

ANGUS COUNCIL

SCRUTINY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE – 24 AUGUST 2021

**ANGUS INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S SERVICES CORPORATE PARENTING PROGRESS
REPORT 2017 – 2021 AND PLAN 2021 – 2024**

**REPORT BY MARK ARMSTRONG, DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE, ANGUS COUNCIL AND CHAIR
OF ANGUS CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

ABSTRACT

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, Part 9, sets out Corporate Parenting responsibilities. Named bodies (of which the Council is one) must establish a plan to deliver supports and services to children and young people who are looked after, or have previously been looked after, and must report on this plan periodically. The Angus Corporate Parenting Board has been established on a multi-agency basis and comprises a wide range of representatives, including a number of individual elected members.

Since 2017, the Corporate Parenting Board has had a joint plan. This report presents for scrutiny and comment, the report on progress made toward delivering the objectives of the 2017 – 2020 Corporate Parenting Plan which was extended to 2021. A refreshed Corporate Parenting Plan (The Angus Promise Plan) for 2021 – 2024, taking account of national developments relating to The Promise, is also presented for scrutiny and comment by members before being presented to Angus Council for approval.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Scrutiny and Audit Committee

- (i) Scrutinise and comment on the Angus Corporate Parenting Progress Report 2017-2020 (extended to March 2021)
- (ii) Scrutinise and comment on the Angus Promise Plan 2021-2024: Getting it Right for Care Experienced Children, Young People, and their Families

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN

- 2.1 These reports contribute to the following outcomes contained within Angus Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2017-2030 and Locality Plans:

Local outcome 4 – The best start in life for children
Local Outcome 5 – More opportunities for people to achieve success
Local Outcome 6 – Improved physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing

- 2.2 Council priorities:

We want to maximise inclusion and reduce inequalities
We want communities to be strong, resilient, and led by citizens
Furthermore, the opportunity to scrutinise these plans enables elected members to exercise their statutory duties as corporate parents.

3. BACKGROUND

The [Corporate Parenting Plan 2017 – 2020](#) (extended to March 2021) details six priorities in the action plan that all partners signed up to:

- Priority 1 We will listen to what you have to say and ensure you are involved in the decisions that affect your life
- Priority 2 We will find the best possible place for you to live that matches what you need and help you to stay in touch with people who are important to you
- Priority 3 We will help you to achieve your best at school and in all places where you learn
- Priority 4 We will take care of your wellbeing and encourage you to be healthy and active
- Priority 5 We will ensure you have a lead professional who visits you regularly and works with you and others to provide you with an assessment of your needs and a clear, up to date plan
- Priority 6 We will support you to have a positive transition into adulthood

Work has been progressed on a multi-agency basis over the 4 years of the plan to deliver on these priorities. Recognising that these are stretch aims which will take many years to achieve in full.

In 2016, the First Minister of Scotland announced an independent Review of Care ('the Care Review'). The Care Review was conducted between 2017 and 2020 driven by those with experience of care and culminated in the publication of seven reports including [The Promise](#) which set out what needs to change in the care system to ensure children and young people grow up loved, safe and respected. Reference is made to [Report No 142/21](#) The Promise Plan 21 – 24 and Corporate Parenting in Angus

The revised Angus Promise Plan 2021-2024: Getting it Right for Care Experienced Children, Young People and their Families (appendix 2) is based on the findings of the Care Review and the voices of our care experienced children and young people.

4. CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 Many of our care experienced children and young people, in particular care leavers, face difficulties which place them amongst the most disadvantaged in Angus which is why it is so important we provide the care, stability and support they need to help our young people achieve their ambitions. Along with the Scottish Government who are implementing the UNCRC incorporating it into Scots law we want to ensure we recognise, respect and promote children's rights across Angus.
- 4.2 Through individual feedback and collective group participation consultation over the last three years there have been three key areas which have come through strongly are areas of focus for corporate parents in Angus, these are:
- Early identification, management and support for care experienced children and young people mental health and wellbeing concerns.
 - Stigma felt by our care experienced young people in all areas of their lives, young people and the Care Review tell us we need to start with the language and vocabulary used by all professionals.
 - Longer term support for employment and education opportunities, we needed to better understand the destinations of our young people beyond leaving school. Opportunities for young people for work experience, volunteering etc should be available at an earlier stage and for longer as formal qualifications and further education aren't felt to be within the reach of all of our young people.

Summary Report 2017 – 2020 (extended to 2021)

- 4.3 The Corporate Parenting Progress Report 2017-2020 (extended to March 2021) highlights the work undertaken by corporate parents towards the six priorities in the action plan and the progress made on fulfilling our promises to care experienced children and young people.
- 4.4 Priority 1 We will listen to what you have to say and ensure you are involved in the decisions that affect your life: This has been a key priority over the life of the action plan with several initiative projects taking place to ensure that children are provided with different opportunities to share their views, to ensure they are listened to and their views are acted on, influencing decisions both for individual young people and improvements across children's services.
- 4.5 Priority 2 We will find the best possible place for you to live that matches what you need and help you to stay in touch with people who are important to you: Within children's services a number of changes have been made to increase support children and their families.

Recruitment of foster carers and adopters has remained a priority in order to provide good quality care across a variety of household types to better match children's needs.

- 4.6 Priority 3 We will help you to achieve your best at school and in all places where you learn: Within schools and across early years provision a number of developments have taken place to develop support, target interventions and close the attainment gap between care experienced children, young people and their peers.
- 4.7 Priority 4 We will take care of your wellbeing and encourage you to be healthy and active: Provision of improved assessment and support for all children moving into care ensures all medical needs are identified and met early. Partnership working has created opportunities for physical activity and social interaction. Investment has been made in services which are able to support children's recovery from the trauma they have experienced.
- 4.8 Priority 5 We will ensure you have a lead professional who visits you regularly and works with you and others to provide you with an assessment of your needs and a clear, up to date plan: In order to meet this priority, the importance of relationship based practice informed the restructure of children's service, implemented in April 2019. The change to four locality teams has ensured a greater emphasis on locality working, stronger local connections and central to this relationship based practice. Innovative ways of working have been piloted empowering children and their families promoting their right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- 4.9 Priority 6 We will support you to have a positive transition into adulthood: Services working in partnership with young people have improved the options and support for young people moving into adulthood. A Transitions Group, with representation from Angus Health Social Care Partnership and Children, Families and Justice and other partners, is undertaking work to consider improvements in the transition process for vulnerable young people into adult services.
- 4.10 As detailed above, while progress has been made the new three year corporate parenting action plan needs to set out with higher ambitions to create excellence in the services offered to the looked after and care experienced children and young people in Angus.
- 4.11 Across Angus we need a greater focus on raising awareness of corporate parenting responsibilities across organisations and agencies to continue to build on the positive partnership working over the life of the last action plan.
- 4.12 Going forward the voices of our young people locally and the national voices of care experienced children and young people, clearly identified in The Promise, alongside our commitment to ensure that the rights of our children are upheld as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) must be at the heart of not only our priorities in the action plan but in everything we do. Children's rights and wellbeing matter now, more than ever and will be embedded into our recovery plans in response to the impact of Covid-19 on children's and young people's mental health and wellbeing.

Angus Promise Plan 2021 – 2024

- 4.13 The revised plan (appendix 2) has been developed together with partners of the Corporate Parenting Board. It has been heavily influenced by the voices of local young people and the findings of The Promise.
- 4.14 As corporate parents we remain committed through this Promise Plan to continue to work with our partners and to do more to involve those with experience of the care system to ensure we are Getting It Right.
- 4.15 Whilst the Promise requires whole system change and we are working across Angus Community Planning Partnership to ensure the Promise underpins whole service planning and delivery, the Angus Promise Plan focusses on the specific needs of children, young people and families who are on the edges of the care system, in the system or have transitioned out to independence. We need to ensure that these children and young people experience the best support, care and protection so as to minimise any further trauma and ensure we deliver support and environments to offer the best chance of success.

- 4.16 Priorities referenced in the 2017 Corporate Parenting plan have therefore been revised to represent promises to young people and are represented as:

Our Promise to You #AngusPromisePlan

Your Voice

We will listen to you by using the standards you have set us; to create opportunities and environments that encourage you to engage with us, recognising you are individuals; we will work hard to provide different opportunities for you in all matters that affect you.

Your Family and Relationships

We will support you to stay with your family where it is the best place for you recognising where it is safe, your family is the best place. Where you cannot remain with your family we promise to support you to not only keep but develop relationships with people that are important to you.

Your Rights and Opportunities to Learn

We will ensure you get what you need to thrive in learning by understanding and respecting you and your care experiences. We will identify and break down barriers to your learning and inclusion.

Your Mental and Emotional Health and Wellbeing

We will ensure you have access to a range of different services, so you feel supported to deal with any trauma and loss. We will recognise the importance of one key relationship to support you with your wellbeing.

Your Right to Move on to a Bright Future

We will support you when you are ready to move on from care and ensure we behave like good parents in preparing and supporting your independence.

Work Together

We will support our workforce to understand, care and respect the work with children, young people and families and make sure we are not enforcing inequality with our language or approach. We will **plan together** to make sure the whole system in Angus works for you and not against you.

5. PROPOSALS

It is proposed that members take this opportunity to exercise their role as corporate parents by:

- (i) Scrutinising and commenting on the Angus Corporate Parenting Progress Report 2017-2020 (extended to March 2021)
- (ii) Scrutinising and commenting on the Angus Promise Plan 2021-2024: Getting it Right for Care Experienced Children, Young People, and their Families

Thereafter, the reports and plan will be presented to Angus Council for approval and an invitation will be offered to all elected members to make a pledge as corporate parents.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached.

8. CONSULTATION

Consultation has taken place through both the Angus Corporate Parenting Board and the operational Corporate Parenting Lead Officer Group. The views and feedback of young people and those with care experience have informed the development of the plan and 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.

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List of Appendices:

Appendix 1 Angus Integrated Children's Service Getting it Right for Looked After Children, Young People and Care Leavers in Angus Corporate Parenting Progress Report 2017-2020 (extended to March 2021)

Appendix 2 Angus Promise Plan 2021-2024 Getting it Right for Care Experienced Children, Young People and their Families



Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment Form

(To be completed with reference to Guidance Notes)

Step 1

Name of Proposal Committee reports re: Angus Integrated Children's Service Getting it Right for Looked After Children, Young People and Care Leavers in Angus Corporate Parenting Progress Report 2017-2020 (extended to March 2021) and Angus Promise Plan 2021-2024 Getting it Right for Care Experienced Children, Young People and their Families

Step 2

Is this only a **screening** Equality Impact Assessment No
(A) If Yes, please choose from the following options **all** reasons why a full EIA/FSD is not required:

- | | |
|--|--------|
| (i) It does not impact on people | Yes/No |
| (ii) It is a percentage increase in fees which has no differential impact on protected characteristics | Yes/No |
| (iii) It is for information only | Yes/No |
| (iv) It is reflective e.g. of budget spend over a financial year | Yes |
| (v) It is technical | No |

If you have answered yes to any of points above, please go to **Step 16**, and sign off the Assessment.

(B) If you have answered No to the above, please indicate the following:

Is this a full Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Is this a Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment	No

If you have answered Yes to either or both of the above, continue with Step 3.
If your proposal is a **strategy** please ensure you complete Step 13 which is the Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment.

Step 3

(i)Lead Directorate/Service:

Children, Families and Justice

(ii)Are there any **relevant** statutory requirements affecting this proposal? If so, please describe.

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, Part 9,

(iii)What is the aim of the proposal? Please give full details.

Improve outcomes for looked after children, young people and care leavers

(iv)Is it a new proposal? No Please indicate OR

Is it a review of e.g. an existing budget saving, report, strategy, policy, service review, procedure or function? Yes Please indicate

Step 4: Which people does your proposal involve or have consequences for?

Please indicate all which apply:

Employees Yes/No

Job Applicants Yes/No

Service users Yes

Members of the public Yes/No

Step 5: List the evidence/data/research that has been used in this assessment (links to data sources, information etc which you may find useful are in the Guidance). This could include:

Internal data (e.g. customer satisfaction surveys; equality monitoring data; customer complaints).

Schools and learning data, social work data on child protection, referrals and looked after children, feedback from care experienced young people, advocacy representatives etc

Internal consultation (e.g. with staff, trade unions and any other services affected).

Via Integrated children's services consultation event in January 2021 including wide range of partners, care experienced young people, community planning reps, third sector reps etc.

External data (e.g. Census, equality reports, equality evidence finder, performance reports, research, available statistics)

Tayside Performance Reports for Looked After Children, Child Protection, Child Health, School attainment and attendance.

Child Poverty data.

External consultation (e.g. partner organisations, national organisations, community groups, other councils.

Angus Integrated Children's Services Group
Who Cares Scotland
Angus Independent Advocacy

Other (general information as appropriate).

Step 6: Evidence Gaps.

Are there any gaps in the equality information you currently hold? No

If yes, please state what they are, and what measures you will take to obtain the evidence you need.

Step 7: Are there potential differential impacts on protected characteristic groups? Please complete for each group, including details of the potential impact on those affected. Please remember to take into account any particular impact resulting from **Covid-19**.

Please state if there is a potentially positive, negative, neutral or unknown impact for each group. Please state the reason(s) why.

Age

Impact

Positive as plan covers all children looked after and previously looked after

Disability

Impact

Positive – focus on transitions, developmental checks for children and early help and support

Gender reassignment

Impact

Neutral – nothing specific in the plan however support is in place via counselling and mental health services to deal with a range of issues that may impact a young person health and wellbeing.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

Impact

Neutral

Pregnancy/Maternity

Impact

Positive – focus on reducing poverty for care experienced including pregnant young woman, increasing access to support services including parenting support.

Race - (includes Gypsy Travellers)

Impact

Positive all children and young people care experienced will be supported to achieve improved outcomes based on individual need

Religion or Belief

Impact

Neutral

Sex

Impact

Neutral

Sexual orientation

Impact

Neutral

Step 8: Consultation with any of the groups potentially affected

If you have consulted with any group potentially affected, please give details of how this was done and what the results were.

Consultation with children, young people and previously looked after young people and adult on individual basis, group advocacy and target consultation events with care experienced children, young people and corporate parents.

If you have not consulted with any group potentially affected, how have you ensured that you can make an informed decision about mitigating action of any negative impact (Step 9)?

Step 9: What mitigating steps will be taken to remove or reduce potentially negative impacts?

Plan actively addresses negative impacts on care experienced children and young people – monitoring of data measures, benchmarking, pooling of corporate parents resources where this brings added value and with local work continuing via community planning and other plans such as Angus Mental Health and Wellbeing Programme

Step 10: If a potentially negative impact has been identified, please state below the justification.

Step 11: In what way does this proposal contribute to any or all of the public sector equality duty to: eliminate unlawful discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between people of different protected characteristics?

As referenced, focus on our most vulnerable and ensuring system approaches to early help through to intensive help and protection for care experienced children, young people and adults.

Step 12: Is there any action which could be taken to advance equalities in relation to this proposal?

N/A

Step 13: FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY

This step is only applicable to **strategies** which are key, high level decisions. If your proposal is **not** a strategy, please leave this Step blank, and go to Step 14.

Links to data sources, information etc which you may find useful are in the Guidance.

Step 13(A) What evidence do you have about any socio-economic disadvantage/inequalities of outcome in relation to this strategic issue?

Step 13(B) Please state if there are any gaps in socio-economic evidence for this strategy and how you will take measures to gather the evidence you need.

Step 13(C) Are there any potential impacts this strategy may have specifically on the undernoted groupings? Please remember to take into account any particular impact resulting from **Covid-19**.

Please state if there is a potentially positive, negative, neutral or unknown impact for each grouping.

Low and/or No Wealth (e.g. those with enough money to meet basic living costs and pay bills but have no savings to deal with any unexpected spends and no provision for the future.

Impact

Material Deprivation (i.e. those unable to access basic goods and services e.g. repair/replace broken electrical goods, warm home, leisure and hobbies).

Impact

Area Deprivation (i.e. where people live (e.g. rural areas), or where they work (e.g. accessibility of transport).

Impact

Socio-economic Background i.e. social class including parents' education, people's employment and income.

Impact

Other – please indicate

Step 13(D) Please state below if there are measures which could be taken to reduce socio-economic disadvantage/inequalities of outcome.

Step 14: What arrangements will be put in place to monitor and review the Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment?

Step 15: Where will this Equality Impact/Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment be published?

Step 16: Sign off and Authorisation. Please state name, post, and date for each:

Prepared by: Kirsty Lee, Service Leader Child Protection and Review, Chair
Corporate Parenting Lead Officers Group

Reviewed by: Kathryn Lindsay, Director of Children Families and Justice

Approved by: Kathryn Lindsay, Director of Children, Families and Justice 30.7.21