

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>SPA Policing Performance</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>8 June 2021</b>
<b>Location</b>	<b>Video Conference</b>
<b>Title of Paper</b>	<b>Police Scotland Corporate Parenting Update</b>
<b>Presented By</b>	<b>ACC Gary Ritchie, Partnership, Prevention and Community Wellbeing</b>
<b>Recommendation to Members</b>	<b>For Discussion</b>
<b>Appendix Attached</b>	<b>Appendix A Scottish Government Corporate Parenting Survey 2021- Police Scotland Response</b>

**PURPOSE**

This report is presented by ACC Ritchie to provide an update on review of performance against corporate parenting duties; the process of developing Corporate Parenting Plan 2021-24; results from the public survey; and how performance will be measured going forward.

Members are invited to discuss the contents if this paper.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

Police Scotland is identified as a corporate parent within the Children and Young People Act 2014. This is defined as the formal and local partnerships between all services responsible for working meet the needs of looked after children, young people and care leavers.

Police Scotland is required to work in collaboration with partners to ensure their responsibilities are met. Police Scotland has reviewed and reported to Scottish Government on the Corporate Parenting Plan 2018-21 and has completed the engagement for and drafted the revised Plan for 2021-24.

## **2. FURTHER DETAIL ON THE REPORT TOPIC**

### **Review of performance against corporate parenting duties**

Police Scotland has responded to the Scottish Government Corporate Parenting Survey 2021. The survey was an opportunity to reflect and report on performance and learning. The survey response is attached at Appendix A.

It is clear that progress has been made with evidence of local and national engagement, both formal and informal, all of which improves the collective knowledge of matters that affect the wellbeing of care experienced children and young people. Police Scotland acknowledge that more needs to be done to continue to listen and then embed what we hear into our practice. Engagement will be one of the key elements of our updated plan. We will work with our Seldom Heard Voices Strategy to listen to and embed the learning into our policy and practice.

All local policing divisions now collaborate with local corporate parenting strategic/planning groups. All our local policing divisions have partnerships with their corporate parents across the 32 local authorities. These in turn have access to care experienced voice, feeding into local priorities.

At a national level, through PPCW's Children and Young People team, Police Scotland has developed strong links with government, statutory authorities and third sector supporting children's rights. We have participated in the Care Review and continue to be an integral partner in Keeping The Promise. We have collaborated with

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NHS Education Service to progress the National Trauma training plan. We collaborate through national functions- National Youth Justice Advisory Group, National Youth Justice Improvement Board, the Adversity Hub, and the EEI Forum. We have built many effective partnerships from these groups that have provided learning, support and opportunities for collaboration.

From early 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic effected some aspects of the Corporate Parenting Plan. Police Scotland did however react quickly to overcome the challenges. Local and national divisions switched almost immediately to online contact and communications with partners and at local level, particularly at residential homes, continued online in order to keep contact and maintain relationships with those who care for our care experienced young people from a distance.

### **CORPORATE PARENTING PLAN – 2021-2024**

Extensive engagement has been carried out to inform the Corporate Parenting Plan 2021-24.

We formed our Corporate Parenting Advisory Group with organisations supporting children's rights; Who Cares? Scotland, Children and Young Persons Commissioner for Scotland, Youthlink Scotland, Scottish Network for the Reduction of Restrictive Practices and supported by the Promise Scotland.

This group's advice and guidance has been invaluable for the review of the existing Police Scotland Corporate Parenting Plan, and the engagement for and setting of priorities for the revised Plan 2021-24.

Many voices have had an input in this Plan, and none more important than care experienced people themselves. Supported by Who Cares? Scotland, Police Scotland carried out workshops with care experienced young people. Many more took the time to respond to a survey developed for care experienced young people.

PPCW Children & Young People team have formed a care experienced colleagues group with our staff. This provides a unique, and extremely valuable perspective on their own experience as children and now as police officers and corporate parents. This group now meets regularly. They have provided feedback on the draft Plan and will be part of the Corporate Parent Working Group to continue this engagement and monitor progress.

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Police Scotland's progress in this area in particular is being championed as best practice by Who Cares? Scotland.

We also sought the views of our external partners through our online survey, receiving 138 responses. There was a high degree of support for the key themes identified and the approach being taken.

We carried out workshops with our Police Scotland officers and staff, across all territorial divisions and specialist roles. The sessions were so worthwhile that a new Corporate Parenting Working Group will be formed to continue this engagement, share good practice and monitor progress.

Unfortunately plans for workshops with foster and kinship carers had to be postponed due to their availability. Another session is planned for early June 2021, and Michelle Miller, SPA will be invited to attend.

Police Scotland has completed a draft Corporate Parenting Plan 2021-24 with a vision; "to contribute to a care system which prioritises a child's need for a happy childhood and results in positive experiences and outcomes".

The 3-year plan will be accompanied by annual Action Plans to provide focus and to monitor progress. The 3-year Plan and Action Plan have been disseminated to local policing corporate parenting leads and specialist departments for final comments.

The Plan sets priorities on key themes:

- Language and Stigma
- Building Better Relationships
- Supporting Children in Contact with Police
- Offering Employment and Development Opportunities
- Engagement, Evaluation and Organisational Learning

The ongoing annual plans will also be heavily influenced by The Promise Scotland and the implementation of the Care Review recommendations.

The Corporate Parenting Plan 2021-24 sets out the vision and priorities. The new Plan sets out actions to engage with care experienced children, young people and adults through the Contact and Engagement Strategy and the Public Confidence Board; to develop the newly established care experienced colleagues group, empowering this group to give direction and guidance on Corporate Parenting topics and issues; and form an internal Corporate

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Parenting Working Group to regularly review our priorities and our Action Plan.

The next steps are to incorporate feedback from local policing corporate parenting leads before publishing the new Plan 2021-24. This will be forwarded to SPA.

In terms of future performance measurement, the intention is to further develop the existing Advisory Group to form a scrutiny group for implementation of the plan. This will include holding Police Scotland to account for delivery while also providing a mechanism for continued engagement. It is anticipated that this group will consist of individuals who are care experienced as well as organisations representing their rights.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 All work outlined above will be incorporated into the general working duties of staff within the Children and Young People Team and within budget constraints of Safer Communities.

There is no financial implications or further costs identified at this stage for review.

### **4. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no personnel implications identified at this stage. All work outlined will be resourced from within Safer Communities – Children and Young People staff. Nothing for review.

### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 All work is aligned to our responsibility under the Children and Young People Act 2014 and as always we will act with fairness, integrity and respect when carrying out these duties.
- 5.2 The forthcoming incorporation of the United Nations Convention on Rights of Child into Scots law will be a significant influence on proposals. The methodology being adopted will be consistent with the principals as it will place the rights of children & young people at the heart of policy decision.

## **6. REPUTATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There is an opportunity to enhance Police Scotland's reputation with the work outlined above.

## **7. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The work highlighted will bring about improvement in respect of care experienced children across Scotland. We will positively engage with young people in care and partners to improve opportunities and offer a higher standard of life for those who are vulnerable. The social implications of this is immeasurable in policing terms but invaluable to each individual positively affected.

There is no detrimental social implication identified.

## **8. COMMUNITY IMPACT**

- 8.1 Service delivery to care experienced young people will be enhanced. The impact of the work is substantial in how Police Scotland is regarded within the care sector.

In localised areas where young people are diverted/deterred from unsavoury behaviour, communities will benefit as a ripple effect of the work we carry out locally and nationally.

Positive service delivery is anticipated in respect of our work.

## **9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 An EQHRIA has been completed and there are no equalities implications identified within the update.

## **10. ENVIRONMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 There are no environmental implications identified within the update.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members are invited to discuss the contents of this report.





**Appendix A – Corporate Parenting Plan 2018-2021  
Survey Return to Scottish Government**

**Extract of Corporate Parenting Plan Survey 2021**

**CORPORATE PARENTING DUTIES**

In this section we would like to understand how you have fulfilled your responsibilities in relation to each of the duties outlined in [Section 58 of the Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#). The duties are: Alert, Assess, Promote, Opportunities, Access and Improve.

Please respond to the questions with information and examples which reflect experiences from across your organisation, in relation to how you have enacted your duties.

In our review of corporate parenting activities, we will review your Corporate Parenting plan(s) and report(s) alongside your survey response. We would therefore encourage you to respond to the survey questions with information that is supplementary to the plan(s) and report(s) you provide.

**7. ALERT: it is the duty of every corporate parent to be alert to matters which, or which might, adversely affect the wellbeing of children and young people.**

A) Since 2018, please describe any changes your organisation has made or introduced as a corporate parent to ensure your organisation is alert to matters which have, or which might have, an adverse impact on the wellbeing of these children and young people?

b) What difference have these changes or introductions had on your services or your organisation?

c) What difference have these changes or introductions had on the lives, opportunities and experiences of children and young people?

**(Maximum 1000 words)-**

Nationally we collaborated with Who Cares? Scotland to develop bespoke training for Police Scotland. In September 2019 the Corporate Parenting training package was launched on our Moodle site and is mandatory for all police officers up to Inspector or equivalent police staff. This training package provided information on their responsibilities as corporate parents, with first-hand accounts from care experienced young people (CEYP). Listening to the voice of CEYP was impactful and gave our staff insight in how they experience our service, either directly or through familial or peer contact. It provided operational and specialist staff with understanding of how CEYP perceive police officers

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and how they think we perceive them. This training package has been completed by 14,400 staff in our organisation. This issue around perception and stigma is discussed further within this report and will be a focus of our 2021-24 Plan.

We continue to participate in national partnerships; National Youth Justice Advisory Group, National Youth Justice Improvement Board, the Adversity Hub, and the EEI Forum. We have built many effective partnerships from these groups that have provided learning, support and opportunities for collaboration. Such examples will be described in more detail throughout this report.

We contributed to the Care Review, resulting in The Promise. We have used this learning and taken the information to inform the review of our current Plan and engagement for 2021-24.

We have collaborated with NHS Education Service (NHS) on the National Trauma Framework. We currently deliver trauma training across our organisation; including all new police officers as part of their initial training and our specialist Public Protection officers. This trauma training has equipped our staff with the knowledge and skills to take back to their role and change practice. We understand that trauma informed practice is essential to progress as a corporate parent and trauma training is planned for all our staff, commensurate to their role. There is a dedicated section to CEYP within this training re-enforcing our responsibilities as a corporate parent and gives examples on how to interact positively with care experienced young people and how caring and empathetic relationships will assist build positive connections.

We have corporate parenting champions in all 13 local policing divisions and they work closely within their community and local authority partnerships. These partnerships have grown significantly and are now part of all local authority planning/harm prevention partnerships. This allows Police Scotland as a national organisation to be receptive to local community needs, recognising these may be different across our population. The result is that we are alert to the needs of CEYP through local engagement partnerships. These examples include:

In Edinburgh the Youth Justice Sergeant and Young Person Liaison/Missing Person Co-ordinator have daily meetings with residential care home managers where any issues are discussed/addressed together. To support this, training, advice and guidance has been provided to both frontline police officers and care staff, on the importance of not criminalising CEYP for behaviours which, if they happened in a child's family home, would not involve a parent calling the police. Since 2018 there has been a steady downwards reduction in offending within residential houses.

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In Dumfries and Galloway they have introduced the role of the link officer, who attends all care homes on a fortnightly basis. This practice has developed from the "Unnecessary criminalisation of children in residential care", pilot, described in more detail in section 8 below.

County Lines is a well-known term describing a method of drug dealing across the UK. It involves gangs from major English cities arranging the supply of Class A drugs, heroin and crack cocaine into smaller towns and cities. Scotland is impacted by County Lines and this often involves young people from English cities being sent to Scotland to deal drugs on their behalf and less often Scottish children being targeted to carry out these activities. Over and above the risk to our communities from drug supply, County Lines creates specific risk from "cuckooing" and the exploitation of young people as drug runners. Cuckooing is the term given to criminals taking over the house of a vulnerable person. This can be as accommodation but also to store and deal drugs. This often results in people becoming involved in the drug dealing themselves. Aligned to patterns across the UK, vulnerable people often with addiction issues and poor mental health are targeted, making those who are young, perhaps with a new tenancy and less well supported at risk. This has led to "Cuckooing" initiatives across the country. When a person is identified as at risk from cuckooing, police and partners from housing offer support and a route out. This has led to a significant proportion seeking this support.

From 2019, Police Scotland worked with partners across the country to raise awareness of county lines methodologies to show how and where children were vulnerable. Nationally this included a Crimestoppers campaign, supported by Fearless who supported messaging for children and young people. For care experienced young people, this included a presentation to Scottish Through and After Care Forum, various Social Work conferences and local partnership groups and where required, bespoke training for care home managers.

These new practices have ensured improvement on the service we give to CEYP in Scotland. This was confirmed with feedback received from our survey during engagement for our new Corporate Parenting plan. We are confident we are on the correct road to providing a safe place for CEYP to grow-up in Scotland. We consider the needs and backgrounds of the care experienced population now more than ever and will continue to improve services at every opportunity.

These changes all combine to create a fairer, supportive framework for our care experienced children and young adults. Pilots like the unnecessary criminalisation of children in care will provide a proportionate and fairer service from the police. Ongoing trauma

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training will help officers across Scotland engage more positively with care experience and close relationships with other corporate parents will help serve the best interests of our young people in care.

**8. ASSESS: it is the duty of every corporate parent to assess the needs of those children and young people for services and support it provides.**

- a) Since 2018, what has your organisation done to assess and understand the needs of these children and young people?
- b) What changes, services or support has your organisation introduced to meet the assessed needs of these children and young people?
- c) What difference have these changes or introductions had on your services or your organisation?
- d) What difference have these changes or introductions had on the lives, opportunities and experiences of these children and young people?

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We have listened to the views of care experienced young people, partners and academic research that provides children in residential care are over represented in the criminal justice system and have significantly higher incidents of going missing from home than their peers.

In April 2019, Police Scotland approved a test of change aimed at reducing the criminalisation of children and young people in care of local authorities. The pilot was initially tested in Dumfries & Galloway Division and was used as an opportunity to incorporate the extended adoption of the 'Not At Home' missing person protocol.

The pilot changed the way in police would ordinarily deal with incidents involving children and young people in a residential care home setting. Protocols were put in place to respond differently to behaviours that could be considered as low-level crime and to children missing/not at home.

A Strategic group of partners was formed including Police Scotland, Care Commission, Dumfries & Galloway Council, Dumfries & Galloway Health and Social Care Partnership and Care-vision. The strategic group delivered a programme of multi-agency training to police officers, social workers and care staff. The strategic group was supported by Who Cares? Scotland, Centre for Youth and Criminal Justice ICYCJ and CEYP

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and they all contributed to joint- training, prior to the test of change starting.

The initial test of change was delivered from September 2019 to February 2020 and an evaluation was completed by Police Scotland and a formal independent assessment of training carried out by CYCJ.

The key findings of the evaluations were;

- CYCJ assessed the training as highly effective and recognised multi-agency approach as being instrumental in success; highlighted the value of the involvement of CEYP in the training as it provided real life context and effects.
- Social work and care staff highlighted the benefit and value of the police care home SPOC role, resulting in a more effective partnership, with the young people being the focus;
- Care staff reported that, towards the end of the pilot period, they were applying the protocol and not reporting incidents of a minor nature to Police Scotland;
- Police officers reported a much more effective relationship with staff and a greater appreciation of why young people were in care and the support they could provide;
- Recorded crime of minor nature within the care homes decreased by 62%; the single greatest reduction was in common assaults – with a reduction of 26 crimes;
- Recorded missing persons enquiries reduced by 35%

However there was insufficient volume of crime data to support a national adoption of the protocol and a recommendation for an additional test of change in a more populated area. This led to a phased roll out of the protocol across Greater Glasgow. The protocol was initiated in September 2020 in the Pollock and Govan area, supported by a Steering Group of key partners of Police Scotland, Greater Glasgow Council Social Work lead, Health & Social Care Partnership Executives, and representatives from Care Providers.

The initial delivery, between September 2020 and this date has been effective and will continue to be rolled out across this police division. Progress in this regard has been impacted by the pandemic including an inability to offer joint training.

A full evaluation will be produced in August 2021 and further consideration of next steps. Progress and recommendations for further adoption will be included in the Corporate Parenting Plan 2021-24.

The Missing-Not at Home protocol aspect of the test of change has been incorporated into national protocol for "Looked After And Accommodated Children Who Go Missing From Residential and Foster Care In Scotland".

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The new protocol will ensure a proportionate response; where there are grounds to believe that there is no apparent risk, or the level of risk is a tolerable one (for example a child failing to return from meeting with family, or friends, carers will consider this as "not at home", and police do not need to be called and the child is not reported as a missing person. Evidence from the test of change in Dumfries and Galloway provides that this more proportionate response supports young people and considers their behaviour as most parents/carers would. The impact of the new protocol will be monitored through the Missing Person Strategic Group.

We understand the need to take a more trauma informed approach to children in our custody suites. We have reviewed our facilities and have designed an alternative approach at one site. Acknowledging that police officers must treat the need to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of the child as a primary consideration, there remains times when children and young people are arrested and brought to one of our custody suites. In early 2020, a refurbishment of the custody area, London Road, Glasgow provided the opportunity to better assess the needs of children and young people in our care. The result is an improved facility with separate entry, less formal "charge-bar" area, detention rooms with distraction toys, including chalk board walls. The custody facility has recently opened and the impact will be monitored in our 2021-24 Plan.

**9. PROMOTE: it is the duty of every corporate parent to promote the interests of those children and young people.**

- a) Since 2018, how has your organisation promoted the interests of these children and young people (and provided them with an advantage or benefit)?
- b) What difference have these changes or introductions had on your services or your organisation?
- c) What difference have these changes or introductions had on the lives, opportunities and experiences of these children and young people?

**(Maximum 1000 words)-**

To meet this duty, Police Scotland committed to action that would benefit care experienced young people as individuals or as a group.

The Covid-19 restrictions put in place from March 2020 has significantly impacted face-face engagement, in particular plans for dedicated recruitment events, to encourage and support young people interested in joining the police as a youth volunteer, Special Constable or police

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officer/staff. This commitment will be taken forward into the new Plan with specific actions to ensure we remain focussed.

Aberdeen and Edinburgh have both published a "Pledge", a minimum standards charter for care experienced young people up to the age of 26 years old guarantees support from police to any person up to 26 years old, covering safety planning if required, support for persons interested in joining Police Scotland, the provision of a mentor for probationary officers and the promotion of opportunities offered by the Police Scotland Youth Volunteers to CEYP. Since the launch at the end of October 2020, 2 individuals have been engaged and are interested in entering the PSYV programme.

In North Lanarkshire, through their Promise Partnership, they recognised the importance of listening to young people who go missing; to understand the reasons why and to better safeguard them in the future. Work has begun with Barnardo's who carry out return interviews for care experienced young people who go missing, providing a better outcome for children who go missing. This approach, supported by third sector partners, is developing across the country.

All policing divisions closely monitor missing people data where the young person is care experienced. Practically this often relates to children missing from residential care.

North East covering Aberdeenshire, Moray and Aberdeen have joint protocols in place Return Home Welfare Interview Officers to provide a link with Residential Care Homes and develop relationships with staff and CEYP and will seek further support for the young people.

In Edinburgh, they include "missing" in the daily conference call with senior unit and service managers. This is supported by a monthly Vulnerable Young Persons Discussion Group meetings where cases, including CEYP are reviewed in a multi-agency setting.

In December 2020, East Ayrshire launched a 'Practice Network' with representatives from Police, East Ayrshire Council, Care Commission and private care providers to discuss concerns and share best practise with a view of improving our collective response when a young person is reported missing from a care home or foster family. This network shall evolve further upon receipt of the new national guidance being developed by the National Missing Persons Unit.

Since January 2019, our staff in Aberdeen have been working with other corporate parents on The Write Right About Me: Future Proofing Records (WRAM) Project. This follows a multi-agency internal audit, and lessons being learned in the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry from

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those with lived experience of care and their care records. They both highlighted the need to keep the child as the focus of our writing, write in a way that the non-professional can understand, and provide analysis that demonstrates an understanding of trauma. The project has a focus on writing styles and language that introduce ways for us to increase the voice of children; extends co-production to the 'whole family'; working with some of our young people to contribute to our awareness of the care system language. The project team includes Children's Social Work staff, Health, Education, and 3rd Sector, Teaching establishments, SCRA and has so far published guidance about their professional writing for children's social work staff and online learning to support this, and started a Test of Change looking at Language with Police Scotland. Robert Gordon's University have introduced incremental learning about language and professional writing into their degree course.

These actions have fed in to the bigger picture and aim of promoting care experienced young people and to afford them better opportunities than we as an organisation have done before. We have adapted during difficult and challenging restrictions during the Covid pandemic and continued to provide better experiences to care experienced individuals. The mentor programme offered by Edinburgh division is a prime example of providing support, confidence and empowerment to care experienced people to join our service and be part of the Police community.

**OPPORTUNITIES: it is the duty of every corporate parent to seek to provide those children and young people with opportunities to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing,**

- a) Since 2018, what has your organisation done to identify and provide these children and young people with opportunities and activities to promote their wellbeing?
- b) What difference have these changes or introductions made to your services or your organisation?
- c) What difference have these changes or introductions had on the lives, opportunities and experiences of these children and young people?

**(Maximum 1000 words)-**

Across the country, corporate parenting partnerships have sought opportunities for care experienced young people.

During 2018-2019 a police officer was seconded to work with the Prince's Trust at Ayrshire College, this was to assist running the "Team Programme", a flagship 12 week personal development programme for



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16-25 year olds. The relationship with the Prince's Trust at Ayrshire College has continued with the college campus officer. The Prince's Trust are involved in "Ayr Academy Can You Dig It", which is an intergenerational gardening project co-ordinated by one of our campus officer. 45 S1 to S5 pupils, all participants had been identified as vulnerable and including care experienced young people.

In both South and North Ayrshire, through their Corporate Parenting Steering Group, a Campus Officer for Ayrshire College sits on the Wellbeing and Safeguarding with care experienced young people and supports the work being done for students. Campus Officers shall be working exclusively with groups of care experienced young people for 1 day per week throughout January and February 2020, taking small groups off campus to experience outdoor activities such as kayaking. This will be done in conjunction with partner agencies and is seen as an ideal opportunity to engage with young people, break down barriers and discuss ongoing issues and future policies.

We have promoted mentoring opportunities, working with the MCR Pathways charity, to encourage wider support of this work. We support MCR Pathways with police staff mentors in several areas across the country.

Our Police Scotland Youth Volunteers have groups in every local authority. Group leaders are actively recruiting children and young people who are care experienced. There is anecdotal evidence of progress but it is yet to be evaluated. This learning has been considered for our 2021-24 Plan.

Data from the Scottish Prison Service (SPS), supported by other reports provides that care experienced people are over represented in the prison system, including young people. During the reporting period, Police Scotland has developed work with SPS to engage with young people in HMPYOI Polmont. There is a police officer seconded to the prison to work with young people on the Positive Lifestyle programme. This 2-week programme aims to break down barriers with police, provide the young people with information about the wider aspects of crime, the effects on them, families and their communities and offer support to reduce offending.

Since 2016, 49 programmes have been delivered with 352 out of 435 young people (81%) completing the course. This work was featured on a BBC Panorama programme highlighting the work to support young people who offend in Scotland. During 2020, the pandemic restrictions had a significant impact on the programme, however it resumed in January 2021.

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The experience from working with young people in HMPYOI Polmont led to developing the approach for children in secure and residential care.

During 2019, the programme was developed for into a six session programme,

Including sessions on drugs, violence, rights and responsibilities and fire/driver safety from Scottish Fire and Rescue. The theme throughout is about engaging with police in a more positive manner and listening to the young people's experiences of crime/police/authority. Care is taken to make the sessions fun and interactive.

During 2019, four programmes were run at Rossie School, both in secure and residential settings, one at high school, Dalkeith and two at a high school provision for children excluded from mainstream education in Stirling.

Plans to develop this were again postponed because of Covid-19 and we hope to resume this approach in 2021.

Acknowledging that this programme is still at an early stage, initial feedback and levels of engagement have been positive:

- There is a marked difference in engagement levels from session 1-6. Children are often reluctant and dismissive at the first session, engage well in future sessions
- The children share their experiences of being interactions with police, either directly or through family/community and are candid about their experiences.
- Staff report that for some children this is the first time they have maintained attendance and/or have worked as part of a group with peers

**10. ACCESS: it is the duty of every corporate parent to take such action as it considers appropriate to help those children and young people to: access opportunities; make use of services, and access support, which it provides; and take such other action as it considers appropriate for the purposes of improving the way in which it exercises its functions in relation to those children and young people.**

a) Since 2018, what has your organisation done to help these children and young people access opportunities, services and support?

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- b) What difference have these changes or introductions made to your services or your organisation?  
c) What difference have these changes or introductions had on the lives, opportunities and experiences of these children and young people?

**(Maximum 1000 words)**

The services of Police Scotland are available across the country. Many services have dedicated resource for children and young people. These include the national Children and Young People team, specialist officers for child abuse and sexual crime, dedicated campus officers or those attached to schools and colleges, embedded officers in HMPYOI Polmont and Kibble School, young person cyber prevention officers. Through our Corporate Parenting responsibilities, services are reviewed to assess the needs of care experienced children and young people.

The examples already mentioned in this report have an impact on improving access and support. Other examples include;

Through their Corporate Parenting groups, staff in Aberdeen regularly attended events held by ACE (Aberdeen Care Experienced) Group to engage directly with local children, young people and adults.

In Edinburgh, police "Keep it 100" project, a fitness and well-being programme to support young people to make better choices resulting in a more positive destination and improved health and wellbeing. It was open to young person's struggling to engaged with school/learning, those involved in ASB or criminal behaviour and looked after and accommodated children, aged 12-18 years.

Tayside Regional Collaborative supports the police monitor and respond to all incidents of young people missing from residential care.

In Edinburgh, all police incidents involving children in residential are discussed at the daily 10am Police/YPC Managers meeting. To support this, training, advice and guidance has been provided to both frontline police officers and care staff, on the importance of NOT criminalising young people for behaviours which, if they happened in a child's family home, would not involve a parent calling the police. Since 2018 there has been a steady downwards reduction in offending within YPC's across the city.

In Lanarkshire each residential house has dedicated officers who have become an integral part of the community within the house. They offer advice to staff and young residents, as well as returning feedback for local officers of the challenges facing the staff and young people. This has improved relationships with officers and young people.

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The above has contributed to attempts to improve the wellbeing of care experienced children and young people across the country. As restrictions allow we will carry out further face to face activities in order to directly form better relationships with care experienced children and be able to guide and direct them to services or make lifestyle choices that will undoubtedly improve their wellbeing.

**11. IMPROVE: how has your organisation reviewed its performance as a corporate parent (e.g. annual reporting, collection and monitoring of relevant measures and indicators, etc.) to help bring about improvements for these children and young people?** *Please describe how you reviewed and reported on your performance as a corporate parent.*

**(Maximum 500 words) 165**

The national Children and Young People team act as a link between national partners and our local policing divisions. The Children and Young People team have oversight of all corporate parenting work and review and share positive work throughout the force area and identify opportunities for improvement through a Harm Prevention forum that meets every six weeks. The team work together with colleagues across to improve practices and hold each other accountable to promote positive corporate parenting models and attitudes.

Specific tests of change or change in policy will be subject to review and/or evaluation. This was done recently with the Unnecessary Criminalisation of Children in Residential Care pilot in Dumfries and Galloway.

Across our local policing areas, all divisions have a missing person co-ordinator who works proactively with other agencies and can be proactive in addressing patterns in young people going missing, statistically children in residential care still features highly in "Missing" data. All reports of missing people are submitted to the National Missing Person Database. This is supported by a "Dashboard" of data and statistics. This provides data at a national and local level to identify trends and provides opportunity to take a more preventative approach.

We have reviewed our corporate parent plan reporting and monitoring and have made changes for 2021-24 to improve governance. The three-year Plan will have one -year priorities with an annual report, supported by an internal Working Group meeting quarterly. This will be supported by our external Advisory Group and our care experience colleagues group.

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Data collection, monitoring and evaluation is a priority in our 2021-24 Plan because we recognise this is an area for improvement.

Police Scotland will collaborate with Promise Scotland's measuring change and monitoring progress team to improve our input to setting and measuring targets.

**12. How has your organisation listened to, involved and included the voice and experience of children and young people in your response to the six [Section 58](#) duties?**

**(Maximum 1000 words)-**

The evidence presented above provides examples from across our organisations of partnerships with care experienced young people.

Nationally we collaborated with Who Cares? Scotland to develop bespoke training for Police Scotland staff. This training package provided our staff with information on their responsibilities as corporate parents, with first-hand accounts from care experienced young people. Listening to the voice of care experienced young people was impactful and gave our staff insight in how they experience our service, either directly or through familial or peer contact.

In April 2019, Police Scotland approved a test of change aimed at reducing the criminalisation of children and young people in care of local authorities. The pilot in Dumfries & Galloway Division changed the way in which police would ordinarily deal with incidents involving children and young people in a residential care home setting. The training and evaluation included care voice directly.

Local partnerships across the country are involved with corporate parenting champions.

We have carried out informal engagement with Police Scotland's Youth Volunteers across Scotland. This gave a view from a young persons' perspective on our corporate parenting plan as well as informed opinions on how Police Scotland can communicate more effectively with our care experienced young people.

Beginning September 2020, work to review and renew our corporate parenting plan commenced. We have been supported by Who Cares? Scotland to engage directly with care experienced young people. We

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have held online sessions and a survey to gather views and opinions. The feedback has been essential and has impacted significantly on our priorities for our 2021-24 Plan.

We have also consulted with organisations that support children's rights. In December 2020, our Corporate Parenting Advisory Group with Who Cares? Scotland, Children and Young Persons Commissioner for Scotland, Youthlink Scotland and the Scottish Network for the Reduction of Restrictive Practices. We have also been supported by members of The Promise. The group provided advice and guidance for; the review of the existing Police Scotland Corporate Parenting Plan, the engagement for and priorities for the revised Plan 2021-24 with the overall vision of contributing to a care system which prioritises a child's need for a happy childhood and results in positive experiences and outcomes.

Consultation was carried out with external agencies and corporate parenting through an engagement survey around Police Scotland's approach to Corporate Parenting and how to improve that was released over the festive period 2020. We received 138 responses from a cross section of public bodies including local councils, children's reporter, NHS and children's charities and incorporated these responses in to our plan.

In November 2020, an appeal was published by Children and Young People Team on the Police Scotland intranet encouraging Police Scotland officers and staff who are care experienced in their personal lives to come forward and create a lived experienced short life working group. The response to this was extremely positive, engagement sessions were held which offered a unique perspective from officers/staff who have lived experience of both being care experienced and working in the police. This group has now met three times and is already providing a unique insight and will form a key part of work moving forward.

Engagement was also carried out with Police Scotland corporate parent leads across the country. This was an opportunity to share work that has been carried out in divisions since the last plan, take what we can learn from the previous plan and help shape and implement our new strategy. The sessions were so worthwhile that a new Corporate Parenting group is being created and will continue to meet and update with regular updates and renewed information sharing protocols established.

**13. Under [Section 60](#) (duty to collaborate) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, how has your organisation**

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**worked with other corporate parents and organisations to support children and young people for whom your organisation has responsibilities to as their corporate parents? (Maximum of 500 words)**

*Examples of collaborative working might include sharing information, providing advice or assistance, co-ordinating activities, sharing responsibility for action, or funding activities jointly.*

**(Maximum 500 words)**

Police Scotland have developed significantly over the reporting period, as reported in the sections above.

During the reporting period, Police Scotland attended local and national corporate parenting groups. Progress made from these partnerships has been documented throughout this report.

We have participated in the Care Review and continue to be an integral partner in Keeping The Promise.

We have collaborated with NES to progress the National Trauma training plan.

We collaborate through national functions- National Youth Justice Advisory Group, National Youth Justice Improvement Board, the Adversity Hub, and the EEI Forum. We have built many effective partnerships from these groups that have provided learning, support and opportunities for collaboration.

All our local policing divisions have partnerships with their corporate parents across the 32 local authorities.

Examples of this have been detailed in the report already, such as;

We have worked with other corporate parents in Dumfries and Galloway and in Glasgow to change how we respond to children in residential care. Further detail is detailed in section 8 in this report.

We have continued to engage with SPS to support children and young people in HMPYOI Polmont, both those on remand and serving a sentence. We have developed our Positive Lifestyle two-week programme co-delivered by Scottish Police Service and with support from Scottish Fire and Rescue, Committed to Ending Abuse, Barnardo's and others. Further details have been given in section 4 above.

Collaboration on The Missing- Not at Home protocol aspect of the test of change has been incorporated into national protocol for "Looked After

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And Accommodated Children Who Go Missing From Residential and Foster Care In Scotland”.

In Edinburgh, services are aligned with daily meetings with residential care home managers where any issues are discussed and addressed together. Since 2018 there has been a steady downwards reduction in offending within residential houses across the city.

**REFLECTIONS OF THE LAST THREE YEARS**

In this section we would like to understand the enablers and barriers you have encountered as Corporate Parents whilst fulfilling your responsibilities since 2018.

**14. What has helped your organisation to progress your Corporate Parenting responsibilities, priorities and activities since 2018?**

**(Maximum 500 words)**

It is clear that progress has been made with evidence of local and national engagement, both formal and informal, all of which improves the collective knowledge of matters that affect the wellbeing of care experienced young people

We acknowledge that we must continue to listen and then embed what we hear into our practice. Engagement will be one of the key elements of our updated plan. We will work with our Seldom Heard Voices Strategy to listen to and embed the learning into our policy and practice.

All out local policing divisions collaborate with local corporate parenting strategic/planning groups. These in turn have access to care experienced voice, feeding into local priorities.

At a national level, through our Children and Young People team, we have developed strong links with government, statutory authorities and third sector supporting children’s rights.

We have recognised that lived experience voice helps us reflect on what work we have done and can continue to do and also informs our decision making for new plans. It is important to give time and energy to CEYP directly to empower them to inform us and guide future plans.

Effective communication is absolutely vital to help us as an organisation progress our Corporate Parenting plans and ideas in future.

Communication with lived experience, with the current young population



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in care and with those partners who share the same goal to improve lives of care experienced young people. We have learned that a persistent will to form strong relationships with partners is vital from everyone involved in Corporate Parenting. We are committed to keeping relationships strong as we look to improve year on year.

### **15. What challenges or difficulties has your organisation had in progressing your Corporate Parenting responsibilities, priorities and activities since 2018?**

**(Maximum 500 words)**

The main challenges and difficulty our organisation has had since 2018 is the COVID 19 pandemic. The affect the pandemic had directly on our work was as we very quickly went in to lockdown the restrictions of which are still in place well over a year after the initial regulations were drastic. Staff across departments were taken off routine duties and placed on frontline duties which meant various pieces of ongoing corporate parenting projects or engagement were postponed as the pandemic took priority over any other form of policing at that time in order to safeguard the public.

Police Scotland did however react quickly to overcome the challenges presented to us. New forms of communication and engagement were sought and achieved to prevent corporate parenting work coming to a halt altogether. Local and national divisions switched almost immediately to online contact and communications with partners and at local level, particularly at residential homes, continued online in order to keep contact and maintain relationships with those who care for our care experienced young people from a distance but still involved.

The ripple effect of the pandemic were seen in that employment events and face to face projects could no longer be facilitated with CEYP. This will re-commence when restrictions finally ease and any important work continued from where we left off. In the meantime new approaches have been taken like in Edinburgh with the mentor programme now in place.

## LOOKING AHEAD

In this section we would like to understand your future plans as a Corporate Parent.

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**16. What are, or do you expect to be, your organisation's priorities for improvement as a Corporate Parent for the next three-year period?**

**(Maximum 500 words)- 500**

Our Vision is;

To contribute to a care system which prioritises a child's need for a happy childhood and results in positive experiences and outcomes.

We have set our priorities on key themes as below. These priorities will be supported by our Action Plan, reviewed and refreshed annually

**PRIORITIES 2021-2024**

**Language and Stigma**- the language of care is stigmatising for children, young people and adult who are care experienced. Care experienced children and adults tell us that the language needs to change to normalise their lives and shift away from professional speak. For children, unintentional use of this professionalised language compounds a sense of them being different.

Actions include:

- Raise awareness among our staff about the impact that language has and how it affects our practice
- Work with other professionals to change the way we speak, write and refer to care experience.

**Building Better Relationships**- We will make every effort to nurture and sustain positive and important relationships for care experienced children. We know that we must empower our workforce to value, develop and nurture cared for children.

Actions will include:

- Deliver trauma informed training, reinforcing the importance of relationships, to all new police officers
- Engage with local Corporate Parenting networks to listen to voice and embed in local partnership
- Develop our newly established care experienced colleagues group, empowering them to provide leadership in this area.

• **Supporting Children in Contact with Police**- Care experienced children are over represented in the criminal justice system but there is no evidence that they engage in more offending behaviour than their peers. The consequences of their behaviour whilst in care are much more likely to result in criminalisation.

Actions will include:

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- Continue with, and evaluate the test of change to stop the unnecessary criminalisation of children and young people in residential care, and consider adoption across Scotland
- Improve conditions for care experienced children in our custody suite to offer a trauma led approach to care for their wellbeing

**Offering Employment and Development Opportunities** - We want care experienced young people and adults to be aware of, consider and then feel supported to join Police Scotland as a youth volunteer, police staff, Special Constable or to become a police officer.

Actions will include:

- Provide the option to self-identify on application forms for all Police Scotland applications and offer mentoring opportunities to all who meet any minimum entry requirements
- Provide focussed recruitment events for care experienced young people and adults
- Provide mentoring opportunities to support care experienced young people

**Engage, Evaluate and Learn-** We will adapt to the needs of our care experienced community by listening to care experienced voice in a meaningful way and embed this in our practice. With our partners, we will continue to develop our shared understanding through better data and evaluating our progress and priorities annually.

Actions will include:

- Prioritise our engagement with care experienced children, young people and adults through our Seldom Heard Voices Strategy
- Form an internal Corporate Parent Working Group to regularly review our priorities and Action Plan.

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