

ANGUS COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND LEARNING COMMITTEE – 22 SEPTEMBER 2020

INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S SERVICES PLAN 2020-2023

REPORT BY MARK ARMSTRONG, DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ABSTRACT

Part 3 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 requires every local authority and its relevant health board to jointly prepare a Children's Services Plan for the area of the local authority, in respect of each three-year period from April 2017 onwards. The responsibility for preparing Children's Services Plans rests jointly with the Local Authority and the Health Board with due regard to Scottish Government Guidance. The current plan was due to end in March 2020 and a new 3 year plan would be in place. Due to the current pandemic and associated emergency legislation, Local Authorities and Health Boards can publish a statement to roll on the current plan throughout 2020/21 whilst work takes place on refreshed plans for the period 2021 – 2023. This report recommends that Angus Council, as part of the Tayside Collaborative delay the completion and publication of a refreshed Children's Services Plan until March 2021.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) Approve the proposal to carry on the current Tayside Plan for Children, Young People and Families to March 2021 whilst a revised plan is drafted and consulted upon; and
- (ii) Approve the statement for submission to Scottish Government as detailed in Section 5 of the report.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS LOCAL OUTCOMES IMPROVEMENT PLAN/CORPORATE PLAN

This report contributes to the outcomes contained within the Angus Community Plan, Locality Plans and Council Plan, which focus on Economy, People, Place and Our Council.

- Children are given the best start in life
- Physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing is improved
- There are more opportunities for people to achieve success

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 In Tayside, a decision was reached to prepare a single children's services plan for 2017-20 covering Angus, Dundee and Perth and Kinross and to align this with the work of the Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative, effectively establishing a children's services collaborative with responsibility for strategic planning and improving outcomes for children, young people and their families.

3.2 The Tayside Children's Services Plan for 2017-20 was due to be updated and a revised plan published by September 2020 covering the years 2020 – 2023. The success of the pan-Tayside approach in the first three-year plan should be continued, however, the work required across the collaborative to devise a second three year plan has been impeded by the emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic from early March 2020. There is also a need to revisit the priorities previously identified and agreed in the draft plan started pre COVID-19 to ensure that they are still fit for purpose.

4. CURRENT POSITION

4.1 The Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 provides public bodies with flexibility to postpone compliance with certain duties and exercise flexibility when effort to respond to the national pandemic has had to be prioritised.

4.2 The Scottish Government consider that the duty to prepare a Children's Services Plan under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 can be dealt with under Part 3, paragraph 8 of Schedule 6 of the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 which reads;

The Scottish Ministers or the Scottish public authority may decide to postpone complying with the duty if they or, as the case may be, it are of the view that complying would be likely to impede their or, as the case may be, its ability to take effective action to prevent, protect against, delay or otherwise control the incidence or transmission of coronavirus.

Where the Scottish Ministers decide or, as the case may be, a Scottish public authority decides to postpone complying with the duty they or it must publish a statement to that effect in such manner as they consider or it considers appropriate—

(a) on or before the date by which the report is due, or

(b) as soon as reasonably practicable after the date.

4.3 The proposed statement is set out in Section 5 of this report.

4.4. Whilst the responsibility for the production of a plan sits with Angus Council and NHS Tayside, we remain committed to the Tayside Collaborative and have discussed this approach with our partners in Dundee and Perth and Kinross who have intimated they are progressing in the same way. Work is already underway to continue the work that took place before March 2020 in re-drafting the next iteration of the Tayside Plan for Children, Young People and Families.

4.5 In line with guidance on the preparation of Children's Services Plans, the current plan was due to be submitted by 30th September therefore we intend to publish the statement, should it be agreed by Committee, by this date.

5. PROPOSALS

5.1 It is proposed that the following statement is submitted to Scottish Government in accordance with the above legal advice following agreement by Angus Council Children and Learning on 22nd September 2020.

The Tayside Children's Services Plan 2020-2023 – joint statement prepared by NHS Tayside and Angus Council - 26th August 2020

5.2 Part 3 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 requires every local authority and its relevant health board to jointly prepare a Children's Services Plan for the area of the local authority, in respect of each three-year period from April 2017 onwards.

5.3 The responsibility for preparing Children's Services Plans rests jointly with the Local Authority and the Health Board with due regard to Scottish Government Guidance.

5.4 In Tayside, a decision was reached to prepare a single plan for 2017-20 covering Angus, Dundee and Perth and Kinross and to align this with the work of the Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative, effectively establishing a children's services collaborative with responsibility for strategic planning and improving outcomes for children, young people and their families.

5.5 The Tayside Children's Services Plan for 2017-20 was due to be updated and a revised plan published by September 2020 covering the years 2020 – 2023. The success of the pan-Tayside approach in the first three-year plan should be continued, however, the work required across the collaborative to devise a second three year plan has been impeded by the emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic from early March 2020. There is also a need to revisit the priorities previously identified and agreed in the draft plan started pre COVID-19 to ensure that they are still fit for purpose.

5.6 There is a strong commitment to work in partnership in a comprehensive and inclusive approach across a wide range of public bodies, community planning partners including the third sector and alongside children, young people and families to ensure that the 2020-23

plan is focused on what is required to further improve outcomes and at the same time support recovery in the short, medium and long term from the pandemic.

5.7 The Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 provides public bodies with flexibility to postpone compliance with certain duties and exercise flexibility when effort to respond to the national pandemic has had to be prioritised.

5.8 **This statement sets out our commitment to the preparation of a three-year progress report on the Tayside Children's Services Plan 2017-20 by December 2020, indicates our intention to continue this existing plan for a further year (2020 – 2021) and to publish a new plan for 2021-2023 by April 2021.** This will allow time to evaluate progress, review priorities in line with a revised needs assessment which takes account of the impact of COVID-19, set new objectives and targets and most importantly to ensure that there is the necessary engagement and participation of children, young people and families.

5.9 **The priorities within the current plan will remain in force until April 2021 as will the planning and governance arrangements for the collaborative work across services.** This will therefore ensure that joint working to ensure that Tayside is the best place for children to grow up in Scotland through five priorities will continue in the interim. The plan focuses on reducing inequalities and improving outcomes for all of Tayside's children and the five priorities remain in the interim as:

1. Our children will have the best start in life, they will be cared for and supported to learn in nurturing environments
2. Our children, young people and their families will be meaningfully engaged with learning and combined with high quality learning experiences, all children and young people will extend their potential.
3. Our children and young people will be physically, mentally and emotionally healthy.
4. Our children and young people who experience particular inequalities and disadvantage will achieve health, wellbeing and educational outcomes comparable with all other children and young people.
5. Our children and young people will be safe and protected from harm at home, school and in the community.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

7. CONSULTATION

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services, NHS Tayside and members of Angus Integrated Children's Services Group have been consulted in preparation for this report.

NOTE: No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

REPORT AUTHOR: Kirsty Lee

EMAIL DETAILS: childrenandlearning@angus.gov.uk