



DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY CHIEF OFFICERS' GROUP (PUBLIC PROTECTION)

Constitution and Terms of Reference

For approval – 28 August 2020
Next review date – 28 August 2021

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Dumfries & Galloway Chief Officers' Group (Public Protection) – hereafter referred to as 'the group' - has been established to provide leadership, direction, governance, and oversight of Public Protection arrangements within the Dumfries & Galloway local authority area. To do this, the Group is the strategic lead and responsible for the Dumfries and Galloway Public Protection Partnership - hereafter referred to as "the partnership"
- 1.2 This document is intended to provide a framework for Chief Officer leadership and accountability.
- 1.3 This document reflects recent changes to national Child Protection guidance – 'Protecting Children and Young People: Child Protection Committee and Chief Officer Responsibilities', updated in February 2019. It directs local services to work in partnership to achieve effective Public Protection services. The arrangements set out in this document are comparable with Chief Officer Groups within comparator local authorities.

2. CONTEXT

- 2.1 Responsibilities of the group will incorporate oversight for all Public Protection functionality within the Dumfries & Galloway area and with particular focus on high risk groups will specifically include: -
- Child Protection.
 - Adult Support & Protection.
 - Offender Management (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) for sexual and violent offenders);
 - Violence Against Women/ Gender Based Violence.
 - Problematic Alcohol and Drugs use; and
 - Suicide Prevention
 - Prevent
- 2.2 There is often common interface between areas of Public Protection. The group will demonstrate consistency in terms of reviewing the effectiveness of working arrangements across any interface and aligning and promoting cohesive approaches to enhance the protection of people.
- 2.3 The group will have oversight of Public Protection strategies and initiatives designed to protect people at risk to ensure they most effectively meet their needs and furthermore seek to improve outcomes for such vulnerable people.
- 2.4 The function of the group is to provide a single leadership forum providing senior officer scrutiny in relation to the functionality of the Public Protection Partnership.

The Group leads the Dumfries and Galloway Public Protection Partnership, directing work of the Public Protection Committee that formally reports to the Group. In addition, the following committees/partnerships are already in place within Dumfries & Galloway, delivering developmental, operational, and strategic functions in relation to their specific role in delivering protection to vulnerable people: -

- Dumfries & Galloway Public Protection Committee (PPC)
- South West Scotland MAPPA Strategic Oversight Group
- Dumfries & Galloway Alcohol and Drugs Partnership

Additionally, there are various standing committees, sub committees & working groups which serve and report to the respective parent committees and partnerships.

3 REMIT, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY CHIEF OFFICERS' GROUP

3.1 Remit

The remit of the group is to provide collective strategic leadership, direction, governance and oversight of the delivery and improvement of services relative to the effectiveness of the Public Protection arrangements within Dumfries & Galloway across the partnership.

3.2 Roles & Responsibilities

3.3 The group will ensure there is multi-agency commitment to collaborative working in Public Protection in Dumfries & Galloway through active senior officer commitment and engagement from all relevant agencies.

3.4 The group will ensure that the above-mentioned committees and partnerships are properly constituted and resourced, so their arrangements are clearly focussed and relevant to the respective area of protection activity.

3.5 The group will oversee the roles, visions, values and aims of the aforementioned Public Protection committees and partnerships, including their affiliated groups, to ensure they fulfil their statutory functions, adhere to national policy and guidance and remain aligned to their respective terms of reference.

3.6 The group will ensure effective planning is in place to respond to the assessment and management of risk, providing appropriate resourcing, and reassurance to the public.

3.7 The group will call for and review performance / management information reports from the Public Protection committees & partnerships to assure themselves that work is continuing to deliver effective services and to

address any areas for improvement identified through inspections, audit, or significant case review reports.

- 3.8 The group will scrutinise the annual Child Protection Report and the biennial Adult Protection Report prior to them being presented to Dumfries & Galloway Council – Social Work Committee.
- 3.9 The group will promote reflective learning from Significant Case Reviews and direct the implementation of associated recommendations where appropriate to local Public Protection arrangements.
- 3.10 The group will scrutinise the stability of Public Protection arrangements in times of significant organisational change. It will consistently promote collective responsibility and collaborative working across the committees/partnerships on cross-cutting protection themes, to enable improved outcomes for all vulnerable people.
- 3.11 The group will agree the appointment of the Independent Chair, Vice-Chair(s) and members of the abovementioned committees & partnerships ensuring they have the necessary skills and knowledge to enable them to fulfil their individual and collective responsibilities. The Group will also ensure that the Chair has the time, resources and dedicated professional and administrative support to fulfil their role.
- 3.12 The group will be responsible for confirming the nature of the contractual agreement, terms of reference, role, remit, and performance of the Independent Chair of PPC. The Chair and Vice-Chairs of the PPC will be agreed by the group for a minimum of two years, at which point there will be a review of the arrangements.
- 3.13 The group will ensure that members of the committees/partnerships have the delegated responsibility level and capacity to make decisions on behalf of the service or agency they represent.
- 3.14 The group will, in appropriate cases, direct the conducting of significant case reviews in cases where there are clear Public Protection issues.
- 3.15 The group will have no budgetary responsibilities which will be devolved within the respective committees & partnerships in accordance with their respective terms of reference.
- 3.16 The group will review the COG's Constitution and Terms of Reference on a regular basis and in any case, every three years or following amended guidance received from the Scottish Government.

4. MEMBERSHIP AND CHAIRING ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Membership

The core membership of the Dumfries & Galloway Chief Officers' Group: Public Protection will consist of the following: -

- The Chief Executive of Dumfries & Galloway Council or their nominee
- The Chief Executive of NHS Dumfries & Galloway or their nominee
- The Chief Superintendent of Police Scotland, Dumfries & Galloway Division, or their nominee
- The Chief Operating Officer, Dumfries & Galloway Health and Social Care Partnership or their nominee

In attendance

- The Chief Social Work Officer, Dumfries & Galloway Council
- Director of Corporate Services, Dumfries & Galloway Council
- The Independent Chair of Dumfries & Galloway Public Protection Committee
- Locality Reporter Manager, Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
- The Independent Chair of the Dumfries & Galloway Alcohol and Drugs Partnership. *(attendance is required at every second meeting or as otherwise requested by the chair of COG-PP)*
- Public Protection Manager
- Other Public Protection Partnership members as appropriate

4.2 Core members as set out above may nominate replacements, but they must be of sufficient seniority to make decisions, as may be required.

4.3 Other attendees may include representatives from the Crown Office and Procurators Fiscal Service, and senior officers from those agencies represented on the core membership, with the agreement of the core membership.

4.4 The Chair of the group will be selected from the core membership and will serve in this position for two years, or as long as the core members collectively decide.

5 FREQUENCY & WORKING ARRANGEMENTS OF MEETINGS

5.1 The group will meet monthly or otherwise, as may be dictated by extraordinary circumstances, and at the discretion of the Chair.

5.2 All statutory agencies must be represented for the meeting to be quorate. (Note: the meeting will be quorate when two Chief Officers are present and the third is represented by a deputy) If otherwise prescribed then the meeting may proceed but any decisions will have to be deferred until the next quorate meeting.

5.3 Decisions will generally be by consensus. Where such consensus has not been established, decisions will be on a vote basis with the Chair having the casting vote in the event of a split decision.

- 5.4 Administrative support will be provided by the appropriate available business support teams serving the Chief Officers.
- 5.5 All meetings will be minuted and protectively marked in accordance with the Government Security Classifications (GSC) guidance. The minute will be endorsed by the Chair and thereafter circulated to attendees within seven working days following the meeting of the group.

6 CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION SHARING

- 6.1 All agendas, reports and other documents and proceedings of the group shall be treated as official unless and until they become public in the ordinary course of the group's business or are authorised to be communicated to, and are available for, publication by the press or other news media and in accordance with a formal decision of the group and approval by the Chair.

7 CONSIDERATION OF INITIAL AND SIGNIFICANT CASE REVIEWS

- 7.1 The Group should be advised by the Chair of the PPC of any cases that should be considered in respect of meeting the criteria for warranting either an Initial Case Review (ICR) or Significant Case Review (SCR). Once agreed by the Group, the Committee should consider and agree the method of review to be undertaken, who should lead the review and ensure appropriate communication takes place with regard to contacting the Care Inspectorate, who oversee all ICRs and SCRs.
- 7.2 Once reviews are concluded, all findings and/or recommendations should be considered by the Group, with focus of attention on:
- Key themes within the findings and how to share these findings with staff, agencies and bodies involved to support and embed learning and improvement locally.
 - The possibility of any systemic failure within or between key agencies or bodies involved.
 - Any remedial or urgent action that is required.
 - The proposed action plan to address the findings and how improvement priorities will be implemented, monitored, and reviewed.
 - How any learning and development will be taken forward and embedded in practice.
 - Any resource issues that are relevant for either the management of the case itself or production and progress of the action plan.
 - Publishing the report (with appropriate safeguards) to promote and support national learning and improvement activity, unless the Group can demonstrate there are exceptional circumstances that justify not publishing; and
 - Whether it is appropriate to develop a press statement.

8.1 RESOLUTION PROCESS

- 8.1 The group's decisions will be reached by consensus, although individual members can have their dissent recorded. Where there is differing views on an option or approach, the chair will decide.
- 8.2 In the event of the group failing to reach a resolution, the chair of the group will consider alternative ways of seeking to resolve the discord.

9 PROCESS FOR AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 9.1 This Constitution and Terms of Reference document will be reviewed every 3 years, or earlier if a significant change is made.
- 9.2 Where a member of the group requests an amendment to be made to the Constitution and Terms of Reference document, it shall be by two thirds majority of group members present.
- 9.3 Amendments may also take place where new legislation or national guidance/direction is available or where there are developments in public protection which suggests new approaches are necessary to ensure continuous improvements in the care and protection of vulnerable people in Dumfries & Galloway.