**NACPC Business Plan 2019 / 2020**

**PART ONE** - **Introduction**

North Ayrshire Child Protection Committee (NACPC) is a locally based inter-agency strategic partnership which leads on child protection policy and practice. The Committee has an Independent Chair and is comprised of senior staff from across key services in North Ayrshire, including both statutory services and the third sector. The Committee meets quarterly and brings all partners together to scrutinise the effectiveness of child protection arrangements in North Ayrshire – from public awareness to risk analysis – and ensures that a programme of continuous improvement is in place that responds to both local need and national drivers.

North Ayrshire Child Protection Committee adheres to National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2014) and Protecting Children & Young People: Child Protection Committees and Chief Officer’s responsibilities **(TBC).** As such the NACPC has a range of day to day business activities to ensure we fulfil our responsibilities. We also develop additional activities on a yearly basis, which focus on particular priorities for the forthcoming year. This business plan outlines the additional planned work of North Ayrshire Child Protection Committee from April 2019 until March 2020. Reports on the progress of the business plan are presented quarterly to North Ayrshire Child and Public Protection Chief Officers Group who provide governance, leadership and direction to North Ayrshire Child Protection Committee.

Our business plan links with other key local strategies including the North Ayrshire Children’s Services Plan and Corporate Parenting Strategy and our plan should be understood within this local context.

This year, the Child Protection Committee has agreed to continue structuring the plan thematically. The five key themes in the 2018/19 Business Plan have been retained as they continue to be our priorities.

These themes are:

**1. Well-being and Vulnerability**

**2. Engagement and Empowerment**

**3. Learning and Improvement**

**4. Risk Assessment and Analysis**

**5. Working Together**

**PART TWO - Themes and Priorities**

Part two of our business plan expands each of our five key themes to outline for each, a vision that is designed to articulate our high level aspirations, the context within which the NACPC is operating, current areas of priority and a broad indication of the planned work.

1. **Well-being and Vulnerability**

NACPC Vision

We aim to reduce vulnerability and promote, support and safeguard well-being by **nurturing** children at all stages of their lifespan, from pre-birth to adulthood, providing additional support where required in specific circumstances when in need of protection and within the changing legislative and policy landscape.

NACPC Context

North Ayrshire continues to recognise the importance of promoting and providing early intervention to vulnerable families; and delivering strategies and initiatives to promote positive mental wellbeing in young people. Multi-agency staff are currently in the process of integrating to form a locality model in Kilwinning. North Ayrshire remains committed to piloting a whole system approach which supports staff in developing strong working relationships to protect children and young people. Evidence suggests that a whole system approach will build resilience in local communities and create a shared vision of mental health; this model will be evaluated and reported to the Children’s Strategic Implementation Board, with plans to scale across North Ayrshire.

In 2018, NACPC introduced the Young People’s Suicide Task Force and the Young People’s Strategic Suicide Prevention Group (YPSSPG). In 2019/2020, the Young People’s Suicide Task Force will continue to progress suicide prevention work via a community action plan; whilst the YPSSPG will also continue to provide direction and governance in relation to young people’s suicide prevention activity.

In the last year, data has demonstrated that there are increasing numbers of children and young people on the Child Protection Register. The CPC will continue to monitor these trends, and will also analyse and risk assess to ensure that children in need of protection are receiving the necessary support to meet their needs.

All of our children’s services work will continue to be geared around supporting the implementation of the Children & Young People’s Act, and the development of the Named Person Service.

This year, our areas of priority include:

**Safeguarding missing children and young people**

The joint Adult and Child Protection National Missing Person’s Group will continue to support the implementation of the National Missing Persons Framework for Scotland and co-ordinate learning and development opportunities for multi-agency staff, enabling them to make better use of opportunities to discuss missing episodes with children and young people with the intention of providing necessary supports and reducing the risk of further missing episodes.

**Children and Young People on the Child Protection Register**

We will continue to analyse the data in relation to the increasing numbers of children who are on the Child Protection Register. The Management Information sub-group will risk assess and implement strategies as appropriate, and ensure that those on the register are continuing to be protected from harm.

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**Addressing the impact of poverty and its links with child protection**

We will continue to analyse indicators such as SIMD status in relation to the links between poverty and the protection of children within areas in North Ayrshire, and take a localised approach to address what preventative and supportive measures can ensure that children are safe and that their needs are being met. We will ensure our findings are communicated to members of the CPC and elected members within North Ayrshire to influence and inform strategic planning.

**Suicide Prevention in Young People**

The Young People’s Suicide Taskforce will develop and build on a community action plan which promotes positive mental wellbeing and improves multi-agency partnerships in suicide prevention. The Young People’s Strategic Suicide Prevention Group (YPSSPG) will continue to provide governance and direction of work undertaken by the Taskforce.

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| 1. **Engagement and Empowerment**
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NACPC Vision

We meaningfully **involve** our stakeholders so that everyone has a **voice** in the effective protection of children and young people. We **listen** to our stakeholders in order to make best use of their expertise in our efforts to improve the protection of children and young people.

NACPC Context

We have identified a need to raise awareness of the committee in 2019. This will support members of the public and workers being able to access information and resources from the committee. NACPC will increase the profile of the CPC to workers, children and young people and the general public via social media and the introduction of a newsletter.

We will also further enhance our leadership, and support all staff to feel empowered to carry out their duties and responsibilities which keep children safe and at the centre of all decision making. We will take forward qualitative work completed last year in relation to strength based participatory approaches for children who are subject to child protection processes.

This year, our areas of priority include:

**Leadership**

We will explore and implement innovative solutions to develop the leadership skills of all managers in child protection services, which empowers and supports staff to protect children and young people.

**Actively involving children and their families in all child protection processes, and practitioners adopting a more child centred approach to ensure that support is individualised to meet their needs**

We will continue to review and analyse the involvement of children through the Management Information Group, Evaluation and Improvement Group and Public Information and Engagement Group, and will use this information and feedback to further improve service user involvement and as appropriate, their roles in decision making.

**Harnessing assets within the community by engaging with stakeholders to support their understanding of their role and sense of efficacy in the protection of children**

We will continue to develop and deliver practice development child protection sessions to key stakeholder groups in the community. Bystander training for taxi drivers will remain a priority. We will also support the development of child protection guidance and procedures with stakeholders within local communities.

**CPC Publicity**

We will increase the profile of North Ayrshire CPC; and use social media platforms such as Twitter to promote the CPC website and child protection developments to both the public and practitioners working with children across North Ayrshire.

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| 1. **Learning and Improvement**
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NACPC Vision

We effectively **share** learning from a range of sources, both locally and nationally, and then use this learning to agree and deliver improvements.

NACPC Context

In 2018, NACPC provided a range of practice development opportunities via training programmes, reflective practice inputs and a conference delivered by young people. We will continue to review, develop and expand our learning opportunities via the Learning and Development sub-group in 2019/2020.

**Developing and implementing improvements based on the findings from our Significant Case Review and other learning opportunities**

North Ayrshire Child Protection Committee will work collaboratively with all stakeholders to implement and review the amalgamated improvement plan based upon learning from our previous Significant and Initial Case Reviews and audit activity.

**An improved response to child sexual abuse and exploitation**

North Ayrshire will deliver a localised CSA strategy via a Short Life Working Group. This strategy will develop professional practice in relation to CSE, further expand the Stop to Listen initiative from 2017 and have input from young people and survivors of child sexual abuse.

**We will continue to provide a range of child protection learning and practice development opportunities which will ensure that practitioners and managers are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to implement and progress learning within their agencies.**

This will form part of the work plan for the Learning and Development Subgroup.

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| 1. **Risk assessment and Analysis**
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NACPC Vision

We **protect** children and young people by sharing information effectively to support the collective understanding of potential risks and then by working collaboratively to address these risks.

NACPC Context

NACPC recognises the significance of all practitioners across all services having the appropriate skills and knowledge to risk assess, analyse and take appropriate action to keep children protected and safe. We acknowledge a continued commitment to develop chronology practice, support practitioners in the use of the National Risk Framework and that processes are efficient in ensuring that there is a co-ordinated overview of children’s needs.

**Continuing to develop our chronology practice**

We will work in partnership with the GIRFEC Corporate Parenting Team to improve this area of practice by supporting the implementation of new performance indicators and auditing both single agency and AYRshare chronologies via the Evaluation and Improvement sub-group.

**Promoting the National Risk Framework**

We will continue to provide practice development workshops on the National Risk Framework to all adult services workers across North Ayrshire and will deliver inputs to other services to ensure that children are being risk assessed holistically and receive the necessary supports to protect and meet their needs.

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| 1. **Working Together**
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NACPC Vision

We work **together** to keep children and young people safe by building collaborative multiagency relationships underpinned by effective communication and informed assessments, which are based on a shared understanding of children’s needs, development and their wider world.

NACPC Context

From previous ICRS, the SCR and audit activity, there has been an identified need to create a cultural shift in how agencies work together to keep children protected and safe from harm. All practitioners across all agencies are required to be accountable for all decision making; and be able to have reflective and analytical discussions to inform professional judgement. NACPC recognise that this is a long term action; but will require a series of actions which will empower workers to appropriately challenge each other and have honest discussions which will put children’s safety and protection at the heart of all decision making.

This year, our areas of priority include:

**Strengthening communication and engagement within and across services**

We will continue to use the findings of our SCR and recommendations of historical ICRs to progress this priority area.

**Supporting professional reflection**

We will prioritise practice development inputs which gives staff from all disciplines the opportunity to reflect on the positives and downfalls of multi-agency collaboration in child protection cases; and identify the importance of a co-ordinated collaborative approach.

**Supervision Practices**

We will support the implementation and delivery of supervision practices across all services to ensure that staff are receiving the necessary guidance and direction to meet children’s wellbeing needs and that they are protected from harm.

**PART THREE - Improvement**

In implementing this business plan, plus our ongoing day to day business activities, we are aiming for the following improvement:

* High visibility of key child protection messages
* Earlier identification of potential risk
* Faster responses when risk is identified
* Reduced harm to children and young people
* Families’ experience of services is collaborative – Doing with families rather than to families
* Improved multi-agency engagement resulting in better assessment and hence action when necessary
* Staff across North Ayrshire have an increased awareness of the Child Protection Committee
* Professional reflection is prioritised and provides learning opportunities for practitioners
* Children’s views are paramount to all decision making in child protection processes

**PART FOUR - Measurement and Reporting**

A subgroup of North Ayrshire Child Protection Committee will develop a detailed action plan with specific measures of progress which will sit underneath this business plan as a live working tool.

North Ayrshire Child Protection Committee will report on the progress of this business plan on a quarterly basis. In keeping with the format of this business plan, each quarterly progress report will focus on themes one to four. In addition, we will report on theme five every quarter throughout the business year as creating a cultural shift on how practitioners work together is a priority for the committee.

Progress reports will be submitted quarterly to the North Ayrshire Child and Public Protection Chief Officers Group. This will provide opportunity for scrutiny, challenge, accountability and support.