

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	<b>Education &amp; Children Services Committee</b>
DATE	<b>8 September 2016</b>
DIRECTOR	<b>Gayle Gorman</b>
TITLE OF REPORT	<b>Joint Inspection of Children's Services – Final Report</b>
REPORT NUMBER	<b>ECS/16/039</b>
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	<b>Yes</b>

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To provide Committee with a final update on the progress of implementing the Joint Inspection of Services for children and young people in the Aberdeen City Community Planning Partnership area, as requested in March 2016.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

It is recommended that, Committee notes the final report on delivering the multi-agency Action Plan

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications.

### **4. OTHER IMPLICATION**

There are no other implications.

### **5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES**

5.1. The Care Inspectorate's report on the Joint Inspection of Services for children and young people in the Aberdeen City Community Planning Partnership area was published on 6 March 2015.

5.2. The Inspection evaluated services positively and identified that the partnership had a positive platform to build on. It also recognised the need to improve performance in respect of all Quality Indicators. An Action Plan was submitted to the Care Inspectorate in June 2015 outlining how the partnership planned to address the inspections findings.

5.3. Responsibility for delivering on the Action Plan is the responsibility of all agencies who deliver services to children in the partnership. The majority

of actions require agencies to work in partnership to achieve successful outcomes. While ultimately focussed on outcomes for children and young people the Action Plan has to address issues such as leadership, governance, performance management, education (staff training) and the quality assurance of practice across all agencies.

5.4. A key challenge identified by the Inspection was the need for agencies across Aberdeen City to improve how individually and collectively they analyse and utilise data to evidence improved outcomes. Consequently a major element of the Action Plan has been to develop a quality assurance framework which draws upon best practice and delivers:

- Clarity of roles and responsibilities.
- Accurate management information.
- Regular performance reporting and analysis.
- Embedded audit and improvement cycles.
- Engagement and feedback from children and families.
- A positive and energised workforce.

5.5. Using the Councils Covalent system an evidenced gathering data framework has been developed across the Partnership. There have been challenges in developing and utilising this system the learning from this experience will be invaluable to track and measure the impact of implementing the 2017-2020 Children's Services Plan which all local authority's are required to have in place by 31 March 2017 and report on annually to the Scottish Government.

5.6. The Improvement and Performance Group (IPG), under the chair of the Head of Service for Policy, Performance and Resources in Education and Children's Services, monitors the progress of delivering the Action Plan. In turn the IPG is responsible for reporting progress to the (ICSB) ensuring that relevant data is available to inform future self-evaluation to evidence ***How well are the lives of children and young people (in Aberdeen) improving?***

5.7. The progress on delivering the Action Plan is ultimately reported to the Integrated Children's Services Chief Officers Group (COG).

5.8. Appendix 1 is an updated high level summary of the delivery of the Action Plan. This highlights of the identified actions

- 34% - Action completed
- 66% - Action subsumed into ongoing work
- 0% - Action no longer required
- 0% - Action not actioned

5.9. It was always anticipated that a number of the agreed actions would take longer than a year to fully complete or form a part of the day to day delivery of services. In addition over the course of the year new legislative duties or policy drivers have resulted in a number of actions being consumed by other work streams. As a consequence much of the work

that is still “ongoing” will feature within the 2017-2020 Children’s Services Plan which is being developed on a multi-agency basis.

5.10. Updates on delivery of the Action Plan have been regularly shared with our Link Inspector from the Care Inspectorate. This has also allowed the Partnership to draw upon best practice from other areas of Scotland, contributing to our continuous improvement journey. The Link Inspector also participated in a self-evaluation event on how the Partnership has worked to deliver the agreed Action Plan.

5.11. In February 2016 the Scottish Government minister announced its intention to review how Child Protection Inspections are to be undertaken. It is anticipated that this review will propose changes in terms of the focus and nature of future inspections.

## **6. IMPACT**

The Joint Inspection report reinforces the Council’s duty (in partnership with other agencies) to provide effective services to children and young people that safeguard and protect their safety and wellbeing as well as ensuring services are targeted towards reducing inequalities and improving outcomes. These expectations are consistent and fully aligned to the Council’s Single Outcome Agreement.

## **7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

The Inspection Report is a public document. The report was essentially positive in terms of how the Council and other agencies deliver services to children and young people. The report also identified areas for improvement. It will be important for the Partnership to continue to evidence co-ordinated and sustained progress to improving outcomes for children and young people. A failure to do so could adversely impact on the reputation of the Council and other services management oversight of the Action Plan.

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

*Appendix 1 - Action Plan, June 2016 ‘Final’ update Summary  
Education & Children’s Services Committee Report March 2016  
Joint Inspection Report on Children’s Services in Aberdeen City – March 2015*

## **9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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