torry, building on the success of the Woodside Pantry. The BSSP helps parents provide healthy food for their children and members who are entitled to Healthy Start vouchers and Best Start food cards. It also promotes free dental treatment during pregnancy and up to 12 months after birth and highlights the importance of good oral health through a variety of methods. At the end of 2019/20 52 families had registered with the pantry. Across the city's three pantries, we have 36 volunteers and 453 members.

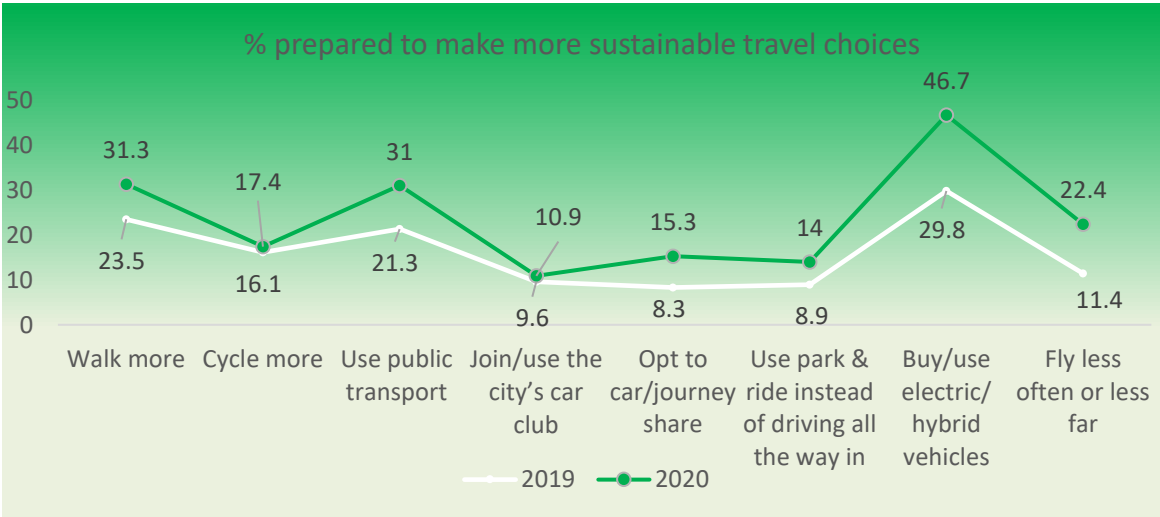


Support for Active Travel

Active travel is good for the environment, helps address climate change and a shift from car dominated transport is needed for population health. There are many national and local strategies to promote and support active travel efforts with considerable effort already happening or underway. Through our improvement work we are seeking to improve access to facilities and equipment for walking and cycling and raise public awareness of the benefits and opportunities for active travel in the area.



Disappointingly, the latest data available from the Scottish Household Survey shows that the percentage of people who cycle as their main mode of travel reduced from 2.4% in 2017 to 1% in 2018. Although, our local City Voice survey does indicate an increase in the percentage of respondents prepared to make more sustainable travel choices.



Improvement priorities 2020/21

Covid-19 has dramatically increased the demand for food parcels across the City and we are as committed as ever to ensuring no one in Aberdeen goes without food as a result of poverty. One of the few positive impacts of Covid-19 has been the reduction in pollution which we would hope to have a lasting impact. Over the next year we will:

- Continue to ensure people in food insecurity have access to food
- Signpost to welfare support, employability, volunteering services
- Continue to promote active and sustainable travel
- Support communities to prepare Community Resilience Plans for the future

WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES



Community Outcomes

Locality Partnerships



Funding for Communities



Empowered Communities



Community Learning & Development



Headline achievements during 2019/20

Locality Partnership Annual Reports published

£1.6m Fairer Aberdeen Fund used to fund 42 community initiatives

£10,000 allocated to community projects through participatory budgeting

1 successful participation request and **30** expressions of interest for asset transfer

Review of CLD Plan well received by CPA Community Engagement Group

Locality Partnership Annual Reports Published

Our three Locality Planning Partnerships have reported progress made in pursuing their local priorities in their most recent Annual Reports for 2018/19. The reports reflect the range of activities being taken forward in collaboration with the Community Planning Aberdeen Outcome Improvement Groups, also highlighted in this report, as well as local actions and initiatives. Information on the three locality partnerships and copies of their annual reports are available at www.communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/priority-localities/



**Torry
Locality**



**Middlefield, Mastrick,
Cummings Park, Northfield
and Heathryfold**



**Seaton, Woodside
and Tillydrone**

Funding for Community Projects

The Fairer Aberdeen Fund is allocated by Aberdeen City Council and aims to tackle poverty and deprivation within the city, support partners to work together to achieve outcomes and to help more residents access and sustain employment opportunities. The funding supports initiatives and services work in priority areas and across the City with vulnerable groups and individuals. In 2019/20 £1.6m was made available to support this work. Overall a total of 34,235 people were involved in or benefitted from the 42 funded initiatives within the main programme, as well as a Community Support Fund supporting community engagement; an Employment Support Fund to support costs associated with getting people back into work, and a Participatory Budgeting event in Froghall, Powis and Sunnybank. Over 9,272 of the people involved were under 16 years old. 949 volunteers contributed 144,868 volunteer hours valued at over £2.2m more than doubling the value of the Fund.



The Fairer Aberdeen Fund has contributed £30,000 to UDECIDE participatory budgeting (PB) events across priority localities. PB activities were organised by the Locality Partnerships in Northfield and Torry, involving residents and

partners and supported by community staff from Aberdeen City Council. Northfield held a community event, whilst Torry sought participation online and via voting 'roadshows' at 11 venues across the community. PB in Woodside, Tillydrone & Seaton has been deferred to 2019/20.

Twenty two local volunteers were involved in running the events across Northfield and Torry, with Northfield PB (NPB) focusing on increasing the involvement of the young people in the area and delivering the project jointly with pupils from Northfield Academy. Almost 1,250 local residents participated in deciding which projects should be funded. Nineteen local groups submitted bids with 16 successful projects sharing the £20,000 allocated.

In Northfield, projects supported include a weekly Northfield youth group, outdoor activities for Syrian New Scots who have moved to the area as a result of civil war, Streetsport Gazebo, food provision, confidence building workshops for 2 primary 7 classes, the boogie at the bar project; the development of a basketball club for players to continue participation in basketball outside of school and provide

development opportunities in leadership. The projects supported in Torry include the Tullos Garden's Outdoor Activity Programme, developing an edible garden at St Fittick's, Torry Summer Fun trip for families organised by Tullos Community Centre, breakfast, lunch and foodbank services at Jesus House, Walker Road Netball Team, a new Torry support group for diabetics and an arts project in local primary schools run by VictoriArt

Empowered Communities

This year the Partnership's Community Engagement Group, chaired by the Chair of the Civic Forum and Community Council Forum, has led the development of a range of materials to raise awareness and [support communities](#) to be able to engage with asset transfer and participation request process. This includes guidance materials, an information handbook, training for Council staff and identification of community champions.

During 2019/2020 one formal participation request to the city was determined. The request was from Tillydrone Flat Association and proposed that the Tilly Flat did not relocate to the new Tillydrone community campus and remained in its current accommodation. Following submission of requested information this request was granted. Also, 30 expressions of interest in community asset transfers were received from 18 different groups. Two groups have been granted a lease of ground in Torry; one looking to develop a shelter at the Torry Battery for those interested in watching the Dolphins and other wildlife in the area; and a growing group who want to convert a former depot site into a garden and education centre.

Community Learning and Development





The first review of the Community Learning Development (CLD) Plan was presented to the Community Engagement Outcome Group and was well received by Community Partners. It was noted that the CLD Funded projects now report quarterly on the CLD plan and LOIP outcomes. The 11 Partnership Forums were issued with revised guidance and continue to develop work in their local communities using the improvement methodology. During 2019/20 the youth work team supported 186 children and young people to gain an accredited award. A number of notable achievements have been made.

The Adult learning team worked with 266 learners delivering 2,456 Learner hours covering Literacies, ESOL, ESOL for new Syrian Scots, ICT and Health and wellbeing. 23 adult learners achieved an adult learning qualification in 2019 and 12 completed an Adult Achievement Award. Among those learners who have completed an SQA are those on Unpaid Work contracts who attend the Willodale Centre. The Adult Learning team continued to support traveller families who live at the Clinterty travellers' site. The Healthy Minds team have provided support and learning opportunities with adults in recovery of poor mental health. The groups range from guitar, craft, cooking, badminton, men's groups to hillwalking and walking for health groups in the city. This year 1 learner has achieved an Adult Achievement Award and 12 learners have achieved the John Muir Award through the Branching Out course run in partnership with the Countryside Ranger Service. The Family Learning team have provided home support and Family learning opportunities to 10 primary schools in Aberdeen. Bespoke family learning opportunities were delivered through Schools PEF funding. An improvement project was set up to trial Adult Achievement awards and 8 adults were successful. 16 Families achieved the John Muir Family Award.

The Localities teams supported community members to become involved in the 3 locality partnerships and help develop locality projects such as community/wildlife gardens, Cruyff court, Living Streets, Boogie in the Bar. They have also supported the Management committees who organise the activities in the Learning Centres across the city. They have worked with partners such as AFCT and Sport Aberdeen to provide Food and fun for vulnerable families during the school holidays.




Who's Who

CPA Board and Management Group Provides strategic leadership and direction.




<p>Chair CPA Board</p>  <p>Councillor Jennifer Laing, ACC</p>	<p>Vice-Chair of CPA Board</p>  <p>Campbell Thomson, Police Scotland</p>	<p>Partners involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • NHS Grampian • Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership • Police Scotland • SFRS • University of Aberdeen • Skills Development Scotland • North East Scotland College • Nestrans • Active Aberdeen Partnership • Scottish Enterprise • Civic Forum • ACVO
<p>Chair Management Group</p>  <p>Angela Scott, ACC</p>	<p>Vice-Chair of Management Group</p>  <p>Graeme Duncan, Police Scotland</p>	

Outcome Improvement Groups




Integrated Children's Services Board Ensuring children are the future.

<p>Chair</p>  <p>Rob Polkinghorne, ACC</p>	<p>Vice Chair</p>  <p>Graeme Simpson, ACC</p>	<p>Lead Contact</p>  <p>James Simpson, ACC</p>	<p>Partners involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • ACVO • Children's Hearings Scotland • NHS Grampian • Police Scotland • Scottish Children's Reporters Association • Scottish Fire and Rescue • ACHSCP • Active Aberdeen Partnership • Skills Development Scotland
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Resilient, Included & Supported Group Helping people live independently.

<p>Chair</p>  <p>Sandra Ross, ACHSCP</p>	<p>Vice Chair</p>  <p>Derek McGowan, ACC</p>	<p>Lead Contact</p>  <p>Gail Woodcock, ACHSCP</p>	<p>Partners involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership • Aberdeen City Council • ACVO • NHS Grampian • Scottish Fire and Rescue Service • Police Scotland • Alcohol and Drugs Partnership • Active Aberdeen Partnership
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Community Justice Group Improving outcomes for people involved in the justice system.

<p>Chair</p>  <p>Derek McGowan, ACC</p>	<p>Vice Chair</p>  <p>David Paterson, Police Scotland</p>	<p>Lead Contact</p>  <p>Val Vertigans, ACC</p>	<p>Partners involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • Health and Social Care Partnership • Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal • NHS Grampian • Police Scotland • Scottish Courts and Tribunals • Scottish Fire and Rescue • Scottish Prison Service • Skills Development Scotland • ACVO • Alcohol and Drugs Partnership • Civic Forum • Active Aberdeen Partnership • Community Justice Scotland
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Alcohol and Drugs Partnership Tackling issues arising from substance misuse.

<p>Chair</p>  <p>Richard Craig, Police Scotland</p>	<p>Vice Chair</p>  <p>Alex Purdie, SFRS</p>	<p>Lead Contact</p>  <p>Simon Rayner, ADP</p>	<p>Partners involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police Scotland • Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership • Aberdeen City Council • NHS Grampian • ACVO • Scottish Fire and Rescue Service • Scottish Prison Service • Active Aberdeen Partnership • Alcohol and Drugs Partnership • Aberdeen in Recovery • Civic Forum • Aberdeen in Recovery
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Sustainable City Group Creating a safe, attractive, welcoming environment.

<p>Chair</p>  <p>Jillian Evans, Public Health, NHS Grampian</p>	<p>Vice Chair</p>  <p>Gale Beattie, ACC</p>	<p>Lead Contact</p>  <p>Jagui Bell, NHS Grampian</p>	<p>Partners involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • Active Aberdeen Partnership • ACVO • CFINE • Civic Forum • NHS Grampian • Police Scotland • Scottish Fire and Rescue Service • Sport Aberdeen • Nestrans • SEPA • Scottish Natural Heritage
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Aberdeen Prospers Responsible for improving our economy.

<p>Vice Chair</p>  <p>Allison Carrington, SDS</p>	<p>Vice Chair</p>  <p>Duncan Abernethy, NESCOL</p>	<p>Lead Contact</p>  <p>Ishbel Greig, ACC</p>	<p>Partners involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aberdeen City Council • Skills Development Scotland • North East Scotland College • Nestrans • Robert Gordon University • Scottish Enterprise • Civic Forum • ACVO • DWP
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Community Engagement Group Bringing the community perspective.

<p>Chair</p>  <p>Jonathan Smith, Civic Forum</p>	<p>Partners involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottish Fire and Rescue Service • Aberdeen City Council • Police Scotland • NHS Grampian • ACVO • Active Aberdeen Partnership • Civic Forum • Health and Social Care Integration Joint Board • Community Council Forum • Locality Partnerships
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Civic Forum Giving the community a voice.

Community Planning Board: Jonathan Smith	Community Planning Management Group: Lavina Massie	Community Engagement Group: Jonathan Smith (Vice Chair)	Fairer Aberdeen: Jonathan Smith, Arthur Forbes	Sustainable City Group: Arthur Forbes
Aberdeen Prospers: Jonathan Smith, Lavina Massie	City Centre Masterplan Reference Group: Arthur Forbes, Lavina Massie	Resilient, Included and Supported: Norma Grant	Community Justice: Faith-Jason Robertson-Foy, David Henderson	Alcohol and Drugs Partnership: Fay Robertson

Locality Partnerships Responsible for delivering our three Locality Plans.

<p>Torry</p>  <p>Jo Mackie, Locality Manager</p>	<p>Tillydrone, Seaton, Woodside</p>  <p>Paul Tytler, Locality Manager</p>	<p>Northfield, Mastrick, Middlefield Heathryfold, Cummings Park</p>  <p>Martin Smith, Locality Manager</p>	<p>Partners involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Representatives • Community Council Forum • Elected Members • School Headteachers • Youth Council • Aberdeen City Council • Police Scotland • NHS Grampian • ACVO • Active Aberdeen Partnership • Scottish Fire and Rescue Service • Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership
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Community Planning Team Provides strategic support to Partnership colleagues.

<p>Community Planning Manager</p>  <p>Michelle Cochlan, ACC</p>	<p>Improvement Programme Manager</p>  <p>Allison Swanson, ACC</p>	<p>Performance and Improvement Officer</p>  <p>James Simpson, ACC</p>	<p>Research Officer</p>  <p>Anne McAteer, ACC</p>
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For all enquiries in relation to this report, or about Community Planning Aberdeen, please contact the Team by emailing: communityplanning@aberdeencity.gov.uk or visit www.communityplanningaberdeen.com

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Public Protection Committee
DATE	28th April 2021
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Adult Protection Committee Biennial Report 2018-20
REPORT NUMBER	ACHSCP/21/089
DIRECTOR	Sandra MacLeod, IJB Chief Officer
CHIEF OFFICER	Claire Wilson, Social Work Lead
REPORT AUTHOR	Carol Simmers, Service Manager
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1, 1.2

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to share the Aberdeen Adult Protection Committee (APC) Convener's Biennial Report for 2018-20, as published, with the Public Protection Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 note and endorse the information contained within this report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The [Adult Support & Protection \(Scotland\) Act 2007](#) stipulates that the (independent) convener of an Adult Protection Committee must prepare a general report on the exercise of the Committee's functions during the preceding two years. The Biennial Report must be submitted to the ASP statutory partners, the Care Inspectorate, Scottish Ministers, the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland, and the Public Guardian.
- 3.2 The APC is committed to facilitating and overseeing an inclusive, responsive and effective approach to the support and protection of adults at risk of harm. It includes representation from a range of professional backgrounds and organisations including Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership, NHS Grampian, Police Scotland, Scottish Ambulance Service, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and ACVO (Aberdeen Council of Voluntary Organisations), the local third sector interface. The APC will welcome a new independent Convener, Adrian Watson, from the beginning of April. Adrian is taking over the role from Sheena Gault, to whom the APC records its thanks for her work over the last two years. (Adrian will also Chair the Child Protection Committee.)
- 3.3 Adult support and protection activities are, by their very nature, often complex and challenging. The Biennial Report attempts to highlight the scale of activities

and initiatives over the two-year period, the collaborations between partners, the co-ordination between professionals and the positive impacts on those who are or who have been at risk of harm.

3.4 Some key messages from the Biennial Report include:

- The period saw an increase in adult support and protection referrals largely due to increased levels of awareness across sectors and services;
- Care at home, care homes and 3rd sector organisations are the main source of referrals, however relationships continue to be built within these services to prevent unnecessary escalation of lower-level reports;
- The largest age group for referrals was in relation to individuals aged 65+;
- Across all referrals, the most common type of harm reported is physical harm;
- Almost 32% of referrals met the statutory Adult Support and Protection '3-point test' (Adults who (a) are unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests, (b) are at risk of harm, and (c) because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected); and
- Harm is most likely to occur within a "homely" setting - almost 47% of harm occurs within a person's own home and this rises to 76% when referrals from care homes are included.

3.5 Improvement objectives for the two-year period for 2020 - 2022 can be found on page 35 of the Biennial Report (at Appendix 1). These include:

- continuing to improve our multi agency policies, procedures and practice guidance;
- working to ensure that we are capturing the views of those we are working with, to inform service development and make sure their voice is heard and rights respected; and
- Strengthening performance and quality assurance arrangements, alongside systems to ensure that learning from this can be embedded.

Work is progressing on all these areas, including the development and improvement of a range of policies, procedures and practice guidance, both at a Grampian and local level, looking at ways of ensuring that the views of clients are sought and heard, and implementing a framework for ongoing quality assurance.

3.6 Having recently paused its work, the national Adult Support and Protection (ASP) Multi-Agency Inspection Programme Partners Group have advised that the joint inspection programme will resume in April 2021 for the period to March 2022. Aberdeen is to be the focus of one of the inspections.

The inspection will focus on two quality indicators:

- Key processes, including policies and procedures, screening processes, ASP in practice, liaison, and collaboration with partners, how the adult is protected and appropriate training in ASP and is it sufficient; and
- Leadership, including governance, ethos of integrated and collaborative working, local processes, and timescales.

Work is underway to develop the multi-agency self-evaluation which will underpin the inspection and drive our improvement work going forwards.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Strategic Risk	None for this report		
Compliance	None for this report		
Operational	None for this report		
Financial	None for this report		
Reputational	None for this report		
Environment / Climate	None for this report		

7. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	The proposals in this report have no impact on the Council Delivery Plan
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The report aligns closely with Stretch Outcome 11 of the LOIP
UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes	The report sets out the Adult Protection Committee Biennial Report 2018-20, which fulfils the

	requirements placed upon the Council by the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007.
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8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	Full impact assessment not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

10. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Biennial Report 2018-20

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Aberdeen City Adult Protection Committee

Biennial Report 2018-2020

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Convenor's Foreword

As the independent convenor of Aberdeen City Adult Protection Committee (APC), it is my privilege to submit our sixth Biennial Report in terms of Section 46 of the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 which reflects the work of the Committee during the period 1 April 2018 - to 31 March 2020.

I am very proud to serve as the current Convenor of the APC and I am committed to overseeing a professional and effective multi-agency response to prevent or reduce harm and protect our local citizens. I recognise the scale and complexity of the adult support and protection challenges that we face but I am confident that we have the required commitment, expertise and leadership across our sectors and services to ensure that our interventions and working practices are timely, appropriate and capable of delivering positive, person-centred outcomes.

These are of course challenging times for everyone. Sadly, it is likely to be the case that the impact of lockdown restrictions will be greater on those individuals whose wellbeing and resilience are less robust. It is also likely that the vulnerable members of our local communities will be at greater risk of harm. As difficult as these past months have been, it is heartening to see or hear of the many different collaborations, activities and initiatives that have been put in place by statutory organisations, third sector organisations, local communities and informal networks of friends and neighbours. If nothing else, this current adversity has enabled the spirit and resilience of our city to shine through.

Those positive attributes are also clearly evident throughout this report. I welcome the range and impact of the many multi-agency activities and interventions that are being undertaken to raise awareness of adult support and protection and reduce the incidence and impact of harm.

Some key messages from this report include:

- There has been an increase in adult support and protection referrals largely due to increased levels of awareness across sectors and services.
- Care at home, care homes and 3rd sector organisations are the main source of referrals however we continue to build relationships within these services to prevent unnecessary escalation of lower-level reports.
- The largest age group for referrals was in relation to individuals aged 65+.
- Across all referrals, the most common type of harm reported is physical harm.

- ▶ Almost 32% of referrals met the ASP 3-point test
- ▶ Harm is most likely to occur within a “homely” setting, almost 47% of harm occurs within a person’s own home and this rises to 76% when referrals from care homes are included

There is clearly still much to do to address the attitudes, behaviours and circumstances in our city specifically but also in our society more widely that can lead to others being harmed. We need to remain vigilant and work together to reduce the instances of harm that can be so detrimental to others. Given the information that comes to me and the APC on a regular basis however, I am confident that public awareness levels of adult support and protection matters will continue to rise and that harm to others will not only be seen to be unacceptable but that the substance of our preventative or early interventions will have a positive impact on those who are either at risk of harm or already suffering harm.

Finally, I cannot conclude this foreword without taking the time to pay tribute to those colleagues from the Adult Protection Unit and others across the statutory, third and independent sectors whose endeavours have helped make Aberdeen a safer place for many people. While it remains concerning that there may always be some individuals who are willing to take advantage and exploit or cause harm to others, I am confident that the commitment and capabilities of our multi-agency workforce will continue to support and protect our local citizens and communities.

Sheena Gault

Convenor
Aberdeen City Adult Protection Committee

Section 1.

Introduction

1.1 The Aberdeen City Adult Protection Committee (APC) is committed to facilitating and overseeing an inclusive, responsive and effective approach to the support and protection of adults at risk of harm. It is chaired by an independent convener and has representatives from a range of professional backgrounds and organisations including Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership, NHS Grampian, Police Scotland, Scottish Ambulance Service, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and ACVO, the local third sector interface.

Keeping adults in Aberdeen safe from harm is a key priority for the APC and its partner organisations. As we understand more about the nature and type of harm, there is an ever-increasing need for our response to individuals at risk of harm to be timely, appropriate and effective. We acknowledge that we need to continue to work in and with our local communities to make sure that all of our citizens, without exception, feel safe and included.

Our ambitions and intentions in respect of adults at risk of harm are firmly aligned with the vision for the **Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP)** which envisages Aberdeen as a place where people can prosper and where everyone feels safe, supported and protected from harm. We fully acknowledge that this can only be achieved by all of our partners collaborating strongly and building positive relationships with adults at risk, their families and carers.

1.2 The 2016-18 Biennial Report was published after a Joint Inspection of the city's Older Adult services in 2015/16 by the Care Inspectorate and Healthcare Improvement Scotland that highlighted fifteen areas for improvement which have merged into eight key priorities (see right) for the Grampian Adult Protection Working Group to progress.

- ▶ Systematically measure outcomes for adults at risk of harm and their unpaid carers.
- ▶ Key processes for adult support and protection are as clear as possible so stakeholders understand them.
- ▶ Clear, unambiguous timescales for the completion of work related to each phase of adult protection, thereby preventing delays.
- ▶ Chronologies, risk assessments and risk management plans are implemented to keep adults at risk of harm safe.
- ▶ Required partners should attend adult protection case conferences, particularly police and health.
- ▶ Ensure staff across the partnership have the appropriate skills and knowledge to fulfil duties under ASP.
- ▶ Reduce the impact of financial harm in Grampian.
- ▶ Develop and implement clear pathways for capacity assessments.

Only one priority, the one that relates to 'key processes', has yet to be fully completed. This was to commence at the end of 2019 as we were working first on ongoing improvements in other priority areas (including initial referral discussions, risk assessment and chronologies) that would likely impact on the content of the Grampian Interagency policy and procedures and require it to be amended. The group remained confident that this work was achievable within the biennial reporting period until the pandemic intervened.



This remains a key priority for the partners and work is already progressing to drive this priority to completion.

In addition, the 2016-18 report also outlined an Improvement Programme that covered a wide range of themes and topics. Our progress in relation to this programme is referenced throughout this report. It has been undertaken in a measured way that takes account of areas of greatest need and availability of resources to ensure that positive improvements are embedded into our working practices and activities and sustained thereafter.

- 1.4** Given that the Covid-19 pandemic only briefly overlapped with the end of this reporting period there is limited reference in this report to the partnership's response to the adult support and protection implications of the emerging public health emergency and the imposition of lockdown restrictions. It is certainly worth acknowledging though that there has been a significant human cost in terms of physical and mental wellbeing that has manifested itself in different ways and which will for some people, impact on them for a further, as yet undefined, period of time.
- 1.5** Adult support and protection activities are, by their very nature, often complex and challenging. This report attempts to highlight the scale of our activities and initiatives over the past two years, the collaborations between partners, the co-ordination between professionals and the positive impacts on those who are or who have been at risk of harm. This report is a testimony to the commitment and professionalism of our colleagues across all of the partner agencies and the difference that they make to the lives of others.

Section 2.

Data Analysis

2.1 The collation and analysis of relevant data helps provide a confidence in our local ASP activities and an assurance to those individuals or groups who have governance and oversight responsibilities. We are further developing a data dashboard to monitor and analyse all referrals and outcomes as understanding emerging or continuing trends is an integral element of providing effective interventions to those who may be at risk of harm.

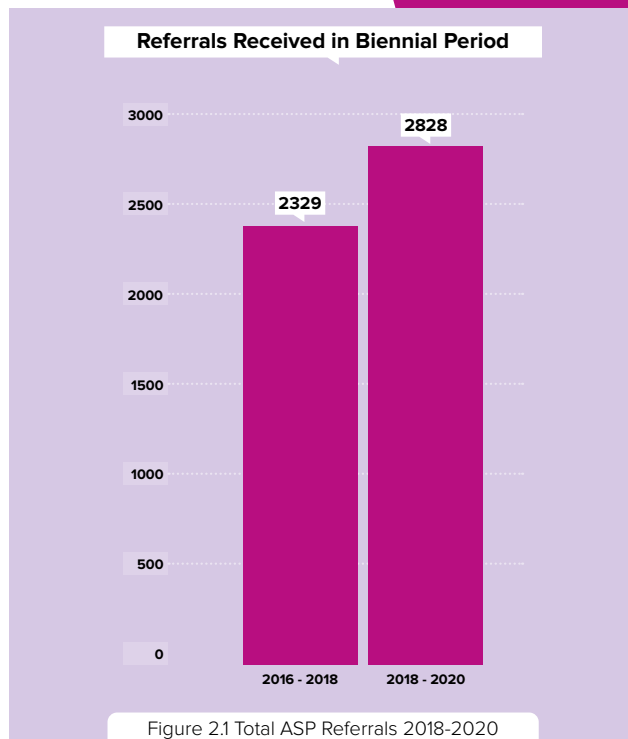
2.2 Referrals

Our local data (Figure 2.1) shows that for the current reporting period, **2828** adult support and protection referrals were received by the Adult Protection Unit. This was an increase of **499 (17.5%)** from the previous reporting period when **2329** referrals were submitted. The data suggests that our local interventions have continued to raise awareness and recognition of our referral process.

2.3 Source of Referrals

The number of referrals from Other Organisations increased by **29.9% (326)**. This category includes care at home, care homes and 3rd sector organisations. This increase is a significant one and suggests that identifying the appropriateness of referrals raised following awareness of self-neglect and hoarding alongside building relationships around large-scale investigations has improved early trigger actions for referrals that helps to avoid unnecessary escalation for lower level adult protection reports. Social Work referrals reduced by **6.3% (17)** as difficulties are better identified and resolved at an earlier stage thereby adopting the least intrusive means of resolving a single incident or an accumulation of lower level concerns.

Although referrals from Police Scotland increased, the increase **39% (11)** was not significant due to the volume of welfare concerns submitted where adults are not assessed to be at risk



of harm if support is provided instead. We have seen an increase in referrals from NHS Grampian **16% (41)** from the previous reporting period primarily due to increased engagement with health colleagues and improved quality of referrals.

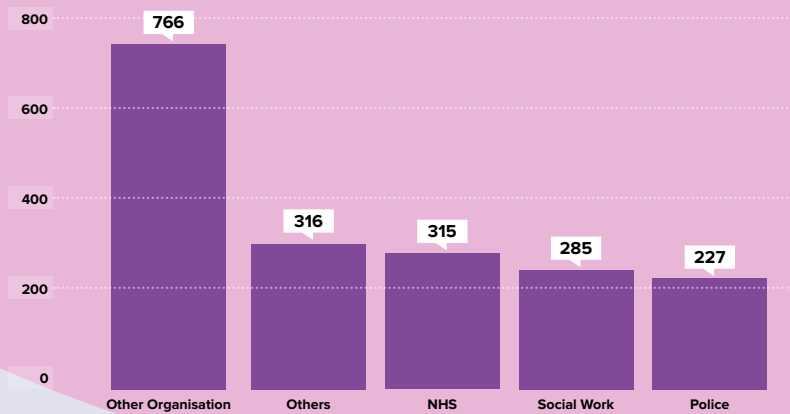
To make the redeployment of council staff more efficient during lockdown the opportunity to complete appropriate adult protection training and awareness raising was offered to employees dealing with public enquiries or requests for help via the helpline.

The number of referrals received (**187**) in this reporting period suggests that having confidence in recognising harm and the procedure for reporting suspicions and abuse is both valuable and effective.



It was an aim of the APU during 2018-2020 to broaden the knowledge of ASP across a range of agencies and as can be seen (Figure 2.3) there has been an increase of **42% (11)** referrals from the SFRS compared to the previous reporting period. It is felt that this increase is potentially due to an increased focus on fire casualty prevention. This has been achieved through promoting and prioritising home safety visits to those most at risk of fire, ensuring that homes are more secure and in return adults are less vulnerable.

Top 5 Referrers 2016 - 2018



Top 5 Referrers 2018 - 2020

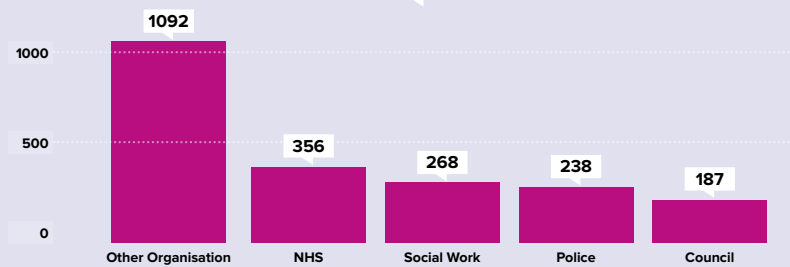


Figure 2.3 Comparison of Top 5 Referrers

The data shows an **18% (34)** drop in carer referrals from the last biennial reporting period. While we are aware that the Aberdeen City Carers Strategy (2018-2021) and improved partnership working with VSA Carers Centre has improved access to early assessment and care support, further work will be done to ensure that all carer data relates to unpaid carers.

There are relatively low number of referrals from adults at risk themselves (**31**) and from members of the public (**21**) reporting concerns. While we raise awareness to enable staff within services to recognise and report abuse there is evidence to suggest that we need to continue do more to increase our efforts to raise public awareness to enable adults at risk to recognise and protect themselves from abuse.

There are good examples of local authorities running mailshots to households to raise awareness of abuse and what can be done about it and we need to better educate the public about how to recognise and respond to abusive and harmful situations and where to go for help.

2.4 Client Group

Figures relating to category of harm remain consistent with previous reporting periods. The largest age group for referrals was in relation to individuals aged 65+ which accounted for **915 referrals (32.4% of the total)**. This was an increase of **232** since the last reporting period.

A total of **16.7% (473)** of all referrals received related to people aged 65+ with dementia and learning disability also noted as a main category in **367 (13%)** of referrals. The percentage of referrals for those in the 65+ bracket compared to ASP referrals for the last biennial period has increased by **25%** of total referrals. Older adults are at particular risk not only because they live with multiple health conditions but also because of the impact of ageing and their potential reliance on others for care and support.

2.5 Location

As with the previous biennial reporting period, the 2018-2020 statistics confirm that the location of harm was frequently noted as the adult's own home or a care home and then sheltered housing and supported accommodation. In total, **1,504 (46.8%)** of all harm reported occurred within the adult's own home. This rises to **76%** when referrals from Care Homes are added (**671**) signalling that harm is much more likely to occur within a 'homely setting' than anywhere else.

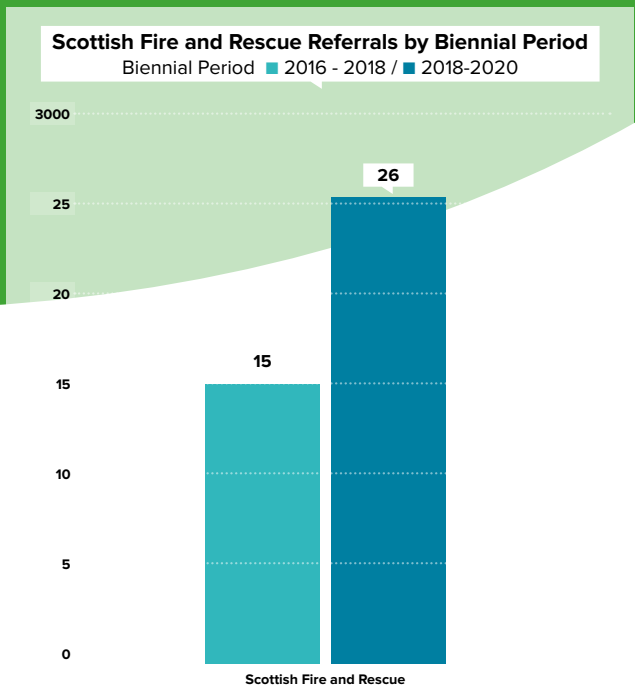


Figure 2.3 Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Referrals

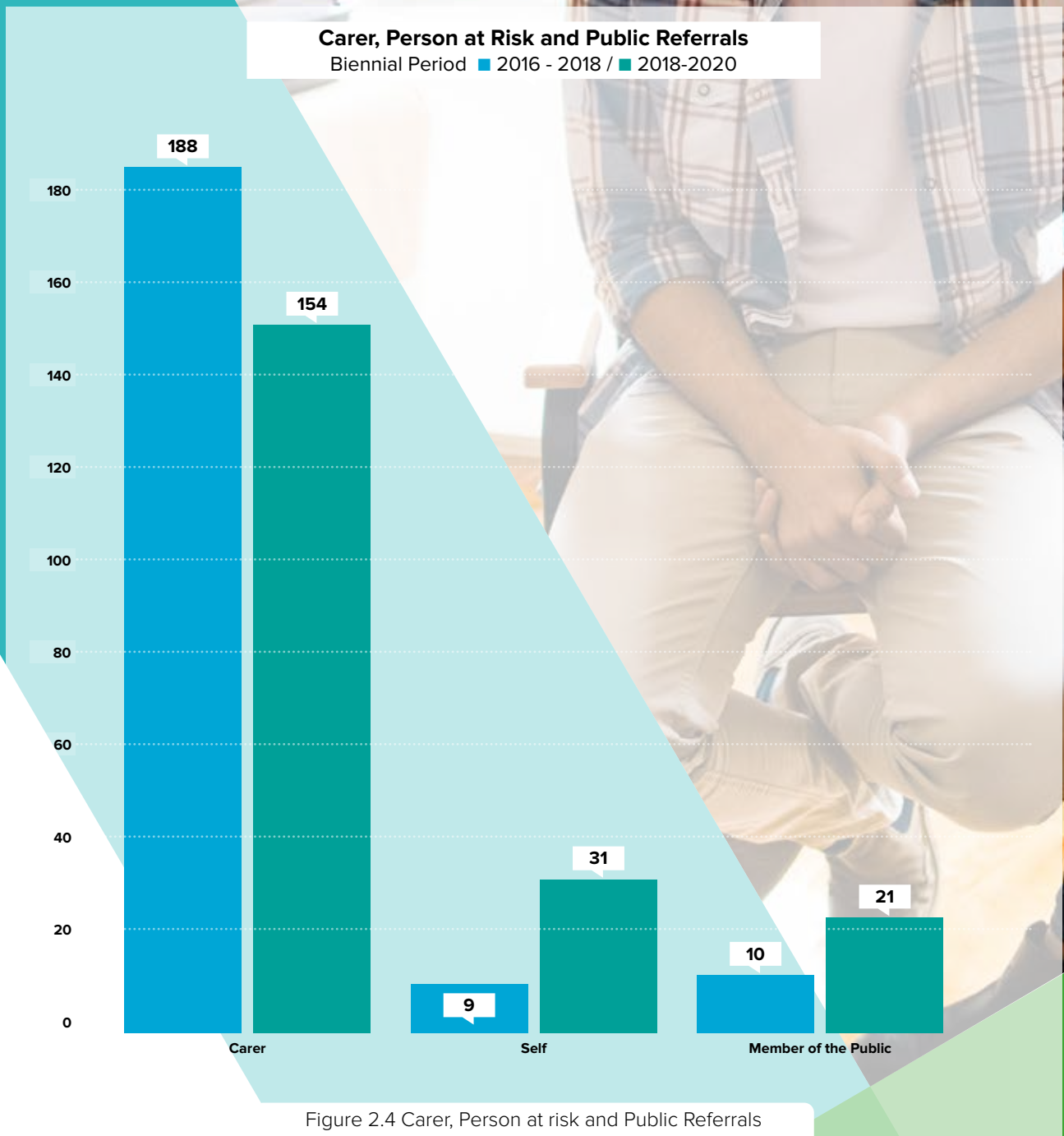


Figure 2.4 Carer, Person at risk and Public Referrals

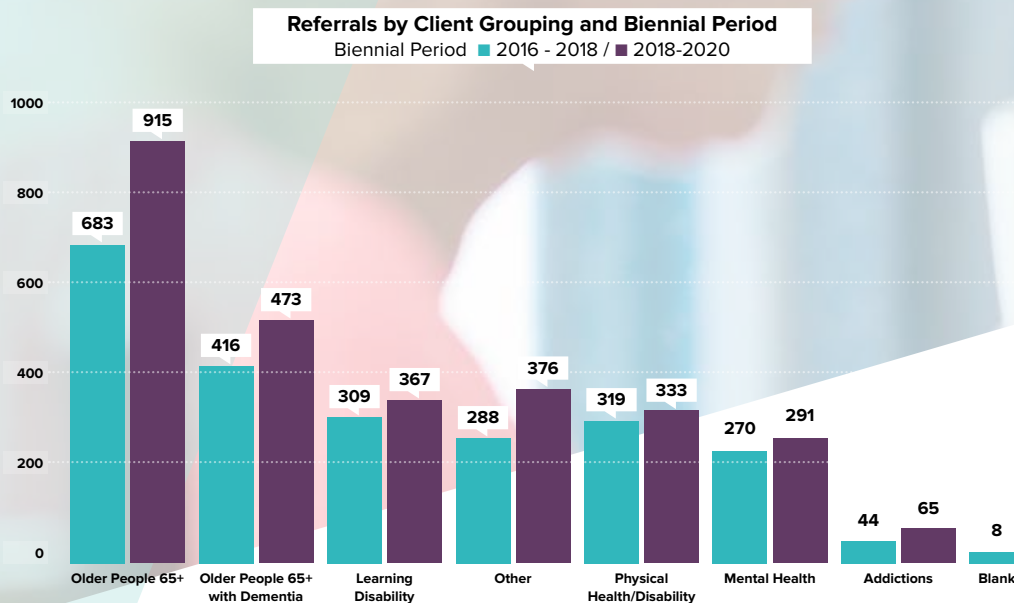


Figure 2.5 Category of Adult at Risk of Harm

The number of incidents of harm in a care home setting rose from **527** in 2016-2018 to **671** in 2018-2020. Between these two periods the incidence of harm in a care home increased by **21%**. A detailed analysis of these figures has concluded that the majority of incidents relate to harm between care home residents that were at the low end of severity and did not relate to harm from staff members or other third parties.

2.6 Type of Harm

In this reporting period the main risk factors for adults is physical harm which amounts to **36.2% (1024)** of the referrals compared with **651** the previous reporting period with financial harm being the second highest reported category (**439**) and then psychological harm (**311**).

Self-neglect and neglect increased by **24.3%** and **11.1%** respectively compared to 2016-2018 whilst 'other' decreased by **70% (93)** as the specific criteria required for this category of harm was re-emphasised. Self-neglect and hoarding training led to the increase in self-neglect referrals as council officers and key partners learned to navigate the tension between human rights and duty of care.

2.6 Gender split.

The gender split has not differed significantly over the last two biennial periods with slightly more females than males being the subject of ASP referrals; in 2016-2018 women accounted for **52.4%** of referrals and **53.7%** in 2018-2020. While both men and women may experience incidents of violence and exploitation and become victims of human trafficking, women tend to experience more domestic abuse requiring adult support and protection intervention.

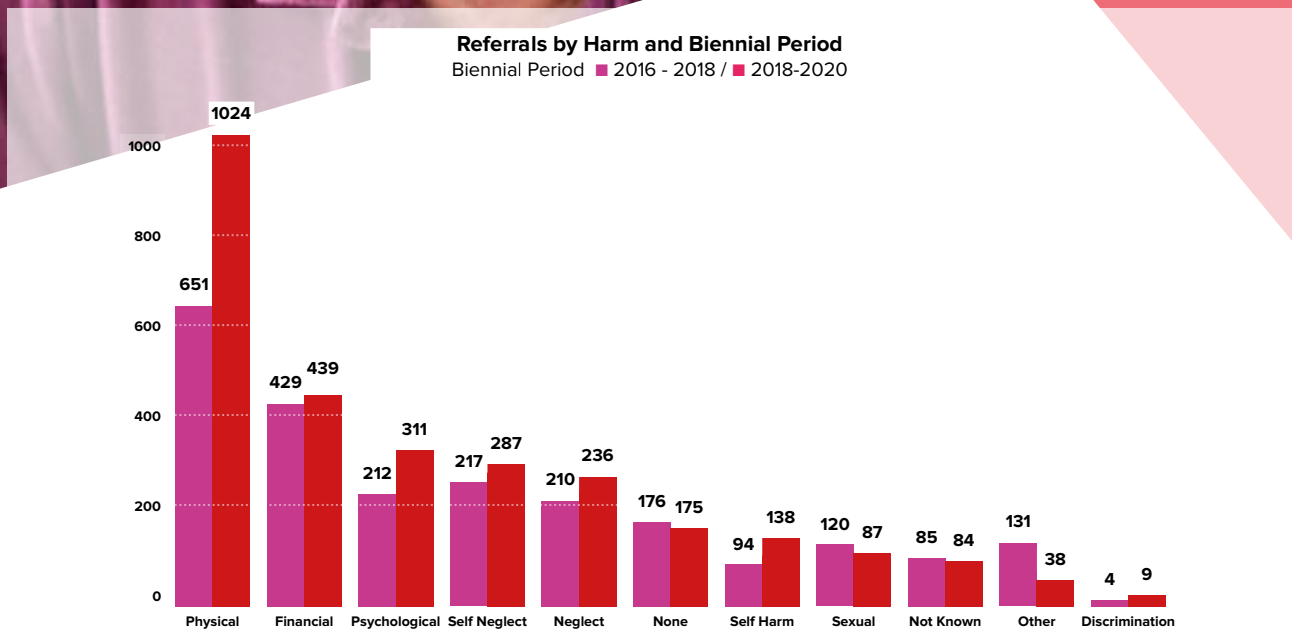


Figure 2.6 Type of Harm

2.7 Outcomes

2.7.1 During this reporting period the most prevailing outcome fell under the heading 'No Further Action' (NFA). Of the **2828** referrals received, **52.75% (1492)** of referrals required no further action under adult support and protection arrangements for one of the following reasons: concerns/risks were not evidenced or substantiated; advice or information was deemed to be sufficient; adequate services are in place or the person was already subject to an adult protection investigation.

2.7.2 A further **12.97% (367)** of cases resulted in further action out with the ASP process which could for example be a package of care or support being put in place from an appropriate team or service. Of the total referrals received, **31.71%** met the three-point test and proceeded under Adult Support and Protection legislation.

Also, **2.54% (72)** of referrals received required no further action under ASP but further intervention from another service or team.

2.7.3 During the reporting period, **661** ASP investigations (**23.4% of total referrals**) were completed compared to **647 (27.8%)** in 2016-2018. This percentage decrease can be explained by a process change where we moved to a screening stage and formal investigation only if the adult meets or is likely to meet the ASP three-point test. The largest number of investigations per client group was for the **Older People (65+)** category. In the previous reporting period **31.2% (202)** accounted for more than a third of investigations but this increased to **33.3% (220)** in 2018-20. There are clearly Older People-specific risk factors that account for this but they are also, in absolute terms, the biggest client group with whom we work.

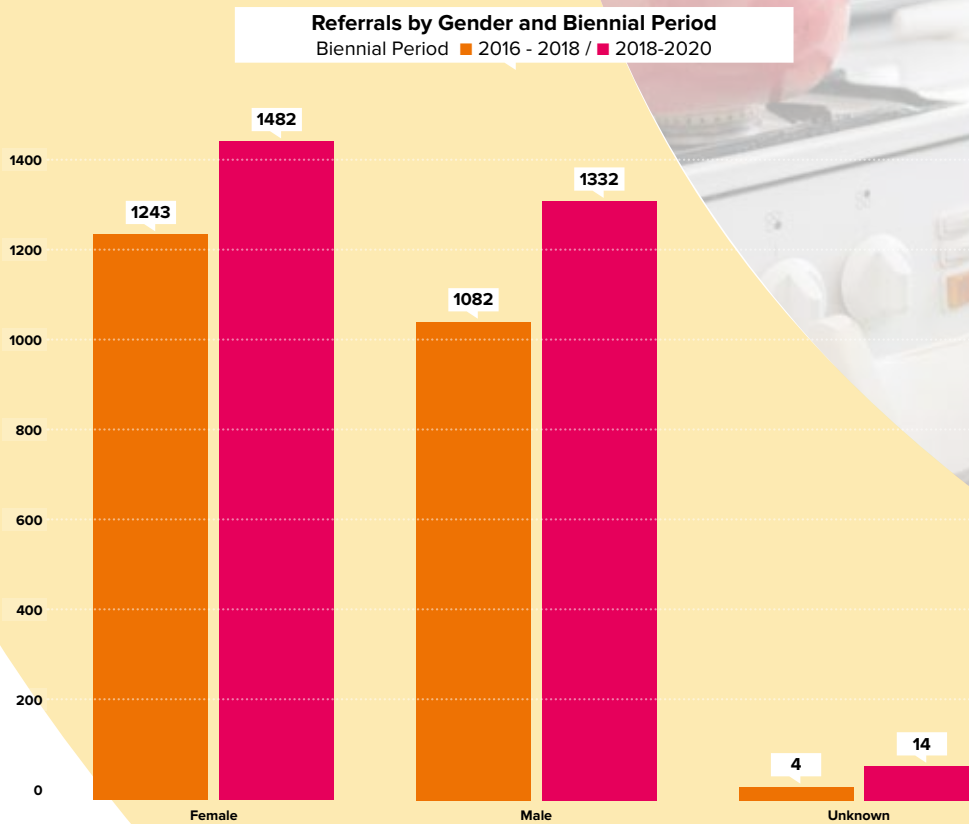
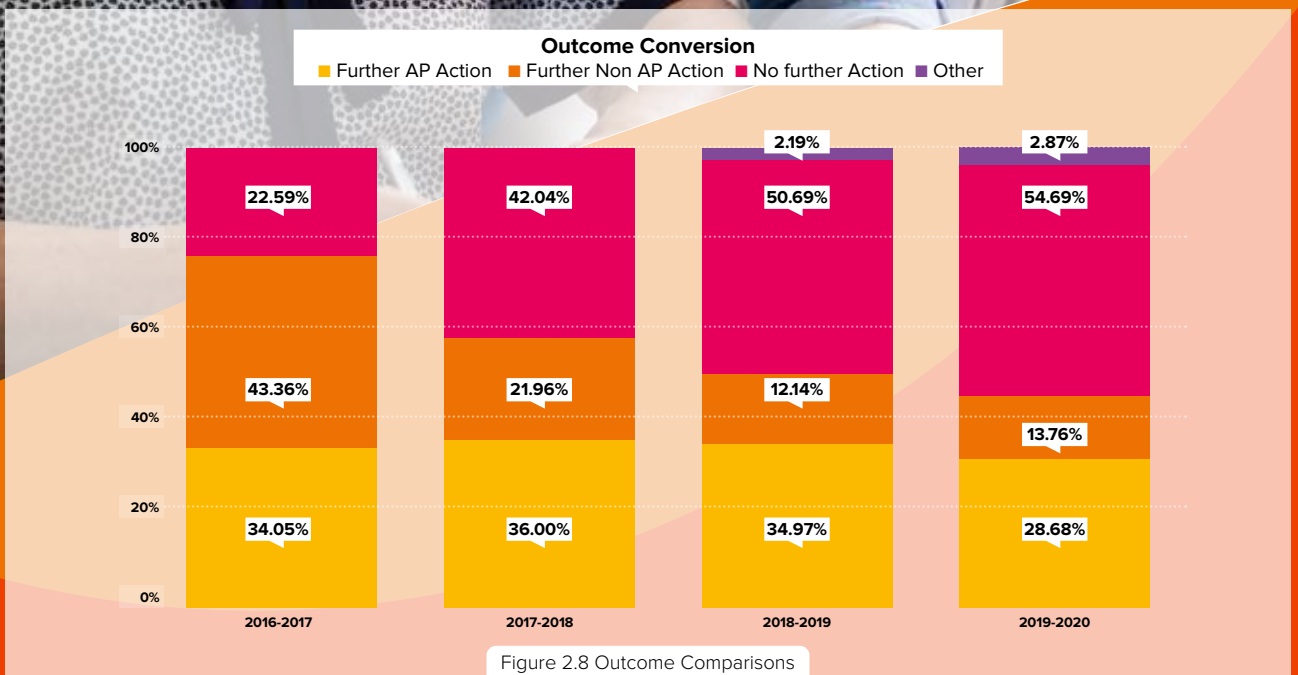


Figure 2.7 Gender Split

Similarly, for the learning disability client group there was a **42% (37)** increase in investigations from the last reporting period.

Investigations for the mental health category shows a different picture with the amount of investigations having reduced by **29% (32)**; further analysis is required to help us understand the possible reasons for this significant reduction.

2.7.4 There were a total of **74** Case Conferences over this biennial reporting period compared to **44** in 2016-2018. This could be reflective of the development of staff skill and confidence in this area identifying earlier that an adult's safety and well-being is being compromised and that key partners who are adult protection professionals have a responsibility to contribute to the most appropriate outcome. It is important that the subject of the case conference is encouraged to participate. If this is not possible their views will be sought and represented at the meetings.



Where there is any delay in arranging a Case Conference, a protection plan will be drawn up so appropriate and timely measures can be put in place. Council Officers continue to maintain regular contact with existing ASP clients and biweekly reports can be sent to the Unit by individual team members to centralise concerns with adult engagement or protection activities and support the Council Officer to manage any safeguarding risks.

2.7.5 The screening process is at the heart of adult support and protection with regards to the three-point test and whether an adult at risk requires to become part of the ASP process. The majority of referrals are screened within timescales although there has been an increase in the number and percentage which are not. 420 (17.4%) for this reporting period compared with 217 (10.3%) previously.

Our aim will always be for as much screening to be done as possible within the stipulated timescales however we also acknowledge that some cases are so complex that they will always require more time to work their way through the procedural sequence.

Investigations by Biennial Period
 Biennial Period ■ 2016 - 2018 / ■ 2018-2020

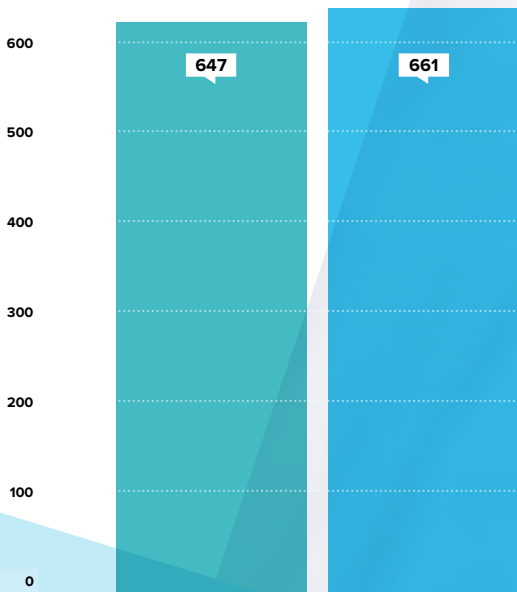


Figure 2.9 Investigations by Biennial Period

The APU maintains a report for referrals that are overdue and the reasons for this which include convening an Initial Referral Discussion (IRD) or arranging a Professionals Meeting but any immediate action taken to safeguard the adult would also be discussed to mitigate any risk.

2.8 Large Scale Investigations

Over the course of the reporting period there have been 6 Large-Scale Investigations (LSIs). These occur in circumstances where there are multiple adults at risk, normally in a managed care setting. The main concerns in all 6 LSIs revolved around lack of basic care and communication. As per the Grampian Protocol for large scale investigations, we adopted a multi-agency partnership response to concerns around the safety of residents in care homes and home care settings. In relation to LSIs the Adult Protection Unit delivered additional training to all care establishments and independent providers who were under large scale investigation tailored to meet the needs of the individual providers or as part of other identified training requirements.

Investigations by Client Group and Biennial Period
 Biennial Period ■ 2016 - 2018 / ■ 2018-2020

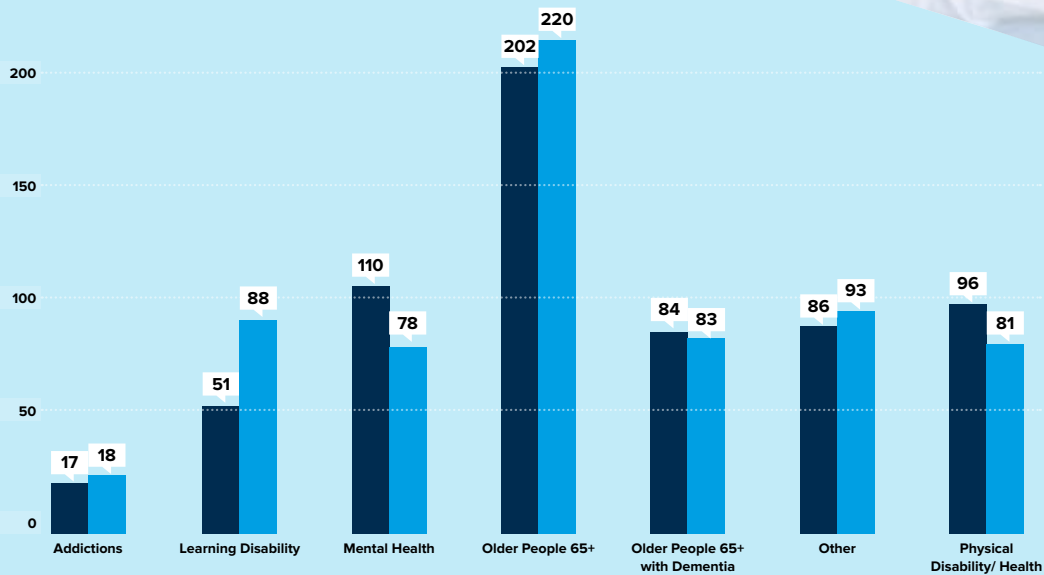
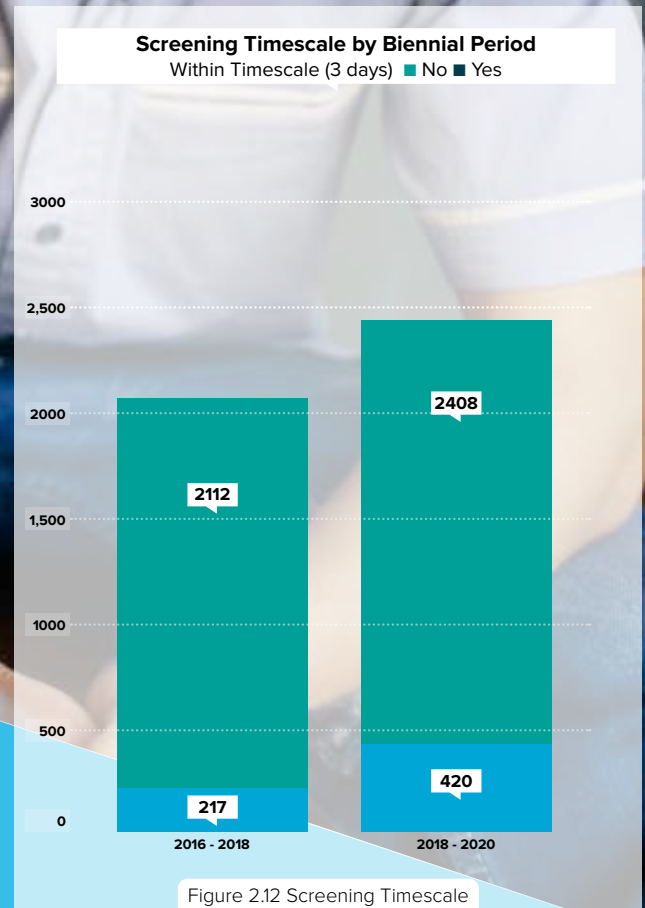
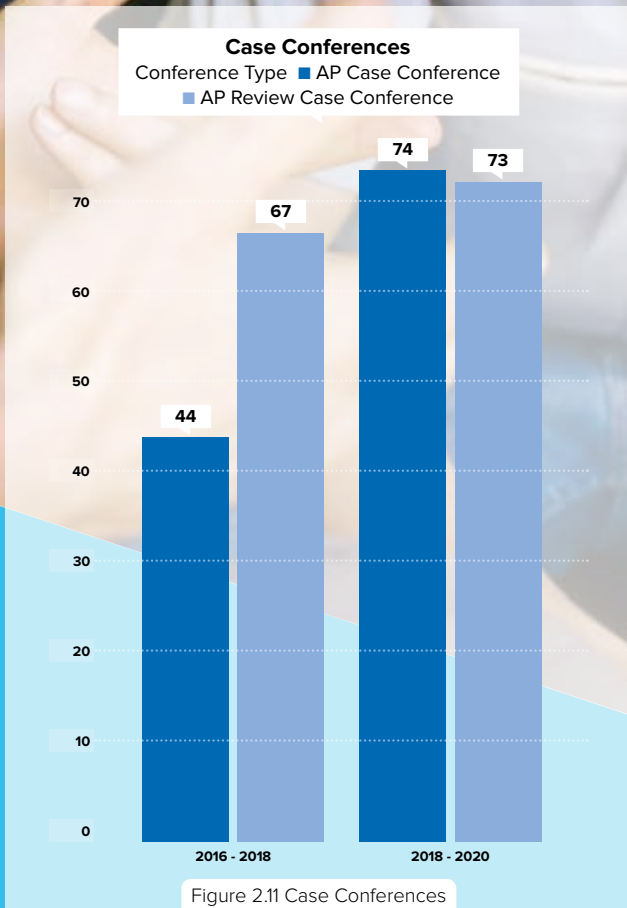


Figure 2.10 Investigations by Client Group and Biennial Period



Section 3.

Legal Requirements

Section 3 Legal Requirements

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 seeks to protect adults at risk of being harmed by requiring key partner agencies and other stakeholders to work together to support and protect adults who are unable to safeguard themselves, their property and their rights.

The Adult Protection Committee has a strong awareness of its statutory role and responsibilities and is committed to fulfilling these as effectively as possible in the best interests of adults who are at risk of harm and our wider communities. The Aberdeen City Executive Group for Public Protection provides additional support, leadership and oversight to these critical activities.

3.1 Protection of adults at risk

Empowering individuals is fundamental to the support and protection of adults at risk of harm however we acknowledge that we can often operate in a risk-averse environment where the desirability of empowering others has sometimes to be balanced against the necessity of reducing the risk of harm.

3.1.1 The APC's Risk Register is a means of providing assurance that in a complex, multi-agency system, the risk of harm to adults is being appropriately assessed with control measures in place to mitigate risks. As such, this document is discussed and updated at every APC meeting and also submitted to the Executive Group for Public Protection

It is important that the risk register is recognised as a comprehensive and effective tool for managing both emerging and established risks and that appropriate mitigations and the impact of these are accurately and consistently recorded. Our primary aim is to prevent harm happening to adults in the first place by enabling more widespread awareness of adult protection matters across services, sectors and communities. Where an adult is at risk of harm or is being harmed, our aim is to facilitate as early an intervention as possible in order to safeguard the adult from potential or further harm.

The risk register is a key underpinning document of the recently refreshed Adult Protection Improvement Programme whereby those risk entries whose mitigations have been identified as not successful or only partially successful have been reframed to form key objectives for the APC and its partners to take forward.

3.1.2 The Grampian Inter-agency Policy and Procedures for the support and protection of adults at risk is the primary ASP reference document for all statutory, third and independent sector organisations across the Grampian area and is reviewed every three years. It is an important framework for recognising and responding to situations where adults may be at risk of harm as it is crucial that all key adult support and protection processes and procedures are sufficiently clear and robust with well-defined timescales for all relevant stages. The planned review of this policy and accompanying procedures was suspended due to the Covid-19 pandemic and will resume in November 2020.

3.1.3 During this reporting period the Grampian Working Group used the Care Inspectorate's 'Practice Guide to Chronologies' to reflect on how well chronologies were being used by local practitioners and managers to inform the assessment and management of risk.

We identified a need to improve the production of chronologies as workers tended to view this task as an administrative burden. The Adult Protection Unit (APU) delivered chronology training for one hundred and thirty-two Council Officers to help them understand the significance of an adult's past events and how to derive appropriate linkage and learning from this. There are plans to arrange further training for fifty more practitioners before rolling out the programme across the whole of adult social work services.

It is inevitable that some adults will be identified as being exposed to a greater degree of risk than others and while our risk assessment process allows for the appropriate identification of risk exposure, the actions taken to respond to or greatly reduce high profile risks have not always been evident. A new risk matrix which more easily demonstrates that significant risk of harm has been reduced has been introduced across Grampian.

3.1.4 The Herbert Protocol is a national scheme for adults who go missing from their home and it was rolled out across the North East of Scotland by Police Scotland and other key partners such as NHS Grampian, Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership, Alzheimer Scotland and Voluntary Services Aberdeen in 2018. Over this reporting period the protocol was extended to include all vulnerable adults who are cared for by the local authority (e.g. residential care home or supported accommodation).

Our shared approach to missing persons seeks to ensure that all those responsible for the care of people who are at risk of going missing have put in place adequate care planning to mitigate this possibility. If however someone does go missing, to ensure that timely and necessary conversations take place thereafter and that appropriate supports are then accessed as and when needed. It also shows carers and staff what information is expected from them when they contact the police.

3.1.5 'Cuckooing' is described as taking over a person's home by using threats or actual violence towards the occupants in order to undertake criminal activities. Our safeguarding initiatives in response to this have included a series of joint visits involving colleagues from Police Scotland, Housing or Duty Social Work to individuals who, through local intelligence, have been identified as being subjected to cuckooing. The purpose of the visit is to offer advice and support to the individual to help them get out of the situation they have found themselves in and to try and protect and maintain their tenancy by referral to appropriate services.

The APU has worked in partnership with police colleagues to identify and safeguard vulnerable individuals and raise awareness of the harm that cuckooing can do. It is referenced within our multi-agency training and police colleagues have also delivered 'County Line' presentations to Duty Social Work staff and Council Officers. Increasing awareness of criminal exploitation has on occasion led to other serious crimes being discovered during ASP investigations, such as Human Trafficking.

3.1.6 As indicated earlier, the first two months of the Covid-19 pandemic overlaps with the end of this reporting period. National Guidance was received from the Scottish Government which emphasised that the principles of safeguarding remained the same but that our local processes and practices were to be revised to ensure that notwithstanding the impact of the pandemic, our interventions remained responsive and appropriate. Significant work was also undertaken to review all Protection Plans in light of the anticipated impact of lockdown restrictions which had the potential to create new situations and circumstances for adults at risk and their ability to safeguard their wellbeing or other interests. Key partners such as Police Scotland and NHS Grampian also adjusted their working processes and resource priorities to ensure Adult Support and Protection activity continued to be delivered effectively.

3.2 Details of support provided(advocacy)
During this reporting period, Advocacy Services Aberdeen (ASA) supported fifty-three adults in relation to adult support and protection matters, a decrease of twelve (18.46%) from the 2016-18 period. This most recent total consisted of twenty-three people with a learning disability, fourteen people with a mental health related issue, thirteen older adults and three carers.

On a limited number of occasions ASA have also provided support to those who were the alleged perpetrators of abuse. In these cases, it is generally to provide advice and support to a family member of an alleged victim to help them engage productively with the adult support and protection process and to understand why their behaviours caused concerns of harm and the action that is being taken.

ASA have also provided independent advocacy support to a group of older adults living in a nursing establishment following a large-scale inquiry. The work undertaken here supported those living within this setting to have their views made known on the quality of support and care that they were receiving and what they felt could be improved. This form of group advocacy within a LSI framework is an area of good practice that the Adult Protection Committee is keen to learn from and encourage going forward.

Service user feedback and involvement was highlighted as an area for improvement in the previous reporting period. We acknowledge that involving advocacy services at the beginning of the adult support and protection process is key to helping people understand their rights, express their views and wishes and be able to make more informed choices. ASA (as a key member of the APC) have designed a leaflet and booklet outlining how they can support people, what their ASP rights are and some general information on the process itself. ASA in partnership with the APU are taking steps to effectively communicate this information to enable us to understand better the adult's experience at each touch point in the process.

3.3 Use of protection orders

No protection orders were granted during this past reporting period compared to one that was granted to ban acquaintances from visiting a home to financially exploit an adult between 2016-2018.

Our practitioners are very mindful of the 'least restrictive' principle that underpins our professional decision-making and have been working directly with adults, their families and carers to support them to understand and manage their own risk profile. This includes undertaking assessments, planning care and support and facilitating access to a wide range of practical and emotional supports such as independent advocacy and advice and services from other agencies. This model of intervention seeks to build upon the individual's existing resources and networks and in doing so, possibly reduce the need for statutory involvement without increasing risk to the individual no matter what their background and health status, including individuals who may lack mental capacity.

3.4 Public information

In recent years we have tried to raise awareness of adult support and protection matters in a variety of different ways and formats. It has been difficult to gauge impact of these initiatives as they have generally focused on raising awareness and do not necessarily result in an increase in the number of referrals subsequently received.

We recognise that developing an adult support and protection-specific communications strategy would help us promote the importance and relevance of adult support and protection to our local citizens and communities. A co-ordinated approach will enable us to promote key messages and campaigns and to promote everyone's right to be safe from all types of harm. We will prioritise this for reporting period 2020-22.

3.5 Communication and cooperation between agencies

We are confident that all key partner agencies understand the importance of sharing safeguarding information and the potential risks associated with not sharing it in a timely and effective manner. The APC and its constituent sub-groups provide different mechanisms and opportunities for different agencies to contribute to the protection of adults at risk of harm in the city. This has arguably resulted in a better understanding of vulnerability and how best to identify those most in need of our support and then provide effective, co-ordinated interventions to support and protect those individuals.

3.5.1 Our Initial/Significant Case Reviews (ICR/SCR) protocol is a key tool for satisfying the APC's statutory duties in respect of reviewing procedures, evaluating co-operation between agencies, undertaking quality assurance of practice and improving skills and knowledge.

During this reporting period, the Adult Protection Operational Sub-Group has been involved in an ICR where significant concerns were raised in respect of an individual's long-standing non-engagement and self-neglect despite the adult being well known at the time to several services. The ICR highlighted that the agencies involved in this case seemed to work in isolation to one another and that there was seemingly no consideration given to undertaking a multi-agency risk assessment or facilitating a professionals meeting to discuss what could and should be done. It was recognised that a better co-ordinated response was needed including a multi-agency risk management meeting and a key professional being identified to take the lead in engaging with the adult and providing on-going monitoring of the situation.

As a consequence of this case, a multi-agency joint procedure for people who are difficult to engage with and subject to serious self-neglect has been drafted and includes clear guidance on self-neglect pathways and relevant assessment tools, a comprehensive risk appraisal, collective ownership of cases, professional meetings and a change of staff culture around self-neglect and capacity. This guidance does not accept self-neglect as a 'lifestyle' choice even if the adult has mental capacity and does not meet the 3-point test.

Council Officers and other key partners have been referring to this draft protocol and working with the APU to ensure that the presence of mental capacity is not used as a justification for any inaction on our part. Awareness raising amongst key partners and others of this challenging area of practice has led to their commitment to working collectively to review the 'big picture' and determine the most favourable co-ordinated approach for achieving engagement with the adult and achieving the best outcome or solution. An easy to use infographic was developed in partnership to sit within the guidance and a plan is in place for this document to be submitted to the next APC for approval.

In addition, an event was held at the Beach Ballroom in relation to a Significant Case Review commissioned by the Glasgow Adult Protection Committee relating to the non-accidental death of an older adult caused by her son. The overarching intention was for frontline staff, key public protection partners and wider stakeholders to be able to reflect on our own local adult support and protection practice by considering the circumstances that led to this adult's death. Key learning points and recommendations were incorporated into the APC's Action Plan and also used as a training tool for advocacy workers within the city.

3.5.2 The Grampian Financial Harm group is a subgroup of the Grampian Adult Protection Working Group whose purpose is raising awareness of financial harm in its different forms; undertaking initiatives to reduce financial harm, and raising awareness of support available for people who are at risk of financial harm. During this reporting period, the group has undertaken the following actions:

- ▶ National Campaigns - members continue to take an active part in annual multi-agency initiatives such as Scams Awareness Month and Shut out Scammers.
- ▶ Training - financial harm awareness is included in all adult support and protection training and, for older people, 'Keeping Yourself Safe from Harm' training has been undertaken in sheltered housing complexes. Group members also took part in an awareness raising event organised by GREC (Grampian Regional Equality Council) for the over 65s on scams and how to avoid them. A financial harm training package has been developed in such a way that it can be used by different partners to raise their staff's awareness; this training can be undertaken face-to-face or virtually
- ▶ Financial Agencies - a meeting occurred with staff from various financial organisations to increase their awareness of adult support and protection and explore ways in which financial exploitation can be reduced.

- Self-assessment - it was felt that the group was beginning to lack impetus and so a self-evaluation was undertaken to identify which partners needed to be involved in the group, what its priorities for the next two years should be and how the momentum of the group's discussions and activities could be maintained over this period.

In addition, Police Scotland continue to raise awareness about door-step scams and frontline staff are briefed in relation to the financial support that is available to reduce the impact of financial poverty and how to direct an individual to this assistance if they have been scammed. These community safety initiatives along with community safety awareness training to all partners, which includes dementia, suicide, financial harm, domestic violence as well as other home safety areas have greatly assisted in our joint approach to protecting those most vulnerable in our communities.

The Financial Harm group are mindful of the different ways that fraud and financial harm can be perpetrated and amends its awareness raising message to suit this. We will continue to work with our individual organisations, third sector organisations and as a team to raise awareness of financial harm and try to understand some of the reasons why some methods of awareness raising do not seem to be as effective as we would wish them to be. We will continue to seek out opportunities to engage with the public in the effort to reduce all instances of financial harm.

- 3.5.3** The Grampian Capacity Assessment Multi-Agency Working Group was convened to develop a pathway for supporting practitioners who require capacity assessments to be undertaken. Membership included NHS Grampian Clinical Directors, a GP, a Consultant Clinical Neuropsychologist, Consultant Liaison Psychiatrist, MHOs and representatives from Adult Protection services in each of the three Local Authority areas in Grampian.

To support and strengthen an effective multi-agency response to requests for capacity assessments, the below documents were developed and issued as "working drafts" for use by all practitioners:

- Grampian Assessment for Capacity Referral Form
- Grampian Capacity Assessment Decision-Specific Screening Tool (requires to be provided with completed referral form)
- Grampian Capacity Assessment Pathway

The Decision-Specific Screening Tool provides a set of questions that allows social care professionals to carefully consider whether a capacity assessment is required and to then provide clear information and clarity on the referral from those making a request for capacity assessment under the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 (AWI). This work has empowered practitioners to take on this responsibility and develop their critical thinking skills and has also contributed to reduced delays in getting capacity assessments and therefore better outcomes for the adult.



It was anticipated the tools would be evaluated in early 2020 however the Covid-19 pandemic has led to this work being postponed until a later date. In the interim, informal feedback from practitioners suggests that the documents have improved assessment of capacity. There is a commitment that the tools will be evaluated imminently and finalised.

The introduction of a decision-specific assessment tool and referral pathway has had positive implications for our local AWI procedures. Partnership staff were aware for some time that local policies and procedures for working with people who may lack capacity had been developed over a period of time and had typically led to rather piecemeal interventions. During this reporting period we started to revise and refresh the different elements of our operational procedures relating to incapacity and planned to incorporate them into one coherent procedure that covered all relevant AWI professional practice. However, the pandemic affected the completion of this task which remains a priority commitment as our practice in this respect would be noticeably more co-ordinated and effective as a result.

3.5.4 Police Scotland recently reviewed its procedures in relation to the sharing of information at Case Conferences and this prompted a wider review of processes within the Aberdeen North East Division. To ensure consistent standards in the sharing of information about vulnerable adults from the national Vulnerable Adults Database, the APU in partnership with Police Scotland circulated guidance to all Council Officers and practitioners who may have cause to handle Police information associated with Case Conferences.

This has proven to be a timely review given the current arrangements for remote/electronic participation in Case Conferences and serves as a good opportunity to refresh awareness around the sharing and appropriate disposal of Police information.

Police Scotland also launched information for Adult Survivors of Childhood Abuse which we promoted among our networks (e.g. Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry). The animated film helped to raise awareness amongst adult survivors of how to report childhood abuse to police, the criminal justice process, and the existence of survivor support services. The animation complements an existing information leaflet for adult survivors of childhood abuse and information on Police Scotland’s website, all of which aim to provide survivors with information to enable them to make an informed choice about whether or not they wish to report such abuse to police, whilst at the same time ensuring that they are signposted to relevant support services.

More than 80% of calls attended by Police do not result in a crime being recorded and vulnerability, mental ill-health and substance misuse issues continue to impact on the wellbeing of individuals and communities. With the world in which we live rapidly changing, it is recognised that policing must respond to the needs of the community.

North East Division has a Local Policing model, placing officers in the heart of communities where they are best placed to protect people. These local officers are supported by:

- ▶ The North East Division Public Protection Unit which contains a pool of officers skilled in investigating all aspects of public protection.

- ▶ The Risk and Concern Hub which is responsible for the triage, research and assessment of all concern reports submitted by police officers and staff in relation to children, vulnerable adults, youth offending and domestic abuse; and
- ▶ The Partnership Coordination Unit which contains a dedicated member of staff who deals solely with Adult Protection matters across the Division, and other staff specialising in case conference attendance among other matters.

A Detective Inspector from the Public Protection Unit has portfolio responsibility for Adult Protection, which compliments other portfolio leads for interconnecting issues, namely Child Protection, Domestic Offending, Serious Sexual Crime and Human Trafficking. The Detective Chief Inspector for Public Protection oversees all such portfolios in Aberdeen City Local Authority area. North East Division Public Protection structures are constantly under review to ensure demand is met, with a formal annual review each year to ensure the structures continue to meet the changing needs of the community.

- 3.5.5** NHS Grampian identified a need to strengthen the specialist Public Protection advice available to support the organisation and to ensure that its staff responded appropriately and effectively to the relevant legislative requirements. An Adult Public Protection Advisor was appointed in December 2019 and an Adult Public Protection Lead post was to be advertised in March 2020 however due to Covid-19 this was delayed to Summer 2020. This post is now also filled, and the successful candidate commenced employment in October 2020.

This enhanced Public Protection team will be able to provide additional support to NHS Grampian and its multi-agency partners across all adult Public Protection strands and provide assurance to appropriate oversight bodies that NHS Grampian is fulfilling its statutory duties.

- 3.5.6** The local introduction of wider home safety visits by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) has resulted in Community Care service users being offered free home safety visits. Over this reporting period social work made 57 referrals to SFRS and the visits delivered has resulted in more effective engagement as well as providing more timely information sharing, including the most vulnerable who make repeated callouts and those who have an inability to cope alone at home. Having a better understanding of each other's roles and responsibilities has strengthened our partnership working and equipped our key partners to signpost individuals to other support organisations to improve the safety and wellbeing of individuals within the community.

SFRS was also involved in a national initiative supported by the Aberdeen City Community Action Team that involved a transforming approach to fire safety knowledge and awareness by providing information and publications to help protect vulnerable people from house fires in Aberdeen. This included a bedtime fire safety checklist, a Carers Guide for looking after someone who could be vulnerable from fire and a fire safety assessment personal plan used to prepare an emergency plan to set out what to do in case of fire and care providers can use this as part of the adult's care and support plan to generate a referral to the SFRS for a home safety visit.

3.5.7 We are aware that the Aberdeenshire section of the *Joint Inspection of Adult Support and Protection (2018)* report highlighted issues regarding attendance of Police and Health colleagues at Adult Protection Case Conferences. An audit of case conference attendances was undertaken (Table 1) to see whether there were similar issues evident in Aberdeen. The results showed that for those case conferences that they were invited to, Police Scotland attended all but one and for that single instance, provided a report in lieu of their attendance. For the eleven case conferences that health professionals were invited to, all but three were attended although a report was submitted in lieu of one of those non-attendances. GPs were invited to twelve case conferences but were not able to attend any; a report was instead provided for all but three of these meetings. In person attendance at case conferences is a crucial responsibility of our professional colleagues and work continues as to how best facilitate these discussions in the best interests of the case conference subject, the adult who is being harmed.

	Attended	Reports Provided when Not Attended	Apologies
Police (invited to 8/15 case conferences)	7 (87.5%)	1 (12.5%)	0 (0%)
Health Professionals (invited to 11/15 case conferences)	8 (73%)	1 (9%)	2 (18%)
GPs (invited to 12/15 case conferences)	0 (0%)	9 (75%)	3 (25%)

Table 3.1 Case Conference Audit

3.6 Workforce

The Adult Protection Unit facilitates and supports all ASP operational activity. It consists of one Co-ordinator responsible for providing professional advice on ASP matters to senior management and frontline operational teams across all partner agencies, a Trainer who is responsible for training fieldwork teams and delivering some wider partner training and two administrators who are responsible for logging all ASP reports, maintaining training records and supporting the organisation and minuting of Case Conferences by social work fieldwork teams.

All social work fieldwork teams with the exception of criminal justice service undertake ASP operational work which is allocated according to the presenting vulnerability, illness, and/or medical condition of the potential adult at risk. This means for example, that if a report identifies functional mental health concerns as the major vulnerability for the adult, then the adult mental health social work team would lead on operational ASP activity. The same principle applies for adults with substance misuse issues, learning disabilities, older adults and so on. The intention is that the operational ASP work ‘flows’ to the team with the best knowledge and professional network related to the adult at risk’s needs.

The increased number and complexity of concern reports has led to an emerging view that the APU needs to be more fully resourced and supported. To this end we are currently reviewing the role of the Adult Protection Co-ordinator while at the same time developing a new strategic support role to improve the data analysis, reporting and assurance in respect of our adult support and protection activities.

3.7 Progress with training

The Grampian Learning and Development group is a subgroup of the Grampian Adult Protection Working Group. The role of the group is to support multi-agency trainers across the partnership to allow consistent responses to ASP concerns and also:

- ▶ To provide a strategic framework, common understanding and collective approach to inter-agency Adult Support and Protection Learning and Development.
- ▶ To develop a competent and confident workforce by the provision of inter-agency Adult Support and Protection Learning and Development opportunities. This is to complement existing single agency adult protection training provisions.
- ▶ To provide good quality, evidence-based, inter-agency Adult Support and Protection Learning & Development opportunities which are robust, fit for purpose, highly evaluated and regularly quality assured.
- ▶ To ensure that all workers have the necessary core competences, key knowledge, skills and values to deliver a consistently high standard of support to adults.

Membership comprises primarily training officers and adult support and protection leads from partner agencies. The group produces an annual action plan and our local training officer contributes to the Committees six monthly reports.

In order to fulfil a key commitment to support training across boundaries, the APC's partners have jointly invested in the provision of a multi-agency trainer, hosted by NHS Grampian. The multi-agency training provided by this colleague is a key opportunity for staff across our partner agencies to access and improve their knowledge and practice in respect of adult support and protection.

3.7.1 Key Learning and Development Group achievements during the reporting period include:

- ▶ A significant level of core and bespoke training has occurred during the reporting period. Evaluation of training packages are now being held between 1-3 months after the training event so that the impact on practice can be seen.
- ▶ Multi-agency GP events have been held focusing on learning from local and national case reviews, decision specific capacity tools and non-engagement of potential adults at risk of harm.
- ▶ Robert Gordon University held an annual Inter-Professional Learning Event with two hundred undergraduate social work, midwifery and mental health nursing staff attending along with Police Scotland personnel. Of greatest benefit was the simulated multi-agency case study discussion. This highlighted the different roles and responsibilities of the professions and the need for inter disciplinary co-operation.

- ▶ Previously a training package had been developed and delivered to people who require communication support (e.g. people with a learning disability) about how to keep themselves safe from harm. At the request of some service users from a sheltered housing establishment, a new pack has been developed with a focus on older people. The service users also co-produced the training package.
 - ▶ Bespoke multi-agency training occurred on Hoarding/Self-neglect and Older People affected by Domestic Abuse.
 - ▶ Training for trainers sessions were delivered across Grampian to Scottish Fire and Rescue Service staff who rolled out the training across the area which resulted in an increase and improvement in the quality of information contained in referrals.
 - ▶ Updated Learning and Development Terms of Reference and Strategic Framework documents were approved by the APC.
- 3.7.2** The priorities for the Learning and development Group over the next two years include:
- ▶ Roll out of financial harm awareness training
 - ▶ Development of training in relation to Initial, Multi Agency and Significant Case Reviews
 - ▶ Learning and Development provision arising out of the policy review
 - ▶ Development of GP level 3 training in line with the Royal College learning outcomes.
 - ▶ A new refreshed and updated online training programme on public protection for all NHS Grampian staff.

3.8 Service user engagement

Engagement of service users can be problematic due to cognitive and communication difficulties. Also people have advised that they did not want to revisit the experience. Nevertheless, the APC continues to work with Advocacy Services Aberdeen (ASA) to increase and improve its engagement practices with service users and carers.

It has previously been the case that people who are going through an adult support and protection intervention were asked if they would be willing to give us feedback on this experience later. The intention has been for people to be subsequently contacted by a colleague from ASA or the health and social care partnership however there have been issues in that there can be a delay between people agreeing to give feedback and being contacted; people aren't aware that they have had ASP input, or they can't separate it from other support they have received or they don't want to revisit the experience. As a result, since 2017 of the 53 people who agreed to be contacted to give their feedback, only 11 people have actually been interviewed.

One interview that did take place highlighted that the person did not know what the conclusion of their ASP intervention had been, or even if it had concluded. When fed back to ASP colleagues it was agreed that this should be addressed so that everyone who goes through an ASP intervention should be written to when it is closed detailing its conclusion. This change has since been operationally implemented. It has also been suggested that feedback of someone's personal experience should be an integral element of the conversations that ASA and others are having with that individual during the ASP process and whilst advocacy support is in place. This offers the advantage of the person hopefully feeling more at ease over a number of conversations rather than a one-off contact at the end of the process. The ASP Operational Group have fully supported the implementation of this model although the pandemic has prevented it from being fully realised.

Section 4.

Outcomes, Strengths and Challenges

4.1 Outcomes

4.1.1 We see the importance of evidencing the outcomes that have been achieved for the individuals with whom we work. Adult support and protection is complex and challenging but we must be able to show the positive outcomes for individuals who have been harmed or are at risks of harm.

4.1.2 During this reporting period we developed a wider overarching Quality Assurance (QA) framework that involves the sampling and reading of ASP casework where adults at risk have progressed to the investigation stage and beyond. The framework focuses on those positive outcomes that have been achieved with and for the person as well as procedural adherence within timescales by the practitioners. Random sampling of the QA outcomes by the APU provides assurance to both the APC and senior managers that adults are safer because of our interventions and that a key factor in this is the quality and effectiveness of our collaborative decision-making.

The QA Checklist is based on quality indicators from the Care Inspectorate. Our quality assurance framework promotes reflective practice and shared learning. Staff receive feedback on their practice to be discussed and reviewed in supervision using a local development tool that helps identify skills gaps or areas of good practice.

4.1.2 In January 2020, local authorities were given a statutory duty to support vulnerable people who are being interviewed by the Police. Previously, appropriate adult provision was delivered by social workers on a voluntary basis but resourcing this proved challenging. To allow scoping of the new duties and to have a clearer picture on overall demand we managed the service 'in-house' with our Duty Social Work team responding to requests from police during working hours and for out of hours at all other times.

Since establishing this service, we have created a co-ordinator role to support the wider development of the appropriate adult service and its training requirements. We have provided training to eighteen people taking on the new role of an appropriate adult and have supported ninety-five vulnerable adults being detained or interviewed by the police. We are now developing our 'appropriate adult' guidance and working towards an 'appropriate adult' quality assurance process to ensure high quality support and service delivery at all times.

4.1.3 The recognised benefits of multi-agency collaborative working have facilitated our ongoing engagement with our local care homes and care providers and enabled a more robust approach to early risk identification, assessment and mitigation and the co-ordinated implementation of improvement plans. We continue to promote a culture of awareness at provider forums and offer clarity on when adult protection procedures should be applied.

A rolling programme of assurance visits to care homes which will prioritise the safety and welfare of residents and a plan to review the Thresholds Document which provides additional guidance locally for supporting the consistent application of the definition of an adult at risk across all care establishments is in place.

4.1.4 The partnership is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities and help improve community safety outcomes. Key partners from the Community Safety Hub meet virtually on weekdays to discuss community safety issues and by operating as a single team, problems are tackled and dealt with more quickly specifically in response to addressing anti-social behaviour.

We have also improved our response in respect of vulnerable adults who are known or suspected to be targeted or exploited by others. Police Scotland reported a number of recent incidents in the city where vulnerable people appeared to have been targeted. The APU asked practitioners to be mindful of risks and signs of potential abuse so that preventative measures could be considered, and appropriate action taken undertaken. During lockdown, it was highlighted that those at greater risk of being exploited are the more vulnerable and with a rise in crimes relating to this group of people, everyone was asked to increase their vigilance and report any concerns quickly and appropriately.

4.2 Strengths

4.2.1 The APC, partner agencies and other appropriate governance bodies can be assured by the strengths of our adult support and protection activities, initiatives and interventions. The scale and complexity of adult protection activities across the city can sometimes make us take for granted the capability, dedication and resilience of our many colleagues across all of the partner agencies who are endeavouring to make Aberdeen a safer city for us all but especially for those who are at most risk of harm.

4.2.2 We strongly believe that there is a positive teamwork ethos evident within the sphere of adult support and protection in Aberdeen City.

Working together across key services and organisations provides us with opportunities to share information, knowledge and expertise as well as physical resources. For example, promoting safeguarding systems where we recognise that partners across housing and the third sector are a vital component in identifying not just where someone lives but in identifying the links between housing-related matters and social justice. Our use of problem-based case studies and learning have reduced practice knowledge gaps and resulted in better equipped practitioners producing better practice to the benefit of individuals with housing-related needs.

We have been successful in employing a range of collaborative activities across key partners and organisations such as inter-agency learning events at Robert Gordon University and GP events to widen our views and understanding regarding the different roles and responsibilities associated with adult support and protection and the kinds of challenges typically encountered by others. Effectively clarifying and confirming professional roles has helped aid understanding across the different professions and has led to less resistance to improving the quality of practices and services.

4.2.3 Our commitment to protect those individuals who are at risk of harm or who are being harmed has been a key motivating factor in the development and implementation of many meaningful and substantive activities and initiatives across the APC, its partner agencies and its constituent sub-groups. We are committed to fulfilling expectations and delivering better outcomes for the individuals with whom we work with a strong desire to improve our practice and performance even more.

4.2.4 Our willingness and ability to quickly adapt and respond positively to change has been evidenced within our initial business continuity response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Social workers from across different service areas were redeployed to the Duty Social Work Team and the Adult Protection Unit was co-located alongside it. Deployed staff received appropriate induction and fast-track core training to enable them to fulfil adult support and protection and appropriate adult responsibilities, including second person training to allow them to carry out these statutory duties. The Duty Social Work Team was also reconfigured to become a 7-day week service to complement the operation of the out-of-hours service and be able to respond appropriately and effectively to suspected, alleged or known abuse.

In addition, the Grampian Working Group, for example, identified the following as key actions to ensure the wellbeing and welfare of local citizens during lockdown:

- ▶ Sharing awareness of risk across the three local authority areas to support a consistency in response e.g. highlighting the risk of exploitation, raising awareness, and working with Police Scotland and Trading Standards.
- ▶ Share good practice across the three partnerships
- ▶ Increased vulnerability due to mental well-being deterioration due to social distancing and isolation will be monitored, with good practice around mitigating this risk being shared across the partnerships

- ▶ Escalation of risk for perpetrator being kept in the same household as the adult and increased stress will continued to be monitored. Police will attend any reported incidents and protection planning will occur reported through ASP
- ▶ APC will be kept informed of patterns of concern and contingency plans from the service areas regarding adults at risk. APC Convenors will inform the respective Chief Officer Groups
- ▶ Financial Harm Subgroup will monitor emerging scams praying on fear and social isolation caused by COVID19

4.3 Challenges

4.3.1 Given the scale and complexity of adult support and protection activity in Aberdeen it is understandable that there are many different challenges to overcome to ensure that the best possible support is being offered to individuals who are at risk of harm. Some of these challenges are partner-specific and some are reflective of wider, systemic issues. Irrespective of their origins or magnitude, it is incumbent on the APC for it to be aware of these challenges and be assured by the discussions that are ongoing between key professionals, groups and agencies to overcome them in the best interests of the individuals who are at risk of harm.

4.3.2 Adult Protection Committees have a legal responsibility for monitoring the implementation of appropriate adult protection procedures. During multi-agency training it became apparent that several attendees were reluctant to follow approved protocol in respect of reporting Adult Support and Protection concerns to the Council and where a crime is suspected, to the Police.

The main reasons that were identified for not referring adult protection concerns were a perception that staff see themselves as 'hands on' carers only and they do not want to jeopardise relationships with families they are involved with and do not want to get involved with anything other than 'caring' for the individual particularly if Police were to be involved, given perceived workplace awkwardness/conflict.

The APC contacted service providers by letter in an attempt to raise awareness and asking for their commitment to ensure their staff felt supported and confident to report adult protection concerns appropriately. The link to the Grampian Interagency Policy and Procedures and the Adult Protection Unit was shared with an invite for all providers to participate in support and protection training opportunities available for staff to attend. The result was a success with forty-one staff members from across five organisations undertaking ASP training and this led to an improvement in the appropriateness of referrals.

4.3.3 We recognise that we need to develop local policies and effective inter-agency co-operation to ensure the accountability of agencies. The third sector performs an essential contribution in this area of practice and whilst commitment and engagement are evident in many areas, there continues to be missed opportunities for engaging with voluntary organisations as well as we would wish.

4.3.4 An Initial Referral Discussion (IRD) is the first stage in the process of joint adult protection assessment following a notification of concern and includes Social Work, Health and Police alongside other key agencies where appropriate.

IRDs normally are led by a social work manager but it has proved difficult to initiate this process as well as we would wish. The partnership has identified an operational model for the delivery of lead agency ASP activity going forward that will centralise screening and IRD to a single team. The APC Improvement Plan has identified IRDs as an action to be taken forward and a plan is in place to develop a short-life working group to consider implementation of these recommendations with key partner participation in the process.

4.3.5 The improvement of our single and multi-agency data analysis to support our improvement activity has not progressed as much as we would wish. There are inherent strengths in the data analysis capabilities of each of the statutory agencies but it is perhaps the case that routine data analysis discussions are not yet fully embedded in our multi-agency collaborations to inform our desired improvements. Further consideration will be given to how we can best utilise our available multi-agency resources so that our ongoing discussions and decisions are informed as fully as possible by insightful analysis of the appropriate data.

Similarly, we have not made much progress during the reporting period in the development of an ASP-specific Performance Management Framework to enable us to look beyond the operational activity volumes and understand better the effectiveness of our multi-agency interventions and the outcomes that have been achieved for the person at risk of harm. Our poor progress has been due to the combined impact of operational demands and strategic resource availability however we are pleased to report that the development of an ASP-specific performance and assurance dashboard is being taken forward under the Covid-recovery, 'Aberdeen Together' umbrella.

Section 5.

Looking Forward

- 5.1** This has been another busy biennial period for members of the Adult Protection Committee and all agencies involved in the support and protection of adults at risk of harm in Aberdeen. As welcome as the positive endeavours and impacts have been, we are mindful that the risk of harm is ever-present, and so we must ensure that our diligent professionalism and effectiveness continue also.
- 5.2** It is impossible to predict when the Covid-19 pandemic will come to an end, enabling different lockdown restrictions to be eased or withdrawn. Given this, the Scottish Government's guidance will continue to have a strong relevance on how we ensure the continued effectiveness of our interventions. We will always seek to be reassured that any and all operational or procedural changes are wholly consistent with the safeguarding principles that underpin the support and protection of adults at risk of harm.
- 5.3** To help us frame our priorities for the next two years, a Grampian-wide virtual exercise was held earlier this year. These priorities were to be discussed further at a workshop in April but unfortunately this had to be postponed because of the pandemic. The draft priorities are currently:
- ▶ Review of ASP processes and procedures
 - ▶ Systematic approach to quality assurance checks of adult protection work.
 - ▶ Performance Management Framework across all partners and improved data collection.
 - ▶ Review the issues surrounding every fatal fire in dwellings and put in place joint-agency interventions to prevent a similar event occurring.
 - ▶ The development of and transition to a new model of adult protection practice embedded.

Further discussion of these draft priorities will be facilitated soon so that there is a recognised strategic coherence to our improvement programme and all the other developmental activities and initiatives that are taking place.

- 5.4** As referenced elsewhere, an Improvement Programme (2020-2022) has been drafted using as its basis the APC's Risk Register. The objectives in this proposed programme relate to those risk entries whose mitigations have been identified as not successful or only partially successfully, and include the following:

Improvement Objectives

1.1	Multi-agency partners will consistently comply with multi-agency adult protection policies, procedures and practice guidance by having access to effective multi-agency learning & development support.
1.2	Policies, procedures and practice guidance are easily accessible to all multi-agency partners.
1.3	A process for Inter-agency Referral Discussions (IRDs) will be in place.
2.1	Advocacy is offered to all ASP adults and carers and recorded if declined.
2.2	Experience of adults and carers is proactively sought to ensure their views are being heard and rights are respected.
2.3	A programme of Quality Assurance will be in place to monitor and identify areas for improving access to Advocacy.
3.1	A multi-agency learning, and development annual programme will support multi agency staff to have the required ASP knowledge, skills and competencies.
3.2	Multi-agency partners have the required workforce to respond effectively to supporting adults at risk of harm.
4.1	APC and operational sub-group will proactively consider all potential cases where there are learning opportunities by utilising the Initial Case Review (ICR) process.
4.2	A robust quality assurance process in response to local/ national case reviews will be developed to ensure learning is embedded into practice.
4.3	A learning framework in response to identified needs e.g. ICR/SCRs will be developed and include methods of evidencing learning.
4.4	A Supervision framework will be in place for practitioners.
5.1	A Multi agency self-evaluation will be carried out and a process put in place for periodical self-evaluations to ensure all key areas of improvement have been identified and acted upon.
6.1	A multi-agency performance framework will be developed to include data and quality indicators.
7.1	Regular reports will be provided from APC to the Executive Public Protection Group.

Table 5.1 Improvement Objectives

This improvement programme will be taken forward by the APC Operational Sub-group with updates presented regularly to the APC.

- 5.5** Realising the city's vision where people feel safe, supported and protected from harm requires all of its citizens to be actively engaged in the wellbeing of our local communities and populations. All abuse, irrespective of its type, is unacceptable and everyone has a responsibility to prevent this where possible and report it to the appropriate authorities when they first become aware of it. Together we will protect those most at risk of harm.

Appendix 1

The Aberdeen City Adult Protection Committee has taken a risk-based approach to developing its improvement action plan for the next biennial reporting period, 2020-2022. After conducting a multi-agency risk analysis (and subsequent population of a 'live' risk register), an Improvement Action Plan has been developed with the intention of addressing identified risks.

Summarised below, are the key improvement outcomes and objectives of the APC going into the next reporting period.



OUTCOME	OBJECTIVE
Multi agency adult protection policies, procedures and practice guidance are complied with consistently.	Multi-agency partners will have access to effective multi-agency learning & development support.
	Policies, procedures and practice guidance are easily accessible to all multi agency partners
	Process for Inter-agency Referral Discussions (IRD's) will be in place.
The voice of stakeholders is key in the adult support and protection process – improvements are fully inclusive of the voice of the adult and their family.	Advocacy is offered to all ASP adults and carers – and is recorded if declined.
	Experience of adults and carers is proactively sought to ensure their views are being heard and rights respected.
	A programme of Quality Assurance will be in place to monitor and identify areas for improving access to Advocacy.
Lead agency and partners are adequately resourced, trained and developed to have both capacity and capability to respond to the demands of adult support and protection work.	A multi-agency learning and development annual programme will support multi agency staff to have the required ASP knowledge, skills and competencies.
	Multi-agency partners have the required workforce to respond effectively to support adults at risk of harm.
Local and national case reviews contribute to learning and continuous development.	APC and operational sub-group will proactively consider all potential cases where there are learning opportunities by utilising the Initial Case Review (ICR process)
	A robust quality assurance process in response to local/ national case reviews will be developed to ensure learning is embedded in practice.
	A learning framework in response to identified needs e.g. ICR/SCR will be developed.
	A supervision framework will be in place for practitioners.
The APC Improvement plan robustly reflects all key areas of improvement as a result of effective multi-agency self-evaluation.	A multi-agency self-evaluation will be carried out and a process put in place for periodic self-evaluations to ensure all key areas of improvement have been identified and acted upon.
Multi-agency collection, sharing and use of data enables better decision making to support and protect adults at risk of harm.	A multi-agency performance framework will be developed to include data and quality indicators.
The impacts of COVID-19 are considered and appropriately incorporated into adult support and protection activity.	Regular reports will be provided from APC to the Executive Public Protection Group
	ASP training will be redeveloped to enable effective training to be delivered virtually or adapted to be delivered safely.



ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Public Protection Committee
DATE	28th April 2021
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Inspection of Justice Social Work service
REPORT NUMBER	ACHSCP/21/088
DIRECTOR	Sandra MacLeod, ACHSCP Chief Officer
CHIEF OFFICER	Claire Wilson, Social Work Lead
REPORT AUTHOR	Kevin Toshney, Planning & Development Manager
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.3 and 1.4

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Public Protection Committee about the recent publication by the Care Inspectorate of its inspection report into the justice social work service.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 note and endorse the information contained within this report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Aberdeen City Council was advised in November 2019 that an inspection of its justice social work (JSW) service with a particular focus on Community Payback Orders (CPOs) was to be undertaken by the Care Inspectorate.
- 3.2 The inspection was to be conducted in line with the Inspection of Justice Social Work services in Scotland guidance and evaluate the service against quality indicators drawn from the Guide to Self-Evaluation for Community Justice in Scotland.
- 3.3 Notification of the commencement of the inspection triggered a 28-week inspection timeline which outlined the respective responsibilities of the Care Inspectorate and the justice service including:
- Submission of self-evaluation with supporting evidence
 - Case file reading of approximately 100 files
 - Meet with individuals who are (or have been) the subject of CPOs
 - Meet with staff and other stakeholders
- 3.4 Formal notification was received from the Care Inspectorate in mid-March 2020, just prior to the scheduled engagement with clients from the service, that the inspection was to be put on hold because of the impending Covid-19 lockdown restrictions.

- 3.5 Subsequently, as the first lockdown eased, a dialogue in respect of next steps was initiated in September 2020 between Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership and the Care Inspectorate and it was jointly agreed that the inspection should be resumed in October. Given the ongoing restrictions it was agreed that the inspection methodology should adapt to current circumstances and so 1:1 conversations or group meetings were to be facilitated by either telephone or MS Teams.
- 3.6 As part of their engagement with service users, the Care Inspectorate spoke with 46 individuals and were complimentary about the logistical arrangements that had been put in place to facilitate these telephone conversations, the back-up support that was available for those few occasions when scheduled phone-calls with individuals went unanswered and the value of the discussions themselves about people's experiences of the justice social work service.
- 3.7 Conversations with 14 justice service stakeholders were facilitated including Police Scotland; Aberdeen Foyer; MAPPA Co-ordinator; Moving Forward Making Changes (MFMC) Team Leader; Housing; Alcohol and Drug Partnership (ADP); a number of Unpaid Work (UPW) providers and a local Sheriff.
- 3.8 The Care Inspectorate spoke with 48 members of staff from the JSW workforce. These conversations were arranged on a peer group basis, for example, Support Workers, Unpaid Work (UPW) staff, Social Workers and Senior Social Workers but also on a themed basis, for example, LSCMI/Best Practice Improvement groups, Women's service, Intervention Programmes ie Caledonian, Young People and general CPOs.
- 3.9 In addition, a number of conversations were also held with senior leaders from across Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership.
- 3.10 On Tuesday 23rd February 2021, the Care Inspectorate published its report of the inspection of the justice social work service. The evaluation against selected quality indicators was as follows:
- | | | |
|-----|--|------------------|
| 1.1 | Improving the life chances and outcomes for people subject to a community payback order: | Good |
| 2.1 | Impact on people who have committed offences: | Excellent |
| 5.2 | Assessing and responding to risk and need: | Good |
| 5.3 | Planning and providing effective intervention: | Very Good |
| 9.4 | Leadership of improvement and change: | Very Good |
- 3.11 Key messages from the report included the following:

- The support provided by justice staff in Aberdeen is having a transformative impact on individuals subject to CPOs. Individuals experience compassionate, consistent, focused and flexible support that frequently exceeds their expectations and is enabling positive change.
- The service is delivering highly person-centred interventions. Staff work proactively to identify and remove barriers to engagement and provide a wide range of practical assistance.
- The clear focus on supporting individuals to address offending behaviour is an important strength. The service is investing in a full range of structured interventions and delivery is tailored to individual needs and risks.
- Leaders demonstrate a strong vision for transformational change that is supported by well-developed plans and ambitious targets. Core principles of early intervention and prevention permeate planning and delivery at all levels of the service.
- A strong commitment to continuous improvement is underpinned by an embedded improvement methodology. This is contributing to improved performance in the delivery of CPOs.
- Performance trends across almost all CPO measures are improving and individuals are being supported to achieve positive outcomes. Embedding the performance management framework offers potential to better demonstrate the difference the service is making to the lives of those on CPOs.
- There is a need to strengthen compliance in meeting expected timescales for assessments and plans. Work is also required to increase staff confidence in the use of accredited assessment tools, including assessment and analysis of risk of serious harm.

3.12 The Care Inspectorate have identified the following areas of improvement for the service to progress and complete:

- To enable robust oversight and increased ability to demonstrate outcomes and impact, senior officers should ensure that the justice service delivery plan and performance management framework are agreed and implemented and associated reporting cycles established.
- To ensure the effective delivery of key processes, senior managers should further strengthen quality assurance mechanisms to support the consistent, confident and timely application of risk assessment and case planning processes, particularly those relating to risk of serious harm.

These comments tally with the service's own informed insights about its operation and performance that were fed into the self-evaluation. A draft delivery plan and a draft performance management framework were submitted as part of the self-evaluation and so the requirement to complete and implement

these is understandable. In addition, the service already had an LS/CMI – a risk assessment and case management tool - action plan in place which was improving our risk assessment and case planning processes but recognised that our quality assurance of these matters was not as robust as it could be.

An action plan showing how we would meet these requirements was submitted to the IJB for approval on 23rd March and then submitted to the Care Inspectorate on 6th April.

3.13 The Care Inspectorate has praised the service's capacity for improvement with its confidence in that assertion being grounded in 'the ambitious leadership and strong management capability' evident.

3.14 This very positive inspection report follows on from equally positive feedback that had been previously received from the Care Inspectorate in relation to the submitted self-evaluation and the case file reading. Key points from that earlier feedback included:

- Well written, well structured, good flow and content and good picture of what CJSW does.
- Honest and thorough
- Clear thread about improvement methodology
- Evidential and taking ownership of improvement
- Rational approach to practice and good understanding of services.
- Range of evidence across Quality Indicators.
- Some evidence lacks contextual details; some minutes of meetings not supplied

3.15 The evaluation of 111 case-files was jointly undertaken by CI inspectors and four Senior Social Workers from the JSW service in early March. Initial feedback was that there were no unsatisfactory case files and that most of our case files are good, or very good and some are excellent. It was also reported that the service knows the client group with whom it works and that there is a good, professional relationship between individuals and practitioners.

3.16 Following publication of the inspection report, the service is now required to submit an action plan by Tuesday 6th April showing how it will address the highlighted areas for improvement.

3.17 The service has already made significant progress in respect of its delivery plan, performance management framework, governance reporting and quality assurance framework and will provide the Care Inspectorate with assurance in respect of these.

3.18 The Care Inspectorate has subsequently provided the service with another report in relation to the case file reading that was undertaken as part of the inspection methodology. This technical report complements the main inspection report and will be used by the service to support its continuous improvement activities.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Strategic Risk	None for this report.		
Compliance	Care Inspectorate inspections offer assurance on how well relevant policies, procedures and risk management arrangements are working.	L	Notwithstanding the positive impact of a LS/CMI action plan, the service has strengthened its QA plan so that there is a more robust quality assurance of its case planning activities.
Operational	None for this report		
Financial	None for this report		
Reputational	The publication of regulatory inspection reports can have a reputational management impact.	L	Given the very positive inspection report there is no risk of reputational damage to the service or to the IJB/HSCP/ACC.
Environment / Climate	None for this report		

7. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	N/A
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	N/A
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The positive outcomes from this inspection demonstrate the person-centred relationships that are being developed between clients and practitioners and the effective interventions that are

	<p>arising from this. The service is making significant contributions to individual and wider community outcomes.</p> <p>Stretch Outcome 9, Key Drivers 9.1, 9.3 and 9.4 and Stretch Outcome 10 Key Drivers 10.1, 10.2, 10.3 and 10.5 are all relevant to this report's findings.</p>
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	N/A
Regional and City Strategies	N/A
UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes	N/A

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	Full impact assessment not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10. APPENDICES

10.1 Inspection of justice social work services in Aberdeen, Care Inspectorate, February 2021.

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Inspection of justice social work services in Aberdeen

February 2021

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Introduction

The governance arrangements for justice services are set out in legislation, making local authorities responsible for delivering a range of services for those involved in the criminal justice system¹. This includes the completion of reports for courts and the Parole Board and the supervision of individuals on statutory social work orders and licences. Statutory social work orders include community payback orders (CPO) that can be imposed by courts in Scotland as an alternative to a custodial sentence. A person subject to a CPO can be required to comply with the terms of a supervision requirement and/or undertake an unpaid work requirement. A supervision requirement is one of nine provisions available to the court that can be imposed as part of a CPO². Unpaid work takes place in local communities and is for the benefit of the community. These are the two most commonly used requirements and someone on a CPO can be subject to one of these or both depending on circumstances outlined in a report provided to court by justice services and the decision of the court³. Guidance on the management and supervision of these is contained within National Outcomes and Standards⁴ and CPO practice guidance⁵.

There has been significant change in justice social work over the last decade including the introduction of CPOs in 2011⁶. Effective community-based sentencing options are essential to the successful implementation of the Scottish Government's community justice strategy⁷ and the extension of the presumption against short sentences. In this context, the Care Inspectorate has decided to focus inspections of justice services at the present time on how well CPOs are implemented and managed, and how effectively services are achieving positive outcomes.

How we conducted this inspection

We began our inspection on 25 November 2019. We examined a self-evaluation report and supporting evidence provided by Aberdeen city health and social care partnership. An inspection team visited Aberdeen in early March 2020 and completed a review of a representative sample of the records of people who were or had been subject to a CPO during the two-year period prior to December 2019. This related to 110 records from a population of 1,436 individuals. As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, the inspection in Aberdeen was suspended by the Care Inspectorate on 13 March 2020. We resumed our inspection activity in October 2020 and undertook the outstanding activities in accordance with public health guidance.

¹ Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2003, Community Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010.

² In imposing a CPO, the court may include one or more of nine specific requirements. These are unpaid work or other activity requirement; offender supervision requirement; compensation requirement; programme requirement; residence requirement; mental health treatment requirement; drug treatment requirement; alcohol treatment requirement; and conduct requirement.

³ A court report is not required if the CPO will contain only a level 1 unpaid work or other activity requirement.

⁴ National Outcomes and Standards for Social Work Services in the Criminal Justice System, Scottish Government, 2010.

⁵ Community Payback Order Practice Guidance, Scottish Government, 2019.

⁶ Community Payback Orders were introduced by the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010.

⁷ National Strategy for Community Justice, Scottish Government, 2016.

This involved minor changes to the inspection methodology to enable us to talk to individuals using the service, staff and partners virtually using telephone calls and video conferencing facilities. Despite the gap, the scope and stages of inspection were unchanged. We spoke with 47 people subject to CPOs including those with a supervision requirement or an unpaid work order, or both. We undertook focus groups and interviews with key members of staff, partner agencies, stakeholders and senior managers with responsibility for the justice service.

During the inspection, we considered how well National Outcomes and Standards and practice guidance were being applied and what difference CPOs were making to the lives of individuals who were, or have been, subject to them. The scope of the inspection focused on:

- the ability of the justice service to demonstrate improved outcomes for individuals subject to CPOs
- how people subject to CPOs experience services
- key processes linked to CPOs, including quality of risk/needs assessment, planning and intervention
- leadership of justice services.

We used a quality indicator model (appendix 2) to consider how the service was performing against a number of quality indicators and we have provided evaluations using a six-point scale (appendix 1) for the following indicators.

- 1.1 improving the life chances and outcomes for people subject to a community payback order.
- 2.1 impact on people who have committed offences.
- 5.2 assessing and responding to risk and need.
- 5.3 planning and providing effective intervention.
- 9.4 leadership of improvement and change.

In the course of the inspection, we also explored the extent to which justice services were prepared for the extension of the presumption against short sentences.

For the purposes of this report, we refer to criminal justice social work services as **justice services** and at times **the service** as an abbreviation. We refer to people who are, or have been, subject to a CPO as **individuals**. Where we refer to staff, we mean justice workers who have responsibility for supervising the various requirements of a CPO unless referred to by their specific designation. Justice social workers have responsibility for supervising the various requirements of a CPO and are sometimes referred to as **supervising officers** to reflect their qualification, role and function. **Order supervisors** are responsible for the management of unpaid work requirements and **task supervisors** are responsible for supervising individuals on unpaid work placements. Aberdeen also employs **support workers**; paraprofessionals, not qualified in social work, who undertake a variety of community payback related tasks across the range of CPO teams. **Managers** refers to the justice service manager and senior social workers who oversee operational delivery. **Leaders** refers to those with strategic oversight of the service across the local authority and wider health and social care partnership.

Context

Aberdeen is the third largest city in Scotland. With a population of 228,670, extending across 186 square kilometres, it is one of the most densely populated local authority areas. As a centre for the oil and gas industries over many years the city has prospered but is not without its difficulties. Sharp differences between affluent and deprived parts of the city bring inequalities, not just economically, but also in terms of health, wellbeing and social inclusion. Aberdeen also experiences high levels of drug and alcohol abuse and in 2019, had the joint 5th highest average annual rate of drug deaths of all local authorities in Scotland.⁸ A generally strong local economy, resulting in high living costs, has also created challenges in recruiting to public services. This has required the justice service to work closely with local universities and human resources colleagues to maximise opportunities to recruit and retain staff.

Strategic priorities, including those for community justice, are embedded within the community planning Aberdeen local outcome improvement plan 2016-2026, which is reviewed and updated every two years. The plan was usefully informed by a comprehensive population needs assessment, and investment in early intervention and prevention is a core principle within strategic plans.

Justice services are devolved from Aberdeen city council to the Aberdeen city health and social care partnership. The services are delivered across three main sites with three dedicated CPO teams being based together at one of them. The work of the CPO teams is interconnected to a range of other teams which include the unpaid work team, the throughcare team and the **Connections women's centre**, which was established in 2015. A team of support workers also works across the teams to provide additional practical and emotional support to individuals on CPOs. Specialist, nationally-accredited programmes are delivered by the **Caledonian System** team and the Joint Sex Offender Project in a partnership which operates across the north-east of Scotland.

In 2018 -19, the justice service supervised 949 CPOs (755 individuals), the fifth highest rate in Scotland per 10,000 population. This was down from 1,151 (895 individuals) in 2017-18, reflecting the national downward trend in the number of orders imposed.

⁸ *Drug Related Deaths in Scotland in 2019*, National Records of Scotland, 2020

Key messages

- The support provided by justice staff in Aberdeen is having a transformative impact on individuals subject to CPOs. Individuals experience compassionate, consistent, focused and flexible support that frequently exceeds their expectations and is enabling positive change.
- The service is delivering highly person-centred interventions. Staff work proactively to identify and remove barriers to engagement and provide a wide range of practical assistance.
- The clear focus on supporting individuals to address offending behaviour is an important strength. The service is investing in a full range of structured interventions and delivery is tailored to individual needs and risks.
- Leaders demonstrate a strong vision for transformational change that is supported by well-developed plans and ambitious targets. Core principles of early intervention and prevention permeate planning and delivery at all levels of the service.
- A strong commitment to continuous improvement is underpinned by an embedded improvement methodology. This is contributing to improved performance in the delivery of CPOs.
- Performance trends across almost all CPO measures are improving and individuals are being supported to achieve positive outcomes. Embedding the performance management framework offers potential to better demonstrate the difference the service is making to the lives of those on CPOs.
- There is a need to strengthen compliance in meeting expected timescales for assessments and plans. Work is also required to increase staff confidence in the use of accredited assessment tools, including assessment and analysis of risk of serious harm.

Achieving outcomes

In this section, we look at the extent to which the justice service can demonstrate improving trends against clear performance measures and can show tangible results in improving the life chances and outcomes for individuals subject to community payback orders.

How well are performance measures achieved?

A clear commitment to continuous improvement enabled the service to demonstrate consistent or improving performance trends across almost all CPO measures. In 2018/19, 76%⁹ of first face-to-face contacts took place on the same day, or within one working day of an order being imposed, which was slightly better than the national average. Court and social work duty processes had been strengthened to drive further improvement. Induction rates were broadly in line with the national average and the timely commencement of **unpaid work** had significantly improved from 30% in 2016/17 to 70% in 2018/19. These positive developments reflected the effectiveness of a focused and sustained approach to quality assurance within the service.

A well embedded approach to continuous improvement was supporting staff and managers to meaningfully contribute to improvement activities. Through a coherent system of practice oversight groups, staff, supported by an information analyst, were making effective use of available performance data to identify improvement priorities. **Level of service/case management inventory (LS/CMI)** data was increasingly used to understand individual needs and to inform service design and delivery. Benchmarking performance against comparator and neighbouring authorities demonstrated a willingness to look outward and learn from others.

Quality assurance processes identified challenges in supporting individuals to complete unpaid work requirements within court-imposed timescales. The rate of timely completions had dropped from 83% in 2016/17 to 66% in 2018/19, below the national average of 74%. A review of practice undertaken by the service identified reduced staffing capacity linked to local recruitment difficulties. This was compounded by an increased demand for flexible unpaid work placements to enable individuals who had multiple and complex needs to undertake light duties or partial workdays. Managers were taking steps to address the issue by broadening the range of flexible placements for those on CPOs and by working across departments to attract internal candidates.

⁹Nationally reported figure was amended following resolution of local inputting issue. Aberdeen updated figure (2018/19) is noted.

How well are outcomes for individuals improving?

A highly motivated, **trauma-informed** staff group was working diligently to achieve positive outcomes for individuals, reflecting a strong commitment to relationship-based practice. Data from exit questionnaires demonstrated improved outcomes for individuals in relation to a range of factors that are known to support desistance from offending behaviour. Individuals reported significant improvements in relation to their use of drugs and alcohol, mental health, personal relationships, and housing. Importantly, individuals had also benefitted from opportunities to develop coping skills, which impacted positively on their self-esteem and self-management.

This was confirmed by our review of records. We found that most of the individuals within our sample evidenced positive changes in their circumstances during their CPO. The most notable improvements related to personal relationships, mental health and wellbeing, accommodation, finances, and reductions in the seriousness or frequency of offending behaviour. Almost all individuals who required additional support were better connected to community resources during their CPO.

A performance management board was bringing added rigour and oversight to two practice development forums - the Best Practice Group and the Practice Issues Group. Chaired by the lead for social work and supported by the planning and development manager, the board reported to the **clinical care and governance group** of the health and social care partnership. These arrangements were helping to strengthen the connection between operational practice and strategic governance. Leaders acknowledged that performance monitoring in the partnership was largely focussed on the national health and wellbeing outcomes with limited consideration of justice data measures beyond exception and annual reporting. To address this, a justice service delivery plan and supporting performance management framework had been developed and were awaiting finalisation and implementation.

Although improvement work had resulted in an increased number of exit questionnaires being completed by individuals ending their CPO during the first quarter of 2019/20, the service was not yet able to demonstrate consistent improvements in individual outcomes over time. Mechanisms to enable the service to systematically capture and review qualitative data at key assessment, planning and review stages were limited. The performance management framework and related datasets offered opportunities to increase the range, breadth and depth of measures for capturing and reporting on person-centric outcomes. Embedding these frameworks will be central in enabling leaders to raise the profile of the service, ensure oversight and demonstrate the impact of community payback orders.

Delivery of key processes

In this section, we look at the extent to which the justice service recognises the need for help and support and provides this at the earliest opportunity. We consider the quality of assessment and planning and the range and quality of different types of intervention. We also look at how individuals are involved in key processes.

How well do staff provide help and support?

The design and delivery of justice services was supporting early and intensive engagement with individuals, and staff clearly recognised the importance of providing timely access to help and support. The creation of a **predisposal team** located adjacent to Aberdeen sheriff court was helping to ensure that most individuals were seen on the same day, or within one day of their order being imposed. A responsive and pro-active team of support workers was providing individuals across all parts of the service with access to a wide range of practical assistance. This included help to arrange and attend appointments, support to apply for housing and benefits, and help to develop budgeting plans and address rent arrears. A duty system was in place to enable quick access to help from a support worker, supplemented by a senior social worker where a crisis response was required.

The service was working creatively with third sector and statutory partners to limit unnecessary contact with justice services through increased use of alternatives to CPOs. Available options included **diversion**, **structured deferred sentences** and the **problem-solving approach**, reflecting the commitment to early intervention and prevention outlined in the local outcome improvement plan. There was a clear commitment to continuity of relationships with staff for those with a **supervision** requirement. Wherever possible, individuals were allocated a social worker they knew, to build on existing connections and encourage engagement. In almost all instances, early recognition of need and proactive efforts by staff to remove barriers were supporting individuals to effectively engage with and carry out their CPOs.

The unpaid work service offered a broad range of placements and activities that catered to the varied needs of individuals. As well as offering evening and weekend sessions for those in employment, individual and short-day placements, light-duty options and women-only groups were available. Staff were described as helpful and approachable and were making efforts to accommodate individuals' needs and preferences. The service had made efforts to increase the availability of placements, however the current provisions were not always meeting the additional needs of young people, women and individuals with mental health and addiction issues. Offence-focused interventions designed to address the root causes of offending behaviour were being tailored to personal learning styles. Non-judgmental approaches from staff were enabling individuals to explore the factors underpinning their offending behaviour in a way that felt safe. Recognising the significant inequalities experienced by many individuals subject to CPOs, the service was

providing access to a variety of practical resources to enable individuals to engage with their CPO.

Efforts to offer tailored placements within the unpaid work service, coupled with recruitment issues had contributed to delays in some individuals starting their hours. Staff were alert to this and were considering how they might source additional support and reconfigure services to meet demand. Despite persistent efforts from justice staff, difficulty in accessing assessment and support from mental health services was an ongoing issue. Referral processes into traditional clinical pathways were noted to be inflexible. In the absence of access to specialist clinical advice, social workers struggled to know how to best support individuals with complex and enduring mental health needs. In a bid to promote an outreach approach, the health and social care partnership was piloting a mental wellbeing out-of-hours hub situated in the police custody suite. This alternative model targeted individuals who came to the attention of first responders and aimed to support a wider cultural shift from symptom management to early intervention and prevention. It was too early to demonstrate whether the outreach model was having an impact for individuals on CPOs.

How well do staff assess risk and need?

Initial assessments of risk and need outlined within justice social work reports for court were helpfully informing decisions about individuals' suitability to undertake the requirements of a CPO. The majority of reports were high quality and most had been informed by appropriate collaboration with partner agencies. For individuals made subject to a CPO, a comprehensive assessment of risk and need was in place in almost every instance. We rated the majority of assessments that we read as good or better. Almost all the assessments reflected that staff had actively sought to involve the individual in the assessment process and that other partners had been appropriately consulted.

A range of specialist assessments were being undertaken to inform interventions. Individuals convicted of domestic abuse were assessed by a worker who was trained in the Caledonian System and the Spousal Abuse Risk Assessment¹⁰ tool. Staff were also trained in the Risk Matrix 2000¹¹ and the Stable and Acute 2007¹² to support the assessment of individuals convicted of sexual offending.

Support for young people reflected a commitment to embedding the **Whole System Approach for Young People Who Offend**. Staff across justice and youth services were working jointly with police and the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration to ensure that, wherever possible, young people involved in offending were

¹⁰ The Spousal Abuse Risk Assessment (SARAv3) is a structured guide for spousal risk evaluations in individuals who are suspected of, or who are being treated for, spousal abuse.

¹¹ Risk Matrix 2000 (RM2K) is an actuarial risk assessment used to assess risk posed by individuals convicted of sexual offences.

¹² Stable and Acute 2007 is used to undertake a dynamic assessment of risks posed by individuals convicted of sexual offences.

supported to remain within children's rather than adult services. This had resulted in a significant reduction in the number of young people entering the adult criminal justice system and reflected a strong commitment to delivering best practice. To support this approach, staff within the youth and justice social work teams were trained in the application of a range of age-appropriate risk assessment tools.

Proportionate, risk-based information sharing was helpfully informing responses to risk and need within the service and across wider social work teams and multi-agency partners. Justice staff attended multi-agency public protection arrangement (**MAPPA**) meetings as well as adult support and protection and child protection case conferences as required. Staff were alert to the importance of timely information sharing to inform victim safety planning in cases involving domestic abuse. Multi-agency risk assessment conference (**MARAC**) arrangements were operating effectively.

Overall, unpaid work staff had access to information to help them allocate work placements or respond to emerging concerns about individuals' risks and needs. Managers recognised the need to further develop the consistent and timely application of the full range of functions within the LS/CMI assessment tool. Although it related to a relatively small number of assessments, staff lacked confidence in applying the processes associated with assessing and analysing risk of serious harm. More broadly, the service was committed to completing comprehensive assessments within the 20-day timescale required by National Outcomes and Standards. However, this was being achieved in just over half of cases. Quality assurance processes had previously identified these as areas for improvement and work was being taken forward through an LS/CMI improvement plan and the work of a LS/CMI champions group.

How well do staff plan and provide effective interventions?

There were significant strengths in the planning and delivery of interventions. Practice was underpinned by a strong commitment to relationship-based practice and sustained investment in a range of evidence-based interventions designed to reduce involvement in offending behaviour. Almost all individuals had a **case management plan** in place, and we rated the quality of most plans that we read as good or very good. The quality of work to support the implementation of plans was good or better in most instances.

Staff across the service were delivering highly person-centred, holistic and trauma-informed interventions that were helping to improve outcomes for individuals on CPOs. As well as having an allocated social worker, many individuals received additional input from a proactive team of support workers. These support workers were providing practical and effective help to address a wide range of welfare needs. This included help to access addiction services, benefits and housing support. For almost all individuals, the intensity of supervision was commensurate with their

identified risks and needs, and staff were tenacious in their efforts to help individuals access the resources they required.

Across the service, there was a notable focus on helping individuals understand the impact of their offending behaviour. A range of well-established, offence-focused programmes were being delivered including **Moving Forward: Making Changes (MF:MC)** and the Caledonian programme. The **Respect** programme was available as an alternative to the Caledonian group for men with a conviction for domestic abuse who were in irregular employment or whose first language was not English. To help individuals fully prepare for and embed learning from their group work, the service was training all social workers to deliver the Caledonian programme and MF:MC case management materials. This was equipping staff to deliver robust and focused one-to-one interventions and was bringing a structured approach to their wider practice. Through these interventions, individuals were supported to address a wide range of offending-related issues including anger management, consequential thinking and victim empathy. As a result, individuals were demonstrating improved self-management and reduced levels of offending.

The unpaid work service was offering a broad range of flexible unpaid work opportunities. The majority of individuals had the opportunity to undertake **other activity** as part of their unpaid work requirement. This included access to training and employment support opportunities commissioned through **Aberdeen Foyer**; educational support from the adult learning and development team; and outdoor education activities through **Venture Trust**. When we reviewed records, we found that almost all the unpaid work placements were suitable and were supporting the majority of individuals to develop new skills. While other activity was being used flexibly, not all activities were experienced as purposeful. Individuals expressed a desire for access to digital learning opportunities and more placements that would encourage meaningful links with the community.

For women subject to CPOs, the Connections women's centre was offering responsive and bespoke support delivered in a safe and relaxed environment. Women using the service benefitted from access to a support worker and were actively involved in developing a personal plan. The structured, modular Connections programme delivered by the women's service was tailored to individual needs. This included input from a range of third sector and statutory partners, which was contributing to improved health and wellbeing. The service also facilitated individual unpaid work placements for women whose personal circumstances made it difficult for them to attend the central unpaid work facility. This flexible approach was supporting those women, who might otherwise have struggled to comply, to successfully complete their orders and move on from justice services.

Strong collaborative working between justice staff and partner agencies was supporting the development and implementation of case management plans. In most cases, individuals were referred to appropriate resources at the earliest opportunity and were able to access all required interventions. Effective referral

routes were in place to drug and alcohol services. Work to establish clear referral pathways and protocols with housing colleagues had resulted in significantly improved access to housing and housing support.

Managers had good oversight of practice and were undertaking regular quality assurance activities. These were consolidated through staff supervision, team meetings and practice development groups, reflecting a service commitment to learning and improvement. Staff had a good awareness of National Outcomes and Standards and their statutory responsibilities and were managing non-compliance and exercising discretion appropriately.

While there were clear strengths in relation to the quality of planning and interventions, there were opportunities to strengthen adherence to national guidance. The service was committed to producing case management plans in accordance with National Outcomes and Standards timescales but this was not being achieved consistently. In some instances, the frequency of reviews and home visits was below the level required. The service had already identified these as areas for improvement.

How well do staff involve individuals in key processes?

Staff were actively seeking the views of individuals at all stages and were working proactively and creatively to encourage engagement. Individuals were given clear information at the start of their CPOs, which helped them to understand what was expected of them. Non-judgemental attitudes from staff were supporting individuals to take responsibility for their offending behaviour. Flexible and person-centred approaches were enabling them to overcome obstacles and successfully complete their CPOs. **Statutory reviews** were being used to encourage them to reflect on their progress and provide feedback on the service they were receiving. Home visits were welcomed by individuals who felt that they provided additional opportunities to build relationships with staff. Although there was scope to further increase their usage, exit questionnaires were being used to capture individuals' views and staff clearly listened and responded to the feedback received. Data gathered from questionnaires was also being reviewed on a quarterly basis to identify areas for service improvement.

Wider feedback and input from individuals about specific projects and initiatives was being used to shape service delivery. Men attending unpaid work had been invited to work alongside third sector partners to develop a 'Confidence to Cook' course. Feedback from women about their experience of unpaid work had prompted the service to begin offering placements at the women's centre.

There was a clear aspiration among staff and managers to encourage individuals to actively participate in their orders and to further develop opportunities for meaningful engagement. Staff within the service were considering how they could build on

learning from efforts to establish a women's forum and how to maximise the involvement of individuals in the case management planning process.

Impact and experience of community payback orders

This section focuses on the impact that justice services, including commissioned services, were having on the lives of those individuals who are, or have been, subject to a community payback order. It considers if individuals have benefitted from positive relationships with staff and what effect getting help and support has had on them.

The support provided by the justice service was having a transformative impact on the lives of individuals who were subject to CPOs. Almost all individuals were consistently and overwhelmingly positive about their relationships with staff from across all aspects of the justice service. Justice service staff were described as reliable, approachable, professional, genuine, and accepting. Relationships were characterised by the provision of compassionate, consistent, focused and flexible support that frequently exceeded individuals' expectations and, where required, extended beyond the life of the order. This consistent message was captured eloquently by one individual who noted "I kept expecting punishment, but I got help and I've come out a better person". Multiple individuals described their relationship with staff as the biggest catalyst for change in their lives.

Individuals on supervision were being consistently and effectively supported to address their offending behaviour. While some individuals had completed activities that were structured, in-depth and focused on their offence, others described less formal and supportive discussions about their offending behaviour. This indicated a tailored and person-centred approach. Almost all individuals reported that the non-judgemental approach of staff had enabled them to examine their behaviour, accept responsibility for their actions and begin to make positive changes. Structured group-work interventions, while challenging, were also experienced as satisfying and were supporting individuals to change their thinking and behaviour.

Individuals undertaking unpaid work gained a sense of worth, purpose and satisfaction from the activities, particularly when the work delivered obvious benefits to the community. In addition to offering opportunities to develop new skills, participation in unpaid work was providing helpful routine and reducing social isolation. Positive and constructive input from staff supported individuals to develop increasingly pro-social attitudes and perspectives. Individuals with additional needs appreciated the efforts unpaid work staff made to identify suitable placements that took account of their personal requirements. This had enabled them to successfully engage with their order and fulfil their commitment to the court.

The women's centre was experienced as a safe and accessible space providing access to social and emotional support for women and their children. Attendees

benefitted from opportunities to participate in a wide range of groups and activities and were supported to access wider welfare services. As a result of these inputs, women were experiencing improved physical and mental health and increased levels of confidence and safety.

Leadership

How well are leaders supporting improvement and change?

This part of our report examines the effectiveness of leaders in striving for excellence in the quality of justice services. We look at how well leaders provide governance and oversight and use performance management to drive forward service improvement, innovation and change. We also look at the extent to which leaders involve staff and partners and learn from others to develop services.

Leaders were ambitious and aspirational in their pursuit of transformational change. A vision to make Aberdeen 'a place where all people can prosper'¹³ was reflected in the local outcome improvement plan. This was informing and driving the priorities of the justice service, the community justice group and the health and social care partnership. The local outcome improvement plan was usefully informed by a population needs assessment and a specific justice needs assessment. This was helping to ensure that planning was evidence-based and delivery was targeted to the identified areas of need within the community. A bold commitment to early intervention and prevention was evident across the suite of strategic plans and this was reflected in a range of ambitious justice 'stretch outcomes'.

Leaders within the health and social care partnership expressed a clear sense of ownership of justice social work. In the early days of the integration arrangements, the service was not as fully involved as it had expected to be. Concerted efforts had been made to redress this balance and there was an ongoing commitment to raising the profile and visibility of the service within the wider partnership. Leaders had directed the preparation of a justice service delivery plan that clearly demonstrated the alignment between justice priorities, local outcome improvement plan priorities and national outcomes. The creation of a lead for social work post within adult social work services had also brought a helpful focus to the justice service. Working alongside the chief social work officer, the post holder was a visible and vocal champion for the service in all key decision-making forums. This was strengthening strategic and operational links for justice services.

Both strategic and operational leaders were strongly committed to the ongoing improvement of the service. Efforts to embed performance management systems across the service were supporting data-led learning and improvement. A performance management board was established to replace ad hoc structures. This

¹³ Local Outcome Improvement Plan: 2016-26, Community Planning Aberdeen (2020) p3.

board's first priorities included development of the justice service delivery plan and an associated performance management framework. In addition, robust quality assurance was put in place. The board reviewed monthly reports from the two practice development groups, which provided oversight and scrutiny of performance, improvement and assurance. Clear governance structures were enabling annual and exception reporting from the performance management board to the clinical care and governance group. This coherent approach was supporting positive change and improved outcomes against national and local priorities.

At an operational level, managers had established a strong culture of continuous learning that was resulting in improved delivery of CPOs. The best practice and practice issues groups included staff representatives from across the range of justice teams and created useful space for review and reflection. These groups were delivering demonstrable improvements through a series of change projects relating to the use of LS/CMI, and the delivery of unpaid work and women's services. The service had invested heavily in training social work students through strong links with Robert Gordon University and the provision of an in-house practice teacher. This had aided recruitment and established a clear culture of learning within the service. This learning ethos was reinforced by a strong team of senior social workers who were actively driving development and improvement work across the service. Professional development was supported by access to training, supervision and practice-focused team meetings. Staff also had access to a coherent range of policies, procedures, and practice guidance to support compliance with statutory duties. Staff were actively encouraged and empowered to take on additional roles and responsibilities based on their areas of interest.

Health and social care integration arrangements and the clear commitment to ongoing improvement were contributing to effective relationships with key local and national justice stakeholders. Coherent governance aligned to strategic plans was underpinned by a strong improvement methodology. The decision to incorporate the **community justice outcome improvement plan** within the local outcome improvement plan had helped to raise the profile of justice services. This was contributing to a shared sense of purpose and ownership across partners by providing clarity about joint goals and measures. Partners were very positive about the quality of collaborative relationships, and the strong strategic approach from leaders was supporting effective links with justice services and increasing opportunities to work innovatively together.

Operational leaders were viewed by staff as visible and approachable. Staff and stakeholders felt that their views were sought and listened to as a result of the collegiate and participative leadership style demonstrated by managers. Encouragingly, staff had been involved in developing the justice service delivery plan.

Despite the efforts by leaders to increase the visibility of justice services, some staff questioned the extent to which the work of the justice service was seen and valued

by strategic leaders within the wider partnership. Leaders were alert to the need to finalise and implement the service delivery plan and associated performance management framework. Completing this work offers opportunities to re-engage with staff and partners to raise their awareness of the place and contribution of the justice service within the wider health and social care partnership.

Preparation for the extension of the presumption against short sentences

The service had undertaken a profiling exercise in preparation for the extension of the presumption against short sentences (EPASS) on 4 July 2019. The purpose was to consider individuals' needs and review the service's capacity to meet any increased demand. This highlighted the need for increased staffing and more flexible and varied placements to accommodate increasing numbers of individuals with complex or additional needs. The service was recruiting task supervisors from across the local authority. In addition, they had started to reconfigure the service and invest in better equipment to enable them to broaden the range of available activities. This work to develop the service was ongoing as part of an unpaid work improvement plan.

The service had been collaborating with partners to increase the availability of alternatives to CPOs and this reflected a strong commitment to early intervention and prevention. This included the use of diversion, bail supervision, structured deferred sentences, and a problem-solving approach. Monthly data monitoring was in place to identify trends and track any potential impact on workload that might require resources to be redeployed. No significant increase in demand had been identified, other than a rise in court requests for assessments for restriction of liberty orders. While it remained too early to determine the impact of EPASS, the service was well placed to meet additional demands.

Areas for improvement

- To enable robust oversight and increased ability to demonstrate outcomes and impact, senior officers should ensure that the justice service delivery plan and performance management framework are agreed and implemented, and associated reporting cycles established.
- To ensure key processes are effective, senior managers should further strengthen quality assurance to support consistent, confident and timely risk assessment and case planning processes, particularly those relating to risk of serious harm.

Capacity for improvement

The service embraced the learning opportunities provided by our scrutiny and engaged fully with the inspection process, despite the very challenging circumstances of the pandemic. Notwithstanding the significant difficulties facing partnerships due to COVID-19, we were assured that the service was able to make improvements and was committed to pursuing excellence in service delivery.

Our confidence was grounded in the ambitious leadership and strong management capability that we observed across the service. A clear vision for transformational change was reflected in well-aligned strategic plans and supported by coherent governance structures. There was clear ownership of the service within the wider health and social care partnership. The development of the justice service delivery plan and performance management framework reflected leaders' ambitions to become a data-led service and offered opportunities to strengthen oversight. The creation of the lead for social work post had brought visibility to the service within strategic forums. Strong improvement methodology was driving a programme of performance management and service improvement. Supported by strong, values-driven leadership, a team of capable and committed senior social workers and staff were implementing a wide range of practice development activities that were contributing to ongoing improvements. This demonstrated that the culture of continuous learning permeated all aspects of the service.

The transformative impact of the consistent and individualised support that staff were providing to individuals on CPOs further demonstrated the strength of the service. In addition to addressing offending behaviour, relationship-based interventions reflected a clear commitment to meeting individuals' health and wellbeing needs. This evidence-based approach was supporting individuals to make positive changes in their lives and reflected the clear focus on improving outcomes. In combination, aspirational leadership, strong management, and an invested workforce leave the service well placed to pursue excellence and innovation in all aspects of their service delivery.

Evaluations

What key outcomes have we achieved?

1.1 Improving the life chances and outcomes for people subject to a community payback order

Good

Rationale for the evaluation

We found consistently positive or improving trends across key nationally-reported CPO performance indicators. Sustained quality assurance contributed to important improvements in some unpaid work measures. Operational staff and managers worked collaboratively within a coherent system of practice oversight groups, and were using performance data effectively to identify improvement priorities. There were challenges in completing unpaid work requirements within court-imposed timescales because of reduced staff capacity and increasing numbers of individuals with complex needs. Staff understood the impact of trauma, poverty and inequality and were strongly committed to supporting individuals to achieve positive outcomes. Feedback from questionnaires completed at the end of a CPO noted that respondents were treated with respect. Individuals indicated they had benefitted from opportunities to develop coping skills that had a positive impact on self-esteem and self-management. Similarly, our review of records and discussions with individuals on CPOs found positive changes in the lives of most individuals during their CPO. While the use of exit questionnaires was increasing, the service was not yet able to demonstrate consistent improvements in individual outcomes over time. Mechanisms to systematically capture and review qualitative data at key assessment, planning and review stages were limited. In recognition, a performance management framework had been developed and was awaiting agreement and implementation.

How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?

2.1 Impact on people who have committed offences

Excellent

Rationale for the evaluation

The support provided by the justice service was having a transformative impact on the lives of individuals who were subject to CPOs. Almost all individuals were consistently benefitting from very positive relationships with staff across all aspects of the service. Staff treated individuals with genuine care and acceptance and were proactive and persistent in their efforts to provide help and support. Individuals told us that the level of help they received frequently exceeded their expectations and was a catalyst for positive change in their lives. Practice was underpinned by a very strong value base and clear commitment to a consistent, relationship-based approach. Interventions were highly person-centred and aimed to address the root causes of offending behaviour. Combined with a compassionate, flexible, and non-judgemental approach, they were supporting individuals to take increased responsibility and move away from offending behaviour. As a consequence, individuals experienced improved self-awareness, increased self-management skills and reduced levels of offending. The practical help, support and advice provided by

staff was contributing to improved physical and mental wellbeing and better life circumstances. Early recognition of need, and support to engage with appropriate services was resulting in more stable housing, decreased levels of drug and alcohol use, improved relationships, enhanced levels of safety, and improved confidence.

How good is our delivery of services?	
5.2 Assessing and responding to risk and need	Good
<p>Rationale for the evaluation</p> <p>Justice social work reports were high quality and helpfully informing sentencing options. Comprehensive assessments of risk and need were in place for almost every individual, and the majority of these were also high quality. A full range of specialist assessments were being undertaken to inform interventions, including age-appropriate assessments for use with young people. A strong commitment to involving the individual and collaborating with partner agencies was evident at every stage of the assessment process. Proportionate, risk-based information sharing was helpfully informing responses to identified risk and need within the service and across wider social work teams where appropriate. Although there was a service-level commitment to following national guidance, just over half of comprehensive assessments were completed within the expected 20-day timescale. There was a recognised need to strengthen compliance with assessment timescales and to further develop staff confidence in using the full range of functions within the LS/CMI assessment tool. This included assessing and analysing risk of serious harm.</p>	
5.3 Planning and providing effective intervention	Very Good
<p>Rationale for the evaluation</p> <p>There were major strengths in the planning and delivery of interventions across the service. Almost all individuals had a case management plan in place and these plans, along with the work being done to implement them, were consistently high quality. Staff demonstrated a very clear commitment to relationship-based practice. Proactive, tailored support was being offered to address a wide range of welfare needs, and staff made concerted efforts to encourage engagement and remove barriers to participation. In addition, there was a notable focus on supporting individuals to address their offending behaviour through the various group work programmes and robust one-to-one interventions. The unpaid work service was offering a broad range of flexible unpaid work opportunities that took account of the needs of individuals and supported skills development. The women's centre gave women access to responsive, bespoke support to address offending behaviour and their wider needs. Strong collaborative working between justice staff and a range of statutory and third sector partners was supporting development and implementation of case management plans. Staff were effectively managing non-compliance in line with statutory responsibilities and exercising discretion appropriately. Managers had good oversight of case management. Routine quality assurance measures were well established, reflecting a wider commitment to learning and improvement. The service recognised that adherence to National Outcomes and Standards in relation to key processes needed to improve. Case management plans were not being consistently completed within the 20-day timescales, and reviews and home visits</p>	

were not always taking place at the required frequency.

How good is our leadership?

9.4 Leadership of improvement and change

Very Good

Rationale for the evaluation

Leaders were ambitious and aspirational in their pursuit of transformational change. A coherent vision outlined in the local outcome improvement plan was shaping and driving the improvement priorities of the justice service. This was underpinned by a clear commitment to early intervention and prevention which permeated strategic plans and was reflected in a range of ambitious outcomes for the justice service. There was a clear sense of ownership of the justice service from chief officers, who were taking steps to raise the profile of the service within the health and social care partnership. A delivery plan had been developed to articulate priorities along with performance management structures to strengthen oversight of performance, improvement, and assurance activities. This reflected the strong commitment to continuous learning and improvement that permeated all levels of the service. Operational leaders had embedded a very strong culture of practice learning through a range of improvement initiatives. Staff at all levels were encouraged and empowered to take part in developing the service. This was contributing to better delivery of CPOs. Clarity about shared goals and measures was contributing to effective collaboration with partners. Some staff questioned whether the work of the service was seen and valued within the wider partnership. To address these concerns, leaders needed to finalise and implement the delivery plan and associated performance management frameworks to increase visibility and effectively demonstrate impact.

The six-point evaluation scale

The six-point scale is used when evaluating the quality of performance across quality indicators

Excellent	Outstanding or sector leading
Very Good	Major strengths
Good	Important strengths, with some areas for improvement
Adequate	Strengths just outweigh weaknesses
Weak	Important weaknesses – priority action required
Unsatisfactory	Major weaknesses – urgent remedial action required

An evaluation of **excellent** describes performance which is sector leading and supports experiences and outcomes for people which are of outstandingly high quality. There is a demonstrable track record of innovative, effective practice and/or very high quality performance across a wide range of its activities and from which others could learn. We can be confident that excellent performance is sustainable and that it will be maintained.

An evaluation of **very good** will apply to performance that demonstrates major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for people. There are very few areas for improvement. Those that do exist will have minimal adverse impact on people's experiences and outcomes. While opportunities are taken to strive for excellence within a culture of continuous improvement, performance evaluated as very good does not require significant adjustment.

An evaluation of **good** applies to performance where there is a number of important strengths which, taken together, clearly outweigh areas for improvement. The strengths will have a significant positive impact on people's experiences and outcomes. However, improvements are required to maximise wellbeing and ensure that people consistently have experiences and outcomes which are as positive as possible.

An evaluation of **adequate** applies where there are some strengths but these just outweigh weaknesses. Strengths may still have a positive impact but the likelihood of achieving positive experiences and outcomes for people is reduced significantly because key areas of performance need to improve. Performance, which is evaluated as adequate, may be tolerable in particular circumstances, such as where a service or partnership is not yet fully established, or in the midst of major transition. However, continued performance at adequate level is not acceptable. Improvements must be made by building on strengths while addressing those elements that are not contributing to positive experiences and outcomes for people.

An evaluation of **weak** will apply to performance in which strengths can be identified but these are outweighed or compromised by significant weaknesses. The weaknesses, either individually or when added together, substantially affect peoples' experiences or outcomes. Without improvement as a matter of priority, the welfare or safety of people may be compromised, or their critical needs not met. Weak performance requires action in the form of structured and planned improvement by the provider or partnership with a mechanism to demonstrate clearly that sustainable improvements have been made.

An evaluation of **unsatisfactory** will apply when there are major weaknesses in critical aspects of performance which require immediate remedial action to improve experiences and outcomes for people. It is likely that people's welfare or safety will be compromised by risks which cannot be tolerated. Those accountable for carrying out the necessary actions for improvement must do so as a matter of urgency, to ensure that people are protected, and their wellbeing improves without delay.

The quality indicator model

The inspection team used this model to reach evaluations on the quality and effectiveness of services.

What key outcomes have we achieved?	How well do we jointly meet the needs of our stakeholders?	How good is our delivery of services for those involved in community justice?	How good is our operational management?	How good is our leadership?
1. Key performance outcomes	2. Impact on people who have committed offences, their families and victims	5. Delivery of key processes	6. Policy, service development and planning	9. Leadership and direction
1.1 Improving the life chances and outcomes of those with lived experience of community justice	2.1 Impact on people who have committed offences 2.2 Impact on victims 2.3 Impact on families	5.1 Providing help and support when it is needed 5.2 Assessing and responding to risk and need 5.3 Planning and providing effective intervention 5.4 Involving people who have committed offences and their families	6.1 Policies, procedures and legal measures 6.2 Planning and delivering services in a collaborative way 6.3 Participation of those who have committed offences, their families, victims and other stakeholders 6.4 Performance management and quality assurance	9.1 Vision, values and aims 9.2 Leadership of strategy and direction 9.3 Leadership of people 9.4 Leadership of improvement and change
	3. Impact on staff		7. Management and support of staff	
	3.1 Impact on staff		7.1 Staff training and development, and joint working	
	4. Impact on the communities		8. Partnership working	
	4.1 Impact on the community		8.1 Effective use and management of resources 8.2 Commissioning arrangements 8.3 Securing improvement through self-evaluation	
10. What is our capacity for improvement?				
Overall judgement based on an evaluation of the framework of quality indicators				

Terms we use in this report

Aberdeen Foyer is an employability support service primarily for those on CPOs who have unpaid work and other activity requirements.

Caledonian System is an integrated approach to addressing domestic abuse that combines a court-ordered programme for men, aimed at changing their behaviour, with support services for women and children who have been victims of abuse.

Case management plan should be developed in collaboration with the individual and should seek to address the identified risks and needs and promote the strengths identified by the assessment process.

Clinical care and governance group is a subgroup of the clinical care and governance committee which reports to the integration joint board. The group scrutinises reports to provide assurance to the committee on the delivery and quality of safe, effective, person-centred care.

Community justice outcome improvement plan - the Community Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 places a duty on community justice statutory partners to produce this plan, which outlines local needs and priorities and the actions to address these.

Connections women's centre provides a range of support to women subject to CPOs in Aberdeen including the Connections programme to address offending related issues. The centre provides unpaid work opportunities, enables access to other agencies and hosts a drop-in service for domestic abuse victims.

Diversion can be imposed following a decision by the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service to divert a case for social work intervention with the aim of preventing further offending in cases involving young people, individuals being charged for the time, minor offences or where there is no overriding public interest for a prosecution.

Local outcome improvement plan outlines how the community planning partnership plans to deliver improved outcomes for its communities.

Level of service/ case management inventory (LS/CMI) is a risk/need assessment and management planning method for general offending. In Scotland, the LS/CMI approach has been developed to combine an actuarial approach with an evaluation of the pattern, nature, seriousness and likelihood of offending.

MAPPA is the acronym for multi-agency public protection arrangements put in place to manage the risk posed by registered sex offenders and other individuals who pose a high risk of harm to people and communities.

MARAC stands for multi-agency risk assessment conference arrangements, which are professional processes designed to identify and protect individuals from domestic abuse.

Moving Forward: Making Changes (MF:MC) is a behavioural programme providing interventions for men who commit sexual offences or offences with a sexual element.

Other activity requirements can be undertaken as part of an unpaid work requirement and provide an opportunity for individuals to undertake other rehabilitative activities that promote desistance from offending, for example alcohol or drug education, employability training, problem solving, interpersonal skills training and so on. Other activity must not exceed 30% of hours, to a maximum of 30 hours.

Pre-disposal team enables early engagement with people appearing in court, provides services to Aberdeen sheriff court and passes relevant information to justice and children's social work services.

Problem-solving approach is a collaborative approach combining the authority of the court with a range of community-based supports and interventions to reduce the use of short custodial sentences and reduce offending by taking a rehabilitative and supportive approach that is tailored to meet the needs of the individual.

Respect is an accredited programme for working one-to-one with perpetrators of domestic abuse.

Statutory reviews – National Outcomes and Standards indicate that case management plans should be reviewed and, where necessary, revised at regular intervals during the course of a CPO.

Structured deferred sentences allow individuals an opportunity to prove to the court that they can be of good behaviour and avoid further offending.

Supervision is one of nine provisions available to the court that can be imposed as part of a CPO. With the exception of unpaid work for individuals aged 18 and over, none of the CPO requirements can be imposed without the addition of a supervision requirement. Supervision requires the individual to attend appointments with a justice social worker for a specified period. The aim of supervision is to encourage compliance and reduce reoffending by engaging the individual in a process of change.

Trauma-informed practice is grounded in understanding and responding to the impact of trauma. It emphasises physical, psychological and emotional safety and creates opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment.

Unpaid work is intended as an alternative to imprisonment, this takes place in local communities and is for the benefit of the community. Unpaid work can be imposed as a standalone requirement by means of a Level 1 or Level 2 order or can be imposed in conjunction with a range of other requirements, including supervision.

Venture Trust (Scotland) is a national charity providing intensive personal development programmes and outdoor activities to help reduce offending and support desistance.

Whole System Approach for Young People Who Offend is the Scottish Government's programme for addressing the needs of young people involved in offending. It aims to divert young people from statutory measures, prosecution and

custody through early intervention and robust community initiatives. It is aligned to the principles of the Getting it Right for Every Child approach.

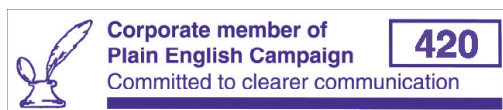
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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Public Protection Committee
DATE	28th April 2021
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Statutory Appropriate Adult Service
REPORT NUMBER	ACHSCP/21/091
DIRECTOR	Sandra MacLeod, IJB Chief Officer
CHIEF OFFICER	Claire Wilson, Social Work Lead
REPORT AUTHOR	Carol Simmers, Service Manager
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide the Public Protection Committee with an update on the progress of the statutory Appropriate Adult Service since its commencement on 10th January 2020.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 note and endorse the information contained within this report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 At its meeting on 7th October 2020, the Committee received a report from the Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership (ACHSCP) which provided an overview of the statutory Appropriate Adult service in Aberdeen considering its recent implementation. The Committee requested that a further update be provided in six months' time, and this report provides that update.
- 3.2 On 10th January 2020 the Scottish Government under section 42(3) of the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2016 placed a duty on local authorities to provide an Appropriate Adult service to assist vulnerable persons (aged 16 or over) in police custody who have communication difficulties because of a mental disorder. This is defined in the Mental Health Care and Treatment (Scotland) Act 2003 as 'any mental illness, personality disorder, learning disability however caused or manifested'. In practice this includes people with acquired brain injury, autistic spectrum disorder or dementia. Related [Guidance for Local Authorities](#) was also published by Scottish Government.
- 3.2 Assistance from the Appropriate Adult Scheme is available to victims, witnesses, suspects and accused persons. Appropriate Adults are independent of the police and are not usually known to the person being interviewed. Their role is to provide support at any stage during police procedures, including searches, interviews, medical examinations, the taking of forensic samples and

fingerprinting. Support in these circumstances refers to helping the vulnerable person understand what is happening and facilitate effective communication between the person and the police.

- 3.3 Prior to the implementation of the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2016, the Appropriate Adult service in Aberdeen was delivered by social workers who responded to call-outs from police as and when required. During evenings and weekends a social worker responded via Out of Hours Social Work from an agreed list of Appropriate Adults.
- 3.4 During the establishment of the statutory service, Appropriate Adult provision was kept 'in-house' to allow scoping of the new duties and have a clearer picture of the overall demand. Under the current 'in-house' option the onus on delivering statutory Appropriate Adult services sits with the adult Duty Social Work team and for out of hours duties a rota of current Appropriate Adults is held.
- 3.5 Dedicated funding from Scottish Government was utilised to set up the statutory scheme and create an Appropriate Adult Coordinator role with the responsibility for oversight of the service and training delivery and for the scoping and scaling up of a future service once statutory demands were fully understood.
- 3.6 Data from the Scottish Appropriate Adult Network (SAAN) has shown that, contrary to expectations, the demand for Appropriate Adults has fallen in many areas of Scotland since the implementation of the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2016, and the number of requests in Aberdeen has been in line with that (see below). However, this may be linked to COVID, as the number of persons taken into custody has reduced and some reported crime levels are down, therefore there are less victims/witnesses.

Date	No. of requests for an AA
2014-2015	168
2015-2016	133
2016-2017	119
2017-2018	110
2018-2019	112
2019-2020	113

- 3.7 As we progressed through 2020, a National Appropriate Adult Coordinator was appointed, the Care Inspectorate have taken on the quality assessment role, and a National Oversight Group has been formed.
- 3.6 Despite reducing figures, the duty social work team because of its size continue to face demand pressures with its existing fieldwork responsibilities responding to the pandemic.
- 3.7 Our intention was to scope the benefits of contracting out the appropriate adult service and proceed with a procurement process, but due to the lockdown restrictions this has not been possible, and the service remains in house.

- 3.8 Dedicated Appropriate Adult support to undertake and cover most appropriate adult duties during working hours is the cheapest option with 'call-outs' being reserved for out of hours provision. The Appropriate Adult Coordinator was initially a 12-month post but we are now in the process of making this a permanent post to oversee and coordinate the service.
- 3.9 As we continue to develop our appropriate adult scheme it is important to bear in mind the potential changes to our current model of provision in Aberdeen as we await outcomes at a National level. In the meantime, to support progression of the service and ensure local quality improvement, we are creating local performance measures based on the Scottish Government guidelines.
- 3.10 An Appropriate Adult Steering Group has been set up in partnership with colleagues in Aberdeenshire. We are currently embarking on a training needs analysis and reviewing the current provision of Appropriate Adult services within our health and social care partnerships. The Steering Group will also consider the potential rise in requests when the lockdown eases.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Strategic Risk	None for this report		
Compliance	Non compliance with legislation	L	Arrangements in place as outlined in this paper
Operational	None for this report		
Financial	None for this report		
Reputational	None for this report		
Environment / Climate	None for this report		

7. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	<p>Appropriate Adults exist to ensure that vulnerable people are treated fairly with respect for their rights and entitlements and can participate effectively in procedures related to a police investigation and / or their detention.</p> <p>The provision of the Appropriate Adults service aligns with the LOIP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stretch Outcome 11 - Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026; and - related Driver - Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups
UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes	The report sets out progress in fulfilling the requirements placed upon the Council by the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 in relation to Appropriate Adults.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	Full impact assessment not required.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Criminal Justice \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#)

Scottish Government [Appropriate Adults – Guidance for local authorities](#) (January 2020)

10. APPENDICES

N/A

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Public Protection Committee
DATE	28 th April 2021
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Aberdeen Violence Against Women Partnership Progress Report
REPORT NUMBER	CUS/21/085
DIRECTOR	Andy Macdonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Derek McGowan, Chair of Community Justice Group
REPORT AUTHOR	Carron McKellar, Co-Chair of Violence Against Women Partnership
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Public Protection Committee on the progress of the Aberdeen Violence Against Women Partnership (AVAWP).

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 That the Committee:
- a) note and endorse the information contained within this report and appendices;
 - b) note that in future an annual assurance report will be presented to the Committee by the Chief Officer.

3. PROGRESS REPORT

- 3.1 The Aberdeen Violence Against Women Partnership (AVAWP) reports through the Community Justice Group and in 2020 had the Strategic Priorities and Action Plan approved through the Public Protection Executive Group. It is co-chaired by Police Scotland and Grampian Women’s Aid and is the key multi-agency driver of implementation of the Scottish Government and COSLA’s Equally Safe strategy across Aberdeen City. This report highlights the progress and work of the partnership towards meeting the aims of the strategy which are aligned to Equally Safe and the additional work undertaken during the Covid-19 pandemic and associated restrictions.

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- 3.2 The COVID-19 restrictions and their implications have continued to be the focus of the AVAWP. As highlighted in the previous progress report, the restrictions inadvertently resulted in the potential for victims of abuse to be in the company of new or existing abusers for prolonged periods, whilst not being seen by friends, family or professionals, thus increasing opportunities for abuse. Furthermore, victims of abuse may have been able to report abuse due to the proximity of their abuser or may have been under the impression that normal pathways to support may not have been available due to the restrictions. [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Supplementary National Violence Against Women Guidance](#) published by the Scottish Government and COSLA which assisted in formulating the response to the restrictions and associated risks.
- 3.3 In line with the AVAWP Communications Strategy, media campaigns have continued by the partnership, highlighting that services are still open and available, while identifying pathways to support with the AVAWP web page hosted on the Aberdeen City Council website providing a wide variety of information and support linked to gender based violence.
- 3.4 Media campaigns and initiatives have been crucial during this period with regards preventative messaging and also ensuring victims are aware of the support and assistance available to them. Collectively, and as an example, a media awareness raising campaign was launched to promote safety messaging in relation to sexual offending to coincide with the relaxing of lockdown restrictions, in respect of the hospitality sector.
- 3.5 The Scottish Government Domestic Abuse campaign, in conjunction with Police Scotland and Safer Scotland, was well supported by the AVAWP. This included local messaging being translated into the 10 most requested languages and sent out through community channels to ensure the messages were as wide-reaching as possible. Additionally, articles published in local community newsletters and distributed to locality areas, aiming to reach those who may not have internet access. With local radio supporting the campaign, this preventative multi-faceted public messaging was continued to ensure focus remained on helping the most vulnerable in our communities.
- 3.6 December saw the partnership's focus turn to '16 Days of Action'. With restrictions in place, partners worked collectively to ensure the continued support of this national campaign in Aberdeen. Aside from the additional enforcement aspect of this, events were carried out virtually and included awareness raising, training to practitioners, police officers and volunteers, and a well-received multi-agency webinar aimed at victims and those seeking support.
- 3.7 Certain services have reported increased demand, particularly at times when lockdown restrictions eased whilst others report demand similar to previous years. The combined issue of 'hidden harm' and potential 'delayed demand' post COVID-19 restrictions is one which is closely monitored by the partnership.

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3.8 Following the Strategic Priorities and Action Plan being approved, the AVAWP has recently developed four key subgroups to take forward the priorities identified in the Action Plan. Two of these subgroups are pan-Grampian and led by Police Scotland and NHS Grampian, recognising the strength in having consistency across the North East in two key areas. The remaining two are driving the work carried out under the Improvement Project entitled 'Tackling Domestic Abuse' which aims to us a whole population approach to increase the aware of domestic abuse by 2021, reduce the number of children who are witness to domestic abuse by September 2022 and decrease the number of reported incidents by 30% in 2026.

3.8.1 Data, Performance and Quality Assurance Group

This is a multi-agency pan-Grampian group being led by Police Scotland. The ACC Digital team is supporting the creation on a VAWP Data dashboard for each of the Grampian areas. To begin with, only domestic abuse information is being collated and, although still in the process of collecting management information around domestic abuse and identifying gaps, it is starting to compare data from 2020. Data on the other forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) will be collected once domestic abuse data has been finalised. It should be noted that this is a local management tool and the data collated is not for publication beyond the respective VAWPs at this time. This group is currently meeting every 6 weeks and will be integral in steering the direction of the partnership as it strives to meet the objectives set out in the Action Plan.

3.8.2 Training, Learning and Development Group

This is also a multi-agency pan-Grampian group and is being led by NHS Grampian. The group is currently collectively evaluating what training is available in each of the Grampian areas and identifying gaps in training need with a view to creating a virtual training programme of local and national learning and development opportunities. The aim is to provide practitioners and volunteers with the knowledge to respond appropriately when working with individuals affected by gender-based violence or abuse. Planning is in place for a multi-agency VAWG conference to be held later this year to start looking at the impact of COVID on VAWG. Speakers from Safe Lives and University of Aberdeen have already been confirmed.

3.8.3 Rejecting Violence and Perpetrator Focus

Led by Criminal Justice Social Work, this multi-agency subgroup is linked to the Improvement Project – Tackling Domestic Abuse – and its aim is to decrease number of incidents of domestic abuse by 30% by 2026. Monthly meetings have recently commenced alongside the other subgroup which is linked to the Improvement Group (see below). A cross-cutting communications campaign is in the early stages of planning and will include: awareness raising to target perpetrators of domestic abuse; what is harmful behaviour; and awareness raising of ACC Domestic Abuse Team for survivors.

3.8.4 Equal Citizens and Effective Interventions

Led by Children and Families Social Work, this multi-agency subgroup is also linked to Improvement Project 'Tackling Domestic Abuse'. It aims to reduce number of children who experience domestic abuse by September 2022 and is meeting monthly alongside the subgroup mentioned above. As highlighted, the cross-cutting communications campaign is in the early stages of planning and, relevant to this group, will include: awareness raising to target social work professionals' knowledge of domestic abuse the impact on children; and a referral pathway to Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).

3.9 In line with other public protection partnerships, a draft Risk Register has been developed for the AVAWP. It incorporates acknowledged risks which have been identified and are currently being mitigated through the work of the groups mentioned in this report and will be tabled at the next partnership meeting for final comment.

3.9.1 In January 2021, the two co-Chairs and the Lead Officer for the AVAWP briefed elected members. The focus of this briefing was domestic abuse and it covered the recent change to legislation, the partnership's strategy and action plan, and the impact of Covid-19. This was well-attended and there was much engagement. It is anticipated will be repeated towards the end of the year and potentially include other aspects of VAWG.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial matters arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal matters arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Financial	None for this report		
Legal	None for this report		
Employee	None for this report		
Customer	None for this report		
Environment	None for this report		
Technology	None for this report		

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Reputational	Incorrect data, if publicised, could lead to reputational issues for the partnership	L	The local data produced is in its infancy and currently for management purposes only with no plans to publicise it at this early stage in the development of the dataset. Oversight, scrutiny and analysis of the data has rectified initial discrepancies.
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7. OUTCOMES

Local Outcome Improvement Plan Themes	
	Impact of Report
Prosperous Economy	None
Prosperous People	<p>The functions of the Aberdeen Violence Against Women Partnership are that Aberdeen embraces equality and mutual respect, and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls; Women and girls thrive as equal citizens – socially, culturally, economically and politically; Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising the safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people; Men desist from all forms of violence against women and girls ,and perpetrators of such violence receive a robust and effective response. Having a robust data set is key for effectively taking forward this agenda.</p> <p>Stretch Outcome 3, Key Driver 3.2 and Stretch Outcome 9, Key Driver 9.4, are particularly impacted by this report.</p>
Prosperous Place	None

Design Principles of Target Operating Model	
	Impact of Report
Customer Service Design	None

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Organisational Design	None
Governance	Appropriate oversight of services delivering public protection provides assurance to both the organisation and the public in terms of meeting the council's statutory duties, and also contributes to compliance with agreed standards.
Workforce	A proactive learning approach is taken to support staff understanding of the range of domestic abuse and child protection issues identified locally and nationally.
Process Design	None
Technology	None
Partnerships and Alliances	Services to vulnerable people are delivered on a multi-agency basis and the scrutiny, challenge and learning requires all agencies to work in partnership with each other.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment	Not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Duty of Due Regard / Fairer Scotland Duty	Not required

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

10. APPENDICES (if applicable)

Appendix 1. [Aberdeen Violence Against Women Partnership Action Plan and Strategy](#)

Appendix 2. Aberdeen City – COVID19 – Domestic Abuse Communications Campaign Plan

Appendix 3. AVAWP Risk Register (DRAFT)

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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**Aberdeen Violence Against Women
Partnership
Strategy
2018-2021**

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

DOCUMENT CONTROL	
Author	Aberdeen Violence Against Women Partnership
Governance	Community Justice Group

Effective date	
Reviewed	
Next Review	

Foreword

The Aberdeen Violence Against Women Partnership aims to tackle violence and abuse against women and girls in all of its forms. Equally Safe shapes our thinking and planning to tackle gender inequality and promote work in making women and girls safer, stronger and more able to strive.

The aims of the Violence Against Women Partnership will contribute towards the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan in raising aspirations, building a better future for children and young people, empowering and connecting communities as well as addressing the behaviours of perpetrators.

Kevin Walker

Detective Chief Inspector

Chair of the Violence Against Women Partnership

Defining violence against women

“There is one universal truth, applicable to all countries, countries and communities, violence against women is never acceptable, never excusable, never tolerable” Ban Ki-moon (Secretary General of the United Nations 2007-2016)

Violence against women and girls is not confined to any particular political or economic system, but it is prevalent in every society in the world. It cuts across boundaries of wealth, race and culture. It is an

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expression of historically and culturally specific values and standards which are today still executed through many social and political institutions that foster women's subservience and discrimination against women and girls.

The Aberdeen Violence Against Women Partnership (AVAWP) has adopted the Scottish Government definition which identifies violence against women as follows:

“Gender based violence is a function of gender inequality, and an abuse of male power and privilege. It takes the form of actions that result in physical, sexual and psychological harm or suffering to women and children, or affront to their human dignity, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of their liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. It is men who predominantly carry out such violence, and women who are predominantly the victims of such violence. By referring to violence as ‘gender based’ this definition highlights the need to understand violence within the context of women’s and girls’ subordinate status in society. Such violence cannot be understood, therefore, in isolation from the norms, social structure and gender roles within the community, which greatly influence women’s vulnerability to violence”

It is recognised that the abuse perpetrated against women is much wider than physical violence so the word “violence” in this document encompasses, but is not limited to:

- Physical, sexual and psychological abuse occurring in the family, within the general community or institutions, including: domestic violence, coercive and controlling behaviours, rape, incest and child sexual abuse.
- Sexual harassment and intimidation at work and in the public sphere; commercial sexual exploitation, including prostitution, pornography and trafficking
- Dowry related violence
- Female genital mutilation
- Forced and child marriages
- Honour crimes
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Other sexual crime including cyber enabled crime¹

¹ There has been a significant increase in the proportion of ‘Other sexual crimes’ that were cyber enabled (i.e. the internet was used as a means to commit the crime) increasing from 38% in 2013-14 to 51% in 2016-17. For both cyber enabled crimes and non-cyber enabled crimes of ‘Communicating indecently’, ‘Cause to view sexual activity or images’, more than 80% of victims were female and around 95% of perpetrators were male in 2016-17. Almost three-quarters of the victims of cyber enabled crimes of this type in 2016-17 were under 16.

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This does not deny that women use violence and coercive control against a male or female partner. It also does not deny that men use violence and control against other men, including male partners. It simply recognises that women are disadvantaged disproportionately because of the abuse they experience.

The terms 'women' and 'girls' will be used throughout this strategy. It is acknowledged that a person's internal sense of gender may differ from the sex assigned at birth. The terms therefore refer not only to cisgender women and girls (whose gender identity reflects the sex assigned at birth) but also includes sexual/gender minorities – terms that refer to individuals whose sexual orientation is outside the heterosexual mainstream and whose gender identity/expression does not fit into the distinct categories of male or female, or cisgender. This encompasses transgender identities, as well as those exhibiting a non-conforming expression of gender.

We are developing our intersectional approach by increasing recognition of the particular experience of different groups of women and girls, better understanding the additional vulnerabilities and barriers that exist for those with intersectional identities, and through engagement with different groups and stakeholders to understand these issues better.

Governance and Reporting

A Chairperson and Vice Chairperson (or joint chair) shall be elected from the AVAWP membership. The appointment of the Chairperson(s) and Vice Chairperson shall be limited to a maximum of 2 years, with the option of being re-elected beyond this time period.

Meetings will be chaired by the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson. In the event that the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson stands down, all members of the AVAWP will be invited to nominate existing members for appointment to either of the posts. All nominations must have a proposer and a seconder and in the event that more than one nomination is received for either of the posts then a vote will be taken at the next scheduled AVAWP meeting. Only full members present will be entitled to cast a single vote. The nomination with the highest number of votes will be elected to the vacant post.

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The AVAWP shall meet at least once every three months with additional meetings called as necessary.

The activities of the AVAWP shall be promoted by a Co-Ordinator/ Lead Officer.

As part of the wider strategic vision, it is hoped that links will be forged with other strategic partnerships such as Child Protection Committee, Alcohol and Drugs Partnership, Adult Protection Committee and Community Justice Group. A strong multi-group strategic vision will help promote joint-working between the differing groups.

Role and Remit

This Strategy aims to establish the issues related to violence and abuse against women, or gender based abuse, in Aberdeen and identify the priorities to be addressed by the AVAWP. This partnership aims to respond and be actively involved in consultations at both a local and national level.

Violence Against Women is a major societal and public health issue which is recognised at both national and international level. The AVAWP recognises that partnership working is essential for providing a comprehensive response to violence against women.

By working together agencies can intervene more effectively with the men who perpetrate abuse, with women, children and young people harmed, and with the wider community in order to promote prevention and earlier intervention.

Working collaboratively with key partners across all sectors, the AVAWP aims to eradicate violence against women in Aberdeen and make it a place where women and children can, with support when necessary, live free from the inequalities and harm associated with gender based violence in accordance with: the Human Rights Act 1998; the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989; the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention); and the Scottish Government Equally Safe Strategy.

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The AVAWP aims to:

- Ensure that gender inequality is integrated into the planning processes of partner agencies.
- Raise public awareness of violence/ abuse against women and ensure that its related harms are better understood.
- Work with children and young people to challenge attitudes towards violence/ abuse against women.
- Influence public attitudes so that people are no longer prepared to tolerate violence/abuse against women
- Encourage and support all partner agencies to take into account the views of women and children in families affected by violence/ abuse against women when developing services.
- Strive to achieve a policy of co-operation and co-ordination of services between agencies.
- Identify gaps in service provision and make recommendations for the development of future services in Aberdeen.
- Ensure that identified appropriate training is provided to staff from all agencies so that they can recognise violence/ abuse against women and give appropriate support to those affected.
- Reduce the extent and impact of violence/ abuse against women and on those affected in the family and wider community.
- Identify mechanisms whereby perpetrators can be held accountable for their behaviour.
- Develop and monitor the delivery of an Action Plan and Strategy in line with the Scottish Government Equally Safe Strategy

Policy and Strategy Context

Work to prevent and eradicate violence/abuse against women and girls is interwoven into a range of Scottish Government strategies, programmes and frameworks. But the principle one is 'Equally Safe' which specifically seeks to address violence/abuse against women.

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Equally Safe

The Scottish Government, in partnership with COSLA published 'Equally Safe: Scotland's strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls'. The vision is of a strong and flourishing Scotland where all individuals are equally safe and respected, and where women and girls live free from all forms of violence and abuse – and the attitudes that help perpetuate it.

The strategy highlights the need for every area of Government and wider society to play a role in tackling this issue. It calls on the engagement of Police Scotland, NHS, community planning partnerships as well as the civil and criminal justice systems, social work, housing, media, businesses, employers, trade unions and third sector organisations to play their part in creating a society where all women and girls can feel safe, respected and equal in our communities.

To achieve the aims of the strategy, work will be shaped around the equally safe four key priorities:

1. Scottish society embraces equality and mutual respect, and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls
2. Women and girls thrive as equal citizens: socially, culturally, economically and politically
3. Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and promoting women's safety and wellbeing
4. Men desist from all forms of violence against women and girls and perpetrators of such violence received a robust and effective response

The framework provides a shared understanding of the causes, risk factors and scale of violence and abuse against women and girls, and highlights the need to prioritise prevention. It recognises the need to work collaboratively with partners by making best use of available resources and with clear governance and process. It has therefore been used as the basis for developing local outcomes.

Outcomes will be further developed and delivered through dedicated work streams and overseen by the AVAWP.

Local Context

Profile of Aberdeen

In 2014, it was estimated that there were 228,990 people living in Aberdeen. This number is expected to increase. The city has a diverse population, with 15.9 % of people not born in the UK. In addition, children (aged 0-15) make up 15% of its population.

With the traditional success of the oil and gas sector, unemployment in the city is low. Although, as a consequence of the industry, the city contains some of the most affluent areas of Scotland, some of the country's most deprived areas are in Aberdeen.

In 2017-18, there were 59,541 incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police in Scotland an increase of 1% from 2016-17. Where gender information was recorded, around four out of every five incidents of domestic abuse in 2017-18 had a female victim and a male accused.

Locally, there were 2773 incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police in Aberdeen in 2017/18. This was an increase of 251 from the previous financial year (*Scottish Government publication, 'Domestic Abuse in Scotland 2017-18'*).

Moreover, the incidents involving sexual crimes has steadily increased in recent years. Sexual crimes can include rape, attempted rape, sexual assault, crimes relating to prostitution, sexually coercive conduct and taking and distributing indecent images. Changes in legislation and a greater reporting of incidents to police following exposure of national enquiries have undoubtedly contributed to this. In 2017/18, out of the 12,487 sexual crimes recorded by police nationally, 623 relate to Aberdeen (*Scottish Government publication, 'Recorded Crime in Scotland 2017-18'*).

Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP)

The vision and strategic priorities set out within the LOIP provide a clear focus for Community Planning Aberdeen. To create 'a place where all people can prosper', there are four priority areas for strategic working in the LOIP :

1. Aberdeen prospers
2. Children are our future
3. People are resilient, included and supported when in need
4. Empowered, resilient and sustainable communities

The activities of the AVAWP will promote the strategic objectives of the LOIP.

Our Strategic Priorities

Priority 1

Aberdeen embraces equality and mutual respect, and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls

Our Objectives

- Positive gender roles are promoted
- People enjoy healthy, positive relationships
- Children and young people develop an understanding of safe, healthy and positive relationships from an early age
- Individuals and communities recognise and challenge violent and abusive behaviour
- Raised public awareness of violence/ abuse against women and its related harms are better understood.

This priority is fundamental in tackling the problem of violence against women and girls, recognising ingrained and entrenched social beliefs must be challenged if we are to effect societal change.

One of the key roles for partners is to increase awareness of the issue of gender based abuse and the appropriate responses, both in the form of criminal justice measures and in the provision of high quality support for women and children harmed.. Education is also key to engendering an attitudinal shift and it is imperative that work is done with young people in order to educate the next generation on what constitutes abuse and why this is unacceptable in any form.

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A culture shift must take place across all sectors of society if we are to create a climate where: women feel their voices have been heard; they can thrive as equals; communities have a better understanding of the issue of gender based abuse; appropriate interventions are available for perpetrators; and victims feel safer.

Local Outcomes

- A greater proportion of people of all ages are aware of issues regarding violence against women and gender based abuse, and believe it is unacceptable.
- Wider society is empowered to challenge abusive and violent behaviour.

Priority 2

**Women and girls thrive as equal citizens – socially,
culturally, economically and politically**

Our Objectives

- Women and girls are safe, respected and equal in our communities
- Women and men have equal access to power and resources
- Ensure that gender inequality is integrated into the planning processes of partner agencies.

A modern society should see equality and fairness as a given. Our aspiration is for our society to be less patriarchal through; promoting equality in the workplace by bridging the gender pay-gap; tackling the causes of poverty and inequality which disproportionately affect women; giving women a voice and supporting them to have the confidence to use it. A wide attitudinal shift from top down to bottom up is required if we are to effect the change needed to see women treated equally across society.

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Local Outcomes

- Local employers have robust policies and procedures in place, relating to gender equality, diversity, flexible working and sexual harassment.
- Women and girls feel safer in their communities, schools and at work

Priority 3

Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising the safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people

Our Objectives

- Justice responses are robust, swift, consistent and coordinated
- Women, children and young people access relevant, effective and integrated services
- Service providers competently identify violence against women and girls, and respond effectively to women, children and young people affected

All partners involved with the Aberdeen Violence Against Women partnership play a vital role in delivering services to promote the safety and wellbeing of those harmed by violence, abuse and controlling behaviours.

The third sector has offered pioneering services including advocacy, refuge provision, advice and counselling and it is clear that there are some support networks in place for women and children who have been affected by violence.

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As has been previously stated, early identification and intervention is crucial in addressing the issues and local and statutory agencies must be supported to ensure that there is adequate provision of support services in their areas. Increased information sharing and a data based analytical response must be embedded in the work of the partnership and this has to be a priority going forward. Early intervention leads to better outcomes and less of a strain on the public purse and will also lead to a decrease in repeat offences.

Local Outcomes

- Increased awareness of early signs of abuse across all sector, with service providers able to intervene sensitively and effectively.
- More people in the wider community, of all ages, are confident in identifying early signs of abuse.

Priority 4

Men desist from all forms of violence against women and girls, and perpetrators of such violence receive a robust and effective response

Our Objectives

- Justice responses are robust, swift, consistent and coordinated
- Men who carry out violence against women and girls are identified early and held to account by the criminal and civil justice system.
- Relevant links are made between the experience of women, children and young people in the criminal and civil system.

It is clear that domestic and sexual abuse cannot be tolerated and for many women a swift and proportionate criminal justice response can help victims feel validated, safe and aid their recovery.

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The role of Police Scotland and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) cannot be downplayed in tackling this issue and a zero-tolerance approach must be taken in bringing perpetrators to justice.

In order for the justice system to play its full role though we need to ensure that support is available from 'report to court' for victims, that women are encouraged and supported to report abuse and that a renewed faith and confidence is felt in the judicial system. It is crucial that the incidents of violence and abuse are identified at the earliest point, that women are listened to, fully informed and supported in making decisions about their (and their children's) safety, and that a swift, robust and fair judicial process takes place.

A range of interventions should be in place to both work with perpetrators and to provide support to those harmed by domestic and sexual abuse. Such interventions should be proportionate to the risk posed by perpetrators and meet the needs of victims. The Caledonian System is one such intervention which provides a programme (usually 2 years) to higher risk male perpetrators of domestic abuse in tandem with support and safety planning for women and children harmed. The Moving Forward Making Changes programme works with sex offenders for a period of 3 years. Both programmes are aimed at changing perpetrators' thinking and behavior in order to reduce their risk of reoffending.

Local Outcomes

- Women, children and young people have increased confidence in the judicial system
- There is an increased range of mandatory and non-mandatory interventions that challenge and support perpetrators of violence against women

Engagement

Ongoing consultation and engagement with stakeholders is important to the success of the AVAWP. We recognize the importance of listening to women who have used services. This allows us to further develop services in the city to ensure the needs of women, children and young people are being met appropriately and effectively.

Monitoring and Evaluation

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Progress towards this strategy will be reviewed regularly by the AVAWP through its annual action plan. Annual reviews will ensure the strategy is in line with changing local and national policies and priorities.

A performance framework has been developed to support the AVAWP's priorities and objectives. Data from this will also be fed into the national framework.



ABERDEEN VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN PARTNERSHIP

ACTION PLAN 2018-21

DOCUMENT CONTROL	
Author	Aberdeen City Violence Against Women Partnership
Governance	Community Justice Group

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Effective date	
Reviewed	
Next Review	

Aberdeen Violence Against Women Action Plan 2018-21

VISION

Our vision is for a strong and flourishing city where all individuals are equally safe and respected, and where women and girls live free from all forms of violence and abuse – and the attitudes that help perpetuate it.

PRIORITIES

We aim to work together in Aberdeen in order to ensure:

Aberdeen embraces equality and mutual respect, and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls	Women and girls thrive as equal citizens – socially, culturally, economically and politically	Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising the safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people	Men desist from all forms of violence against women and girls, and perpetrators of such violence receive a robust and effective response
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LOCAL OUTCOME IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2016-26

Stretch Outcome	Key Drivers	Improvement Project Aim	Key Improvement Measures
3. 95% of children (0-5 years) will reach their expected developmental	3.2 Keeping young children safe.	Reduce number of children who are witness to domestic abuse by 2022.	Number of health visitor routine inquiry's that

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milestones by the time of their child health reviews by 2026			indicate domestic abuse in the home Number of domestic abuse reports with children regarded as present
9. 25% fewer people receiving a first ever court conviction each year by 2026	9.4 Changing attitudes about domestic abuse in all its forms	Using a whole population approach: i. Increase awareness of domestic abuse by 2021 ii. Reduce number of children who are witness to domestic abuse by 2022 iii. Decrease number of reported incidents by 30% by 2026	Number of awareness raising events tackling domestic abuse % of secondary schools with mentors in violence prevention scheme in place Number of reported domestic abuse incidents

Aberdeen Violence Against Women Partnership have listed priorities which will focus the group’s activities towards the aims of Equally Safe as well and contributing towards the above elements of the Aberdeen Local Outcome Improvement Plan.

OUTCOMES			
Positive gender roles are promoted	Women and girls are safe, respected and equal in our communities	People enjoy healthy, positive relationships and children develop an understanding of safe, healthy, and positive relationships from an early age	Individuals and communities recognise and challenge violent and abusive behaviour
Women and men have equal access to power and resources	Justice responses are robust, swift, consistent and coordinated	Women, children and young people access relevant, effective and integrated services	Men who carry out violence against women and girls are identified

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			early and held to account by the justice system
Service providers competently identify violence against women and girls, and respond effectively to women, children and young people affected	Men who carry out violence against women and girls change their behaviour, and are supported to do so	Women, children and young people's voices are heard and their rights respected	Relevant links are made between the experience of women, children and young people in the criminal and civil justice systems

UNDERPINNING ACTIVITIES				
Working in partnership	Using improvement methodology	Delivery of VAWG training	Data collection & analysis	C P

PRIORITIES				
THE CITY EMBRACES EQUALITY AND MUTUAL RESPECT, AND REJECTS ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AND ABUSE AGAINST WOMEN				
1	Action	Ownership	Evidence	Dem
a	Gather information and evidence on the range of VAWG prevention activities currently being undertaken and make recommendations to fill identified gaps and promote consistency across Aberdeen			
b	Promote the 'mentors in violence prevention' scheme across the city's secondary schools			
c	Work with parents and carers to support early recognition and identification of VAWG Development			
d	Targeted prevention work with those with additional vulnerabilities to forms of VAWG, e.g. those with care experience, learning disabilities, young people			

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e	Link with other public protection focused initiatives to promote prevention			
f	Promote consistency of responses to VAWG across services			
g	Provide ways for people to report experiences of VAWG anonymously			
h	Number of health visitor routine inquiry's that indicate domestic abuse in the home			
i	Review how MARAC meetings and other VAWG related groups are resourced			
j	Implement a strategic approach to White Ribbon in Aberdeen			
k	Formulate a Communication Plan to promote the work of the Violence Against Women Partnership			
l	Promote awareness raising events tackling domestic abuse across the city <i>(LOIP)</i>			

WOMEN AND GIRLS THRIVE AS EQUAL CITIZENS – SOCIALLY, CULTURALLY, ECONOMICALLY AND POLITICALLY

2	Action	Ownership	Evidence	Dem
a	Implement workplace policies to reduce tolerance of VAWG in the work place and support affected employees			
b	Workplaces respond effectively to employees who are perpetrators of VAWG			
c	Engage with education/employment leads & other relevant stakeholders to promote gender equality in career pathways/positive destinations.			
d	Promote effective use of Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) to ensure policies, processes & services do not discriminate against women & identify ways to promote gender equality through them			
e	Deliver training & awareness raising activities on gender equality & diversity			
f	Map work currently going on within schools to promote gender equality & healthy positive relationships			

INTERVENTIONS ARE EARLY AND EFFECTIVE, PREVENTING VIOLENCE AND ABUSE, MAXIMISING THE SAFETY AND WELLBEING AND YOUNG PEOPLE

3	Action	Ownership	Evidence	Dem
a	Implement MARAC Action Plan			

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b	Effectively support children and young people affected by VAW			
c	Improve responses to adult survivors of child sexual abuse and sexual violence from children's services			
d	Scope and ensure trauma informed services for adults and children			
e	Develop approaches to reduce sexual exploitation			
f	Develop integrated approaches to survivors of VAW (and their children) with drug and alcohol problems			
g	Sustain (or improve) quality of current third sector services			
h	Extend provision of third sector services			
i	Workplaces promote the safety and wellbeing of their staff who are survivors of VAW			
j	Training Plan implemented to improve responses to survivors of VAW in Aberdeen			
k	Statutory sector agencies measure how their interventions increase safety and wellbeing of survivors			
l	Housing Policy and processes to better meet the needs of those affected by domestic abuse Housing			
m	Ensure awareness of Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse in Scotland (DSDAS) across the agencies			
n	Ensure effective links in place with the No Recourse, North East network.			
o	Develop a practitioner's guide with the Child Protection Committee for Domestic Abuse and Child Protection in relation to the Safe and Together model & ensure training/awareness raising takes place			

MEN DESIST FROM ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AND ABUSE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS, AND PERPETRATORS OF SUCH VIOLENCE AND EFFECTIVE RESPONSE

4	Action	Ownership	Evidence	Demands
a	Multi-agency training and awareness raising to ensure agencies and staff are supported to respond to perpetrators of sexual violence and domestic abuse			

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b	Effectively support children and young people affected by VAW			
c	Develop a more proactive approach in relation to interventions and support for perpetrators pre, on and after conviction, to reduce offending behaviours			
d	Specific prevention programmes are offered to men through SPS			
e	Perpetrator focused interventions increase the safety of women and children affected by domestic abuse			

PPC Report – Appendix 2

Aberdeen City – COVID19 – Domestic Abuse Communications Campaign Plan

Aim: To put out simple, clear messaging to reach as wide an audience as possible, in a range of formats/languages, etc, commencing end April 2020.

Key messages

How to get help:

- Services are open for business
- Service contact details/ helplines– including national helpline (24/7), Police and local services (ACVO [Tracker](#) & Toolkit*)
- Details of wider supports, eg financial
- Make clear that people with coronavirus symptoms can still access support
- How to report concerns about others

'Stay Safe' and 'Planning suggestions' (from Toolkit*)

[Scot Govt Dom Ab Toolkit*: <https://www.cps.scot/media/3327/april-2020-domestic-abuse-toolkit.pdf>]

Methods of communication

Partner websites

Community magazines (SHMU)

Community radio (SHMU)

Press?

Civic Forum contacts (David Henderson)

Posters in supermarkets/ pharmacies?

ACVO bulletin

Social Media

The table below sets out the detail of the planned communications and information about 'reach'. Additional information about the campaign follows.

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Timescales?	What is the message? <i>(Numbers in brackets relate to messages in Appendix)</i>	Who is the target audience?	How will this be communicated?	What needs to be done, by whom?
w/c 27th April 2020				
Mon 27 th	Whole AVAWP message	Northfield/Middlefield localities	Copy to Community Mags (SHMU)	Poster/s & info – ACVO
Tues 28 th	Help is available	Wider public	SG campaign poster – FB post.	Police Corporate comms
Wed 29 th	Whole message	Wider public	Media release	ACC Comms team
Thurs 30 th	Every 9 minutes message and Quote from DSU Forrester...	Wider public	Police Scotland fb pages Or press	Police Corporate comms
	(1) DA not acceptable	Wider public	FB & Twitter – 5pm	ACC Comms Team
Fri 1 st May	Whole AVAWP message	Minority groups Community groups such as Sure Start, women’s groups, religious groups, toddler groups Communities	ACVO Bulletin Via Civic Forum contacts	ACVO VV to send to David Henderson
Sun 3 rd May	(2) DA is not your fault	Wider public	Twitter, 3pm	ACC Comms Team
w/c 4th May 2020				
Tues 5 th	Whole AVAWP message	Tillydrone/Seaton locality partnership	Copy to Community Mags SHMU	Poster/s and info – ACVO
Wed 6 th	(2) DA is not your fault	Wider public	FB, 4pm	ACC Comms Team
Thurs 7 th	Help is available	Wider public	SG campaign poster – FB pages	Police Comms Team
w/c 11th May 2020				
Wed 13 th	(6) If things are difficult	Wider public	Twitter, 12.25pm	ACC Comms Team
Thurs 14 th	Every 9 minutes message and Quote from DSU Forrester...	Wider public	Police Scotland website/fb pages. Visible until the following Tuesday	Police Corporate comms
	(7) Many services + key numbers	Wider public	FB, 1pm	ACC Comms Team
Fri 15 th	Whole AVAWP message	Minority groups	ACVO Bulletin	ACVO

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Timescales?	What is the message? <i>(Numbers in brackets relate to messages in Appendix)</i>	Who is the target audience?	How will this be communicated?	What needs to be done, by whom?
		Community groups such as Sure Start, women's groups, religious groups, toddler groups		
w/c 18th May 2020**				
Mon 18 th	(8) At home shouldn't mean at risk	Wider public	Twitter, 11am	ACC Comms Team
Tues 19 th	Help is available	Wider public	SG campaign poster – FB? To remain until Friday	Police Comms Team
Wed 20 th	DA & Child Protection – see below [#]	Wider public	Twitter	ACC Comms Team
Fri 22 nd	Whole AVAWP message	Minority groups Community groups such as Sure Start, women's groups, religious groups, toddler groups	ACVO Bulletin	ACVO
	(3) Every year – stats	Wider public	FB, 2.15pm	ACC Comms Team
w/c 25th May 2020				
Mon 25 th	DA & Child Protection – see Appendix [#]	Wider public	FB	ACC Comms Team
Thurs 28 th	(4) Partner hurt you?	Wider public	FB & Twitter	ACC Comms Team
Fri 29 th	DA not acceptable	Wider public	Twitter	SFRS
June 2020				
End June	Whole AVAWP message	Mastrick locality partnership	Copy to Community Mags SHMU	Poster/s and info – ACVO
June onwards	Translations of myths	Non-English speakers	Snippets on SHMU radio	Susan M/ SHMU
July 2020				
Thur 2 nd	(1) DA not acceptable	Wider Public	FB	ACC Comms Team
Sun 5 th	(4) Partner hurt you?	Wider Public	Twitter	ACC Comms Team
Tue 7 th	(4) Partner hurt you?	Wider Public	FB	ACC Comms Team
Thur 16 th	(6) If things are difficult	Wider Public	Twitter	ACC Comms Team
Fri 17 th	(3) Every year – stats	Wider Public	FB	ACC Comms Team

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Timescales?	What is the message? <i>(Numbers in brackets relate to messages in Appendix)</i>	Who is the target audience?	How will this be communicated?	What needs to be done, by whom?
Tue 21st	(3) Every year – stats	Wider Public	Twitter	ACC Comms Team
Sat 25th	(6) If things are difficult	Wider Public	FB	ACC Comms Team
Fri 31 st	What goes on behind closed doors	Wider Public	Twitter	ACC Comms Team
August 2020				
Mon 3rd	What goes on behind closed doors	Wider Public	FB & Twitter	ACC Comms Team
Sun 16th	(7) Many services + key numbers	Wider Public	FB & Twitter	ACC Comms Team
Sun 22nd	(2) DA is not your fault	Wider Public	FB & Twitter	ACC Comms Team
Fri 28th	(6) If things are difficult	Wider Public	FB & Twitter	ACC Comms Team

Additional info re Reach of campaign

**1000 leaflets distributed between 14th and 21st May with CFine food parcels – to households excluding single men.

P&J article on Cyrenians/ Caledonian.

ACC Social Media Messages – April to August 2020

1. Domestic abuse is not acceptable! It is not your fault and you are not alone. We can help, visit <https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/domesticabuse/> for more information
If you are in danger and it is an emergency, call 999 or 101 in non-emergencies
2. Domestic abuse is not your fault. If you or anyone you know is experiencing domestic abuse you must get help. Find out more <https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/domesticabuse/>
3. Every year around 58,000 to 61,000 people across Scotland experience domestic abuse. You are not alone, we are here to help you. Find out more <https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/domesticabuse/>
4. If your partner or ex has ever hurt you or your child, locked you in, held you so you cannot move, or hurt you in other ways Then we can help you. Find out more <https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/domesticabuse/>

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5. There are many free and confidential services available to help people in Aberdeen who are experiencing domestic abuse. Please visit <https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/domesticabuse/> for more information

6. If things are difficult for you or a family member at home right now, find out where to get support <https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/domesticabuse/>

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ABERDEEN VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN PARTNERSHIP RISK REGISTER

A Risk Register is a mechanism for describing how you plan to organise the management of risk within a system. This is the operational risk register for the Aberdeen Violence Against Women Partnership (AVAWP) and represents one element of the multi-agency system of managing the risk of gender based violence in Aberdeen. Gender based violence includes but is not limited to domestic abuse, sexual violence and abuse, Female Gender Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, prostitution and other forms of Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

Responsibility for designing, refreshing and monitoring this risk register rests with the AVAWP on behalf of the Aberdeen City Community Justice Group. As part of the monitoring discipline, the AVAWP will consider emerging risks as well as established risks recorded on the register and identify the actions that should be taken to respond to the risk.

Our ultimate vision is to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls in all its forms. However, we recognise that while we strive to achieve this we must embrace equality and mutual respect, ensure women and girls thrive as equal citizens, maximise the safety and wellbeing of women children and young people by ensuring early and effective intervention to prevent violence and finally, ensure men desist from all forms of violence against women and girls.

Our aspirations for women and girls are outlined in the AVAWP Strategy and Action Plan, which complement the Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) and governance is through the Aberdeen City Community Planning Partnership.

All risks are identified in relation to their impact on gender based abuse in Aberdeen

Contents

- AVAWP - 001** The risk that a lack of multi-agency self-evaluation means the AVAWP is not assured that all key areas of improvement have been identified.
- AVAWP – 002** The risk that partners do not enable improvement, development and learning to be embedded into practice across the partnership.
- AVAWP – 003** The risk that the voice of the person, including any child, affected by gender based abuse is not being heard and rights are not being respected.
- AVAWP – 004** The risk that agencies comprising the AVAWP do not understand the true extent of gender based abuse due to failure of multi-agency collection, sharing, analysis and use of data.
- AVAWP – 005** The risk that agencies comprising the AVAWP do not have the required workforce capacity and capability to respond to demand and the changing nature of demand.
- AVAWP – 006** The risk that the AVAWP does not effectively consider the impact of Covid-19 on gender based abuse.

Code	AVAWP - 001	The risk that a lack of multi-agency self-evaluation means the AVAWP is not assured that all key areas of improvement have been identified.			
Potential Impact	Causes	Control Effectiveness		Current Assessment	Risk
		Control	Control Assessment		
<p>Not addressing all priority areas for improvement could potentially impact on effective multi-agency working and positive outcomes for women and children experiencing or at risk of abuse.</p> <p>An inability to clear evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective partnership working at all stages; • training and supervision processes in place are sufficient; • clear governance structures; and, • an ethos of integrated and collaborative working 	<p>No formal multi-agency self-evaluation has been undertaken</p> <p>No documented clarity on multi-agency structures</p> <p>Lack of representation of key partners at MARAC & MATAC</p> <p>No evaluation of training with a focus on improving practice</p>	Programme of multi-agency quality assurance as part of an embedded approach to self-evaluation and improvement.	Partially met		
		Formal evaluation of training to ensure maximum impact re delivering best practice that is relevant	Not met		
		Formal review of attendance of key multi-agency meetings	Not met		
		Evaluation of MARAC to include attendance	Partially met		
		Self-evaluation of the Safe and Together model	Not met		
		Evaluation of MARAC process through MARAC management meetings	Partially met		
		Learning and Development Group established to provide management information and identify gaps and areas for improvement	Partially met		
Mitigating Actions				Residual risk	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe Lives Review of MARAC • 					
Risk Owner	AVAWP Chair	Risk Manager	Lead Officer		
Latest Note					

Code	AVAWP - 002	The risk that partners do not enable improvement, development and learning to be embedded into practice across the partnership.																												
Potential Impact	Causes	Control Effectiveness		Current Risk Assessment																										
		Control	Control Assessment																											
<p>Learning opportunities are missed</p> <p>Risk of significant harm is not reduced</p> <p>Ineffective response to current and emerging trends in gender based abuse across services and agencies, putting women and children at risk.</p> <p>Professional expertise is not up-to-date</p>	<p>High levels of staff turnover</p> <p>Absence of a consistent approach to measuring and reporting on required improvements</p> <p>Lack of support for staff to attend learning and development opportunities</p> <p>Lack of engagement from the AVAWP with the Training, Learning & Development group</p>	Learning and Development Group	Met	<table border="1"> <tr> <td rowspan="5" style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Likelihood</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>X</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="5" style="text-align: center;">Impact</td> </tr> </table>	Likelihood						X															Impact				
		Likelihood																												
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Impact																														
Development and roll-out of a multi-agency training programme informed by training needs analysis, overseen by the VAWP	Partially Met																													
Effective training programme for new staff and refreshing of existing opportunities	Not Met																													
An effective data framework which demonstrates evidence of measuring and reporting on required improvements	Not Met																													
Mitigating Actions				Residual risk																										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of a Training, Learning & Development Group (pan Grampian) Data and Quality Assurance sub-group formed Crossover with CP, ASP & GIRFEC training 																														
Risk Owner	AVAWP Chair	Risk Manager	Lead Officer																											
Latest Note																														

Code	AVAWP - 003	The risk that the voice of the person, including any child, affected by gender based abuse is not being heard and rights are not being respected.																												
Potential Impact	Causes	Control Effectiveness		Current Risk Assessment																										
		Control	Control Assessment																											
Interventions and supports are ineffective	Historic approach to VAWG	Quality assurance of multi-agency processes	Partially met	<table border="1"> <tr> <td rowspan="5">Likelihood</td> <td>Yellow</td> <td>Orange</td> <td>Red</td> <td>Red</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Yellow</td> <td>Orange</td> <td>Orange</td> <td>Red</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Green</td> <td>Yellow</td> <td>Orange</td> <td>Orange</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Green</td> <td>Yellow</td> <td>Yellow</td> <td>Orange</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Green</td> <td>Green</td> <td>Yellow</td> <td>Yellow</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="5">Impact</td> </tr> </table>	Likelihood	Yellow	Orange	Red	Red	Yellow	Orange	Orange	Red	Green	Yellow	Orange	Orange	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Orange	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Impact				
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	Green	Yellow	Orange			Orange																								
	Green	Yellow	Yellow			Orange																								
	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow																										
Impact																														
Missed opportunities to identify risk of significant harm	Challenges of workforce capacity	Supported engagement opportunities exist for those affected by VAWG	Partially met																											
Missed opportunities to improve multi-agency practice	Absence of robust professional challenge and curiosity	Programme of quality assurance activity to measure embedding advocacy and participatory approaches with women, children and young people	Not met																											
Those affected reluctant to engage with professionals	Ineffective early intervention	Active engagement in CP and ASP processes and strategic meetings	Fully met																											
Failure to deliver on LOIP																														
Lack of confidence in GBA process																														
Mitigating Actions				Residual risk																										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole Lives project TEC Pathfinder project Advocacy service with VAW services 																														
Risk Owner	AVAWP Chair	Risk Manager	Lead Officer																											
Latest Note																														

Code & Definition		AVAWP - 004	The risk that agencies comprising the AVAWP do not understand the true extent of gender based abuse due to failure of multi-agency collection, sharing, analysis and use of data.		
Potential Impact		Causes	Control Effectiveness		Current Risk Assessment
			Control	Control Assessment	
Continued gender based violence AVAWP resources not targeted Inability to identify trends, gaps and areas of poor performance Lack of strategic planning Limitations in the ability to analyse and understand data		Data collection is not consistent Silo thinking Unsuitable or non-meaningful data collected which does not permit effective monitoring Lack of understanding around data sharing protocols between all partner agencies Lack of analytical capacity and capability Information not being shared Absence of effective performance framework	Develop multi-agency data set, linked to strategic objectives SOLACE data set utilised to establish demand Performance monitoring a standing item on the AVAWP agenda Actively engage and contribute to Aberdeen Together Data Subgroup formed	Partially met Partially met Not met Fully met Fully Met	
Mitigating Actions					
					Residual risk
Risk Owner	AVAWP Chair		Risk Manager	Lead Officer	
Latest Note					

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Code	AVAWP - 005	The risk that agencies comprising the AVAWP do not have the required workforce capacity and capability to respond to demand and the changing nature of demand.			
Potential Impact	Causes	Control Effectiveness		Current Risk Assessment	
		Control	Control Assessment		
<p>Ineffective response to current and emerging gender based violence issues across agencies and services resulting in continued gender based violence</p> <p>Demand on services increases the culture of reactive rather than proactive activity giving limited time to progress actions and eradicate gender based violence</p> <p>Demand on services results in limited time and opportunity for training and supervision</p> <p>Lack of mutual understanding of partners roles and responsibilities impact on effective multi-agency working to deal with gender based violence</p> <p>Staff unable to attend / provide training and / or learning events.</p>	<p>Failure to respond to changing types of demand</p> <p>Insufficient Third Sector capacity to manage increased demand</p> <p>Insufficient statutory authority capacity and focus on gender based abuse priority</p> <p>Lack of multi-training</p> <p>Lack of prevention focused agenda</p>	Mapping of services	Partially met		
		Data set to establish whole service demand and service gaps	Partially met		
		Escalation of needs and demands to respective single agency strategic leads	Partially met		
		Multi-agency awareness raising and training	Partially met		
		Links to APC, CPC and ADP through leadership group to highlight cross-overs and shared demand	Fully met		
		AVAWP Co-ordinator Appointed	Fully Met		
		AVAWP Strategy and Action Plan approved	Fully met		
Mitigating Actions				Residual risk	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 					
Risk Owner	AVAWP Chair	Risk Manager		Lead Officer	
Latest Note					

Code	AVAWP - 006	Risk that policy and practice are compromised as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic (plus longer term effects)																																		
Potential Impact	Causes	Control Effectiveness		Current Risk Assessment																																
		Control	Control Assessment																																	
<p>Increased gender based abuse due unintended consequences of Covid-19 restrictions</p> <p>Risks 1-5 are all adversely impacted with elevated risks</p>	Increased perpetrator access	COVID-19 is standing item on AVAWP agenda	Fully Met	<table border="1"> <tr> <td rowspan="5" style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Likelihood</td> <td style="background-color: yellow;"></td> <td style="background-color: orange;"></td> <td style="background-color: orange;"></td> <td style="background-color: red;"></td> <td style="background-color: red;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: yellow;"></td> <td style="background-color: yellow;"></td> <td style="background-color: orange;"></td> <td style="background-color: orange;"></td> <td style="background-color: red;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: green;"></td> <td style="background-color: yellow;"></td> <td style="background-color: yellow;"></td> <td style="background-color: orange;"></td> <td style="background-color: orange;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: green;"></td> <td style="background-color: yellow; text-align: center;">X</td> <td style="background-color: yellow;"></td> <td style="background-color: orange;"></td> <td style="background-color: orange;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: green;"></td> <td style="background-color: green;"></td> <td style="background-color: green;"></td> <td style="background-color: yellow;"></td> <td style="background-color: yellow;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="6" style="text-align: center;">Impact</td> </tr> </table>	Likelihood																	X									Impact					
	Likelihood																																			
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	Increased financial dependency	Regular reports to CJ Group, COG and Public Protection Committee	Partially met																																	
	Lack of societal & professional access due to restrictions	Awareness raising through media	Partially met																																	
Regular safety mechanisms & support may not be available	Multi-agency collaboration through existing relationships	Partially met																																		
Increased demand & changing working practices for services increases barriers to support & emergency housing.	Continued development of new tech-led ways of working towards a blended approach of support	Partially met																																		
Increased risk taking behaviours by many women, children & young people, due to isolation, desperation, financial distress & mental health issues, in physical and cyber environments.	LA Housing are core members of the AVAWP	Fully Met																																		
Early release of perpetrators from prison	Appointment of AVAWP Co-ordinator	Fully Met																																		
Perpetrators using restrictions to justify behaviour & avoid challenge																																				
Perpetrator programmatic work being hindered																																				
Mitigating Actions				Residual risk																																
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scottish Government / COSLA Coronavirus Supplementary National Violence Against Women Guidance response Multi-Agency management of prison early release program, which is now concluded 																																				

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Risk Owner	AVAWP Chair	Risk Manager	Lead Officer
Latest Note			

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Public Protection Committee
DATE	28 th April 2021
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	EU Exit – Current Position
REPORT NUMBER	COM/21/080
CHIEF OFFICER	Fraser Bell
REPORT AUTHOR	Ronnie McKean
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Committee with assurance of the on-going activities in relation to EU Exit.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Committee:-

- 2.1 Notes the content of this report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 UK membership of the European Union (EU) ceased on 31st January 2020. UK and EU officials agreed to a transition period whereby the UK would continue to follow EU rules so that the trading relationship would remain unaffected whilst negotiations to agree terms of the future relationship between the UK and the EU took place.
- 3.2 The UK Government announced that an agreement had been reached between the UK and the EU on 24th December 2020 and the transition period ended on 31st December 2020.

EU Exit Group

- 3.3 In 2019 the Council established the EU Exit Group. The Group was chaired by the Corporate Risk Lead and its membership consisted of Senior Officers from across the Council and the Health and Social Care Partnership.
- 3.4 The Group provided the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and the Risk Board with assurance that potential risks were identified, assessed and that,

where possible, plans and arrangements were in place to mitigate the potential effects of EU Exit on the Council and place.

- 3.5 Members of the Group used their external networks to assist with the process of identifying potential risks. This included working with partners in the Grampian LRPWG (Local Resilience Partnership Working Group) to establish a list of risks and mitigation activities based upon the “Set of Reasonable Worst Case Scenario Planning Assumptions” issued by the UK Cabinet Office. The Council contributed to discussion at the LRPWG through the EU Exit Group.
- 3.6 The Group recorded the risks identified onto the Council’s Risk Register and the risks were maintained and monitored in accordance with the Council’s Risk Management Policy and guidance.
- 3.7 The CMT was provided with an update on the Council’s EU Exit preparations in December 2020 and agreed that an (IMT) Incident Management Team chaired by the Chief Officer – Governance would be established and activated if required. This would allow the Council to provide a coordinated response to any urgent multi-service issues arising during the Christmas holiday season. The IMT was not required but remains in place and can be activated if required.
- 3.8 The EU Exit Group met on 8th January 2021 to consider the implications of the agreement reached between the UK and EU. The Group concluded that the potential impacts of a “worst case/no deal” scenario appeared to have been mitigated by the deal announced between the UK and the EU on 24 December 2020. The Group recommended to the Risk Board that Corporate EU Exit risks be closed, Cluster EU Exit risks be monitored by the relevant Chief Officers and that the Group no longer meet on a monthly basis but remain on standby to re-activate should any EU Exit risks escalate or become issues. These recommendations were approved by the Risk Board.

Situational Awareness and Response

- 3.9 Officers on the EU Exit Group continue share situational awareness of EU Exit related matters through engagement with external networks and local partners including; CoSLA, LRPWG and Local Authority Resilience Group Scotland (LARGS). The Scottish Government also provides daily EU Exit situation reports at Regional and National Levels.
- 3.10 The information and reports are shared on the EU Exit Group Teams site so that Group members can monitor the information received and can escalate any risks and potential issues to the Risk Board.
- 3.11 To date, no issues or risks relating to EU Exit have been escalated to the Risk Board.
- 3.12 Officers will respond to a significant EU Exit related issue materialising by activation of the EU Exit Group and/or IMT and, if required, activation of the Grampian Local Resilience Partnership.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

6.1 From the perspective of civil contingencies, the on-going monitoring arrangements and engagement with partner organisations detailed in 3.9 to date, indicates that the levels of risk to the Council and the Place that are directly attributed to EU Exit remain low. As set out above, the situation will continue to be monitored.

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Strategic Risk	There are no strategic risks arising directly from the presentation of this report.	L	N/A
Compliance	Risk that the Council is not compliant with its responsibilities under the Civil Contingencies Act as a Category 1 responder.	L	The monitoring and response arrangements detailed within this report will mitigate the risk of non-compliance.
Operational	Risk that the Councils critical functions and activities are affected by EU Exit related events or issues.	L	The monitoring and response arrangements detailed within this report will result in response arrangements that will mitigate potential operation risks.
Financial	Risk that EU related issues affect the Council's finances.	L	The monitoring arrangements detailed within this report will support mitigation of finance risks.
Reputational	There is a risk that the Council's reputation could be damaged in the event that any of the risks identified materialise.	L	The monitoring and response arrangements detailed within this report support the mitigation reputational risk.

Environment / Climate	There are no Environmental/Climate risks arising directly from the presentation of this report.	L	N/A
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7. OUTCOMES

7.1 The situational awareness and monitoring arrangements that remain in place facilitate the mitigation of potential impacts of EU Exit on the Council Delivery Plan and LOIP outcomes.

8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	Not required.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

10. APPENDICES

Nil.

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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