Local Government’s Annual Report on The Promise

South Lanarkshire Council progress /Context setting

Overview of South Lanarkshire’s approach and contributions to progressing the outcomes of the Promise Plan 21-24

**Revised Corporate Parenting structure /Governance:**

In South Lanarkshire we have untaken a review of our Corporate Parenting structures. We have established a Corporate Parenting Partnership Board, renamed South Lanarkshire’s Partnership Promise Board. The Promise Board is represented at Chief Officer level to ensure higher levels of governance and accountability to progress our corporate parenting agenda.

**Champions Board Approach:**

We have located our Champions Board approach within our governance structure, the approach will have a key role in helping us shape and adapt our services throughout the duration of the Plan. We are in the process of strengthening our participation structure by recruiting two of our care experienced young people to newly jointly funded Promise Posts. The posts will be aligned with our Champions Board Structure

We have recruited 2 full time Promise Participation worker posts to work alongside our Champions board and Corporate Parents.

**Corporate Parenting strategy & Plan:**

We have now published our Corporate Parenting Strategy, the strategy will enable us to incorporate the Promise Plan within our refreshed strategy. Our Plan articulates our local priority improvement and change ideas alongside the outcome areas contained within the Promise Plan 21-24. The Promise and our priorities area have visibility and alignment with our Children’s Services Plan

Examples of key projects and practice initiatives developing across South Lanarkshire Council**.** There are numerous examples of initiatives that demonstrate our progress towards outcomes contained within the Plan and as a Partnership we intend to map this work alongside the five outcomes of the Plan. Below we have highlighted a few improvement/change ideas that we believe will result in more children to remain at home with the right support

**A Good Childhood**

**Pathfinders** -The initiative was established in 2019, the aim was to explore different ways to

improve outcomes for vulnerable young people who experienced barriers to learning.

Rutherglen/Cambuslang was identified as the area to pilot an alternative intervention model for

these young people and their families, due to a wide range of factors such as:

The focus of the initiative was to promote effective early intervention and to consider how best to support young people on the ‘edges of care’, whose health and wellbeing were at risk. The aim of the Pathfinder initiative was to consider the evidence of what works to stop the needs of young people escalating. The approach of the secondary schools, or 'senior' pathfinder project, as captured in its initial evaluation, is very much key to its success. The staff work flexibility and creatively with both the child and their family to identify and address issues of concern in their lives. This support is based and delivered through school, and this creates a bridge between education and the child/family. Working in this way enables staff to build trusting and lasting relationships with the child and family, which are valued and supported by the school and school staff. The initiative is currently action research is being adopted to formally evaluate the projects aims. Key partners in this initiative are Education, Youth and Community Learning and Social Work.

**Tutoring programme for care experienced Young people.**

In October 2021 as part of the learning recovery and renewal programme the project was established to give all Care Experienced young people in the senior phase the offer of a tutor to support a subject of their choice to help them to achieve the best outcome possible. A pool of tutors was recruited from core teaching staff, and a matching and support system was established to build the relationships and agree the best place and time for the tuition to take place.

64 care experienced young people with a tutor and the feedback has been positive from the young people the tutors and the school leads. The support was across a wide range of subjects from National 4 to Advanced Higher. Request for Maths and English far exceed any other requests. This was the first time delivering such a programme and a great deal was learned and an improvement plan is already in place for the second year of the programme starting August 2022.

**Youth Justice: Our whole system approach**

Our Inclusion as prevention work in the Rutherglen locality is a lottery funded investment over five

years from 2019 to redesign early support services with children and young people to demonstrate

 better outcomes through co design and improvement model aimed at reducing the number of

young people going into the Criminal Justice system**.**

**Structured Deferred Sentence (SDS**) is when we work intensively with the support of partner

agencies with young people aged 16-21 who are subject to a period of short-term

deferment (normally six months). The SDS pilot began in December 2017 and was recently

evaluated by the University of the West of Scotland. The evaluation highlights the approach taken

 within South Lanarkshire in recent years to better support young people who find themselves in

 conflict with the law, and who may be at risk of harm. This includes a number of young people who

have experience of being Looked After and cared for by the local authority. The use of short-term

 intensive supports and services at an earlier opportunity, following involvement with the justice

 system, is shown to produce better outcomes for young people. The aim is to utilise a relationship-

based approach to address and respond to the key risks and needs identified for the young person,

while also focussing on the development of strengths.

**Moving On : Improving transitions for care experienced Young people** We have a local strategic improvement programme in relation to improving the experience of our care experienced young people when they wish to move on. The improvements are based on what our young people told us needed to change. These areas included navigating and making pathways more accessible to mental health and substance support and treatment. We are working with Alcohol and Drugs Partnership, Homelessness Service, Mental Health Adult Services and 3rd sector organisations to develop a peer navigator to help our young people get access to support and treatment. We have put a proposal forward to Health Improvement Scotland to support partners in South Lanarkshire with a test of change around this area for improvement. The improvement plan also includes strengthening our accommodation and housing pathways with a partnership aim to prevent Homelessness and helping our young people with needs led options such as; staying put, increasing options for supported carers, enhanced aftercare provision. South Lanarkshire Councils’ Aspire Project wis recognised as a good practice example of a targeted, relational approach to promoting positive destinations for all young people including our care experienced young people, the project is championing increased work-related opportunities across the Partnership for our care experienced young people.

**Advocacy**

This is a significant improvement area in relation to the offer and accessibility of Advocacy for all our care experienced young people. We have set a target that 70 % of all care experienced Young people will have been offered or accepted advocacy support by April 23’.

**Whole Family Support**

Strengthening Families Model. We have currently launched our Early Help Hub as the first phase of creating a model of family support for young people and their families underpinned by the 10 principles of family support. The model will offer intensive family support much earlier in the system, at the centre of the model we plan to introduce Family Group Decision Making. Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) is a key whole family, restorative approach with a strong foundation in rights, relational and strength-based practice that is effective at keeping children safe and at home within their families.

Family Based Care - The Short Breaks Service provides short breaks to children living at home or in kinship placements. The focus is on early intervention and support to families, with the overall objective of keeping children at home, with their families. There are currently 17 Community Shorts Break carers, with a further nine applicants in the process of assessment. There were 25 children receiving Short Breaks on 31 March 2021, 15 living with parents and 10 in kinship care. Our target is to increase the size of the service to 50 carers by March 2025, with the potential to offer short breaks to 75 children. On 31 March 2021 there were 22 children waiting for a placement. This is a significant increase on last year, which appears, from referrals, to be linked to the increasing pressure faced by families during the Pandemic.

**Supporting the Workforce**

South Lanarkshire Council are currently developing the workforce plan in relation to a trauma informed workforcefor key services**.**

**Planning & Building Capacity**

Our focus has been on collating and understanding data to inform planning. South Lanarkshire started a process alongside the Independent Care Review on Deprivation Mapping**,** unfortunately this work ceased at the concluding of the review period and the start of the pandemic. We have made an ask of the Promise Implementation to progress this work and would find the expertise of the Promise Implementation Team valuable to take this forward to the next steps.