

**ANGUS COUNCIL
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES COMMITTEE - 21 AUGUST 2008
EDUCATION COMMITTEE - 28 AUGUST 2008
SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH COMMITTEE - 14 AUGUST 2008
STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE - 9 SEPTEMBER 2008**

**ANGUS CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT AND BUSINESS PLAN
2007/2008**

**JOINT REPORT BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THE DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL WORK AND
HEALTH, EDUCATION AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

ABSTRACT

This report presents to the committees the Annual Report and Business Plan for 2007/2008 on the Angus Child Protection Committee. A [copy of the Annual Report and Business Plan](#) is attached to this report and a copy has been placed in the Members Lounge.

1 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committees note the contents of the 2007/2008 Annual Report and Business Plan of the Angus Child Protection Committee.

2 INTRODUCTION

The Angus Child Protection Committee was formed at local government reorganisation and the attached Annual Report and Business Plan is the 12th produced.

The report is provided to all agencies represented on the committee, to the Scottish Government and to other child protection committees in Scotland. (Previous reports 612/05, 947/05, 296/06, 638/06, 969/06, 162/07, 498/07, 647/07).

3 ANGUS CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE REPORT AND BUSINESS PLAN

Angus Child Protection Committee Annual Report and Business Plan details the work and activity of the committee and member agencies in the field of child protection over the past year. The report also details the work of the three sub committees, namely the Policy sub committee, the Practice sub committee and the Training sub committee. The report also outlines the formation of a fourth sub committee, the Continuous Improvement sub committee. The Angus Child Protection Committee Business Plan for 2008/09 is contained within the report.

4 KEY POINTS WITHIN THE REPORT

Key points within the report include:

- The Angus area underwent an inspection of services to protect children by the Services for Children Unit located within Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education. The report regarding the inspection was published in February 2007. Since then the committee has continued to monitor progress in respect of the interagency action plan which was prepared to address the key issues highlighted during the inspection. (Committee report no. 498/07). Notification has now been received of a follow-through inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education commencing the week of 20 October 2008.

- On 31 March 2008 there were 117 children on Angus Child Protection Register. This figure is higher than in previous years. Significant factors contributing to the high number include improved interagency working arrangements leading to better identification of unborn or newly born infants where there is considered to be a risk due to factors in their living circumstances and an increase in the number of children identified as living in households where domestic violence is a factor in their lives. The increased identification of children and young people affected by domestic abuse would probably come about as a result of improved public information and training delivered by Angus Partnership on Domestic Abuse rather than an increased prevalence of this issue. The committee has continued to work jointly with Angus Partnership on Domestic Abuse and relevant agencies regarding information sharing where children live in households where domestic violence is a feature.
- There is an increase in the number of children whose names are placed on the register under the category of emotional abuse. This primarily reflects the number of children identified as living in households where domestic abuse is a feature.
- All of the 117 children on the Angus Child Protection Register live in 56 families. 13 families, however, account for 44% of registrations reflecting the prevalence of large sibling groups whose names are placed on the register.
- The number of children referred to the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration in Angus has risen steadily over the years from 129 children subject to compulsory measures of supervision in March 2002 to 198 children on 31 March 2007. This constitutes 1% of the Angus child population, which is a similar statistic to comparator authorities.
- The committee has continued to produce public information to ensure members of the public know who to contact if they have a concern about a child. This has included an article in the Angus Council magazine, "Angus Life", regarding internet safety. Information has also been inserted into the school planners for all primary 7 and secondary school pupils and the Angus parenting handbooks have been distributed to all new S1 and P1 school pupils during the year. A leaflet advising the public what to do if they have a concern about a child has been further distributed. The committee has also worked on developing a web site this year, which will be launched in the coming months. The committee supported a drama production called "Cyberspyder" which was presented to all first year secondary school pupils to inform them about how to stay safe, be in control and have fun while using the internet and mobile phones.
- Angus Child Protection Committee completed a further self evaluation as required by the Scottish Government guidance "Protecting Children and Young People; Child Protection Committees". This evaluation involved consideration of how agencies share information and assess the circumstances of children and young people in need of protection. A report of the audit findings will be provided to the child protection committee in the coming months.
- The child protection committee and all agencies involved in the protection of children have continued to provide training for staff. The committee has provided 532 training places over the last year. Training has been provided regarding Angus Child Protection Committee "Interagency guidelines for professional staff" and the Child Protection Committee and the Drug and Alcohol Action Team protocol "Working with children and families affected by parental substance misuse". The committee has also provided training on the role of the children's reporter, on child protection case conferences and delivery of training

designed by the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre promoting the safe use of the internet for children and young people. Training has also been provided for volunteers working in community groups with children and young people.

- The committee has devised and implemented a range of interagency policies and procedures in the last year including a policy on the identification and joint working in respect of unborn infants who may be at risk of abuse or neglect at birth, a protocol regarding children and young people who exhibit sexually harmful behaviour and a protocol for conducting significant case reviews as required by Scottish Government guidance.
- A multi agency group has also been established to implement "Child Protection Messaging". This is an automated system for electronically sending agreed messages about children in need of protection to relevant agencies. This system facilitates interagency communication about children in need of protection.
- Viewpoint, an on-line interactive tool for seeking views of children and young people at key points has been commissioned in Angus for a period of two years. Viewpoint went live in December 2007 and as a result children and young people prepare an individual report for the meeting about their care. The system also enables the views of children and young people to be collated hence providing performance management information in this area of work. The first report will be analysed in the near future.

5 PRIORITY OBJECTIVES

The business plan identifies the following priorities for Angus Child Protection Committee for the year 2008/2009:

- Ongoing provision of information to members of the public including children and young people to ensure they know where to get help if they have a concern about a child. New initiatives in this aspect of the committee's work involves delivery of information at large public events in Angus over the summer of 2008;
- To deliver interagency child protection training and promote the use by all agencies of an induction cd rom developed by the child protection committee;
- To agree resources, procedures and policies locally to implement "Child Protection Messaging" in Angus;
- To agree and implement policies and procedures for an interagency early screening group to identify and respond to children about whom there are concerns;
- To report on the self evaluation undertaken during 2007 / 2008 and to undertake a further audit of child protection work and report on the findings and implement improvements and developments required;
- To prepare for the follow-through inspection to be undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education in October 2008;
- To continue to implement "Viewpoint", an interactive on-line approach to seeking and collating children's views and to act on the findings; and
- To develop the Montrose "Demonstration Project" to identify innovative multi agency approaches to the identification and support of children affected by parental substance misuse and to work with the Scottish Government as a learning partner for "Getting It Right for Every Child" focusing on children affected by parental substance misuse.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

7 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

There are no Human Rights implications arising from the recommendation contained in this report.

8 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

The issues dealt with in this Report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective (as required by legislation). An equalities impact assessment is not required.

9 CONSULTATION

The Director of Corporate Services, the Head of Finance and the Head of Law and Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

David Sawers
Chief
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R Peat
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Director of
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R Ashton
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NOTE: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.