

<b>Assessment No</b>	1020	<b>Owner</b>	rickeera.kaur
<b>Resource</b>	HSCP	<b>Service</b>	Joint
	<b>FirstName</b>	<b>Surname</b>	<b>Job Title</b>
<b>Head Officer</b>	Rickeera	Kaur	Contracts & Commissioning Officer
<b>Members</b>	Rickeera Kaur: Contracts & Commissioning Officer, West Dunbartonshire HSCP Neil McKechnie: Contracts, Commissioning & Quality Manager, West Dunbartonshire HSCP Ailsa Dinwoodie: Promise Lead, West Dunbartonshire HSCP Denny Ford: Director of Advocacy and Participation, Who Cares? Scotland		
	<i>(Please note: the word 'policy' is used as shorthand for strategy policy function or financial decision)</i>		
<b>Policy Title</b>	Contract: Children and Young People's Independent Advocacy Services		
	<b>The aim, objective, purpose and intended out come of policy</b>		
	It is proposed that a contract be awarded to Who Cares? Scotland as a provider of independent advocacy services for care experienced children and young people in West Dunbartonshire. This will be through increasing their current Advocacy and Participation Worker services from 21 to 35 hours per week, and by creating a Development Officer role within their service, whose focus will be to support the roles and functions of West Dunbartonshire's Champions Board. The board is comprised of young people with lived experience, who collate and provide views and insights into the care systems and services delivered to children and young people in West Dunbartonshire. The purpose of this is to allow children's rights and views to be at the heart of process and decision making, to promote children feeling listened to and respected, thus improving working relationships and outcomes, and to allow the HSCP and partner services a more in depth understanding of children's experiences in order to be able to deliver more inclusive and responsive services.		
	<b>Service/Partners/Stakeholders/service users involved in the development and/or implementation of policy.</b>		
	Children and Young People with lived experience - through input from the Promise Lead for West Dunbartonshire, Ailsa Dinwoodie and Denny Ford, Director of Advocacy and Participation, Who Cares? Scotland  Rickeera Kaur: Contracts & Commissioning Officer, West Dunbartonshire HSCP Neil McKechnie: Contracts, Commissioning & Quality Manager, West Dunbartonshire HSCP		
<b>Does the proposals involve the procurement of any goods or services?</b>			Yes
<b>If yes please confirm that you have contacted our procurement services to discuss your requirements.</b>			Yes
<b>SCREENING</b>			
<i>You must indicate if there is any relevance to the four areas</i>			
<b>Duty to eliminate discrimination (E), advance equal opportunities (A) or foster good relations (F)</b>			Yes
<b>Relevance to Human Rights (HR)</b>			Yes
<b>Relevance to Health Impacts (H)</b>			Yes
<b>Relevance to Social Economic Impacts (SE)</b>			Yes

<b>Who will be affected by this policy?</b>
Children and young people supported by West Dunbartonshire social work services, who have care experience. Professionals working with/ supporting those children and young people.
<b>Who will be/has been involved in the consultation process?</b>
As previous

**Please outline any particular need/barriers which equality groups may have in relation to this policy list evidence you are using to support this and whether there is any negative impact on particular groups.**

Specific group to consider	Needs	Evidence	Impact
<b>Age</b>	The service will support children and young people to the age of 26. This is in line with national legislation and policy framework.	Children and Young People Scotland Act 2014  The Promise Implementation Plan, 2022, Scot Gov	Positive:  The service will include support for young people to access adult advocacy services if required. The Provider also operates a helpline which young people will have ongoing access to as required/appropriate post 26.  Age criteria allows the service to be specialised and responsive to the unique needs to children and young people, and expert in the legal and policy frameworks that direct the services around them.
<b>Disability</b>	Approximately 10% of children in care in Scotland have a recorded disability. Many other children will be impacted by disabilities within their families or close networks. The Service will utilise a range of evidenced models of practice to support the particular communication needs of each individual in terms of being able to express their views and participate in their care planning and decision making in their lives. Children and young people with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to experiencing poor care or harm, often due to communication barriers, or lack of specialised skill to overcome these.	Children's Social Work Statistics Scotland: 2021 to 2022, Scot Gov	Positive:  The service will provide a further support to children and young people with disabilities.

<b>Gender Reassign</b>	<p>Evidence shows that trans people face many barriers to accessing and participating in health and social care services, and to having their views and opinions heard within. There are many barriers for trans people within local communities and societies too, that can have detrimental impact on their health and wellbeing outcomes.</p> <p>This can be exacerbated for care experienced people, who have higher levels of contact with services and who often have had experiences of adversity, trauma, change and inconsistent care and nurture. The Service will require to demonstrate insight and responsiveness, by delivering individualised advocacy support for all children and young people as required.</p>	Life in Scotland for LGBT Young People: Trans Report, LGBT Youth Scotland, 2024	<p>Positive:</p> <p>The Provider's organisation states that children's rights are at the heart of the work that they do, and they embed the principles of the UN Convention for the Rights of the child into their daily practice and sought outcomes.</p> <p>The Provider delivers individual, group and community advocacy support, including lobbying and participation in consultations with Scottish Government. The Provider is able to offer opportunities for young people's voices and experiences to be heard, in a meaningful and impactful way.</p>
<b>Marriage &amp; Civil Partnership</b>	<p>The Provider will work with all young people with care experience as per the referral criteria, regardless of marital status. They will have insight through evidence, experience and working relationships with individuals about how parent's marital status may impact on the children they support.</p>	Getting it right for every child – Practice Guidance 1 – Using the National Practice Model – 2022, Scot Gov	<p>Positive:</p> <p>An individualised advocacy service can be more understanding of the unique experiences of each child or young person, and can monitor trends and patterns in the local area that impact their wellbeing outcomes.</p>

<b>Pregnancy &amp; Maternity</b>	<p>Parents with care experience are more likely to have contact with services during pregnancy and early years parenting in particular. Therefore advocacy services for those within the WCS criteria will be an important supporting service.</p> <p>Similarly, pregnancy in the family can also have varying and complex impact for care experienced children and advocacy support could provide an important rights based service during such times. The service is experienced in supporting children and young people through different life events and is able to be responsive to provide an individualised service.</p>	Long-term outcomes for care-experienced parents and children: Evidence of risk and resilience from two British cohort studies. Centre for Longitudinal Studies	Positive
<b>Race</b>	Children from ethnic minority backgrounds are known to have additional vulnerabilities in terms of accessing supporting services and outcomes from service involvement. There are cultural considerations that will be important advocacy issues for children with care experience.	Monitoring racialised health inequalities in Scotland: Data and Evidence - Public Health Scotland, 2023	Positive, if the service is attuned to equalities issues and able to ensure equitable access to support.
<b>Religion and Belief</b>	Religious and cultural beliefs can be an important component of children's developing identity and emotional wellbeing, that can be impacted by change, disruption and care experience. Children may seek advocacy support to express their needs and views. The service should be attuned to the needs of children and young people that they support and able to provide an individualised service that takes account of cultural needs.	Race, religion and representation among care-experienced children: Nuffield Foundation, 2022	Positive, if the service is able to respond to individual need.

<b>Sex</b>	There is some evidence that male children are more likely to remain in care than female children, particularly in teenage years. The provider has significant and long term experience in researching and understanding the needs and lived experiences of care experienced children and can offer insight and attuned care accordingly.	National Care Service - children's social services: overview - Scot Gov, 2022	Positive - the provider has skill in understanding barriers to positive outcomes and to promoting children's rights and best interests.
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	LGBTQ+ young people report significantly higher levels of mental health problems, are frequently subjected to bullying in school, and experience issues at home – nearly one in ten LGBTQ+ young people have had to leave home for reasons relating to their sexuality or gender identity. Therefore it is crucial that services are able to recognise and respond to the barriers that young people face to accessing and benefiting from service interventions.	SPEAKOUT: A STUDY OF THE EXPERIENCES AND IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT OF LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER AND QUESTIONING YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE – AND THE SUPPORT THEY RECEIVE - University of East Anglia, 2018  IMPROVING LGBTQ+ YOUNG PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCES OF CARE - What Works for Children's Social Care, 2021	Positive - The provider is experienced in promoting the rights of children and young people.
<b>Human Rights</b>	There are numerous human rights considerations, as the service is children's rights based. The Provider is a national leader in supporting the rights of care experienced people, with extensive and long term expertise.	A Human Rights Bill for Scotland Response to the Scottish Government's public consultation - Who Cares? Scotland, 2023	Positive - further embedding of the providers expertise in the field of children's rights will further advance practice in West Dunbartonshire, in line with the commitment to the Promise, local strategy, and HSCP aims to promote the rights of children and young people resident here.
<b>Health</b>	Research and evidence has consistently shown that people with care experience have poorer health and wellbeing outcomes than their peers. It also shows that care experienced people have unique barriers and challenges in accessing health care support.	Care experienced children and young people's mental health - IRISS, 2020	Positive - the service will focus on advocacy for children and young people, often supporting them to access and express their views relevant to health and social care services.

<b>Social &amp; Economic Impact</b>	<p>Wellbeing outcomes for care experienced people remain poorer than their peers, including in employment, experiences of poverty, financial struggle, access to education, homelessness, offending and in being active citizens in their local communities. Whilst there are different experiences for each person, the evidence remains that there are unique barriers for care experienced people in society.</p>	<p>Who Cares? Scotland's Report on the Criminalisation of Care Experienced People - 2018</p> <p>Latest statistics about children and young people in and leaving care - CELCIS, 2021</p> <p>Care experience and employment - IRISS, 2021</p>	<p>Positive - the service will focus on improving outcomes for children and young people, particularly those who are 'seldom heard' in wider communities. The provider also focuses on inclusion, reducing stigma and increasing understanding in communities, services and society.</p>
<b>Cross Cutting</b>	<p>There are several cross cutting considerations, as care experienced people will have different life experiences, identity, personal support needs. Therefore it is crucial that the service continues to respond to individual needs, in an impartial way. It is also important that the provider is able to widely monitor the support needed/ delivered by their service in order to continue providing clear evidence of future anticipated needs.</p>		<p>Positive.</p>

**Actions**



**Policy has a negative impact on an equality group, but is still to be implemented, please provide justification for this.**

**Will the impact of the policy be monitored and reported on an ongoing basis?**

Contract monitoring as appropriate.

**Q7 What is your recommendation for this policy?**

Introduce

**Please provide a meaningful summary of how you have reached the recommendation**

The provider has been providing independent advocacy support within West Dunbartonshire for a number of years. The contract will allow increased provision of a children's rights and participation service, thus reaching more people in need.