

# Angus Child Protection Committee Annual Report

## August 2022 – July 2023



**Working together to protect children in Angus.**

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## FOREWORD BY THE INDEPENDENT CHAIR

As Independent Chair of the Angus Child Protection Committee (ACPC) I am pleased to bring this report summarising the excellent work between a range of partners in Angus to further child protection practice. Whilst this report focuses on the multi-agency joint work undertaken, I have been pleased to receive updates on a range of single agency investments and developments that continue to create the conditions for positive change. Of note, is the development in the implementation of the National Data Set, the continued growth in responses to Domestic Abuse (Safe and Together), the expansion of Care and Risk Management support for young people and the return to more face-to-face learning and development.

I am particularly pleased with the continued progress being made within the 'PREpare' model. This approach enables families to be fully involved and understand the child protection process in a supported, strengths-based environment with excellent feedback being received. Likewise, our work towards the 'Promise' and our exploration of Family Group Decision Making is a positive step for families involved in Child Protection processes. These approaches and indeed all Child Protection / welfare practices are being complimented by the developments of the 'Involving Dads' work. I am pleased to report that this work is receiving Scottish recognition, including an opportunity to share progress with a cross-party, shared parenting group, of MP's and Councillors.

There has been further progress in implementing and embedding the National Guidance for Child Protection Scotland, with an overview of the progression being submitted to the Scottish Government this year, demonstrating excellent evidence of our development in this area. A further update of this guidance is expected in the next reporting year, with further implementation required.

In the coming year, I welcome the development and implementation of the Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) and Bairn's Hoose principles into Angus multi-agency practice and how this will benefit the children and families we work for.

As chair I have continued to connect with other strategic partnerships, both locally and nationally as we strive to ensure efficient and highly effective child protection services and responses. Our success in Angus is due to the hard work and commitment of our staff and our priority is to ensure they continued to feel supported and empowered to undertake their important roles. Our learning and development plan, the quality assurance work and our proactive approach to policy and implementation ensures our staff have the tools and support they need.

My thanks go to the staff who are committed to the delivery of excellent services for children and families in Angus.



Alison Todd  
Independent Chair

## CHIEF OFFICER'S RESPONSE

Angus Chief Officers receive the annual report of the Angus Child Protection Committee with thanks to the Independent Chair, Alison Todd, Protecting People Angus partnership support team and the strategic partners represented on the ACPC.

This year has seen increased struggles for children and families due to the cost-of-living crisis and how this is impacting on their daily lives.

We have seen an emerging landscape of child protection/welfare, against the cost-of-living crisis and the challenges this brings to children, young people, and vulnerable adults.

Angus multi-agency services' have continued to utilise the available practice strategies and guidance to support children and families across our communities. This has included, for example, the Angus 'PREpare' approach, where families are being supported to engage in child protection planning by partnering more effectively with them, building on their strengths, acknowledging risk and working with the family to reduce this. Reducing child poverty and working together to ensure families can access the full range of benefit entitlements is a priority for all agencies including supporting families who are experiencing 'in work' poverty, debt, fuel and food poverty remains core to out work with children and families.

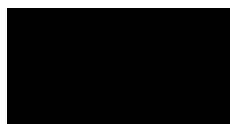
The 'Safe and Together' work continues to highlight the significant impact domestic abuse on children and families. There continues to be extensive focus from all Angus partners in attempting to partner with the non-offending parent and hold the perpetrator to account, reducing violence, abuse, and exploitation towards children. We understand that changing our culture across the multi-agency workforce and in wider society will take time but welcome the continued efforts of the ACPC.

Angus Chief Officers fully support the work of this Partnership in child protection and are confident that the right steps are being taken to influence and deliver change in ever challenging environments.

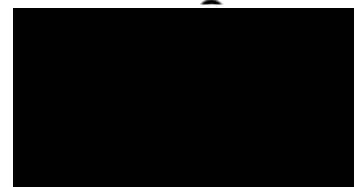
We once again thank partners for their work, commitment, and collaborative leadership in this priority area.



Kathryn Lindsay  
Chief Executive  
Angus Council



Claire Pearce  
Executive Director of Nursing  
NHS Tayside



Jason Carrigan  
Chief Superintendent  
Police Scotland

# INTRODUCTION

This annual report of the Angus Child Protection Committee (ACPC) covers the period August 2022 - July 2023 and highlights some of the key developments, improvements during that time and areas of focus in the next reporting period.

ACPC is the local strategic planning partnership responsible for developing and implementing child protection strategy, policy, and guidance across and between local agencies, professional bodies, and the community in Angus. ACPC is comprised of senior leaders from different agencies including Angus Council, NHS Tayside, Police Scotland, and local Third Sector organisations.

The Committee works in accordance with the [National Guidance for Child Protection Scotland](#), a non-statutory National guidance informing the development of local multi-agency child protection (CP) procedures, processes and training, to support the care and protection of children across Scotland. It promotes collaboration with parents, families and communities to prevent harm and to protect children from abuse and neglect. Ensuring the provision of public information is key to the awareness of everyone's responsibility to promote children's safety and wellbeing.

The ACPC also work in accordance with [Protecting Children and Young People: Child Protection Committee and Chief Officer Responsibilities](#). This guidance makes clear Ministers' expectations of Chief Officers in fulfilling their responsibilities in respect of child protection and how CPCs across Scotland, as key local inter-agency bodies, contribute to the delivery of the child protection agenda.

ACPC meet at least four times per year although frequency is increased if there are matters to attend to. Analysis of attendance and participation at ACPC shows a continued high level of commitment from all member agencies. Attendance of members or delegated members is recorded and reported to Chief Officers to ensure membership and participation remains fully supported. During 2022-2023 there has been a vacancy, within the committee, of a Third Sector representative, work is underway to recruit for this vacancy.

The three subgroups of the committee, Practice and Policy (P&PS), Workforce Learning and Development (WLD) and Self-Evaluation and Continuous Improvement (SECI) meet regularly. The chairs of the subgroups provide comprehensive feedback to the main committee on priorities, highlighting areas of progress, where there are challenges and risks which require to be escalated.

## Leadership and Governance

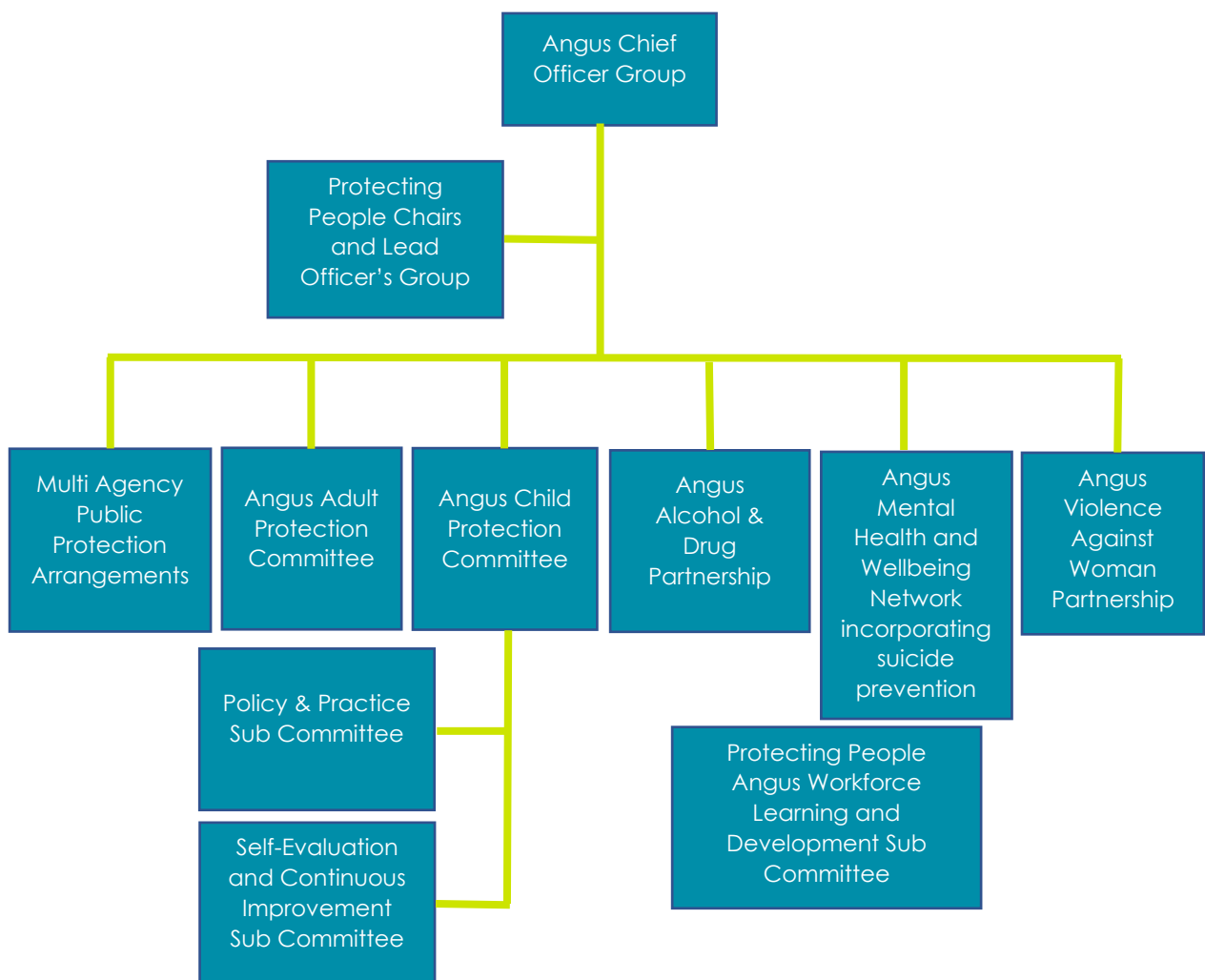
ACPC regularly report to, and are offered scrutiny and guidance by, the Angus Chief Officers Group (COG), who are ultimately responsible and accountable for improving the experience and outcomes for children who may need protection.

The ACPC Independent Chair provides quarterly exception reporting to the Angus COG. This includes highlighting any risks identified in the ACPC Risk Register that may require action or support from Chief Officers.

The ACPC is represented at Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative ([TRIC](#)) as well as the Central and North Scotland Child Protection Committee Consortium (NSCPCC), Scottish National Chairs (SNC) and Lead Officers Group (LOG). This provides an opportunity to share learning and experiences across areas and develop opportunities for joint working in an effort to further develop continuous improvement of child protection policy and practice.

## Angus Child Protection in the Wider Strategic Context

Figure 1 Protecting People Angus



ACPC operates in the wider context of Protecting People Angus (PPA). This is in recognition of the complex factors that impact the wellbeing and protection of children and the need to plan/deliver services in a whole family approach context.

The following shared statement was agreed between all PPA partners,

*“Protecting People Angus is the collective term for multi-agency committees, partnerships and networks in Angus who work together to develop the shared agenda, ensure collaboration and co-ordination, make best use of available resources and consider a whole family approach to care, wellbeing and protection”.*

The Lead Officers and Development Officers from across PPA meet on a regular basis and progress work on a shared basis. In addition to ensuring joint work and reporting, where possible with other PPA partners, closer alignment has taken place with Angus Integrated Children's Services Group (AICSG) to ensure the work of The Promise, Child Poverty and Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) are fully aligned with the work of the Committee. The Independent Chair of the ACPC is now a member of the AICSG to strengthen the connection between the strategic groups.

# PROGRESS TOWARDS KEY DEVELOPMENT AREAS FROM 2021-2022

Below are the key priorities set out in the 2021-2022 ACPC annual report. Throughout this report the progress towards achieving the priorities and identifying areas to be highlighted:

- The ACPC Practice and Policy subgroup will lead a multi-agency child protection (CP) audit next year
- A new strategic plan to be developed for 2023-2026
- Continued development of the Involving Dad's working group
- Explore approaches to Joint Investigative Interviewing (JII)
- Full implementation of the data set
- Continued development of the PREpare model
- A thematic review of key processes will take place
- Continued development of Care and Risk Management (CARM) approaches to supporting young people at risk of harm
- Families involved in child protection process voices are heard and feedback used to inform services going forward
- Review of Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2) and exploration of other tools that can be used to assess neglect
- Further scoping of options for having a PPA website, including a section on the Angus Promise



# CHILD PROTECTION PRACTICE AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

## ACPC Strategic Plan 2020-2023

When first published, the ACPC Plan covered August 2020 to July 2023, and as such was due for renewal at the end of this reporting year. A discussion has taken place with the CPC Independent Chair and Lead Officer about potentially extending the Strategic Plan for an additional year, to July 2024. This was due to a variety of reasons, including:

- The continued relevance of the identified actions in the strategic plan and agreement from ACPC that they remain important priorities over the next year
- Continued Implementation of National Guidance for Child Protection 2021 at a local level, recognising the excellent progress already made, that full implementation will continue into next year
- Local and Tayside wide planning and development for implementation of the National [Bairn's Hoose](#) principles and standards
- Introduction of Scottish Child Interview Model ([SCIM](#))
- Transitions work being developed and implemented locally
- The proposed move to a Protecting People model

This proposal will go to full ACPC for consideration and an update included in the next annual report.

## ACPC Practice and Policy Subgroup (P&PS)

The ACPC Practice and Policy subgroup continues to meet approximately every eight weeks and has representation from relevant services across Angus. The subgroup receives an analyses impact for practice from the Early Screening Assurance Group (ESAG) and Pre-birth Referral Allocation Meeting (PRAM).

The P&PS continues to hold oversight for Child Protection Local Policies and Guidance on an Angus and Tayside level. In the past year the following refreshed guidance was shared with the workforce:

- Tayside Practitioners Guidance: Chronologies
- Tayside Multi-Agency Guidance: Concern for Unborn Babies
- Tayside Practitioners Guidance and Template: Initial Referral Discussion (IRDs)

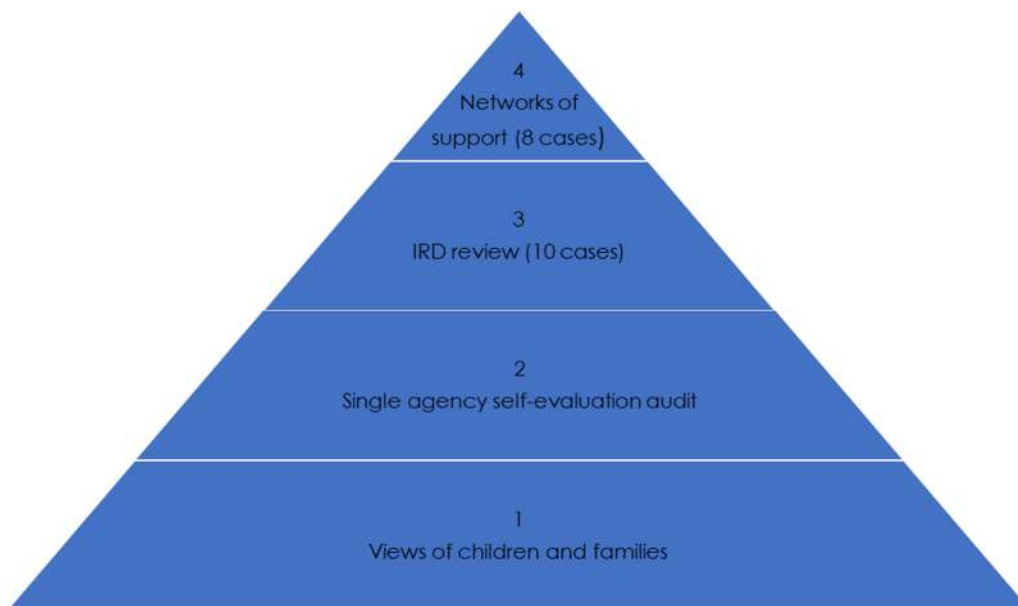
## P&PS - Policy and Guidance Future Priorities:

- Angus Multi-agency Underage Sexual Activity Guidance

- CARM Planning for Young People who Present a Risk of Serious Harm
- Responding to Child Concern Reports (CCRs): Good Practice Guide for Angus
- ACPC Policy and Practice Sub-committee (P&PS) Terms of Reference (ToR)
- Tayside Joint Protocol for the Medical Examinations of Children & Young People

### **P&PS - Key Areas of Work 2022-2023**

A multi-agency Child Protection Practice Review was undertaken which consisted of a four-tiered approach. This model was a test of change from earlier practice review models. An evaluation of the process is not yet complete.



The initial key areas the audit includes:

#### **1. Views of Children & Families**

The Quality and Improvement Service (Q&IS), led on stage one of the audit process, which gained the voices of children, young people, and their families. The focus of the audit was to capture the child, young person, and family's journey through the CP Investigation (CPI) and Inter-Agency Referral Discussions (IRD) process'. It was agreed with the Chair of the P&PS that the audit would focus on children and young people subject to an IRD during November 2022. This work has enabled the voice, views and experiences of 35 children and young people to be heard and to influence service improvement.

#### **2. Single Agency Self Evaluation Audit**

This stage was in place of the previous case file reading during audits. It was agreed that single agencies would submit an overview of any ongoing single agency CP self-evaluation with any key themes that were noted in them. This was to be submitted to a multi-agency working group who would then compare the audit tools used, identify any cross-cutting themes and compile a report with findings. This approach has

offered very limited data and is being reviewed as a method of audit. The scale of evaluation activity at stage 1, 3 and 4 has ensured good quality data to evaluate practice.

### **3. Multi-Agency Audit of IRDs**

The purpose of the quality assurance review of Initial Referral Discussions (IRDs) in Angus was to provide confidence that key multi-agency child protection processes and practice were effective and working well to respond to child protection concerns to ensure children were safe. The review provided learning opportunities by highlighting key strengths and identifying areas for improvement.

- Of the ten (100%) cases reviewed, four (40%) were evaluated as Excellent, three (30%) were evaluated as Very Good; two (20%) as Good and one (10%) as being Weak. The case evaluated as weak was due to recording and sharing of the IRD information
- Of the four (40%) cases evaluated as excellent, one case stood out as an exemplar IRD due to the level of information recorded along with rationale evidencing why decisions were made and actions taken

This was a small-scale but detailed multi-agency audit and review of Angus IRDs, carried out following a similar audit of IRDs in Perth and Kinross which further tested the proof-of-concept methodology which provided confidence that key multi-agency CP processes and practices are working well to keep children in Angus safe.

The evaluation and recommendations from this stage of the audit are being developed into a report that will be signed off and implemented by the Practice and Policy Subgroup.

### **4. Networks of Support (NOS)**

Networks of Support are a learning opportunity that allows multi-agency staff to come together in an informal way and discuss a case they have been involved in. This model has successfully been delivered by the Adult Protection Committee (APC) for several years and was trialled by the CPC Development Officer in June and July 2023.

Six cases were discussed over two days. Each case had a different theme to ensure that a broad range of circumstances were discussed. This included; Oldest and Youngest Child on the CP register, Domestic Abuse case, Father involvement.

While there were some initial concerns by multi-agency practitioners around this model, feedback following the events has been mainly positive, with a few suggestions of how the process could be improved.

Practitioners valued the opportunity to reflect with peers and focus on "What went well" and "Even better if".

The four stages of the audit have been undertaken. The audit has identified some initial key messages and recommendations and the final report will be submitted to the P&P subgroup for sign off and implementation of the recommendations. It is important that we can provide assurance to families and stakeholders that we are meeting quality indicators as set by the Care Inspectorate. In this instance QI 2.1 &

2.2 Impact on children and young people and impact on families and Q15.4 delivery of key processes (involving individual children, young people and families) are relevant. The initial findings are noted below:

### **Strengths identified:**

- Social Work interventions during interview with children and young people, are trauma informed and a child centred approach is used
- Most families were made aware of a CP concern prior to the IRDs taking place
- Joint working with Universal Services has a positive impact on the children, young people, and their families during the CPI. Having a shared response during and after the investigation process should be widely promoted and replicated with other partner agencies
- The Interview Suite at Bellevue is trauma informed, welcoming and meets the needs of the children, young people, and their families to support one another during the investigation interview process
- There was evidence which indicated Social Work had followed the wishes of young people and not shared the concerns with their parents where it was not deemed to be in their best interest, this promoted their rights to privacy and choice
- Families shared views which indicated Social Work values are being demonstrated through engagement - "polite and understanding", "gave me confidence", "reassuring about keeping brothers and sisters together", "they helped me trust them", "amazing and pleasant", "doing a great job"

### **Recommendations:**

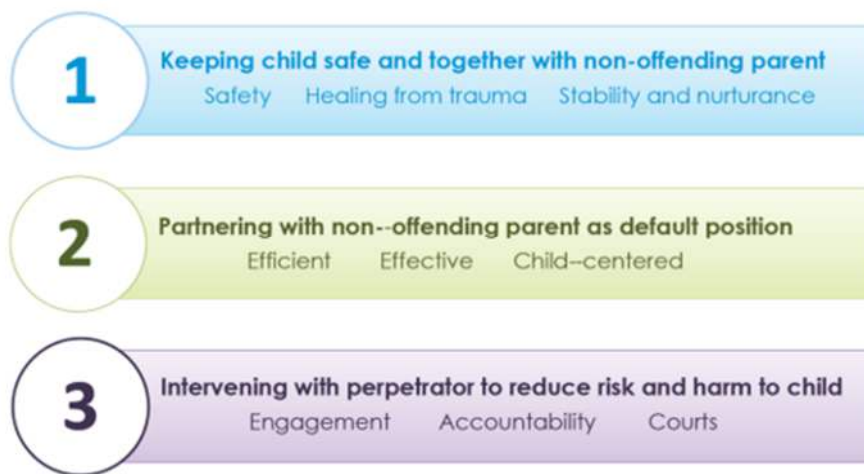
- The next stage of the audit may benefit from taking a deeper dive into exploring, if practitioners are responding to families where domestic abuse is known to have been a factor, using the [Safe and Together \(S&T\) principles](#). With a focus on how this was recorded and what difference did it make to practice?
- Mothers were contacted throughout the CPI disproportionately compared to fathers. Attention should be given as to whether this is preferable for families or a gender bias within practice?
- Further exploration into the language used in shared cases / across multiagency services with a focus on reinforcing/implement standardisation to support families to understand roles, responsibilities, and processes
- Further investigation into the barriers preventing collaborative practice with families to devise and implement safety plans which support families to feel listened to and have their views acted upon
- Further clarity to be sought in relation to multiagency professionals' roles in the CP process to ensure all key agencies are visible and accountable to children, young people, and their families

## Involving Children, Young People, and their Families

### Safe and Together (S&T)

PPA partners have continued to work towards a multi-agency approach to embedding '[Safe & Together](#)' across the workforce. This has included training practitioners (Champions) in the four-day CORE training to enable them to act as a main point of contact and support within their organisation or team. At the end of the reporting period (July 2023) there were 81 Champions in Angus with representation from across the Angus multi-agency workforce.

The S&T approach was included in the [Scottish Government National Child Protection Guidance 2021](#), as best practice model in domestic abuse cases and supports the whole family approach. The S&T model is based on three main principles:



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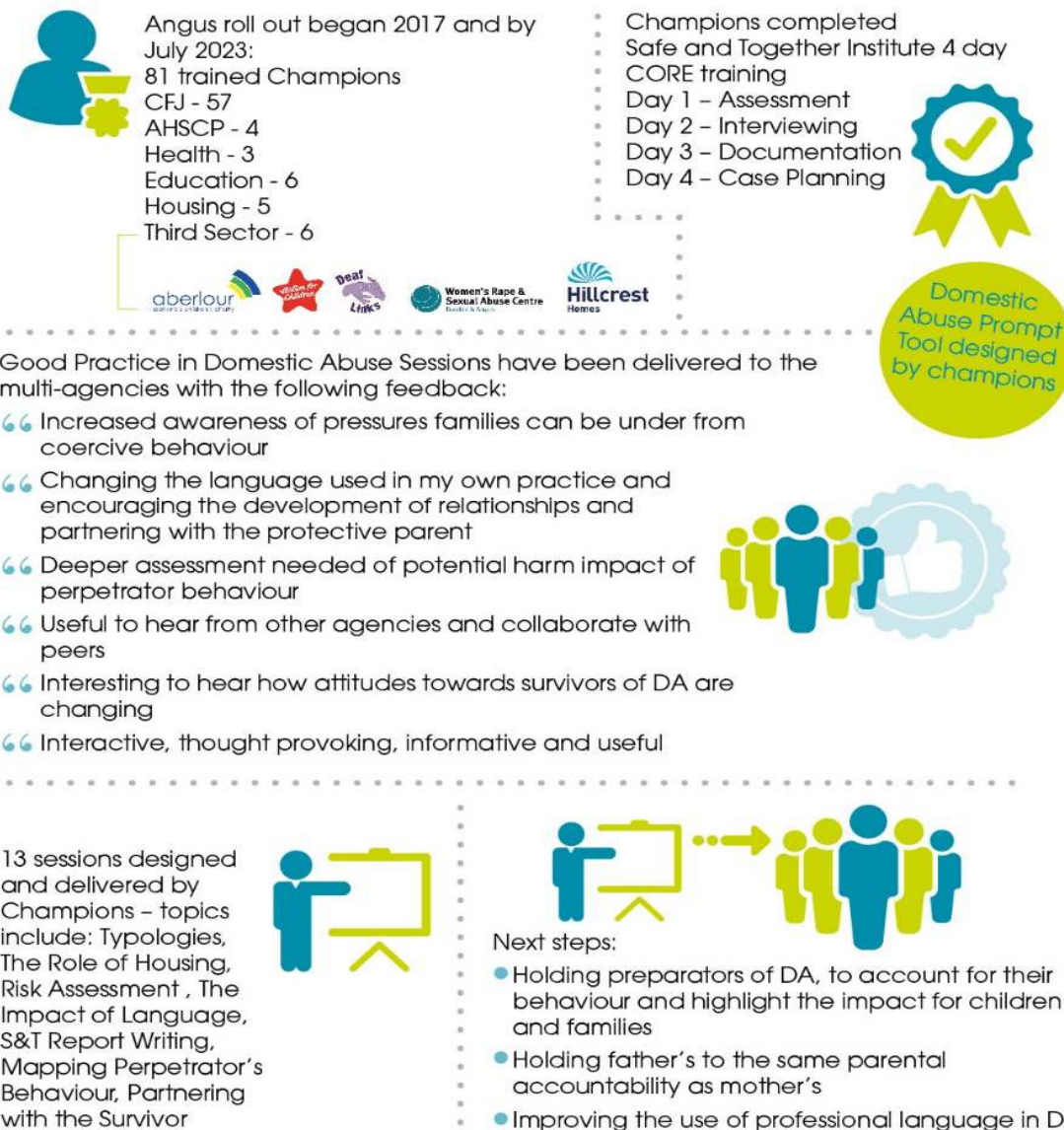
Within the approach, Angus practitioners from all agencies, are asked to work collaboratively to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and the non-offending parent. The multi-agency workforce is being supported to identify that preparators' DA patterns of behaviour are a parenting choice, and they should be held accountable for this and not the non-offending parent.

S&T Champions come together monthly to host learning sessions for the multi-agency workforce. These are a few of the sessions delivered:

- Domestic abuse risk assessment tool and referrals to Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
- Risk Assessment Safety planning
- Working with Perpetrators as Fathers to try to effect change

S&T and Good Practice in Domestic Abuse session are currently being evaluated, to gain insight into the views of the multi-agency workforce and to consider any amendments that may be required based on learning needs. When this information is collated, a report will submit to the S&T lead group and action taken as required. The outcome of this will be highlighted in the next reporting period.

## Safe and Together infographic information



## Roots to Change

Roots to Change is an assessment and intervention suite of tools developed by Children, Families & Justice (CFJ) practitioners, for working with non-convicted perpetrators of domestic abuse. The 14-stage program supports identification and learning around perpetrators own thinking such as, personal beliefs, values, and explores relationships within their family and support networks. It also promotes the understanding of the Cycle of Abuse and Change, DA patterns, the impact of negative self-talk and how past life experience may have impacted on behaviours. The programme concludes with the formulation of an individualised strategy plan with the overall intention of eradicating any risk to the family.

A multi-agency training program is to be rolled out to the workforce and will be evaluated within the next reporting year.

### **Involving Dad's and Dad Figures**

The Involving Dads Multi-agency steering group was formed in April 2022, to support the recognition of Dads and increase professional engagement with them. Currently the group meet six weekly and has representation from key agencies including Social Work, Health, Education, and the Third Sector.

In August 2022, a service provider survey was distributed throughout Education, Health, Social Work, Emergency Services and Third Sector agencies to gather views of practitioners on their own and their agencies practice in relation to engaging with dads; and how this may differ from engagement with mums. The survey returned 85 responses which offered insight into areas of good practice; as well as gaps or areas of development in knowledge, understanding or practice.

A second survey was then distributed, this time directly to dads throughout Angus, to gain the views on how services engage with and involve them in matters relating to their children. The survey returned 424 responses which considered the circumstances of dads involved with 886 children and young people in Angus. This data is still in the process of being analysed, initial comments / views include:

- Social norms assuming one - men are career focussed; two – men are not as interested in children; three - not as important to children or their development
- (Services) Spending time with and getting to know a family and the dynamics would be beneficial
- One dad reflected that full engagement of all dad's would require "a radical transformation of society"
- Broaden professionals' understanding that dads have equal role in child's life and welfare
- More inclusive and progressive policies and systems to encourage positive interactions with dads
- A poor legal system in Scotland which recognises parental rights in principle but does not support these being exercised and upheld, often due to parental separation
- Nine out of the 424 respondents reported they had attended a dad's specific event or training
- Services being mindful of arranging events for inclusive parental participation – taking account of working arrangements
- Making it a policy to contact both parents when sending out information unless an opt out is agreed
- There is a systematic nationwide prejudice against fathers/dad type figures, particularly in Scotland
- Don't "target dads" just make efforts to engage with all parents
- Training for staff on how to engage with both parents equally and the importance of this

The information will be collated in service specific areas and multi-agency groups formed to take forward their individualised feedback with a focus of “what else can we do” when considering the question “what about Dad?”. In addition, efforts will continue to support engagement from our Health & Social Care Partners and Police Scotland.

## **PREpare**



The [Angus PREpare model](#) is an innovative approach to supporting families to engage in CP planning by identifying and building on strengths in the family, acknowledging risk and working with the family to reduce it and partnering more effectively.

Between August 2022 and July 2023, the focus of PREpare was to extend its reach and in achieving this, the Quality and Review Team (Q&RT) agreed to focus on the following 2 outcomes:

### **1. Increasing Capacity of PREpare**

How have we achieved this:

- All Quality and Review Officers (Q&RO) have received training in facilitating PREpare meetings and therefore the capacity to offer these meetings has increased
- From March 2023 the Q&RT offer a PREpare meeting to every family whose child has been referred for an initial Child Protection Planning Meeting (CPPM)
- Engaging with Education colleagues around the need for nurturing spaces to offer PREpare meetings in a non-threatening environment

### **2. Improving Understanding about the Approach for Children, Families and Professionals**

How have we achieved this:

- An information [Video](#) has been produced which explains PREpare and the role of everyone participating
- We are in the final stage of producing an information card for children, families and professionals which gives information in an easy, concise format. This will be available in October 2023
- Information sessions have been developed for social work staff and multi-agency staff
- An interactive e-leaflet is being developed for children and will be available for distribution in the next reporting year

Feedback from Q&RT evidence that PREpare is having a positive impact upon the Initial CPPM including a more positive emotional atmosphere, parents felt less stressed, oppositional, intimidated and judged. Parents appeared fully prepared to hear difficult information, were empowered to ask questions and request clarity where



required. When professionals received the summary sheet from the PREpare, they better understood the parents' position and children's views, they had context and were able to read about families wishes and commitments to change.

After experiencing a PREpare meeting, families told us that they had a better understanding of the process of the Child Protection Planning Meeting, they were listened to and were able to voice their views. In addition, they also said that they liked that it was informal, smaller and were able to speak about things in detail before the 'big meeting'. Families stated that it was "good to hear good things about our family" and valued that they were part of making the safety plan.

Moving into the next reporting period, the aim is to continue to develop PREpare and offering it at an earlier stage to support proactive assessment and intervention. The initial phase of this will look at offering PREpare at an early stage during the prebirth assessments process. This plan will present challenges in respect of workforce capacity, offering an increased number of meetings will therefore need careful consideration regarding how this can be managed.

## The Promise



Work around the [Promise](#) has been led by CFJ Quality and Improvement Service in partnership with Participation Assistants (Angus young people with care experience) who are based within Who Cares? Scotland.

The Promise Team planned three main outcomes which are noted below with aims achieved summarised under each heading:

**Learning and Development** – Children, their families, carers, and professionals will be fully informed and engaged with the rights of brothers and sisters.

- Practitioner development forums are now a regular occurrence where various areas of practice are discussed. Topics are always underpinned by the Promise. Attendance can be variable however it is acknowledged that this is due to competing demands on time
- There has been a test of change with a local secondary school where our participation assistants have linked in directly to promote the Promise to pupils and staff. This was evaluated and deemed to be successful. Meetings have taken place with Head Teachers to raise awareness of the Promise and improve understanding on the needs of care experienced children and young people. A module in respect of the Promise and Care Experience has also been designed and is in its final stages of completion. The plan is to test this

within P5 classes in one school and amendments made if required. Long term plan is for this module to be extended to all schools in Angus.

- Promise Packs for children having to live away from home have been designed, these will contain information in a child friendly format explaining the processes, their rights and contact details of advocacy services as well as items to aid the transition from home and hopefully provide some comfort. This is being supported by a local rotary group who have donated items such as handknitted teddy bears. The Promise Team are linking in with the remaining local rotary groups to explore what can be achieved for care experienced children in their local community
- A new website has been designed and is almost ready to launch, which includes key information regarding rights, advocacy and corporate parenting

**Childs Planning and Quality Relationships** - Children's key relationships will be prioritised.

- A family time working group has been established to review policies within Angus and improve on practice. The group have focused on brother and sister and key relationships to ensure that these are in the fore of practitioners' minds
- Family Group Decision-Making (FGDM) is being explored and various meetings have been set up with stakeholders / potential contractors to explore options.
- The Angus multi-agency 'Involving Dads' group is well established and has recently undertaken a significant piece of work to gain the views of fathers and father figures in Angus. Highlighted elsewhere in this report
- The Promise Team have established "The Promise Hangout" which is a monthly group for care experienced children to come along and meet others, spend some time playing and being involved in influencing decisions regarding the services they receive. The group has been in place for just over a year with regular attendance of approximately 20 children and young people from the age of 5 years old

**Nurturing Environment to Support Relationships** - Children and families will have opportunities and environments to support quality time together.

- We are improving our venues by developing trauma informed spaces for working with children and families and promoting family time to protect relationships with people who are important for children. A group of children from the Promise hangout have been involved in supporting decisions regarding the design of these venues
- We are engaging with local rotaries and businesses as highlighted above to support a whole-community approach

### **What Next?**

The above does not contain all the excellent work being undertaken by those involved in this area. The core Promise team continues to meet 6-8 weekly to review progress and consider next steps. It is anticipated that the Participation Assistant will move on mid-2024 and there is consideration being given to how Angus service can support our current care experienced children to take up these roles in the future.

## Advocacy for Children and Young People



The [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) underpins Government Policy and Legislation in relation to children and young people. This spells out the rights of all children defined by the Convention as anyone under 18 years of age. Article 12 states the child's view must be considered and taken into account in all matters affecting him or her.

For children and young people detained under the [Mental Health \(Care and Treatment\) \(Scotland\) Act 2004](#) and for those subject to discussion in tribunal proceedings under the [Education \(Additional Support for Learning\) \(Scotland\) Act 2009](#), the provision of independent advocacy is a duty and is enshrined in legislation.

For children involved in the [Children's Hearing System](#), there is no legal right to access independent advocacy however best practice guidance, The Promise and Getting It Right for Every Child, promote and encourage the local provision of independent advocacy services for children involved with the Children's Hearing system and for anyone who is looked after.

[Who Cares? Scotland](#) provide independent advocacy in Angus on all matters important to care experienced children and young people helping to empower children, ensure their rights are respected, that their views / wishes are fully considered and reflected in decision making about their own lives. Care experienced children and young people are unique in that they are subject to legislation and decision making often without their consent. Independent advocacy is crucial for them to even up any power imbalance in a complex, decision making system.

[Angus Independent Advocacy \(AIA\)](#) are provided with funding to extend advocacy support for children and young people in Angus who are involved with or required to access a service including:

- Children and families' services including child protection
- Mental health and wellbeing service
- Education and learning
- Justice services

The Children & Young Persons Advocacy resource is available for children & young people up to 18 years – wherever advocacy is required. For 19-25 years old, referrals are considered on an individual basis. Angus Independent Advocacy also offers advocacy dedicated to supporting children & young people involved in the Children's Hearing System.

# IDENTIFYING, SUPPORTING AND PROTECTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

## How Good are our Key Processes?

In Angus there are established, well understood systems and processes in place for the multi-agency workforce. The guidance enables identification of where a child or family maybe in need of additional support or protection and is a critical part of our multi-agency CP system. One of the key priorities of the ACPC during this period has been to ensure there are robust systems in place for identification of unborn babies and pregnant women, and for those children identified by Police Scotland as having a wellbeing or protection concern.

## Prebirth Resource Allocation Meeting (PRAM)

**The following PRAM data is from the 01 October 2022 to 31 March 2023 only.**

PRAM quality assurance and improvement is reported to the ACPC on a 6 monthly reporting cycle. It has been proposed and approved by the ACPC that the reporting cycle for PRAM changes over 2023–2024 to align with the CPC reporting timescale, enabling a full year of figures to be analysed together.

PRAM is chaired by Social Work with representation from Police Scotland and Health (Midwifery and / or Health Visiting services). Representation at meetings continues to be high with attendance from Health (midwifery), Social Work and Police Scotland sitting at 100%. In 84 % of the meetings both Health Visiting and Midwifery Services were present.

Meetings continue to be held fortnightly with all referrals screened weekly. Any woman assessed at the screening stage as requiring timely support results in a direct referral to Social Work to minimise any unnecessary delay. Where families are already known to Children & Families Social Work services, the unborn baby will be allocated without the need for a PRAM referral.

**Figure 2 PRAM Referral Data (October 2022 – March 2023)**

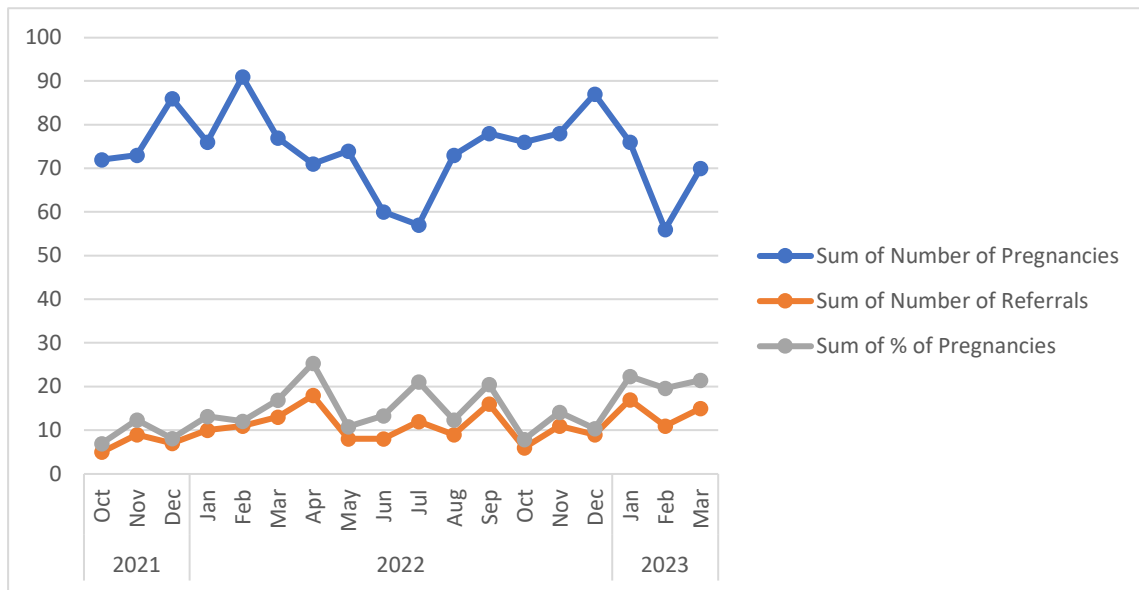
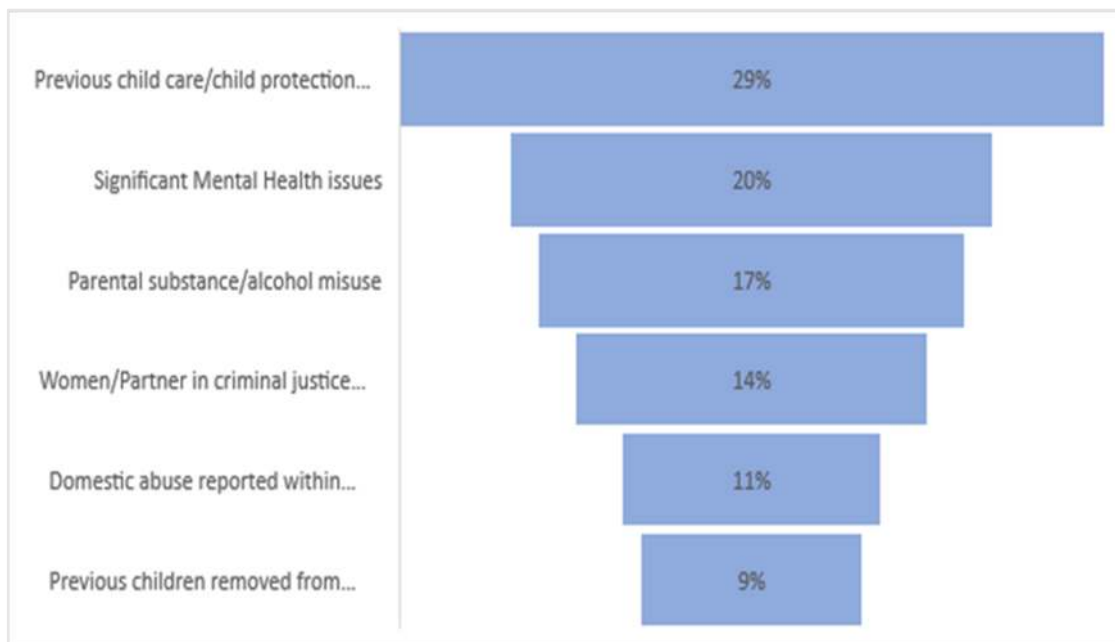


Figure 2 shows there were 69 women referred to PRAM in the six-month period from 01 October 2022 to 31 March 2023, constituting 16% of all booked pregnancies (443). On average, there were 11.5 referrals per month, ranging from six in October 2022 to 17 in January 2023. The number of weeks pregnant at time of referral has remained consistent, sitting at around 14 weeks.

**Figure 3 Reason for Referral (October 2022 to April 2023)**



Parental mental health issues and previous childcare / child protection concerns remain the top two reasons for referral to PRAM throughout 2021-2023.

**Figure 4 Outcome per Reporting Period (October 2022 to April 2023)**

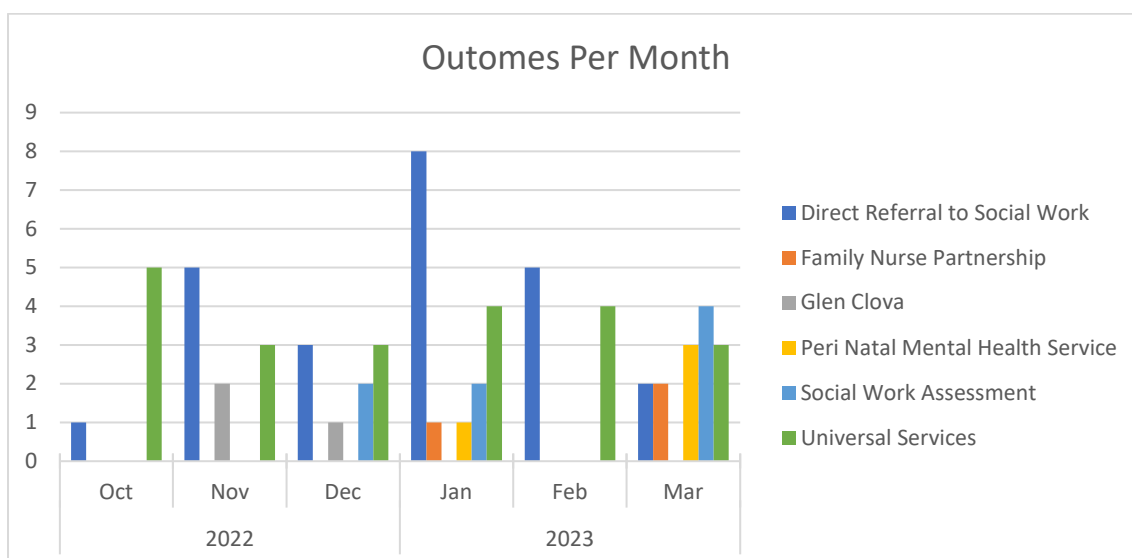


Figure 4 shows the **Primary** PRAM Outcomes (October 2022-April 2023):

- Direct Referral to Social Work 35%
- Universal services 32%
- Social Work Assessment (following PRAM) 12%
- Peri Natal Mental Health Services 6%
- Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) 4%
- Glen Clova 4%

In some cases, there was a **Secondary** outcome, including referral to Peri Natal Mental Health services, Welfare Rights or Glen Clova. Some referrals resulted in 'no outcome' due to, for example, non-continuing pregnancy or woman moving out with Angus.

35% of the referrals to PRAM resulted in a direct referral to CFJ Locality Social Work. Direct referrals are made at the screening stage and were introduced to reduce time delays for women and unborn babies who:

- Were 28+ weeks gestation at the time of referral. These referrals are for initial screening and if required, an urgent assessment
- Have children who are already receiving support from our Children and Families Locality Social Work Teams
- The information shared within the PRAM referral indicates significant concerns

### Longer Term Outcomes

PRAM are now reporting on the longer-term outcomes for a sample of the unborn babies referred. Data was used from the **October 2021 to March 2022** period, with every fifth referral randomly selected for examination. Eleven women were tracked, and the outcomes support the initial decision making by PRAM group.

## **PRAM Key Observations and Themes**

- Longer term outcomes indicate that decision making at PRAM is proportionate.
- 47% of PRAM referrals were passed to Social Work Services
- 32% of women were referred to universal services during this period. The main reason for a PRAM outcome of universal support was that the concerns noted in the referral were historical and no longer relevant for the family
- Including Dads work continues within Angus and development work is proceeding on a single and multi-agency basis. This will continue to be relevant for PRAM
- It was reported by press in July 2023 that NHS Tayside have the highest teenage pregnancy rate in Scotland (32.2 per 1000)

## **Areas for Future Development**

- Aligning PRAM reports with the CPC Annual Report schedule to ensure that the data is relevant to the reporting period
- We will gather PRAM data on the age of pregnant women and consider any implications for practice
- PRAM outcomes of 'universal services' will be reviewed over the next year to ensure decision making for referrals at panel are proportionate

## **Early Screening Assurance Group (ESAG) – Angus**

ESAG was established as a multi-agency forum to ensure that Angus have adequate systems and processes in place to identify and support children birth to 18, who are identified by Police Scotland in a Police Child Concern Report (PCCR), as requiring support.

The purpose of ESAG is to:

- Provide a quality assurance role on a multi-agency basis to assure ACPC that children identified as having a wellbeing or protection concern are in receipt of appropriate support
- Address practice issues, as or when they arise
- Identify areas for practice development including sharing good practice
- Support single agency Quality Assurance practices

ESAG includes representatives from Police, Health, Education and Social Work. The group continue to meet quarterly and routinely sample PCCR, considering the content and quality of information shared by Police Scotland, as well as the actions taken by the named person, following the incident that triggered the PCCR and the impact this has had on the child.

ESAG have evaluated 72 PCCRs during this reporting period providing feedback to named persons in Health and Education, lead professionals and Police Scotland on identification of wellbeing and protection concerns, recording and child centred

follow up with families. From the multi-agency evaluation, together with the single agency assurance work, the ESAG are confident that the wellbeing and protection concerns reported to the local authority are shared appropriately, that they are recorded and are appropriately follow up where required.

Good practice examples have been identified through the evaluation work and shared through professional development forums and training events such as regular Child Protection Designated Officer Forums in education. Emerging themes are also shared with the GIRFEC group to ensure that early help and support is integral to CP processes.

## Scottish Children's Report Administration (SCRA)



During the period from 2022-2023 SCRA in Angus saw a complete return to normal Hearing activity as pre-pandemic. Referral rates have risen and peaked at a 136 within the reporting period. The primary reason for referral was due to children experiencing a lack of parental care (65 cases), the secondary reason was non-school attendance (30 cases).

Over 40% of the children referred to the reporter, were subject of a Children's Hearing, this conversion rate of referral to Hearings continues to mirror previous years and is twice that of the national average. During this reporting period Hearings in Angus totalled 537, this exceeded last reporting period by 130.

Court Applications in relation to denied or not understood grounds where more than double the previous year. 57 children had grounds established at Court, this equated to a 100% success rate at Court. No appeals were lodged at Court in the past year.

Whilst business has returned to normal, further challenges are faced for both the Children's Reporter and the Hearing System including:

- The Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Bill which was introduced to the Scottish Parliament in December 2022 is likely to be enacted in the coming year. The Bill is supported by SCRA and is compliant with the vision of the Promise. A primary part of that bill is increasing the age of referral to the reporter up to the age of 18
- The Hearing System in its entirety was reviewed by the Hearings System Working Group ([HSWG](#)), who looked at all aspects of the system including the role of the Children's Reporter, the role of the Children's Panel, as well as other partners. The HSWG has submitted its recommendations to the Scottish Government, and it is expected the Government will respond by December 2023. The recommendations are wide ranging and would see a significant redesign of the system that will impact on all parties



To respond to change and deliver the most effective service to children and families, SCRA have developed a new 'programme framework' for delivery of their Corporate Plan and Business Plan. There are three internal programmes of work, each representing one of the three strategic aims of their Corporate Plan:

- Care: Policy, Research and Innovation (includes Promise projects)
- Connect: Digital, Technology and Information (Digital / IT projects)
- Protect: People, Equity and Effective Delivery (Operations / Effective & Efficient Service Delivery)

Currently Programme Protect has completed its initial phases and pilot work is being developed around the country. Within Tayside SCRA are developing several projects that align with Programme Protect and the Promise.

# NATIONAL GUIDANCE

## National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021



[The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021](#) was published two years ago and a self-evaluation of implementation is required to be submitted to CPC Scotland by October 2023.

All agencies representing at the Angus CPC are participating in the evaluation of the implementation on a multi-agency basis. The completion of the tool has so far highlighted that good progress is being made in the implementation of the new guidance.

Once consultation with multi-agency partners is complete and the submission finalised, a plan of work will be drafted for consideration of the CPC so that work can continue to be made in implementing the areas identified.

## GIRFEC



[GIRFEC](#) refresh materials published in September 2022, through collaboration with other Tayside local authorities we are developing a common language and approach across three strands: to our policies, resources and tools and the professional development of staff.

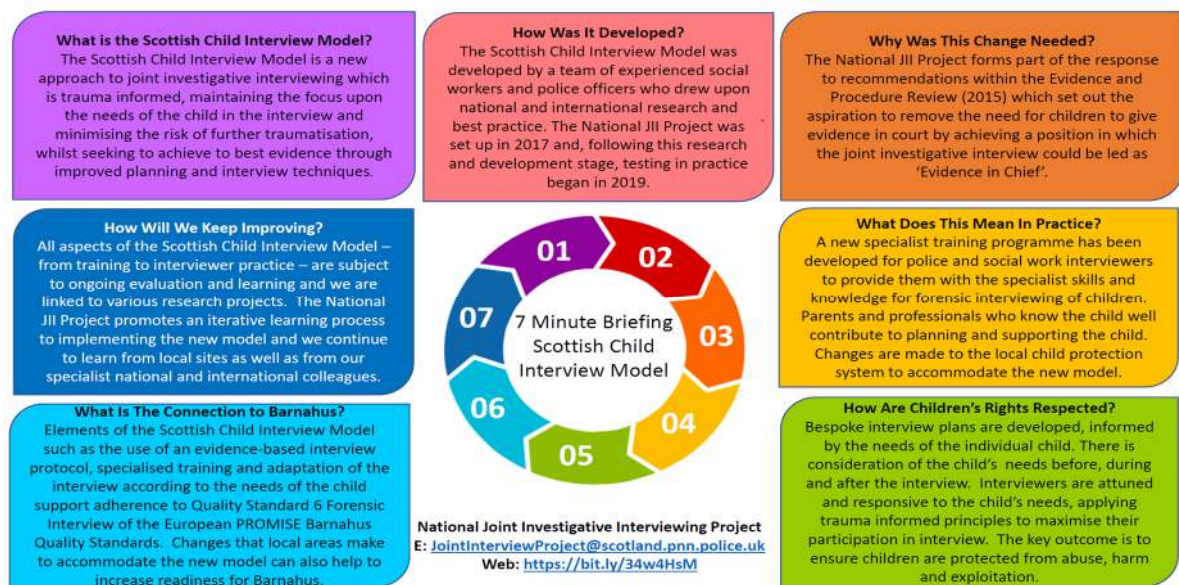
A multiagency pilot training session was delivered in June 2023, sharing the key changes, and support practitioners across agencies in their understanding of how to deliver GIRFEC through the Continuum of Need process. Feedback from this pilot is being gathered and will inform future professional development across the Continuum of Need, with a mandatory GIRFEC online module to be made available to all staff by August 2024. Further multiagency training on GIRFEC across the Continuum of Need is to be delivered to professionals in the Named Person and Lead Professional role by June 2024, alongside assessment and decision-making training. These developments are supported by the multiagency GIRFEC group in Angus.

## Scottish Child Interview Model [SCIM](#)

In Scotland there has been a plan to implement a new Joint Interview process, detailed below. Discussions have been ongoing within Angus, Dundee and Perth and Kinross in 2022-2023 regarding the implementation of this model across Tayside. Interviewer training for Police and Social Workers will begin early 2024.

Further consideration will be required to manage the introduction of the new model, during 2024 due to the significant training requirements impacting workforce capacity.

**Figure 5 SCIM Overview.**



CONVENTION OF SCOTTISH LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Figure 5 shows an overview of the SCIM model, with progress of the implementation in Angus, being reported in next year's PPA report.

## Care And Risk Management (CARM)

In December 2022, Angus Council CFJ and Hillcrest futures were successful in a joint application to the Corra Foundation ([CORRA](#)) in respect of "A Supportive Workforce". They received £247,500 which is being used to fund a project in respect of supporting children and young people whose behaviours present a significant risk to self or others. They have employed a full-time development officer and a part time senior practitioner to take this work forward. The project is in its initial stages; however, a steering group has been established and has representation from a variety of agencies from across the committees.

**The main outcomes over the next 2 years will be:**

- Upskilling the workforce in respect of risk assessment and risk formulation to support rights-based interventions – Upholding of children's rights

- Supporting the workforce to work collaboratively to jointly share risk whilst supporting relationship-based practice with the young person and their families. – Keeping children within family where it is safe to do so
- Challenge the system we work within to ensure that children and young people receive the right trauma recovery / mental health support

The project is using the Model for Improvement to support the work of this group in developing change ideas that will benefit the workforce and in turn promote better outcomes for the children and young people they work with.

## CHILD PROTECTION STATISTICS – WHAT THE DATA IS TELLING US?

The Self Evaluation and Continuous Improvement (SECI) Subgroup continues to meet on a quarterly basis; membership includes Education & Lifelong Learning, Social Work, Health, SCRA and Police. Chairing of the Subgroup moved from Health to Social Work in February 2023. The Subgroup routinely considers the dataset which contains twenty-two measures under the following eight headings:

- Early-Stage Child Protection Activity
- Child Protection Planning Meetings
- Conversion Rates
- Child Protection Register
- Characteristics of our Vulnerable Children and Young People
- Children Involved in Related Processes
- Child Protection Timescales
- Parental or Carer Attendance

The Subgroup discuss the data set and use this to identify specific areas of interest or concern. Areas of interest over the last year have included the number of Child Concern Reports submitted by Police Scotland and the Quality Assurance around these as well as considering the volume of Pre-Birth Assessments being undertaken.

The quality and breadth of information contained in the dataset continues to grow and by focusing on one or two areas per meeting the subgroup can draw the attention of the committee to areas of interest or concern.

The following data shows some of the key matters considered during 2022-2023 by the group and subsequently presented to the ACPC.

**Figure 6 Referrals Requiring Follow Up.**

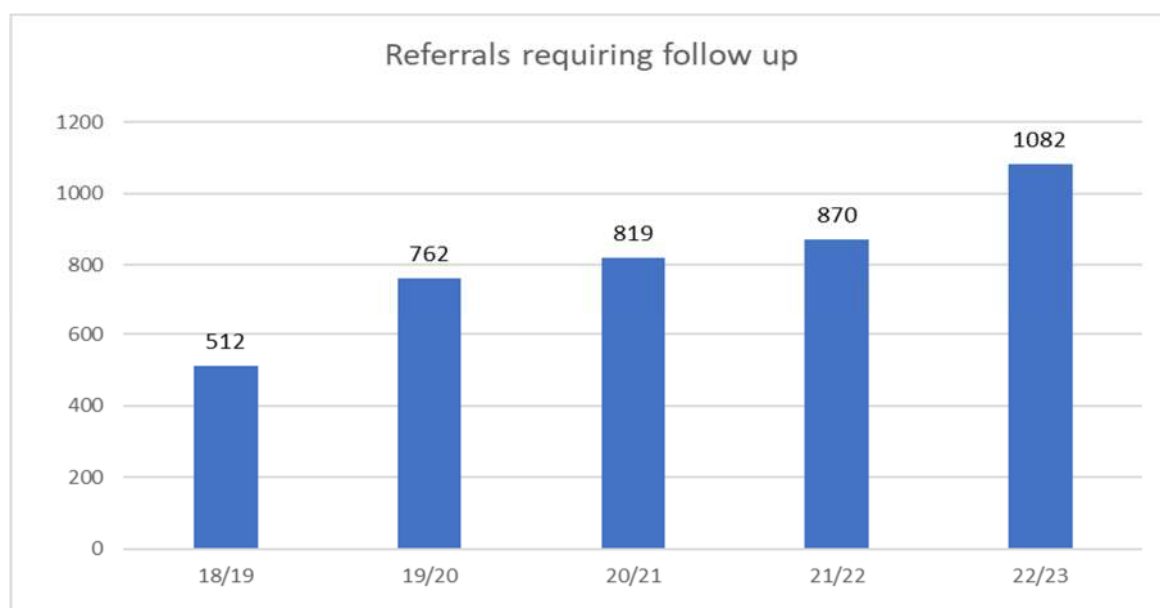


Figure 6 highlights the steadily increasing number of referrals requiring follow up action by services.

From 2021/22 to 2022/23 saw an increase of 212 (24%) referrals. This is a steadier increase than previous years. This year-on-year increase is influenced by several concerns families are experiencing, for example:

- The cost-of-living crisis and poverty
- Challenges with mental health and wellbeing as these are known to disproportionately impact those from lower-income households and living in areas of deprivation
- Parental drug and alcohol misuse.
- Domestic abuse (DA)

**Figure 7 Pre-Birth Referrals**

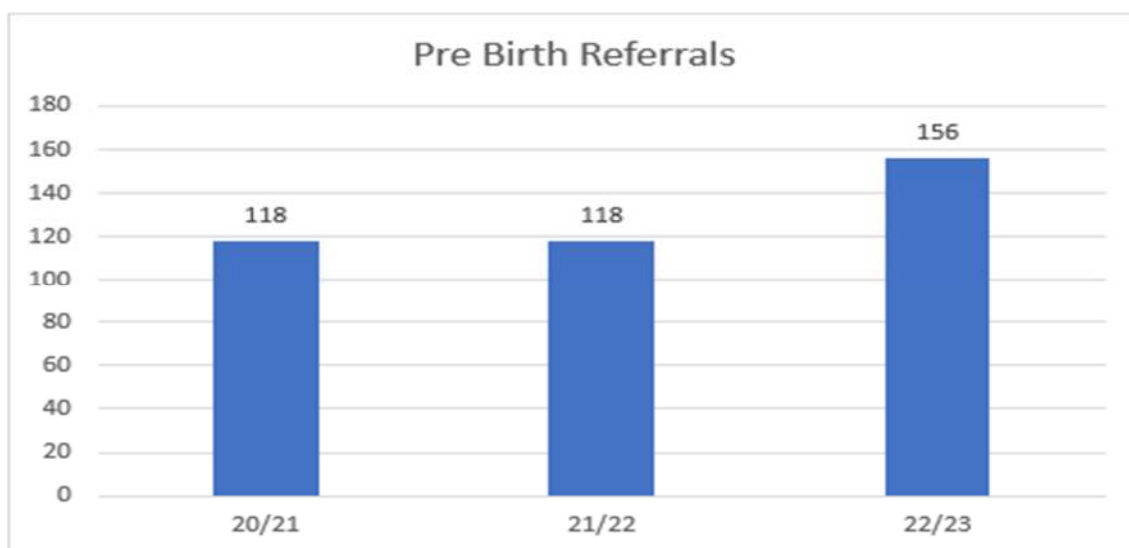
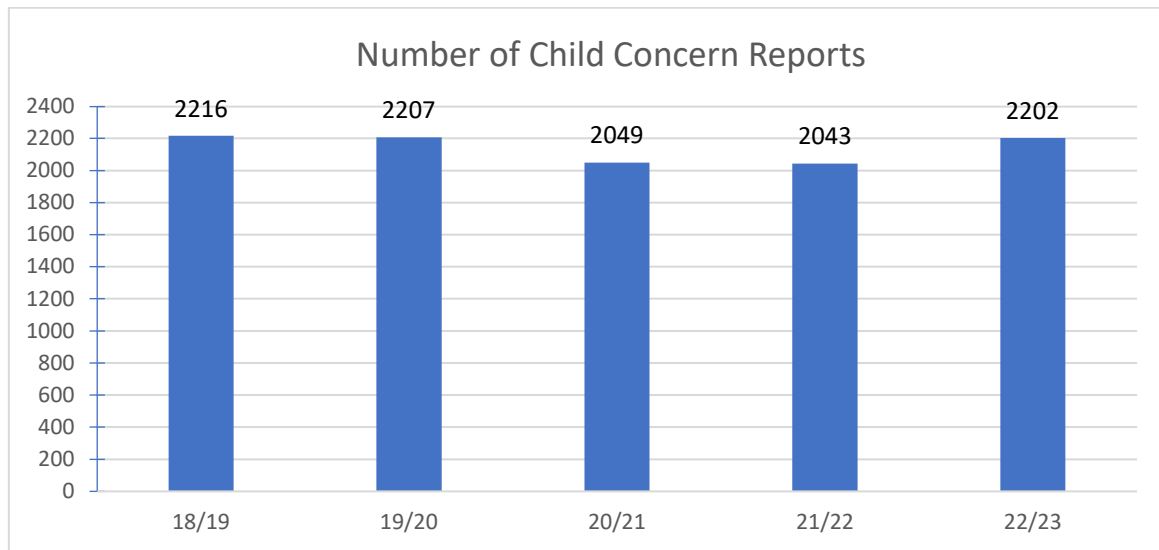


Figure 7 shows there was an increase of 38 (32%) in referrals to PRAM from 2021-2022 to 2022-2023. This level of referrals resulted in an increase of 15 pre-birth assessments, an 88% rise from the previous year. This rise appears to follow the increase noted in the 'referrals requiring follow up' and PCCR's. the top three reasons for referrals to PRAM are:

- Previous child protection concerns for the family
- Parental Mental Ill Health
- Parental Alcohol and/or drug use

PRAM has been thoroughly explored for the six month period between October 2022 and March 2023. This is noted in the graphs in Figures 2, 3 and 4.

**Figure 8 Number of Child Concern Reports**



The above graph figure 8 shows that CCR's received from Police Scotland have increased by 159(8%) from the previous year. The number of CCR's have remained reasonably static with minimal increase and decrease over the five-year period, 2019-2020 number and this reporting showing a reduction of only 5 reports.

Taking a closer look at data and using the detailed recording in Children's Social Work, it is possible to see a spike in CCR's being received during July, August, and September over the previous two years.

This would be while children and young people are not within education due to holiday periods, and may have an impact on the rise in this figure. Education continue to provide a named person service during holiday times and ensure information is provided quickly and IRDs attended. The increase in activity over the summer break places an increased demand on the service who continue to prioritise child protection. Over school holiday periods there is an increased pressure on families and it is therefore important that we continue to consider pro-active measures within local communities over this time such as the use of holiday funds.

**Figure 9 Number of Children Subject to CCR's**

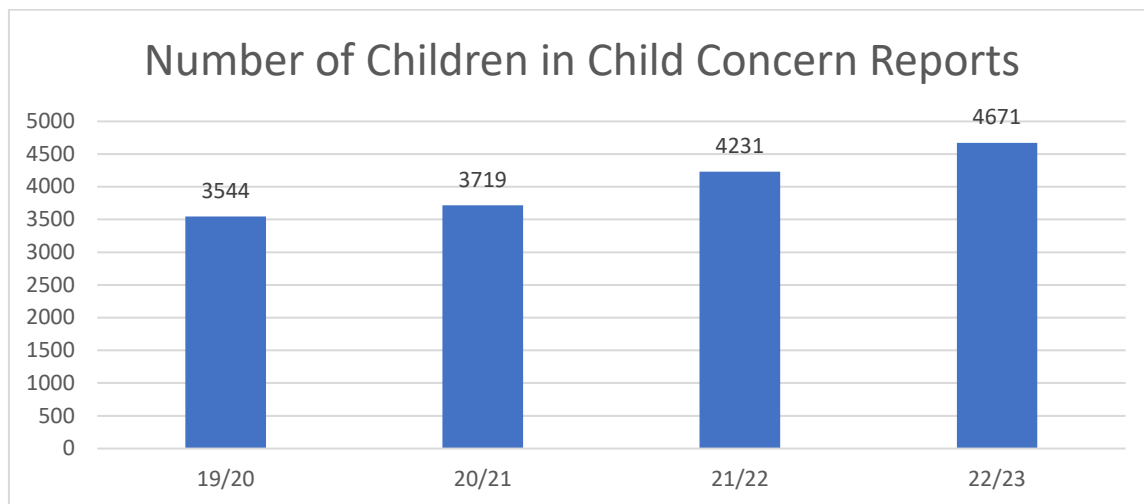


Figure 9 shows that even though the number of CCR's received from Police Scotland has remained reasonably stable the number of children being included in each report has increased year on year. In the last reporting year there was a rise of 440 (10%) and an overall increase of 1,127 (32%) since 2019-2020.

**Figure 10 Interagency Referral Discussions**

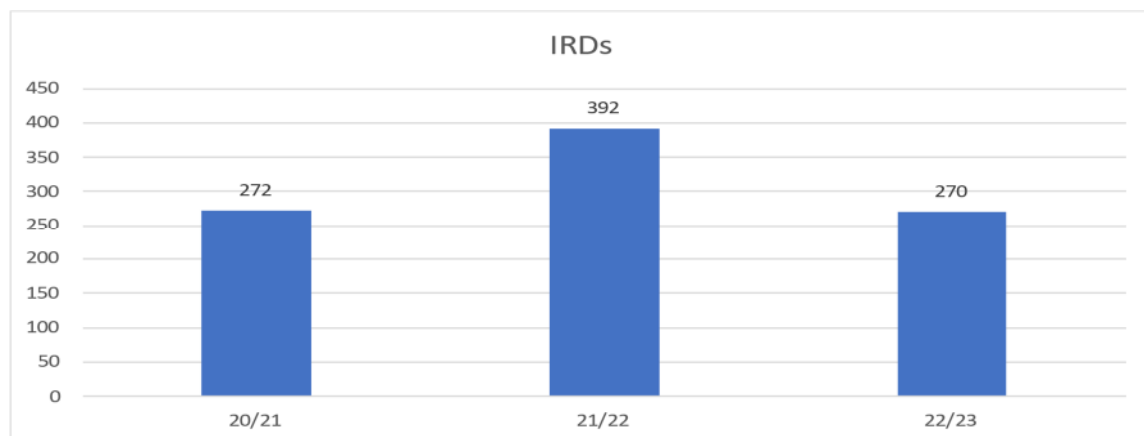


Figure 10 shows there has been a decrease in the amount of IRD's held, in Angus, reducing by 122 (-32%). The national figures, show that IRD's have increased by 6% in Scotland. The Angus figure, after the spike in the last reporting period has again returned to within two of the 2022-2021 figure. The national figure has remained largely stable.

As reported in the last CPC report the fluctuation of IRD figures could relate to ending of the Covid lockdown. However, it is worth noting that this year's reduction sits within an 8% increase in PCCR's, 32% increase in PRAM referrals and a 20% increase of referrals requiring follow up overall. For this reporting period there is no comparison data for PCCR's or Referrals requiring update, with a Child Protection marker, which is something that may have given the figures more clarity.



**Figure 11 Joint Investigation Interviews**

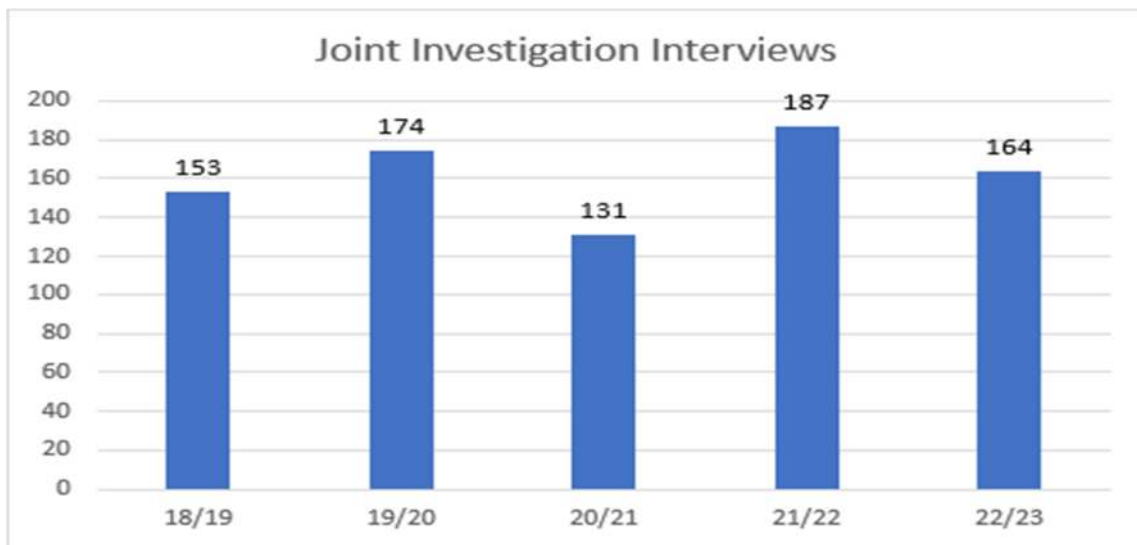


Figure 11 shows that although there has been a reduction of 23 (-12%) of JII's in 2022-2023, this figure has not decreased when compared to IRD's held. In 2020-2021 272 IRD's, resulted in 131 JII's (48%), in 2021-2022, 392 IRD's resulted in 187 JII's (47%), however in 2022-2023 the lower figure of 270 IRD's resulted in 164 JII's, an increase of 60%.

The slight fluctuation in figures between 21/22 and 22/23 is minimal and are within what would be deemed as normal variation.

**Figure 12 Child Protection Investigation.**

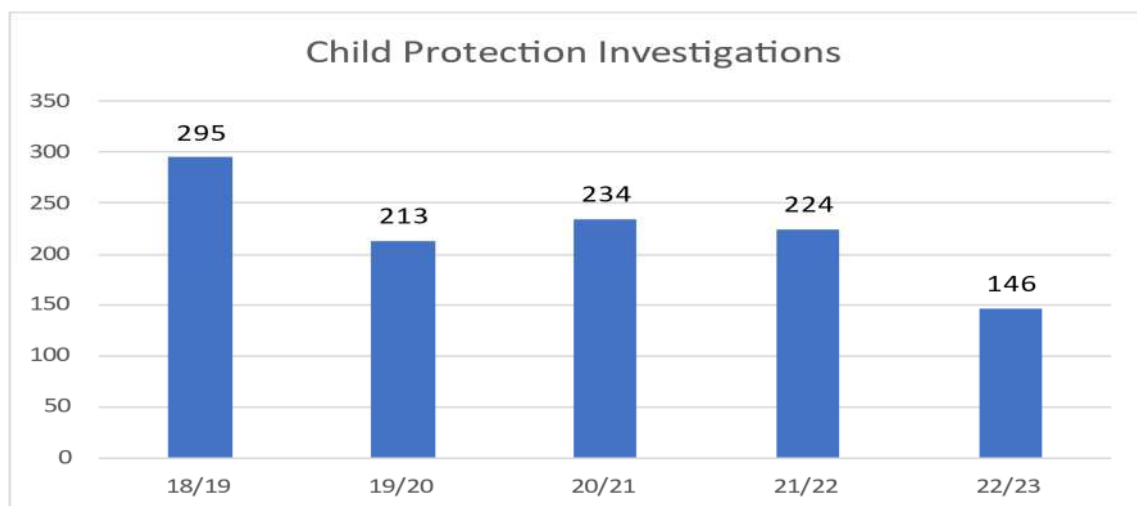


Figure 12 shows that although there was an increase JII's in the last year this has not translated into the amount of CPI completed, reducing by 78 (-35%). In general, children aged under 5 will not be considered for a JII given their age and understanding. Children who are vulnerable or may have additional support needs may not be appropriate for joint interview. The needs of the child are discussed within

the IRD with the views of people who know the children best, relied upon to inform the decision to offer and seek consent for a JII.

Reasons that would affect the CPI figure include:

- The child is the responsibility of another Local Authority who take forward the CPI. An example of this is children who reside at Rossie
- The JII is conducted at the request of the Procurator Fiscal
- The concern requires a Police investigation but not a Social Work investigation, for example, the child protection concern is historical and there is no need for a current CPI report from Social Work
- The child is joint interviewed as a witness to a potential crime

Within Social Work, we measure Child Protection Investigations (CPI) by the number of Child protection Investigation reports that are completed. For children who are supported by longer term teams and where the CP concerns are cumulative, a comprehensive assessment form is used instead. Whilst the numbers of CPI reports are decreasing, the use of other assessment forms are increasing and this has an implication for child protection data.

There are significant national developments in child interviewing, for example the Scottish Government have been consulting on the [SCIM](#) and [Bairn's Hoose model](#). Angus has been involved in discussions at a local and national level and developments will continue over the next year, with the introduction of the SCIM process into practice.

**Figure 13 Joint Forensic Medical Examinations**

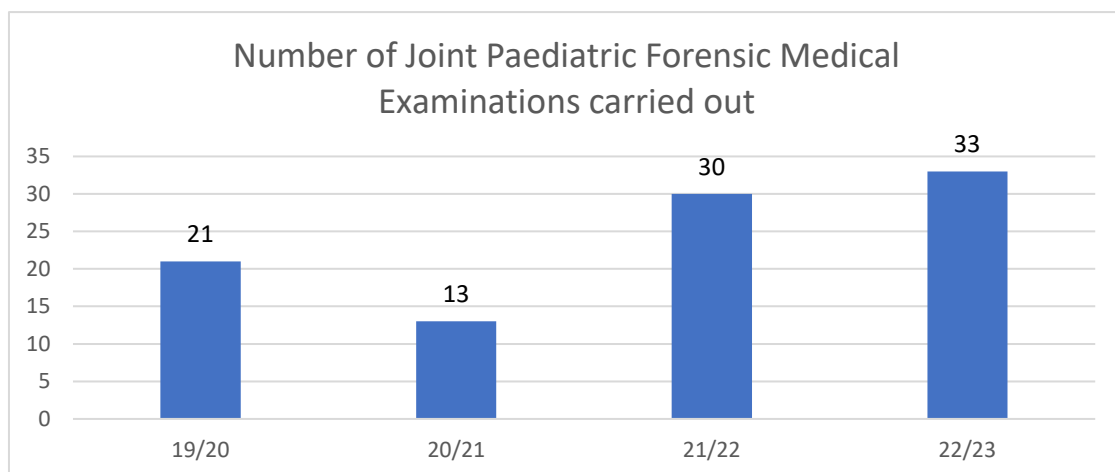


Figure 13 shows a slight increase of in the 2022-2023 in the number of Paediatric Forensic Medical Examinations. 2020-2021 shows a lower figure of medicals undertaken however this was within the Covid period. There is a minimal increase from last year figures which would be within normal variation and does not prompt any further investigation.

**Figure 14 Children on the Child Protection Register (CPR)**

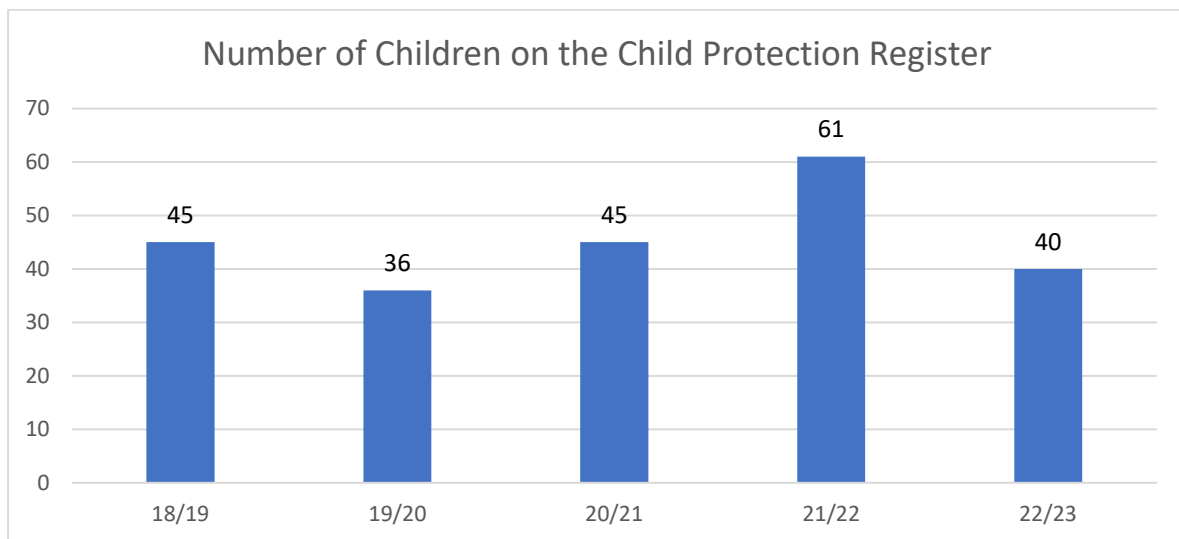


Figure 14 shows a reduction of 21 (-35%) of children and young people being subject of CPR in 2022-2023 from 2021-2022. These figures only show the number of children being registered and not how many are part of the same family and as such maybe misleading. This also may explain why there appears to be a large spike in numbers 2021-2022.

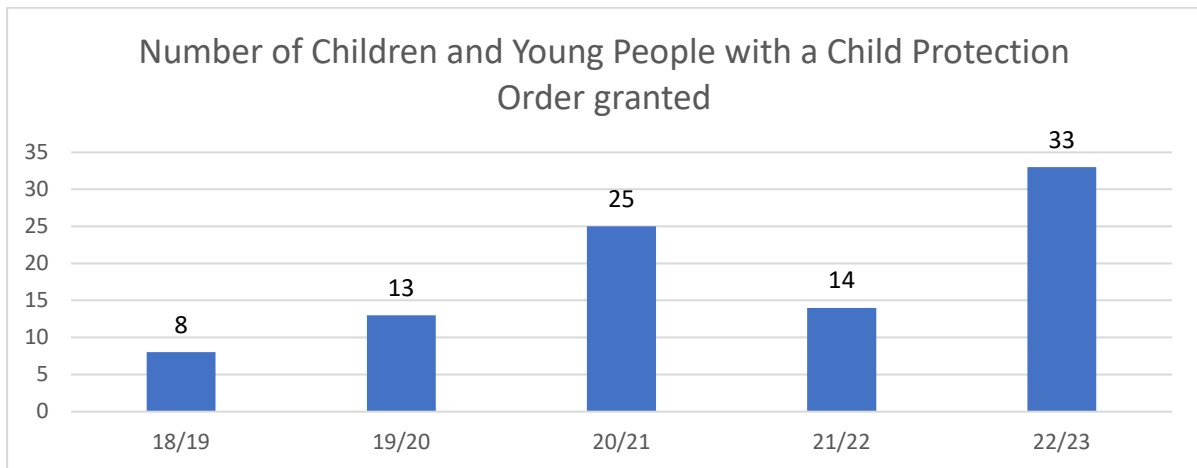
The numbers noted above are also a static figure representative of children registered at the end date of the reporting period, 31 July. The numbers fluctuate during the year, depending on the period of registration, and as such may have been more or less than the final figure.

Angus is just above the Scottish average for numbers of children on the CPR with 2.8% per 1,000 of the population aged 0-15 years compared to the Scottish average of 2.2% per 1,000 of the population aged 0-15 years. Due to the small population involved, individual family variances can impact significantly on the value of these benchmark comparisons.

In this reporting period 84% of children were subject of registration for one year or less (Less than 6 months (36%); 6 months to one year (48%)), with 13% being registered for one year to 18 months and 3% over 18 months. Domestic Abuse (22%), Parental Mental Health (15%) and Neglect (13%) continue to account for half of the reasons children become subject to CPR.

There is an internal reflective learning review in every case where a child is on the register for over one year to ensure that the supports in place are sufficient to meet the needs and reduce risk. These sessions are well received by social workers and managers to aid reflective practice and identify learning at the case, team and organisational level.

**Figure 15 Numbers of CPO's**



Where possible, families are supported in a planned way, however Child Protection Orders (CPOs) are sought where immediate risk of significant harm is identified. Figure 15 shows CPO legislation has been used this year for 33 individual children, an increase of 19(136%). This rise appears significant and may be reflective of the increase in overall referrals, the number of children subject to CCR's and the ongoing pressures families are facing. However, it is also possible this figure has been affected by the number of children experiencing the same risk factor, resulting in a CPO being granted per child.

As part of CFJ's single agency approach to self-evaluation an internal reflective learning review should take place for every circumstance in which a CPO has been applied for to support learning, share good practice and identify any system issues which may have had an impact on the case. Also of note is that none of the 33 CPO's have been refused or overturned, indicating that the applications have been appropriately sought.

**Figure 16 CP Concerns Emotional & Domestic Abuse**

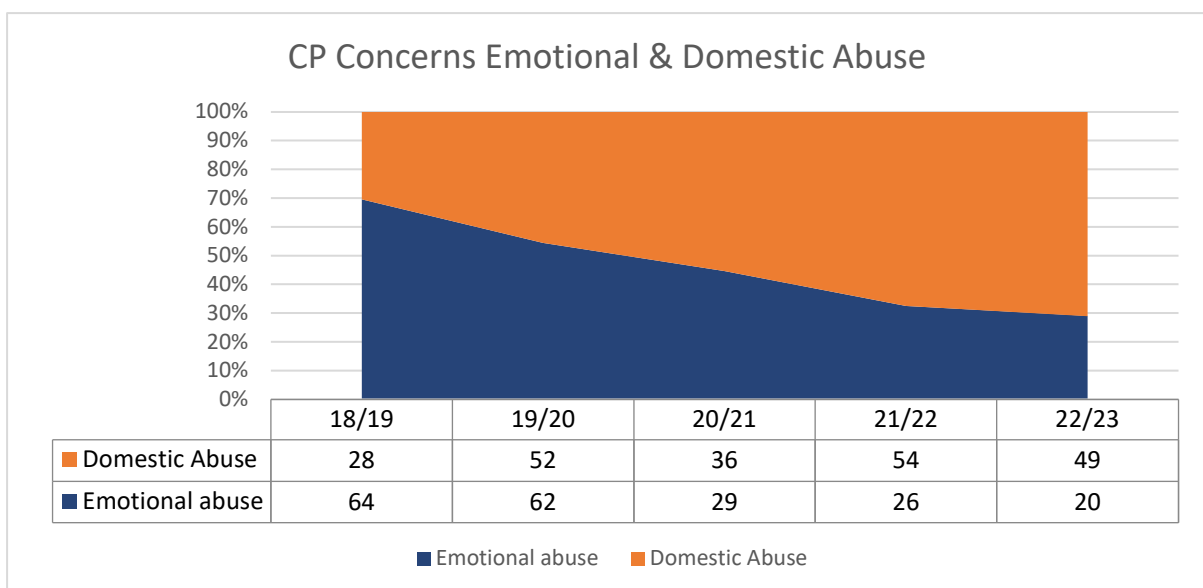


Figure 16 shows that since 2018/19, there has been an increase in DA and a drop in emotional abuse. This coincides with the roll out of Safe and Together where it appears that the multi-agency workforce has increased in confidence in recognising DA within families, and being explicit about this in assessments, planning meetings and Child's Plans.

This Angus trend appears to be levelling out, which may suggest a truer reflection of the occurrences of DA and an indication that S&T has had a positive impact on the lives of women and girls in Angus. However, it is imperative that the multi-agency workforce continue to promote S&T as the preferred model in domestic abuse work, train the workforce and ensure this remains the focus of domestic abuse practice.

# TRAINING AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

## Protecting People Angus Workforce Learning and Development Subgroup

The ethos of the group continues to be to utilise nationally or regionally available resource wherever possible, enabling local resource to focus on providing specialist and bespoke learning, tailored to the needs of the workforce.

Both the [Learning and Development Framework](#) and the PPA L&D newsletter continue to be utilised as tools to make learning more readily available across the workforce.

A “[Language Matters](#)” resource was developed for use across the workforce. The aim of this is to create a common language across the Angus workforce which supports the reduction of stigma, minimises sensationalism and supports individuals in a positive way. The resource highlights language which should be used and language which should be avoided. It will be updated 6 monthly to ensure it remains current and reflective of societal changes.

The core learning programme has continued to be delivered throughout the year and includes the introduction of “networks of support”. These provide an opportunity for multiagency professionals to come together to explore and learn from specific cases. Initial evaluations indicate these are valuable learning opportunities.

An evaluation process for all PPA learning has been developed and introduced. The process comprises of:

- An immediate evaluation, which is completed either at the end of the course or shortly thereafter. It evaluates the quality of the course and information shared
- A longitudinal evaluation will also be conducted three months following each event. This focuses on gathering data on the impact of the learning from the event (i.e. how practice has changed, what the individual has done differently)

Outputs from the evaluations considered by the sub-group on a rolling basis to identify any thematic trends. The initial appraisal of the data collected has been very positive with an increase of knowledge across every session offered and positive feedback being received. This has been the first year of this process and as such further development of the process is required and will be available for the next reporting period.

There continues to be some concern about the capacity the workforce has, for undertaking learning and development whilst managing ever increasing workloads. Going forward, the subgroup will continue to look at how learning is made available to reduce barriers to access.

## **National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) - Graded Care Profile 2 (GCP2)**

NSPCC Graded Care Profile 2 ([GCP2](#)) is the assessment tool utilised in Angus, where neglect maybe of concern. The tool helps professionals measure the quality of care provided by a parent or carer in meeting their child's needs, particularly where there are concerns about neglect. Professionals score aspects of family life on a scale of one to five, assisting them to:

- measure the quality of care being provided to children you work with identify where children require further support and whether the level of care received needs to be improved
- implement a constructive working relationship with families
- increase your confidence in decision making at all levels
- promote multi-agency working and train professionals across agencies to use the tool – creating a common language and improving the quality of referrals

In this reporting year there has been a reduction in trainers for GCP2 due to staff moving on, however the small group of professionals have managed to offer three sessions, to the multi-agency workforce. Feedback from a participant noted, *"I feel that the training was very informative, and I now feel confident in what a graded care assessment is and how to carry one out"*.

Due to the low number of GCP2 trainers available in Angus, this training has not been offered as widely as would have been hoped, a requirement of facilitating this training requires accreditation from NSPCC. Further opportunity has been offered to train additional trainers, but no interest was noted and as such we have progressed with the trainer's availability. In the coming reporting period it is likely trainers will struggle to meet the workforce demand for GCP2 training, as a result plans are in place:

- To deliver neglect focused training to the workforce raising the awareness of this issue, the impact and how to support children and families.
- To make the best use of the limited GCP2 resources available in Angus, and ensure the training is offered on a need led basis targeting those professional who are most likely to see neglect in families
- Link professionals who have undertaken the training with other who have not

Within this reporting period there is no available data of how often the GCP2 has been used in practice. A scoping exercise will be undertaken to establish this and evidence if further funding is required for the GCP2 Train the Trainers course.

## Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative (TRIC)



The ACPC continues to be a member of [TRIC](#) Priority Group 5. Due to a change of Chair, there has been a pause to meetings. This will be developed further by the new Chair in the next reporting period.

### Child Protection in Schools

Child Protection in Schools Service continues to deliver communication and supports for child protection practice within schools, nurseries, private / voluntary providers, and partner agencies.

This year there has been a focus on promoting the PREpare model, which has included a child protection coordinator forum on how education can support families going through the process of Child Protection Planning Meetings (CPPM's).

In addition, the education workforce has been offered an experience of participating in role play mock CPPM's sessions. These sessions have raised confidence and enable staff to gain invaluable first-hand experience of participating in a CPPM; an understanding of the process, in a safe and supportive environment as well as practical advice and feedback on expectations of participants. As the role play included parent characters, there is an opportunity for participants to discuss and gain insight into how it may feel for family members to attend.

The overall rating of the course was 9.15/10 and feedback from this training has been positive, including:

- *"The relaxed atmosphere and ability to ask questions. I enjoyed taking part in one meeting and then observing one"*
- *"Great opportunity to ask questions and learn from others. Real life scenarios made the experience feel genuine and worthwhile (everything looked and felt like a CPPM)"*
- *"I felt that running the session like a genuine CPPM was very useful as it provided opportunities to make decisions and judgements in 'real time' and independently without influence"*
- *"I felt I got the assurances I needed for attending these meetings in the future"*

Work has continued to implement the updates within the National Child Protection Guidance for Scotland 2023 updating local guidance to ensure it is cognisant with national guidance. Part of this work has included representation from Angus on a short life working group (SLWG) of education child protection leads across Scotland considering how supervision for education staff can be implemented in practice. As



a result of this work a paper has been submitted by the SLWG to the Scottish Government.

### **Child Protection in Health**

NHS Tayside works with multi-agency partners to collectively support the delivery of safe and essential care to keep Tayside's children and young people safe. The NHS Tayside CP Team continue to support services across NHS Tayside to strengthen CP practice and empower health professionals through a self-evaluation and learning approach. This has included a review of the NHS Tayside CP Policy to support implementation of the National CP Guidance and further development of the use of 7 Minute Briefings.

The CP Team have also engaged in 'The [Bairns Hoose](#)' model following implementation of National standards in May 2023. The overall vision of a Bairns' Hoose in Scotland is that all children who have been victims of or witnesses to abuse or violence, children under the age of criminal responsibility whose behaviour has caused significant harm or abuse, will have access to trauma informed recovery, support and justice. NHS Tayside, along with our locality partners are keen to explore becoming a Pathfinder site prior to pilot sites in 2025.

For both CPC and APC reports: NHS Tayside has been progressing implementation of the NHS Public Protection Accountability and Assurance Framework <https://www.gov.scot/publications/nhs-public-protection-accountability-assurance-framework> published in October 2022, which aims to guide Health Boards in the assessment of the adequacy and effectiveness of their public protection arrangements both at strategic and operational levels. It will ensure greater consistency with children, young people, and adults at risk of harm, families and details what is expect in terms of support and protection from health services in all parts of Scotland.

# **PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS / RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS**

## **Public Protection Website**

Between August 2022 and July 2023, the Protecting People website entered a scoping and development stage alongside our multiagency partners. This supported PPA to gather data in relation to what information should be included to promote a rights-based approach for the children, young people and families who are receiving a service in Angus. We have been collaborating with the Angus Council digital team to streamline our messaging and are nearing the point of completion.

Moving forward PPA aim to have a soft launch in January 2024. Following this, traffic and usage will be monitored, to allow for adaptations to website information / layout based on the data collated. Furthermore, test groups inclusive of children, young people, and their families will be set up to seek feedback. This support will ensure the website is relevant and accessible to meet the user's needs.

## **Mentors in Violence Program**

Schools in Angus encourage children and young people to report incidences of bullying. Mentors in Violence (MVP) is a programme which aims to challenge the attitudes, values and beliefs that underpin gender-based violence and bullying behaviour. The focus is on young people developing healthy relationships that will support their learning in a safe and nurturing environment.

Seven of the eight secondary schools in Angus have been trained successfully to run this peer education programme. Angus Councils Vibrant Communities staff also support schools in delivering the MVP programme, where trained staff deliver training to senior pupils. These trained pupils then work with junior pupils delivering the key messages of the programme. The final school in Angus to engage with the programme, is presently arranging training. This will see all secondary pupils having access to this programme.

## **16 Days of Action – November to December 2022**



The Angus Violence Against Women Partnership (AVAWP) led on 16 Days of Action and the CPC supported this via Protecting People Angus (PPA).

During the 16 Days of Action Against Gender Based Violence, a series of learning and awareness raising events were organised, with the aims of raising awareness of GBV issues in the community and upskilling the workforce in best practice around GBV.

From 25 November 2022 to 10 December 2022, 17 multi-agency learning sessions took place, aimed at staff, volunteers, carers or anyone who supports people in Angus. A total of 142 people attended sessions and participants were asked to evaluate each session. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive 94% of all participants noting they would recommend the learning session to colleagues. Feedback from those attending learning sessions included:

- *"I am going to pass this information on to my team. I will ensure that in my line of work I consider any warning signs"*
- *"So informative. What a well told but shocking a tragic story."*
- *"It was online which made it possible for me to attend. The length of the session was good as its about as long as I can concentrate online. The content was excellent! and delivered really well. Thank you"*.

The focus of 2022 16 Days of Action was on the multi-agency workforce with little community involvement. In the next reporting year, PPA will consider a more inclusive approach, looking at how awareness can be raised in Angus communities.

### **National Children's Day – May 2023**



To celebrate [National Children's Day](#) the CPC hosted a multi-agency opportunity to meet the CPC Chair for a Q&A session. This was well attended and raised interesting conversations.

A session was also arranged by NHS Tayside highlighting the ICON Programme (I – Infant crying is normal, C – Comforting methods can help, O – It's ok to walk away, N – Never, ever shake a baby). [ICON NHS Tayside](#) launched in Tayside and is an established programme of intervention that reinforces a simple message to parents and carers regarding how to cope with infant crying.

The CPC remain committed to continuing to highlight Child Protection practice within Angus during National Children's Day over the coming years.

# **FINDINGS AND RECOMENDATIONS FROM LEARNING REVIEWS (FORMELY ICR/SCR)**

## **Learning Review Oversight**

The ACPC were presented with the process used by the Angus Adult Protection Committee (AAPC) for maintaining oversight of progress towards all recommendations that have come from previous Learning Reviews (formerly known as ICRs and SCRs). The process includes listing all recommendations in one document and updates towards progress or any barriers to be requested regularly by the Lead Officer. This will be collated and given to the SECI group for oversight and scrutiny. Any recommendations that organisations would like to submit for completion are heard by the SECI and a decision made on if appropriate evidence is available.

The ACPC approved moving to this model and the Lead Officer will progress this during the next reporting period.

# CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

## Conclusion

In conclusion this has been another difficult year for children and families, both at a local and national level. Angus services have seen an increased need for the support offered across all areas, where families referred have experienced multiple disadvantages including poor mental health, poverty, addictions, domestic abuse, offending behaviour and attachment difficulties.

Workforce challenges continue to face multi-agency staff with heavy and complex caseloads, limited resources for early intervention and preventative work. Together with a highly competitive environment for recruitment and retention, this context continues to put pressures on the Angus multi-agency workforce.

## Key development areas for 2023-24

Development areas are identified through subgroups and linked to the ACPC Strategic Plan. Oversight of the development areas listed are overseen by the workplans of the subgroups. The main areas of focus for August 2023 to July 2024 will be:

- Develop an Angus approach to tackle and raise awareness of issue of neglect
- Further develop the 'Involving Dads' work
- Aligning PRAM timescales with the CPC Annual Report schedule to ensure that the data is relevant to the reporting period
- We will gather PRAM data on the age of pregnant women and consider any implications for practice
- Develop the Whole Family Approach in Angus
- Continue to develop and review CP policy and guidance
- Report on the CP audit and action any recommendations
- CARM planning and implementation to be further developed
- SCIM to introduce to Angus CP practice, with police and social work to be trained to enable this process to be implemented
- ACPC to recruit a third sector member

## Appendix 1

### Glossary of Acronyms

ACE's	Adverse Childhood Experiences
ACPC	Angus Child Protection Committee
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ADP	Alcohol and Drug Partnership
AICSG	Angus Integrated Children's Services Group
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
AVAWP	Angus Violence Against Women Partnership
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CARM	Care and Risk Management
PCCRs	Child Concern Reports
CFJ	Children, Families & Justice
CHS	Children's Hearing Scotland
CLOG	Chairs and Lead Officers
COG	Angus Chief Officer Group
CP	Child Protection
CPC	Child Protection Committee
CPPM	Child Protection Planning
CPP&PS	Child Protection Practice and Policy Sub-committee
CPO	Child Protection Order
CPC&PS	Child Protection Policy and Practice Sub-group
DA	Domestic Abuse
ESAG	Early Screening Assurance Group
GCP2	Graded Care Profile 2 (Neglect assessment tool)
GIRFEC	Getting It Right for Every Child
HSWG	Hearings System Working Group HSWG
ICR	Initial Case Review
IRD	Inter-Agency Referral Discussions

JII	Joint Investigative Interviewing
L&D	Learning and Development
LNA	Local Needs Analysis
LOG	Lead Officers Group
MAPPA	Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
NQSW	Newly Qualified Social Worker
NSCPCC	North Scotland Child Protection Committee Consortium
PCCRs	Child Concern Reports
PPA	Protecting People Angus
P&PS	Practice and Policy Subgroup
PRAM	Pre-birth Referral Allocation Meeting
QIS	Quality and Improvement Service
QRS	Quality and Review Service
S&T	Safe and Together
SCR	Significant Case Review
SCRA	Scottish Children's Report Administration
SECI	Self-Evaluation and Continuous Improvement Subgroup
SLWG	Short Life Working Group
SMART	Specific – Measurable – Attainable – Measurable – Time Bound
SNC	Scottish National Chairs
SSSC	Scottish Social Service Council
TIP	Trauma Informed Practice
ToR	Terms of Reference
TRIC	Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative
TRIC PG5	Tayside Regional Improvement Collaborative Priority Group 5
UNCR	United Nations Children's Rights
VPD	Vulnerable Person Database
WLD	Workforce Learning and Development Subgroup

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