

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**SCRUTINY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE 23 JUNE 2022  
ANGUS COUNCIL 30 JUNE 2022**

**ANGUS CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2020 to 2021**

**REPORT BY MARGO WILLIAMSON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE ANGUS COUNCIL AND MEMBER OF  
ANGUS CHIEF OFFICERS' GROUP**

**ABSTRACT**

This report presents the Angus Child Protection Committee Annual Report for August 2020 to July 2021. Chief Officers across Scotland are individually and collectively responsible for the leadership, direction and scrutiny of their respective child protection services and their Child Protection Committees. In Angus, the Child Protection Committee reports directly to the Chief Officers' Group. A number of Angus Council services are members of the Child Protection Committee reflecting both the multi-faceted nature of risk and the whole system responsibility to support its mitigation.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

1.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny and Audit Committee:

- (i) Scrutinise and comment on the Angus Child Protection Committee (ACPC) Annual Report 2020 to 2021 (appended to this report)
- (ii) Consider the key trends and areas for development emerging from the report

1.2 It is recommended that Angus Council:

- (i) Review the content of the Angus Child Protection Committee (ACPC) Annual Report 2020 to 2021 (appended to this report)
- (ii) Note the Council's cross department responsibilities in relation to Child Protection

**2. ALIGNMENT TO CORPORATE PLANS**

This report aligns to the following strategic priorities identified within the Council Plan:

- (i) To maximise inclusion and reduce inequalities
- (ii) Our communities to be strong, resilient, and led by citizens

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 The previous ACPC [Annual Report 2019-2020](#) covered the period April 2019 to July 2020 to bring us in line with national reporting requirements (the academic year reporting period rather than the previous financial year reporting period).

3.2 This Annual Report of ACPC for the period August 2020 to July 2021 presents the work undertaken across Angus by individual agencies and in partnership to deliver national, Tayside-wide, and local child protection outcomes to improve the lives of children at risk of harm.

3.3 The Annual Report was approved by ACPC on 15 April 2022 (by email) and the Angus Chief Officer Group on 27 April 2022. There is a delay in having presented this report to Committee

and to Council because of the deployment of key staff to other protecting people priorities, and the impact of the pre-election period.

- 3.5 Members should be aware that the ACPC holds a risk register which is reviewed at least four times each year and reported to Angus Chief Officers' Group. There are no exceptional risks noted within this report.

#### **4. CURRENT POSITION**

- 4.1 ACPC have continued to work together to improve child protection practice in Angus throughout the reporting period.

- 4.2 Of note during the reporting period are:

- The ongoing challenges the COVID pandemic presents and the significant effects of lockdown on individuals and families across Angus.
- That additional ACPC meetings were held throughout the year and a COVID specific Risk Register was developed to identify, manage, and mitigate risks associated with the impact of the pandemic.
- A child protection response and recovery plan was developed and included work on promoting flexible referral pathways, enhanced advice, and guidance for wellbeing concerns in schools, increased social worker posts to provide duty cover and additional capacity for the NHS Child Protection advice line.
- That ACPC agreed an additional sub-committee focusing on self-evaluation and continuous improvement, with a remit to consider data and undertake analysis, identify priorities, and deliver a cyclical and robust self-evaluation programme for ACPC.

- 4.3 Key trends from the statistical part of the Annual Report demonstrate a continued increase in demand on frontline child protection services, these include:

- The number of initial contacts has increased to 291 in 2020-21 from 260 the previous year; an increase of 31.
- The total number of referrals for August 2020 to July 2021 was 1874, compared to 1422 for the same period in 2019-20, showing an increase in referral activity.
- Of these 1874 referrals, 819 progressed to a referral requiring follow up action.
- Of the 819 referrals progressing to follow up action, 39% proceeded to investigation compared to 35% the previous year.

- 4.4 The new ACPC Strategic Plan 2020-2023 is based around the core business functions of a Child Protection Committee as set out in the national Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2014. This Annual Report reports under the same headings this year. The plan will also be regularly updated to include any emerging national or local priorities. The plan remains flexible to take into account any future impact arising from the COVID pandemic.

- 4.5 Areas for development and progression:

- Support and promote a culture of learning and continuous improvement across the workforce that embraces appropriate professional challenge.
- Prioritise prevention and early intervention to prevent lifelong disadvantage.
- All children will have a voice in decisions that are made about them.
- Improve the use of data, performance reporting, self-evaluation and planning to inform leadership and decision making.

- Children and young people understand their rights and know where to go to seek advice, support, help and protection.
- Parents and carers and the public know what to do when they have concerns about a child at risk.

## **5. PROPOSALS**

The Committee scrutinises and comments on the content of the ACPC Annual Report August 2020 to July 2021 and considers the key trends and areas for improvement arising from the report. The Independent Chair of the ACPC will be in attendance at Committee.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## **7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required as this is an annual report summarising multi-agency work over the year.

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List of Appendices: Angus Child Protection Committee Annual Report for 2020 to 2021.