

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Education and Children's Services Committee
DATE	26 November 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Aberdeen City's Child Protection Committee Annual Report 2023-24
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/24/312
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Graeme Simpson
REPORT AUTHOR	Amy Anderson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.1, 2.2, 2.3

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To share Aberdeen City's Child Protection Committee (CPC) Annual Report 2023-24 to provide assurance that the work of the CPC is effectively helping reduce risks to children and young people.

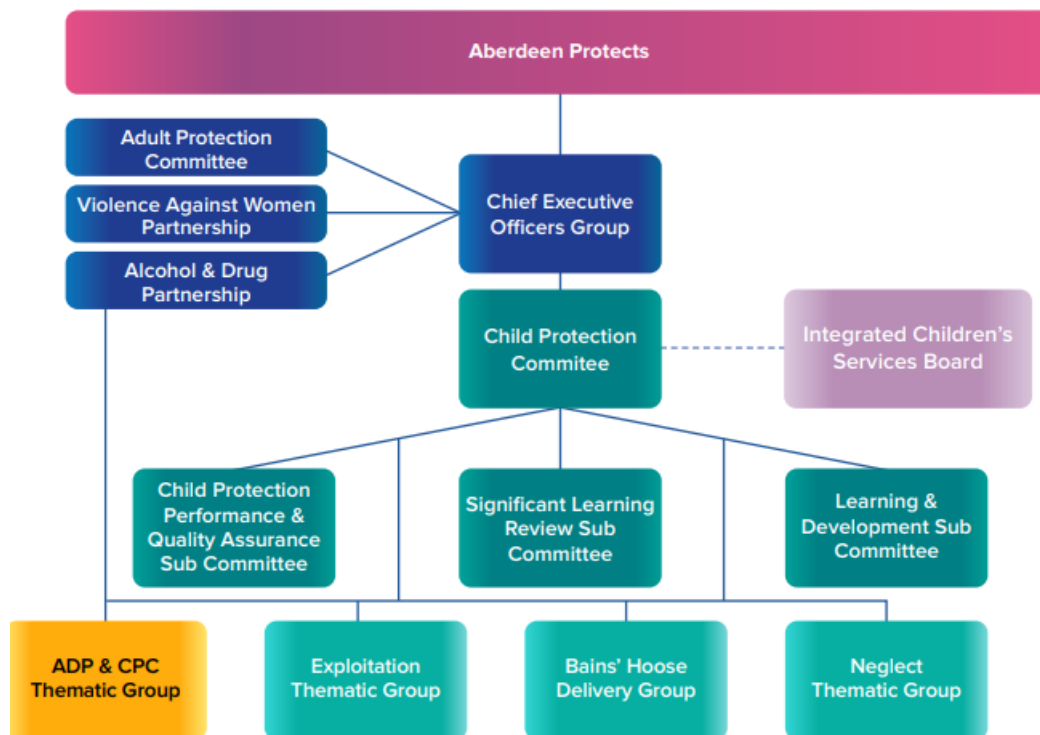
2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 notes the content of the CPC's Annual Report 2023-24, including the conclusion of the Child Protection Programme 2021-2024; and
- 2.2 instructs the Chief Social Work Officer to provide Committee with a further report in November 2025 detailing the continuing impact and effectiveness of partnership work in relation to child protection.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Aberdeen City's Child Protection Committee (CPC) is a multi-agency strategic partnership governed by the Chief Executive Officers of Aberdeen City Council, NHS Grampian and the Police Commander for the area. It is committed to providing individual and collective leadership and direction for the management of child protection services in the Aberdeen City area. Areas for improvement which are identified through self-evaluation are driven through the Child Protection Programme.
- 3.2 The CPC works collaboratively with other strategic partnerships in the City such as the Children's Services Board, Aberdeen Violence Against Women & Girls Partnership (particularly in relation to child protection and domestic abuse), Adult Protection Committee, Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership under the banner of Aberdeen Protects as is outlined in the visual below.



- 3.3 The CPC routinely analyses and evaluates the impact of our collaborative work to keep children safe. Areas for improvement are detailed in the CPC Child Protection Programme 2021-24 which aims to improve the safety, wellbeing and life chances of vulnerable children and young people. Improvement activity is reported to and monitored by the CPC through its connected sub committees which are; the Significant Learning Review, the Performance & Quality Assurance, and the Learning & Development sub committees. Improvement activity set out in the Child Protection Programme 2021-2024, is and will be subject to the inspection scrutiny of the Care Inspectorate.
- 3.4 The CPC produces a statutory Annual Report to demonstrate the work of the CPC over a full year in both leading and improving child protection arrangements. The report is informed by the now well embedded Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) and audit programme.
- 3.5 The Annual Report highlights many achievements including the development of our Bairns' Hoose following our successful pathfinder application, the delivery of a Learning Event for practitioners across the North East on parental substance use and safe sleep practices, and self evaluation activity.
- 3.6 The Child Protection Programme 2021-24 concluded in July 2024. The programme was informed by and aligned to national expectations flowing from the independent care review and as set out in The Promise. The CPC priorities set out in the Child Protection Programme 2021-24 were:
- To increase workforce confidence and knowledge to respond to child protection issues arising among children with disabilities
 - To improve multi-agency recognition and response to indicators of cumulative neglect

- To raise awareness and develop a multi-agency understanding of, and response to, all forms of child exploitation and children who go missing
- To implement a whole system approach across the City in relation to child protection and domestic abuse, and support the delivery and embedding of the Safe and Together model alongside the Violence Against Women Partnership
- To consider the revised National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland and ensure the required changes are implemented to help support and improve practice
- To build on our trauma informed and strength based practice approaches ensuring children and their families are engaged with appropriately, and that their voices are heard when they are involved in child protection processes
- To improve the multi-agency recognition and response to equality, diversity and inclusion from a child protection perspective. This includes Female Genital Mutilation, Gender Identity, Prevent, Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage in the field of Child Protection.

3.7 The CPC completed a national self-evaluation tool for the implementation of the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021. This was submitted to Scottish Government in October 2023. This self-evaluation activity has supported the identification of areas requiring further improvement, and the measures required to address these.

3.8 In anticipation of inspection, the CPC established a Multi Agency Self Evaluation Group to take forward further evaluation activity based on the Care Inspectorate's quality indicators for children and young people in need of care and protection.

3.9 The CPC have ensured that the significant changes that were identified in refreshed National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021-2023 are either already embedded or have since been implemented.

3.10 The CPC have introduced the [Child Protection Improvement Programme 2024/26](#). Our priorities have been informed by data, Learning Reviews, and our self evaluation activity, The CPC priorities for 2024/26 are:

- Neglect
- Child Protection & Parental Substance Use
- Exploitation
- Child Protection & Domestic Abuse
- Interdisciplinary multi agency working
- Learning & Development

3.11 Feedback from our Care Inspectorate Link Inspector, who attends CPC meetings, continues to reflect very positively on the work of the 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. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant risks identified			
Compliance	No significant risks identified			
Operational	Required improvements and developments in practice are not identified and actioned.	Children, young people, their families and the professional workforce can be assured that services in Aberdeen City are continually appraised in order to improve the quality of locally delivered services.	M	Yes
Financial	No significant risks identified			
Reputational	Organisational failings in relation to child protection can bring significant media interest and scrutiny of services delivered to children and young people.	The public can be assured that: the Council ensures compliance with legal requirements, national standards and guidance; partners respond to self and external scrutiny; and identified areas for improvement are addressed.	M	Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>Council Delivery Plan 2024</u>	
Impact of Report	
<p>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</p> <p><u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u></p>	<p>The work of the CPC is aligned to other strategic partnerships, namely the Children’s Services Board, Violence Against Women & Girls Partnership, Alcohol and Drug Partnership, and the Adult Protection Committee, whose aims are aligned collectively to the Council Delivery Plan 2024 and the Working in Partnership for Aberdeen Policy Statement.</p>
<u>Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026</u>	
<p>Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes</p>	<p>The functions of the CPC are central to supporting and assuring that the multi agency Children’s Services partners deliver on the outcomes of the LOIP – Prosperous People (Children and Young People) Stretch Outcomes 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12 to ensure our children are safe from harm. Children, young people and families who are adequately protected from threats to their health, safety and economic wellbeing are more likely to prosper than those who are not.</p>
<p>Regional and City Strategies</p>	<p>The work of the CPC is relevant to Aberdeen City Council Delivery Plan, the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, the Children’s Services Plan and the Child Protection Improvement Programme</p>

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	No assessment required. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with Graeme Simpson, Chief Social Work Officer, Families & Communities – Children’s Social Work on 11 October 2024.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required for this report
Other	Not required for this report

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Aberdeen City CPC Annual Report 2023–2024

11.2 CPC Improvement Programme 2024-26

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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