

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Scrutiny Committee – 27 November 2019

Council – 18 December 2019

PERTH AND KINROSS CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE (CPC) STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2018/2019

Report by Chief Social Work Officer (Report No. 19/347)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee (CPC), in compliance with Protecting Children and Young People: Child Protection Committee and Chief Officer Responsibilities (Scottish Government: February 2019), publishes an annual Standards and Quality Report. This Standards and Quality Report, for the academic year 2018/2019 provides an overview of the key activities and work of the CPC to protect children and young people from harm, abuse and exploitation. This report identifies achievements, key strengths and areas for further improvement. It also sets out the CPC's programme of improvement work for the next twelve months and beyond.

1. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 All 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 Standards and Quality Report (S&Q) covers work of the CPC for the academic year from 1 August 2018 to 31 July 2019.
- 1.2 The S&Q report reflects the Care Inspectorate's Quality Indicator Frameworks: [*How well are we improving the lives of children and young people?*](#) (Care Inspectorate: 2014) and [*A quality framework for children and young people in need of care and protection*](#) (Care Inspectorate: 2018).
- 1.3 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 wide range of single and multi-agency quality assurance and self-evaluation activities. It describes achievements, key strengths and areas for further improvement. It also describes the capacity for continuing improvement and the CPC's improvement programme for the next 12 months and beyond.
- 1.4 The pictorial summary on page 5 of the S&Q report provides a graphic synopsis of the entire S&Q report and identifies increasing key child protection processes and statistical data; improving practice and processes, both being enabled by improved guidance.

- 1.5 The headline statistical data presented on pages 9 to 12 of the S&Q report show that the number of child concern reports has risen for a second successive year; by far the majority continuing to come from Police Scotland. The number of children and young people who have been the subject of an inter-agency referral discussion (IRDs), leading to a child protection investigation, has also continued to grow over the last two years. Whilst this is a very positive development in terms of practice and process improvements, if this trend continues, it will have an impact on inter-agency resource capacity; particularly within Services for Children, Young People and Families.
- 1.6 The key child protection data increases described above, correspondingly impact on the number of children and young people being considered at initial child protection case conferences and subsequently being placed on the Child Protection Register (CPR). The conversion rate from child protection investigation to child protection case conference is 73% and the conversion rate from child protection case conference to registration is 90%; confirming that the children and young people most at risk of significant harm, abuse and exploitation are being correctly identified, managed, supported and protected. Similarly, if this trend continues, there will be an impact on our resource capacity.
- 1.7 For those children and young people whose names have been placed on the CPR (registration), we continue to closely monitor both short term and longer term periods of registration. The areas for concern being recorded most frequently continue to be problematic parental drug and/or alcohol use; domestic abuse and parental mental ill-health, commonly referred to as the 'toxic trio'. Neglect and non-engagement also feature highly, potentially as a result of our increased focus on supporting vulnerable pregnant women pre-birth and up to the first year of their baby's life. Additionally, our staff are increasingly alert in identifying and addressing parental non-engagement and/or disguised compliance. It is also recognised that in every area of concern being recorded, there will be an element of emotional abuse, which we are recording more robustly.
- 1.8 The data (financial year) also shows that referrals to the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) have now fallen, in keeping with national trends and we are confident that we are only referring those children and young people who are in need of compulsory measures of care. The CPC continues to monitor the use of legal measures: particularly Compulsory Supervision Orders (CSOs) and Child Protection Orders (CPOs) which have remained fairly static. Finally, the number of unborn baby referrals has fallen slightly; with the majority continuing to come from Health Services.
- 1.9 This year, the CPC's multi-agency quality assurance and review of child protection practice examined the case files of all 15 children, aged between 6 months and 18 months of age, whose names were placed on the CPR for the first time. The period of interest was January 2017 – January 2019 and the focus was on impact on families; recognition and response to initial concerns; assessing risk and need; care planning, managing risk and effective intervention. The findings presented on pages 14 to 15 of the S&Q report provide reassurance that our key child protection processes remain robust

and that our partnership working remains strong. Of particular note is that the quality of our assessment and planning processes is strong and that there is a recognised improvement in the use and quality of chronologies. However, we acknowledge there is still room for further improvement in terms of early intervention; consistent recording practices and a need to encourage more fathers to be involved in care planning.

- 1.10 Pages 16 to 22 of the S&Q report also evidences a significantly improved picture in the provision of, and access to, advocacy support for children and young people involved in key meetings. Throughout the S&Q report we have evidenced how we are engaging and listening to children and young people and how we are working to keep children and young people safe from harm, abuse and exploitation; in particular from Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) as described on page 31 of the S&Q report.
- 1.11 The CPC continues to support the work of the Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative (TRIC) Priority Group 5 (PG5): Safeguarding and Child Protection, which is chaired by Jacquie Pepper, Chief Social Work Officer. The improvement work of this group has gained significant pace and the practice developments are providing added value to the improvement work of the CPC. A concise summary of this work can be found at page 36 of the S&Q report.
- 1.12 In conclusion, the S&Q report evidences our continued capacity for further improvement and our next steps; which are described on page 37 of the S&Q report. This is supported by the evidence contained within the [CPC Improvement Plan 2018 – 2020 at 31 July 2019](#) and the [CSE Work Plan 2017 – 2020 at 31 July 2019](#), both of which accompany this report. Both plans show the progress we have made to date and the planned improvement work being taken forward by the CPC to support frontline practice.
- 1.13 Through the work of the CPC, there is a commitment to remain alert; to continually identify areas of risk; to ensure continuous improvement and to maintain excellence in the work of the CPC.

2. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Council:

- (i) Notes the wide range of work being carried out by Perth and Kinross Council and partners through the Child Protection Committee, to provide high quality services to protect children and young people, in particular the high level commitment to continuous improvement through self-evaluation; and
- (ii) Endorses the contents of this report and the Child Protection Committee Standards and Quality Report 2018/2019 (Appendix 1) and the contents of the CPC Improvement Plan 2018 – 2020 at 31 July 2019 (Appendix 2) and the CSE Work Plan 2017 – 2020 at 31 July 2019 Appendix 3).

2.2 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Committee:

- (i) Scrutinises and comments as appropriate on the Child Protection Committee Standards and Quality Report 2018/2019 (Appendix 1); the contents of the CPC Improvement Plan 2018 – 2020 at 31 July 2019 (Appendix 2) and the CSE Work Plan 2017 – 2020 at 31 July 2019 (Appendix 3).

Author(s)

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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 Policy Framework in respect of the following key policy area: Integrated Working.

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 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 Not Applicable.

Legal and Governance

- 3.4 There are no legal implications at this time.

Risk

- 3.5 There are no associated risks at this time.

- 3.6 N/A

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Head of Democratic Services, Head of Finance, Head of Legal Services, Head of Human Resources, the Children, Young People and Families Partnership, Education and Children's Services SMT 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.

5. Communication

- 5.1 There are no Communication issues at this time

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

3. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee Standards and Quality Report 2018/2019

Appendix 2: Perth and Kinross CPC Improvement Plan 2018 – 2020 at 31 July 2019

Appendix 3: Perth and Kinross Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Work Plan 2017 – 2020 at 31 July 2019