

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**FAMILY, EDUCATION AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE – 10 JUNE 2025**

**CHILDREN AT RISK OF HARM - JOINT INSPECTION OF SERVICE**

**REPORT BY KATHRYN LINDSAY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**1. ABSTRACT**

- 1.1 This report briefs members of Family, Education and Justice Committee on the outcome of the Children at Risk of Harm Integrated Inspection for Angus. The remit of the Inspection as set by Scottish Ministers, is to consider the effectiveness of services for children and young people up to the age of 18 at risk of harm and evaluate the difference community planning partnerships are making to the lives of children, young people and their families. The Inspection was conducted by the Care Inspectorate along with Healthcare Improvement Scotland, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland and Education Scotland. Inspection activity took place between 30 September 2024 and 19 March 2025 and involved direct engagement of children, young people and families. The report was published on 29 March 2025 with an evaluation of Very Good against quality indicator 2.1 – Impact on children and young people.

**2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICIES**

**The Angus Community Plan 2022-30:**

- Provide the best start in life for children
- Improve physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Create more opportunities for people to live well and achieve their personal goals

**The Council Plan 2023-2028:**

- Caring for our people; protect those in our communities who are at risk or have experienced significant harm

**The Tayside Plan for Children, Young People and Families 2023 - 2026**

- Our children and young people will have their rights protected and their voices heard
- Our children growing and young people will be safe and loved

**3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Family, Education and Justice Committee: -
- (i) considers the findings of the Joint Inspection of Children at Risk of Harm;
  - (ii) acknowledges the inspection findings, the associated grading and areas for improvement specified in the report;
  - (iii) acknowledges the requirement for a multi-agency improvement action plan which will be developed and submitted to the Care Inspectorate within 6 weeks; and
  - (iv) agrees the Director for Children, Families and Justice has oversight of the improvement plan and submits the necessary updates to assure the Care Inspectorate that progress is being made.

**4. BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The Angus Child Protection Committee (ACPC) is the local strategic planning partnership responsible for developing and implementing child protection strategy, policy and guidance across and between agencies, bodies and the local community in Angus. ACPC is comprised of several senior leaders from many different agencies including Angus Council, NHS Tayside,

Police Scotland, and Angus Third Sector organisations. The committee is responsible for working together to ensure the co-ordination and delivery of training and learning opportunities for the multi-agency workforce, the development of policies, procedures and guidance, improving services through continuous improvement and evaluation, and the provision of public information to ensure awareness of everyone's responsibility to promote children's safety and wellbeing. The Committee works in accordance with the [National Guidance for Child Protection Scotland](#) and the National Chief Officers' Public Protection Induction Resource.

- 4.2 From 1 April 2024 our local arrangements surrounding protecting people committees changed to bring together the responsibilities of the ACPC, Angus Adult Protection Committee and Angus Violence against Women Partnership into Public Protection Angus Strategic Committee (PPASC). The Care Inspectorate scrutinised how PPASC was functioning to ensure that all protecting people agendas were given the level of attention necessary.
- 4.3 At the request of Scottish Ministers, the Care Inspectorate leads joint inspections of services for children and young people at risk of harm.
- 4.4 The remit of these joint inspections is to consider the effectiveness of services for children and young people up to the age of 18 at risk of harm. The inspections look at the differences community planning partnerships are making to the lives of children and young people at risk of harm, and their families.
- 4.5 Joint inspections aim to provide assurance on the extent to which services, working together, can demonstrate that:
  - Children and young people are safer because risks have been identified early and responded to effectively.
  - Children and young people's lives improve with high-quality planning and support, ensuring they experience sustained, loving and nurturing relationships to keep them safe from further harm.
  - Children and young people and families are meaningfully and appropriately involved in decisions about their lives. They influence service planning, delivery and improvement.
  - Collaborative strategic leadership, planning and operational management ensure high standards of service delivery.
- 4.6 The joint inspection of services for children at risk of harm in the Angus community planning partnership area took place between 30 September 2024 and 19 March 2025. It covered the range of partners in the area that have a role in meeting the needs of children and young people at risk of harm, and their families. As part of the inspection process, the inspection team:
  - Listened to the views and experiences of 26 children and young people and 29 parents and carers. This included face to face meetings, telephone or video calls and survey responses.
  - Reviewed practice by reading a sample of records held by a range of services for 60 children and young people at risk of harm.
  - Reviewed a wide range of documents and a position statement provided by the partnership.
  - Carried out a staff survey and received 588 responses from staff working in a range of services.
  - Met with approximately 168 members of staff who work directly with children, young people and families.
  - Met 21 members of senior leadership teams, committees and boards that oversee work with children at risk of harm and their families.

## **5. CURRENT POSITION**

- 5.1 The Care Inspectorate published the [final report](#) on its website on 29 April 2025. The key findings of the inspection were:

- Preventative work and early identification of risks was positively impacting in the lives of children and young people.
- A confident and skilled workforce was effectively recognising and responding to protection concerns and reducing risk for children and young people.
- Most children and young people had trusting, positive relationships with staff, helping to keep them safe and get support when needed.
- Children and young people were able to participate meaningfully in decisions that affect their lives.
- Staff worked hard to build positive relationships with parents and carers, and this helped them to be involved and heard.
- To support the improvement of services, leaders listened well to the views and experiences of children and young people and took these seriously.
- The partnership was collaborating effectively to evaluate, plan and deliver services for keeping children and young people safe.
- Leaders were well sighted on the breadth and impact of child protection activity.
- Leaders were promoting a clear vision for services and taking action to embed meaningful involvement, effective collaboration and self-evaluation.
- A learning culture was enabled by support for staff which prioritised reflection and the effective coordination of single and multi-agency training.
- Despite a range of services, the emotional and mental wellbeing needs of children and young people were not always being met timeously.

5.2 The inspectorate provide an evaluation of one quality indicator (2.1 Impact on children and young people) using a six-point scale. Angus were evaluated as (5) **VERY GOOD** (Major strengths).

5.3 The inspectorate identified areas of improvement relating to children and young people receiving timely support for mental health and wellbeing, and recruitment and retention of social workers to ensure that children and families experience consistent relationships. These are areas of improvement which the partnership were already aware of and therefore we will continue to work to further develop plans.

5.4 From an Angus Council perspective, the report highlights good practice in several areas led by Angus Council services, specifically in relation to PREpare and CARM (care and risk management). In addition, the progress around Bairns Hoose has been viewed positively as has our implementation of Getting it Right for Every Child, early help and support in schools and communities and gender specific supports from Glen Clova. The areas highlighted link directly to our Children, Families and Justice Improvement plan and the priorities of Angus Integrated Children's Services Partnership and the report provides assurance of the impact we are making.

5.5 It is also important to highlight the inspectorate findings in respect of the culture which was observed. This reflects that staff work in an environment which feels safe and promotes the importance of learning, transparency, autonomy and bravery which in turn impacts positively on the services our children and families in Angus receive.

## 6. PROPOSALS

6.1 It is recommended that the Family, Education and Justice Committee: -

- (i) Considers the findings of the Joint Inspection of Children at Risk of Harm
- (ii) Acknowledges the inspection findings, the associated grading and areas for improvement specified in the report
- (iii) Acknowledges the requirement for a multi-agency improvement action plan which will be developed and submitted to the Care Inspectorate within 6 weeks

- (iv) Agrees the Director for Children, Families and Justice has oversight of the improvement plan and submits the necessary updates to assure the Care Inspectorate that progress is being made.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

## **8. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 8.1 There are no implications arising from this report that require consideration in respect of the corporate risk register.

## **9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

## **10. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT, HUMAN RIGHTS AND FAIRER SCOTLAND DUTY**

- 10.1 A screening assessment has been undertaken and a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required for the following reason:

This report is for information.

## **11. CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND WELLBEING IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 11.1 A Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment has been carried out within the EIA.

## **12. CONSULTATION**

- 12.1 The Director of Finance, Acting Director of Legal, Governance and Change and Chief Social Work Officer have been consulted on this report.

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

**REPORT AUTHOR: Rebecca McNeil, Acting Service Leader**

**EMAIL DETAILS: [People@angus.gov.uk](mailto:People@angus.gov.uk)**

List of Appendices:

- Appendix 1 – Report on the joint inspection of services for children and young people at risk of harm in Angus Community Planning Partnership