

Education & Children's Services Sub-Committee

Due to Scottish Government Guidance relating to COVID-19, this meeting will be held remotely.



Tuesday, 1st March, 2022 - 10.00 a.m.

AGENDA

Page Nos.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – In terms of Section 5 of the Code of Conduct, members of the Committee are asked to declare any interest in particular items on the agenda and the nature of the interest(s) at this stage.
3. **MINUTE** – Minute of Meeting of Education and Children's Services Sub-Committee of 28th January, 2022. 5 – 8
4. **THIRD SECTOR GRANT AWARDS** – Report by the Executive Director - Education & Children's Services. 9 – 18
5. **ANNUAL UPLIFT IN PAYMENTS TO FOSTER CARERS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2022/23** – Report by the Executive Director - Education & Children's Services. 19 – 21
6. **FIFE CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD** – Report by the Executive Director - Education & Children's Services. 22 -33
7. **CHILDREN'S SERVICES INSPECTION UPDATE** – Report by the Executive Director - Education & Children's Services. 34 – 52
8. **CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21** – Report by the Chief Social Work Officer. 53 – 101
9. **EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES DIRECTORATE REVENUE BUDGET 2021-22 - UPDATE** – Joint Report by the Executive Director - Finance & Corporate Services and the Executive Director - Education & Children's Services. 102 – 109
10. **EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES DIRECTORATE CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN 2021-22: PROGRESS REPORT** – Joint Report by the Executive Director - Finance & Corporate Services and the Executive Director - Education & Children's Services. 110 – 115
11. **SECONDARY SCHOOL STAFFWISE SURVEY - PROGRESS** – Report by the Executive Director - Education & Children's Services. 116 – 131
12. **SWIMMING: OFFERING TO YOUNG PEOPLE** – Report by the Executive Director - Education & Children's Services. 132 – 141
13. **WALKED ROUTES TO SCHOOL ASSESSMENT POLICY – UPDATE ON PROGRAMME** – Report by the Executive Director - Education & Children's Services. 142 – 148
- 14./

14. **EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME.** 149

15. **NOTICE OF MOTION** – In terms of Standing Order No. 8.1(1), the following Notice of Motion has been submitted:-

Sub-Committee notes the decision of the Education & Children's Services Sub-Committee of 7th September, 2021 whereby Agenda Item 8 was agreed as:

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Education & Children's Services Sub-Committee:

- (1) Reviews and comments on the progress made with the Professional Learning & Leadership Strategy since the report approved by the Education, Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee in January, 2016.
- (2) Note the leadership models, as agreed in the Professional Learning & Leadership Strategy (2016) that have been progressed successfully over the last five years, and the intention to continue with the development and implementation of Leadership Models 2 and 3 to best meet the needs of school and local communities.

Sub-Committee also recognises that Leadership Models 2 and 3 are defined (Agenda Item 8 – 1.2) as:

- Model 2 - School grouping model of leadership: a leadership team serving a group of schools brought together by key links e.g., community, cultural, school, partners, demographics.
- Model 3 - Learning journey model of leadership: a leadership team serving the learners' journey e.g., 0 – 5 or 0 – 12 or 0 – 18 years including children with additional support needs.

Sub-Committee is now invited to note the following:

- (1) That examples of Current Shared Leadership Arrangements (August 2021) are 20 permanent and 9 are temporary.
- (2) Also notes that all of these are a joint leadership model.
- (3) That there are no examples of shared leadership models – only joint headship.
- (4) No information was provided in the Sub-Committee papers that included proposals such as those being considered for the Waid Cluster Leadership Model.
- (5) The level of parental concern around such change to the school leadership model, including the impact on attainment and local leadership and the capacity of the changed model to deal with ongoing disruption to education due to the pandemic.

(6)/

- (6) The Sub-Committee's concern that such significant changes to a long-standing leadership model are sufficiently robust to fulfil Fife Council's responsibilities on safeguarding, particularly during any transition period.

Sub-Committee requests that such proposed changes to the leadership model, in the East Neuk and across Fife, are halted until a full report, with evidence for any assumptions or conclusions, is provided on the short, medium and long term impact of the models and evidence to the Sub-Committee or its successor.

Proposed by Councillor Kathleen Leslie
Seconded by Councillor Dave Dempsey

Members are reminded that should they have queries on the detail of a report they should, where possible, contact the report authors in advance of the meeting to seek clarification.

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Finance and Corporate Services

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22nd February, 2022

If telephoning, please ask for:
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**THE FIFE COUNCIL - EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE –
REMOTE MEETING**

28th January, 2022

2.00 p.m. – 4.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Craig Walker (Convener), James Calder, Bobby Clelland, Dave Dempsey, Linda Erskine, Ian Ferguson, Derek Glen (substituting for Councillor Ford), Gary Guichan, Andy Heer, Helen Law, Kathleen Leslie, Rosemary Liewald, Ross Paterson, Fay Sinclair, Alistair Suttie, Mr. Alastair Crockett, Mr. George Haggarty and Mr. William Imlay.

ATTENDING: Carrie Lindsay, Executive Director - Education & Children's Services, Shelagh McLean, Head of Education & Children's Services (Early Years and Directorate Support), Rona Weir, Education Manager, Jackie Funnell, Education Manager, Angela Logue, Head of Education & Children's Services (Primary Schools & Improvement) and Gavin Waterston, Quality Improvement Officer, Education & Children's Services; Lindsay Thomson, Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Emma Whyte, Committee Officer, Legal & Democratic Services.

**ALSO
ATTENDING:** Joyce Tomlinson, Director of Public Health, NHS Fife.

239. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order No. 7.1.

240. MINUTE

The Sub-Committee considered the minute of meeting of the Education and Children's Services Sub-Committee of 9th November, 2021.

Decision

The Sub-Committee agreed to approve the minute.

241. MINUTES OF EDUCATION APPOINTMENT COMMITTEE

The Sub-Committee considered the minutes of meetings of the Education Appointment Committee of 26th October and 24th November, 2021.

Decision

The Sub-Committee noted the minutes.

242. NATIONAL HEALTH & WELLBEING CENSUS

The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Education and Children's Services informing of the arrangements in place for Fife Council to undertake the Scottish Government National Health and Wellbeing Census and to/

2022 ECS 103

to respond to the decision of Fife Council by providing information on the proposed content and processes associated with implementation, for decision.

The meeting adjourned at 2.55 p.m. and reconvened at 3.10 p.m.

Motion

Councillor Leslie, seconded by Councillor Dempsey, moved as follows:-

“The Sub-Committee:-

Notes that it was the decision of the Fife Council to postpone Fife Council’s participation in the survey until the Education and Children Services Sub-Committee can consider a report on the survey covering the following matters: -

- (1) why this survey is necessary in Fife
- (2) what questions will be asked of which year groups in school
- (3) who will see any data collected
- (4) what use will be made of that data
- (5) what data protection measures will be in place

Notes that the report does not address satisfactorily why the survey is necessary.

Agrees that we should continue to postpone participation in the survey until a further report is provided to the committee (or its successor) by the Director of Education and Children’s Services which sets out an explanation for why each of the proposed questions is necessary to improve health and well-being.

Agrees that the collection of personal data for the uses described in the report should not be supported and that the survey should not collect or use any personal data for any purpose or use.”

Amendment 1

Councillor Erskine, seconded by Councillor Law, moved as follows:-

“The Sub-Committee agrees:-

- (1) To continue to postpone the participation with the survey.
- (2) To refer the survey back to the Scottish Government to reconsider the approach to the collection of personal data so that complete confidentiality is ensured and no individual taking part in this census can be identified.
- (3) To ask the Scottish Government to review the appropriateness of all questions and in particular the sexual health section in light of parental and carer concerns.
- (4) To ask the Scottish Government to ensure that all questions are age appropriate.
- (5) The final version of the survey is provided to the Committee before it is issued to ensure that the Survey is necessary for Fife Council.”

Amendment/

Amendment 2

Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Liewald, moved as follows:-

“The Sub-Committee:-

- (1) Recognises that at its last meeting full council raised concerns about two aspects of this survey: i) data security, and the potential for individuals to be identified based on their candidate number; and ii) asking potentially sensitive questions about sexual health to individuals.
- (2) Agrees to remove the candidate number from the survey and replace with part postcode, gender and ethnicity.
- (3) Agrees to remove the section including questions on sexual health in its entirety.
- (4) Agrees to hold a workshop involving young adults to discuss and agree on the remaining questions in the survey, along with any amendments and bring a report back to the Education and Children's Services Sub-Committee in March.”

Following considerable debate, Councillor Leslie advised that she had decided to withdraw her motion.

Roll Call

For Amendment 1 – 10 votes

Councillors James Calder, Bobby Clelland, Dave Dempsey, Linda Erskine, Gary Guichan, Andy Heer, Helen Law, Kathleen Leslie, Ross Paterson and Mr. George Haggarty.

For Amendment 2 – 8 votes

Councillors Craig Walker, Ian Ferguson, Derek Glen, Rosemary Liewald, Fay Sinclair, Alistair Suttie, Mr. Alistair Crockett and Mr. William Imlay.

Amendment 1 was accordingly carried.

Decision

The Sub-Committee agreed:-

- (1) to continue to postpone the participation with the survey;
- (2) to refer the survey back to the Scottish Government to reconsider the approach to the collection of personal data so that complete confidentiality is ensured and no individual taking part in this census can be identified;
- (3) to ask the Scottish Government to review the appropriateness of all questions and in particular the sexual health section in light of parental and carer concerns;
- (4) to ask the Scottish Government to ensure that all questions are age appropriate; and
- (5)/

- (5) that the final version of the survey is provided to the Sub-Committee before it is issued to ensure that the survey is necessary for Fife Council.

243. INSPECTION OUTCOMES

The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Education and Children's Services providing an overview of the outcomes and key messages from school/early learning centre improvement work and Care Inspectorate Inspections:

- Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings, Primary, Secondary and Special Schools
- Care Inspectorate within the Early Learning Centres
- Care Inspectorate within Residential Provision
- Care Inspectorate within Out of School/Creche Provision

Decision

The Sub-Committee noted the outcomes of the overview and areas of success and progress, as well as the actions being taken to ensure continued improvement.

244. EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Sub-Committee considered the Education and Children's Services Sub-Committee Forward Work Programme.

Decision

The Sub-Committee noted the Education and Children's Services Sub-Committee Forward Work Programme, subject to amendment as necessary.

1st March 2022

Agenda Item No. 4

Third sector Grant Awards

Report by Carrie Lindsay, Executive Director (Education & Children's Services Directorate)

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

This report provides a summary of the progress in service development and delivery regarding Third Sector commissioned services and recommendations for grant awards for 2022-23.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Committee:

- Note the progress and offer comment on the programme of work associated with commissioning arrangements.
- Approve the recommendations for grant funding for 2022-23.

Resource Implications

Appendix 2 provides details of recommendations funding for the financial year 2022-23. This also provides a summary of grant funding allocated in 2021-22. The budget saving of £410,000 was reinstated in 2021-22 and will be continued for the following financial periods (2022-23 & 2023-24) only. The overall budget for 2021-2022 was **£4,837,861**, this did not include the additional Alcohol and Drug Partnership funding of £349,752 aligned to service brief 6. A one-off return of underspend from one organisation from 2018/19 of £160,278 was also offset in this financial year against the overall expenditure. The total budget for 2022-2023 remains **£4,837,861**.

Appendix 2 also provides details of organisations recommended for a full year grant award and are listed in category 2 & 3, recommended out of scope funding and in scope funding. Those organisations recommended for a 6 month grant award are listed in category 1 and the detail for this is explained in section 3.0 of the report. The exception is Barnardo's who were successful in being awarded service brief 1 and 2b and will receive a full year's grant award but only 6 months grant award for service brief 6.

Appendices 3 and 4 provide details of grant awards for 2022-23 which have not been part of the Children & Families commissioning programme of work.

Legal and Risk Implications

All awards for support are subject to compliance with Fife Council's Monitoring and Evaluation Framework which requires that they are reviewed on an annual basis as part of the Council's ongoing commitment to ensuring organisations are meeting the terms of their Service Level Agreement.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA and summary was submitted in the report to Committee on the 7 September 2021 and is attached to the report. (Appendix 1).

Consultation

Since the last update report to Committee on the 7 September 2021 there has been ongoing monitoring of Service Level Agreements by link officers as part of the Monitoring & Evaluation Framework. In addition to this, further meetings have been held with organisations associated with service brief 2a and 6 to support the early stages of developing the new partnerships models. This has involved putting in place a detailed monitoring framework which will be subject to regular review and scrutiny during 2022-23 to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the new models more fully within the available budget attached to the new service briefs. The Strategic Commissioning group has continued to meet and has multi-agency representation including elected members.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Education and Children's Services (E&CS) Sub Committee on 26 January 2021 approved recommendations for funding new service briefs and 6-month transitional funding from April 2021. No change was made to organisations who were part of national agreements or receiving under £5,000.00. A further report was considered at the E&CS Sub Committee on the 11 May, this provided an update on progress of organisations successful in the initial grant application process and work undertaken with organisations to adapt services to meet new service requirements.
- 1.2 The Committee on the 11 May 2021 approved the option of a differential approach in respect to commissioning arrangements as outlined below and detailed in appendix 2:
 - **Category 1** organisations were identified as requiring more time to establish if a consortia/partnership arrangement was achievable. These organisations were funded for a further 6 months from October based on the 2020-21 grant.
 - **Category 2** organisations evidenced that they were able to enhance the new service briefs and 6 months continued funding from October was approved.
 - **Category 3** organisations were those with a long history in localities, some providing a specialist niche service which was not possible to adapt or align with the new briefs and 6 months continued funding from October was approved based on the value these organisations bring to communities across Fife.

- 1.3 A decision was taken to reinvest the original £410,000 saving approved in 2018-2019 for 2021-22, this supported funding awards across the full continuum of services from grassroot providers and organisations successful in securing the new service briefs. Only one service was decommissioned in 2021-22 (Who Cares). Further consideration of alternative funding sources was to be explored to establish if the organisations unable to meet the new service brief requirements could be supported, however no new funding streams were identified despite discussions across Directorates and consideration of national funding opportunities.
- 1.4 The updated report at Committee on the 7 September provided details of the intensive work undertaken with organisations associated with brief 2a and 6. This confirmed the partnership models were in the very early stages of development and despite further scrutiny of the budget projections organisations were unable to indicate any efficiency savings unless staffing or beneficiaries of services was reduced. The budget envelope for service brief 2a was set at **£800,000** however the projection by the Early Years Collective (EYC) was **£1,093,170**. Further discussions with the EYC organisations have not been able to identify any options to come in under the service brief budget other than those noted earlier. The partnership between Barnardo's and Clued Up (Positive Journeys) to deliver service brief 6 is also at a very early stage of development with delay due to recruitment challenges to new posts by Barnardo's. The budget envelope allocated to this service brief is **£650,000** with the projection of an annual budget of **£756,595**. Although there is an underspend in this financial year for the grant allocation to Barnardo's which will be offset against the grant allocation to this organisation for 2022-23, both organisations have indicated the forecasted budget submitted by this partnership considers all options for efficiency savings.
- 1.5 Since the last update to Committee, meetings have also been held with DAPL given it has been commissioned based on enhancing and adding additionality to service brief 6 offering one-to-one counselling to children and young people affected by their own or another's substance use. The overall cost of the service provided by DAPL is forecasted at **£250,000** per annum. Discussions have been held with this organisation who have been unable to identify any efficiency savings. A detailed monitoring framework is also in place for this organisation which will be subject to fuller analysis.
- 1.6 The funding forecasted for the partnership model between Barnardo's and Clued up for brief 6 already exceeds the budget available for this new service brief. DAPL applied for service brief 6 but did not meet all the requirements in the new service brief and a partnership arrangement between all 3 organisations did not progress. Funding for counselling services from DAPL to enhance service brief 6 must be considered within the same financial envelope of £650,000.

2.0 Progress Update

- 2.1 Since the last report to Committee in September the focus of work has been developing new Service Level Agreements (SLA) for organisations successful in securing the new service briefs as well as confirming adjustment to SLA for those organisations grouped under category 2 and 3.
- 2.2 The focus of work since September 2021 has been developing detailed monitoring frameworks for organisations delivering service briefs 2a and 6 over and above the normal monitoring mechanisms undertaken by link officers. Data has been submitted for scrutiny at the end of January and meetings are to be scheduled to consider this data, progress against key targets, outcomes, and consideration of any adjustments to

the partnership models in place and financial forecasting.

- 2.3 Data, both quantitative and qualitative, submitted on 31/1/2022 by the EYC (Oct-Dec) in this first phase of the new model has yet to be fully discussed, this confirms:
- Systems and processes have been set up in relation to referral and allocation
 - The test of change is at an early stage
 - 177 out of 182 referrals were allocated for support
 - A high proportion of referrals from Health and more consideration will need to be given to the level of need and support offered
 - A range of 1-1, group work and volunteer support has been delivered

- 2.4 Data for both quantitative and qualitative for brief 6 in this first phase confirms:

Barnardo's/Clued Up (Positive Journeys) Partnership

- Referrals are on target for YP provision with 66 of 79 engaging in support
- For intensive whole family provision, three new families were referred with two engaging with support and nine families from the previous quarter remaining engaged
- Very few outcomes were provided from the whole family support intensive level activity over the quarter
- Outcomes for young people show positive change in key areas including reduction in substance use and improved lifestyle choices
- Recruitment challenges means there has not been delivery of whole family support at additional level and this component of the brief remains untested
- None of the families and YP are receiving support from both Barnardo's and Clued Up indicating that the partnership model outlined is not yet functional

DAPL

- Referrals are on target for C&YP mainly generated from schools at 94% of the total for the quarter and none of the referrals have been made by the Positive Journeys partnership
- Outcomes have been met for C&YP counselling provision
- Referrals for therapeutic engagement are slightly below target for families and only two sessions being delivered on average per family. This delivery was offered as additionality by DAPL and not requested in the brief
- Counselling referrals for parents affected by a child's substance use are also lower than target but engagement length is longer at 12 sessions on average
- Evaluation tools are in development for families and some elements of the parent counselling provision and as such all the outcomes have not been evidenced for this quarter

- 2.5 Extension is proposed to DAPL's School Counselling Service provision, responding to demand on the service and positive feedback. An additional £132,000 is to be allocated on top of the £450,000 already invested. This will create additional capacity in the School Counselling Service support for non-substance related needs of school-aged young people aged 10 and over. This funding is for the duration of DAPL's School Counselling contract. In addition, supplementary funding of £100,000 to DAPL is proposed as a one year, test of change project within the School Counselling model. This will focus on the introduction of Art Psychotherapists for targeted young people aged 9 and below.

- 2.6 Fuller details on annual monitoring of all other SLAs will be available in March as part of the Annual Monitoring process within the Monitoring & Evaluation Framework, however no significant concerns or issues have been reported by link officers to date.
- 2.7 The implementation of the Pupil Equity Fund (PEF) has encouraged schools to work with voluntary organisations to provide additional support for young people and their families with a view to closing the poverty related attainment gap. Due to the impact of the Covid pandemic on schools, planning and reporting timelines, it has not been possible to provide a full overview of the spend on 3rd sector organisations last session to support them in their work towards closing the poverty related attainment gap. In order that Committee has an overview of the spend for last session this is detailed in appendix 3. Appendix 3 also details the awards recommended for approval that will deliver agreed activities for Fife Council from the PEF for session 2022/23. As schools will not be fully aware of the funding that they will receive from the PEF until the end of March we may need to request that further funding is agreed by the Committee at a later point this year should schools identify the capacity within this to engage with 3rd sector partners.
- 2.8 Funds associated with the Community Mental Health & Wellbeing Supports and Services framework outlined in Appendix 4 outlines awards for Barnardo's and Includem to deliver a core service across Fife, offering equitable support to young people and their families to support mental health. This will involve the following activity:
- supporting C&YP and families to transition into local services to support their mental wellbeing
 - developing and delivering a blended approach of 1:1 and group work programmes as part of an early intervention approach
 - working collaboratively with other agencies or specialist services to develop interventions to ensure effective delivery
- 2.9 In addition, Barnardo's and Includem will also support capacity with young people, families and community groups through increasing knowledge and understanding about mental health; recognising early signs of poor mental health and implementing self-help strategies and where to get further support. This will involve the following activity:
- developing knowledge of specific needs within the locality through consultation with partner services to ensure appropriate preventative work, signposting, training opportunities and advice are available to C&YP and families
 - providing 1:1 support to families to support understanding, normalise and develop an awareness of mental health and emotional wellbeing in young people, building skills and confidence in recognising and responding to the YP needs
 - supporting community group who work with YP and their families to further develop their skills and practices to promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing.

3.0 Summary

- 3.1 The report to Committee in September confirmed the budget proposals submitted by Third sector organisations exceeded the budget envelope in 2021-22 and the overspend was to be set against the Children & Families budget. It was also noted that this overspend would increase significantly in 2022-23 if organisations associated with service brief 2a and 6 were unable to redesign operating models to come in within the cash envelope for both briefs.
- 3.2 Work has progressed to consider the proposed new models for service brief 2a and 6, with all organisations committing to a monitoring framework which will be subject to scrutiny and analysis. A further period is required to test these at an operational level would allow for a much fuller analysis of the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of delivery models to inform future recommendations. To date this work remains at the early stages due to a range of factors including recruitment to new posts, impact of the pandemic, development of new systems and processes.
- 3.3 The expenditure forecasted by organisations associated with service brief 2a and 6 is not sustainable within the available budget for commissioned services. This will require all organisations aligned to service brief 2a and 6 to reconsider and review operating models to be delivered within the budget available. Organisations have indicated this will result in a loss of staff and reduction in beneficiaries however there will be a need to adapt and mitigate any risks across the range of services available.
- 3.4 The current budget is insufficient to commission all organisations provided with grant funding in 2021-22 however the programme of work undertaken during 2020-21 and 2021-22 has been extensive and supported greater alignment with the Children & Families Belonging to Fife strategy and the key principles of the Promise which reinforces the importance of a continuum of family support to improve outcomes for children, young people, and families, at home, school, and wider community. This first phase of remodelling of services has taken place during a pandemic with all services and organisations facing challenges which has impacted on progress. This next stage of work is a priority to support effective partnership working with the Third sector in communities across Fife.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 To progress this next stage of the programme of work associated with Third sector organisations, it is recommended that full year grant awards are approved for organisations apart from those associated with Service brief 2a and 6 who should be awarded funding for 6 months in the new financial year.
- 4.2 Ongoing negotiation will continue with organisations for service brief 2a and 6 to achieve a service redesign within budget and a report on progress on this will be brought back to Committee by September.

Appendices

1. Equality Impact Assessment Summary Report
2. Summary of recommendations for funding
3. Details of grant awards for 2021-23 and 2022-23 (Pupil Equity Fund)
4. Details of grant awards for 2021-23 and 2022-23

Report Contact:

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Equality Impact Assessment Summary Report

(to be attached as an Appendix to the committee report or for consideration by any other partnership forum, board or advisory group as appropriate)

<p>Which Committee report does this IA relate to (specify meeting date)?</p> <p>Education & Children’s Service Committee (26/01/2021)</p>
<p>What are the main impacts on equality?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A focus on the most vulnerable children, young people and families in Fife to address needs, risks and wellbeing leading to positive outcomes. • Children’s rights will be central to service delivery promoting greater inclusion and participation • Support will be targeted at a community level for families experiencing poverty, disadvantage and poor outcomes
<p>What are the main recommendations to enhance or mitigate the impacts identified?</p> <p>The remodelling of services across Children & Families and the review of Third sector organisations will ensure a focus on the most vulnerable children & families in Fife. This will provide targeted support which is community facing and the ability to be flexible, responsive and agile in approach. Better coordination and clearer pathways for accessing services will ensure the most vulnerable children, young people and families receive the right support at the right time.</p>
<p>If there are no equality impacts on any of the protected characteristics, please explain.</p>
<p>Further information is available from: Name / position / contact details:</p> <p>Lynn Gillies Service Manager (Children & Families) Tel 03451 555 555 ext 443043</p>

One of the following statements must be included in the “Impact Assessment” section of any committee report. Attach as an appendix the completed EqIA Summary form to the report – not required for option (a).

- (a) An EqIA has not been completed and is not necessary for the following reasons: (please write in brief description)
- (b) The general duties section of the impact assessment and the summary form has been completed – the summary form is attached to the report.
- (c) An EqIA and summary form have been completed – the summary form is attached to the Report

Appendix 2

Organisation	Service Brief If Applicable	21/22 Full year awards	22/23 Full Year Awards - 6 Months SB2A & 6
Recommended In Scope Funding			
Aberlour Childcare Trust	3	£506,759	£506,759
Barnardo's - Intensive Family Support, Children's Rights Service & CAPSM	1,2b & 6	£848,074	£848,074
Birthlink		£4,963	£4,963
Childline Scotland		£1,600	£1,600
Fife Women's Aid	4	£477,057	£477,057
Fife Young Carers	5	£149,907	£149,907
Includem	2c	£528,320	£528,320
Scottish Child Law Centre		£2,209	£2,209
Snowdrop		£2,314	£2,314
Recommended In Scope Transition Funding			
CATEGORY 1			
Cottage Family Centre	2a	£323,438	£173,727
Clued-Up Project	6	£171,976	£105,348
Drug and Alcohol Project Leven (DAPL)		£276,172	£125,000
Fife Gingerbread	2a	£217,351	£107,799
Homestart (Dunfermline)	2a	£99,002	£50,346
Homestart (East Fife)	2a	£72,720	£36,981
Homestart (Glenrothes)	2a	£89,528	£45,528
Homestart (Kirkcaldy)	2a	£92,652	£47,117
Homestart (Levenmouth)	2a	£81,513	£41,452
Homestart (Cowdenbeath)	2a	£85,807	£43,636
CATEGORY 2 & 3			
Crossroads (Fife Central)		£30,015	£33,036
Families First		£39,269	£40,154
Families Outside		£14,000	£14,000
Family Mediation Tayside/Fife		£43,673	£32,032
Relationship Scotland – Couple Counselling		£22,913	£23,000
SENSE (providing services formerly provided by RNIB)		£31,239	£31,788
SCMA		£47,520	£47,520
Seal Association		£28,596	£28,596
Recommended Out of Scope Funding			
Apex - Glenrothes	From Criminal Justice Budget	£53,455	£53,455
CHAS - Rachel House Kinross (Children's Hospice Association Scotland)	Agreed by COSLA	£46,342	£46,342
Drug and Alcohol Project Leven (DAPL)	From School Counselling Budget	£450,000	£450,000
Early Years Scotland	Contributes to national requirement to deliver of 1140 hours of EL&C	£48,952	£48,952
Fife Women's Aid	C&F Contribution to MARAC Funding outwith components of brief	£120,936	£120,936
Fife Women's Aid	Contribution to MARAC service from NHS	£30,000	£30,000
Fife Women's Aid	Contribution to MARAC service from Housing Service	£66,000	£66,000
		£5,104,272	£4,363,948

Appendix 3

PUPIL EQUITY FUNDING				
Organisation	School	Project Description	21/22 Full year awards	22/23 Full Year Awards
Drug and Alcohol Project Ltd (DAPL)	St Josephs	Counselling and Support service 21 hours per week over 40 weeks in St Joseph's school	£ 22,000	£ 22,000
In-Sync Mentoring through YMCA	Kirkcaldy High School	The "In-Sync" mentoring programme. This is 10 hours per week for 2 youth workers to mentor 6 vulnerable young people each to sustain their place in mainstream school. The mentoring programme uses a coaching/goal setting approach and also offers achievement awards. Total cost this session	£ 14,000	£ 14,000
Drug and Alcohol Project Ltd (DAPL)	St Kenneths PS	Counselling and Support service 21 hours per week over 40 weeks in St Kenneths primary school	£ 28,500	£ -
Drug and Alcohol Project Ltd (DAPL)	Queen Anne High School	Counselling and support service 2 days per week over 40 weeks in Queen Anne High School	£ 15,300	£ 15,000
			£ 79,800	£ 51,000

Appendix 4

Organisation	Project Description	21/22 Award	22/23 Full Year Awards
Barnardo's	Community Young Persons Mental Health & Wellbeing Framework	£ 159,625	£ 187,500
Includem	Community Young Persons Mental Health & Wellbeing Framework	£ 122,125	£ 75,000
YMCA	Community Young Persons Mental Health & Wellbeing Framework	£ 145,631	£ -
DAPL	Our Minds Matter - Additional School Counselling	£ -	£ 132,000
DAPL	Our Minds Matter - Art Psychotherapy	£ -	£ 100,000
Notre Dame Centre	Our Minds Matter	£ -	£ 20,000
		£427,381	£514,500

1st March 2022

Agenda Item No. 5

Annual Uplift in Payments to Foster Carers for Financial Year 2022/23

Report by: Carrie Lindsay, Executive Director, Education & Children's Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the Sub-Committee with information on the proposed uplift in payments to Foster Carers and Supported Lodging Carers.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Sub-Committee approve:

- a) The application of 2.5% increase in the maintenance payments made for children in a foster care and supported lodging setting; and
- b) The application of an uplift of 2.5% in the fees paid to Foster Carers including Supported Lodging Carers .

Resource Implications

The funding for this increase is included within the current budget.

Legal and Risk Implications

None.

Impact Assessment

There is no requirement for an impact assessment in respect of this report as no change or revision to existing policies and practices is proposed.

Consultation

None.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Social Work Children and Families Service supports Foster Carers who care for looked after children via a weekly fee and a maintenance payment. Foster Carers provide an essential service for Fife's looked after children and young people in their family home and this also includes Supported Lodging Carers.
- 1.2 Fostering is a way of providing a family life for children and young people who are unable to live with their parents. This can be due to a variety of reasons from parental illness to abuse and neglect. Foster care gives children a secure, safe and stable environment where they can grow in confidence. It is different from adoption in that the child's family maintain parental rights and responsibilities, which can be shared with the Council.
- 1.3 Carers provide different types of fostering from providing a home for a few days, months or even years. Many children and young people will return to their families, but others may need help for longer either through continued fostering, adoption or being helped to live independently. Foster care provides children, who will be experiencing loss, and may have been exposed to harm or have a range of complex care and support needs a secure, safe and stable home. Efforts are made to ensure children have the opportunity in foster care to live with their sisters and brothers wherever possible.
- 1.4 The fees and maintenance payments to Foster Carers are normally reviewed at this point in the financial year; following approval of the Revenue Budget, and recommendations brought forward. Increases to Fees are normally similar to the level of pay award for council staff and Increases to Maintenance are subject to any budget inflationary increases.
- 1.5 Kinship Carers of Looked After Children and Non-Looked After children with a Residence Order or equivalent who are in receipt of an allowance will also benefit from this decision as the basis for the payment of Kinship Allowance and Non-Looked After Kinship Allowance is the Fostering Maintenance Allowance.

2.0 Conclusion

- 2.1 In order to support Foster Carers, it is recommended that in recognition of rising household costs, the fee payments made to Foster Carers and Supported Lodging Carers in respect of children in a foster and supported lodgings care setting are increased by 2.5% for 2022-2023 and Maintenance will be increased in 2022-23 by 2.5%.

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None

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1st March 2022

Agenda Item No. 6

Fife Corporate Parenting Board

Report by: Carrie Lindsay Executive Director, Education & Children's Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

To update on the work of Fife Corporate Parenting Board (FCPB) and developments planned to improve the Corporate Parenting agenda across Fife.

Recommendation(s)

That the Sub-Committee:-

- note the intention of the Corporate Parenting Board to ensure Care Experienced Children and Young People (CECYP) in Fife are supported, with the best offer from their 'corporate parents', to reach their full potential
- note the progress made within the last 6 months, informing the strategic plan and developing the narrative of expectation across all 'corporate parents' in Fife
- approve the revised structure that better captures the voice and experience of those with lived experience and celebrates success; whilst holding to account the strategic areas in which we need to improve across the next 3 years, in line with local and national drivers.
- note this is the first of the agreed 6 monthly update/analysis reports to the relevant Committee

Resource Implications

The proposed recommendations can be met utilising existing resources.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no perceived legal risks associated with the recommendations.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA is not necessary at this time, however, recognising the particular vulnerability of CECYP, this will be subject to ongoing review.

Consultation

This report is based on discussion between members of Fife Corporate Parenting Board and wider stakeholder group.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Fife's Corporate Parenting Board (FCPB), has been in operation since 2008. The board currently meets on a quarterly basis and has representation from a wide range of relevant partners, including elected members. CECYP also have opportunity to link in with the Board.
- 1.2 FCPB is well placed to capture and report on the effectiveness of the strategic responsibilities placed on 'the whole organisation' in relation to their corporate parenting role, achievement and intent.
- 1.3 Corporate parenting responsibilities are defined in Part 9 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (guidance can be found [here](#)). Corporate parenting is not a task which can be delegated to an individual or team. Fulfilling the corporate parenting duties, set out in Part 9 of the Act, demands a whole organisation responsibility/approach. This includes elected members.
- 1.4 The purpose and intention of Part 9 is to improve how organisation's support looked after children and care leavers. Implementation of this Part of the Act requires it to be led by senior management across all departments, regardless of their focus or function. Staff at all levels must understand their duties and be supported and enabled to fulfil them.
- 1.5 As corporate parenting is a corporate responsibility, an organisation's most senior corporate management will be held responsible for ensuring that the duties set out in Part 9 are met. Moreover, senior corporate management will be held accountable for an organisation's performance in respect to corporate parenting.
- 1.6 It is the role of Fife Corporate Parenting Board (FCPB) to reflect and report on this and hold each other to account, to provide the assurances required.
- 1.7 A report was considered at the Education & Children's Services Sub-Committee on the 16th of March 2021, this outlined the intention to restructure FCPB and approval was confirmed regarding the next stage of this work.

2.0 Issues and Options

- 2.1 FCPB meets quarterly to report on the effectiveness of organisational wide activity to meet the needs of CECYP. It holds commitment to champion the voices of those with lived experience.
- 2.2 FCPB terms of reference and overarching framework has been revised and a new structure agreed. This comprises a strategic oversight group linked to the People Leadership Groups, which will operate in each area as part of the wider reform agenda.
- 2.3 Both groups will have an active voice and responsibility for developing and implementing a local corporate parenting plan. This new framework draws on good practice principles and the importance of ensuring a connect both at strategic and

grass roots level to improve outcomes for CEC&YP.

- 2.4** The People Leadership Groups will develop an understanding of the profile and support needs of the care community in their area. They will work to support and strengthen the strategic and operational interface, working closely alongside people with lived experience to identify local priorities and ensure plans are progressed.
- 2.5** The People Leadership Groups are multi agency and offer opportunity to raise greater awareness, understanding and responsivity to individual and structural issues that impact on the lives of care experienced young people and adults.
- 2.6** Strengthening the connection at a community level and ensuring the voice and active contribution of care experienced young people and adults on service design, development and delivery is a key priority of FCPB.
- 2.7** Work has also taken place across the seven areas of Fife, through Franklin Covey (4 Disciplines of Execution (4DX)) which has sought to increase parental satisfaction of the Child Wellbeing Pathway, increase attendance of care experienced children within school, and increase their engagement in decision making meetings. This multi- agency project has shown the value in understanding localised data which informs responsive planning and collaborative action.
- 2.8** The work of FCPB has also been informed by The Promise which is a key driver of change. The Promise seeks to ensure that care experienced people can access support to attain within their education, have their health needs met, and have intensive support structures in place which are locally accessible, to enable them to remain with their families, in the places they know, with those they love. Being provided the ambition afforded to every other young person in Fife.
- 2.9** FCPB is committed to positively impact on individual experience and outcomes and to address system, structural and societal inequality, exclusion and discrimination that the care experienced community can face.
- 2.10** There are currently around 800 care experienced children and young people in Fife. There are many more children and adults who have experienced care in Fife and it is these collective voices we strive to hear. We know through our own work and that of the Promise that being care experienced adversely impacts on life chances, through poorer outcomes in health, education, homelessness and employment.
- 2.11** We know there are a disproportionate number of care experienced children and young people living in the areas of highest need and deprivation. There are similarly disproportionate numbers of care experienced young people/adults visible to services through their experience of multiple severe disadvantages, such as homelessness, substance use, mental health and offending. See Appendix 2 and 3
- 2.12** It is these inequalities on an individual and structural basis that the FCPB seeks to address. Especially when considered through the lens of poverty, trauma and loss, that is indelibly linked with the care community.

- 2.13** A key part of The Promise is recognising the strengths within families and communities, and the importance of maintaining relationships with those people who are important, for example brothers and sisters and other family members.
- 2.14** The Children & Families Belonging to Fife (B2F) strategy is strongly aligned to the key building blocks of the Promise and continues to be successful. During 2020-21 the progress achieved within the Children & Families Social Work Service has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of children and young people becoming looked after (currently 801) as well as those requiring high- cost residential placements (50% reduction over past year -with only 39 children/ young people in residential care, seven of whom are living out with Fife).
- 2.15** The profile of care in Fife has significantly changed, in alignment with B2F and the national drivers, with the majority of children and young people who need alternative care being placed with in kinship arrangements. This very much sets the tone and culture for supporting children and young people within their own family and community wherever safe to do so, with the right supports, to ensure they feel loved and cared for.
- 2.16** To deliver on the FCPB framework a new Plan has been developed which has identified thematic areas which are a priority to progress, between now and April 2022, when the revised FCPB structure comes fully into force. These include three improvement activities:

Improvement activity 1: Progression of the Belonging to Fife Strategy

This overarching strategy has proved successful in reducing the number of children and young people placed in alternative care and being placed out with Fife. This requires ongoing commitment from all agencies, to safely retain children and young people within their families and local communities. Work was undertaken to capture the views and experiences of those children, young people who moved back into Fife and into family care, to ensure we had got the supports right to make this both positive and sustainable. This feedback, whilst generally positive, provided us some challenge and critical learning around practice and intent, so we are revisiting these families to ensure they know they are valued and cared for and that we are committed to getting it right for them. This feedback helps inform strategy and services going forward.

Improvement activity 2: School attendance of Children living in residential care:

- Children in residential care experience poorer outcomes in terms of educational attendance and attainment. Fife's Learning with care team have been taking an innovative approach to help care experienced children and young people in residential care re-engage with formal learning and continue to make progress, to benefit from full time school attendance and achieve academically, in line with the national ambition for every child and young person.

Moving forward, every child and young person who has need to move into

care is to be afforded full time education, as a right for all children; an ambition towards reaching national qualifications and continuation of the learning offer to ensure that they can be supported to move back into family/school/community at the earliest opportunity.

Improvement activity 3: Access to Mental Health support for children and young people with care experience

- Young people who are being supported through the Young Peoples Team gave very graphic illustrations of their mental health experiences/needs which manifested in risk taking behaviors and significant attempts on their own lives, some requiring hospitalisation. A commitment was made to improving the offer to these young people, to develop a shared approach so there was no one agency feeling isolated in managing high levels of vulnerability and risk.
- A proposal to create a consultation line for workers involved with young people experiencing significant mental health issues and at risk of harm is being explored. There is consideration of developing a Young Person's Mental health risk advisory group. Work is being done on how to upskill the workforce to better support young people who present with high risk taking and self-harming behaviours; building emotional and mental wellbeing support into the fabric of teams –so they are not seen as separate/clinical provision, which young people tend to lean away from.

- 2.17** The new Plan also includes the need to develop a data set which will enable further scrutiny and analysis of progress against key qualitative and quantitative outcomes to inform service planning, development and delivery. Triangulation with the voices of the care experienced community will be integral to this.
- 2.18** The development and implementation of a communication strategy to raise the awareness and profile of FCPB and its obligations, is to be progressed in line with the new structure coming into being.
- 2.19** Along with supporting the development of the care community we are developing a platform to assist in creating a positive identity, and a prominent and credible role/voice for our panels of people with lived experience.
- 2.20** We have successfully secured a further £100,000 from The Corra Foundation to enhance the FCPB team, appointing people with care experience and supporting modern apprenticeships, to support activity across the seven locality areas in Fife.
- 2.21** Funding from The Corra Foundation, of £200,000, was also secured to take forward work with the kinship community. From this we have developed the concept of EMBRACE -FIFE. Information was embargoed until after 9th February. It is fully shared with ECSC, as part of this paper. See Appendix 4.

3.0 Conclusion

- 3.1** It is recognised that Fife Corporate Parenting Board has an important role in driving forward the strategic Corporate Parenting agenda in Fife, recognising the particular vulnerability and disadvantage that CECYP are exposed throughout their time in care and wider life chances. The FCPB has worked hard to ensure that its membership represents those organisations and services that support CECYP through their care journeys.
- 3.2** The FCPB has many examples of good work and effective impact. However, this tends to be from the lens of a single agency/provision and is not representative of the wider cohort of CEYP. Nor has it addressed system, structural or societal disadvantage faced.
- 3.3** There is, quite rightly, a growing focus on improving the experience and life chances of CECYP, through local and national drivers. The revised FCPB is committed to meeting this challenge. There are clear cross cutting themes around poverty, risk, vulnerability and achievement that need to be better captured/challenged.
- 3.4** FCPB next meets on 23.02.2022, where it will review and report on progress to date, against the three improvement activities. It can provide a verbal update to Education and Children’s Services Committee as required.
- 3.5** The FCPB anticipates holding a much more visible and credible position across Fife, advocating for the care experienced community, through local community planning fora. In building up a positive presence, it is anticipated the collective voices of the care community in Fife will be central in driving forward the transformational change required to address the inequalities faced.
- 3.6** The FCBP will report on progress 6 monthly.

Appendices

The following appendices are included with this report:

- 1 CP Board- structure and reporting**
- 2. The lifelong costs of care for children**
- 3. The lifelong costs of care for adults**

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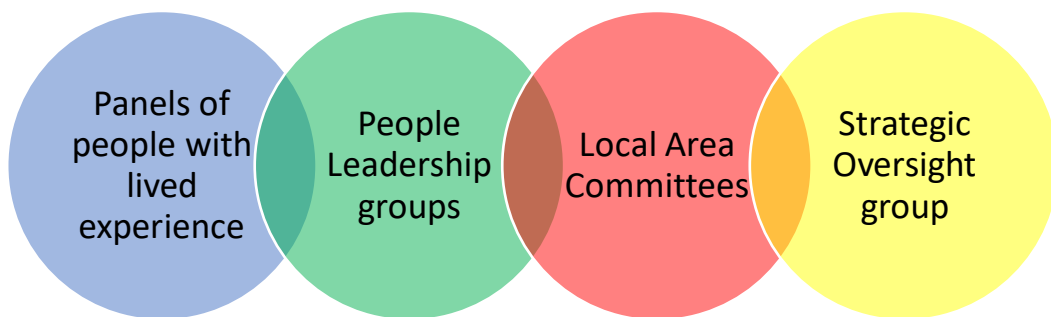
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Appendix 1 -Education and Children’s Services Committee

1st March 2022

Corporate Parenting Fife- Structure, Function and Reporting

This paper gives a brief overview of the revised structures, functions, and reporting lines for corporate parents in Fife. The evolving landscape of corporate parenting means that how we engage with, learn from, and include people with care experience in Fife has changed based on national guidance and legislation. Fife Corporate Parenting Board has considered and agreed the structure set out below.



The Panel of people with lived experience will comprise of a group in each of the seven localities with representation from care experienced children and young people, parents and carers. These expert groups will meet regularly to discuss local issues, services and explore ideas for improvement. The purpose of these groups will be multi-faceted but in the main influence and inform policy development and service delivery in each area through the lens of lived experiences.



The seven People Leadership groups across Fife will form the operational component of the structure. These groups are comprised of professionals who are closely involved in aspects of the day-to-day delivery of services for care experienced people across Fife and on this basis are well placed to develop these connections, know of, and be responsive to issues and developments in their area.


People Leadership groups will:

- Support the development and be responsible for the plan in their area, monitoring progress and achieving outcomes


- Develop collaborative and partnership delivery to improve outcomes informed by children, young people, and their families
- Consider local data within the context of the Promise, Plan for Fife, Belonging to Fife and wider Children’s Services Plan/community planning, identifying areas for service improvement and actions
- Connect, engage and work closely with the panel of people with lived experience to improve service design, delivery and check progress against the plan
- Promote innovation and support change at a service level influencing a change in practice, systems and culture
- Promote the work of the group to all stakeholders
- Promote children’s rights within their service/ area

Membership of People Leadership groups may include:

- Community Manager
- Education Manager
- Children & Families Team Manager
- Children & Families Service Manager
- Family Support Service Team Manager
- Health and Social Care Representative
- Criminal Justice Services Team Manager
- Safer Communities Team Manager
- Housing Manager
- Community Development Team Manager
- Third Sector Reps



Local Area Committees will work alongside the panels and operational groups to ensure that local plans are supported. A representative from the panel of people with lived experience will attend Committees and be tasked with representing the views of the care experienced community in the area.



The Strategic oversight group will meet quarterly and set and review the wider corporate parenting plan for Fife. The board will consider service commitment, resourcing and ensure that the rights and needs of care experienced people are central to community planning and policy development. Operational groups will report to the Strategic oversight group every 6 months.

The strategic oversight group will report to:

- Chief Officers (Quarterly)
- Education and Children’s services sub-Committee (Bi-annually)
- Education, Health and Social care scrutiny Committee (Bi-annually)
- Integrated Joint Board (Bi-annually)

- Clinical and Care Governance Committee (Bi-annually)
- Scottish Government (Every three years)

Members of the strategic board:

- Chairperson
- Cllr 1
- Cllr 2
- Fife Council data analysis
- Business support
- Social work
- NHS
- Education
- Fife College
- SCRA
- CHS
- Police
- Communities & Neighbourhoods
- 3rd sector
- Housing
- Corporate Parenting team

Implementation

The implementation of this structure will require support at a strategic and local level in order to be successful. A phased roll out is planned and the target date for implementation is April 2022.

Key stages in phased implementation:

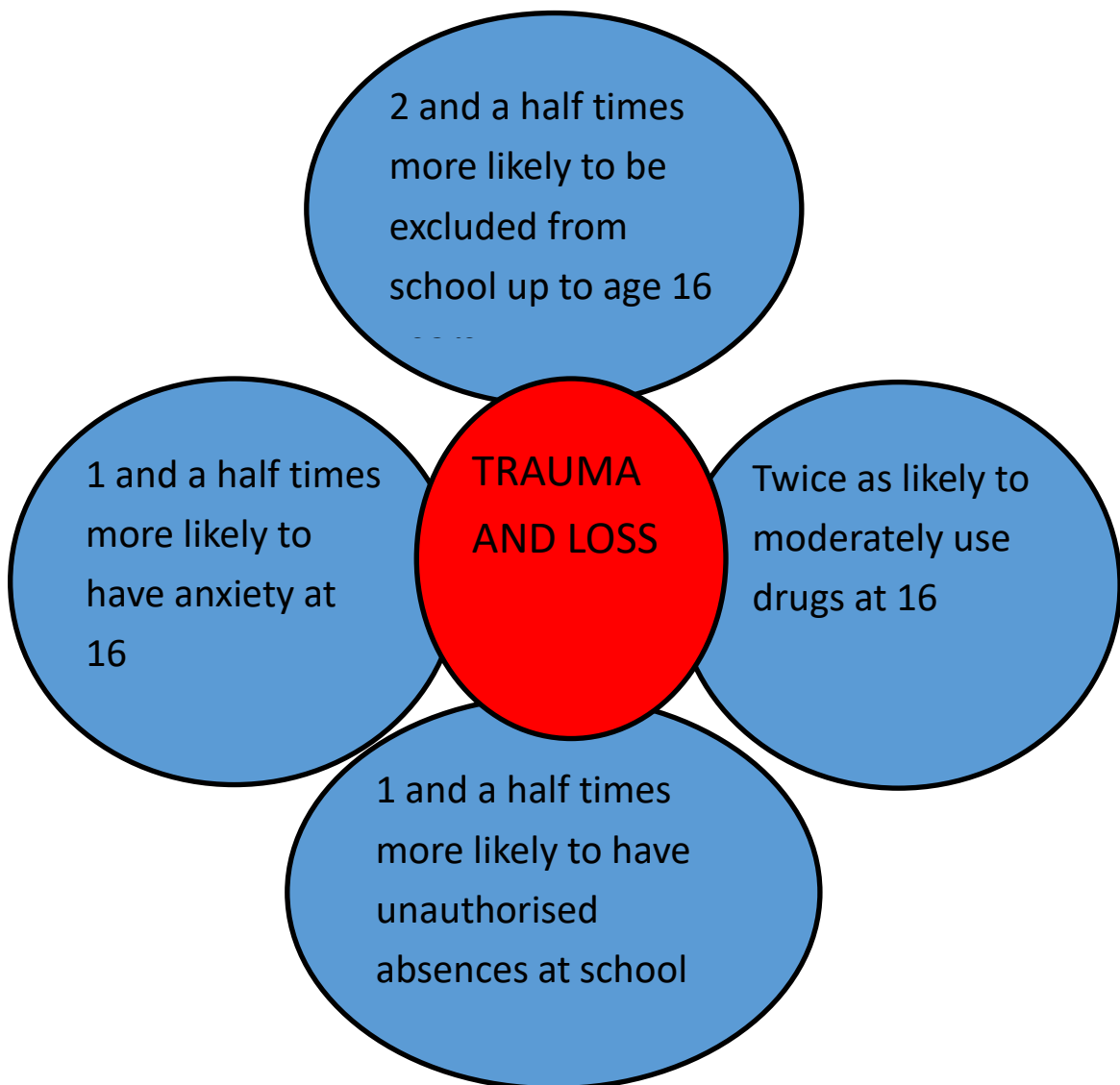
1. Identification of sequence of areas which will adopt new structure
2. Sharing of plan and reporting pro- forma including local data
3. Creation of Panels of people with lived experience
4. Initial discussions between People leadership teams and Panels
5. Creation of local CP plans
6. Engagement with elected members
7. Reporting and review

Discussions are underway with Legal and Democratic Services regarding Area committees' involvement.

The corporate parenting support team have begun work on the panels of people with lived experience and have held discussions with agencies regarding potential inputs for these.

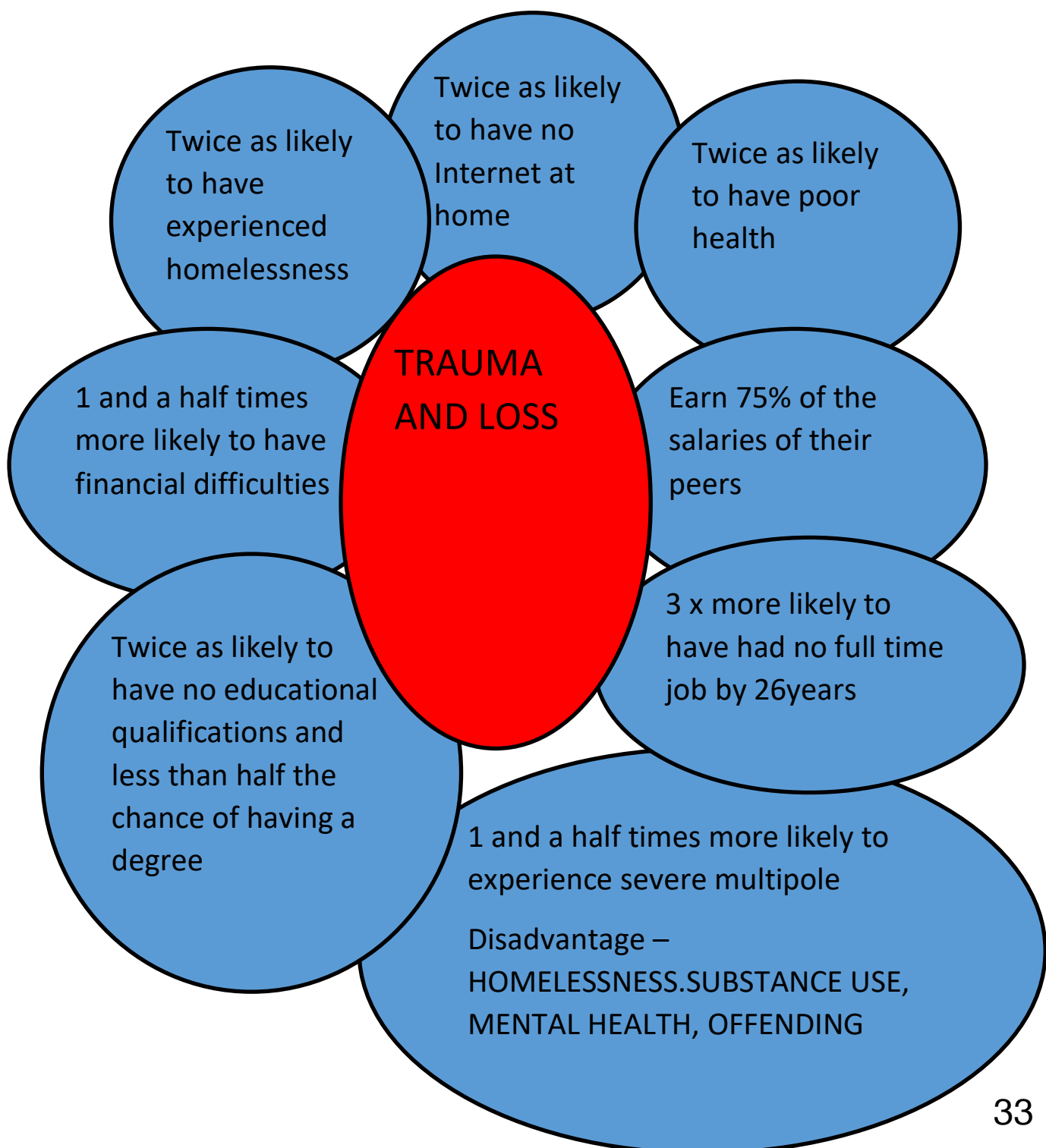
Levenmouth has been identified as the first area to pilot the new structure.

Care experienced children bear the lifelong cost of care



Children living in the 10% most deprived areas of Scotland are 20 times more likely to become care experienced than those in the 10% least deprived areas.

Care experienced adults bear the lifelong cost of care and are:



1 March 2022

Agenda Item No. 7

Children's Services Inspection Update

Report by: Carrie Lindsay, Executive Director - Education & Children's Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

To inform members of the update of the Care Inspectorate Improvement Plan following the 2019 Children's Services Inspection, since the last update provided in January 2021.

Recommendation(s)

Recommended that committee:

- Identify any items for further scrutiny
- Note the outcome of the update report and the progress made
- Agree that most of the improvements identified within the 2019 report have either been achieved or have been integrated into the CPC improvement plan, Children's Services plan or the Corporate Parenting Improvement Plan. Any outstanding are subject to critical review and partnership planning.
- Agree the need for an update plan of the improvements made, to be submitted to the relevant committee in 6 months.

Resource Implications

None

Legal & Risk Implications

Children's Services across all partner activity deal with areas of significant risk and services have detailed arrangements in place to manage these

Impact Assessment

An EqIA is not required because the report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

The inspection process included extensive consultation with staff across all services along with children and families who use children's services. Updates for this report have been provided by and informed by partners across Children's Services and Service User feedback

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Scottish Government has a programme in place to inspect all services to children within local authority areas. The inspection methodology in use for this inspection had a specific focus on the difference community planning partnerships are making to:
- the lives of children and young people in need of care and protection
 - the lives of the children and young people for whom community planning partnerships have corporate parenting responsibilities.
- 1.2 The 2018/19 inspection asked five key questions:
- How good is the partnership at recognising and responding when children and young people need protection?
 - How good is the partnership at helping children and young people who have experienced abuse and neglect stay safe, healthy and recover from their experiences?
 - How good is the partnership at maximising the wellbeing of children and young people who are looked after?
 - How good is the partnership at enabling care experienced young people to succeed in their transition to adulthood?
 - How good is collaborative leadership?
- 1.3 During the inspection, inspectors collected and reviewed evidence against all 17 quality indicators in the framework and used this understanding to answer the five inspection questions in this report. In addition to answering the inspection questions, inspectors use a six-point scale to provide a formal evaluation of three quality indicators which concern the impact of partners' work on the lives of children, young people and their families and the outcomes partners are achieving.
- These are:
- 1.1 – Improvements in the safety, wellbeing and life chances of vulnerable children and young people
 - 2.1 – Impact on children and young people
 - 2.2 – Impact on families
- The inspection also provided an overall evaluation for leadership.
- 1.4 Following the consideration of the material gathered during the contact with partners and service users in Fife, the inspectors evaluated provision out of a six point scale as below:

- 1.1 Improvements in the safety, wellbeing and life chances of vulnerable children and young people - *Good*
 - 2.1 Impact on children and young people - *Good*
 - 2.2 Impact on families – *Good*
 - 9.0 Leadership and direction – *Good*
- 1.5 The areas for improvement noted within the inspection report reflected those identified across the partnership within the self-evaluation prepared in advance of the inspection.
- 1.6 An improvement plan was developed across the Children’s Services Partnership to address the areas identified with progress being reported to Children in Fife from the three key strategic groups responsible:
- Child Protection Committee
 - Corporate Parenting Board
 - Children’s Services Partnership Group.

2.0 Update on Improvement Plan

- 2.1 This report has been compiled from across the Children’s Services Partnership to give members an update on the Care Inspectorate Improvement Plan developed in July 2019 as a response to the Children’s Services Inspection published in April 2019.
- 2.2 Partners in this report are defined as Fife Council, NHS Fife, SCRA, Police Scotland, and Fife Health and Social Care Partnership.
- 2.3 Overall the language in the 2019 report was positive in relation to practice across all services but particular emphasis was given to:
- the strengths around relationship-based practice which was seen to significantly benefit the experiences of both children and their families.
 - good collaborative working, keeping children at the centre of decision making
 - visible improvement relating to attainment and positive destinations.
 - the development of creative support for children leaving care
 - an evident culture of self-evaluation across the partnership.
- 2.4 Strengths Detailed
- Robust and effective pre-birth planning processes which has enabled the early identification, management and response to child protection and wellbeing concerns. This was ensuring vulnerable pregnant women were getting the right help and support at an early stage.
 - A wide range of flexible and responsive therapeutic services was effectively supporting children and young people in need of care and protection to get timely help and support to recover from abuse and trauma.
 - Effective, trusting relationships and nurturing care with staff and carers was positively impacting on the quality, stability and continuity of care and support for children and young people in care placements, including those young people in continuing care.

- Strong partnership working and a culture of learning was helping to drive forward identified improvements. This was supported by effective leadership and a well-performing child protection committee.
- The work of partners to help educational attainment and positive post school destinations of looked after children.

2.5 The inspection report also helped us prioritise areas for improvement:

- Partners should further improve their recognition and response when children and young people experience neglect or repeated instances of harm, for example because of parental substance misuse, mental ill-health or domestic abuse.
- Partners should achieve greater consistency in the quality and practice standards of assessments, child's plans and chronologies and strengthen quality assurance and management oversight.
- Partners should continue to ensure that capacity is released to improve the time taken to undertake health needs assessment in preschool children when they become looked after.
- Partners should progress plans to undertake a health needs assessment with all care leavers and advise them how to seek support relating to any emotional or wellbeing needs that are identified.
- Partners should continue to use data and analysis of the Home2Fife strategy (now called Belonging To Fife) and ensure this is effectively linked to a commissioning framework.

2.6 In the conclusion to the inspection report, the Care Inspectorate and its scrutiny partners noted that they were confident that the Fife partnership had the capacity to continue to improve and address the points for action highlighted in this report. This was based on:

- the collective leadership, direction and accountability demonstrated by partners to deliver the best possible outcomes for children and young people in need of care and protection in Fife
- the strong culture of learning across services underpinned by well embedded approach to self-evaluation and continuous improvement to improve performance and practice
- effective partnership working and the culture of mutual support and collaboration at strategic and operational levels
- the strategic focus and oversight by the child protection committee to improve multi-agency responses to keep children safe and protected
- the commitment and high aspirations as corporate parents to improve better outcomes for looked after children, young people and care leavers.

2.7 It also noted that partners would need to continue to develop their joint approaches to a strategic assessment of need and the use of data and evidence to be able to ensure ongoing activity around improving outcomes for children, young people and families. There is explicit intent to move from good to excellent.

2.8 Improvement Plan: Partners undertook to develop an improvement plan throughout May – July 2019 and this was agreed at CiF in August 2019:

- Partners should further improve their recognition and response when children and young people experience neglect or repeated instances of harm, for

example because of parental substance misuse, mental ill-health, domestic abuse and accumulating neglect

- Partners should achieve greater consistency in the quality and practice standards of assessments, child's plans and chronologies
- Further development of methods for systematically gathering feedback from children, young people and their parents and evaluation of views.
- Specific activity for children involved in Child Protection and Looked After processes
- Partners should strengthen quality assurance and management oversight
- Partners should continue to ensure that capacity is released to improve the time taken to undertake health needs assessment in preschool children when they become looked after
- Partners should progress plans to undertake a health needs assessment with all care leavers and advise them how to seek support relating to any emotional or wellbeing needs that are identified
- Partners should continue to use data effectively and analyse the Home2Fife strategy, ensuring this is effectively linked to a commissioning framework
- Evaluation, audit and strategic oversight of IRD processes to ensure decision making is robust when concerns are about neglect and domestic abuse
- Review of advocacy services to ensure Children and Young people can access appropriate support
- Strengthen the quality assurance role provided by independent reviewing officers to help ensure greater consistency
- Care leavers need to be able to access more flexible accommodation options.
- Agree joint strategic approach to setting out corporate parenting priorities across the partnership

2.9 These 13 actions have been further refined recognising that there were connections across and between the different areas of improvement. Significant progress has been made over the last 30 months since the plan was agreed, and an updated plan is attached identifying areas of ongoing or completed activity. It must be noted that some actions relate to significant system change and these have been impacted by COVID, but also overtaken by new policies and guidance, such as the Promise or the National Guidance for Child Protection. It should be further noted that the plan was not designed to be short term but to support improvement over time.

3.0 Issues and Options

3.1 It is noted that the impact of coronavirus over the last 2 years has affected progress within a number of areas as agencies within Fife focussed their priorities around supporting the most vulnerable families during lockdown and recovery.

3.2 The publication of the Independent Care Review and the obligations of 'the Promise' have led to a further review to prioritise improvement activity across the partnership. Whilst all the activity required for the Care Inspectorate Improvement plan are ongoing, particular elements will be further targeted:

- *Further development of methods for systematically gathering feedback from children, young people and their parents and evaluation of views.*

It is noted that whilst there has been progress made in relation to the meaningful engagement and participation of children and young people within decision making forums, this is an area where further progress is required. The Children and Family Social Work service have commissioned the services of MOMO (Mind Of My Own) a web based system, dedicated to receiving, analysing and collating the views of children in receipt of support from that service and this will be rolled out early 2022.

- *Partners should continue to use data effectively and analyse the Home2Fife (now Belonging to Fife) strategy, ensuring this is effectively linked to a commissioning framework.*

The partnership is highly focused on ensuring that data is used effectively within agile planning in 'real' time. Significant progress has been made both in relation to the ambitions of Belonging to Fife (B2F) but also in sharing data and considering practice improvement. This work has been further enhanced by the involvement of Franklin Covey and their 4 Disciplines of Execution work across the children's services partnership, which is due to conclude in March 2022.

- *Partners should further improve their recognition and response when children and young people experience neglect or repeated instances of harm, for example because of parental substance misuse, mental ill-health, domestic abuse and accumulating neglect.*

Early and effective intervention using the strengths of the Child Wellbeing Pathway will be further developed throughout 2021/22 building on progress made. This work has been enhanced, as noted above, by the Franklin Covey work but it is recognised that this is an area which requires ongoing improvement and the partnership are actively reviewing the need for change. This will be a key area of focus nationally and locally in 2022 due to refreshed guidance on GIRFEC as well as improvements required being key within the CPC improvement plan.

3.3 It should be noted that the partnership has made significant progress in relation to:

'Care leavers need to be able to access more flexible accommodation options', through:

- the establishment and ongoing usage of a 'training' flat for young people transitioning out of formal care
- The partnership with the National House Project which offers care leavers tenancies from December 2020 (9 young people were given tenancies in 2021 and 10 are in line for allocation early 2022)
- Ongoing work and planning with the Barnardos Gap project
- Ongoing recruitment of Supported Lodgings carers (increase from 26 to 52 during 2019-2020)
- The re-provisioning of a care home in Fife to provide a group living environment specifically to support care leavers moving towards independence.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 The inspection report presented a comprehensive analysis of services to children in need of care and protection in Fife. It covered all partnership activity, including the 3rd sector, as well as including extensive engagement with children and families who use services within Fife.
- 4.2 The report highlighted a number of areas of good practice and noted as particular strengths: the quality of relationship-based practice in Fife and the positive impact that this has on children and families, the work of the Child Protection Committee and the leadership shown by staff at all levels. It also commented very positively on the outcomes achieved by services and the attainment of our children and young people.
- 4.3 The report allowed for a positive foundation for further improvement work, to support the ambition to move to excellent, which is detailed in the appendix and is being taken forward by the strategic groups responsible for the activity.

Appendices

1. Improvement plan with RAG status
2. Link to report, this is also available via the Care Inspectorate website
<http://bit.ly/fife-servicesforcyp>

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Appendix 1: Improvement plan

Area for Action	Activity	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress Update
<p>1. Partners should further improve their recognition and response when children and young people experience neglect or repeated instances of harm, for example because of parental substance misuse, mental ill-health, domestic abuse and accumulating neglect</p>	<p>(a) Review of how neglect is identified and responded to including the evaluation of existing pilots or practice change initiatives (i.e. Child Care Clinic: Dental Neglect Pilot)</p>	<p>CPC/CSPG</p>	<p>February 2021</p>	<p>Due to clinical capacity the Child Care Clinic has still not recommenced – it is unlikely to restart before 2022.</p> <p>31/7/21 Dental health support workers have recommenced engagement with high priority families and dental neglect pilot is to be revisited.</p> <p>Although the two pilots are on hold due to unforeseen circumstances, work is progressing across the partnership, and tackling neglect is a key work strand across many of the working groups.</p> <p>Rich learning has come from a recent Learning Together Review which highlighted key processes staff should draw on for assessing and responding to neglect.</p>

Area for Action	Activity	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress Update
				<p>A scoping exercise of bespoke neglect assessment tools (undertaken by the CPC WFDG) concluded that current assessment tools are more than adequate, alongside effective supervision and L&D opportunities as pivotal instruments in improving the recognition of and response to neglect. The introduction of the Graded Carer Profile, as a bespoke neglect tool, was also considered as part of this scoping exercise. Decision was made by the CPC not to take this forward at this time.</p> <p>July 2021: Within Children's Services, Health Visiting has opted to purchase the NSPCC's Graded Care Profile 2, to support assessment, analysis and intervention planning with respect to neglect. This will be launched in early 2022. Findings/learning will be reported as a self</p>

Area for Action	Activity	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress Update
				<p>evaluation report to CPC SE&I group in due course.</p> <p>Impact assessment and performance will continue to be monitored through the self-evaluation and improvement working group</p>
	(b) Multi-agency questionnaires and focus groups through SE&A group to include questions on neglect to gather staff views and confidence	SE&A group CPC/CSPG	December 2021	<p>As a consequence of COVID this has not developed, and consideration is being given as to whether this activity can be scheduled for EARLY 2022.</p> <p>Looking to merge learning from Franklin Covey work however timescale needs to be extended to spring 2022 and work will reflect newly identified concerns.</p>
2. Specific activity for children involved in Child Protection and Looked After processes	(a) Annual CPC audit to evaluate involvement of CYP in relation to views being sought	SE&A group CPC/CSPG	December 2021	<p>As above at 1 (e) re audit as they feed into each other. The work detailed by the Child Protection Team progressed September 2020 and learning is being evaluated and has been shared with SE&A group's in 2021.</p> <p>The learning around impact on children is being further explored and developed by</p>

Area for Action	Activity	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress Update
				both the CPT within the new IRD and JII work and also through the multi-agency participation work led within 4DX
	(b) Reviewing Service (Social Work) to undertake audit of case conference and initial LAC reviews to ascertain how children's views are sought and presented	Social Work	December 2021	Parental experience of formal meetings is being explored in the 4DX work and in addition to this the Reviewing Service are updating their performance framework to ensure this is regularly captured
3. Partners should strengthen quality assurance and management oversight	(a) Agree and arrange evaluation and audits of management processes	Individual services Service Leads for SW Education 3 rd Sector Housing Police SCRA	December 2021	July 2021 (Health) The QA framework was fully implemented across health visiting service in October 2020 with a series of audits Fife wide. The findings/learning has been reported to Children's Services Health Management Group and the Child Protection Health Steering Group as a standing agenda item. Since the QA framework is the vehicle for continuing learning and improvements, an improvement plan from these initial

Area for Action	Activity	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress Update
				<p>findings/Learning is now being actioned. Further audits are planned for later in 2021 which will ascertain the effectiveness of the improvement actions. Self evaluation reports will be submitted to CPC SE&I grp where appropriate. SCRA undertakes a national case sampling audit on a quarterly basis (currently suspended due to Covid response). This audit and review is considered by SCRA's Executive Management Team and results in specific improvement action plans for Locality Reporter Managers;</p> <p>Performance overview is provided to each Locality on a bi-monthly basis by SCRA's Quality Assurance Manager which informs local improvement plans; and (3) previous audit of management processes resulted in the formation of twice-yearly Locality Reporter Manager network development sessions.</p>

Area for Action	Activity	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress Update
				<p>This was not identified as a key priority for social work other than to ensure clarity around recording management decisions in the electronic system. This has been delayed due to a new electronic system being commissioned.</p> <p>Housing, through our Service Public Protection Coordinators group we continue to audit our Public Protection procedures.</p> <p>3rd Sector – each agency responsible for own quality assurance and management oversight. Reporting mechanisms in place through Service Level Agreements. Key priorities for action in improvement plan regularly shared with third sector organisations through the Voluntary Sector Children’s Services Forum.</p> <p>Police – Child Protection Register – flag now added to VPD to increase visibility of vulnerable children. Back record conversation underway.</p>

Area for Action	Activity	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress Update
				<p>Education: A CP toolkit has been provided to support schools in auditing their practice. This will be promoted in various ways between August and December 2021. It will be offered universally to all schools for use as well as in a targeted way, for example with new HTs, with schools who would benefit from additional support. The toolkit resource will be supported by additional professional development support for Named Persons and Education leaders, which is expected to focus on Record Keeping processes. To support this and other CP Developments a new post has been created within Education – of Quality Improvement Officer: Child Protection and Health and Wellbeing.</p>
	(b) Agree and arrange evaluation and audit of supervision processes	<p>Individual services</p> <p>Service Leads for SW</p> <p>Education</p> <p>3rd Sector</p> <p>Housing</p> <p>Police</p> <p>SCRA</p>	<p>December 2021</p> <p>HEALTH COMPLETED (Continues to</p>	<p>Health CP team: CP QA framework scheduled has been launched in Autumn 2020.</p> <p>July 2021: Supervision arrangements in place (Health, children's services). Further upskills</p>

Area for Action	Activity	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress Update
			<p>be part of rolling programme of QA and reporting</p>	<p>ongoing, with a rolling programme of key staff registered for post graduate course in supervision. A suite of Standard Operating Procedures are being developed to outline the requirements of each staff group in the delivery and attendance at various forms of supervision (Health, children's services)</p> <p>SCRA, in partnership with Unison, undertook a thorough review of SCRA's Supervision Framework in 2019. Framework was relaunched in May 2020 and outlines SCRA's expectations for formal supervision of all staff a minimum of 5 times per year. Formal supervision must now be recorded electronically for audit purposes.</p> <p>Social work reviewed and evaluated supervision process and impact in 2019: action complete.</p>

Area for Action	Activity	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress Update
				<p>Housing Services – August 2021 new coaching models are currently being rolled out across the Communities Directorate</p> <p>3rd Sector – each agency has their own supervision arrangements and review processes in place.</p> <p>Police – Self-evaluation process of concern reports relating to children and young people in dip sampling format. Quality assurance framework embedded within Risk and Concern Hub in respect of EEI with relevant children and young people.</p> <p>Education: The Supervision model for education staff continues to be an ongoing area of development, through Staff Wellbeing work and also Child Protection improvement activity. Last session improvements were made to the model to spread the reach of voluntary (opt-in) peer:peer support. This has been well-received by a number of school leaders. Opportunities to extend this will continue to be explored.</p>

Area for Action	Activity	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress Update
				In addition to this it will be necessary to consider supervision practices for groups such as family workers working within Education establishments.
4. Partners should progress plans to undertake a health needs assessment with all care leavers and advise them how to seek support relating to any emotional or wellbeing needs that are identified	(a) School Nursing service to further develop their planning in relation to what can be offered to care leavers in partnership with the Young People's Team in social work	School Nursing Service HSCP Mark Smith	September 2021	School nursing service will begin to offer a health assessment from September 2021 for CEYP who have left school in the previous 12 weeks. This will be evaluated in 2022
5. Partners should continue to use data effectively and analyse the Home2Fife (retitled Belonging to Fife) strategy, ensuring this is effectively linked to a commissioning framework	(a) Governance group to be created to review all activity relating to H2Fin addition to developing a joint approach in relation to a strategic assessment of need (projected and current) and the use of data and evidence to ensure improving outcomes for children and families: STEPP H2F data SAC-LAC progress Recruitment strategy for FC/SL/Adoptive carers	All partners and chaired by HoS/CSWO	February 2021	Progress made in relation to partnership data group and agreement for CiF to be the governance group for the Promise which includes activity of B2F. 2021 - Strategic commissioning group established, and third sector review completed 5/08/20 – Practice governance group to be established. This work has been affected by the publication of the Independent Care Review and the recognition that all partners need to develop their understanding of the

Area for Action	Activity	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress Update
	Strategic commissioning group for carers both community and residential Kinship strategy refresh			Promise, which will be the key policy document guiding partnership planning for all looked after or care experienced young people.
	(b) 6 monthly reports evaluating impact and collaborative advantage to be presented to CiF	All partners and chaired by HoS/CSWO	March 2021	5/08/20 – CPB will pull this into a piece of work, get a systems approach going forward and any gaps will be highlighted. Work is ongoing as part of the work of the CPB
6. Evaluation, audit and strategic oversight of IRD processes to ensure decision making is robust when concerns are about neglect and domestic abuse	(a) Ongoing evaluation to continue – SG advise they are keen to use current Fife model as exemplar	IRD SOG CPC	September 2019	Evaluation presented to CPC November 2019, actions emerging to be progressed with IRD partners Complete The Scottish Government's national child protection guidance will introduce significant changes to the IRD process and a group has been established to progress all aspects of change involved in realising the new guidance into practice.
7. Review of advocacy services to ensure Children and Young people can access appropriate support	(a) Advocacy services for young people to be captured within Third Sector commissioning review	Kathy Henwood Lynn Gillies Fiona McKay Carrie Lindsay	December 2021	The Third sector review is complete and recommendations on options regarding future commissioning

Area for Action	Activity	Responsibility	Timescale	Progress Update
				<p>arrangements has been considered at E&CS Committee.</p> <p>Barnardos Children's Rights service continues to be available to young people and in addition there is a newly funded post to support children to attend their children's hearings. Finally the CSPG has a specific task in relation to ensuring services are aware of and meeting their obligations under the UNCRC</p> <p>Work complete but ongoing evaluation of impact will be carried out</p>
8. Agree joint strategic approach to setting out corporate parenting priorities across the partnership	(a) Work to continue within this group to ensure commitments are explicit and ambitious.	Corporate Parenting Board members	September 2021	<p>Work to continue and activity ongoing to ensure this work encompasses the obligations from the 'promise'.</p> <p>Review of CPB activity is now complete and a new plan is in place to ensure effective development and progress on agreed priorities</p>
	(b) Annual evaluation of the CPB plan	Corporate Parenting Board members	September 2021	As Above

Date: 1st March 2022

Agenda Item No. 11

Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2020/21

Report by: Kathy Henwood, Chief Social Work Officer

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The Education and Children's Services Committee agreed that an annual report on the role of the Chief Social Work Officer would be provided to Members.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Members consider and note the content of the report.

Resource Implications

There is no resource implication arising from this report.

Legal & Risk Implications

None arising from this report.

Impact Assessment

There is no requirement for an impact assessment as the report is for noting only.

Consultation

Nil

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 An annual report by the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) has been presented annually to a committee of the Council from 2009. The current report follows a standard template issued by the Scottish Government for the purpose of ensuring comparison of these reports across Scotland. The report is designed to provide an overview of social work services within Fife and reflects the formal statutory responsibilities held by the role undertaken by the Chief Social Work Officer.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 All Scottish local authorities are required to appoint a professionally qualified Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO). The function of the CSWO post is to ensure the provision of effective, professional advice to local authorities, including elected members and officers in the authority's provision of social work services. The post should assist authorities in understanding social work service delivery and the role that social work plays in contributing to the achievement of local and national outcomes.
- 2.2 The CSWO is also responsible for providing professional governance for the delivery of social work and social care services, whether these be provided by the local authority or purchased from the voluntary or private sector.
- 2.3 In addition, there are a number of specific duties and decisions that relate primarily to the curtailment of individual freedom and the protection of both individuals and the public, which must be made by the CSWO or by a professionally qualified delegate.
- 2.4 From 2014 the duties of the Chief Social Work Officer has been held by the Head of Service post responsible for Children & Families and Criminal Justice social work services.

3.0 Conclusions

- 3.1 The attached report is submitted to the Scottish Government as part of the statutory responsibilities of the role of the Chief Social Work Officer and provides members with an overview of key aspects of social work provision in Fife.
- 3.2. Members will note the role and range of functions covered by the Chief Social Work Officer including social work and social care services provided by both the authority and by the Health and Social Care Partnership

List of Appendices

1. The 2020/21 Chief Social Work Officer Report

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Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2020/21

Introduction

This is my second year in Fife as CSWO. Whilst most of this year has been predicated by the pandemic, there have been extraordinary shows of innovation and creativity, in an effort to provide support and services to those people in Fife who are most in need. This approach has extended across all social work services and is a real credit to professional values and determination to ensure services remained in place and supports were both meaningful and effective in keeping people connected.

I know social work staff across the services continued to attend to work, even though the workplace was disrupted, and staff were displaced; having to work from home as office and community venues closed around them.

This was commendable and led to pockets of intensive learning, as we all became familiar and frustrated (probably in equal measure at the beginning), with Microsoft Teams and navigating the virtual world of work. This is an area we now excel and has created unexpected capacity as well as increased demand and most importantly a means to keep better connected with each other and with people who we support. Thanks go to children and young people who have often been instrumental in our learning, sharing their expertise and familiarity with virtual systems. Thanks have also to be extended to our partners in business and technical support, who equipped us with the technology to move forward at pace. This is an area we are further developing, to capitalise on the potential added value and strengths of using technology and a broader digitalisation strategy within our work.

Within all this, those people who had most need of the services were seen face to face, with home visits continuing and creative communications being held in gardens and through windows, offering that human contact and time to talk. Through the pandemic and lockdown this was well received.

Through these challenges, professional leadership and support was not only increased and adapted to meet changing need but was openly curious about the quality of supports being offered and what could be done differently. This was a courageous move, but one that brought staff and service users together with compassion and care and a commitment to wanting to get it right. This report highlights some of the consultations undertaken and the feedback received, from service users and staff, that went on to inform service planning.

There have been numerous achievements throughout this year. We did not stand still and wait the outturn of the pandemic. Staff across social work services collaborated, challenged, committed to change and delivered and for this I thank them. The communities and partnerships across Fife also came together and it is through this revised approach that we want to take forward the very best of what worked and continue to learn through what didn't.

Whilst recovery hasn't been achieved in this reporting year, reform has been a key narrative. I recognise that whilst supporting the need to progress, there has also been time needed to consider the impact of the pandemic on the social work service. There has certainly been a professional and personal impact and, supported through our workforce development leads, the mental health and emotional well-being of staff has been at the fore. This is an area we have got to get right and will continue to focus through the coming year and beyond.

So, in what has been an unprecedented year, I hope this report gives an overview of the wide reach of the social work service, working closely with partners and the communities of Fife, to make a difference.

Can I take this opportunity to thank all staff, for the work undertaken, the unwavering commitment and energy that has been demonstrable throughout the year. It has been a pleasure to work alongside you all.

Thank you

Kathy Henwood

Head of Education and Children's Services/Justice Services and CSWO

1. Governance and Accountability

Fife Council Political Structure

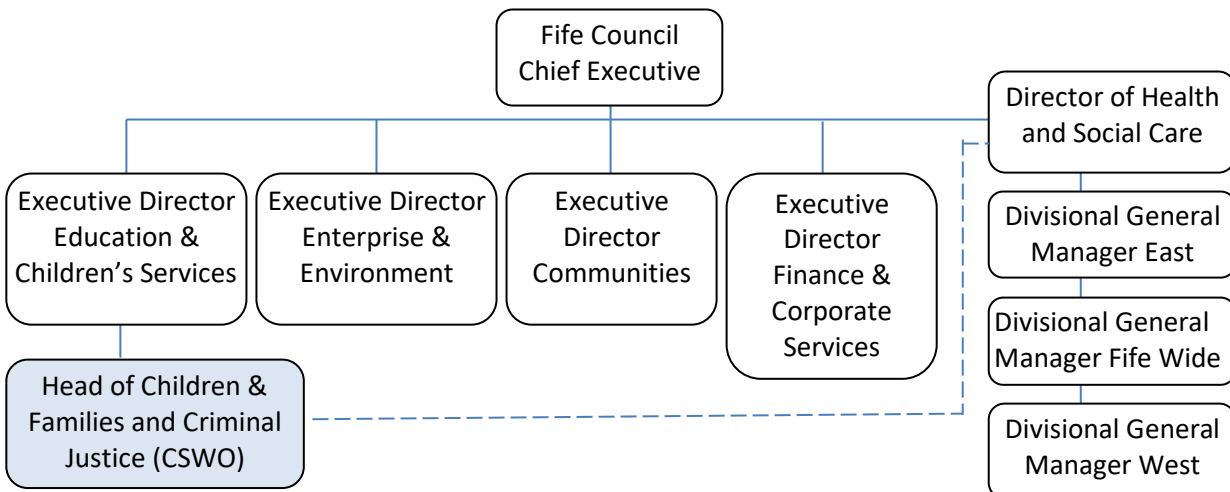
There are 22 electoral wards in Fife and each ward has three or four councillors who have been elected by the people of that ward to represent them. In total, there are 75 councillors.

They are responsible for setting policy for the Council and may sit on various committees where they can vote on a range of matters from local planning to decisions on welfare or education.

Breakdown by political groups	
Scottish National Party	30
Labour	23
Conservative	14
Liberal Democrats	7
Independent	1
Total	75

Fife Social Work Governance Arrangements (Structural)

In Fife, the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) is the Head of Children and Families, and Criminal Justice. The post sits within the Education and Children’s Services Directorate and reports through the Executive Director to the Council Management Team and Elected Members.



The CSWO is responsible for monitoring social work service activity across the Council and within the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership to ensure that agreed targets are being met and that professional standards are maintained. Operational management responsibility for social work service delivery rests with relevant management arrangements in Children and Families, Adult, and Older People’s Services and a reporting system is in place in relation to those social work services where the CSWO has no operational management responsibility.

These reporting arrangements cover:

- Statutory decision-making including adoption, secure accommodation, and guardianship
- Performance outcomes and trend information
- Critical incident reports including significant case reviews
- Direct reporting by the CSWO to the Council and the Chief Executive

The CSWO also has a role to play in specific advisory bodies such as the Chief Officer Public Safety Group and in advising the Council in relation to matters affecting social work services arising from Community Planning and other Partnership bodies.

The CSWO also has direct access as required to the Council’s Chief Executive and Elected Members.

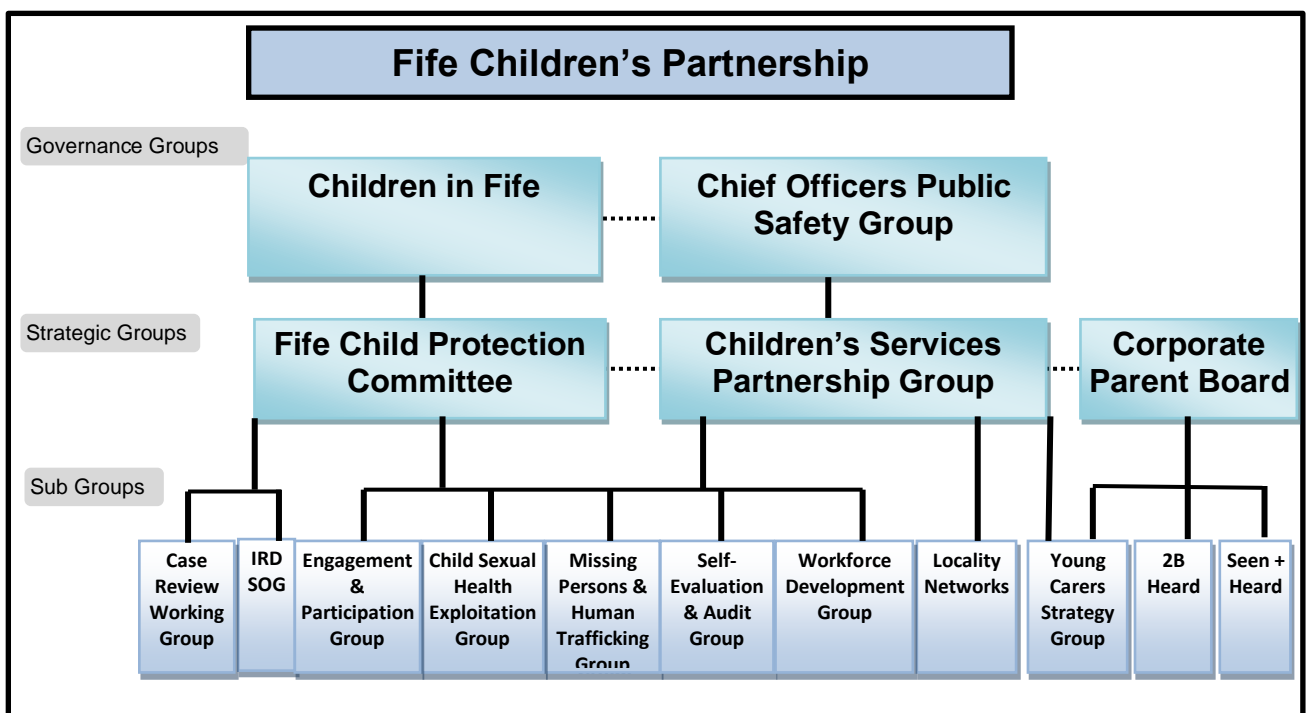
Fife Children’s Services and Criminal Justice Service: Strategic Governance and Accountability

The partnership between services for Children in Fife is well established at both a strategic level and across local areas. The responsibility for the Children’s Services Plan (2021-2023) is held by the Fife Partnership, represented by the Children in Fife Group. This partnership binds Fife Council, the voluntary sector, Police Scotland, Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration, NHS Fife, and Health and Social Care in common purpose. The Children in Fife Group reports to the Fife Partnership.

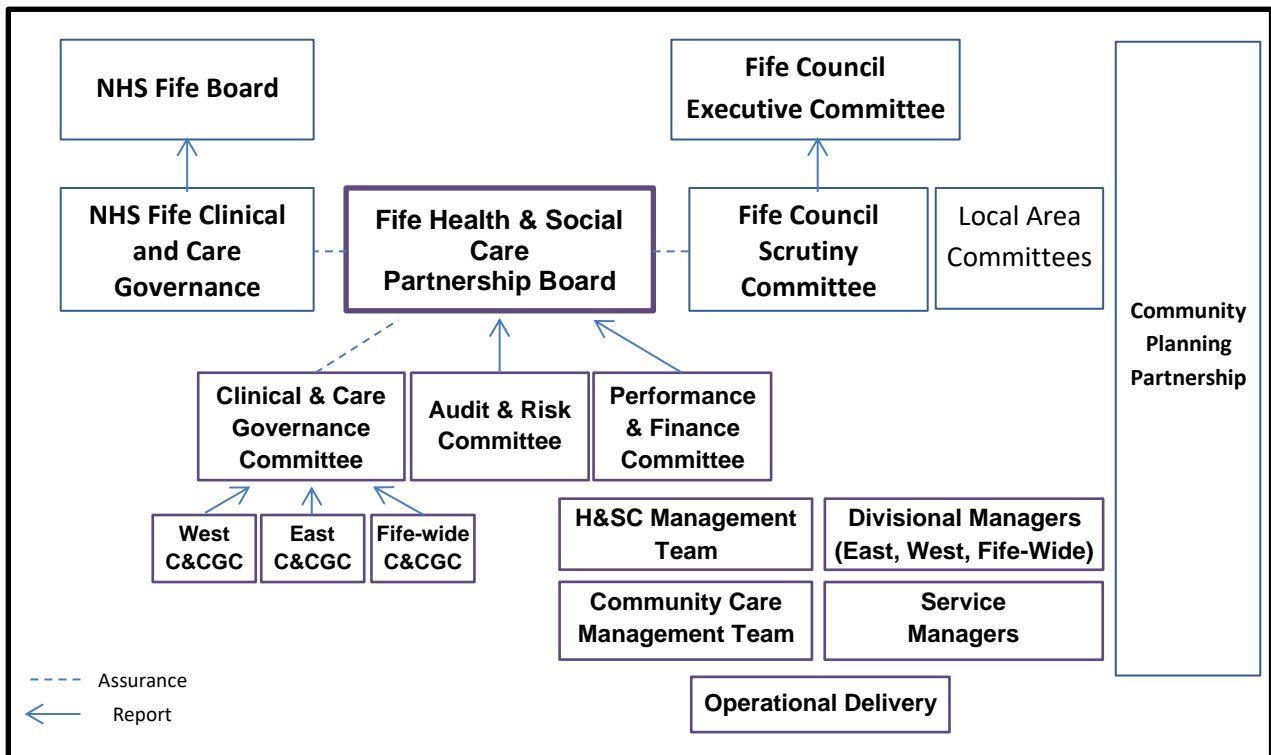
This plan is nested within Fife’s Community Plan, in particular these four outcomes:

- Improving early years development of children in Fife
- Raising educational attainment and reducing educational inequality
- Improving the health of Fifers and narrowing the health inequality gap
- Making Fife’s communities safer

These arrangements help ensure effective management of performance throughout Partnership social work services in Fife. This allows focus on particular areas of activity to assist in identifying where additional development is required. From this information, it is clear that there are a number of areas of strong performance as well as areas that require additional support. The focus in the coming period will be recovery and reform, working towards placed based services, to ensure a level of consistency in relation to the quality of assessment and care planning across all service user groups, allied to ensuring that those in need of services get the assistance they require at the earliest possible stage.



Fife Social Work Governance Arrangements: Health and Social Care Decision Making Structure



Role of CSWO

Financial Responsibilities of the CSWO

As a Head of Service for Education and Children's Services Directorate, the CSWO has direct operational responsibilities for the financial management within the Children and Families, and Criminal Justice Social Work Services. The role also has oversight of the standards involved in the delivery of social work within Adult and Older People's Services, and any budgetary implications that may arise from this.

The CSWO is responsible for monitoring all social work service activity including Children and Families, Criminal Justice Services and Adults and Older People Services. The CSWO, through their statutory function, must be assured that agreed performance targets are being met and that professional standards are maintained. Operational management responsibility for social work service delivery rests with relevant management arrangements in Children and Families, Criminal Justice, Adults, and Older People's Services.

2. Key Challenges, Developments, and Improvements (including impact of Covid-19)

a. Children and Families Service

Priorities and Challenges in 2020/21

2020-2021 was a year of significant challenge for Social Work nationally due to the impact of COVID 19. Restrictions on travel and meeting people inevitably affected the ability of social workers to visit family homes and carry out assessment activity. The impact on social worker's emotional wellbeing was a significant factor as they dealt with the pandemic in their non-work hours and then the impact during work hours. This was further compounded due to:

- home becoming a workplace and school environment for many, and
- the emotional context of the work; working with crisis, risk and harm permeating into people's safe space and family/home environments.

This required careful management and support. However, despite this, the Children and Family social work service in Fife continued to work as close to 'business as usual', ensuring practice was safe, appropriate and proportionate.

The service created a priority listing for all children in receipt of a service and arranged contact or face to face visits utilising a COVID safety assessment. All of our children categorised as level 1 were visited weekly and contact was maintained with all others virtually.

The service continued to hold Fostering and Adoption Panels and recruited carers as well as progressing permanence planning for children.

We developed robust and regular communication systems with the staff group sending out weekly and then fortnightly updates covering issues around: PPE, covid risk assessments, testing centres, visiting schedules, how to access staff support, HR updates. The communication by newsletter has been well received and will remain a central part of our staff communication strategy enhanced by management attendance at team meetings.

Children and Families Social Work Strategy

2020/21 saw the ongoing development of the Children and Family Social Work Strategy, phase 3, 'Belonging to Fife', which has been further informed and shaped by the Care Inspectorate Improvement plan (2019) and the developing work from the Independent Care Review. This was the final year of a five-year plan and saw the ambitions of a changed profile of care within Fife, with reducing numbers of children living in high-cost residential placements realised, as well as an increase in the use of Kinship Care.

The five-year plan laid out a number of key priorities for the service including a shift towards a more preventative approach to families in need, along with a focus on high quality care and protection planning for children. This included new partnership approaches such as the Child Wellbeing Pathway which helped provide a clearer framework for services across the GIRFEC continuum to work collaboratively to support families.

As noted, the strategy has continued to reduce the overall numbers of children being Looked After by the local authority and increased kinship care arrangements for children who could not live safely at home. However, we are aware of an increase in the number of Child Protection Orders and work is ongoing to understand what has caused this and whether it may be covid related in terms of ability to assess on an ongoing basis across

the children's services workforce. We know that the impact of coronavirus affected progress within a number of areas, as agencies within Fife focussed their priorities around supporting the most vulnerable families during lockdown and recovery.

The service has been involved with the work of The Promise for a number of years and the key principles of The Promise align with the values and practice principles inherent within the Children and Family key strategic objectives detailed in Belonging to Fife. As a consequence, the publication of the Promise has not led to immediate change across the social work service. However, it has offered the opportunity to emphasise key messages across the Children's Services Partnership and legitimise and promote our ongoing strategy: relationship-based practice, support children to stay at home or with kinship carers, listen and learn from the lived experience of children and their families, advocate for children to achieve the best possible outcomes, challenge partners to provide early and effective intervention. The service is keen to explore opportunities through Fife's developing Corporate Parenting Board, Children in Fife and The Promise national team to develop practice and targeted resources during the next financial year.

Performance Framework and Data

Following the introduction of the Minimum Data Set for child protection data (2019), the service developed a Performance Framework report using data and challenge questions to support reflection and improvement work across the whole service. The 'product' has allowed the service to reconcile qualitative and quantitative data for all aspects of service delivery to be presented within one document and has proven helpful for both those within the service to monitor progress but also supportive for the wider council and elected members. The final version is still evolving and will be completed in 2021.

Earlier intervention and GIRFEC. The redesign of the family support service in 2019-2020 has been further progressed with the teams now using the same recording systems as the rest of the social work service and far greater collaborative working. The Family Support Service allows for greater responsivity supporting families earlier to avoid crisis as well as working as part of a team around the child. The service has continued to be agile and adaptable during the pandemic offering practical parenting support and advice as well as direct support to children and young people to build resilience and address a range of wellbeing needs. The model in the service remains flexible to emerging need complimenting both the C&F services and the Third sector offer in Fife.

Commissioning Review

As part of the C&F strategic development, and being responsive to the changed profile of care within Fife, a review of the services that Children and Family social work commissioned, was undertaken to ensure that we were targeting support at those children and families identified as most vulnerable and those who could be described as 'edge of care'. Commissioning activity within universal services was complimenting this and supporting intervention at an early and effective level. An intensive programme of activity commenced in 2020 with new service briefs developed to support remodelling of provision to better meet need and align more closely to the C&F strategy. This initial phase of work as part of the Strategic Commissioning framework is close to completion and provides an opportunity for more seamless coordination of place-based support, with the aim of consistent provision across the seven localities of Fife.

Evaluation and Improvement

The service was keen to understand alternative improvement activity during the pandemic and learning from other services within Fife Council. Colleagues from Communities were sharing positive experiences around culture and practice change from utilising Franklyn Covey's 4 Disciplines of Execution (4DX). Following discussions, the service employed a 'sprint' model to work across the children's service partnership to examine how we could work better together to support those children identified as most at risk. This work aimed to focus on the voice of the customer and realised some important learning, detailed below, but also set the stage for a 12-month programme of improvement with an aim of supporting more children to remain safely at home which will be progressed during 2021-2022.

Financial Pressures

The Children and Family service was under significant financial pressure throughout 2018/19 and this continued into the following year. The service had a significant overspend associated primarily with:

- High-cost residential placements
- Purchased foster placements

Significant efforts have been made to address these issues as detailed within this report and whilst there was a reported overspend in 2019/20 of £10.160m the ongoing commitment to reducing purchased placements allowed this deficit position to be resolved by the end of 2020/21. This was an outstanding achievement of the Belonging to Fife strategy and has secured better outcomes for children and young people of Fife.

Resources Services: Fostering

2020-2021 saw a significant increase in the recruitment of foster carers with a net gain of 27 additional fostering households. This has positively impacted on Fife's ability to provide community-based care for children, young people and siblings within the geography of Fife. This goes against the national trend which has seen significant gaps in foster care recruitment and provision.

When the Covid 19 pandemic started there was initial concern that there may be an increased demand for foster care. Emergency carer registration was introduced to respond to this. Fife Council employees who were unable to complete their usual work duties due to lockdown, were offered the opportunity to be assessed and approved as emergency foster carers. This innovative approach was successful in ensuring additional care arrangements were available for children, however the anticipated need did not materialise. The emergency carer registration lapsed after 12 weeks with most employees. However, some staff were enthusiastic about the role of being a carer and have continued to foster as short break carers for Fife.

The increase in overall fostering households was significant for this year in comparison to 2019-20 which recorded an overall net increase of 4 households. Whilst we recognise that alternative advertising and recruitment strategies will have played a part in this, we also recognise that one potential impact of a global pandemic and local lockdowns may have led to some families becoming more engaged with their local communities and wanting, as some newly recruited carers have stated 'to give something back'. The success of our recruitment strategy has set our aims high for foster carer recruitment as we move into the new financial year, and we continue to advertise over a number of media sources to enthuse the people of Fife to offer a home to the most vulnerable.

This year our strategy for supporting foster carers has focused on self-care and reviewing support packages in place. The fostering teams spent additional funding on self-care vouchers for foster carers, mindfulness training, retreat days and a holiday activity camp for children. The fostering service is developing closer links with the Learning with Care team to support increased school attendance for looked after young people. Reflecting on recent placement disruptions, themes have emerged around reduced education packages, and increased reliance on foster carers to manage challenging behaviours during what would traditionally be the school day. Closer links with education services is aimed at being creative around education and striving to reduce children and young people's experience of foster placement disruption.

The fostering service in Fife has been recognised as a service that recruits foster carers to meet the diverse needs of the children in Fife. A stronger focus on carer support has enabled Fife to experience continued success in fostering as well as ensure that children and young people achieve stability in foster care through developing support packages with partners in Fife. One outcome reflected in our data is a shift between the number of local authority carers and the use of purchased foster carers. This balance has shifted towards local authority carers and the hope is this will be maintained.

Fife's commitment to ensuring that children and young people experience enduring placements with minimal placement disruption is core of the fostering practice. Our carers continue to report that the support, communication and assistance is commendable, and it has been one of the key reasons for foster carers transfer to Fife from other Local Authorities and Agencies. We continue to include Active Schools, Leisure Trust, Parks and Countryside and Therapeutic Services in our programmes of support for fostering households.

Resources Service: Adoption & Permanence Mentoring

These services have successfully adapted to meet the needs of children and Adopters. A flexible approach of blended support through virtual forums and face to face visits have enabled children's permanence plans to progress and has enabled the recruitment and approval of new adopters to continue. Adoption preparation groups and the Permanence Panel were not interrupted, and recruitment and approval of adopters and other carer groups have continued throughout the pandemic.

A virtual support group for adopted young people has been progressed and will start in April 2021 with approximately 6 teenagers participating. Informal Post Adoption Support has been provided virtually with the offer of virtual support groups, regular telephone calls and a closed Facebook page. However, virtual support does not replace face to face contact and some families required more formal support during lockdown which was provided with appropriate health and safety safeguards in place.

The implementation of 'bump into' meetings in 2020 has been very successful and positive feedback has been received from everyone involved. These meetings allow the child and prospective adopters to become familiar with each other at an early stage and therefore provides a more robust matching process. We have also continued to see an increase in the number of children who have a plan for adoption through direct petition as opposed to other legal orders. Support to birth families is high on the agenda particularly for birth families who have had more than one child permanently removed from their care. This is an area of support that will continue to be developed in 2021/22.

Data Snapshot: In 2020/21, during the pandemic, the Adoption Team assessed and approved 9 new adopters, 2 new concurrent carers/ adopters, 13 children were matched with Fife Council adopters (8 children were matched with adopters through link maker). The Adoption Team also undertook 14 *Section 19* assessments, provided Adoption

Counselling to 5 adult adoptees and provided formal Post Adoption Support to 12 families.

Resources Service: National House Project

Fife has been successful in securing funding from the Life Changes Trust to develop a House Project in Fife (LHP). All LHP's are members of the National House Project who help young people leaving care to create their own home and live independently. House Projects are co-designed with young people. They work together to develop relationships and learn skills that enable them to live successful adult lives. They have a choice in where they live and are involved in getting their property ready to become their home. House Projects are represented by young people at the Care Leavers National Movement (CLNM) to ensure that a young person's voice is at the heart of all decision making.

House Projects are made up of cohorts of 10 young people (approximately) and 3 members of staff. For projects to operate effectively and to their full potential they require a base that is always accessible to staff and young people during the week, and at weekends by arrangement.

Eight young people made successful applications to be part of the House Project Fife and they started the programme in August 2020. The young people will be given an empty property (secured tenancy) which they will be able to furnish and decorate independently whilst supported and guided by the house project staff. This project in partnership with Housing Services is aimed at ensuring we provide the right support and interventions with our care leavers so that they experience success in early adulthood.

Resources Service: Kinship

The Kinship team was redesigned in June 2019 to support greater capacity to assess new kinship carers and work to an agreed timescale for assessment. The redesign more than achieved its ambitious aims with a significant increase in the number of kinship arrangements between 2020/21 with a 35% increase since the strategy began (2015).

Fife has continued to invest in Kinship Services and in the last year has appointed a further 3 social workers and 1 senior social worker to the team. The team has been able to provide a range of assessments and interventions such as, family finding for children on the edge of care or subject to a placement breakdown as well as hosting family group meetings and ensuring there is a range of training and support to kinship carers. The team now facilitate kinship support groups over the geography of Fife on a weekly basis and hosts annual events. A recent addition to the service has been education support workers.

Fife has a strong commitment to empowering families and ensuring that children and young people are cared for within their families and in their communities, getting the right support at the right time. Fife provides financial support to 699 Kinship arrangements through the payment of Kinship Allowance and Support for family carers Allowance. This is an increase of 110 kinship payments from the previous year. The Kinship Team support around 250 carers through direct work and support groups at any time.

The Independent Care Review has recognised the impact on people when they become a Kinship Carer, identifying that carers often experience feelings of isolation and can feel unsupported. The service has commissioned targeted Mindfulness training, currently giving the opportunity for 40 kinship carers to engage in a 6-week programme. We have also bought in 3 workshops to be run later in 2021 across Fife providing an opportunity for 75 carers to consider their own Health and Wellbeing, provide self-awareness and consider the impact of grief, trauma and loss.

Over the period of Covid restrictions, Kinship Carers have been given the opportunity to continue to engage in Kinship Support groups virtually. Where technology has been a barrier, workers have engaged on an individual basis with carers. During this time a number of carers have used their links from support groups to form their own local networks to support each other, such as meeting 1 to 1 for a walk and creating informal telephone support networks. Engagement days have been booked for the 7 support groups in Fife to allow them to get back together and re-engage ensuring that we provide the right support to families as we emerge from lockdown. These days will be used to recognise the commitment of Kinship carers and further develop support groups in line with what carers feel is important. There has also been an investment in a number of recreational passes to allow kinship families opportunities to engage in fun activities recognising the financial and emotional impact of lockdown.

The Kinship team are developing a programme of support recognising that caring for a teenager in a kinship family can be challenging with data telling us that many of the disruptions seen in kinship families happen during teenage years. This will incorporate family work to address issues re their emotions, behaviours, and feelings and how these can impact on the placement, introducing trauma informed approaches as well as behaviour and routine charts and supporting carers to use strategies to deal with more challenging behaviours.

Resources Service: Residential Houses

In terms of Service expansion, we have successfully opened 4 new services which has allowed us to further ensure that placement decisions are based upon the needs of children as opposed to available resources – a key finding of the Promise. The new houses have increased our internal capacity by 16 beds.

The Promise is also clear that the main purpose of Residential Childcare is to ‘...prioritise the quality of relationships that young people experience ...’. Our new practice model has been designed to support our staff to continue to respond to this aspiration which is a cornerstone of the Belonging to Fife Strategy. The framework is based upon a literature review of attachment promoting/trauma informed care and gives staff explicit messages and expanded examples of what this should look like in a group home setting. Our aim for 2021-2022 is to develop a new Quality Assurance model around the main areas of the Practice framework. The new QA model will allow us to identify good practice and also areas where we need to improve.

In May 2020 we enhanced our provision by the opening of STEPP (Short term emergency placement planning) in a purpose-built residential childcare home. This offers care to children, young people and their families at the point of crisis. This provision allows care to be offered in Fife whereas in the past this could have resulted in care being provided out of Fife. Throughout the potential 28-day care placement weekly multi-agency assessment/planning meetings will take place to consider the young person and their family’s changing needs and capacity to meet these needs. Risks are always carefully monitored and assessed with a clear focus on future risks and how these can be mitigated and reduced through solution focussed support planning. A clear emphasis is on managing and responding to risks within family-based care with community supports.

We are re-provisioning a residential childcare home to provide care for young care leavers. Braefoot will offer 5 beds from April 2021 after completion of improvement works. This provision will offer short to medium term care between 3 and 6 months to enable young people to prepare for a transition to their own tenancy, a supported lodgings placement or alternative independent accommodation. The provision is staffed by senior

residential care workers supporting young people to adjust from leaving care with a focus on better preparing them for greater levels of independence.

The programme of residential improvements is enabling Fife to meet the varied needs of children and young people who require residential care at a point in time in their life. These developments have allowed us to move from offering 17 beds to potentially offering 33 beds all located in Fife by February 2021.

Therapeutic Service: Springfield Project

Fife continues to offer a specialist therapeutic service to looked after and accommodated children and young people placed within internal foster care and residential settings. The service is multi-disciplinary and offers specialist advice, training and consultation to foster carers, adoptive parents, residential childcare staff as well as social workers. The service offers a range of specialist assessments as well as therapeutic interventions. This service continued during the pandemic and became a vital lifeline to carers, practitioners and young people. The service supports 125 children and young people as well as the professional network around them.

The Springfield Project team has continued to provide a high level of therapeutic support to children and young people throughout the pandemic. For the most part, during lockdown periods, this continued online. Whilst easier for some, older young people in particular, it was not a replacement for the provision of face-to-face working, enabling more thorough assessment. A level of intervention and direct therapeutic work was re-established in between lockdown periods, in accordance with restrictions.

The team focussed on *“Supporting foster carers to be the best parents, feel valued, cared for and supported”*. Momentum gradually increased over the year, in response to demands on the service. Consultation sessions were offered to Fife Council foster carers, adoptive parents and a number of kinship carers. The latter were offered temporary online consultations between March-July 2020.

New developments included monthly consultation sessions to residential staff, (in addition to work with staff for individual children referred). Similar to the work with foster carers, this involved helping staff to tune in to the child’s experiences, thoughts and feelings, enabling a process of co-regulation and stability where children were supported to learn to manage stress and anxiety. This reflected ongoing recognition and understanding that residential staff are dealing with increasingly complex trauma and plans have been agreed to provide formal training in relation to attachment, child development and the impact of trauma.

Supported Lodgings

This has been an extremely successful year for the Supported Lodgings service. Recruitment activity has been very consistent, and the service currently has a total of 55 approved carers available to offer alternative care arrangements, with assessments ongoing of prospective carers. The staff team, consisting of 1 Social Worker and 2 Social Work Assistants, work hard to support our carers to maintain positive, stable placements for young people who are preparing for independence. Covid-19 has caused understandable uncertainty; however, the team have worked hard to minimise the impact on care arrangements and ensure positive transitions for young people returning to Fife from a range of placement types.

The continued growth of the Supported Lodgings service has put it in a strong position to respond flexibly to needs of the wider service. The service has been an integral part of the Belonging to Fife strategy, offering positive destinations to young people moving on from residential care. The service has trebled in the last year allowing the service to offer

placements to mother and babies, care leavers, trafficked young people and has supported our partner authorities by offering care to 4 young adults during the current humanitarian crisis of UASC. This service continues to grow and allow family-based care to be an option for young people with the most complex of needs at a key stage in their lives.

The Supported Lodgings service has continued to grow and develop over the past year making it one of the biggest supported lodgings schemes in Scotland. Despite the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, the assessment of new applicants continued, with a further 21 new carers being approved during this period. The service now has a large resource of full-time carers, along with a number of carers who can offer;

- short breaks
- emergency care
- care for mother and babies' care
- Care for adults with moderate learning difficulties and
- care for care leavers.

Like other services, the Supported Lodgings service found new ways to practice during the pandemic, including effective use of video calls and socially distanced outdoor visits. Although a small number of carers had to take a break from their role during this time, the service did continue to source placements for a significant number of young people, including 4 young asylum seekers who came to Fife via the Home Office National Transfer Scheme. This has now moved into an ongoing commitment from Fife. The team have worked incredibly hard to support their carers to respond to the diverse needs of their young people.

b. Criminal Justice Service

The Justice Service in Fife continues to strive for excellence through their commitment to learning and development. The Service is well supported in this area, internally through the HR Organisational Strategy & Workforce Development service, and externally, through Community Justice Scotland and other partners such as Health Promotion, the FMHT, the Risk Management Authority and NOTA.

Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic during 20-21 undoubtedly impacted on the way the Service operated and on learning and development opportunities, the Service in conjunction with HR Workforce Development and Strategy were proactive in seeking the support of colleagues in Community Justice Scotland to ensure that the Service emerges from the pandemic in a very strong position with all core training up to date, as far as possible.

Priorities and Challenges in 2020/2021

Criminal Justice Social Work along with the wider Justice system across the country suffered significant impact as the Courts effectively closed to all but essential business just before the beginning of the reporting year. The initial lockdown had a profound effect upon effectiveness of the courts to administer justice, with the consequential impact of a rapid decline in the day-to-day business of the CJ Social Work Service. In addition to the Courts, prison-based social work was also impacted as prisons themselves locked down meaning essential visits for reports and case management meetings were no longer feasible.

The impact of the lockdown on the justice system required emergency legislation to ensure that cases awaiting trial could be deferred beyond conventional timescales and

that prisoners close to their respective release dates could be considered for early release. This was to ease any pressures on the prison estate should there be any internal outbreaks in prisons and to mitigate against staffing reducing beyond safe levels due to transmission and self-isolation. A number of caveats were left to ensure that violent sexual and domestic offenders did not benefit from early release.

At a local level all buildings accessed by the public were closed and staff were advised to work from home. These changes led to the introduction of some new and inventive ways of working in the longer term, but initially resulted in the majority of contact with service-users being undertaken remotely via telephone or by video link through the WhatsApp technology. The Service was able to maintain contact with high dependency DTTO clients who required regular testing, and those who were deemed to be very-high risk.

Unpaid work and all group work services were suspended wholly during both lockdown periods. Unpaid work did manage to return to a restricted service in the period between lockdown, but this was limited to a staffing ratio of 1:2 as opposed to the normal 1:5. As a consequence numbers of outstanding hours began to rack up with no immediate sign of an ability to reduce these. At a national level the decision was taken to remove 35% of hours from all outstanding unpaid work hours, with the usual caveats around sexual, violent, and domestic offences. In Fife this amounted to 21,492 hours being removed from Unpaid Work Orders.

In terms of staffing the management team ensured full ongoing support for staff at team and individual level. The Service produced a Newsletter which was circulated on a daily basis, which reduced to a now weekly communication, which kept staff up to date with events as they unfolded nationally and within the Council. These included information on the availability and use of PPE, changes to national strategy and updates from the Courts and the wider justice system. The Newsletter is now a much-valued part of the working week, keeping staff informed, engaged and sometimes amused with developments as they happen.

Performance, Planning, and Improvement Framework

Following a gap of many years, the Service completed a Priority and Development plan to clearly highlight those issues and challenges that required priority. This was initially to be a three-year plan 2020-2023, but in light of the pandemic, focussed on a one-year plan due to the ongoing uncertainty about the future path(s) on the road to recovery, along with the equally uncertain roadmap to tackle the mounting backlog of cases within the justice system. The planning cycle will therefore commence 2021-2022, and annually thereafter until there is firmer ground on which to develop longer-term planning within the Service.

Despite the decision to hold back on the publication of the proposed plan, work has continued to ensure that staff at all levels are included in the planning and performance improvement process. The setup of practitioner led groups on Practice and Performance have ensured consistent positive and very productive input from the staff group, these groups have led to significant positive changes to practice, the formation of new specialist services and formally brought the voices of service-users to the discussion with the Service User Participation Group which first met in January 2021 and moved from strength to strength since that time.

In line with the Priority and Development Plan, the Service has produced a Performance Improvement Framework document focussing on the eight issues deemed to be in need of prioritisation at this time, these are:

- Improving service-user engagement and satisfaction
- Revamp audit processes and improve measurement and scrutiny

- Provide clear and achievable performance and improvement targets
- Review and update manual of practice guidance
- Improve relationships with partners
- Align future plans to wider Council and National objectives
- Support **SDD** Taskforce to reduce instances of drug related deaths in Fife
- Build upon successful media strategy and share success and good practice

These eight elements will be reported on quarterly with a view to completion by year end, with new and/or additional priorities being identified in the Performance Improvement Framework for 2022-23

Audit and Self-Evaluation

Historically Criminal Justice Services have focussed upon the quantitative aspect of audit with little by way of analysis. The emphasis on a more qualitative approach is required to address more specific forward planning and target setting. Within that changes to the current audit toll are essential to clearly focus on the analysis aspect of results and key performance indicators. Changes to the self-analysis aspect of audit will result in a peer led system reporting to the Service Manager on a quarterly basis. The new audit process coupled with the changes to the evaluation process will feed directly into the performance, planning and improvement framework into the next reporting year.

Resources

Six area-based Community Payback Order Teams based in:

- Dunfermline
- Cowdenbeath
- Kirkcaldy (East)
- Kirkcaldy (West)
- Levenmouth
- Glenrothes

Two Throughcare Teams covering:

- West Fife – Kirkcaldy, Cowdenbeath, Dunfermline, South West Fife.
- East Fife – Levenmouth, Glenrothes, North East Fife.

Two Women's Justice Teams covering:

- West Fife – Kirkcaldy, Cowdenbeath, Dunfermline, South West Fife.
- East Fife – Levenmouth, Glenrothes, North East Fife.

Drug Treatment and Testing Order Team:

- Fife-wide

Unpaid Work Service covering three area-based workshops in:

- Glenrothes
- Kirkcaldy
- Dunfermline

Groupwork Team incorporating Caledonian Programme:

- Fife-wide

MAPPA:

- Fife-wide

c. Health and Social Care Partnership

Priorities in 2020/21

The Health and Social Care Strategic Plan 2019 – 22 sets out the priorities for and establishes the framework in which resources will be used. The Fife Health and Social Care Partnership delivers a range of community-based health and social care services relating to all adults, as well as children's community services such as Health Visiting.

The Health and Social Care Partnership Board is responsible for planning and ensuring the delivery of a wide range of health and social care services and is accountable for delivering the National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes. An integrated Performance Management Framework is used to prepare a list of targets, measures and arrangements which relate to functions of the Health and Social Care Partnership. The Partnership Board is also responsible for monitoring and reporting in relation to the delivery of the integrated services on behalf of NHS Fife and Fife Council.

The Board receives detailed work plans and reports from the Partnership outlining progress for the year against the delivery of the Strategic Plan and uses performance reports to help inform future strategic planning.

Health and Social Care Partnership Strategy

The Strategic Plan is driven by law and national and local policy and aims to meet the needs of people now and in the future.

The Strategic Plan Priorities are as follows:

1. Working with local people and communities to address inequalities and improve health and wellbeing outcomes across Fife
2. Promoting mental health and wellbeing
3. Working with communities, partners and our workforce to effectively transform, integrate and improve our services
4. Living well with long term conditions
5. Managing resources effectively while delivering quality outcomes

Reporting on the Strategic Plan takes into account non-delegated targets and measures when these are affected by the performance and funding of integration functions. The Performance Framework focusses on dealing with the correct issue at the correct level of detail and this includes consideration of core operational plans and objectives, as well as national strategic targets, local targets, and improvement goals.

Challenges in 2020/21

Over the course of the last year the HSCP has faced many challenges brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly when the stay-at-home order was introduced and face to face contact for many services had to be ceased. Teams quickly adjusted to using technology to work from home and were able to continue to ensure delivery of statutory functions; assessment, commissioning of services, supporting and assessing Adults with Incapacity and Adult Support and Protection needs through 'virtual' meetings and case conferences.

Residential Care

Fife H&SCP operates 8 Older People's Care Homes ranging from small residential, respite and day care services through to large 60 bed Care Homes. These are registered

with the Care Inspectorate and are inspected each year, providing assurance that they continue to provide high quality care and support to Fife's older people. Since the outbreak of COVID-19, our care homes were required to operate within different parameters and had to align practice to regular guidance from Public Health in respect of PPE, Infection Control and who can visit the care home. The care homes received regular, weekly support and oversight from social work, health and the Care Inspectorate to ensure that best practice is promoted during the COVID pandemic. The Scottish Government mandated that care homes should receive Assurance Visits and devolved this task to Directors of Nursing within H&SCP areas to lead. In Fife, the Assurance Visits were undertaken by Senior Nursing and Social Work staff. Of the H&SCP homes visited, the reports have been excellent. Showing commitment to both safe infection control practice but also ensuring that the well-being of residents continue to be promoted during this challenging time. Management have undertaken regular audits of PPE and infection control practice to ensure continued best practice in this critical area.

STAR beds were initially put on hold during the pandemic but were offered again in line with supporting safe hospital discharge and again in line with public health guidance on admissions and discharge from care homes.

Care at Home

The Care at Home Service has around 600 FTE frontline care at home staff delivering approximately 22,000 visits to 1,300 service users across Fife each week. The service continued to deliver care throughout the pandemic, although initially very low-level services were suspended, but very quickly these were re-started and the service soon returned to delivering at full capacity.

The service provides a START (Short term Assessment and Review Team) service providing enablement to people who leave hospital and who require a care package. This team functioned fully throughout the pandemic, carrying out assessments in the home to ensure the package of care met the needs of the service user. During the pandemic the service created a Specialist Care team to deliver care to people with a positive COVID test as a means of limiting the spread of COVID between service users. As the pandemic heightened, with more service users testing positive on discharge from hospital, the service trained all workers in the use of enhanced PPE. Total Mobile was actioned to alert staff that they should wear enhanced PPE prior to entering the home.

In January 2021 the internal service created an End-of-Life team in partnership with Marie Curie to enable people who are in their final weeks of life to fulfil their wish to die at home. This is a small team working across Fife in 2-worker teams; due to the pandemic the service hired vehicles to allow the workers to travel separately to prevent having to isolate if contacted by Track and Trace.

A number of adaptations were made across the service to ensure the safety of both Service Users and Staff and also to improve efficiency while dealing with the challenges of the pandemic. These included:

- Moving to using Microsoft Teams as the main means of communication with staff, particularly in relation to keeping them informed of changes to protocol. In addition, the service moved from using phone calls for communication between staff and the Out of Hours Service, to using MS Teams which proved more efficient and also reduced frustration since workers no longer have to wait to get through to a scheduler if lines are engaged.
- Moving all our Assessment and Review Practitioners (ARPs) to wearing workwear and full PPE, the same as the frontline staff, to minimise the spread of infection. ARPs will

now continue to wear workwear due to the nature of their role which involves assessing for equipment to assist with safe personal care in the bathroom.

- Adapting the Social Care Response Service (MECS) and Nightlink to meet the guidelines for safe travel and to prevent both workers having to isolate if contacted by Track and Trace. This included a stricter cleaning regime and in the case that a worker tested positive and had used a vehicle, a cleaning company would be brought in to deep clean the vehicle. Additional vehicles were hired so that workers could travel in separate vehicles to the same house, again to prevent double isolation if contacted.
- Team Managers, Lead Officers, Home Care Coordinators, Supervisors and Schedulers moved to working from home, delivering PPE from the boots of their cars and communicating with staff using Teams.
- During the pandemic we had over 150 home carers isolating at any one time. This increased pressure on the staff who remained in work with many working much longer hours, unable to claim flexitime or take annual leave, to ensure that every service user who needed a service received it. We have a number of staff affected by long COVID, and our isolation rates and overall sickness rates continue to rise. As a result, with increased levels of care at home packages and hospital discharges the Care at Home service faces significant challenges on a daily basis and in terms of future planning.

Adult Services Resources (Day Services/Respite)

Covid-19 had a major impact on the provision of Community Support Services (day services / respite) due to the lockdown and social distancing requirements. Staff adopted a flexible approach to deliver care through the Pandemic, changing shifts and working with minimum staffing levels. Being creative using technology to offer alternative activities to Service Users to ensure mental health and wellbeing is maintained e.g. Zoom exercising, walking, remote learning classes, music and movement, gardening, recycling projects. Some of our service users have benefitted from a “slower” pace of life which has been evidenced in reduced anxieties and incidents.

Staff supported service users to maintain contact with friends / family / carers using Zoom / Teams / Facetime / email. They also helped promote online shopping using a purchasing card. Face to face contact is now being increased in line with current advice.

Other challenges included:

- An increase in hospital visits due to service user anxieties regarding Covid-19 and a knock-on effect to mental and physical health.
- The impact of the forced closure of day services, resulting in service user routines being affected and increasing their anxieties.
- Not being able to support family contact has proved stressful for some service users, their families/carers and staff.
- Service users who lived in a flat, with no garden, struggled as they had more limited contact with others and increased feelings of isolation.

This has however provided an opportunity to appraise resources and re-evaluate how we deliver services in the future. Exploring new ways of looking at positive outcomes for the service users we support.

Assessment & Care Management

Older People’s Care and Assessment Teams were impacted by COVID in terms of day-to-day functioning, with a reduction in face-to-face work being undertaken in both the

community and care home settings, with much work being carried out over the phone or using other technology. Teams have remained busy throughout, undertaking assessment work, sourcing packages of care, responding to Adult Support and Protection matters and remaining in contact with service users and their networks of support.

Care and Assessment teams also picked up significant levels of work through the Scottish Government led Shielding process. This required social workers to make contact with 11,351 individuals in Fife to ensure that they were receiving any support required. This was a huge task, carried out with great enthusiasm and resulting in some of Fife's most vulnerable people receiving support when they needed it.

Team Managers supported local Community Hubs, again ensuring that food, welfare and other support was sourced for those who needed it within local communities

Engagement with Individuals, Carers and Communities

A great deal of engagement with individuals, carers and communities occurs across the Health and Social Care Partnership.

A new Public Engagement Team is now in place, with three Public Engagement Officer's recruited to engage with the public, communities, community organisations, public and private bodies to develop effective processes and mechanisms to enable people to be involved in planning and decision making of H&SC Services. They will support the partnership to ensure that public engagement activities are fully incorporated into the way we work, and plan and they will support participation at all levels of the organisation. They will work to ensure that the public have a say and influence the decisions made by the Integrated Joint Board regarding the planning of services. In the future they will also look at how the public can get involved in the commissioning process, based on community aspirations and needs, and how services are planned and budgets are spent that are proportionate to local needs across the seven localities.

Among their first priorities is supporting the engagement activities to inform the new Dementia Strategy. A full plan has been developed and is being progressed at an appropriate pace now that the civic society is reopening. In due course this team will also support the engagement activities to inform the carers strategies.

Over the period of the pandemic, involvement activity with unpaid carers necessarily took an alternative approach. Fife Voluntary Action are commissioned to help the partnership with carer involvement at the locality level. They have continued to support unpaid carer representatives through virtual meetings although clearly progress has been slower due to the restrictions. Now that the restrictions are all but removed, we anticipate an increase in activity to support the carer representatives in their localities to develop their own constituency base. This will be important as later this year we will begin the process of engaging and consulting as we refresh the carers strategies. To support this Fife Voluntary Action has recruited five new carer representatives from the localities and they are in the process of their induction and training.

Carers Week 2021 was once again a low-profile event due to the covid restrictions. Awareness raising took place online only. Our intention is that on 25th November 2021 we will again plan to undertake a range of activities to raise awareness of carers rights to support.

Other services approved last year which are slowly finding their feet now that lockdown restrictions are easing, include:

- A support service for carers of people affected by mental health which is delivered through a partnership between Support in Mind Scotland and Fife Carers Centre.

- A new service to support carers of people who have sensory impairment or loss, or who themselves live with sensory impairment. Deafblind Scotland deliver this new commission.
- An advocacy support service for carers of people with diminishing or lost capacity helping them to establish powers of attorney or guardianship. This support is managed by Circles Advocacy on our behalf, supported by Fife Carers Centre.
- Increases in capacity for our hospital discharge support services which are now also being delivered in community hospitals. This is delivered by Fife Carers Centre.

Future Developments and Investment for Improvement

In May 2021 the IJB will be asked to approve a plan for widescale improvement in support for carers for 2021/22. Whilst this is outwith the reporting period for this report, its development has been very much part of day to day thinking. This plan is in the process of being established. It includes:

- Increased funding to support eligible carers to access self-direct support where their needs cannot be met from universal services. This includes staffing resource to manage the programme.
- A carers community chest whereby carers in each locality will be able to propose new initiatives that meet their collective needs for support. It is intended that the community chest will be community led and over time it will involve carers as part of the decision-making process for their locality.
- Increased capacity to support young carers in schools, and a new service to support young carers families. There is also an increase in capacity for the young carers transition support which helps young carers progress to being adult carers. These supports are delivered by Fife Young Carers.

3. Service Quality and Performance

a. Children and Families Service

Strategic Aims: The Children and Family Social Work Service has one overall strategic aim which is to promote Belonging to Fife, ensuring that children and young people are supported to live safely within their own families/communities and to be ambitious for their success.

As noted above, during the summer months the service undertook some learning and improvement work with Franklin Covey using a 'sprint' to look across the partnership at how we could work better together to support young children on the Child Protection Register. In December 2020 work began with Franklin Covey to explore how we could use their 4 disciplines of execution to consider improvements within the children's service partnerships delivery of support to vulnerable families in line with the principles of the Promise and reflecting our overall strategic plan: Belonging to Fife.

There are a number of strands of work which support and enhance this overall strategy:

- Increase in the provision of the types of care arrangements with an emphasis on increasing kinship, care at home and in-house foster/adoptive/supported lodgings care. This work developed at pace during 2020/21 with a significant increase within our residential and alternative care provision.
- Achieving a significant shift in the profile of care in Fife, away from high cost high-cost residential placements (HCRP) and purchased placements and towards support at home or with friends/relatives. Sustained scrutiny around planning for children in care led to a decrease in the use of high-cost external residential placements by 50% between April 1st 2020 and March 31st 2021, moving from 84 to 42 children/young people.
- Ensuring that the services supporting looked after children and young people are better aligned, providing a coherent scaffolding around our care experienced children. Asking services to be both agile and responsive, family focused and community facing. The service completed a review of third sector commissioning during 2020 which led to the design of new service briefs attracting bids from across the sector to provide services in a targeted manner for those children most in need of additionality.
- Effective intervention at the additional level to prevent escalation to formal statutory involvement through assessment and provision of section 22 (voluntary support) and partnership working with the third sector and other statutory partners to provide additional support.
- Ensuring that services supporting all children, but in the first instance for those most in need, are better aligned and sufficiently focused on preventing the need for alternative formal care, wherever safe to do so.

Whilst the overall size of the Looked After population in Fife has remained at or below the Scottish average, which was the success of phases 1 and 2 of the strategy, it remains the case that the profile of children and young people in care in Fife has remained skewed towards foster care, with proportionately fewer looked after children being cared for at home (see figures below).



The dash line shows the pre-strategy trend, with a sustained increase in demand for purchased placements. The solid line shows the aim of the original strategy.

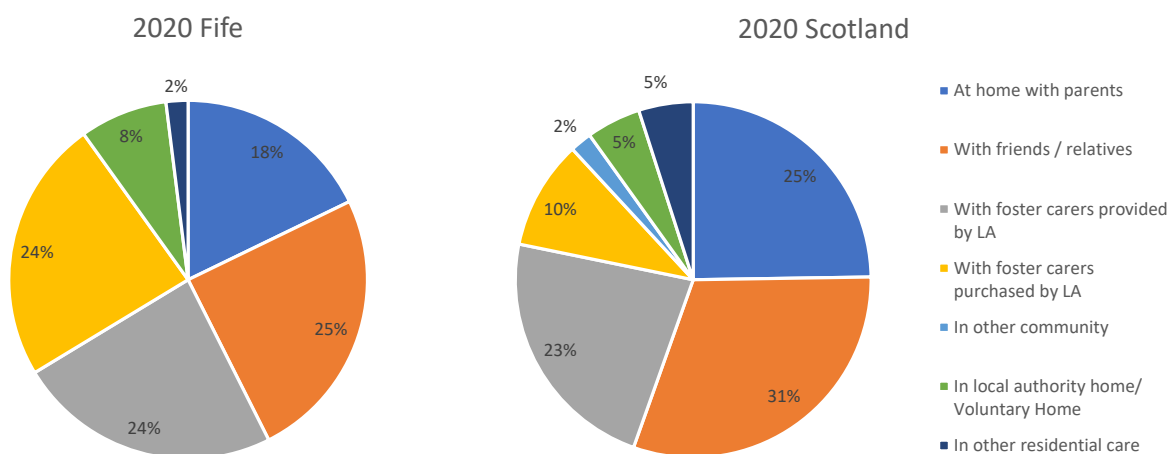


Figure 2. Comparison of the profile of care for Looked After Children in Fife, with that in Scotland (based on the most recent published national data on Looked After Children, the Children Looked After Statistics 2020).

Phase 3 of the Children and Families Strategy was ‘rebadged’ in 2019 as ‘Belonging to Fife’ and has continued to build on the positive progress made over the preceding years.

This focussed on reducing service overspend through:

- shifting the balance of care (reducing purchased residential and foster care)
- service redesign and
- achieving savings through 3rd sector commissioning.

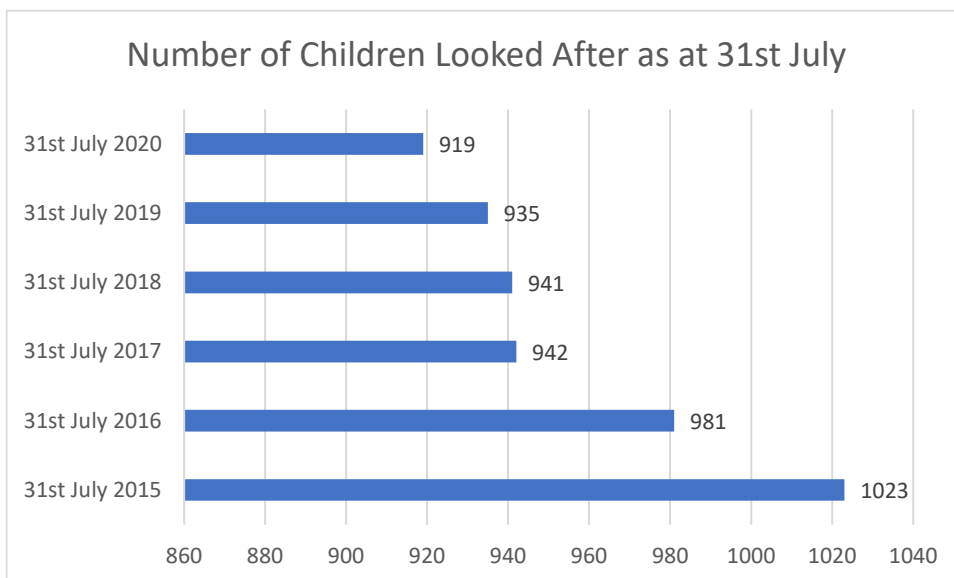
The success of Belonging to Fife (B2F) has exceeded our original ambition and expectations in relation to purchased residential care for the financial year 2020 – 2021,

and whilst not within this reporting period it is important to note that this success has both been sustained and further improved.

Overall looked after numbers in Fife continue to reduce as more effective early intervention strategies develop and as we continue to dynamically review and challenge all placements for children placed out with parental or familial care.

The data below shows changes in the balance of care since 2015.

The number of children looked after in Fife continues to reduce with 919 children reported to be looked after as at the 31st July 2020. Annual reporting figures for 01st August 2020 to 31st July 2021 will not be available until March 2022



High-Cost Residential Placement Data

Month	Purchased Residential	Internal Residential
March 2019	133 children are in HCRP with 44% (n 59) out with the geography of Fife	16
March 2020	84 children are in HCRP with 38% (n 32) out with the geography of Fife	17
March 2021	42 children are in HCRP with 28% (n 12) outwith the geography of Fife	15

Whilst there was an aim to reduce the number of purchased foster care placements, it was fully recognised that the majority of young people within this type of care had permanence plans and the service is clear that the needs of individual children must remain at the centre of planning. However alternative care placements continue to be subject to robust, monthly scrutiny to ensure care planning remains dynamic and responsive to emerging need.

Foster Care Data	Internal	Purchased	Total
March 2019	243	241	484
March 2020	217	226	443
March 2021	225	155	380

There has been a significant increase in placing those newly looked after children with kinship carers and this reflects the principles central to both the Children and Family Strategy and those of the Independent Care Review.

Family Based Care	March 2019	March 2020	March 2021
Paid Kinship	156	191	251
Unpaid Kinship	24	35	26
Non-LAC Kinship	311	351	353
Family Carers	107	117	122
Total kinship care	598	694	752

Whilst we are on the right side of the trend, in terms of our profile of care, i.e. more children and young people being supported with family as opposed to in foster or residential care, what is clear, is that factors influencing the number of families coming to the attention of formal services is complex and we should always anticipate spikes in need, vulnerability and risk, and hold capacity to be agile and respond in different ways.

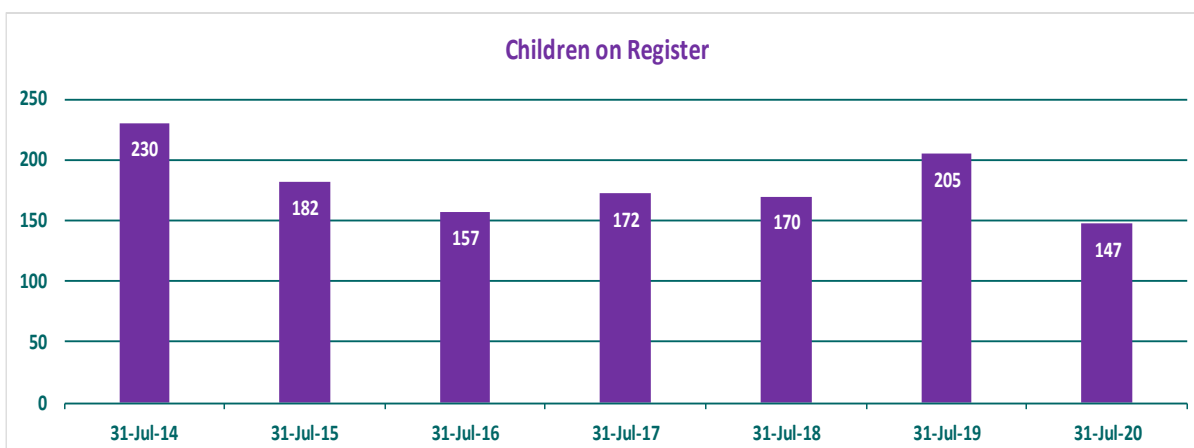
In response to this, the service continues to develop work within the practice context of the Belonging to Fife agenda and over the last year has developed targeted resource provision to support enhanced support for those children who are often described as being at the 'edge of care'. In particular the development of the Short-Term Emergency Placement Planning service (STEPP) and the work of the Belonging to Fife team have supported the service's aims to offer wrap around care at the time of crisis to families.

There has also been a focus, on ensuring that our care leavers are enabled to build towards independence through ensuring they are supported through a range of potential next steps from care: continuing care, supported lodgings or a supported tenancy. In partnership with the Housing service, we have secured a 'training' flat which has been used by 9 young people as a step towards independent living and this work will be significantly enhanced by the work of the House Project.

	March 2019	March 2020	March 2021
Supported Lodgings Placements	22	35	42
Continuing Care	37	41	55

Child Protection

The number of registrations following a case conference in Fife during 2019/20 totalled 292 which is an 8.2% decrease on the previous year's total of 318. The chart below displays the number of children remaining on the register as at 31st July for each of the last 7 academic years. 2014 peaked at 230 whilst 2020 has recorded the lowest total remaining on the CPR at the end of a year with 147 registrations. Annual reporting figures for 01st August 2020 to 31st July 2021 will not be available until March 2022.



Next steps

The service's ambition is to be significantly better than the Scottish average by 2023 in terms of securing better outcomes for children and young people, through improved service delivery, quality and cost.

We met our ambitious aim to come in on budget by 2020/21 and we aim to sustain this position. This will allow us to invest in children and families in more meaningful and measurable ways, improving the experience of families who have need of more targeted supports.

We aim to further develop our residential resource within Fife through offering emergency residential placements and support children affected by disability to remain within the geography of Fife with the opening of a redesigned care resource. We also aim to re-provision one current home to support care leavers and at the time of writing this has opened and is offering a home to three young people.

We still have a disproportionately high number of children and young people in purchased foster care. However, following robust reviews, we are clear that these children and young people are living in the right place for them at this time, with many on permanence orders in matched placements. However, we are keeping the wider system and pathways in and out of care actively under review.

Service re design is being progressed to better meet the changing need of children young people and their families; shifting to a whole system place-based model that works more closely with families in the communities that they live.

We plan to build on the professional role of social work and further promote relational based practice, ensuring workers have the time and resource to invest in families and communities to make the difference required.

Risks

The findings of the Independent Care Review mirror many aspects of the Children and Family Strategy. Whilst this service notes this as a strength we are acutely aware that the over association of the 'promise' with the social work service, presents a key risk in relation to ownership across the children's services partnership.

For the Promise to be achieved will take commitment from the 'whole system' and this culture change will take time during which challenging conversations will have to take place. It is hoped that the work of Franklin Covey will support this collective challenge.

Engagement with Individuals, Carers and Communities

For Education and Children's Services, there is a well-established engagement process for Looked After Children supported by the activity of the Corporate Parenting Board which includes young people as core members. This activity includes crucial contributions from both the 2BHeard forums for care experienced young people and the Seen+Heard initiative run by the Children's Parliament which promotes the rights of younger looked after children.

In addition, there is a range of feedback processes such as surveys and questionnaires for families who are receiving services from Children and Families Social Work. Criminal Justice have similar feedback processes for partners in the Criminal Justice system, including Sheriffs, along with recipients of Community Payback activity. Feedback on the effectiveness of services from people who have offended is also gathered.

During the pandemic a survey was undertaken with children and their families to understand how their lives and experiences were being impacted. The learning from this

survey was used to change practice in terms of virtual contact, virtual meetings and also recognising the need for face-to-face meetings. Families were supported financially to ensure that they had access to the internet and devices to allow communication and school learning.

Children's Views and Feedback

The C&F Social Work Service undertook activity May/June 2020 in seeking the views of children open to the service and receiving support. We were aware that there were numerous online surveys for the cohort of children and young people we support and therefore suggested that allocated workers ask three questions during their usual contact:

1. What has been the best thing about lockdown?
2. What has been the worst thing about lockdown?
3. Is there anything else I could have done to support you?

We gathered feedback from 345 CYP and a summary of their responses is given below and the key themes have been adopted within our improvement agenda for the next year.

1. Friends – it is unsurprising that the biggest issue for children and young people was not getting to see friends during lockdown and this reinforces the importance of peer groups for children and young people and gives us cause to consider the importance of wider community contact when children become looked after away from home and the need to support and maintain existing peer networks.
2. Family – the response from many children in relation to the best thing about Lockdown was the opportunity to spend more time with their family or carers. For some children lockdown impacted significantly on their ability to see their family and this was cited as a significant issue within the section on what was the worst thing about lockdown. Issues for looked after and accommodated CYP having contact with their family became challenging during lockdown as people worked within the public health guidance. It was noted that many residential homes would not allow family members to visit due to risks of transmitting the virus and many foster carers also decided to stop all outside contacts due to prioritising their own and the rest of their household's health and wellbeing.

Some young people have raised concerns about workers not seeing them and not supporting them and their family to work on improving relationships. This will be an area for further consideration within the context of the strength-based family focused approach within the service.

3. Education – not being at school was almost equally positive and negative in responses provided, however it is interesting to note why some children were glad to not be going to school – issues relate to bullying and feeling pressure to both get to school on time and engage in learning. It is interesting to consider the feedback from 69 CYP that wider learning opportunities and developing new skills were highly valued activities during lockdown.

Some young people very clearly missed school in terms of routines but also their teachers as important people in their lives. A number of children (27) talked specifically about being bored but there were other responses where different language was used to indicate children lacking in stimulation and opportunities.

This activity has allowed us to have a broad understanding of the impact of lockdown on children who receive a service from Children and Family Social Work teams. Some of the individual comments are extremely insightful into personal situations and workers have responded to these at the time.

Examples of individual comments

- Let me see children my own age
- Get me a new bike
- Buy me a rocket ship so I can fly to Mars and get away from the coronavirus
- Make Coronavirus go away
- No, you help me loads.
- Maybe visited us even more
- Nothing, I like the videocalls
- I don't think you could have done anything else to support me during lockdown as you kept in good contact with me and met with me a couple of times, so I think that is pretty good and not much more could have been done.
- You were a great support and did a great job at helping me and my family through what's going on right now.
- Would have liked to have gone out with Social Work to get a break as it's just us at home.
- No but I liked when you actually visited me
- No but the WhatsApp calls were good
- Visit in the garden or do a WhatsApp call
- No – phone support was very good
- Build a relationship with mum
- Help repair relationship with my mum
- Help me not steal anything
- Listened more, helped me be away from mum

Parental views and feedback

We offered a survey questionnaire to parents/carers who were receiving support during the pandemic and received 104 responses. The feedback received was overwhelmingly positive in nature and evidenced that families felt supported and able to contact their worker if there were any emerging problems. A significant number of people shared that for them just having someone to talk to or to listen to how they were feeling was beneficial.

For the remaining three questions a selection of responses are detailed below. These responses were overwhelmingly positive and have been summarised but there was also some challenge offered and the negative comments are detailed in full with some data removed to protect confidentiality.

Individual comments

- I know there is always someone at the other end of the phone if needed.
- Worker - once he came on board it was like a breath of fresh air. Until that point, we were blundering along with no real help
- Just knowing that worker is at the end of a call, makes all the difference, and peace of mind.
- Easier to talk face to face and to see how kids are in their surroundings
- Having someone to listen
- Worker was down to earth and we got on great
- It was just nice to know someone cares
- Getting the safety gates at the start
- Financial help and food parcels
- Just knowing that if we even needed any questions answered we could contact any of the services available to us without feeling 'silly'

- Friendly approach
- Worker has always been there for us since she became our worker, even if it's just for emotional support through meetings, or help with food, cooker – he's there for all 4 of my kids even if it's just a quick visit she always has a smile and is very helpful.
- just talking (43 people noted this)
- Having someone to talk to about anxieties has helped. Being able to speak about strained relationships and get advice on how to manage this. Getting support to get a cot for the baby.
- The biggest difference was the social worker and Education folk coming to take son out for some fresh air. This allowed him to get out for a short time to exercise and allowed him to maintain relationships with the social worker and teachers.
- My social worker arranged a childminder for us and that helped no end! So grateful for that.
- Knowing social worker's support was there if and when needed, without feeling being intrusive. Having open and friendly conversations.
- Just getting regularly checked up on and knowing that my social worker cared how I was feeling and wanted me to be happy
- I think the biggest difference to us as parents was to know that we had that support from our social worker and that she kept in frequent contact with us and let us know that she was available for us to get in touch with if we needed to.
- I couldn't fault the support we have had during this time. Our social worker has been fantastic and has taken everything at my child's pace which was exactly what they needed at this time.
- I was kept in touch with by phone and garden visits. The biggest difference for me was being able to talk to someone and not being judged, and also just listening and giving advice too.
- The service was excellent
- No - I felt that me and my children have had excellent support.

b. Health and Social Care

Key achievements during 2020/21:

Locality Planning

The refresh of the Locality Plans and priority actions was finalised in November 2020, focussing on work that we can realistically remobilise through 2020/2021 taking into account the Covid-19 restrictions. Our priorities focus on wellbeing & social isolation, living well with long term conditions, supporting mental health, carer support, H&SC public representation.

Connecting People with Local Support

The Wells bring together those who know all about health and social care in your local community such as Local Area Coordinators, Housing Officers, Social Work, Social Security Benefits and a range of other community, health and social care staff. During 2020 these had to be paused due to the Covid restrictions however they were remobilised in November 2020 using Near Me software as a tool to provide virtual access for the population of Fife. A phone line was set up to support the population of Fife who may not have access to technology or internet or feel confident enough to use the virtual Wells. A core team for each locality was established with staff from Social Worker Adults and Older Adults and Fife Forum Local Area Coordinators.

During the period November 20 - March 21 we received 52 enquiries through The Well Near Me, with enquiries in relation to Mental Health, Financial Support/Benefits, Community Support, Social care, Care at Home and Housing.

Supporting those with Sensory Impairment

The Deaf Communication Service (DCS) is a small service with a team of 3 Development Workers and who provide support to people who live Fife wide who are D/deaf, Deafened, Deafblind or who are Hard of Hearing delivering effectively and timeously on both the Fife Local BSL plan and the See Hear Strategy. The service adapted to Covid-19 by offering support in a different way to meet the needs of the continuing referrals and contacts.

From the onset of the pandemic, it became evident that people with a lived experience of being Deaf or who rely on British Sign Language (BSL) as their first language found the restriction(s) pathway difficult to navigate:

- Fife Police referrals increased, regarding concerns about restrictions being misunderstood. To support this the team translated the essential Covid-19 guidance to short clips and videos on DCS Youtube and the DCS Facebook pages.
- Home visits were prioritised to those requiring critical support and advice or who required essential repairs to communication equipment.
- An increase in adult protection was also evident in Fife D/Deaf community as people appeared to be more vulnerable to exploitation, information passed to relevant area teams, however, where practicable due to communication difficulties some cases have been retained by the team for ongoing advice and support.
- An increase in support to access foodbanks, supporting CARF appointments or benefits enquiries.

During the period April 2020- 31st March 2021 there were 1309 contacts to the team for a myriad of support, including requests for technology or communication equipment.



Opening doors to Fife's communities

www.onyourdoorstepfife.org

On Your Doorstep - The Social Care (Self Directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 places a duty on Local Authorities to “take reasonable steps to facilitate the person’s participation in the life of the community and to take active steps to promote a variety of types of support and a range of providers of support.” And Fife Health and Social Care Partnership’s community

website On Your Doorstep Fife helps us to comply with the legal duty and as a tool to improve access to local information, support and advice for supported individuals and their unpaid carers, citizens, practitioners, support workers, community groups and organisations.

Google analytics show that over the past 5 years there have been:

- 28,000 users, 11,800 of whom logged directly into the website using the web address.
- 138,000 page views, with mental health, dementia and befriending being the most frequently used search words.



Users have logged in to the website from many cities across the UK and worldwide. The site has recently been moved to a new platform known as Matrix and this has provided the opportunity to make improvements including:

- Creation of a new registration/update form to encourage registered organisations to update their own information;
- A new mental health section added to the website in response to a surge in mental health referrals and an increase in requests for support and information during lockdown;
- Information on the many food insecurity initiatives and Covid-19 community response groups that emerged in response to the pandemic were added to the website to help people to identify sources of support in their local area.

Supporting Adults to live independently through Self-Directed Support

Fife continues to have a small dedicated Self-Directed Support (SDS) team to support colleagues in the wider service. Early in the pandemic, Health and Social Care introduced an Additional Service Response team to support individuals and carers in our local communities. All members of the SDS team supported this work which ranged from health and wellbeing telephone calls, delivering food parcels to individuals who were unable to access supermarkets either as a result of shielding, anxiety, lack of personal resources or lack of support from family and friends, arranging the delivery of medication as well as the sourcing and delivery of PPE. Whilst this had a significant impact on the day-to-day work of the team; all staff went above and beyond to ensure that anyone who was looking for help received it or was sign posted to other agencies.

As a result of the pandemic and the need to be more flexible in our approach to care and support planning, staff have been supporting operational colleagues where individuals have requested to change SDS option and/or support service, as a result of usual services being closed due to Covid-19.

During 2020, the SDS team worked closely with colleagues in Workforce Development to refresh the SDS training. The new training module focuses on the personal outcomes approach to assessment and support planning, using case studies and examples. The training also provides an opportunity for participants to reflect that their practice addresses the SDS statutory values and principles. Roll out of the training is expected in July 2021 and will be mandatory for all operational staff.

Covid-19 Food Initiative

In early 2021, the SDS team worked with colleagues in Communities and Neighbourhoods and Facilities on a short-term food initiative to provide dry goods and meals to individuals and families who were:

- In the shielding population or clinically at high risk of severe illness if they were to contract Covid-19
- Experiencing food poverty
- Self-isolating and have no access to online shopping or support to obtain regular grocery supplies

Through contact with operational teams we were able to identify 49 households – a mixture of families and individuals living alone.

The SDS team contacted each family/individual and arranged with Facilities to deliver the food parcels during the month of March. The deliveries were extremely well received.

“this helped a lot, the food I could not use or store has helped my family also, so thank you for everything you do 😊 Have an amazing day!” S&R

“the food project has made a huge difference to my family and I. Was such a help having food every week, it’s a shame it had to end when it did. We were able to buy extra treats to amuse the boys.... Rather than them being stuck in the house on the computer. I would like to thank you for the deliveries the past few weeks, much appreciated – thank you and stay safe” H.S.

“the food has made a huge difference and helped me a lot during lockdown as I struggled a lot. Thank you very much” H.M.

“thank you. This has helped me a great deal I didn’t always have help to get out of the houseso many thanks and I hope everyone involved stayed safe” M.E.

To support the refreshed training, our on-line staff portal has been revised to include useful links, accessible information, Frequently Asked Questions and our SDS animation. In addition, the SDS team has been revising and updating our Processes and Procedures all of which will provide information and support for operational colleagues.

Due to various changes in personnel, we have refreshed membership of our SDS Implementation Board. This provides an excellent opportunity to review our workstreams and to refocus on the areas where work remains outstanding. This takes into consideration the new Self-Directed Support Framework of Standards as well as continuing our developments with the recommendations of the Care Inspectorate's thematic review of self-directed support (2019) and the Self-Directed Support 2017 progress report by Audit Scotland (2017).

SDS Options –Position at 31/3/21

- 490 Service users in receipt of Option 1
- 166 Service users in receipt of Option 2

Towards the end of 2020, work started with Allpay as part of our implementation of prepaid cards. This will replace our current system of offering individual direct payment budgets (Option 1, SDS). A significant amount of preparatory work had been done during 2019 – this is now being refreshed in preparation for the transition to the new system. A robust communications plan has been developed to ensure each individual in receipt of a direct payment has access to advice, information and support to transition. It is anticipated this will be implemented throughout 2021/22.

We continue to work closely with our independent support organisation – SDS Options (Fife) – to ensure any information being issued by either party is consistent. We have worked closely over the year to ensure PA employers have the necessary information regarding Covid-19 arrangements, including accessing vaccines for their PA's as well as access to testing and PPE. A representative from our SDS team attends the local authority SDS Network and ILF Scotland meetings. This ensures continued shared learning – which has proved invaluable during the last year.

Increasing the Use and Application of Technology

Working in partnership with Just Checking we have started work on the redesign of Overnight Support and introduction of Technology Enabled Assessment. Progress was delayed due to Covid but a new implementation plan is in place and progressing.

Despite the delays, the Partnership was able to start using technology as a support to our existing assessment and review process. Staff from Health and Social Care have been working in partnership with Just Checking in two areas in the west of Fife.

- The first in the Older Peoples Service to support the assessment of new referrals received by the service, from both individuals with existing packages of care and those without. The range of technology enabled care has only recently been explored in Fife and we are using this as an opportunity to identify if our current models of support continue to meet individual need and outcomes. It also offers the opportunity to consider circumstances where alternative digital solutions can provide less intrusive models of support; enabling and empowering people, using technology, to live more independently. Due to pressures within operational teams as a result of Covid-19, undertaking assessments and reviews following the Just Checking installations, has proved challenging. There is a significant amount of work required to analyse the data and then once potential changes have been identified, to undertake a full social work review, liaise with families and carers then implement any change. This has taken longer than anticipated.

- The second, working with our Adults team in the Dunfermline area to support the review of overnight support. The project to review the overnight support, as was anticipated, has also been challenging. Many carers, families and service providers have raised concerns about the potential changes to some existing services, many of which have been in place for several years. Each circumstance is being considered individually, taking into consideration family concerns, personal circumstances and health needs as well as provider nervousness about proposed changes. This has impacted on timescales as additional time has been required to provide information and reassurance but has been crucial to ensure all parties feel involved and included in the process. The introduction of dedicated staff is being considered to overcome this as the project moves to other areas in Fife.

Connecting Scotland Project



www.connecting.scot

Connecting Scotland is a national initiative funded by the Scottish Government which aims to reach out to 60,000 digitally excluded individuals by the end of 2021. The Self-Directed Support Team were successful in 2 separate applications for i-pads and mi-fi devices offering 24 months of free wi-fi to participants.

In the first stage of the project, 47 adults and older people were identified by social work teams and were provided with an i-pad and free wi-fi. A further 30 adults with disabilities received their device in the second stage, 20 of whom attend Leonard Cheshire's Day Services. These adults were supported to use their i-pad to participate in online activities and to keep in touch with support staff and friends whilst their building-based service was closed during the pandemic.

Staff working in social work area teams, housing and accommodation and support services, as well as support workers from care provider organisations attended online Digital Champion training facilitated by Connecting Scotland. These Digital Champions have supported 77 digitally excluded, shielding or clinically vulnerable, adults and older people to develop new skills, pursue their hobbies, explore new interests, access timely and relevant information, and connect virtually with family, friends, and support services.

The greatest challenge was ensuring speedy delivery of the i-pads to each participant, since most of the participants were in the shielding category or clinically vulnerable which meant that staff were unable to visit them at home or to mentor them in the use of the device. This resulted in a prolonged delivery phase and participants receiving the device and instruction manual on their doorstep without the mentoring and support. We explored supporting participants electronically, but staff didn't have access to apps or devices to be able to do this. Connecting Scotland have since placed a 4-week delivery window on subsequent phases of the project.

13 people dropped out of the first phase of the project due to failing physical or mental health or admission to hospital or care home. New participants had to be identified which prolonged the delivery stage of the project. Several older adults and their unpaid carers found the experience of learning to use their device, without 1:1 mentoring or support, challenging and frustrating. Many of them decided to wait until the lifting of lockdown for support.

It is hoped that digital champions can visit participants who need support once lockdown is lifted, and people have been vaccinated.

Feedback on challenges of using devices

"It's too complicated. I can't use it. My brother has tried to help, but he can't do it either. My husband has been in hospital for a month, and I haven't been able to see him." (Carer aged 77)

"It hasn't been easy. My mental health officer was going to help me, but she can't visit just now due to the coronavirus."

"I'm finding it hard as I live alone. My son's friend pops in sometimes to help me, but I've forgotten it all when he goes away."

"It's not my scene at all. It has been very frustrating. I managed to send a few messages to family members but am waiting for cataract surgery so can't see very well. I don't have time to sit and learn as I'm caring for my husband who has dementia. My digital champion has been out to help me, but I don't like to bother her as she is very busy. I could really do with a step-by-step handbook to help me." (Carer aged 86)

Having experienced the pressures that social workers were under to deliver the devices during lockdown, it was decided that in the next phase, the Project Officer and a colleague would deliver the devices wearing PPE, whilst keeping a 2m distance on doorsteps. This was completed within a fortnight, allowing the project officer to upload all the required project information to the Connecting Scotland database within the set timescale. Staff from care organisations who were already supporting people at home were identified as digital champions, allowing them to mentor the participants during their allocated support time. This approach worked well and provided a much better learning experience for the participants.



30 participants from stage 1 of the project responded to the telephone evaluation and were asked what they were using their device for. The graph shows a wide range of digital activity and the speech bubble has quotes from some of the participants

Positive feedback

"Being digitally connected has made a huge difference to me as I have been able to be included in meetings with my psychiatrist and my social worker. I am able to get emails from my adult basic education tutor so that I can continue with my online learning."

"It's been great having the i-pad and free wi-fi. I have been able to do a video link regarding a legal issue that I am being supported with. I get regular online support from an organisation for veterans and have been contacted by lots of former veterans who have all been supportive and are there for me."

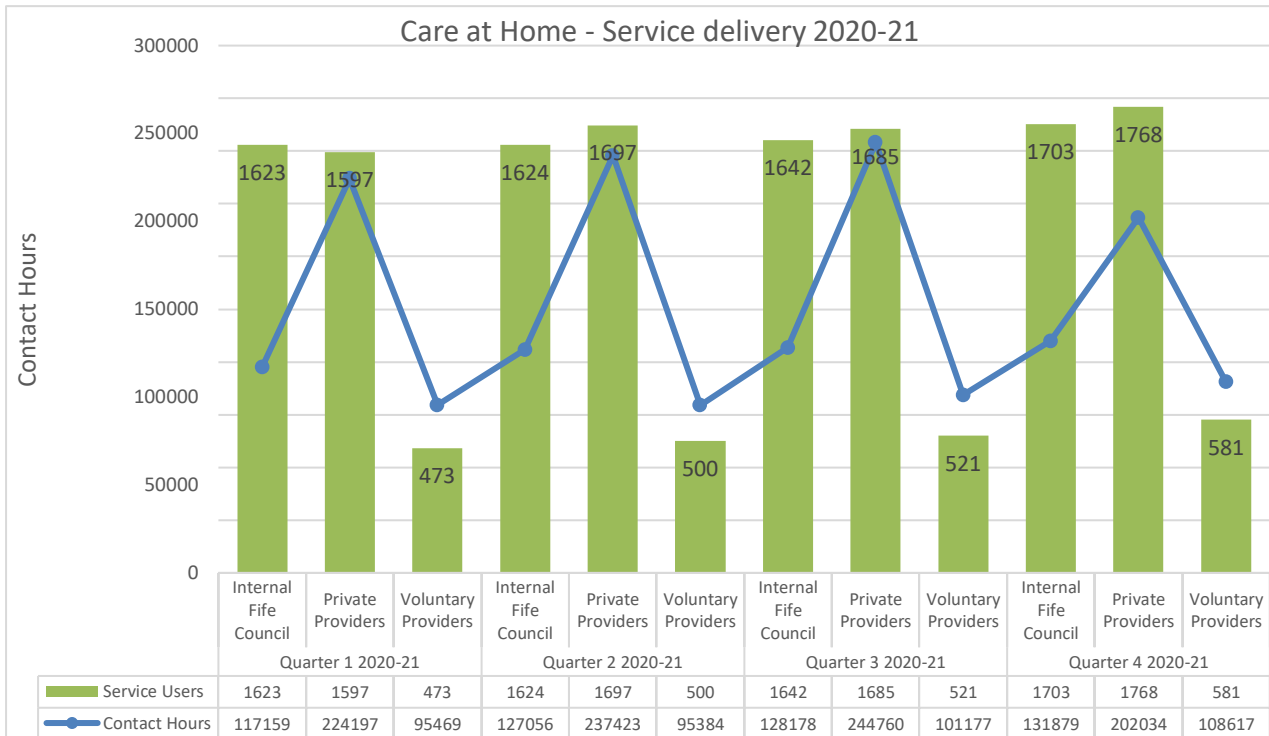
"It's been super for our son. Support staff use the i-pad with him to listen to music. It has opened new opportunities for him, and he has started to enjoy classical music and will sit with his eyes closed and relax. He doesn't like people being in his space, so it has allowed family members to keep in touch with him electronically. Staff use the i-pad to interact with him and often try out new things to see how he responds."

"It's been great for the lady we support as her elderly mother isn't permitted to visit her. We didn't know if she would relate to her mum on a screen, but it's worked out really well. Her mum contacts her a few times a week and sings to her. She just loves it. I was so pleased for them the first time I saw them together on the screen."

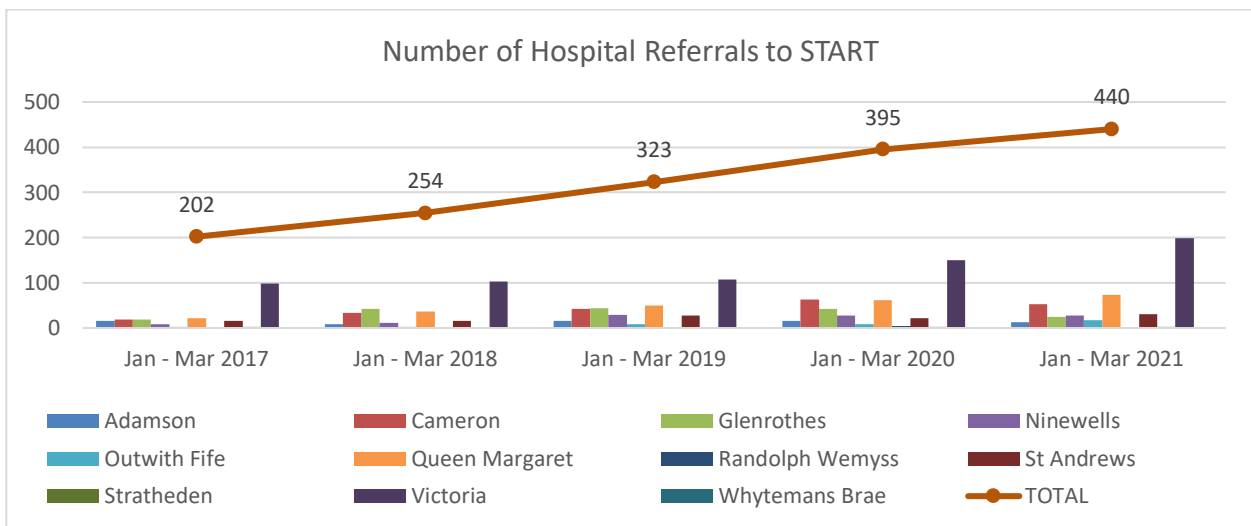
"My teenage son has been in hospital for some time. We used to speak on the phone, but it was hard going. For the first time, the hospital rang to say that my son wanted to speak to me on Skype. Telephone calls don't usually last long, but the skype call went on for 90 minutes. We had a great laugh together. I haven't heard him laugh like that in a long time. He can now have a chat with his brothers and sisters, his gran, and his dog online. I miss him so much. Being able to see him online has given me peace of mind and I can attend all his meetings without having to travel a distance to take part."

Care at Home

The Partnership delivers care at home services to enable people to live in their own homes for as long as possible. This is delivered through both internal care delivery teams and purchased from independent providers. The graph below shows information on service delivery, number of service users (grey bars including the number of service users) and contact hours (the hours received by the service user, not including multiple workers, which is on a secondary axis and is shown as a blue line) during 2020/2021.



START is provided by the Health & Social Care Partnership's Care at Home Service. This reactive Care at Home service is designed to support a person's discharge from hospital and significantly improves discharge planning for people with assessed needs. Residents of Fife with care needs, who wish to return home, are referred to the service from any hospital and these referrals continue to rise. The service also takes referrals for people in crisis at home and other models of care to deliver the right care, at the right time, in the right place. The chart below shows a snapshot of the Hospital referrals to START for the first quarter of each calendar year over the past 5 years.



Assessment and Care Management

During the year despite the challenges of Covid-19 the operational teams across Fife continued to undertake their core duties undertaking:

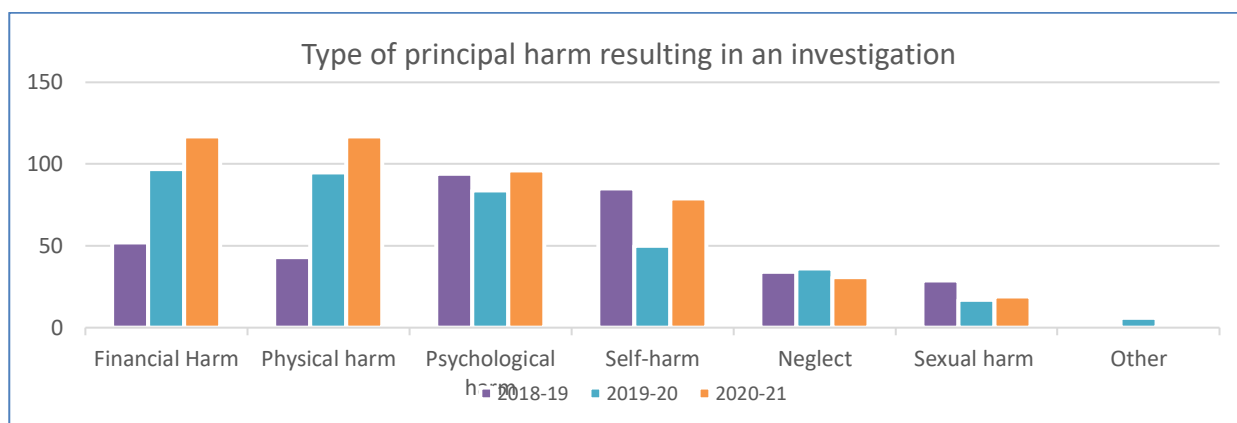
- **3524** assessments/reassessments/reviews.
- **1714** START Assessments
- **486** Hospital Discharge Assessments

Adult Support and Protection

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 places a duty on local authorities to make inquiries into instances where an adult is believed to be at risk of harm. Social work is the lead agency which takes forward a report of harm if the adult meets a 3-point criteria which allows for intervention under this Act. Health & Social Care Partnership Social Workers with suitable experience and training are delegated the responsibility to lead in the Inquiry and Investigation processes of adult support and protection. Social Workers approach this duty with a multi-agency focus to ensure that all relevant information is shared in a timely and appropriate manner to allow for joint decision making and risk planning. There are Information Sharing Protocols in place to support this.

Key activity during the year 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021:

- We received **2798** Adult Support and Protection reports of harm relating to 1876 individuals. Of these 29% had multiple reports of harm.
- We commenced **460** investigations; Of these 59 were subject to further AP action and 172 were subject to further non-AP action with the rest requiring no further action. The main types of harm recorded for cases at Investigation stage were Financial harm (25%), Physical harm (25%) or Psychological/emotional harm (21%). There has been a notable increase in the number of Investigations relating to self-harm. The chart below shows the change over time in the principal harm resulting in an investigation.
- **126** cases were subject to an ASP Case Conference (84 initial and 42 review)
- We commenced **2** Large Scale Investigations.



Care Homes Replacement Programme

Methil Care Village: the pandemic meant that the project was delayed by 8 months and construction at Methil did not get underway until November 2020, however, it is now progressing well. Residents of the existing Methilhaven Home have been enjoying seeing photographs and film of progress with their new home and have been choosing

names for each of the residential units within the home. They are looking forward to helping decide on colour schemes and furnishings for the new home.

Cupar Care Community: approval was granted on 18th February 2021 for the replacement for Northeden Care Home in Cupar. This will be a 24-bed care home with 12 supported housing flats for adults with additional support needs. The building will also contain accommodation for Adult Services' Community Support Service, older people's day service and a hairdresser. Residents of the existing Northeden House have been very pleased with the initial designs and particularly liked the proposed enclosed balconies and garden areas.

Anstruther Care Village: approval was granted on 7th January 2021 for the replacement for Ladywalk Care Home in Anstruther. This will be a 24-bed care home with 12 extra care housing flats for older people and two specific needs bungalows in the grounds. The main building will also contain a café/ drop-in facility, hairdressers and day service for older people. The Design Team are now working on the design for the new building.

Support for Unpaid Carers

We continued to deliver support for unpaid carers in Fife albeit with a significant change in the approach and method of delivery. Very few of the commissioned voluntary sector partner organisations ceased their support for carers except for those that offered short breaks in residential or day settings. Most organisations adapted their method of delivery to include telephone support for carers (including assessment of their needs for support) and some introduced video consultations and support to continue with a form or face-to-face support.

New support for unpaid carers was commissioned in the following ways:

- Carers of people with sensory impairment, and carers who themselves are affected by sensory loss.
- Carers of people with mental ill health and support to maintain and improve carers own mental health and well-being that supports their ability to cope and thrive as a carer.
- Support to help understand the benefits of Powers of Attorney and assistance/guidance to secure the same for the persons they care for, proactively, or secure Guardianship after the fact.

The change in approach to supporting carers meant many carers were unable to access to the support they had previously benefitted from, particularly short breaks from their caring roles. Fife Carers Centre reported that carers coped well at the start of lockdown but as time wore on carers' newfound confidence in their own abilities and resilience was tested. Carers have reported suffered significant strain and stress during lockdown and this presented a major challenge with the lack of breaks from caring, an impact that will remain in place for a significant time to come.

There were very significant delays in decision making regarding the investments and improvements proposed that were intended to enhance support for carers. Final decisions were only reached in November 2020. These delays, while understandable at the start of the lockdown, likely impacted on our ability to support carers in meaningful ways sooner.

During the year the previously agreed locality support service was introduced across Fife in partnership with Fife Carers Centre. As this investment took place at the start of

lockdown the role of these staff was flexed to support unpaid carers in different ways including specifically delivering PPE to unpaid carers.

Carers Week 2020 was held virtually with a range of stories and articles posted online and in social media with the aim of making caring more visible and recognised as critically important. This week was also used to launch new support including self-help whereby carers can access much of the support they might need using resources we have secured for their use, particularly information on our website and through the Carers UK digital resource for carers which we purchased for carers to access at a time and place of their convenience.

Operational teams have a responsibility to offer carers their own support plan. The table below shows the number offered during each quarter of 2020/21.

	Q1 2020/21 (Apr - Jun)	Q2 2020/21 (Jul - Sep)	Q3 2020/21 (Oct - Dec)	Q4 2020/21 (Jan - Mar)
Number of Carer Support Plans Offered	498	617	635	704

Short Breaks Service

The personal outcomes approach to assessment and supporting planning continues to be evidenced in our Short Breaks Service for Adults (65 years and under). The team provide information to supported individuals and their families/carers to assist them to access creative and innovative short break provisions, using their individual short break budget and their chosen option through self-directed support.

2020 was an extremely challenging time for many, including unpaid carers who due to Covid-19 restrictions were unable to access any planned respite to provide them with a much-needed break from their caring role. Many building-based short break resources were closed and the requirement to “stay at home” meant that many alternative, creative breaks were not an option.

As part of our remobilisation of services, short break providers worked closely with Health and Social Care staff and Public Health to introduce additional health and safety measures which allowed them to welcome visitors back in October.

Due to the implementation of additional health and safety measures, providers have had to adapt their service delivery models. For many this has proved extremely challenging. It has meant additional consideration as to numbers that can be supported at one time, consideration of the outcome of Covid-19 testing (a pre-requisite prior to breaks taking place) and a change in how their service can be delivered. Accessing outdoor activities was much reduced; which meant that individuals' experience of their short break was very different.

As highlighted, the number of individuals who were able to access their break was much reduced which has put considerable strain on families and carers. Both the short breaks team and the short breaks providers tried to alleviate this as much as possible through telephone contact and ensuring that when resources did become available, those in the highest need of a break, were given priority. This was managed through our remobilisation of services planning.

We have also seen a reduction in the choice of available resources which has meant some individuals and families have not been able to access their usual short break facility. This has proved particularly challenging for individuals with high, complex care needs.

For some, there remains anxiety about returning to building based resources and the Short Breaks team have been working with individuals and their families to look at creative ways in which breaks can be achieved using their short break budgets.

Examples of creative use of personal short break budgets

- Summerhouse with some furniture
- Boxing ring in a shed
- Lodges
- Caravans
- Therapy sessions/services (unavailable through statutory sources)

Ability to deliver statutory functions and Key risks to delivery

The Adult and Older People's Social Work teams have remained able to deliver statutory functions throughout the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic through the timeous commissioning of care services for those in need, Adults with Incapacity and Adult Support and Protection. Care and Assessment teams have not required to enact the COVID legislation in relation to assessment work and have been able to progress supports to those in need.

Most social workers are working from home or attending the office infrequently or as required. The use of technology has greatly increased and allowed 'virtual' team meetings as well as using the laptops for virtual case conferences too. Whilst this has been embraced by most teams, there are sometimes limitations to this as it is dependent on Wi-Fi and server strength.

Health and Social Care Financial Pressures

The IJB commenced 2020/21 with an uncertain and challenging financial position due to the pandemic, with many services on hold, the workforce adapting to meet service needs and reacting to the pandemic. The IJB approved budget was set predicated on implementing an approved saving plan to deliver £13.759m of savings.

The savings package proved to be unachievable as many of the initiatives were put on hold due to continued restrictions and further lockdown arrangements. The non-delivery of £6.467m of savings was reported via the LMP and full funding was made available by Scottish Government.

Key pressures within the 2020/21 accounts are:

- The significant increased demand for our services associated with an increasing population, in particular an increasing ageing population and increased complexity of care needs. Adult packages increased in year, due to Community Services, Day Care and Respite being placed on hold due to the pandemic.
- The significant increased demand to ensure the flow from hospital discharges was effective and timeous in moving service users to a home or homely setting, to free hospital beds for admissions.
- The inability to recruit staff to the Partnership which in some cases required higher cost recruitment for locum and agency staff to cover services.

Funding received from Scottish Government for additional Covid-19 expenditure, as requested through the Local Mobilisation Plan totalled, £29.233m and actual spend on Covid-19 was £26.038m. In addition, further allocations were received late in year for Winter and to fund on-going Covid-19 related pressures. The balance of funding was

transferred to reserves to meet the expenditure expected to be incurred in early 2021/22.

Financial Outlook

2020/21 has been an unprecedented year. The effects of Covid-19 are expected to continue well into 2021/22, remobilisation and recovery will be key to moving forward, re-imagining services and continuing to embrace integrated working.

It is anticipated that all additional Covid-19 related costs will be fully funded from earmarked reserves and further funding from Scottish Government will be available when required and will continue to be requested via Local Mobilisation Plans (LMP). Fife IJB are committed to progressing agreed savings. Some services may have an increase in demand and our uncommitted reserves may be required to meet demands in these areas.

Key areas of Covid-19 expenditure within 2020/21 were PPE, Financial Sustainability for Care Homes and Care at Home providers, additional staffing to cover isolation/shielding including use of agency staff. These supports are likely to be stepped down as restrictions ease, however this expenditure will continue to be closely monitored via the LMP.

The focus is now on recovery and reform and how to change services effectively. Services have shown they can adapt, and the pandemic has allowed the Partnership to quickly shift on areas of service redesign and improve integration. Business as usual was on hold as a result of the pandemic. However, as we begin to ease out of restrictions, workstreams will proceed.

An Integrated Transformation Board was created during the 2019/20 financial year. The terms of reference of that Board include responsibility for transformation across the whole system. Due to the pandemic response and recovery taking priority, the delivery of transformation and change this year has been postponed or slowed in many projects and transformation work, although redesign of some processes has occurred as a result of the pandemic response. However, positive steps have been made in appointing a Senior Leadership Team Lead for Transformation and discussion on refreshing both transformation projects, and the framework in which they operate, is underway.

The budget for 2021/22 has been set and balanced, with a savings plan of £8.732m in place to meet the budget gap. Project teams will be created to ensure transformational change is progressed at pace across the partnership.

It is likely to be the case that some of the costs now being incurred could continue beyond this financial year and possibly even into the longer term. There will undoubtedly be an adverse impact on the level of funding made available to HSCPs due to the economic impact of Covid-19. As the recovery phases evolve, it will become clearer what some of these impacts are likely to be and how risks to service users will be mitigated.

A financial strategy will be developed that addresses the various new and additional pressures that will face the Health and Social Care Partnership over next financial year 2021/22 and also into future years.

The Partnership must redesign services, focus on joined up working, and focus finite resources on delivering services which are sustainable over the longer term and focussed on those with greatest need, whilst meeting the aim of shifting the provision of care to a home or homely setting.

The most significant risks faced by the IJB over the medium to longer term can be summarised as follows:

- the wider financial environment, which continues to be challenging;
- Covid-19 impact on the economy;
- the impact of demographic changes leading to increased demand and increased complexity of demand for services alongside reducing resources;
- difficulties in recruitment leading to the use of higher cost agency staff; the Transformation Programme does not meet the desired timescales or achieve the associated benefits/outcomes;
- workforce sustainability both internally in health and social care and with our external care partners.

It is therefore crucial that the H&SCP focus on early intervention and prevention and changing the balance of care if we are to work within the available financial resources.

During 2021/22 an action plan to improve the 6 key features within the Ministerial Strategic Group self-assessment tool will be developed further and progressed. We will see the continuation of a whole system approach to delivering services and the Fife pound being utilised to deliver services that best meets the needs of the people of Fife.

4. Workforce Development

a. Children and Families

Following the distribution of the Workforce Development plans for 2020-21 last year, Covid restrictions led to the adaptation of the programme, which meant a significant shift for everyone in relation to the online access of learning and engagement with services. The Workforce Development Team (WDT) worked collaboratively with Children's Services colleagues and Business & Technology Services (BTS) colleagues as well as both internal and commissioned trainers, to provide alternative means of delivering learning and organisational development.

The WDT delivered learning & development in all areas required by services utilising webinars (live training online) alongside e-learning. For those who were initially less comfortable with e-learning, resources packages were developed containing relevant documents, video and website links embedded for easy access and learning.

Many practitioners and carers have embraced this style of learning, despite being clear that it is preferable to have 'face to face' engagement for learning in many practice areas, recognising the important relational aspect of learning within Social Work – and we all look forward to a return of this as regulations permit.

It is to participants' credit that they have engaged so well with learning at a time when there are so many other pressures at hand. It also reflects the continued appetite and need for learning during these times.

In the absence of 'face to face' training, a range of webinars have been provided, including:

- 'Planning Purposeful Contact' for children and birth parents
- 'Court Skills in the context of Permanence Planning'
- 'Management and Risk Reduction' - working with children and young people who display harmful sexualised behaviours
- 'AIMs 3' training
- 'Attachment-based Practice with Adults' – engaging with parents
- 'Report Writing'
- 'Engaging Fathers in assessment and child's plan'
- 'Voice of the child and the parent within the social work system'
- Training in the 'Observation of Infants during Supervised Parent-Infant Contact'
- Education & Children's Service 'Wellbeing Strategy' – looking after ourselves and others
- 'Safe & Together' training

A range of online learning resources and e-learning packages are also available, including:

- 'Child Protection'
- 'Child Sexual Exploitation'
- 'Human Trafficking'
- 'Trauma informed practice and developing skills in trauma related practice'
- 'Solihull' course
- 'Mentally Healthy Workplace'

Given the growth and structural changes within Residential Childcare services, the training pathways and plans have been altered to reflect learning and development needs of practitioners. Organisational development sessions took place with relevant teams to familiarise them with new Fife Council Childcare Residential Practice Framework.

Family Placement Service colleagues and carers/adopters have been offered webinars and e-learning.

The Promise has been embedded in all training and development materials to ensure it is integrated in culture and practice.

The engagement on a multi-agency level with PRISM and impending revised Scottish Government National Guidance on Child Protection (C.P.) will impact on the single and multi-agency training developments that take place within the Child Protection context. Child Protection and Child Sexual Exploitation e-learning has been made available with follow up webinar sessions available to embed the learning. Specific Child Protection training for Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSW) is also underway.

The re-launch of the reviewed 'How We Work Matters' framework will also inform our thinking and we would look to integrate the tenets of this framework into all learning that takes place. Some of the Organisational Development work taking place within the service references this when focussing on leadership development and succession planning for the future.

The Plan for Fife 2020-27 also highlights the increased provision of early years support and mental health support, both of which will feature in workforce development planning. Mental Health and Wellbeing for practitioners and carers has been a priority area for all staff and their service users since the start of Covid restrictions.

Alongside the daily support being given by line managers and colleagues across teams, online resources relating to maintaining good mental health and wellbeing have been distributed and highlighted across the service, with a specific input organised for NQSW around the ECS staff wellbeing strategy

Children and Family, Newly Qualified Social Work Forums have continued to run monthly.

b. Criminal Justice

The Justice Service in Fife continue to strive for excellence through their commitment to learning and development. The Service is well supported in this area, internally through HR Workforce Development and Strategy, and externally, through Community Justice Scotland and other partners such as Health Promotion, the FMHT, the Risk Management Authority and NOTA.

Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic during 20-21 undoubtedly impacted on the way the Service operated and on learning and development opportunities, the Service in conjunction with HR Workforce Development and Strategy were proactive in seeking the support of colleagues in Community Justice Scotland to ensure that the Service emerge from the pandemic in a very strong position with all core training up to date, as far as possible.

Throughout the pandemic the service continued to have a key focus on developing the workforce and ensuring key training was delivered to support best practice.

- - LSCMi Risk Assessment Tool for all Social Workers and Senior Practitioners.
- - LSCMi Familiarisation for all Social Work Assistants.
- - SA07/RM2K Risk Assessment Tool for all Social Workers and Senior Practitioners.
- - MF:MC Case Manager and Groupwork Facilitation.

The Service also worked very closely with HR Workforce Development to ensure that internal and external training opportunities were provided through online sessions via the MS Teams platform and through e-learning. These included:

- - Transforming Psychological Trauma Training at levels 1 and 2 of the National Trauma Training Framework
- - Working with individuals with Learning Disabilities in CJS system.

- - Preparation for Parole Board Tribunal Training.
- - Ageing and Dementia in the Forensic Mental Health Population.
- - Forensic Aspects of Autism Spectrum Disorder Training.
- - Risk Practice (RoSH) Training.
- - Introduction to Sexually Harmful Behaviour.
- - Child Protection.
- - Adult Protection.
- - MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements)

The Service were also successful in their bid to the SSSC to provide three individuals a space on the Foundations in Quality Improvement Award. All three have successfully completed, and their work has been introduced across the service. This involves the concept, design and implementation of a new, stand-alone, Enhanced Bail service, the design, formulation and implementation of a Groupwork Programme on Safe internet use and the design of an internal transfer of Unpaid Work Orders.

The Service is in a strong position as we move through recovery and has a very full and varied 2021-22 training programme aligned to local and national priorities.

c. Health and Social Care

An annual Workforce Learning and Development Plan for 2020-21 had been created in consultation with Service Managers, identifying priority areas for the coming year, taking into account legislative requirements and relevant development frameworks, for example Optimising Outcomes: A framework for all staff working with people with Autism Spectrum Disorders, their families and carers.

The focus of learning and development, like everything else, was impacted by Covid-19. In the first quarter, workforce development focus shifted to supporting staff mobilisation and upskilling Fife Council and third sector staff who volunteered to take on new roles. This was aimed at supporting the continuation of key services, in particular Care at Home and Older Adults Residential services. Through collaboration across the Health and Social Care Partnership, essential training was identified and adapted, where possible, to an e-learning and online delivery. The exception was Moving and Handling training, which retained an essential practical element, delivered with new protective measures in place, in addition to the e-learning which covered the theory aspects.

As the longevity of the situation became apparent, workforce development continued to adapt and develop training to meet the needs of services and staff. In addition to adapting existing training, there was an increased focus on staff wellbeing across all services. Workforce development ensured managers were kept up to date with the wide range of external and national resources to support staff wellbeing, such as The National Wellbeing Hub for Health and Social Care Staff, profession specific support such as SSSC Workforce Support and BASW / SASW Covid-19 Guidance, as well as internal resources through Fife Council's MyToolkit

Prior to 2020-21, Mindfulness sessions were offered to staff in Assessment and Care Management Teams. These were available as Mindfulness-based approaches are a proven method for addressing stress and difficulty and are also part of the NHS NICE Guidelines for the prevention of recurrent depression. On the basis that learning about mindfulness can help staff manage difficult situations in the workplace and also in their personal life, it was recognised these could prove even more beneficial to staff now. A new arrangement with our provider, Kingdom Mindfulness, was agreed to deliver sessions via MS Teams. The uptake and positive feedback demonstrated the value of these, with Managers encouraged to book sessions for their teams to participate in

together. These sessions, and short refresher sessions, continue to be offered, now encompassing staff across all Health and Social Care services.

Another area which had been planned prior to Covid-19, but which proved to be more relevant, was to provide support to staff to cope with loss, grief and bereavement - both for themselves and to allow them to support others. Initial sessions, delivered through MS Teams by Cruse Scotland, were targeted at Senior Social Care Workers in Older People Residential Services. Having consulted with Managers across other services, further sessions now include staff in all Health and Social Care services.

Other essential training for Health and Social Care, such as Adult Support and Protection and Mental Health, were adapted to be delivered as an online webinar, making use of MS Teams. As the functionality of MS Teams increased, such as the introduction of breakout rooms, training continued to be adapted to incorporate these; continuing to improve the quality of training and enhance the online learning experience for staff.

This focus on maintaining the quality of training, and particularly learners experience, was at the heart of discussions with external training providers. This has, in some cases, improved the overall learning experience and opportunities. An example of this has been the collaborative work with Scottish Autism in the redesign of their training.

Prior to Covid-19, Scottish Autism were commissioned to deliver a one-day session for staff who, in line with the Optimising Outcomes Framework, needed the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the Skilled Practice level. The discussion element of this training; with the opportunity to ask questions and learn from other participants experiences, was recognised as a critical element to the quality and effectiveness of this training. There were concerns that a move to e-learning would lose this. Scottish Autism were very open to working in partnership to meet our requirements and to retain the discussion and shared learning element. The outcome was the development of a blended learning experience, which was piloted with Fife Social Care staff in November 2020. This offered increased flexibility; with self-paced, online video presentations, followed by attendance at facilitated discussion sessions on MS Teams and a written reflective account; explaining how learning will be put into practice.

In addition to the improved the flexibility of training and promoting learning into practice, after the initial pilot, staff now participate in facilitated discussion sessions with staff from other local authorities and the third sector. This has extended the sharing of knowledge and experience, enhancing this pivotal element of the original training, and the area deemed most beneficial by participants. Scottish Autism have now created additional training modules which follow the same structure. These have a more specific focus, such as Communication and Sensory Processing, to further extend staff learning and their ability to support adults with autism.

d. Managing behaviour that challenges (All Service sectors)

During 2020-21, there were significant changes in the numbers of children and young people entering residential childcare establishments in Fife, often with multiple and complex needs. The nature and length of their stays with the Service have also been somewhat different to the traditional long-term model. The number of houses accommodating young people, and numbers of staff employed, have increased significantly. The requirement to work with more service users with multiple and complex needs was also mirrored in Adult Services (Resources).

This increase in service user need, and staff need in terms of training required a strategic person-centred approach in dealing with behaviour that challenges, at a time where 'business as usual' was hampered by COVID-19. Notwithstanding this, a significant training programme was developed, and delivery started online during 20-21 to new staff

and staff who moved to work with specific service users. This training consists of online webinars combined with robust e-learning modules which have evaluated very well. In addition, pockets of physical intervention training took place where the need was greatest with all COVID guidance adhered to as much as possible in the training environment. Upskilling several staff to deliver Physical Intervention skills was prioritised to help us move through recovery in order to get all staff trained and/or re-accredited by the statutory date which is January 2022. The delivery of the plan is all set within a context of reducing the use of restrictive interventions and protecting children & young people and Adult service users, as well as the staff who support them.

Foster Carers have also benefited from the aforementioned online modules and webinars which provide theoretical models and strategies for managing behaviour that challenge.

e. SSSC Registration and Fife's Assessment Centre:

The assessment centre is SQA accredited and has continued to grow steadily since 2012. Approved to deliver 32 different qualifications levelled at SCQF 4 to SCQF 10 the Assessment Centre's primary focus are vocational qualifications for HSC staff subject to SSSC registration. In addition to vocational learning, the centre delivers a range of Professional Development Awards which are monitored by the Care Inspectorate when undertaking compliance inspections as a measure of good practice models.

The registered services progress on 31 March 2021 is:

Service Area	Number of Staff	Number qualified for registration	Number of waiting lists	Number studying
Adult Support and Accommodation	551	547 (82% of workforce)	44	32
Community Services (not eligible for registration yet)	217	36 (16% of workforce)	179	2
Older People's Services	303	210 (69% of workforce)	48	14
Care at Home	995	699 (70% of workforce)	126	83
Residential Childcare	82	65 (79% of workforce)	7	5

The centre also delivered the Foundation Apprenticeship Social Services and Healthcare / Children and Young People. The total for the combined frameworks currently studying is 73. They commenced in August 2020 and due to finish in May 2022. There were 9 Fastrack one-year students who completed the course in one year despite the restrictions and lack of access to workplaces. The apprentices accessed virtual workplaces created by the assessment centre across a range of settings.

Post-Graduate Qualifications

Qualification	Number paid for in 20/21
PG Qualification in Child Welfare and Protection	4 Children & Families staff
PG Qualification in Adults Support and Protection	5 Health & Social Care staff
PG Qualification 'Securing Children's Futures -Good Practice in 'Permanence Planning'	2 Children & Families staff
PQL Practice Learning	16 (9 C&F, 5 H&SC, 2 Justice Services)
Management and Leadership in Social Services-Supervision module	5 Children & Families staff
PG Gerontology with Dementia	1 Health & Social Care
PG Certificate in Autism	1 Health & Social Care
PG Mental Health Officer Award	6 (3 H&SC, 1 C&F, 2 JS)

Final remarks

As we move forward into 2021/22, there will be a focus on recovery and reform, moving to place based services, better integrated into local communities. This will afford communities greater visibility and presence in the development and delivery of services.

Workforce planning, recruitment and retention will continue to be a priority, to manage the impact of the pandemic, the change in work approaches and the increased expectation of Fife communities.

Succession planning will be a key requisite, as will training routes into social work and social care, across the workforce. Special emphasis will be placed on recruitment of staff with lived experience to build a strategic presence to inform thinking and practice.

I have no doubt we will approach this coming year with the same rigour, but recognise the challenges that whilst different, may be equally demanding.

I would like to thank you for all your support through this unprecedented year.

Kathy Henwood

Head of Education and Children's Services, Justice Services and CSWO

1st March 2022
Agenda Item No 9

Education & Children's Services Directorate Revenue Budget 2021-22 Projected Outturn

Report by:

Carrie Lindsay, Executive Director Education and Children's Services
Eileen Rowand, Executive Director Finance & Corporate Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on the forecast financial position for the 2021-22 financial year, for the areas in scope of the Education and Children's Services Committee.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- a. consider the current financial performance and activity as detailed in this report;
- b. note that the Education and Children's Services Directorate implementation of the Children and Families Strategy has reduced the reliance on purchased care placements and increased the number of children who can be looked after safely at home or in kinship care;
- c. note the estimated costs, and associated funding, in relation to the continuing impact of Covid-19 on the Directorate.

Resource Implications

The Directorate remains committed to managing the budget and developing and implementing the strategy to address the demographic pressures on the budget.

Legal & Risk Implications

The Directorate requires to discharge its duty as Corporate Parent to all Looked After Children and to support their families accordingly. It is committed to proactive management of the budget whilst managing the risk to individuals.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been completed, and is not necessary, as no change or revision to existing policies and practices is proposed.

Consultation

None

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the projected outturn for the Education and Children's Services Directorate (excluding Criminal Justice), for the 2021-22 Revenue Budget, and to highlight the major variances as at December 2021. This is the second monitoring report to the Strategic Committee for the 2021-22 financial year.

2.0 Major Variances

2.1 Education and Children's Services 2021-22 Projected Outturn

- 2.1.1 The projected underspend, for this financial year, for Education and Children's Services (excluding Criminal Justice) is £3.426m. A summary of the 2021-22 projected outturn is detailed in Appendices 1-2. This shows projected expenditure against budget across the service headings within the Directorate. It should be noted that the balances are extracted from the ledger system and are shown as rounded thousands. This may mean that there are some rounding differences contained within the appendices, but these are immaterial values that do not impact on the overall financial position. The following paragraphs provide a brief explanation of the main areas where there are significant variances (+/-£0.250m) to budgets.

- 2.1.2 The estimated financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has been reported to Policy and Co-ordination Committee previously. This report highlighted the estimated costs in relation to Education and Children's Services, and the mitigation available to the Directorate to absorb some of these costs. This mitigation is in terms of specific funding from Scottish Government, for example in relation to additional teaching staff, or the application of Logistics/Recovery Funding made available to councils by the Scottish Government in order to mitigate the financial impact. An additional column has been included in the appendices attached in relation to Covid-19 costs.

2.2 Education Service

- 2.2.1 DSM Budget: - projected outturn £1.694m underspend, movement £0.388m
- Under the DSM Scheme, schools' budgets are calculated and allocated with reference to a range of formulae based on appropriate data, for example school roll. School budgets have now been updated to reflect updated rolls and projections have been provided by schools. The variance being reported under DSM within this report relates to a number of projected underspends across all sectors, of £1.573m, and an additional minor projected underspend of £0.106m in Pupil Support Service staffing. The movement is a result of the updated projections now received from schools, as opposed to the previous reported figure which was based on the DSM carry forward from the previous year.
- 2.2.2 Additional costs due to Covid-19 are included in the projected outturn, for example costs in relation to the appointment of additional teachers of £4.466m, potential costs in relation to refunds to parents for school trips of £0.100m and unachieved savings from 2020-21 in relation to the DSM, of £0.400m. These costs will be funded by Covid-19 funding announced by the Scottish Government

in relation to additional teachers, of £4.466m, and £0.500 from Scottish Government Covid-19 Education Logistics funding.

- 2.2.3 In addition to the core DSM budget, schools' Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) has also been included in their devolved budgets. Any unspent PEF at 31 March 2021 was carried forward for schools, and in addition schools' allocations for 2021-22 have been applied to their devolved budgets. These amounts are £3.760m and £11.850m respectively. As PEF is a ring-fenced funding source, with variances carried forward at the end of the financial year, it has no impact on the variance within the service.
- 2.2.4 Non-DSM/Childcare: - projected overspend £2.798m, movement (£1.699m)
- 2.2.5 The projected overspend mainly relates to maternity pay and long-term absence and overspends of £2.962m and £0.629m are included within the projection. These costs are in relation to teachers but are borne by the non-devolved central Education budget and not the DSM. A further projected overspend has arisen due to the increase in pupil rolls in Secondary Education and the requirement to fund this increase in schools. The increase in rolls covers the period 2019 to 2021 and is 1,354 pupils, with an estimated pressure of £1.359m. These overspends are reduced by a projected underspend in Early Years, of £0.484m, mainly due to the timing of recruiting of EYO Modern Apprentices and other central staff; an underspend in Special Education of £0.616m, due to projected underspends on employee costs for both teachers and pupil support assistants; underspends on utilities and NDR budgets from updated projections, of £0.382m, and additional funding for probationers. The majority of the movement is from the impact of updating schools' budgets to reflect updated rolls and additional funding for probationers.
- 2.2.6 In relation to Covid-19, the main estimated additional costs included within Non Devolved Education are in relation to school transport, of £0.200m; cleaning/catering and waste collection of £1.329m; staffing costs of £1.025m; PPE of £0.500m; heating costs of £0.250m; free school meal costs to date, of £1.589m; Summer Activities programme of £1.160m; Mental Health for Children and Young People of £0.785m; shortfall in funding for CO₂ monitors of £0.411m and projected net loss of income in relation to Childcare Services, of £0.500m, and Music Service of £0.316m. It should be noted that some of these costs are estimates which will require to be refined as more information becomes available, however, these costs will require to be met from Covid-19 Education logistics funding. Total covid costs within the forecast are £8.7m, and funding of £7.5m has been applied either through additional income or budget to fund additional Covid-19 costs.
- 2.3 Children and Families Service – projected underspend £4.538m, movement (£2.530m)
- 2.3.1 The position for the service reflects a projected underspend for Children and Families / Criminal Justice Service, mainly due to projected underspends on third party payments, relating to purchased placements, of £7.3m, due to the full year effect of the reduction in placement numbers over the last year. There is also a projected underspend on Children & Families employee costs, of £0.814m, due to staff turnover and a delay in recruiting to new posts set up to support the implementation of the strategy. Offsetting this underspend are projected

overspends in kinship care, of £1.445m, as some of the children previously in purchased care arrangements have moved into kinship care. A further projected overspend of £0.337m in foster care, adoption and throughcare has also arisen due to the shift in the balance of care from external purchased arrangements, as well as an overspend on Supported Lodgings of £0.325m. A further overspend of £1.061m is projected as a result of children remaining in continuing care arrangements and an overspend of £0.385m in Supplies and Services, reflecting the shift away from purchased care to foster care/kinship/home support, is projected. This year £1.7m of budget has been realigned from purchased placements into Supplies & Services to support the implementation of the strategy. A further realignment of the budget within Children and Families Service will be required to reflect these new balance of care arrangements.

- 2.3.2 With regards to Covid-19, the projected costs are in relation to additional support for looked after children, of £0.710m, which is fully funded from Scottish Government Covid-19 funding.
- 2.3.3 The movement since the last report of £2.530m is in part due to a reduction in the third party payments, of £0.9m, as a result of further reductions in purchased placements and continuing care packages. There is a reduction of £1.5m in forecasted employee costs and Supplies and Services, mainly due to staff turnover and vacancies from the implementation of the strategy.

3.0 Savings

- 3.1 Revenue Budget Savings 2021-22
 - 3.1.1 The combined savings target, as approved in the 2021-24 budget process and earlier budget processes for the Directorate (excluding Criminal Justice), for this financial year, is £0.145m. An indication of the forecast achievement of this saving is attached at Appendix 3.
 - 3.1.2 The saving included within the appendix relates to a review of management structures across Family Nurture Centres and ELC provisions. This is a continuation of a previous saving which has been delayed in implementation due to the restrictions associated with Covid. However, it is anticipated that the changes required to achieve this saving have been implemented from August 2021 and therefore the saving is flagged as amber. The target of £0.145m is the full year effect of the saving, and therefore it will be 2022-23 financial year before the full amount is realised.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 The projected outturn for the Education and Children's Services Directorate Revenue Budget (excluding Criminal Justice) for 2021-22 is a projected underspend of £3.426m. The dominant factors within the projection are the projected overspend in respect of long-term absence and maternity leave within Education and the overspend in respect of the funding of increasing rolls across secondary schools. These overspends are substantially offset by the projected underspend within the DSM, due to updated projections from schools, Early Years and Special Education as a result of recruitment lead in times and staff

vacancies and within Children and Families Service due to the significant reduction in purchased care placements for looked after children.

List of Appendices

1. Education and Children's Services Revenue Monitor 2021-22 and Educational Services – Devolved and Non-Devolved Revenue Monitor 2021-22
2. Children and Families Services excluding Criminal Justice Revenue Monitor 2021-22
3. Savings Tracker 2021-22

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BUDGET MONITORING REPORT SUMMARY

2021-22

EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROJECTED OUTTURN AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

SERVICE	CURRENT BUDGET	COVID	NON-COVID	FORECAST	FORECAST	FORECAST
	2021-22	PROJECTION	PROJECTION	2021-22	VARIANCE	VARIANCE
	£m	2021-22	2021-22	2021-22	£m	%
		£m	£m	£m		
SERVICE MANAGED NET BUDGET	384.973	6.298	375.249	381.547	(3.426)	-0.89%
ANALYSIS OF SERVICE MANAGED BUDGET						
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES - DEVOLVED	213.138	2.104	209.341	211.444	(1.694)	-0.79%
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES - NON DEVOLVED	107.739	4.188	106.349	110.537	2.798	2.60%
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES excl CRIMINAL JUSTICE	64.096	0.006	59.559	59.566	(4.530)	-7.07%
EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROJECTED OUTTURN	384.973	6.298	375.249	381.547	(3.426)	-0.89%

BUDGET MONITORING REPORT SUMMARY

2021-22

EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROJECTED OUTTURN AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021 - DEVOLVED SCHOOLS BUDGET

SERVICE	CURRENT BUDGET	COVID	NON-COVID	FORECAST	FORECAST	FORECAST
	2021-22	PROJECTION	PROJECTION	2021-22	VARIANCE	VARIANCE
	£m	2021-22	2021-22	2021-22	£m	%
		£m	£m	£m		
SERVICE MANAGED NET EXPENDITURE	213.138	2.104	209.341	211.444	(1.694)	-0.79%
ANALYSIS OF SERVICE MANAGED BUDGET						
PRIMARY EDUCATION	100.722	1.363	99.030	100.394	(0.328)	-0.33%
SECONDARY EDUCATION	105.256	0.663	103.310	103.972	(1.284)	-1.22%
NURSERY EDUCATION	2.465	(0.000)	2.490	2.490	0.025	1.00%
SPECIAL EDUCATION	4.681	0.078	4.497	4.575	(0.106)	-2.27%
AREA GROUPS	0.014	0.000	0.014	0.014	0.000	0.00%
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES AS AT JUNE 2021 - DEVOLVED	213.138	2.104	209.341	211.444	(1.694)	-0.79%

BUDGET MONITORING REPORT SUMMARY

2021-22

EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROJECTED OUTTURN AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021 - NON DEVOLVED SCHOOLS BUDGET

SERVICE	CURRENT BUDGET	COVID	NON-COVID	FORECAST	FORECAST	FORECAST
	2021-22	PROJECTION	PROJECTION	2021-22	VARIANCE	VARIANCE
	£m	2021-22	2021-22	2021-22	£m	%
		£m	£m	£m		
SERVICE MANAGED NET EXPENDITURE	107.739	4.188	106.349	110.537	2.798	2.60%
ANALYSIS OF SERVICE MANAGED BUDGET						
PRIMARY EDUCATION	19.339	0.000	21.633	21.633	2.294	11.86%
SECONDARY EDUCATION	19.975	0.000	20.759	20.759	0.784	3.93%
NURSERY EDUCATION	26.533	0.000	26.049	26.049	(0.484)	-1.82%
SPECIAL EDUCATION	32.016	0.001	31.399	31.400	(0.616)	-1.92%
AREA GROUPS	0.614	0.003	0.639	0.642	0.028	4.58%
EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION	6.337	2.262	4.131	6.393	0.055	0.88%
STAFF DEVELOPMENT	0.315	0.000	0.215	0.215	(0.100)	-31.82%
MUSIC SERVICE	1.669	0.318	1.687	2.005	0.336	20.11%
SUPPORT SERVICES	3.471	0.785	2.482	3.267	(0.203)	-5.86%
GENERAL EDUCATION	(4.409)	0.320	(4.328)	(4.008)	0.401	-9.09%
CHILDCARE SERVICES	1.880	0.500	1.684	2.184	0.304	16.15%
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES AS AT JUNE 2021 - NON DEVOLVED	107.739	4.188	106.349	110.537	2.798	2.60%

**BUDGET MONITORING REPORT SUMMARY
2021-22**

Appendix 2

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES PROJECTED OUTTURN AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE	CURRENT BUDGET 2021-22 £m	COVID PROJECTION 2021-22 £m	NON-COVID PROJECTION 2021-22 £m	FORECAST 2021-22 £m	FORECAST VARIANCE £m	FORECAST VARIANCE %	PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m	MOVEMENT FROM PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m
SERVICE MANAGED NET EXPENDITURE	64.096	0.006	59.559	59.566	(4.530)	-7.07%	(2.000)	(2.530)
ANALYSIS OF SERVICE MANAGED BUDGET								
C&F West	3.273	0.000	3.436	3.436	0.163	4.98%	0.199	(0.037)
C&F East	2.312	0.000	2.381	2.381	0.069	2.99%	0.104	(0.035)
C&F Fife Wide	31.870	0.002	25.593	25.594	(6.276)	-19.69%	(7.845)	1.569
C&F Residential	6.301	0.001	7.231	7.232	0.931	14.77%	0.526	0.405
C&F Family Placement	10.621	0.004	12.639	12.643	2.022	19.03%	3.038	(1.016)
Senior Manager	3.276	0.000	2.377	2.377	(0.900)	-27.46%	2.089	(2.989)
Family Support	2.820	0.000	2.561	2.561	(0.259)	-9.18%	(0.063)	(0.196)
C&F Central	3.622	0.000	3.342	3.342	(0.280)	-7.74%	(0.048)	(0.232)
EDUCATIONAL SERVICES AS AT JUNE 2021 - DEVOLVED	64.096	0.006	59.559	59.566	(4.530)	-7.07%	(2.000)	(2.530)

SUBJECTIVE GROUPINGS: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES	CURRENT BUDGET 2021-22 £m	COVID PROJECTION 2021-22 £m	NON-COVID PROJECTION 2021-22 £m	FORECAST 2021-22 £m	FORECAST VARIANCE £m	FORECAST VARIANCE %	PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m	MOVEMENT FROM PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m
SERVICE MANAGED NET EXPENDITURE	64.096	0.006	59.559	59.566	(4.530)	-7.07%	(2.000)	(2.530)
INCOME	(1.019)	0.000	(1.294)	(1.294)	(0.275)	26.99%	(0.192)	(0.083)
EXPENDITURE	65.115	0.006	60.853	60.859	(4.255)	-6.54%	(1.808)	(2.448)
EMPLOYEE COSTS	25.740	0.001	24.925	24.926	(0.814)	-3.16%	0.191	(1.005)
PREMISES RELATED EXPENDITURE	0.335	0.001	0.585	0.587	0.252	75.07%	0.070	0.182
TRANSPORT RELATED EXPENDITURE	1.398	0.000	1.214	1.214	(0.184)	-13.14%	0.058	(0.242)
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	2.691	0.001	3.076	3.077	0.385	14.32%	2.626	(2.241)
THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	31.250	0.000	26.603	26.603	(4.647)	-14.87%	(5.796)	1.149
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	3.700	0.004	4.423	4.427	0.727	19.64%	1.044	(0.317)
SUPPORT SERVICES CHARGES	0.001	0.000	0.026	0.026	0.026	4039.59%	0.000	0.026

**FIFE COUNCIL
TRACKING APPROVED 2021-22 SAVINGS
EDUCATION AND CHILDREN SERVICES COMMITTEE
DECEMBER 2021**

Area	Approved Budget Year	Savings Reference	Title of Savings Proposal	Savings Target £m	Forecast £m	(Under)/Over £m	Rag Status
Education & Children Services	2020-23	2021-EC-06	Review management structure across Family Nurture Centres and early years provisions	0.145	0.000	(0.145)	Amber
Grand Total				0.145	0.000	(0.145)	

Rag Status Key:-

Green - No issues and saving is on track to be delivered

Amber - There are minor issues or minor reduction in the value of saving, or delivery of the saving is delayed

Red - Major issues should be addressed before any saving can be realised

Summary			
Rag Status	Savings Target £m	Overall Forecast £m	(Under)/Over £m
Green	0.000	0.000	0.000
Amber	0.145	0.000	(0.145)
Red	0.000	0.000	0.000
Total	0.145	0.000	(0.145)

1st March 2022

Agenda Item No 10

Education and Children's Services Directorate

Capital Investment Plan 2021-2022: Progress Report

Report by: Carrie Lindsay, Executive Director, Education and Children's Services

Eileen Rowand, Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

This report provides members with information on the overall progress of the Education and Children's Services Directorate's capital programme, for the current financial year, 2021-22, as well as informs members of progress on our major projects.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that members:

- i) note the financial position as detailed in this report, and
- ii) note that the budget has been revised to reflect the outcome of the Capital Plan review undertaken in February 2021 and the subsequent re-phasing exercise carried out in July 2021.

Resource Implications

There are no direct resource implications. At the present time the Directorate is projecting a final outturn of £38.045m. The plan is showing a variance of £1.512m, in the current year, as of December 2021.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this report. However, there is a risk that the actual outturn will vary from the projection contained in the report. Any potential over or under spend will be managed within the capital programme in 2021-2022 and the programme re-profiled over future years.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been completed, and is not necessary, as no change or revision to existing policies is proposed.

Consultation

Not Applicable.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information on the overall progress of projects within the capital programme for the current year, as well as provide an update on projects under individual headings within the capital plan.
- 1.2 The projected outturn is currently £38.045m, which is a variance of £1.512m from budget, however this may change as projects develop throughout the financial year.
- 1.3 Appendix 1 provides the cost detail on major projects and programmes within the capital plan, where expenditure exceeds £1m.
- 1.4 Appendix 2 provides the projected final outturn for Education and Children's Services for the year 2021-2022

2.0 Issues and Options

Key Issues / Risks

- 2.1 The impact of COVID-19 is still ongoing, with many projects currently on-site reporting shortages of both labour and materials, as well as increased material costs. Monitoring of the impact of these additional costs and timescales is ongoing and is considered within the projected outturn.

Major Projects

- 2.2 Appendix 1 provides a summary of the projected outturn for the major projects and programmes within the Education and Children's Services Capital Plan. Madras College is complete and opened to pupils in August 2021. Initial detail design work is underway on the new Dunfermline Learning Campus, which is expected to spend £18m in the current financial year. The extension projects at Guardbridge and Masterton Primary schools are complete and were operational for start of the new term in August 2021.

Potential Risks and Actions

- 2.3 The Council's approved Capital Plan includes £202m investment in respect of Secondary Schools in West Fife, which includes the Dunfermline Learning Campus and the Inverkeithing High School replacement. The budgets for the projects reflect the funding arrangements of the Scottish Government's Learning Estate Investment Plan, which requires the Council to fund the up-front cost of construction, with Government support coming in the form of a revenue contribution based on the achievement of outcomes. This investment is intended to address both school condition and the need for additional school places arising from housing development. The risks associated with the projects relate to the potential impact of inflation on construction costs, the cost pressure arising from the requirement to design the schools to net zero and the potential risks in the market around the availability and supply of labour and materials to complete the schools within the required timescale (August 2024 and August 2026 respectively).
- 2.4 Within Early Learning and Childcare (ELC), the delivery date of August 2020 was removed by the Scottish Government, in light of COVID-19. The new date was confirmed as August 2021. There are 4 projects due to be completed beyond August 2021 and contingency arrangements are in place until these facilities are complete and operational.

- 2.5 It should also be noted that work has been underway to estimate the likely costs to the Council of delivering the Scottish Government policy intention of Free School Meals expansion. It will be critical that funding is forthcoming to cover these costs. Further detail will be reported as it becomes available.

Financial Performance – 2021-2022 projected spend

- 2.6 Appendix 2 details the projected outturn for 2021-2022 against the main projects and Investment Themes.
- 2.7 Within the Building Fife's Future programme, the new Madras College has been delivered and is fully operational. There is currently an underspend of £1.071m, resulting from lower than anticipated additional costs from the impact of COVID-19 on our live construction site and savings from the cost of ICT equipment.
- 2.8 There is advancement of £3.509m associated with the Dunfermline Learning Campus (DLC). This reflects the early commencement of the site enabling works and the reprofiling of the construction spend. The project is currently highlighting a significant estimated additional cost pressure of up to £11.1m, however the project is at an early stage and approaches to managing the additional cost pressure are being pursued and will be explored further in the business case for the project.
- 2.9 There is slippage under Primary School Development, which is due to delays in the installation of a 2 classroom modular unit at McLean PS, as site conditions require grouting of mining works, and delays in the Wormit PS project, due to a re-tendering exercise. Both are now due to be delivered by August 2022.

3.0 Conclusions

- 3.1 The projected outturn position for the capital programme for Education and Children's Services Directorate is £38.045m. Advancement of £1.512m is projected.
- 3.2 The management of capital resources require us to look across financial years, as well as within individual years. The current year performance is only a snapshot of the existing plan and the Directorate will adjust expenditure levels within future years of the plan to accommodate the advancement of projects.

List of Appendices

1. Project Cost Monitor
2. Capital Plan 2021-2022 Forecast Expenditure

Background Papers

Not applicable

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**FIFE COUNCIL
EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES SUB COMMITTEE
CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN 2021-31
TOTAL COST MONITOR - MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS**

Project	Theme	Original Approved Budget £m	Current Project Budget £m	Total Projected Outturn £m	Variance £m	Variance %	Current Project Status	Expected Project Completion Date
Madras College - Langlands	Opportunities for All	50.170	59.991	59.991	-	0.00%	Current Project	2021-22
Dunfermline Learning Campus	Opportunities for All		111.000	122.100	11.100	10.00%	Current Project	2027-28
Extension Secondary School - Viewforth	Opportunities for All	5.989	6.335	6.969	0.634	10.00%	Future Project	2025-26
New Secondary School - Glenrothes /Glenwood	Opportunities for All	27.532	78.937	78.937	-	0.00%	Future Project	2028-29
Balwearie High School	Maintaining Our Assets	8.300	8.300	8.300	-	0.00%	Future Project	2026-27
Total Major Capital Projects over £5.000m		91.991	256.263	267.996	11.734	4.58%		
Extension Secondary School - Auchmuty	Opportunities for All	9.620	3.469	3.816	0.347	10.00%	Future Project	2024-25
Pitteuchar East Nursery Expansion	Opportunities for All		2.961	2.961	-	0.00%	Current Project	2021-22
Camdean Nursery Expansion	Opportunities for All		2.007	2.007	-	0.00%	Current Project	2021-22
Touch Primary School Extension	Opportunities for All		2.738	2.738	-	0.00%	Current Project	2021-22
Halbeath Nursery Expansion	Opportunities for All		3.709	3.709	-	0.00%	Current Project	2021-22
Pitcorthie Nursery Expansion	Opportunities for All		3.427	3.427	-	0.00%	Current Project	2021-22
Lochgelly North Nursery Expansion	Opportunities for All		2.802	2.802	-	0.00%	Current Project	2021-22
Guardbridge Primary School Extension	Opportunities for All		1.769	1.769	-	0.00%	Current Project	2021-22
New Templehall Nursery	Opportunities for All		3.087	3.087	-	0.00%	Current Project	2021-22
New Methilhaven Nursery	Opportunities for All		1.563	1.563	-	0.00%	Current Project	2022-23
Total Major Capital Projects over £1.000m		9.620	27.532	27.879	0.347	1.26%		
Total Major Capital Projects		101.611	283.795	295.875	12.080	4.26%		

Expenditure	Current Budget £m	Actual to Date £m	Projected Outturn £m	Projected Variance £m	Projected Outturn as % of Plan
BUILDING FIFE'S FUTURE					
LEVENMOUTH ACADEMY	-	0.003	0.003	0.003	0%
MADRAS COLLEGE NEW BUILD	8.565	5.962	7.494	(1.071)	87%
KILRYMONT LAND ACQUISITION	-	0.002	0.004	0.004	0%
TOTAL BUILDING FIFE'S FUTURE	8.565	5.968	7.502	(1.063)	88%
INVESTMENT THEMES					
ICT PROGRAMME	4.372	3.839	4.199	(0.173)	96%
EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE	3.838	3.702	3.838	-	100%
NURSERIES AND PRIMARIES PRESSURES	0.012	0.270	0.012	(0.000)	98%
PRIMARY SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT	2.120	1.275	1.194	(0.925)	56%
SECONDARY SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT	14.000	10.835	17.509	3.509	125%
EDUCATION ROLLING PROGRAMME	3.500	1.759	3.610	0.110	103%
NURSERY REFURBISHMENT	0.025	0.046	0.056	0.031	224%
TOTAL INVESTMENT THEMES	27.867	21.726	30.419	2.551	109%
CHILDREN'S SERVICES					
LOOKED AFER CHILDREN HOMES REPROVISION	-	-	0.045	0.045	0%
LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN	0.100	0.037	0.079	(0.021)	79%
TOTAL CHILDREN'S SERVICES	0.100	0.037	0.124	0.024	124%
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	36.533	27.730	38.045	1.512	104%

Income	Current Budget £m	Actual to Date £m	Projected Outturn £m	Projected Variance £m	Projected Outturn as % of Plan
BUILDING FIFE'S FUTURE					
BUILDING FIFE'S FUTURE	(0.972)	(1.093)	(0.980)	(0.007)	101%
NURSERIES AND PRIMARIES PRESSURES	(0.851)	(1.925)	(0.851)	-	100%
PRIMARY SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT	(2.051)	-	(2.051)	-	100%
SECONDARY SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT	-	(1.480)	-	-	0%
EDUCATION ROLLING PROGRAMME	-	(0.017)	-	-	0%
TOTAL INCOME	(3.874)	(4.515)	(3.881)	(0.007)	100%

1 March 2022

Agenda Item No. 11

Secondary School Staffwise Survey - Progress

Report by: Carrie Lindsay, Executive Director (Education & Children's Services)

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

This report is to update Committee on the progress made by the Directorate, specifically secondary schools, with regards to the 'Staffwise' survey undertaken in January/February 2019. This report follows on from the report on the survey presented at the Education and Children's Services Committee on the 11th February 2020.

Recommendation(s)

The Education and Children's Services Sub-Committee is invited to:

- (1) consider the progress made by Secondary Schools in progressing their improvement priorities identified through the 2019 Staffwise survey.
- (2) note the additional priorities that have been progressed in our Secondary Settings, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- (3) acknowledge the Directorate's learning from 2019 and the next steps to improve our approaches to the 'what next' sustainable improvement planning process.

Resource Implications

None.

Legal & Risk Implications

No direct legal / risk implications arise from this report.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA Checklist is not required, as this is a performance report

Consultation

Following the reporting of the 2019 Staffwise survey results, there were various consultation activities, including at School Operational Management Meetings and headteacher engagement days, in November 2019.

During the 2019-20 academic session a project group, involving senior managers and wellbeing volunteers, worked collaboratively to develop our Directorate's first Staff Wellbeing strategy. This was highlighted at the committee meeting in September 2019.

Our Staff Wellbeing strategy was highlighted during our Directorate's Wellbeing conference on 18th September 2019 and it was formally published in February 2020. A Project Manager was recruited in April 2020 with the remit of progressing the core projects set out in our strategy.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Our vision, values and principles as an Education & Children's Services Directorate are closely aligned and focused on improving the life chances of all children and young people in Fife. For us to realise these ambitions we need highly skilled, motivated, and committed people working hard to ensure we are providing the best and most effective services we can.
- 1.2 Our first staff wellbeing strategy was commissioned because we recognise that for us to promote and support the physical and emotional wellbeing of the children, young people and families we work with, we need to have a focus on the wellbeing of our staff. Our strategy outlines the importance of supporting both our own and one another's wellbeing, but it is also underpinned by the feedback we receive from our staff, through various staff consultation activities.
- 1.3 A key aspect of our approaches to gathering staff feedback is the Staffwise survey, which enables all employees to share their thoughts and feelings about what it is like to work in our Directorate. Our survey was most recently carried out in spring 2019 and we received our highest response rate to date, of 74%.
- 1.4 Our Staffwise data allows us to identify key emerging themes across our Directorate but also enables us to monitor establishment level responses, which we can use to inform local plans to support our staff more effectively. It is expected that all schools and teams identify and acknowledge areas for improvement and that these are reflected in team and school improvement plans.
- 1.5 At the beginning of 2020, the Committee members sought further information from the Directorate, specifically on the 2019 survey results relating to the Secondary school sector, given that these were generally scoring lower than the other sectors.
- 1.6 Secondary school staff completed Staffwise at a time of a significant managing change process in 2019. This focused on restructuring all secondary school management levels to align with their allocated budgets. At this time, there was also the potential for national industrial action due to pay and workload disputes relating to our teachers.
- 1.7 Given that our secondary sector scored notably lower than other sectors on key areas aligning with the Health and Safety Executive Management Standards and our own organisations behavioural framework, it was agreed that we would monitor the progress of their action plans.
- 1.8 Circumstances have meant that by the time our next Staffwise survey was live, we had approached a three-year cycle, as opposed to our preferred biennial approach, as between January and February 2021 we were experiencing the national lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a Directorate we provided staff with alternative opportunities to provide us with feedback, delivered through our 'Listening to and Learning from Feedback' staff wellbeing project. It was, therefore, agreed that Staffwise should be delayed.

- 1.9 Additionally, our wider organisation has gathered staff feedback through the Heartbeat survey. As a Directorate, we felt it important that Staffwise did not conflict with the Heartbeat survey, and so it was agreed that we would postpone Staffwise until February 2022.
- 1.10 Therefore, as we are not able, at this point, to analyse progress through a direct comparison of Staffwise data, we have supported our secondary settings to report on their 2019 action plans though using 'You said, we did' and 'RAG status' submissions.

2.0 Context

- 2.1 Our secondary headteachers have taken the Staffwise survey outcomes seriously and have proactively sought to improve the areas identified, informed by their own settings data. This has complemented our Directorate strategic approach and has ensured that, across all services, we are implementing the staff wellbeing strategy and all core aspects of this.
- 2.2 In forming their 2019/20 improvement plans, all schools were required to consider their Staffwise results and the workable proposals that would help progress their own identified improvement areas. Communication, workload demands and positive relationships and behaviours (between staff and between staff and pupils) were identified as emerging themes across almost all secondary schools.
- 2.3 Education Managers and officers engaged with secondary headteachers and requested that they provide high level information in the format, 'you said, we did' to capture definitive actions to be progressed between spring 2019 and the next Staffwise survey window. To ensure further transparency of each settings results, it was requested that leadership teams share the results with their staff group and then work together to identify two or three key areas where there was a strong feeling that improvement was required.
- 2.4 **Appendix A** summarises the proposals made by each secondary school to address concerns raised, and the associated tasks. The 'you said, we did' submissions and the subsequent analysis of this was completed in March 2020. Further detail of how these objectives were to be implemented were recorded in the 2019/20 school improvement plans, which were examined by our Heads of Service.

3.0 What our secondary schools have done - Staffwise

- 3.1 As a follow up to the March 2020 submissions, and because Staffwise was not going live during 2021, all schools completed a RAG status update in November 2021. These updates outlined the progress made against all of their improvement area priorities and also any other staff wellbeing work developed in response to the pandemic. **Appendix B** provides a summary of progress made against the 2019 Staffwise priorities.
- 3.2 All schools have provided evidence of progress against at least one of the Health and Safety Executive management standards or our own organisation's Behavioural framework, How We Work Matters. These variables are closely aligned with workplace stress and workplace ethos and cultures.
- 3.3 Of the schools who identified change as an improvement priority, the majority have progressed items through their action plans. This specifically relates to managing change processes. These items include:
- Structural changes to support sustainable staffing structures.
 - Significant changes to school-based processes and policies (e.g. Relationships and Behaviour).

- Reduced bureaucracy (e.g. removal of self-evaluation wheels).
- Ongoing consultation with all staff on the key priorities for the school (developing empowerment and ownership).
- Reducing the number of priorities and a focus on our core business.
- Introduction of a Leadership of Change Policy.

3.4 Of those secondary schools where control was highlighted as an improvement area, the majority have progressed associated items in their improvement plans. This relates to a persons perceived control of the way they carry out their role and remit.

- Ensuring all staff have an opportunity to engage with the planned improvements to school vision, values and aims.
- A clear remit for the Pupil Support Officer role has been developed and is now in use within the school.
- Invitation to contribute to a “suggestion box” on this issue (which could be anonymous, or through the union representative).

3.5 Support, and line management support, featured in a number of secondary school action plans. Of those schools, the majority developed and progressed proposals against this item. These proposals include:

- Improved ‘team approach’ taken to School Working Time Agreement resulting in increased Communication Strategy sessions.
- Implementation of a new leadership structure across school.
- Change to support structure, staffing and layout to extend the support provision.
- Working time agreement updated to allow for additional meetings.
- Whole school planning calendar which assists staff in forward planning and highlights any potential pinch points in the year (mindful not to add further layers).
- Regular PT Curriculum meetings have contributed to clearer and more direct message around SQA changes and presentation procedures.
- Developed roles and responsibilities for PTC in supporting Relationships for Learning practice guidelines.
- All PTCs have put in place a mechanism for staff to communicate concerns on a weekly basis.

3.6 Most of our schools’ progressed actions focused on improving relationships and behaviours (staff-staff and staff-pupil) in their own settings. These were highlighted as being a green or amber status in our RAG submissions, indicating that these schools had fully implemented their changes or that this was an ongoing process.

- Better Relationships, Better Learning, Better Behaviour (BRBLBB) Guidelines.
- Staff and departments worked constructively with the behaviour consultant to support their own professional development.
- Professional learning: De-escalation techniques/ self-regulation and neural biology of behaviour.
- Implementation of positive behaviour policy.
- Improved visibility of Senior Leadership Team.
- Developed and implemented standard for learning and teaching

- Staff HWB day during in-service day.
- Staff newsletter promoting weekly classes for colleagues.

3.7. Almost all secondary schools identified their communication methods and approaches as areas that they wanted to improve. Of those schools, the majority made progress by implementing changes that ensured staff felt better informed on key issues.

- Implementation of the learning tracker to share learning feedback between pupils and staff.
- Weekly e-bulletin to all staff and wider community.
- Use of Forms to gather views and staff given the opportunity to feedback on all significant areas.
- Improved recognition opportunities being offered across the school.
- Publish daily school / guidance bulletin and weekly headteacher update.
- Guidance teachers – improved communication and links made with wellbeing indicators for staff.
- Weekly comms meetings with immediate minutes for all staff.
- Staff wellbeing sessions taking place across the session (feedback).
- Clarity regarding vision of school and purpose of new initiatives.
- Established Communication working group.
- Daily bulletin now on app every day. Staff, learners and parents access through App.

3.8 The majority of our settings identified demands (workload) as a key issue for staff and one that required attention through their improvement plans. Of those schools, most have been able to evidence that they have developed and progressed workable proposals in response to this area.

- More opportunities for collegiate working & collaboration in School WTA.
- Whole staff meeting & faculty meetings to discuss workload – highlighting monitoring, tracking and reporting.
- Exploring ways of cutting down administrative tasks, including emails, which detract from learning and teaching.
- Workload is regularly discussed, and tackled, via staff, PTC and Trade Union meetings.
- Created a staff consultative group to assist with looking at workload.
- Tackling Bureaucracy – Bag It Bin It exercise with all staff.

3.9 Of the schools who identified their physical working environment as a key theme for their staff, the majority reported key changes in response to their Staffwise comments. For example:

- A significant part of our school has been refurbished.
- Agreement to resource each room in a similar way and to label resources.
- PE changing rooms have been updated (new ceilings, benches, painting, new lighting).

- Commitment to continue to maintain and refresh the school building and equipment to a high standard.
- 3.10 Workplace ethos and cultures, and improving those, are a focus through our organisation's Behavioural framework, *How We Work Matters*. Less than half of our secondary schools identified this as an area for improvement and, of those schools, most progressed items in their action plans. For example:
- Made staff wellbeing and our school value of 'respect' a key focus of our School Improvement Plan.
 - Trained mental health First Aiders in our staff.
 - Wellbeing focus – in particular mental wellbeing for staff.
 - New social committee with initiatives for staff.
 - Staff wellbeing sessions taking place across the session.
 - More opportunities to network e.g. Cake and catchup with departments taking turns to host.
 - Formed a staff wellbeing committee.
- 3.11 A Few of our secondary schools identified role clarity as an area that required further attention through their improvement plans. Of those that did, all were able to make positive changes. For example:
- Too many projects running simultaneously – narrowed these.
 - Two extra in service days being given over to faculty development priorities.
 - Planned out collegiate time so that significant time is being given to developing learning and teaching practice.

4.0 What our secondary schools have done – COVID

- 4.1 As with staff in all settings, the COVID pandemic placed our secondary school staff under increased levels of stress and anxiety. Dealing with personal and professional challenges and adapting to new ways of living and working, while being expected to facilitate high quality learning, has had an impact on the wellbeing of many staff.
- 4.2 In addition to the progress made in the improvement priorities linked to their 2019 Staffwise data, our secondary schools developed a number of proposals in response to the pandemic, to further support staff.
- 4.3 In analysing the qualitative returns from each secondary school, the COVID response priorities have been grouped into the following themes, as shown in **Figure 1**. **Appendix C** provides further information on the COVID response activities for each Secondary setting.
- Listening to Staff
 - Professional Learning
 - Wellbeing Programmes / Initiatives
 - Communication
 - Signposting
 - Support
 - Relationships / Connecting

- 4.4 The majority of schools ensured that there were varying 'Listening to Staff' methods available for staff to share feedback on key topics, such as their support, workload and the impact of the pandemic. These opportunities were important to ensure staff felt valued, but also to allow secondary schools to adopt a data informed approach to providing additional support to staff.
- 4.5 Professional learning was a key theme identified by schools, with staff requesting opportunities to engage in relevant CPD. All schools provided their staff with an opportunity to engage in professional learning, covering a range of topics relating to wellbeing and mental health.
- 4.6 Self-care strategies was another topic that secondary school staff requested further information on, and this data was grouped as Wellbeing Programmes / Initiatives. The Five Ways to Wellbeing are a set of evidence-based public mental health messages aimed at improving mental health and wellbeing. They are simple and proven actions to help people find balance, build resilience and boost mental health and wellbeing. All of our secondary schools developed initiatives aligned with at least one of the 5 ways – connect, learn, give, be active and take notice.
- 4.7 During a time where there was an overwhelming amount of information circulating, it was difficult for staff to feel fully informed and clear on what was expected of them. Communication was, therefore, highlighted by the majority of schools as an area that required focus. The majority of schools made changes to their internal processes for sharing information and key messages with their staff, using platforms that were less familiar before the pandemic.
- 4.8 Changes to communication processes are also linked to the next theme of data, signposting. It's been crucial, over the past twenty months, to ensure that our staff have an awareness of where to access the support they are entitled to as Fife Council employees. From an Education and Children's Services perspective, it's been important to highlight our own staff wellbeing projects and the wider organisations support services. All of our secondary schools have reinforced this in their COVID response work.
- 4.9 Support from management and from peers was another important theme for our secondary schools, and links to the Health and Safety Executive management standards. All of our schools made changes to the processes used to support our staff, by introducing key changes and new measures.
- 4.10 It was not uncommon for staff to feel disconnected from each other during the pandemic, and this was particularly challenging for new staff and for those in a new setting. This area was highlighted in a third of our secondary school covid response plans, and all of those settings implemented measures to contribute towards this priority.

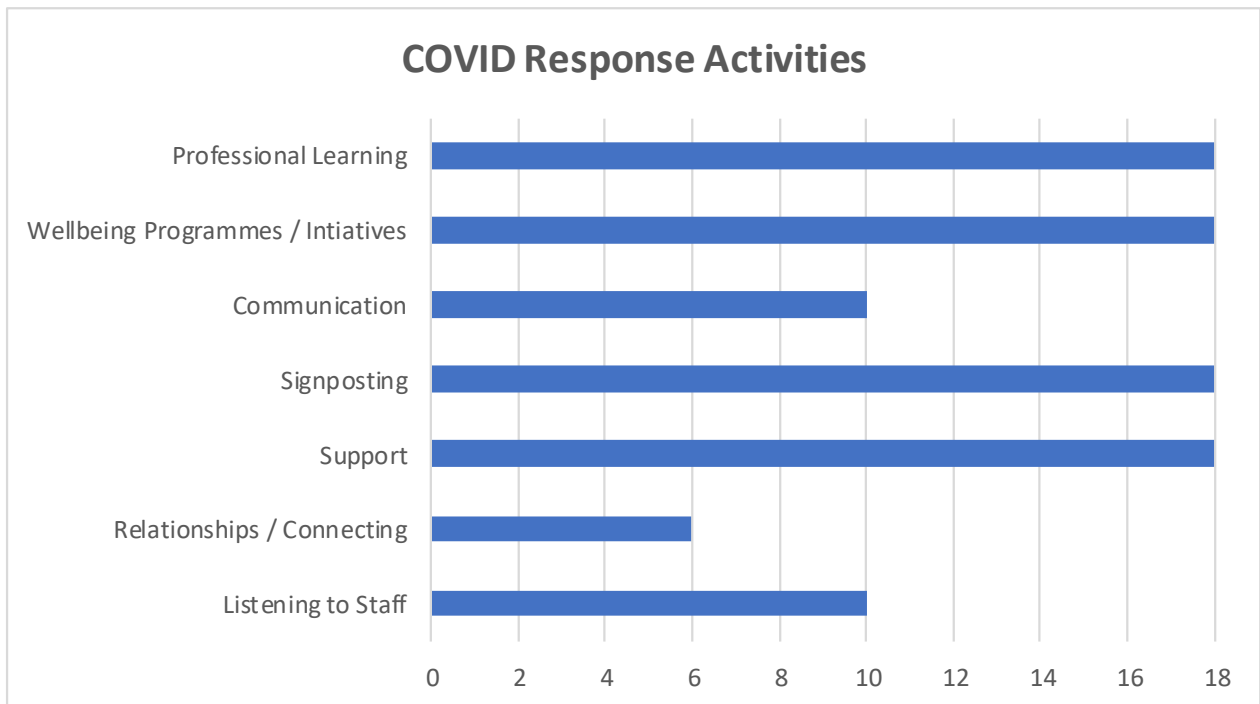


Figure 1. Themes identified through qualitative analysis of secondary school RAG status returns

5.0 Staff Wellbeing Representatives

- 5.1 Shortly after the publication of our Staff Wellbeing Strategy in February 2020, we were placed in a national lockdown. At that point it was important to re-shape our immediate priorities and ensure that we were supporting staff with the challenges presented by the pandemic.
- 5.2 One way that we sought to achieve this was by identifying and recruiting a staff wellbeing representative in all schools, teams and centres. As a Directorate, our intention was for this to be a helpful resource for our settings and, to ensure that we achieved this, a short life project group was formed to agree on the role descriptor and specific responsibilities.
- 5.3 It was agreed that the objective of these roles should be to raise the profile of our strategy in all settings, ensure peers have an awareness of universal, additional and intensive supports for staff and to review the effectiveness of their own settings approach to staff wellbeing. The associated responsibilities were finalised as:
- Connect school, team, centre to Staff Wellbeing Strategy.
 - Cascade all relevant staff wellbeing information to peers.
 - Work with HT / manager to ensure local staff wellbeing approaches remain on team's agenda.
 - Share progress on local staff wellbeing approaches to help highlight examples of effective practice.
 - Ensure ongoing opportunities for peers to be listened to and their views acted upon.
 - Attend optional ECS staff wellbeing representative development sessions (four per year).

- 5.4 To date, most of our Secondary settings have identified and recruited their staff wellbeing representative. We now plan to form a Secondary School Staff Wellbeing Representative network to help us build on the momentum and the work developed in our secondaries over the past two years. These roles will also be central to the 2022 Staffwise process to further improve our settings' approaches to progressing their improvement priorities, developed in response to feedback from their staff.

6.0 Case Study: Glenrothes High School

Background

- 6.1 It became apparent, based on the Staffwise feedback and the context of life in schools during the pandemic, that health and wellbeing for staff was a concern and that this should be considered a priority.
- 6.2 As the appointed staff wellbeing representative and strategic lead for health and wellbeing, I aligned the Staffwise feedback and the anecdotal evidence of issues linked to health and wellbeing in the staff body. After carrying out an initial analysis of the feedback and concerns raised with the health and wellbeing working group the decision was made to incorporate this into our improvement priorities as a standalone strand.
- 6.3 Guided by the Staffwise survey responses and the general feedback from the working group, a comprehensive staff wellbeing survey was created. This survey allowed staff the opportunity to feedback either openly or privately on their health and wellbeing. The Form was designed to gain as much information as possible, without being onerous to staff.

Sample of Form

2. How well do you feel you are coping with the demands of work at the moment? *

One = not going well - five = going very well



3. Is there anything in particular, at work, that is causing difficulties? *

Enter your answer

4. How well are you feeling in general this term? *

One - not going well - five = going very well



The Full Picture

- 6.4 Staff were asked to rate their wellbeing in relation to their role within the school and their life outside. Staff were asked to comment on any element in each area that was causing stress or concern. In addition, staff were offered the opportunity to have a health and wellbeing chat with their link Depute Headteacher or another member of the Senior leadership Team if that was more appropriate or requested.

The Results

- 6.5 The overall results provided excellent data regarding overall levels of wellbeing and particular areas of concern. We identified some key trends linked to workload, behavioural issues and staff morale. In addition, we were able to support individuals who raised specific issues either linked to school or to other aspects of their life. We also followed up by carrying out a health and wellbeing meeting with every member of staff who requested a one-to-one meeting. The scope of these meetings differed significantly depending on the needs of the individual involved.

Individual Support

- 6.6 An example of an individualised health and wellbeing support plan came about through one of the follow up conversations. During one of the requested follow up sessions a member of staff raised a concern about their working environment. They do not have their own room so work in many classrooms. This has meant that their resources are kept in a centralised place. Unfortunately, this centralised room had to be repurposed meaning that the member of staff could only access the room at certain times of the day. To support this member of staff they were given half a day out of class to ensure that they had time to sort through their resources. The required resources have now been moved to another area that we have reorganised as a workspace. This member of staff continues to have wellbeing check ins with their Depute Headteacher link on a fortnightly basis.

Additional Support

- 6.7 In addition, some staff have been offered individual coaching sessions and/or weekly check ins depending on what works best for them. All staff were provided with clear guidance of how to access counselling through the Fife Council system, to ensure that support was available if required.

Universal Support

- 6.8 To support staff health and wellbeing across the school we organised a socially distanced staff coffee afternoon, an input from the Hive of Wellbeing, a secret friend system, email free – feel good Friday on the last Friday of the month, additional professional learning on this key area, signposted staff towards supports, wellbeing hampers, eLearning sessions and readings that staff may find useful and implemented a Random Acts of Kindness fortnight.

Conclusion

- 6.9 We are continuing to work on the key themes identified in the health and wellbeing survey moving forward as a school and will analyse the data from the Staffwise survey as it becomes available.

7.0 Next Steps

- 7.1 We will compare the 2022 secondary school Staffwise data with the results of the 2019 survey, to further analyse the progress that our settings have made in the past three years.

- 7.2 A network of secondary school staff wellbeing representatives will be established to ensure:
- Our secondary schools are better connected to our staff wellbeing strategy and its core projects.
 - There is a shared responsibility for staff wellbeing, broader than our senior leadership teams.
 - There is further support for peers through signposting to all relevant supports for our staff.
 - There are opportunities for us to identify and share examples of effective practice specifically in our secondary schools.
 - There are opportunities for us to identify and address challenges that may be specific to our secondary settings.
- 7.3 We are planning to host workshops for our senior leaders focused on using our Staffwise data for sustainable improvement planning. We have acknowledged that there needs to be further support for our senior leaders in the 'what next' part of the process, ensuring that our staff have an awareness of how their setting's data has been used to inform decision making.
- 7.4 The funding for the Project Manager – Staff Wellbeing post has been extended until August 2022, to consolidate the existing work and to support the process of sustainable improvement planning.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 Our secondary headteachers have been committed to progressing their own settings improvement priorities identified through their 2019 Staffwise returns. Although it can be difficult to listen to feedback, the responses were taken seriously in each of our schools and workable proposals were identified to address the themes in the data.
- 8.2 Shortly after agreeing the 2020 action plans, we were placed in a national lockdown which presented our staff with the challenges of adapting to new ways of living and working. Despite this, all of our secondary schools progressed the majority of their own settings 2019 improvement priorities.
- 8.3 In addition to this, a significant amount of work was developed to support staff, in response to the pandemic, in all of our secondary schools, as summarised in **Appendix C**.
- 8.4 Work will be undertaken to consider arrangements to ensure continued leadership and support for ongoing developments for monitoring progress.

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Summary of progress made by schools to address concerns raised, and the associated tasks (18/19)

Appendix B – Summary of 18/19 concerns, associated tasks and the November 2021 RAG Status updates

Appendix C – Summary of COVID response activities in Secondary settings

Background Papers

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973:-

None.

Report Contact

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Appendix A – Summary of progress made by schools to address concerns raised, and the associated tasks (18/19)

School	Communication		Workload/demands/control/ understanding		Supporting learners		Change		Environment		Ethos		Leadership		Relationships/line management	
	89%	Action	67%	Action	39%	Action	33%	Action	28%	Action	28%	Action	22%	Action	11%	Action
Auchmuty	1	develop existing approaches							1	maintain existing approaches					1	set up HWB group
Balwearie			1	staff support & planning	1	training and self evaluation			1	Planned improvements						
Beath	1	regular updates and gatherings	1	whole school focus	1	set up positive relationships group										
Bell Baxter	1	whole range of activity via SIP	1	systems and activities review			1	establish wellbeing group, management of pace			1	whole range of activity through SIP				
Dunfermline	1	Improved comms at all levels	1	focus on discussion and support			1	Streamlined improvement plans			1	positive behaviour and relationships policy				
Glenrothes			1	set up consultative group							1	Focus in SIP				
Glenwood	1	develop existing approaches			1	Training and setting expectations	1	whole range of activity								
Inverkeithing	1	develop existing approaches									1	set up group				
Kirkcaldy	1	improve data sharing	1	whole school approach (mainly around exams)												
Levenmouth	1	introduce weekly update	1	workshop activities			1	whole range of activity								
Lochgelly	1	sharing information earlier	1	prelim diet reviewed					1	potential refurb of areas and heating resolution						
Madras	1	Focus priority under 1.3. leadership of change			1	discuss with individual departments										
Queen Anne	1	whole range of activity	1	collegiate activity	1	Training, guidance, expectation setting, LGBT Developments	1	bedding in following restructure					1	Investment following leadership restructure		
St Andrews	1	weekly briefings									1	New Relationships Policy	1	Review of policies and HWB group		
St Columbas	1	whole range of activity	1	whole range of activities	1	Training and process review							1	whole range of engagement activities		
Viewforth	1	set up a working group	1	set up an working group	1	set up a working group										
Woodmill	1	review approaches through return to site							1	look at whole school resources. Refresh of building			1	develop shared expectation and standard		
Waid	1	launch of daily bulletin and app use	1	Narrowing of school priorities			1	reconfigured collegiate work	1	standardise room facilities					1	develop leadership capacity of PTCs

Appendix B – Summary of 18/19 concerns, associated tasks and the November 2021 RAG Status updates

	Communication		Workload/demands/control/ understanding		Supporting learners		Change		Environment		Ethos		Leadership		Relationships/line management	
School	89%	Action	67%	Action	39%	Action	33%	Action	28%	Action	28%	Action	22%	Action	11%	Action
Auchmuty	1	develop existing approaches							1	maintain existing approaches					1	set up HWB group
Balwearie			1	staff support & planning	1	training and self evaluation			1	Planned improvements						
Beath	1	regular updates and gatherings	1	whole school focus	1	set up positive relationships group										
Bell Baxter	1	whole range of activity via SIP	1	systems and activities review			1	establish wellbeing group, management of pace			1	whole range of activity through SIP				
Dunfermline	1	Improved comms at all levels	1	focus on discussion and support			1	Streamlined improvement plans			1	positive behaviour and relationships policy				
Glenrothes			1	set up consultative group							1	Focus in SIP				
Glenwood	1	develop existing approaches			1	Training and setting expectations	1	whole range of activity								
Inverkeithing	1	develop existing approaches									1	set up group				
Kirkcaldy	1	improve data sharing	1	whole school approach (mainly around exams)												
Levenmouth	1	introduce weekly update	1	workshop activities			1	whole range of activity								
Lochgelly	1	sharing information earlier	1	prelim diet reviewed					1	potential refurb of areas and heating resolution						
Madras	1	Focus priority under 1.3, leadership of change			1	discuss with individual departments										Staff Wellbeing Representative
Queen Anne	1	whole range of activity	1	collegiate activity	1	Training, guidance, expectation setting, LGBT Developments	1	bedding in following restructure					1	Investment following leadership restructure		
St Andrews	1	weekly briefings									1	New Relationships Policy	1	Review of policies and HWB group		
St Columbas	1	whole range of activity	1	whole range of activities	1	Training and process review							1	whole range of engagement activities		
Viewforth	1	set up a working group	1	set up an working group	1	set up a working group										Staff Wellbeing Committee
Woodmill	1	review approaches through return to site							1	look at whole school resources. Refresh of building			1	develop shared expectation and standard		
Waid	1	launch of daily bulletin and app use	1	Narrowing of school priorities			1	reconfigured collegiate work	1	standardise room facilities					1	develop leadership capacity of PTCs

Appendix C – Summary of COVID response activities in Secondary settings

	Communication		Listening to Staff		Professional Learning		Wellbeing Programmes / Initiatives		Signposting		Support		Relationships / Connecting	
School	55%	Action	55%	Action	100%	Action	100%	Action	100%	Action	100%	Action	33%	Action
Auchmuty	1	Bulletin, private HWB group facebook page	1	HWB Questionnaire	1	SW Rep Development sessions, CAMHS session, Mental Health First Aid	1	Various staff classes	1	ECS Supports and FC Health, Safety and Wellbeing Hub	1	Staff Wellbeing Representative	1	Forming Peer Support structure
Balwearie			1	Feedback from HWB Committee	1	Being Mindful of Our Wellbeing	1	Professional Learning	1	ECS Supports and FC Health, Safety and Wellbeing Hub	1	Staff Wellbeing Representative	1	Staff HWB committee
Beath					1	Mental Health First Aid, Mentally Healthy Workplaces	1	Professional Learning	1	ECS Supports and FC Health, Safety and Wellbeing Hub	1	Staff Wellbeing Representative		
Bell Baxter					1	Being Mindful of Our Wellbeing	1	Social Committee, Secret Friend, staff classes	1	ECS Supports and FC Health, Safety and Wellbeing Hub	1	Staff Wellbeing Representative		
Dunfermline					1	Wellbeing Conference, Positive Steps to Increase Mental Wellbeing	1	Professional Learning	1	ECS Supports and FC Health, Safety and Wellbeing Hub	1	Staff Wellbeing Representative		
Glenrothes	1	Bulletin	1	Staff Survey	1	SW Rep Development sessions, Mental Health First Aid, Online MH Awareness	1	Hive of Wellbeing, 'Going Home Checklist'	1	ECS supports, MH First Aid, Counselling, PAM Assist	1	Staff Wellbeing Representative		
Glenwood	1	Weekly Bulletin, Wellbeing Wakelet	1	Relationships with professional associations	1	Online MH Awareness	1	Wellbeing coffee mornings	1	ECS Supports and FC Health, Safety and Wellbeing Hub	1	Time to talk meetings		
Inverkeithing	1	Sway Bulletin	1	Staff Wellbeing Meetings	1	SW Rep Development sessions, Being Mindful of Our Wellbeing, Mentally Healthy Workplaces, Online MH Awareness	1	Professional Learning	1	ECS Universal supports, corporate HS & Wellbeing information	1	Staff Wellbeing Representative	1	Get to know' photos of all staff
Kirkcaldy	1	Bulletin	1	Suggestion box	1	Mentally Healthy Workplaces	1	Professional Learning	1	ECS Supports and FC Health, Safety and Wellbeing Hub	1	Relationship and work with professional associations		

Levenmouth		Weekly Update	1	Open door policy	1	SW Rep Development sessions, Being Mindful of our wellbeing, CAMHS	1	Wellbeing & Mental Health Awareness Programme	1	ECS Supports and FC Health, Safety and Wellbeing Hub	1	Staff Wellbeing Representative		
Lochgelly			1	Comments box, Wellbeing standing agenda item	1	SW Rep Development sessions, Wellbeing Conference, Mentally Healthy Workplaces		Hive of Wellbeing inset, praise postcards, Wellbeing Wednesday	1	ECS Supports and FC Health, Safety and Wellbeing Hub	1	Staff Wellbeing Representative	1	Colleague walk and talks, supervision time
Madras	1	What's on' weekly newsletter, noticeboard			1	SW Rep Development sessions, Being Mindful of Our Wellbeing, Online MH Awareness	1	Professional Learning	1	ECS Supports and FC Health, Safety and Wellbeing Hub	1	Staff Wellbeing Representative	1	Staff HWB working group
Queen Anne	1	Weekly Bulletin			1	Being Mindful of Our Wellbeing, Mental Health First Aid	1	Staff Mental Health Awareness Event	1	ECS Supports and FC Health, Safety and Wellbeing Hub	1	Staff Wellbeing Representative		
St Andrews			1	Forming 'Promoting Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing' working group	1	Ed Psychology - Promoting Positive Relationships, Being Mindful of Our Wellbeing	1	Professional Learning	1	ECS Supports and FC Health, Safety and Wellbeing Hub	1	Staff Wellbeing Representative		
St Columbas					1	SW Rep Development sessions, Being Mindful of Our Wellbeing	1	Staff Welfare Strategy	1	ECS Supports and FC Health, Safety and Wellbeing Hub	1	Staff Wellbeing Representative		
Viewforth	1	Bulletin, Wellbeing Wakelet	1	Staff Consultancy Group	1	SW Rep Development sessions	1	Weekly classes	1	ECS Supports and FC Health, Safety and Wellbeing Hub	1	Staff Wellbeing Committee		
Woodmill					1	SW Rep Development sessions, Wellbeing Conference, Being Mindful of Our Wellbeing, Mental Health First Aid	1	Professional Learning	1	ECS Supports and FC Health, Safety and Wellbeing Hub	1	Staff Wellbeing Representative, relationships with professional association		
Waid	1	Bulletin, School App			1	Coaching Approaches	1	Professional Learning	1	ECS Supports and FC Health, Safety and Wellbeing Hub	1	Staff Wellbeing Representative	1	Coaching, Staff Ethos Committee, peer to peer observation

1 March 2022

Agenda Item No 12

Swimming: Offering to Young People

Report by: Carrie Lindsay, Executive Director, Education & Children's Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise the committee on the partnership approach to providing a range of Swimming opportunities offered to Children & Young People in Fife and proposed suggested next steps.

Recommendation(s)

The Education and Children's Services Committee is invited to:

- a. Note the approach to both universal and additional swimming provision offered to children and young people.
- b. Endorse proposed next steps to continue to identify young people who identify as non-swimmers and support a targeted approach to future provision.

Resource Implications

In the financial year of 2021/22 £16,664 was allocated to support additional Swimming provision within Education & Children's Services. To date £3,384 has been used due to the implications of Covid 19.

Legal & Risk Implications

The Covid-19 context has impacted upon everyone's way of life, leading to a reduction in provision over several years. Sport & Physical Activity for young people is critical as we know the greater benefits it has on both young people's mental and physical wellbeing. Greater collaboration across services will be crucial to ensuring provision is increased and sustained.

Impact Assessment

There are no direct legal/risk implications arising from the report.

Consultation

Pupil activity data is currently collected for school based extra-curricular provision. To establish a more holistic profile of pupils' activity prior to the pandemic Active Schools started recording participation in community activities for every Primary School pupil. This enabled us to identify the pupils who do not currently engage in sport and physical activity in or out of school to better programme provision. Due to the pandemic this has not been possible to collect. Starting in February 2022 community data recording will begin again capturing;

- Primary pupil's community-based sport & physical activities
- Primary pupil's ability to swim
- Primary pupil's ability to ride a bike

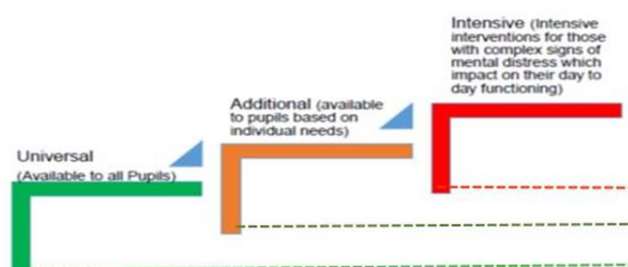
This data will be entered into Seemis (Schools Education Information System) and linked to wider achievement within Schools.

Equalities data will also be included in this collection to understand if pupils who share protected characteristics are receiving equitable access to sport & physical activity. These categories include Disability/ASN, Care Experienced and SIMD.

1.0 Context

Introduction

- 1.1 In September 2021 a brief update was brought to the Education and Children's Services committee in relation to the programme for the Administration as part of Culture Sport and Physical Activity that the Administration "would ensure that every child in Fife should be able to swim and ride a bike safely by the time they leave primary school".
- 1.2 This report seeks to provide a more detailed update on the context and progress in relation to swimming provision and will include;
 - Current universal offering provided to young people both within Education & Communities
 - Current additional offering provided to young people both within Education & Communities
 - Collaboration within "Active Fife"
 - Summary of Challenges
 - Next Steps



- 1.3 At present there is no legislative requirement for swimming within the school curriculum but Education & Children's Services through the work of Active Schools ensure both a universal and additional offering to young people.
- 1.4 Although this report will focus on Swimming to note Fife Council has delivered Bikeability Level One and Bikeability Level Two within schools, targeting Primary 6 and Primary 7 and after-school cycling clubs were introduced in April 2021 a partnership approach across Active Schools, Active Communities & Transportation.

Recovery from Covid-19

- 1.5 Supporting the physical wellbeing of young people, continues as a key challenge for both Education, Communities & Fife Sport & Leisure Trust (FSLT) in continued recovery from the impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic.
- 1.6 In order to ensure service design responds to the needs of young people through these unprecedented circumstances it has been crucial to continue to take account of national guidance including the return to sport guidance.
- 1.7 Initial Term 1 2021/22 data collected by Active Schools following 2 years of the pandemic shows an understandable decrease in participants taking part in extra curricular provision:

	2019 Term 1	2020 Term 1	2021 Term 1
Sessions	N/A	N/A	3,391 (95% Purely Voluntary) (31 Different Activities)
Visits	N/A	N/A	78,793 (41% Female)
Participants	13,537	N/A	6,231
Deliverers	947 (86% Volunteers) (318 Secondary Pupils)	N/A	475 (97% Volunteers) (229 Secondary Pupils)
School to Club Links			64

Collaboration - Recovery & Reform

- 1.8 Critical to the recovery of sport & physical activity has been the collaboration between services in particular between Fife Council and Fife Sport & Leisure Trust.
- 1.9 Sport & Physical Activity Strategy; this is a joint strategy which includes Fife's main public sport & leisure providers (Fife Council and Fife Sports & Leisure Trust) and key partners such as NHS Fife, sports councils, sportscotland and disability sport fife.

The leadership group will be accountable for the overall leadership and governance of the strategy, and deliver the vision of '*an Active Fife where everyone has opportunities to be more active, with better health & wellbeing*', supported with the four main ambitions:

- Reduce inequalities in physical activity and sport across Fife
- Increase and sustain physical activity, physical confidence and sport participation
- Build resilient communities that are physically active and participate in sport
- Invest in facilities and infrastructure for physical activity and sport

- 1.10 4DX; Between Fife's public service partners, we have a new 'Wildly Important Goal' (WIG), to '*Increase participation in physical activity & sport from 0 to 1.997m by 30th June 2022*'.

We'll deliver this ambition by utilising Franklin Covey's '4 Disciplines of Execution';

Focus, Leverage, Engagement and Accountability

To support the delivery of our overall WIG, while targeting specific groups, we have agreed the following sub-WIGs as our best bets to ensuring a 'winnable goal':

- Awareness
- Social Connectedness
- Under 18s
- Concessions

1.11 Pan Fife Aquatics - FSLT in December 2020 provided a proposal of operating all Learn to Swim Programmes in Fife, which includes Fife Sports and Leisure Trust and Community Use. The outcome of the proposal was for FSLT to develop a way forward for the implementation of a Fife Wide Learn to Swim Programme. The outcomes would include: Improve the aquatic pathways in Fife, Structure development to support the current programme recovery and expansion in the future and programme development for the recovery and increase in participations in aquatics.

2.0 Universal Swimming Provision

Learn to Swim

2.1 Learn to swim programmes are delivered by FSLT.

2.2 As of 31st December 2021, FSLT Learn to swim schemes have 7,924 customers enrolled, 6,993 enrolled within FSLT schemes and 931 enrolled within community programmes, 2.84% above the overall recovery strategy target. These attendances are the highest numbers to date and a further increase on the previous milestone of 6925 in September 2021.

2.3 At the same period last year 6018 customers were enrolled in the programme, an increase of 975 learners in this period. It is worthwhile noting at the same period last year The Beacon was on a temporary relocated programme to Kirkcaldy with reduced attendances.

Bowhill, Cowdenbeath, Leven and Michael Woods have reached their highest attendances to date also.

2.4 The table below identifies those centres who have exceeded their attendance target and those who are working towards.

Learn to Swim Attendances				
	Venue	Target	Attendances	% +/-
1	Kirkcaldy	700	786	12.29%
2	Leven	560	616	10.00%
3	Michael Woods	1300	1424	9.54%

Learn to Swim Attendances				
	Venue	Target	Attendances	% +/-
4	Bowhill	400	438	9.50%
5	Cowdenbeath	680	728	7.06%
6	Carnegie	1500	1545	3.00%
7	East Sands	570	535	-6.14%
8	Cupar	540	464	-14.07%
9	Beacon	550	457	-16.91%
Total Target - 6800			6993	

2.5 FSLT scheme is SwiMark Plus accredited, the highest accreditation that Scottish Swimming provides to LTS providers.

2.6 The community learn to swim programme has 931 customers enrolled. FSLT has been operating the learn to swim scheme in 5 community use venues since 25th October 2021. Below is a breakdown of the number per scheme:

Community - Learn to Swim Attendances	
Venue	Attendances
Balwearie	160
Glenwood	299
Inverkeithing	232
Lochgelly	115
Woodmill	125
Total	931

2.7 Provision at Lochgelly was paused due to pool issues and lessons were moved to Bowhill. There were 27 occasions where swimming lessons were cancelled, in the other venues.

2.8 Active Schools continue to promote learn to swim provision within Schools and signpost families during term time and holiday periods.

Quid a Kid-Universal Holiday Provision

2.9 Quid a Kid swimming has been available in previous School holiday periods for juniors aged 17 and under to pay £1 to swim in FSLT venues at the weekends.

3.0 Additional Swimming Provision Offers

Water Confidence Programme

- 3.1 Active Schools provided a holiday provision water confidence programme which was delivered over multiple sites in the Kirkcaldy & Dunfermline areas during the Summer of 2021.
- 3.2 Consultation was held with families who had pupils in P5-S1 to identify non-swimmers within these localities. Families residing in SIMD 1-3 areas and/or who accessed free school meals were targeted as priority with cost being identified as a key barrier.
- 3.3 Provisional plans had been put in place to provide an opportunity for 30 pupils however 242 notes of interest were submitted. Active Schools Co-ordinators worked with community use and fife sport and leisure trust partners to secure pool time to expand the offering to as many families as possible.
- 3.4 Responses came from 20+ local schools with 43% of these families residing in SIMD 1-3 areas, they were deemed priority and received a place. 163 families in total accepted their allocate space across the additional sessions that were organised.
- 3.5 In addition to these mainstream sessions a disability / ASN specific session was provided to cater for a smaller group of pupils who required more intensive support.
- 3.6 All participants received water and a healthy snack after their session as well as a pair of goggles for those who did not have their own. All pupils were signposted to Fife Sport & Leisure Trust 'splash out for nowt' and 'quid a kid' provisions as well as community use swimming provision where free or discounted sessions were available.
- 3.7 Of the evaluations received 85% of the pupils had never attended a swimming lesson before and 100% of the participants cited cost as the main barrier to their participation. Below are some further reflections from these evaluations:

	Not confident at all	Somewhat confident	Don't know	Confident	Very confident
Water confidence before programme	47.3%	42%	5.2%	5.2%	0%
Water confidence after programme	0%	36.8%	5.2%	52.6%	10.5%
Parent's confidence to attend a pool with	0%	52.6%	5.2%	36.8%	5.2%

	Not confident at all	Somewhat confident	Don't know	Confident	Very confident
your child before the programme					
Parent's confidence to attend a pool with your child after the programme	0%	10.5%	5.2%	68.4%	15.7%

3.8 Water confidence sessions have continued to develop through Active Schools in extra curricular time within limited Schools due to Covid 19.

PEF

3.9 A number of schools across Fife have used funding sources such as the pupil equity funding to provide swimming lessons for their pupils throughout the school day. This is an option to Head Teachers in considering how best to meet the needs of their young people. Average numbers of young people involved can be noted below:

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
	207	40	103	65	48	37

3.10 Numbers can only be provided up to academic year 2018/19 as this provision has been impacted by the pandemic.

ASN

3.11 Support has been provided through instructor time costs prior to the pandemic to allow young people from ASN schools and DAS departments to access swimming both in school based pools and local community pools.

3.12 Disability Sport Fife provide community based swimming detailed below:

Swimming	
6+ years Learners with a physical or visual impairment	Tuesday 4.15pm - 4.45pm Michael Woods Sports & Leisure Centre
6+ years Learners with a physical or visual impairment > Click to download fact sheet	Wednesday 5.00pm - 5.30pm Michael Woods Sports & Leisure Centre
Ability based session Improver swimmers with disabilities > Click to download fact sheet	Wednesday 5.30pm - 6.00pm Michael Woods Sports & Leisure Centre
Ability based session Improver swimmers with disabilities > Click to download fact sheet	Wednesday 5.00pm - 6.00pm Michael Woods Sports & Leisure Centre
12+ years Improver swimmers with disabilities > Click to download fact sheet	Thursday 5.15pm - 7.15pm Inverkeithing High School
14+ years Improver swimmers with disabilities	Friday 1.00pm - 2.00pm Kirkcaldy Leisure Centre

Swimming Clubs

3.13 From the Learn to Swim programme an established and implemented clear progression pathway to all aquatic based clubs throughout Fife has been developed so young people can transition and continue progressing.

3.14 The breakdown of Aquatic clubs within Fife is detailed in the table below:

West	Central	East
Carnegie SC	Kinross Otters (P&K)	East Fife Triathlon Club
Dunfermline ASC	Glenrothes ASC	Step Rock ASC
InCas ASC	Cardenden ASC	Cupar & District SC
Fife Synchro	FINS CSC	St Andrews Uni Saints Swimming Saints Water Polo Tri Club
Dunfermline Water Polo	Burntilsand ASC	
Tri Bridges Club	Glenrothes Tri Club	

Private Providers

- 3.15 A choice for some parents to encourage their child to learn to swim is through a commercial provider, within Fife these include;
- Swimworld
 - Waterbabies
 - Merbabies
 - Turtle Tots
 - Infinity Swim School
 - Swim with Us
 - Octotots

4.0 Summary of Challenges

- 4.1 Covid 19 continues to impact provision within extra curricular time. The pandemic has also impacted the collection of sport and physical activity data within Schools.
- 4.2 Currently decisions about swimming pool provision in new schools are taken on a case by case basis within the Building Fife's Future programme. For example in the case of the Dunfermline Learning Campus, the intention not to include a swimming pool was outlined in the Statutory Consultation Proposal Paper regarding the relocation of St. Columba's RC and Woodmill High Schools.
- 4.3 The outcome of the consultation process was then presented in the Consultation Report, which was considered and approved by the E&CS Sub Committee on 7th September 2021. Under the section 'Fife Council's Response to the Written and Oral Representations made and to the Pupil Consultation' the consultation report stated:
- Swimming Provision and Building Facilities**
Fife Council acknowledges that pupils and parents would prefer to have a new campus complete with a swimming pool. Our recent new build secondary schools have been replaced without swimming pools as most of the large towns within Fife do have access to public swimming pools, including Dunfermline. Fife Council will ensure that, although the new school will have no swimming pool, there will be sufficient PE facilities to deliver the full breadth of the PE curriculum.
- 4.4 Cost of swimming provision in Fife continues to be a barrier to participation and ways to provide swimming to young people who are identified as non swimmers.

5.0 Next Steps

- 5.1 Review and support education programmes that encourage participation of instructors and support staff at all levels to allow for continued provision in particular how to involve young people into employability within Aquatics.
- 5.2 SportScotland & Scottish Swimming are keen to establish some baseline information from each Local Authority on the provision of primary school swimming lessons across Scotland. Discussions are ongoing with Scottish Government about

the potential for a national programme of curriculum-time primary school swimming lessons to help to ensure that all children have the opportunity to learn to swim, and become confident, safer and competent swimmers, before they leave primary school. Fife Council will provide information as required.

- 5.3 Analyse the swimming data collection results for primary school children within Fife and continue to develop pathways for participation for these identified young people.

Appendices

Appendix A: Sport & Physical Activity Strategy Link -

<https://fifecloud.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/edu/as-dc/Reports/Physical%20Activity%20%20Sport%20Strategy%20Final%20Version%20170821.docx?d=wd49b4d51ba2c47028bd166faa5ae6a1c&csf=1&web=1&e=FZXg9f>

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1 March 2022

Agenda Item No. 13

Walked Routes to School Assessment Policy – Update on Programme

Report by: Carrie Lindsay, Executive Director (Education & Children's Services)

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

This report presents an update on the progress relating to implementation of the Walked Routes to Schools Assessment Policy, following the elected member workshops.

Recommendation(s)

The Education and Children's Services Sub-Committee is invited to approve:

- (1) a postponement to the implementation of changes to existing route assessments until the impact of the Under 22 Travel Scheme has been assessed.
- (2) the full implementation of the policy from August 2023.

Resource Implications

The Education & Children's Services and Roads & Transportation Services officers will continue to work on the implementation of this policy. Officer time will be required to implement the recommendations of the proposal and resources will need to be allocated for the implementation, if approved.

Legal & Risk Implications

There continues to be a risk to the Council of a 'do nothing' approach, as the Education (Scotland) Act 1996 requires a Local Authority to have regard to the safety of pupils in relation to their walk route to school. Failing to implement the policy leaves the Council in a vulnerable position and it could legitimately be argued that the Council is failing in its statutory duty to consider safety on an equitable basis. In addition, the Equality Act 2010 places a general duty on Local Authorities to eliminate unlawful discrimination. The Council has already been challenged for failure to have a Walk Routes to School Policy in the past. Despite now having an approved policy, further challenges may succeed for failure to implement it and, again, be escalated to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) and ultimately the Scottish Government.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA was completed as part of the previous Committee paper in March 2019 (see Appendix 1).

Initial consultation included staff in Education & Children's Services, Roads & Transportation Services and Legal Services, plus the Council's Road Safety Organiser, Police Scotland and the Council Communications Officer.

In September 2015, the former Executive Committee agreed the need for a policy and remitted the former Education, Young People, Children & Families Policy Advisory Group (PAG) to establish one that it could approve. This was progressed with Councillors and the PAG until its dissolution in 2017.

The assessment policy was subject to the process of public consultation in the winter of 2018-2019.

Further assessment of the policy was carried out by members of the Scrutiny Committee, on 26 February 2019, and the feedback was incorporated into the Policy which was approved by the Education & Children's Services Committee on 19 March 2019.

With the Covid pandemic delaying implementation in August 2020, a workshop with elected members was carried out in March 2021, followed by individual ward meetings in September 2021 and a further workshop with elected members in January 2022, to provide the outcomes of the outstanding assessments and to consider progressing the implementation of these outcomes.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Education Service is required, in accordance with the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, to provide free transport to school for catchment pupils where the walking distance to school exceeds certain limits. For those living less than the agreed transport entitlement distances, the Council has no legal obligation to provide transport. However, the Education (Scotland) Act 1996 introduced an amendment to the original 1980 Act, as follows:

After section 51(2B) of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 (provision of transport and other facilities) there shall be inserted the following subsection - "(2C) In considering whether to make any arrangements under subsection (1) above in respect of pupils attending schools, an education authority shall have regard to the safety of such pupils."
- 1.2 This infers that each education authority, in determining provision of school transport, must assess the availability of walk routes to schools, for pupils.
- 1.3 Following a complaint to the SPSO, which concluded that the Council should evidence, explicitly, what its position and methodology is regarding walked routes to school, a policy was developed by officers to meet this recommendation. The policy was developed in accordance with *Assessment of Walked Routes to School*, produced by Road Safety GB and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA). On 22 September 2016, the previous Policy Advisory Group agreed to adopt this practice as the Council's methodology for current and future walk route assessments.
- 1.4 A paper was presented to the Education & Children's Services Committee in November 2018, seeking approval to carry out a consultation exercise with parents/carers and stakeholders on the contents of the draft policy. Although this draft policy did not require a statutory consultation in accordance with the Schools (Consultation) Scotland Act, officers carried out this consultation using specific elements of this act, by seeking feedback from interested parties and by holding a number of consultation meetings across Fife to ensure both pupils and other stakeholders had the opportunity to provide feedback.

- 1.5 The findings of the consultation were presented to the Education & Children's Services Committee in January 2019 and a report requesting approval of assessment criteria, methodology and process was detailed within the draft policy. Following feedback from elected members, the draft policy was referred to the Scrutiny Committee. The Scrutiny Committee reviewed the document, on 26 February 2019, and officers accepted the comments and revisions were made to the policy, which was then presented to the Education & Children's Services Committee on 19 March 2019.
- 1.6 On 19 March 2019, the Education & Children's Services Committee agreed:-
- (1) the content of the Walked Routes to Schools - Assessment Policy (attached as Appendix one to the report), as amended in light of the feedback from the Education and Children's Services Committee of 22nd January 2019 and the Scrutiny Committee of 26th February 2019, subject to the further amendment that the Review Panel should always include 3 members of the Committee; and
 - (2) a post implementation review report be submitted to a future meeting of this Committee, after a period of at least one year from implementation, i.e. after August 2020.

2.0 Issues and Options

- 2.1 The walk routes that have been assessed are the identified routes where free transport has been being provided without formal assessment in accordance with the Policy. As new infrastructure had been installed in areas across Fife, the initial reason for granting this free transport might no longer be valid.
- 2.2 The series of walk route assessments were carried out by council officers during the period November 2019 and March 2020, with ward members and a representative of the Parent Council of each individual school invited to observe the assessment.
- 2.3 A summary of the programme is as follows:
- the initial 52 routes outlined in March 2019 were assessed.
 - 29 routes were assessed as unavailable, in line with the Policy, where transport continues to be required. (These assessments were based on preliminary surveys and Google StreetView, which showed significant infrastructure changes would be required to make these routes available.)
 - 23 routes were assessed by officers from Education, Roads & Transportation, Police Scotland and Safer Communities Teams, with different officers assessing the morning and afternoon routes.
 - 7 additional routes were assessed, following requests received since the Policy was agreed i.e. 3 routes for Inverkeithing High School, 2 for Auchmuty High School and one additional route each for Balwearie High School and Waid Academy.
- 2.4 Following the walk route assessments, officers considered concerns raised by Councillors and, as defined in the policy, considered the interaction of site specific factors on some routes.
- 2.5 This led to 4 of the 30 routes being assessed as unavailable. These were:
- Tofthill Estate via the A92 or through Balbirnie to Auchmuty High School
 - Gowkhall to Carnock Primary School
 - East Camps to Carnock Primary School
 - Luscar Garden Lodge/house to Carnock Primary School.
- 2.6 Two of the routes were assessed as partially available. These were:

- Boreland to Dysart Primary School, where the area past the roundabout at Standing Stane Road is unavailable and the route south of the roundabout has been assessed as available
- Piteadie Cottages to Balwearie High School, where the route is available until the footpath disappears.

2.7 Therefore 24 routes were identified as available in accordance with the approved Walk Routes to School Policy.

3.0 Member & Ward Consultation

3.1 As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, progress in the implementation of the changes identified following the officer assessment of the routes was delayed, as officers from both services were responding to the challenges of COVID-19. Subsequently, and in accordance with the decision of this Committee, officers from the Education and Roads & Transportation Services held a workshop with Elected Members, in March 2021, to seek feedback on the outcomes of the assessments. Following this workshop officers were asked to hold ward meetings, to discuss each assessment in detail with the local elected members, and these were held in September 2021.

3.2 At these ward meetings, officers from both services were available to answer questions from elected members, and, where required, further information was then sought on the assessment routes.

3.3 A final workshop was held in January 2022, to allow officers to feedback any areas of concern highlighted from the ward meetings in September 2021. There were no outstanding concerns raised by elected members regarding the following walk route assessments:

- Rosyth to Dunfermline HS
- Liggars Bridge to St Leonards PS
- Dalgety Bay to Inverkeithing HS
- Redcraigs to Kirkcaldy HS
- Strathairly to Kirkton of Largo PS
- Balgone/Craigtoun to Lawhead PS
- Elizabeth Crescent to Newport PS
- Pittenweem to Waid Academy
- Coaltown of Balgonie to Auchmuty HS

3.4 For the remaining 15 routes, officers outlined the reasons why the conclusion was that these routes were assessed as available. These routes were:

- Wellwood to McLean PS
- West Camps to Carnock PS
- Castlandhill Road to Inverkeithing HS
- Admiralty Road to Inverkeithing HS
- High Valleyfield to Torryburn PS
- Ballingry to Lochgelly HS
- East Wemyss to Levenmouth Academy
- Kilrenny to Ansruther PS
- Balgeddie to Glenwood HS
- Balfarg to Glenrothes HS
- Stenton/Finglassie/Lochtyview (old) to Auchmuty HS
- Lochtyview (new), Thornton to Auchmuty HS
- Mountfrost to Auchmuty HS
- Alburne Park/Prestonhall to Carleton PS

- Markinch (Northall Road/Manse Road area) to Auchmuty HS
- 3.5 It was noted that bus services could be removed, or the capacity reduced, now or in the future, where the number of entitled pupils from an area has gone down.
- 3.6 Elected members, at this recent workshop, highlighted concern over the implementation of any change in walk route assessment at the same time as the implementation of the National Entitlement Card (NEC) in Scotland, which allows Under 22s to travel free on local bus services. The Under 22s Free Travel Scheme was introduced on 31 January 2022.
- 3.7 It will be the case that any pupils who stand to lose their current free transport entitlement, because their walk route has now been assessed as available, will be able to apply for a new NEC and continue to travel for free, subject to capacity on any local or school bus service.
- 3.8 Members attending the workshop requested feedback regarding the impact of the Under 22s Free Travel Scheme prior to any decision to implement a change to any current arrangements in place for these assessed routes and prior to any subsequent removal, or reduction in capacity, of a school bus, now or in the future, where the number of pupils from an area is reduced.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 A policy for assessing walk routes to school was approved in March 2019 which would:
- future-proof the Council's walked route assessment standards
 - ensure up-to-date, relevant assessment criteria are applied to all routes
 - ensure fairness and equality for all pupils
 - establish accurate assessment records for each route
 - introduce a regular review for all such routes
 - encourage more pupils to walk and cycle to school, thus increasing levels of physical activity and improving health and wellbeing.
- 4.2 As requested by Committee, officers have walked and assessed 30 routes in accordance with the approved policy and taken into consideration the criteria when determining if these routes are available.
- 4.3 As requested by elected members, individual wards meetings were held to provide feedback on the assessments and where requested, additional information has been provided.
- 4.4 At the recent workshop elected members requested that the Education & Children's Services Sub Committee agrees to a further postponement of the implementation of changes to these routes, until the impact of the Under 22 Travel Scheme has been assessed.

List of Appendices

1. Equality Impact Assessment Summary Report

Background Papers

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973:-

- Establishing a Walked Routes to School Assessment Policy – 6 November 2018
- Consultation Report on the Proposal to Establish a Walked Routes to School – Assessment Policy – 22 January 2019
- Walked Routes to School – Assessment Policy – 26 February 2019 (Scrutiny Committee)
- Establishing the Walked Routes to School - Assessment Policy – 19 March 2019

Report Contact

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Equality Impact Assessment Summary Report

Which Committee report does this IA relate to (specify meeting date)?

Education & Children's Services Committee on 1st March 2022 and previous committee reports

- Establishing a Walked Routes to School Assessment Policy – 6 November 2018
- Consultation Report on the Proposal to Establish a Walked Routes to School – Assessment Policy – 22 January 2019
- Walked Routes to School – Assessment Policy – 26 February 2019 (Scrutiny Committee)
- Establishing the Walked Routes to School - Assessment Policy – 19 March 2019

What are the main impacts on equality?

Ensuring fairness and transparency in pupil transport provision by applying a standard policy and criteria to new walk route assessments.

What are the main recommendations to enhance or mitigate the impacts identified?

Where an assessment indicates that a historic route is now available, undertake appropriate consultation with relevant stakeholders prior to any decision of transport withdrawal. Engage with bus operators with a view to providing replacement transport on a commercial basis.

If there are no equality impacts on any of the protected characteristics, please explain.

Further information is available from: Name / position / contact details:

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Gary Moyes (Category Manager – Travel & Transportation) ext.444429

Unallocated			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Dunfermline North Catchment Review	Education and Children's Services	Shelagh McLean	Para. 88 of 2018.EChSC.52 refers - to carry out a catchment review in Dunfermline North.
Workforce Planning	Education and Children's Services	Shelagh McLean	
Our Minds Matter Update	Education and Children's Services	Rona Weir	Reference to be made to Community Mental Health.
Positive Destinations Outcomes	Education and Children's Services	Stuart Booker, Karen Lees	Was due 01.03.22. Due to timescale of data released from Scottish Government, date to be advised.
Review of ASL Strategy - Update	Education and Children's Services	Maria Lloyd, Deborah Davidson, Vivienne Sutherland	
Digital Strategy	Education and Children's Services		
Building Fife's Future	Education and Children's Services	Shelagh McLean	
Devolved School Management	Education and Children's Services	Shelagh McLean, Kevin Funnell-Ed	
National Health & Wellbeing Census	Education and Children's Services	Shelagh McLean, Rona Weir, Gavin Waterston	Requested by Cllr Walker, Convener (originally considered 28.01.22); due to be considered 01.03.22 - deferred to allow work on the survey questions to be completed.