

## ANGUS COUNCIL

## CHILDREN AND LEARNING COMMITTEE – 16 FEBRUARY 2021

## INFORMATION REPORT ON RENAMING THE THROUGH-CARE AFTERCARE TEAM TO HORIZON

## REPORT BY KATHRYN LINDSAY – DIRECTOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND JUSTICE

**ABSTRACT**

This report provides information to members with regard to changing the name of the Throughcare Aftercare Team to 'Horizon', albeit that a decision is not required in terms of the current Scheme of Delegation to Officers and the Order of Reference of Committees.

**1. BACKGROUND**

Angus Council, at a special meeting on 19 November 2013 took a number of decisions which changed the way the Council conducted its committee business. Fundamental to this was the streamlining of processes with a focus on key strategy and policy matters.

One element of this was the production of "Information Reports". These information reports summarise information that would in the past have gone to a council committee for "noting".

The information schedules are in accordance with that principle.

**2. SIGNIFICANT INFORMATION – SCHEDULES**

The Throughcare Aftercare Team was established to provide support to Care Leavers in Angus and works with young people and adults between the ages of 15 and 25.

The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 (as amended by Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014) sets out that local authorities have a legal duty to:

- prepare young people for leaving care or ceasing to be looked after
- provide advice and assistance to young people who have ceased to be looked after on or after their 16th birthday. Local authorities are legally required to provide aftercare support until the care leaver turns 19, and to assess any eligible needs for aftercare support until they turn 26 (or beyond in some cases)

Throughcare is the ongoing preparation and support for young people who have been looked after and who may soon be making the transition to live independently.

Aftercare is defined as 'advice, guidance and assistance'. This can include (but is not restricted to) helping a young person to secure accommodation, education and employment opportunities, and financial support.

In addition to the above, the Team also carries out Diversion work for young men aged 16 and 17. Diversion from prosecution is a formal decision by the Procurator Fiscal, whereby on receipt of a Police report, they can choose to divert the young person to a local social work team.

The Team will also be carrying out Youth Justice work by the end of February 2021, with workers being supervising officers for young people aged between 16 and 19, and the role includes all court related tasks. This work sits well with our current Whole Systems Approach for young people in Angus.

Towards the end of 2020, the Throughcare Aftercare Team agreed that the service would benefit from a new name that would:

- reflect the wider scope of the Team's work
- be less stigmatising – 'The Promise' (Scotland's Independent Care Review) notes that the words used to describe young peoples' lives and experiences can exacerbate low self-esteem and is stigmatising.

- reinforce the concept of 'Staying Put'. There was anecdotal evidence that referral to an 'Aftercare Service' increased anxiety for young people who wished to remain in their current home (care placement).

Based on previous experiences around consulting with young people, the following approach was adopted:

- the staff team contributed to suggestions for the new name (a list of 12 names were generated);
- the team voted for their top five names;
- we asked our young people to vote on the top two, Millgate or Horizon.

The vote was advertised via the Team's Facebook page and promoted during ongoing contact with young people. The preferred name was Horizon with the majority noting that they liked the new name for the service. One of our young people has since designed an image, which includes the phrase 'There for You' and this is currently with our design team.

Once the image is finalised, the service will 'launch' the new name and image to our past and present young people and other stakeholders using Social Media, direct contact, emails, Angus Council Intranet and Webpages. Guidance and advice will be sought from the Communication team for this purpose.

The new name and image will be the dominant image on the Facebook page and Messenger. Messenger is the favoured means of communication by most of our young people, particularly those who are older and no longer receive a regular service.

The service will also commission branded goods to advertise the new team identity and contact details. These will be distributed to our young people so that they have reminders of how to make contact.

### **3. REPORT AUTHOR**

This report and associated schedules has been compiled by Lisa McMahon, Team Leader, Throughcare Aftercare Team, who can be contacted by emailing [TCAC@angus.gov.uk](mailto:TCAC@angus.gov.uk) if you would like further information.

List of Appendices: None