

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**CABINET: 26 JANUARY 2011**

### **EAST AYRSHIRE CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT (2009/10) AND BUSINESS PLAN (2008/2011)**

#### **Report by Executive Director of Educational & Social Services**

#### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To advise of the development of the East Ayrshire Child Protection Committee (EACPC) Annual Report (2009/2010) and the Business Plan (2008/2011), which incorporates the action plan for 2010/2011.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The EACPC is a multi-agency forum with responsibility for strategic planning, public information and improvement activity in respect of child protection.
- 2.2 The committee operates within national guidance and is currently chaired by the Head of Service: Children, Families and Criminal Justice. The council is the host employer of the Child Protection Co-ordinator post (a multi-agency post which supports the work of the committee).
- 2.3 The EACPC planning cycle works in conjunction with the East Ayrshire Children's Services Planning Cycle, with plans covering the period 2008/2011. A report was submitted to Cabinet on 17 November 2010 seeking approval of the East Ayrshire Children and Young People's Service Plan Annual Review 2009/2010.
- 2.4 During 2010, several planning/development sessions took place to reflect on progress in implementing the business plan 2008/11 and to ensure that emerging priorities are tackled during 2010/2011. These sessions included members of the EACPC and the East Ayrshire Chief Officers Group.
- 2.5 The recommendations of the Joint Inspection of Services to Protect Children and Young People in East Ayrshire (March 2010) were incorporated into the current action plan to ensure that progress is made and regularly reported. This arrangement was previously reported to Cabinet on 2 June 2010.
- 2.6 Work is currently underway to plan the development of the new three year plans for the period 2011/14 in respect of both the Child Protection Business Plan and the East Ayrshire Children and Young People's Service Plan.

#### **3. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS**

- 3.1 The annual report summarises activity in 2009/10 and sets out our key achievements including the development of: -

- a three year communication strategy, ensuring that we are getting the right messages to the right people about keeping children safe;
- an online survey of primary five pupils (P5) and second year pupils (S2) to gather views on arrangements to keep children safe;
- new ways of raising the importance of child protection with the public e.g. via distribution of bookmarks with key telephone numbers, stickers in secondary school pupil diaries, posters in public access buildings.
- guidance for foster carers and staff in respect of internet safety;
- a self evaluation framework which ensures that multi-agency practice across and between services is continuously improving, particularly in respect of risk assessment and recording practice;
- improved management and performance information which tell us about how services are responding to child protection concerns;
- multi-agency learning and development opportunities to include a number of new initiatives and themes e.g. internet safety.
- strengthened governance arrangements, ensuring that the connections between strategic planning groups are strong, and that there is a clear link between strategic planning and operational practice.

#### **4. FUTURE PLANS**

4.1 The EACPC has set out two main areas for priority action in 2010/2011, and some of these themes will also continue into the next three year business plan:

- Key Management Priorities
- Developments which support Cultural Change

4.2 The key management priorities include:

- improvements in assessment of risk and need (e.g. health needs);
- strengthening child protection plans with a focus on improving life circumstances and meeting longer term needs;
- improved processes including, pre birth planning, information sharing and recording arrangements;
- further development of ways to seek the views and involvement of children and young people;
- a continued focus on self evaluation which is outcome based.

4.3 The developments which will support culture change include:

- strengthening engagement with practitioners by developing practitioner networks and involvement in service / practice reviews;
- strengthening connections with the voluntary sector;
- developing ways of involving communities in preventing child abuse through identifying ways which communities can help to keep children safe.

4.4 The East Ayrshire Child Protection Committee and the East Ayrshire Chief Officer's Group are particularly keen to hear directly from practitioners about their experiences of working in the field of child protection. Consequently, a recent presentation by practitioners demonstrated the complexity and resource intensive nature of the work taking place to protect babies and infants on a multi-agency basis. The staff involved were commended for their professionalism and resilience, noting the considerable efforts which were made to ascertain the nature of the risks to the child and to make arrangements to keep him safe.

4.5 As outlined at paragraph 2.5, the action plan will continue to address the recommendations made in the Joint Inspection of Services to Protect Children and Young People in East Ayrshire (March 2010). It will also take forward key actions arising from significant case reviews (national and local), ensuring that practice is being developed in accordance with professional and multiagency learning arising from such reviews.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The actions set out in the business plan (action plan for 2010/11) have been costed, and arrangements have been made for the key statutory partners (East Ayrshire Council, Strathclyde Police and NHS Ayrshire and Arran) to contribute towards the costs of implementation from existing budgets.

## **6. POLICY/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The development of the annual report and business plan ensures that the national guidance on fulfilling the functions of the CPC is implemented.

## **7. COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 This is a multi-agency annual report and business plan with involvement of key partner agencies, all of whom contribute to community planning in East Ayrshire. This annual report and business plan will be shared with the Community Planning Board.

## **8. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The business plan (including the action plan for 2010/11) sets out key priorities and actions for the EACPC in the next year. The actions set out in the plan aim to improve how all agencies work together to keep children safe,

and therefore support the management of risk for individual children and their families, practitioners / managers and organisations.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (i) endorse the work taking place, as summarised within this report, within the East Ayrshire Child Protection Committee in the development and implementation of the Annual Report (2009/10) and the Business Plan (2008/11) – incorporating the 2010/11 action plan.

**Graham Short**  
**Executive Director of Educational and Social Services**  
**12 January 2011**

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. East Ayrshire Child Protection Committee Annual Report 2009/2010 and Business Plan 2008 / 2011 (available on the portal)
2. East Ayrshire Children and Young People's Service Plan 2008/2011(available on the portal)
3. Cabinet Report (17 November 2010) – East Ayrshire Children and Young People's Service Plan and Annual Review 2009/2010 (available on the portal)

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