



Dumfries and Galloway
IJB Clinical and Care Governance Committee

Date 12th November 2020

This Report relates to
Item 5 on the Agenda

Joint Annual Report on Dumfries and Galloway Children's Services Plan 2017-20

Paper presented by Lillian Cringles

For Noting

Author:	Jane McMillan, Children's Services Planning and Communications Officer, Jane.mcmillan@dumgal.gov.uk
List of Background Papers:	Please add hyperlinks if available
Appendices:	Appendix, Joint Annual Report on Children's Services Plan 2017-20

<p>1.</p> <p>1.1</p>	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Attached is the third and final Joint Annual Report on Dumfries and Galloway Children's Services Plan 2017-20. The report sets out progress made against the priorities in the 2017-20 Children's Services plan in its final year; and also provides an evaluation of progress over the plan's three-year delivery period. The report has been agreed by Children's Services Executive Group (CSEG); and is presented to IJB Clinical and Care Governance Committee for noting. Following this, the report will be presented to DG Council in December, before submission to Scottish Government and publication on the Council website.</p>
<p>2.</p> <p>2.1</p>	<p>Recommendations</p> <p>The IJB Clinical and Care Governance Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note progress made against the aims of the 2017-20 Dumfries and Galloway Children's Services Plan
<p>3.</p> <p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p> <p>3.4</p>	<p>Background and Main Report</p> <p>The requirement for Local Authorities in Scotland to jointly produce a Children's Services Plan from April 2017 with partner agencies is a statutory duty under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The Children's Services Plan must set out a jointly-agreed, shared vision and priorities for services for children and young people. The aims, purpose, scope, content and reporting requirements of Children's Services Plans are directed by statutory guidance from the Scottish Government. The aims of a Children's Services Plan are to safeguard, support and promote the wellbeing of children; to focus on early intervention and prevention; to provide services that are integrated from the point of view of recipients and to constitute the best use of resources.</p> <p>The 2017-20 Dumfries and Galloway Children's Services Plan set out six joint priority improvement areas for services for children and young people and each priority had an action plan. There were five Strategic Groups responsible for planning and delivering actions. These were: Public Protection Committee (PPC); the GIRFEC Leadership Group; the Corporate Parenting Group; the Early Years Group and the Youth Justice Partnership. The Chairs of the Strategic Groups reported regularly on progress to the Children's Services Executive Group (CSEG) throughout the duration of the plan. Other partnership groups, including for example, those addressing domestic abuse, disability and poverty were responsible for specific actions within the plan.</p> <p>The Council and NHS have a statutory requirement to jointly prepare an annual report on the Children's Services Plan and to submit this to the Scottish Government. The Joint Annual Report attached (Appendix 1) is the third and last of these statutory reports on the 2017-20 Children's Services Plan. The report contains an overview of progress against the priorities in the final year of the plan and an evaluation of progress over the three years of the plan.</p> <p>The performance indicator section of the report contains the suite of high-level indicators for the plan. These indicators covered a range of wellbeing indicators from Health, Education, Social Work and other sources, and taken as a whole, assisted CSEG in making judgements about whether outcomes for children and young people in Dumfries and Galloway are improving. The indicators were updated as statistics were published. However, it should be noted that with such a wide range of data from different sources using different reporting timeframes, at any single point in time the updates might not be entirely reflective of the full picture. Some of the indicators were originally identified with the aim of collecting them over time in order to get long-term trend data. However, where some indicators do not appear to have been updated, this is because there has been a change to the indicator meaning that recent data is not comparable to that in previous</p>

years.

- 3.5 The 2017-2020 Children's Services Plan came to a close just as the scale and implications of the Covid-19 pandemic were becoming apparent. This inevitably had an impact on the way that the final report was produced. The usual reporting process would have involved a series of multi-agency workshops with the aim of identifying key messages for the report, and then testing these through engagement with a range of stakeholders. However, the impact of Covid meant that a pragmatic approach had to be taken that minimised demands on staff.

Main Report

- 3.6 Our first priority was to ensure that children and young people are safe and free from harm. In the final year of the plan, we continued to work effectively as a partnership to ensure we identified and responded to children and young people in need of care and protection. The establishment of a joint Public Protection agenda assisted in more effectively managing joint resources and overlapping areas of responsibilities across all areas of Public Protection. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) continued to deliver fast, effective decision-making at the earliest stage. Our improvements in the early identification of risk were followed by improvements in assessment and planning. These were achieved by introducing and embedding the use of evidence-based approaches and tools such as the National Risk Framework and the Neglect Toolkit, followed by adoption in 2018 of the Signs of Safety approach to assessment and planning for children and young people. The Public Protection Committee continued to raise public awareness of child protection issues, and the 2019 campaign to raise awareness of Child Sexual Exploitation in Dumfries and Galloway was an example of a major region-wide campaign that involved the provision of information to the general public and local businesses, as well as to parents/carers and young people.
- 3.7 Our second priority was to ensure that children and young people receive support at the earliest opportunity through prevention and early intervention. Dumfries and Galloway's approach to this was to focus on GIRFEC implementation and services that support families in the early years. Over the course of the plan the GIRFEC approach has been fully embedded in Dumfries and Galloway. Early planning takes place for children and young people putting them at the centre using the named person as their point of contact. There is an agreed suite of GIRFEC products and paperwork which is used across the partnership and which ensures that there is a shared approach and language regardless of agency involved. Dumfries and Galloway have also adopted a solution-focused approach to planning for children and young people and this supports and mirrors the Signs of Safety approach in child protection. In our focus on support for parents in the early years, we have provided an evidence-based suite of parenting programmes, implemented 1140 hours of childcare and early learning; developed family centres and implemented the Family Nurse Partnership and the Health Visiting Pathway.
- 3.8 Our third priority was to improve the wellbeing and life chances of our most vulnerable children and young people – those who are care-experienced. We have made good progress with regard to engagement with our looked-after children and young people. More children and young people are having health assessments and their health needs identified within target timescales. We provide free access for care-experienced children and young people to Council-run leisure and cultural activities, and we reviewed and re-branded our access to leisure programme as ClubSport in response to feedback from children and young people. We have a zero exclusions policy for looked-after children, and exclusions of looked-after children and young people have greatly reduced. We have had significant success in supporting care-experienced young people into further and higher education. However, we still need to do more to raise educational attainment for looked-after children and young people and this continues as one of the priority actions in our 2020-23 plan.
- 3.9 The fourth priority in the plan was that we would work to reduce or remove barriers so that all children and young people have equity of opportunity. This priority consisted of a range of approaches and actions aimed at reducing barriers such as poverty, disability and caring

responsibilities, and promoting equity of opportunity. The Anti-Poverty Strategy and accompanying Action Plan delivered a portfolio of over 60 interlinked projects and initiatives which were developed in consultation with our Tackling Poverty Reference Group Members (volunteers with a lived experience of poverty). Engagement and participation of young people has been a particular area of improvement, with the development of structures for youth participation and the success of 2018 Year of Young People. Young Carers' services in D&G have been at the forefront of service development nationally, particularly with the development and implementation of our Young Carers Statements in partnership with Social Work and Schools Services. Other actions, for example development of a Disability Strategy and the full implementation of Self-Directed Support within Children's Services, have made progress but this has been slower than planned. As a result, this work has been carried through into the 2020-23 plan as *Priority 5: Children and young people with complex needs and disabilities are enabled to reach their potential.*

3.10 Our fifth priority was to deliver the best possible health and wellbeing to all children and young people. Actions focused on three areas: prevention, early intervention, and the provision of specialist services. We have delivered training and resources for school staff and young people on relationships, sexual health and parenthood. Young people have used the Cool2Talk digital service to have health-related questions answered and access one-to-one counselling. The Youth Information Service secured funding to provide 3 Full Time Equivalent 'Youth Information Workers' delivering low level mental health support to young people in need, through one-to-one support, informal drop-ins and group work programmes. The new model for School Nursing has been embedded in Dumfries and Galloway. The Active Schools programme has continued to support opportunities for young people to take part in sport and physical activity before, during and after school, working in partnership with schools and community sport clubs.

3.11 Our sixth priority was that we would raise attainment and be ambitious for all children and young people. We restructured our Supporting Learners Service to ensure that resources are better targeted to those in most need and more children are readily supported within the mainstream classroom setting. In improving attainment for all, we have continued to make progress, with 2019 data showing an increase over time in achievement in almost all stages and measures for literacy and numeracy. All 16 secondary schools in Dumfries and Galloway have engaged with The REACH programme (Glasgow University Widening Participation project) supporting young people considering Higher Education. The majority of schools now offer more flexible qualifications e.g. national progression awards and skills for work qualifications, and a key success in extending the curricular offer has been in the increased uptake of Foundation Apprenticeships. The senior phase strategy is ensuring schools are providing a range of flexible pathways for young people. Young people across our schools have access to a wide range of opportunities and the necessary support required to help them participate and progress to their next stage of learning whether that be further or higher education or to training and employment.

4. Conclusions

4.1 In conclusion, our position is that our partnership has delivered an ambitious plan of improvement with many key successes, particularly with regard to child protection. Challenges remain, especially with regard to closing the attainment gap; securing improved outcomes for care-experienced young people; and improving the way we support children with disabilities. Our 2020-23 Children's Services Plan will continue to deliver improvement across these areas of challenge. Going forwards however, the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic may mean that we have to narrow our priorities; or be more flexible with our time-scales.

5. Resource Implications

Not applicable

6.	<p>Impact on Integration Joint Board Outcomes, Priorities and Policy</p> <p>The Children’s Services Plan contributes directly or indirectly to all 9 of the local integration 9 national outcomes and is a delivery mechanism for the Getting it right for every child approach.</p>						
7.	<p>Legal and Risk Implications</p> <p>There are no known legal issues or risks.</p>						
8.	<p>Consultation</p> <p>The draft report went through a process of consultation with multi-agency Priority Lead officers and the Chairs of children’s services strategic planning groups.</p>						
9.	<p>Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment</p> <p>As this report does not propose a change in policy, the formal adoption of a plan, policy or strategy, it is not necessary to complete an Impact Assessment.</p>						
10.	<p>Glossary</p> <p>All acronyms must be set out in full the first time they appear in a paper with the acronym following in brackets.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="304 945 1501 1048"> <tr> <td data-bbox="304 945 437 981">EQIA</td> <td data-bbox="437 945 1501 981">Equalities Impact Assessment</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="304 981 437 1016">IJB</td> <td data-bbox="437 981 1501 1016">Integration Joint Board</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="304 1016 437 1048">CSEG</td> <td data-bbox="437 1016 1501 1048">Children’s Services Executive Group</td> </tr> </table>	EQIA	Equalities Impact Assessment	IJB	Integration Joint Board	CSEG	Children’s Services Executive Group
EQIA	Equalities Impact Assessment						
IJB	Integration Joint Board						
CSEG	Children’s Services Executive Group						

PUBLIC

PUBLIC