

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Public Protection
DATE	1 November 2022
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Adult Protection Committee Biennial Report 2020-22
REPORT NUMBER	ACHSCP/22/237
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TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.9

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To share the Aberdeen Adult Protection Committee (APC) Convener's Biennial Report for 2020-22.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 notes the Aberdeen Adult Protection Committee's Biennial Report for 2020-22 which has been prepared as required by the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007, and which provides assurance about progress made over the period.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The Adult Support and 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. A copy of the Biennial Report must be submitted to the ASP statutory partners (i.e. each of the public bodies and office-holders represented on the APC), the Care Inspectorate, Scottish Ministers, the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland and the Public Guardian. The Biennial Report for 2020-22 as attached at Appendix 1 is the 'public-facing' version of the populated Word Template which has been submitted to Scottish Government as required.
- 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 Independent Convener of the APC also plays the same role for the Child Protection Committee.

3.3 Adult support and protection activities are, by their very nature, often complex and challenging. This Biennial Report coincides almost entirely with the period of the Covid 19 pandemic, and 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 – all within the context of the additional challenges which the pandemic brought.

3.4 A joint inspection of adult support and protection processes and strategic leadership was undertaken from March 2022 to April 2022, with the [resulting report](#) published on 21st June 2022. The inspection covered the period from February 2020 to February 2022, significantly overlapping with the biennial reporting period. The report commended how the strategic leadership team had invested and progressed their vision for adult support and protection during the pandemic, through a programme of well delivered operational and structural change and improvement.

3.5 Some key messages from the Biennial Report include:

- Public protection was rightly recognised by all of the statutory partners as a priority function at the start of the pandemic and so staff were not redeployed out of their ASP roles and in some cases, for example the social work duty team, staff numbers were increased to ensure that risk could be recognised and responded to appropriately
- The APC has continued to meet on a regular basis throughout the pandemic, (moving to ‘virtual’ on-line meetings), to ensure a continued focus on adults at risk of harm
- Findings from the review of case files which took place as part of the inspection indicated that:
 - 88% of adults at risk of harm had some improvement for safety and protection; and
 - 94% of adults at risk of harm who needed additional support received it.
- Overall numbers of Adult Support & Protection (ASP) referrals were slightly higher in 2019-20 (pre-Covid) compared to the subsequent two years to end March 2022 – however, numbers increased significantly once all restrictions had been lifted, reflecting the emergence of ‘hidden harms’ as life returned to ‘normal’.
- The impact of the pandemic is in evidence in the majority of our datasets, in terms of the types of harms for which ASP Referrals have been made, and the parties submitting those Referrals. The number and % of ASP Referrals where the main harm type recorded was linked to ‘mental health and wellbeing’, eg

Self Harm, Psychological Harm, and Self Neglect, all increased in the two-year period from April 2020 compared to the previous year.

- The Biennial Report references that the inspection report findings commented favourably on Aberdeen City's engagement with adults at risk of harm, recognising a 'golden thread' that flowed from strategic decision-making to hands-on activity. Positive feedback was also received in relation to the Stakeholder Engagement Sub Committee of the APC and the APC User Forum which evidenced important steps to strengthen the voice of adults and unpaid carers.

3.6 In terms of moving forwards, as set out in Section 9 of the Biennial Report, the APC [Strategy](#) for the period January 2022 to March 2024 encompasses the below Priorities. These are being delivered by progression of a related Improvement Plan which is being progressed by the APC's Sub-Committees.

Stakeholder Engagement

We commit to continue to develop appropriate mechanisms for effective communication:

- i) recognising how diverse our communities are, to ensure the 'voice' of all those we aim to support and protect is at the centre of all we do,
- ii) to raise awareness about ASP, so that staff and public recognise the risks of harm to vulnerable adults and know how to respond, report and connect to appropriate supports, and
- iii) to ensure we understand each other's roles, responsibilities and aims (including via sharing of updates and good practice across all partners' staff groups).

Performance / Quality Assurance Framework

We will develop a robust Data Performance and Quality Assurance Framework, to enable us to:

- i) identify trends, areas for improvement and areas of good practice; and
- ii) establish a process for continuous improvement and ensure learning is embedded into practice.

This will enable us to deliver safe and effective services with improved outcomes for those at risk of harm.

Learning and Development

We will continuously improve ASP practice, learning and development by reaching all our people, ensuring effective support, preventative measures and protection of adults at risk of harm.

In addition, the monitoring and analysis of our ASP data and outcomes will be significantly enhanced in 2022 with the introduction of our new whole sector – children's and adults – database, D365 which will replace our existing CareFirst system. D365 has been designed by social work for social work in conjunction with other internal and external partners and will, amongst other things, make a significant improvement to the quality, consistency and transparency of our adult protection activities.

We will also ensure we maximise all opportunities for learning through our Learning Review Sub Committee. They continually monitor national and local

cases from which further learning and improvements can be made and changes where appropriate implemented.

- 3.7 The Biennial Report has been submitted to Scottish Government and shared with key stakeholders as required by the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007. It has also been circulated widely to partners and staff, and has been published on the Aberdeen Protects website.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Section 46 of the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 requires the convener of an Adult Protection Committee to prepare a general report on the Adult Protection Committee's work every two years. The Biennial Report as appended at Appendix 1 ensures that this statutory requirement is complied with.

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	Risk of non compliance with Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 if no Biennial Report prepared	Biennial Report has been prepared as required by the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007	L	Yes
Operational	No significant risks identified			

Financial	No significant risks identified			
Reputational	No significant risks identified			
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified			

8. OUTCOMES

<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	<p><i>The proposals within this report support the delivery of Stretch Outcome 11:</i></p> <p><i>Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026</i></p> <p><i>Key Driver 11.1:</i></p> <p><i>11.1 Supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged people, families and groups</i></p> <p><i>The Biennial Report sets out how vulnerable adults at risk of harm are being supported and protected by multi agency partners.</i></p>

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 N/A

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1 - APC Biennial Report 2020-22.

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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