



West Dunbartonshire
Child Protection
Committee

Vision Statement and Constitution 2021 – 2024

Previous Version: 2016 - 2019

Reviewed: Dec 2021

Next Review: Dec 2024

West Dunbartonshire Child Protection Committee.

“Improving the lives of children and young people”.

West Dunbartonshire Child Protection Committee is the key local body for developing, implementing and improving child protection strategy across and between agencies, bodies and the local community.

Vision, Values and Aims.

“Child Protection is Everyone’s Responsibility”.

We believe that:	We aim to:
The child’s right to protection from harm is our primary and overriding concern.	Improve the safety of children in West Dunbartonshire.
Children and young people should get the help they need when they need it.	Provide an integrated approach to identifying, intervening and providing ongoing support to protect children and young people at risk of harm.
Children and young people should be listened to and respected.	Ensure we have a competent and confident workforce.
Information should be shared about children and young people where this is necessary to protect them.	Listen to the views of children and families at all times and involve them in the delivery of services.
Children, young people and their families have a right to be kept informed of all processes involving them.	Provide public information about child protection.
Agencies individually and collectively should demonstrate leadership and accountability for their work and its effectiveness.	Support families and the community to safely care for children.
The promotion of cultural diversity and equality of opportunity in our communities is central to our work in improving the lives of children and young people.	Support our children and young people to achieve their full potential.
	Offer our children and young people a safe place to live, work and play.

1. The Constitution

The West Dunbartonshire Child Protection Committee Constitution will be ratified by the Public Protection Chief Officers Group, and will be reviewed by the Child Protection Committee on a three yearly basis to coincide with the production of the three year Improvement Plan.

2. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

West Dunbartonshire Child Protection Committee is committed to transparency, open communication and sharing of information.

The Child Protection Committee Constitution, minutes and papers discussed at Committee meetings will be made available on the Child Protection Committee web site. Where there is sensitive information discussed that is not appropriate for wider distribution, this will be made explicit by the Chair and recorded as such in the minute; such exceptions will meet the requirements for non-disclosure as described within the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and the Data Protection Act 2018.

3. The Role of the Public Protection Chief Officers' Group and its Relationship to the Child Protection Committee

In line with the Protecting Children and Young People Child Protection Committee and Chief Officer Responsibilities (2019), West Dunbartonshire's Public Protection Chief Officers Group is responsible and accountable for improving the experiences of and outcomes for children and young people who may need protection within West Dunbartonshire.

The Child Protection Committee is the multi-agency mechanism to take forwards this work. The Public Protection Chief Officers are individually and collectively responsible and accountable for the effectiveness of the Child Protection Committee.

The key areas that will be overseen by the West Dunbartonshire Public Protection Chief Officers Group (PPCOG) are:

- Child Protection;
- Adult Protection;
- Offender Management processes for high risk sexual and violent offenders;
- Violence Against Women Services

West Dunbartonshire enacts their operational, strategic and developmental responsibilities in relation to child protection specifically via the West Dunbartonshire Child Protection Committee. The roles, functions and responsibilities are clearly defined in the Protecting Children and Young People Child Protection Committee and Chief Officer Responsibilities (2019). These include –

- Individually and collectively, demonstrating leadership and accountability for child protection work and its effectiveness on behalf of their agencies / bodies – including the effectiveness of the CPC itself
- Agreeing the CPC Annual Report and Improvement / Business Plan, including operational priorities for protecting children, and ensure the allocation of resources to the CPC
- Considering performance reports that include qualitative and quantitative data on the effectiveness of services in improving the experiences of, and outcomes for, children in need of protection
- Ensuring that the CPC links to other planning fora, in particular the structures for integrated children's services planning
- Agreeing the constitution for the CPC, including the delegating of roles and responsibilities, to take forward multi-agency issues in respect of child protection on their behalf and invest it with the authority to do so
- Agreeing the agencies, bodies or organisations to be represented at their CPC
- Considering the development of a communications strategy in order to raise awareness of both the role of the CPC and the PPCOG locally
- Appointing, or agreeing the appointment of, the chair of the CPC and in doing so ensuring that the Chair has the time, resources and dedicated professional and administrative support to properly fulfil the role
- Appointing representatives from their own agencies / bodies to the CPC with the appropriate authority and responsibility to best take forward the functions required
- Inviting nominations from other agencies, bodies or organisations to be represented on the CPC
- Agreeing reporting mechanisms with elected members and board members that cover the work of their CPC and the implications for their local authority area. This will include at least annual reporting.

4. Responsibilities of the West Dunbartonshire Child Protection Committee:

The Protecting Children and Young People Child Protection Committee and Chief Officer Responsibilities (2019) states Child Protection Committees will ensure that local agencies, services and organisations work together to protect children by the following means;

- Continuous improvement
- Public information, engagement and participation
- Strategic planning and connections
- Annual reporting on the work of the CPC

To do this, West Dunbartonshire Child Protection Committee has formed subgroups focussing on –

- Learning and Development
- Communication and Engagement
- Policy, practice and Improvement
- Performance
- Quality Assurance and Evaluation

This allows the Committee to;

- Ensure the strategic leadership of child protection activity in West Dunbartonshire.
- Ensure the production of an agreed three year Improvement Plan and associated Improvement Action Plans.
- Facilitate the production of an Annual Progress Report, including details of expenditure from the Child Protection Committee budget.
- Support the preparation for integrated inspections of children's services.
- Agree, implement and review multi-agency quality assurance mechanisms for inter-agency work within child protection, including early and effective intervention processes, the management of referral and investigation processes and management of the child protection register.
- Establish systematic approaches to quality assurance and self-evaluation which focus on the experiences of, and outcomes for, children, young people and families
- Use the learning from self-evaluation activity to develop, implement and measure the impact of improvement plans
- Involve key stakeholders including frontline staff, managers, children, young people and families in aspects of undertaking, reviewing and learning from quality assurance and self-evaluation activity
- Take account of learning from sources including research; inspection locally and nationally; and other CPCs in order to promote good practice and contribute to improved outcomes for children and young people
- Have in place mechanisms to identify and disseminate lessons from audits, inspections, learning from research, and recommendations, action and learning from inquiries and significant case reviews.
- Publish, implement and review an inter-agency child protection learning and development strategy to ensure that each partner has a suitably skilled, confident and

competent workforce to deliver the CPC's priorities and meet the needs for children and young people in their area.

- Ensure that local child protection policies, procedures and guidance are informed by this guidance and the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021)
- Systematically develop, disseminate and review the effectiveness of inter-agency policies, procedures and guidance
- Ensure that policies, procedures and guidance are developed around current and emerging issues where there is agreement that this is required
- Implement and regularly review a communications strategy that includes:
 - raising awareness so that members of the public, including children and young people, know what child protection means and what to do if they have a concern for a child or young person
 - explaining and promoting the role of services in protecting children and young people
 - engaging with local communities to raise awareness of indicators of concern
 - increasing understanding of the role that communities and all adults have in protecting children and young people
 - involving children, young people and families in its design and delivery
 - taking account of new and emerging risks
 - ensuring there are arrangements in place to obtain the views of children and families and staff to inform planning and improvement
- Ensure the CPC has an overview of performance from key services about their work to protect children and young people in line with the shared dataset.
 - Including qualitative and quantitative data on the effectiveness of services in improving the experiences of, and outcomes for, children in need of protection.

5. Child Protection Committee Meetings

The Child Protection Committee will meet every 3 months. Meetings will be considered quorate when attended by representatives of at least four agencies, which must include Police, Social Work, Health and Education plus the Chair or Vice Chair.

6. Membership of West Dunbartonshire Child Protection Committee

West Dunbartonshire Child Protection Committee consists of members from each of the main agencies responsible for working together to safeguard and protect children.

Member agencies must appoint representatives whose roles and seniority enable them to contribute to developing and maintaining strong and effective interagency child protection procedures and protocols and to ensure that local child protection services are adequately resourced.

Members should have the authority to speak on behalf of their agency in matters of policy and practice development, and to delegate within their agency in respect of specific improvement tasks as defined by the CPC Improvement Action Plan.

The core memberships is aligned with the Protecting Children and Young People Child Protection Committee and Chief Officer Responsibilities (2019) and includes representation from the following –

- Social Work Children's Services
- Education Services
- Health Board
- Police Scotland
- Local Authority Housing Services
- Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
- The Third Sector
- Child Protection Lead Officer
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

7. Responsibilities of the Chair of the Child Protection Committee

The Chair of the Child Protection Committee will be responsible for:

- Chairing meetings of the CPC, and ensuring that they are conducted in a manner that reflects the contribution that all agencies have to make to child protection
- Leading the work of the CPC to effectively fulfil its functions such that a demonstrable continuous improvement of the inter-agency child protection arrangement is achieved
- Managing the Lead Officer (see below), who will be accountable to the CPC whatever the employment arrangements put in place, on behalf of the CPC

(Note: The Lead Officer will report to the chair of the CPC, however, the day-to-day management of the Lead Officer could be undertaken within one of the agencies by local agreement, but this must not confuse the clear management and accountability of the Lead Officer to the CPC through the Chair).

- Ensuring the development and delivery of the CPC Improvement / Business Plan and annual report
- Negotiating the resource requirement necessary for the work of the committee
- Ensuring child protection specific issues are appropriately raised and taken account of in local children's services planning processes

- Ensuring that the CPC collaborates with other CPCs
- Reporting and being accountable to the Chief Officers Group and reporting progress and issues regularly
- Maintaining links with Scottish Government and Child Protection Committees through the established national network of meetings
- Keeping the committee informed of national developments and ensuring that best practice is promoted
- Contributing to development of policy and practice at national level
- Providing leadership and guidance in relation to the need to carry out Learning Reviews

The Chair will have considerable experience in both inter-agency working and child protection, and be either a senior officer from one of the key agencies or an independent person appointed specifically to the task. In either case, the appointment will be made by Chief Officers or agreed by them.

8. Responsibilities of the Vice-Chair

The Vice Chair will be responsible for:

- Assuming the responsibilities of the Chair at the request of the Chair, Committee or Public Protection Chief Officers' Group.
- Assisting the Chair in ensuring the Child Protection Committee effectively fulfils its functions.

9. Responsibilities of the Lead Officer Child Protection

The Protecting Children and Young People Child Protection Committee and Chief Officer Responsibilities (2019) stipulates a CPC requires dedicated staff time and resources to support the implementation and delivery of its core functions as required by this guidance.

The level and configuration of that dedicated resource is a matter for agreement with Chief Officers.

It is important that the title and role of the Lead Officer of the CPC is clearly distinct from other roles elsewhere in the child protection system.

Each CPC will have:

- At a minimum, a Lead Officer to implement its core functions

- An inter-agency training co-ordinator, or specific training capacity to ensure the delivery of training and staff development on an interagency basis

The employment arrangements for these officers must fully reflect their status as officers of the CPC and their direct accountability to the CPC itself.

Lead Officers will be of sufficient seniority to carry authority with partner agencies/bodies.

The responsibilities of the West Dunbartonshire Lead Officer include:

- Ensuring that the Child Protection Committee is informed of national developments, including changes in legislation, Scottish Government policies, regulations and guidance.
- Undertaking specific tasks as identified by the Child Protection Committee and the Chair.
- Facilitating the production of the Child Protection Committee Annual Progress Report.
- Facilitating the production of the Child Protection Committee Improvement Plan.
- Ensuring that the actions from the Improvement Action Plan are taken forward and that the Improvement Action Plan is updated after each Child Protection Committee meeting.
- Ensuring that the Child Protection Committee is made aware of actions and learning from Significant Case Reviews/Learning Reviews and that these are taken forward in practice.
- Ensuring the development and implementation of quality assurance mechanisms and self-evaluation processes.
- Ensuring effective systems are in place to monitor performance in child protection work across all services.
- Ensuring that all child protection procedures are up to date for all agencies, and that a system of monitor and review of all child protection policies and procedures is in place.
- Ensuring that local child protection training is developed to meet the needs of the multi-agency workforce.

10.Role of the Improvement Groups of the Child Protection Committee

West Dunbartonshire Child Protection Committee has developed an Improvement Action Plan, within which key improvement areas have been identified.

Specific areas for development prioritised within each improvement area will be actioned by the CPC Subgroups, members of which will be identified by the Committee.

The Committee will proactively identify a lead professional who will assume responsibility for facilitating the subgroup, and who will formally report on progress to the Committee.

Updates to the Child Protection Committee will be provided in the form of a short written report.

West Dunbartonshire Child Protection Committee Key Improvement Areas:

- Learning and Development
- Communication and Engagement
- Policy, practice and Improvement
- Performance
- Quality Assurance and Evaluation

Specific information in respect of the key priorities within each area will be detailed within the Improvement Action Plan, to be updated following each Child Protection Committee meeting.

11.Provision of Administrative Support to the Child Protection Committee

Administrative support to the Committee will be overseen by the Lead Officer; this will include preparation of the agenda and ensuring the timely circulation of papers.

Completion of the minute will be undertaken by the administrative support to the Chair and Lead Officer.