

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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<b>COMMITTEE</b>	Education and Children's Services
<b>DATE</b>	12 September 2023
<b>EXEMPT</b>	No
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	No
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	Bairns Hoose
<b>REPORT NUMBER</b>	CFS/23/289
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Eleanor Sheppard
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>	Graeme Simpson
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	Graeme Simpson
<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b>	2.3

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To advise and share with members Aberdeen City's Children's Services partnership Bairns Hoose Pathfinder application and the associated planning.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 note Aberdeen City's Pathfinder Application, Appendix 1; and
- 2.2 instruct the Chief Officer Children & Family Services/CSWO to provide a Service update in early 2024 on the outcome of the Pathfinder application and progress to develop Aberdeen City's Bairns Hoose.

### 3.1 CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The Scottish Government's vision for a Bairns' Hoose (Barnahus) in Scotland is that by 2026: *"All children in Scotland who have been victims or witnesses to abuse or violence, as well as children under the age of criminal responsibility whose behaviour has caused significant harm or abuse will have access to trauma-informed recovery, support and justice."*
- 3.2 A Bairns Hoose is based on the concept of 'four rooms'. It brings together the four elements of justice, health, social work and recovery support into a single setting to deliver integrated support to best meet the needs of children who are victims of abuse or have witnessed violence as well as children under the age of criminal responsibility whose behaviour has caused significant harm to others.
- 3.3 In Autumn 2022 Aberdeen City's Public Protection Chief Officers Group unanimously committed to delivering an Aberdeen City Bairns Hoose on a collaborative basis. To drive forward a multi-agency Bairns Hoose Delivery

Group was established in early 2023, bringing together key members of the Child Protection Committee (CPC) along with other relevant stakeholders. The Group has responsibility for:

- Planning, implementation, and delivery of a Bairns Hoose to provide trauma-informed recovery, support and justice.
- Ensure that delivery of trauma recovery support aligns to the wider Family Support Model.
- Ensure as a partnership a trauma recovery lens is central to the delivery of IRD's (Interagency Referral Discussions) and SCIM (Scottish Child Interview Model) interviews.
- Develop the capacity of a Bairns Hoose to deliver a trauma-informed remote Court facility for children and young people.
- Engage with partnerships across the North East of Scotland to explore opportunities for co-delivery and shared learning to improve outcomes for children and young people.

- 3.4 The strategic group with primary oversight for the development of our Bairns Hoose is the CPC. There is an important interconnection with the Children's Services Board and the development of our broader preventative approach to Whole Family Support in the city. The whole family support provided by the Bairns Hoose will form part of our continuum of support and cannot exist within a silo of its own making.
- 3.5 Aberdeen City Council has identified the unused half of the Links Hub, Early Learning Centre on Regent Walk as an ideal location to serve as our Bairns Hoose. It will require significant re-development and Council has already identified £1m from its capital programme to support the redesign. Multi-agency partners unanimously agree this option has the potential to support the delivery of a high quality trauma informed service to children, young people and their families. A strategic business case is being finalised and the re-design of the space is being informed by children and families as well as relevant partners.
- 3.6 Central to delivery of a Bairns Hoose is the Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM). SCIM is a new rights and trauma informed approach to gathering best evidence from children and young people who have been victims of abuse/harm or witness to violence. The SCIM model went live in Aberdeen City in November 2022. The National SCIM team have been highly praise worthy of our implementation.
- 3.7 Following a consultation exercise in 2022, the Scottish Government published the [Bairns' Hoose standards](#) in May 2023. These standards set the blueprint for delivering a Bairns Hoose, at their core is ensuring the voice of children, young people and families who use the services of a Bairns Hoose is central to its design and delivery. To support our planning a Reference Group of children and family members who have had experience of child protection processes has been established. We will actively engage with this group on our planning and design for delivering a Bairns Hoose.
- 3.8 In June 2023 the Scottish Government announced a Pathfinder Application process. Aberdeen City have submitted a Pathfinder Application which closed on 21 August 2023 (Appendix 1). A decision on who the successful bidders are

is expected in September/October 2023. Some funding will be awarded to successful applications although it is not anticipated that funding will cover the full cost of developing and delivering a Bairns Hoose.

3.9 The Council is drawing on the support of Children’s 1<sup>st</sup> who are involved in the delivery of a Bairns Hoose in North Strathclyde and already are a key partner in delivering the Fit Like, Aberdeen service. To support our own learning we will work in partnership with Children 1<sup>st</sup> and the NIHR funded Aberdeen Health Determinants Research Collaboration (AHDRC) to commission the University of Edinburgh, who have undertaken evaluation and development of programme theory relating to Scotland’s first Bairns Hoose [North Strathclyde Bairns Hoose \(Barnahus\)](#). We will draw upon established protocols for designing ethical research approaches; data management, security and sharing protocols and data collection tool design. The participation of AHDRC will provide additional support ensuring learning is captured and shared at a local level. This partnership will also deliver on the expectation of all Pathfinders that successful bids will share learning with other partnerships and with the Scottish Government’s Bairns Hoose team.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising out of this report. As noted the Council has already identified some capital funding to support the redesign of the identified Links Hub.

4.2 Successful applicants will receive some funding to support delivery of their pathway bid, the level of funding is at this stage unclear. The application also makes clear that delivery of a Bairns Hoose will require all agencies to contribute to its delivery.

#### 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications arising out of this report.

#### 6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

#### 7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) <small>*taking into account controls/control actions</small>	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
<b>Strategic Risk</b>	No significant related risks	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Compliance</b>	The Scottish Government policy is that every child in Scotland will	The CPC has primary oversight on progress to develop and deliver a	L	Yes

	<p>have access to a Bairns Hoose service by 2025.</p> <p>It is anticipated that national reporting will in future include reporting against the Bairns Hoose Standards.</p>	<p>Bairns Hoose. Regular reporting will be shared with Aberdeen's Public protection Chief Officers Group.</p>		
<b>Operational</b>	<p>Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people who have experienced harm or whose behaviour poses a risk to others is central to the planning for all children and young people open to Children's Social Work. Children's Social Work and Police Scotland have lead responsibility to investigate allegations of abuse or where children's behaviour poses a concern to others. While this duty is currently being fulfilled the environment in which these investigations occur does not fulfil the requirements of the Bairns Hoose standards nor best meet the needs of the children and young people.</p>	<p>Aberdeen City has a well established Child Protection data reporting framework. Going forward the framework will be amended to include reporting against the Bairns Hoose standards.</p>	L	Yes
<b>Financial</b>	<p>There are no significant related financial risks from this report.</p> <p>The Strategic Business case is being concluded and will upon its conclusions be reported to Finance and Resources Committee. This will be informed by funding awarded to a successful Pathway Application.</p> <p>All agencies will be responsible for funding the individual service components that will deliver a Bairns Hoose.</p>	<p>One of the core principles of delivering a Bairns Hoose service is that by providing early trauma informed support to children and their family it will reduce the demand on services in the longer term and reduce the likelihood of children requiring intensive support.</p>	L	Yes
<b>Reputational</b>	<p>Failure to deliver on the Bairns Hoose standards will have a reputational impact on the Council. It will also adversely impact on the assessment of Children's Services within future strategic joint inspections.</p>	<p>By being a pathfinder the Council will benefit from support from the National Bairns Hoose team to deliver a high quality service.</p>	L	Yes
<b>Environment / Climate</b>	<p>No significant risks identified.</p>	N/A	N/A	N/A

## 8. OUTCOMES

### COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN

<b>Impact of Report</b>	
<b>Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement</b>	<p>Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people has a direct relevance to the delivery of the following statements contained within the Council Delivery Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure local services identify young people with mental health problems and help them get early support and help.</li> <li>• Ensure the Council follows best practice as a corporate parent to get the best outcomes for looked-after young people, those in kinship care and those with additional support needs such as autism, developmental disorders or mental health problems</li> <li>• Continue to seek to support young people to receive care in Aberdeen, through fostering, adoption and other services and seek to reduce “out of authority” placements.</li> </ul>
<b>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</b>	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	<p>Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people for whom secure care might be considered has a direct relevance to the following stretch outcomes in the LOIP:</p> <p>4. 95% of children (0-5 years) will reach their expected developmental milestones by the time of their child health reviews by 2026</p> <p>5. 90% of children and young people will report that they feel mentally well by 2026.</p> <p>6. 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.</p> <p>7. 95% of children living in our priority localities will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026.</p> <p>8. 25% fewer young people (under 18) charged with an offence by 2026.</p>
<b>Regional and City Strategies</b>	<p>Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people is central to the planning for all children and young people open to Children’s Social Work. This activity is relevant to the Aberdeen City Council Delivery Plan, the Local Outcome Improvement Plan, and the Children’s Services Plan.</p>
<b>UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes</b>	<p>Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people is central to the planning for all children and young people open to Children’s Social Work supports the Scottish Government’s drive to #KeepthePromise. This wide ranging and ambitious programme impacts on a range of statutory duties on the Council in relation to vulnerable and care experienced children including those contained in the Children(Scotland) Act 1995, Children’s Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011, Children &amp; Young</p>

	People (Scotland) Act 2014, Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 and Children (Scotland) Act 2020.
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## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
<b>Impact Assessment</b>	Delivery of a Bairsns Hoose will positively impact on all children, young people and families who require to access a Bairsns Hoose. It will enhance the Council's ability to deliver on its statutory duty to investigate allegations of harm and to respond effectively to meet the needs of children under the age of criminal responsibility whose behaviour pose a risk to others. As such it is considered that a full Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment to be completed.  Stage 1 IIA completed.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	Not required.
<b>Other</b>	Not required.

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 – Aberdeen City Bairsns Hoose Pathfinder Application.

## 11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

<b>Name</b>	Graeme Simpson
<b>Title</b>	CO – Children & Family Services/CSWO
<b>Email Address</b>	<a href="mailto:gsimpson@aberdeencity.gov.uk">gsimpson@aberdeencity.gov.uk</a>