

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

SCRUTINY AND PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

30 NOVEMBER 2022

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

21 DECEMBER 2022

PERTH AND KINROSS CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2021/2022

Report by Jacquie Pepper, Chief Social Work Officer

(Report No 22/293)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee (CPC), in compliance with Scottish Government guidance, publishes an annual Standards and Quality (S&Q) report. This Report is routinely presented to Elected Members on an annual basis. The S&Q report, for the academic year 2021/2022, provides an overview of the key activities and work of the CPC partners to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation.
- 1.2 This report describes the CPC's achievements; key strengths and areas for improvement. It also includes an update on the CPC's Improvement Plan; confirms that the CPC continues to focus on learning and improvement and has in place a comprehensive programme of improvement work for 2022 and beyond.

2. RECOMMENDATION

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| 2.1 | <p>It is recommended that the Scrutiny and Performance Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scrutinises and comments as appropriate on the Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee Standards and Quality Report 2021/2022 (Appendix 1) and the contents of the Perth and Kinross CPC Improvement Plan 1 August 2021 – 31 July 2023 (Appendix 2). |
| 2.2 | <p>It is recommended that Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Notes the wide range of work being carried out by Perth and Kinross Council, and partners, through the CPC to provide high quality services to protect children and young people, in particular, the high-level commitment to continuous improvement through quality assurance and self-evaluation; and• Endorses the contents of this report and the Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee Standards and Quality Report 2021/2022 (Appendix 1) and the contents of the Perth and Kinross CPC Improvement Plan 1 August 2021 – 31 July 2023 (Appendix 2). |

3. STRUCTURE OF REPORT

3.1 This report is structured over the following sections:

- Section 4: Background
- Section 5: Analysis and Proposals
- Section 6: Further Considerations
- Appendices

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Child Protection Committees in Scotland are encouraged to publish an Annual Report in compliance with the requirements described in [*Protecting Children and Young People: Child Protection Committee and Chief Officer Responsibilities*](#) (Scottish Government: February 2019). This (S&Q) report covers the work of the CPC for the academic year from 1 August 2021 to 31 July 2022.
- 4.2 The S&Q report reflects the Care Inspectorate's Quality Indicator Framework: [*A quality framework for children and young people in need of care and protection*](#) (Care Inspectorate: Revised 2019).
- 4.3 The S&Q report presents an overview of performance in services to protect children and young people and is based on sound evidence, obtained through a range of single and multi-agency key performance indicators (data), quality assurance and self-evaluation activities. It describes achievements, key strengths and areas for further improvement.
- 4.4 The S&Q report confirms that the CPC continues to be a listening, learning and improving CPC, and the report sets out the CPC's shared programme of improvement work for 2022 and beyond.

5. ANALYSIS AND PROPOSALS

Data

- 5.1 Page 5 of the S&Q report provides a summary infographic. It identifies the key changes in the volume and activity of multi-agency child protection processes and practices. Pages 9 to 15 of the S&Q report provides a high-level analysis of child protection key data performance indicators, with descriptive narrative.
- 5.2 This year the data shows that the number of Child Concern Reports (CCRs)¹ has risen for a sixth successive year; by far the majority of CCRs continue to come from Police Scotland.

¹ Note: A Child Concern Report (CCR) is a mechanism by which any practitioner or manager across the public, private or third sector, or indeed, any member of the public, can raise any worry or concern they may have about a child or young person's health and/or wellbeing.

The number of children and young people, who have been the subject of an inter-agency referral discussion (IRDs)² and the number of child protection investigations have also increased; continuing a year-on-year trend for the last six years. There has also been an increase in the number of joint investigative interviews conducted by police and social work.

- 5.3 Whilst there has been a slight reduction in the number of unborn baby referrals received (126 in 2021/2022 compared to 134 in 2020/2021, in keeping with a falling birth rate across Tayside), 30 were considered at pre-birth child protection case conferences (CPCCs) where 29 (97%) went on to be placed on the child protection register (CPR). This continues to evidence that frontline staff across services and agencies remain alert to risks and vulnerability in pregnancy.
- 5.4 The number of children and young people being considered at initial CPCCs has fallen again (60 in 2021/2022 compared to 71 in 2020/2021). Of these, 47 (78%) children and young people's names were placed on the CPR. All unborn babies, children and young people placed on the CPR are the subject of a multi-agency child protection plan coordinated by a social worker (lead professional). Those not placed on the CPR, received alternative single and / or multi-agency supports at an earlier stage, by way of a multi-agency child or young person's plan; again, co-ordinated by a social worker (lead professional).
- 5.5 In keeping with the falling number of initial CPCCs, there has also been a corresponding reduction in the number of new CPR registrations (84 in 2021/2022 compared with 97 in 2020/2021). In addition, the number of children and young people whose names were included on the CPR at 31 July 2022 has fallen to 55, compared to 69 in 2020/2021. This reduction is a consequence of a significant investment made to secure consistent Chairing of CPCCs within Services for Children, Young People and Families and increasing use of child and young person's plans, with support being provided at a much earlier stage; thus, reducing the need to go to CPCC and CPR registrations.
- 5.6 The age profile of those placed on the CPR has significantly changed. Unborn babies and younger children currently make up the majority of those now placed (registered) on the CPR. The areas for concern, for children in need of protection, continue to be parental mental ill-health, domestic abuse and parental alcohol or drug use; sometimes referred to as the "*trio of risk*". Neglect and non-engagement also continue to feature highly. It is also recognised that in the majority, if not all of these cases, there will be also an element of emotional abuse.
- 5.7 The data and information provided by the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) shows that there has been a reduction in the overall number of children and young people referred to SCRA; whilst noting a change profile in the referring agencies.

² Note: An IRD is a discussion between practitioners, services, or agencies, where a child concern report and/or multi-agency screening arrangements have determined that a child or young person may need care and protection from harm, abuse, or neglect; or there is a likelihood or risk of significant harm, abuse, or neglect.

The number of children subject to compulsory supervision orders (CSOs) has risen this year; albeit the numbers remain small; whilst the conversion rate from referrals to hearing remains steady. The number of child protection orders (CPOs) has decreased again this year to 13 in 2021/2022 (compared to 25 in 2020/2021); again, the numbers involved are small.

Impact

- 5.8 Following feedback from Elected Members last year, the CPC has undertaken a multi-agency quality assurance review of child protection investigations that did not proceed to a CPCC. This was a small scale, but representative sample size review, which reviewed the multi-agency decision-making processes, assessment and planning processes and identified the relevant outcomes for each child or young person. The key findings from this review, which overall were very positive, can be found at Pages 16 to 18 of the S&Q report. At time of this report, the CPC is about to undertake a similar multi-agency quality assurance review of IRDs; planned for October and November 2022. Both are aimed at providing evidence-based assurances in terms of better outcomes for children and young people.
- 5.9 The S&Q report evidences a continually improving position in terms of listening to, engaging with and providing children and young people with access to independent advocacy. The work of the Children and Youths Right Officer (CYRO) and in particular, the services being commissioned via Independent Advocacy Perth and Kinross (IAPK) continue to ensure that all children and young people, involved in child protection processes and the Hearings systems are provided with good quality independent advocacy.
- 5.10 The S&Q report highlights the increasing support being provided to staff; with increasing numbers of multi-agency staff undertaking virtual and online child protection learning and development opportunities; more specialist training and plans are in place to recommence face-to-face multi-agency child protection training in November 2022.
- 5.11 The S&Q report highlights the importance of, and the use being made of the CPC website pages; its use of social media to extend the CPC's reach and footprint and recognises that going forward, there is an opportunity to expand that even further.
- 5.12 The S&Q report highlights the added value and ongoing work of the Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative (TRIC): Priority Group 5 (PG5): Safeguarding and Child Protection, which is continuing to deliver evidence-based practice guidance; aimed at improving child protection day-to-day culture, ethos and practice across Tayside.

Leadership and Improvement

- 5.13 Pages 39 onwards in the S&Q report evidences our collective commitment to leadership; our strengthened public protection partnership arrangements and our commitment to developing a values-based reflective practice approach.

- 5.14 The strengthened Public Protection Chief Officers' Group (COG) and the Children, Young People and Families Partnership continue to provide strong leadership and direction to the work of the CPC partnership; particularly in terms of the scrutiny and accountability role they have for the CPC's thematic reporting and update reports, and they also have direct oversight of the CPC's improvement work.
- 5.15 Page 41 of the S&Q report recognises that the CPC is a listening and learning partnership. Learning lessons and making improvements, particularly from Learning Reviews are fundamental to the work of the CPC's and to its commitment to continuous improvement through quality assurance and self-evaluation. In addition, the CPC is aware of the ongoing Scottish Government's Historic Child Abuse Inquiry, from which there is and will be, additional learning for key services, agencies and the CPC.
- 5.16 Finally, an update on the CPC's Improvement Plan 2021 – 2023 is shown at Appendix 2. This plan, co-ordinates the CPC's current two-year improvement work; articulated by various Actions and Tasks which are supported by an evidence-base.

6. FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 In conclusion, the Perth and Kinross CPC annual standards and quality report provides a comprehensive, high-level overview and analysis of the work carried out by the CPC and partner services and agencies to keep children and young people safe and protected. It sets out clearly the work and priorities of the CPC to support the most vulnerable and at-risk children and young people. It describes the CPC's key strengths, areas for improvement and its capacity for further improvement. It confirms that the CPC is a listening and learning partnership, remains vigilant and is not complacent.

Author

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Approved

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes/None
Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	N/A
Workforce	N/A
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	N/A
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	N/A
Strategic Environmental Assessment	N/A
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	N/A
Legal and Governance	N/A
Risk	N/A
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
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 (i).

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 (i).

- 1.3 The report also links to the Education & Children's Services Vision, Values and Priorities in respect of the following key Priority area:

- Safe and Protected

2. Resource Implications

Financial

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

Workforce

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

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There are no asset management resource 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.

- 3.1.1 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 Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.

- 3.2.1 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.

3.3.1 The proposals have been assessed as not applicable.

Legal and Governance

3.4 There are no legal and governance implications at this time.

3.5 Not Applicable

Risk

3.6 There are no associated risks at this time.

4. Consultation

Internal

4.1 The Head of Legal and Governance Services; the Children, Young People and Families Partnership, Education and Children's Service's Senior Management Team and the Child Protection Committee and partners have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

External

4.2 The Child Protection Committee and partners have been consulted in the preparation of this report – including NHS Tayside; Police Scotland – Tayside Division and the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration.

5. Communication

5.1 There are no communication issues at this time.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

2.1 There are no background papers.

3. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee Standards and Quality Report 2021/2022

Appendix 2: Perth and Kinross CPC Improvement Plan 1 August 2021 – 31 July 2023 (Update)