

Chief Officer's Public Protection Group Report

Report by Chief Executive

Annual Report from Chief Officers Public Protection Group 2023/2024

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. This report provides the Community Planning Partnership with an overview of the work of the Chief Officer's Public Protection Group 2023/2024.

REPORT

PURPOSE OF THE CHIEF OFFICERS PUBLIC PROTECTION GROUP

2. The Chief Officer's Public Protection Group provides strategic leadership, scrutiny and the oversight of quality assurance and improvement of public protection arrangements within East Renfrewshire. This is achieved by providing strategic direction on priorities concerning risk and clear expectations for partnership arrangements on the safe delivery of services that keep people and their communities safe. It ensures that partnership working within East Renfrewshire meets with national standards around risk management and in addition considers how effective the local planning arrangements are.
3. The core business of the group is as follows:
 - Child Protection
 - Adult Protection
 - Violence Against Women
 - Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) Offender Management (specifically Sex Offenders and potentially dangerous offenders)
 - Alcohol and Drugs Partnership

MEMBERSHIP AND FUNCTION

4. The group is chaired by the Chief Executive of East Renfrewshire Council and has the following core members:
 - Chief Executive East Renfrewshire Council
 - Chief Officer Health & Social Care Partnership
 - Nurse Director NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde
 - Divisional Commander of Police Scotland G Division (East Renfrewshire)
 - Chief Social Work Officer and East Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee Chair
 - East Renfrewshire Adult Protection Committee Independent Chair
5. In addition there are associate members that may be called upon by the core group to attend when needed. These include;

- The Lead Officers for Public Protection (child, adult, MAPPA and violence against women / girls),
- The Lead Officer for Prevent,
- The locality Reporter (SCRA) and the Director of Education.

The group meets bi-annually in May and November.

6. A summary of the functions of Chief Officers Public Protection Group are as follows:
 - Provide leadership and accountability across all public protection arrangements within East Renfrewshire.
 - Coordinate strategic developments within public protection.
 - Approve annual plans, scrutinise self-evaluation of public protection activity and approve associated improvement plans.
 - Review and direct improvements on performance and audit.
 - Provide direction to chairs and members of Child Protection Committee, Adult Protection Committee and Violence against Women / Girls on local priorities.
 - Approve and consider the learning from Significant Case Reviews and be provided with assurance that the improvements and actions required are in place across the local authority.
7. Public protection arrangements require agencies and partnerships to work together strategically, operationally, and effectively and this is supported through robust planning and quality assurance processes. Partners are required to provide significant commitment and contributions through the Child Protection Committee, Adult Protection Committee, MAPPA Strategic Oversight Group and Violence against Women / Girls, by contributing to the development of strategic plans and measures that identify and mitigate risk as well as promoting best practice. Alongside these statutory plans the Chief Officers are provided with regular data, quality assurance and improvement activity that assures that people and communities are kept safe from harm.
8. Our responsibility to keep people protected and safe from harm is fundamental to the work of the HSCP and underpins the other strategic priorities set out in our strategic plan. Our plan recognises that everyone has the right to live in safety and be protected from neglect, abuse and harm. We respond to the identified key risk areas and new risks and vulnerabilities as these emerge, taking actions with our partners to prevent and respond and learning from each other to improve the ways we support and protect vulnerable people.

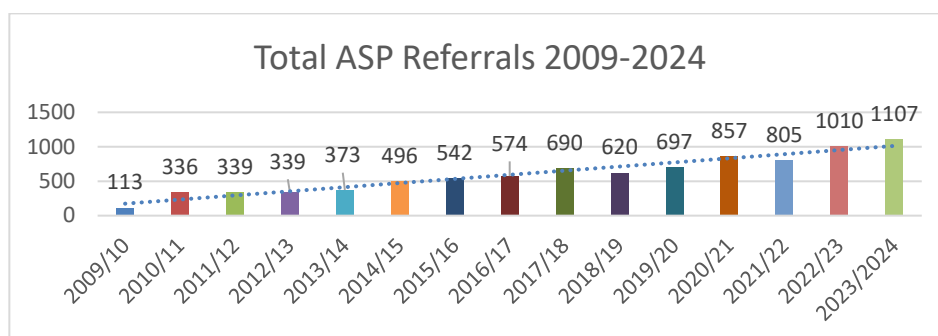
SUMMARY OF AREAS OF ACTIVITY 2023/2024

9. Our staff have continued to respond in a timely and effective manner to support individuals at risk of harm creatively in a person centred, asset based approach to help increase self-efficacy.
10. The Trauma Implementation Strategy has progressed well and spans across all areas of public protection. The Trauma Steering Group will begin to focus on the next stage of implementation, namely how we support staff to apply the learning in their respective

services. The collaborative network is now established to help local champions begin this process.

11. Public protection activity has continued to increase, with significant growth in referrals experienced across the partnership:
 - Child Protection referrals have increased by 48%.
 - Adult Support and Protection referrals have increased by 10%
 - This has increased 27% in the last two years and is reflective of growing trend noted since the introduction of the 2007 Act (Fig. 1).
 - Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) referrals increased by 16%
 - There was a 33% increase in the number of children discussed as part of MARAC.

Fig.1 ASP activity since inception of the 2007 Act.



12. Across Scotland all local authorities and HSCP's are experiencing unprecedented financial pressures. In East Renfrewshire we must make significant savings in order to continue providing essential services to our communities. The Supporting People Framework (SPF), introduced in April 2023, implemented a universal approach to classifying and assessing need, introducing a criteria based upon research and practice that informs our decision making.
13. Under the SPF we have prioritised social care resources to ensure that we support the people with the most significant needs and achieve our required savings. This has been a considerable undertaking requiring resource and time. We have had to undertake this work alongside our public protection responsibilities in managing risk and harm.
14. The implementation of SPF has been resource intensive and required a refocusing of workers across the partnership. We can offer assurance however that the staffing of our public protection and initial response teams have been considered a priority in ensuring our timely response to concerns and also in meeting increasing demands.

Child Protection

15. Oversight and scrutiny of child protection activity is maintained via the Child Protection Committee, its subgroups and the Child Protection Committee Business / Improvement plan. This includes regular updates in relation to audit activity and National Minimum dataset;
16. There continues to be oversight and endorsement of the Public Protection Development Programme which delivers training across the partnership;
 - Priorities identified for 2024 / 25 include the specific needs of unaccompanied children, Age of Criminal Responsibility legislation, child protection and parental mental health and Safe Talk content to support the workforce in working with children and young people who are suicidal and / or engaged in self-harming behaviours.
17. We have continued support of the implementation of the Signs of Safety approach, which focusses on relationship based practice as well as keeping the child and their network at the centre of all assessments and plans.
18. We have continued to provide training and development for all frontline workers and managers in Signs of Safety.
19. We are now moving towards a self-sustaining Signs of Safety training model whereupon our staff will lead and deliver appropriate training to multi agency partners.
20. As part of North Strathclyde Partnership, we are now considered a Pathfinder following a successful application via Scottish Government Bairns' Hoose Team.
 - To date, 107 interviews have been undertaken at the bairnshoose, significantly reducing the need to utilise any other venue.
21. There is assurance that concerns in relation to children are easily reported by the public through the Council's website and signposted to the appropriate point of contact.

Adult Protection

22. Through oversight and scrutiny of Adult Protection Committee, its subgroups and improvement activity;
 - We have continued to strengthen the accuracy and qualitative analysis of our data reporting. This has included clearer reporting to track areas of performance and understand challenges.
23. We have placed collaboration at the heart of our ASP activity. Our procedures are rooted in collaboration and multidisciplinary working, led by the council officer but engaging everyone to get the best outcomes for the adult.
24. Our ASP Team Manager and ASP Team has cultivated a strong relationship with support providers and care homes. Contacting our ASP team is viewed as a positive

step, with the ASP Team providing advice and support to help identify risk at the earliest opportunity.

25. We have developed our ASP practice and procedures, incorporating the revised Code of Practice, changes in the child protection landscape, the development of a national ASP data set and our experience in practice.
26. Through the Multi-agency Policy, Practice and Procedures Subcommittee the APC developed and adopted a local procedure for conducting Learning Reviews in East Renfrewshire. This guidance was developed with input from Multi-agency partners within the APC.
27. A Large Scale Investigation (LSI) was conducted in relation to a privately operated care home in this period. Throughout this a person-centred approach remained at the forefront of all activity. The Care home management have advised that they have felt the LSI to be a very beneficial and supportive process. We view this as a positive outcome, and indicative of the good collaborative work undertaken during the investigation.
28. We have continued to provide flexible and adaptable training opportunities to support staff, partners and providers, developing a strong partnership approach. These courses are provided both as a part of our Public Protection Development Programme, but also as bespoke session for partners and providers to support their improvement.

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)

29. Oversight of activity and performance of Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements;
30. The justice service has prioritised contact with those offenders who are subject to Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements requirements to ensure that Risk Management plans and statutory functions are adhered to.
31. The nationally accredited sex offender treatment programme, Moving Forward Making Changes (MFMC) continues to be delivered in a group capacity.
32. MAPPA cases continue to be reviewed and monitored jointly by East Renfrewshire and the North Strathclyde MAPPA unit.

Violence against Women and Girls

33. There remains continued oversight and scrutiny of the Violence Against Women & Girls Partnership, subgroups and improvement activity, including data, audit and self-evaluation.
34. Domestic Abuse, Risk Assessment, MARAC and Safe and Together training continues to be delivered in addition to the provision of bespoke sessions for key partners.

35. Over the course of the last year, 181 staff were trained across a range of disciplines including Adult Services, Children & Families, Mental Health, Alcohol and Drugs, Housing, Education, Care at Home, Community Learning and Development and Health Visiting.
36. Following extensive consultation with victim / survivors and key stakeholders East Renfrewshire Council launched a new Domestic Abuse Policy and Guidance during 16 days of Action. This has been widely shared and promoted across the organisation with training and support being provided.

Alcohol and Drugs Partnership

37. The East Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board (IJB) approved the refreshed Alcohol and Drugs Strategy on 27 March 2024. The strategy was well received by the IJB and in particular the involvement of people with lived and living experience was commended.
38. The East Renfrewshire strategy focuses on supporting people at risk of harm from all drug types and alcohol. The strategy sets out eight priority areas for action, based on the national and local evidence. These are summarised below:
 - We will work with lived and living experience communities, and partners across the public and third sector, to create a thriving and supportive recovery community, including the design and development of community recovery hub.
 - We will ensure the voices of lived and living experience are heard and included in the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership and in services.
 - We will tackle stigma to reduce barriers to accessing services and wider community supports and activities.
 - We will develop and implement a partnership approach to prevention and early intervention to reduce alcohol and drug harms in the longer term.
 - We will strive to provide high quality treatment and recovery services that are accessible, person-centred and responsive to the needs of different population groups, including people at high risk.
 - We will work together across services and organisations to ensure families affected by alcohol and drugs have access to holistic whole family support that meets their needs.
 - We will continue to develop integrated working across alcohol, drugs and mental health settings to provide mental health supports that meet the needs of people affected by harmful alcohol and / or drug use.

- We will develop, strengthen and support a skilled, multi-disciplinary workforce across all partner agencies who support people affected by alcohol and drug harms.
39. The East Renfrewshire ADP continues to monitor key data sets including drug and alcohol deaths. Further work is ongoing to understand the emerging picture of this during 2023.
 40. The Alcohol and Drugs Partnership continues to provide guidance and leadership on a partnership approach to preventing alcohol and drug-related harms and deaths.
 41. A Medication Assisted Treatment Standards implementation plan is in place. A local MAT Implementation Working Group is driving forward the continuing work in 2024-25 on implementation with a particular focus on Standards 6 to 10 (covering mental health, advocacy, psychological supports and trauma informed services) which are expected to be fully implemented by 31 March 2025.

EXTERNAL VALIDATION

Child Protection

42. An Initial Referral Discussion audit was presented to the Child Protection Committee on the 7th May 2024. The findings were from January 2023 – July 2023. There continues to be strong evidence of partnership working across services in health, social work and police, with increased involvement of education.

Adult Protection

43. The Adult Protection Committee continues to progress the Improvement plan for 2023-2025. This plan sets out our ongoing commitment to improvement and multiagency development, incorporating areas of improvement identified as part of the Joint ASP inspection in 2023.
44. The Adult Protection Committee have evaluated and refocused the work of the subcommittees to deliver the improvement plan.

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)

45. Audits of MAPPA cases were undertaken by the staff from the MAPPA unit, health, police and social work. Previous audits have highlighted robust risk management practice within East Renfrewshire and that information sharing between agencies was achieved, this being reiterated at a recent audit.

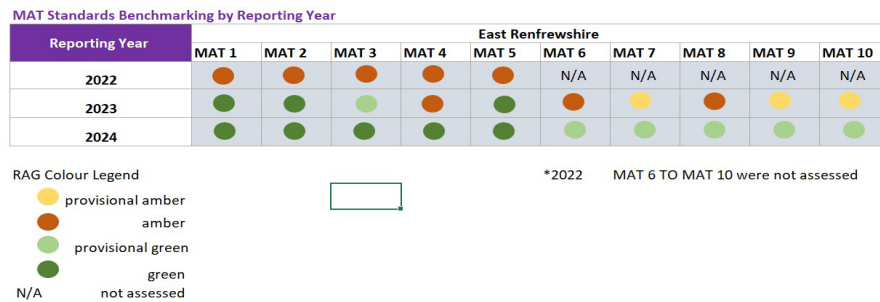
Violence Against Women and Girls

46. The Violence Against Women & Girls Partnership has completed annual self-evaluation activity which has been submitted to the Improvement Service.

47. This activity demonstrated continued positive activity to address violence against women and girls in East Renfrewshire.

Alcohol and Drugs Partnership

48. East Renfrewshire has achieved green ratings across all MAT standards in the recent RAG assessment by Public Health Scotland. The progress made since 2021-22 is shown in the graphic below.



DISCUSSION POINTS

49. It is recommended that the CPP Board:

- i. discuss the high level public protection activity outlined within the report and identify any areas for improvement to the Chief Officer Public Protection group on public protection partnership arrangements within East Renfrewshire; and
- ii. agree the East Renfrewshire Chief Officer Public Protection group continues to provide annual updates to the CPP concerning public protection scrutiny and improvement activity that provides assurance that people and communities are being kept safe.

Report Author:

Raymond Prior,
 Head of Children Services and Justice, Chief Social Work Officer
 0141 451 0748
Raymond.Prior@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

Lee McLaughlin,
 Head of Adult Services: Communities and Wellbeing
 0141 451 0751
Lee.McLaughlin@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk