

# **PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL**

**15 December 2021**

## **PERTH AND KINROSS ADULT PROTECTION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021**

**Report by Chief Social Work Officer  
(Report No. 21/243)**

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

Perth and Kinross Adult Protection Committee (APC), in compliance with Scottish Government guidance, publishes biennial reports. A biennial report was presented to the Scottish Government covering the reporting period 2019/20 and another will be presented for the period 2021/22.

This annual report for 2020/2021 provides an overview of the key activities and work of the APC partners to safeguard the welfare and interests of adults from harm.

This report focuses on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on adults at risk, how performance has been maintained and how services and agencies have successfully adapted. This report confirms that the APC continues to place a strong emphasis on learning and development and has prepared a programme of evidence-based improvement work for 2021/2022.

### **1. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES**

- 1.1 Section 46 of the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 requires Conveners of APCs to produce a biennial report on the exercise of the committee's functions in the preceding two years. Reports summarising the findings are published on the Scottish Government website. Annual reports are prepared by the Perth and Kinross APC to provide assurance about the multi-agency adult support and protection arrangements and to demonstrate the ongoing cycle of self-evaluation and audit. The Council agreed in 2018 that, in order to support good practice and regular scrutiny of continuous improvement in public protection, it would receive annual reports of the work of the APC.
- 1.2 The APC Annual Report 2020/2021 presents an overview of the performance of multi-agency working to protect adults at risk of harm. The report sets out achievements, key strengths, and areas for further improvement over the last year. This report also describes the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and importantly, how services have adapted to meet new challenges and demands.
- 1.3 On page 4 of the report, there is a summary infographic of adult protection activity throughout 2020/2021. It identifies the key changes in the volume and activity of key multi-agency adult protection processes. This year, in line with the aims of the committee to improve management information, the report contains a broader set of data and richer analysis.

Positively, this comes at a time when there has never been a greater need to understand in more detail the impact of the pandemic on the lives of our most vulnerable and at-risk members of our communities.

### **Key Themes and Assurances**

- 1.4 The data shows an incremental growth in the number of adult protection (AP) concerns with 1819 AP concerns received in 2020/21 compared to 1593 in 2019/20. This represents a 14% increase. Although there is no national AP data set, this increase would appear to be consistent with the national picture.
- 1.5 Adult protection referrals were received from a wide range of sources, with the main three sources being Police, Health, and social work/local authority. Fire and ambulance services, care homes and the general public have also referred. This indicates a growing awareness of adult protection, and a confidence in the reporting of concerns.
- 1.6 The profile of people referred to adult support and protection processes shows that older women are most likely to give cause for concern. As with previous years, vulnerability factors include infirmity due to old age, mental health, physical disability, and learning disability.
- 1.7 There has also been an increase in adult support and protection activity for younger adults, and in particular, younger adults affected by learning disability, mental ill-health, and substance use. This is an encouraging sign that partners have an increased awareness of vulnerability and risk. Younger adults are more likely to be the subject of repeat referrals typically featuring diagnoses of borderline personality disorder, alcohol/substance misuse, and self-harming behaviour.
- 1.8 There has been a higher number of referrals for women over men. Men are more likely to be referred when under the age of 65, with women more likely to be referred above the age of 65.
- 1.9 Harm is most likely to occur within a home setting, either a person's own home or within a care home. Incidents of harm in care home settings are often found to relate to harm between care home residents, at the low end of severity, and do not relate to harm from staff members or other third parties.
- 1.10 The most prevalent types of harm remain relatively consistent, with physical harm, financial harm, neglect, self-harm, and psychological harm the most reported. It should be noted that many investigations involve multiple types of harm.

### **Adapting Adult Support and Protection (ASP) During COVID-19**

- 1.11 Page 36 of the annual report provides a more detailed account of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and how services adapted to the challenges.

Adult support and protection was identified as an essential service by the Council, and in addition to strengthening the governance and oversight of this

work, a high priority was placed on ensuring that there were sufficient numbers of appropriately trained and experienced social workers to carry out this work. This included a temporary move to 7-day operations to support an increase in volume of activity outside normal office hours.

1.12 The report highlights a number of improvements in performance and practice in 2020/2021 that have been achieved within the most challenging of circumstances:

- The number of AP concerns increased by 14%, however, the proportion of concerns screened within 24-hours has remained steady at 98%;
- The number of AP Concerns that progressed to formal ASP inquiry or investigation increased by 22% and notably performance against timescales for completion continued to improve; and
- The number of APC case conferences increased from 12 in 2019/20 to 75 conducted in 2020/2021.

### **Continuous Improvement**

1.13 The APC has maintained a focus on continuous improvement and the annual report looks forward to 2021/22 and identifies a programme of improvement actions. This includes:

- Further work to understanding the true and long-term impact of COVID-19 locally in relation to adults in need of support and protection;
- A focus on key risk factors including violence against women, financial harm, drug and alcohol use, mental ill-health, and suicide prevention;
- Priority focus on young people and adults in transition between services and securing improvements in the multi-agency, co-ordinated response;
- Engaging supported people in a more meaningful way and developing an AP specific communications strategy;
- Development and implementation of a robust multi-agency data set to inform planning, manage workload efficiently, target resources on key issues, to inform improvements to practice, and to demonstrate outcomes;
- Capturing learning from adverse events and learning reviews with partner agencies across Tayside; and
- Recognising the importance of chronologies as a means to identifying patterns of behaviour and escalating risks, improve multi-agency practice in preparing and using multi-agency chronologies to identify, share and respond to risk.

## 2. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Perth and Kinross APC Annual Report provides a comprehensive overview and analysis of adult protection activity over 2020/2021. It provides assurance to Council that the protection and welfare of vulnerable and at-risk adults has been prioritised throughout. Notably, the governance arrangements for public protection have been strengthened over the last year, and in particular, the management of COVID-19 specific risks are identified and managed across all public protection partnerships.

The report clearly shows the pressures arising from increasing demand. It also demonstrates that this has been managed effectively by prioritising resources and ensuring that there are sufficient skilled social workers to respond timeously and effectively. This will continue to be monitored closely. It is commendable that key improvements in performance have been achieved in the most challenging of years.

- 2.2 It is recommended that Council:

- (i) Notes the wide range of work being carried out by Perth and Kinross Council and partners through the Adult Protection Committee, to provide high quality services to protect adults at risk and the commitment to continuous improvement; and
- (ii) Endorses the contents of the Perth and Kinross Adult Protection Committee Annual Report for 2020/2021.

### Authors

Name	Designation	Contact Details
Iain Wilkie	Interagency Adult Protection Co-ordinator	<a href="mailto:ECSCCommittee@pkc.gov.uk">ECSCCommittee@pkc.gov.uk</a>
Jacquie Pepper	Chief Social Work Officer	01738 475000

### Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Jacquie Pepper	Chief Social Work Officer	17 November 2021

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion, only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 01738 475000.

You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

## 1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

<b>Strategic Implications</b>	<b>Yes / None</b>
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	<b>Yes</b>
Corporate Plan	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Resource Implications</b>	
Financial	n/a
Workforce	n/a
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	n/a
<b>Assessments</b>	
Equality Impact Assessment	n/a
Strategic Environmental Assessment	n/a
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	n/a
Legal and Governance	n/a
Risk	n/a
<b>Consultation</b>	
Internal	<b>Yes</b>
External	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Communication</b>	
Communications Plan	n/a

### 1. Strategic Implications

#### Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 This section sets out how the proposals relate to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement in terms of the following priorities:

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible, and informed citizens.
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable economy.
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

This report relates to Objective No. (iv).

#### Corporate Plan

- 1.2 This section sets out how the proposals relate to the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan Objectives.

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life;
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens;
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy;
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

This report relates to Objective No. (iv).

- 1.3 The report also links to the Education & Children's Services Vision, Values and Priorities in respect of the following key Priority area: ***(please select one Priority area from the list below as appropriate)***

- Best Start
- Learning and Achievement
- Health and Wellbeing
- Care and Equity
- Safe and Protected

## 2. Resource Implications

### Financial

- 2.1 There are no known resource implications at this time.

### Workforce

- 2.2 There are no known workforce implications at this time.

### Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There are no asset management implications at this time.

## 3. Assessments

### Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:

- (i) Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA.

### Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 The matters presented in this report were considered under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

### Sustainability

- 3.3 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Under the Climate Change

(Scotland) Act 2009 the Council also has a duty relating to climate change and, in exercising its functions must act:

- In the way best calculated to delivery of the Act's emissions reduction targets.
- In the way best calculated to deliver any statutory adaption programmes.
- In a way that it considers most sustainable.

This report is not applicable to sustainability.

#### Legal and Governance

3.4 There are no legal implications at this time.

3.5 N/A

#### Risk

3.6 There are no associated risks at this time.

### **4. Consultation**

#### Internal

4.1 The Head of Adult Services within the Health & Social Care Partnership (HSCP) and partners have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

#### External

4.2 The Adult Protection Committee and partners have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

### **5. Communication**

5.1 There are no communication issues at this time.

## **2. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

2.1 None.

## **3. APPENDICES**

3.1 Appendix 1 – Adult Support and Protection (ASP) Annual Report 2020 - 2021