

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Public Protection Committee
DATE	7 December 2021
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	New National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 and New National Guidance for Child Protection Committees undertaking Learning Reviews 2021
REPORT NUMBER	ACHSCP/21/310
DIRECTOR	Rob Polkinghorne
CHIEF OFFICER	Graeme Simpson, Chief Social Work Officer and Vice Chair of the Child Protection Committee
REPORT AUTHOR	Kymme Fraser
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To introduce to the Committee the new National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 and new National Guidance for Child Protection Committees undertaking Learning Reviews 2021 and to provide assurance that the Child Protection Committee will identify, implement and monitor any areas requiring local development.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:

- 2.1 notes the new National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021;
- 2.2 notes the new National Guidance for Child Protection Committees undertaking Learning Reviews 2021; and
- 2.3 notes that the Child Protection Committee (CPC) is considering the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 and National Guidance for Child Protection Committees undertaking Learning Reviews 2021 and that any areas requiring local development will be identified and incorporated into local planning overseen by the CPC.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021

This non-statutory national Guidance was published on 2 September 2021 with an expectation that Child Protection Committees consider and implement any local areas for improvement within an 18-month timeframe. The Guidance supersedes the previous National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014. The new Guidance describes responsibilities and expectations for all involved in protecting children in Scotland. The Guidance outlines how statutory and non-government agencies should work together with parents, families and communities to prevent harm and to protect children from abuse and neglect. It emphasises that everyone has a role in protecting children from harm.

The 2021 Guidance builds on the structure of the 2014 Guidance although all sections are revised and supplemented. Children's rights and human rights underpin the whole. The modern emphasis is on early, attuned, trauma-informed and sufficiently sustained support whether a child remains at home or at an alternative secure home base when this is not possible. Real engagement with children and their families in the child protection process is an expectation.

The CPC is undertaking analysis of the new Guidance which it will consider at its development sessions and at quarterly meetings. An initial appraisal indicates that local practice is already aligned with the new Guidance or, where it is not, has already been anticipated in its strategic planning through the Child Protection Improvement Programme. The CPC will identify, implement and monitor any areas requiring local development.

3.2 National Guidance for Child Protection Committees undertaking Learning Reviews 2021

This Guidance is aligned to the National Guidance for Child Protection and was also published on 2 September 2021. It is intended to support child protection committees to reflect, learn and improve child protection systems and practice when a child or young person dies, is significantly harmed, or was at risk of death or significant harm or where effective practice has prevented harm or risk of harm.

This guidance replaces the National Guidance for Child Protection Committees – Conducting a Significant Case Review (2015). All references to 'Initial Case Review' and 'Significant Case Review' in other current policy and guidance documents will be understood as referring to a 'Learning Review' as defined by this new guidance. Locally we intend to refer to reviews in such circumstances as "Significant Learning Reviews" to avoid the potential confusion with any other sort of learning review.

Locally we have a well-established process for conducting such reviews. A Significant Case Review undertaken by Aberdeen City CPC in 2018 utilised the Welsh Methodology upon which the new National Guidance for Learning Reviews has been based. Such reviews are undertaken on behalf of the CPC by its Significant Case Review (now Significant Learning Review) Sub Committee. The SLR Sub Committee is undertaking analysis of the new Guidance and ensuring our local procedures and associated documentation are compliant. The SLR Sub Committee have already conducted a Significant Learning Review using the new Guidance and documentation, the findings of which will be reported to the next meeting of the CPC in December 2021.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Category	Risk	Low (L) Medium (M) High (H)	Mitigation
Strategic Risk	Many of the requirements of the new National Guidance documents are already in place in practice in the City. Other areas are already incorporated into strategic planning. It is expected that gaps will emerge as the Council and partners scrutinise the requirements of the new National Guidance documents in detail.	L	The CPC's strategic plan (Child Protection Improvement Programme) is well governed by the CPC and the Chief Officer Group. They will be ensuring that the terms of the new National Guidance documents are incorporated into current and future strategic planning.
Compliance	No significant related risks.	L	Services across all multi-agency partners are aware of National Guidance requirements and ensure compliance.
Operational	Required improvements and developments in practice are not	L	Leadership supports participation and planning across the multi-agency partnership in the delivery of

	identified and actioned.		any changes required as a result of the new National Guidance documents.
Financial	No significant related financial risks from this report.	L	
Reputational	Organisational failings in relation to child protection can bring significant media interest and scrutiny of services delivered to children and young people.	M	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.
Environment / Climate	Not applicable 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 new National Guidance documents support the functions of the CPC which is central to assuring that the multi-agency Children's Services partners deliver on the outcomes of the LOIP Prosperous People (Children & Young People) Stretch Outcomes 4 to 9 and to ensure our children are safe and protected 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.
Regional and City Strategies	The work of the CPC, incorporating the new National Guidance documents, is relevant to the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, the Children's Services Plan and the Child Protection Improvement Programme.

UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes	The CPC progresses the policy ambitions and expectations of the Scottish Government and is key to the local implementation of new National Guidance for Child Protection 2021 and new National Guidance for conducting Learning Reviews 2021.
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8. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	This report to introduce members to new National Guidance does not require a full Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment to be completed.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 pp274	https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-guidance-child-protection-scotland-2021/documents/
National Guidance for Child Protection Committees undertaking Learning Reviews 2021 pp66	https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-guidance-child-protection-committees-undertaking-learning-reviews/documents/

10. APPENDICES

none

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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