

# Highland Public Protection Chief Officers Group

Annual Report  
2022 - 2023



**POLICE**  
**SCOTLAND**  
Keeping people safe  
**POILEAS ALBA**



## Our values

We are here to serve the communities of the Highland and Islands and will do this with fairness, integrity and respect. We will challenge each other constructively when necessary to ensure we deliver beyond expectations for these communities.

### **Pamela Dudek**

Chair of the Highland Public Protection Chief Officer Group

## Introduction

The Highland Public Protection Chief Officer Group (HPPCOG) has been in place since December 2018. It is an autonomous body comprising legally accountable Chief Officers, Independent Chairs of relevant committees/partnerships and other key officers. The remit is based in legislation and national guidance in respect of public protection matters.

It is recognised that public protection has a key role in wider community planning considerations and it has been agreed an annual report to the Community Planning Partnership Board is an appropriate mechanism to update Community Planning Partners about progress, risks and future plans for the various groups and committees that report to the HPPCOG.

## Recommendations

The Community Planning Partnership Board is asked to note:

- **The progress of the work of the committees/partnerships that report to the Highland Public Protection Chief Officer Group**
- **The risks to delivery of the public protection agenda**
- **The priorities for future action**

## Background and Governance

The HPPCOG was developed in response to national reviews of Child Protection and Adult Support & Protection leadership and governance arrangements and responsibilities. Additionally, recommendations were made in relation to governance of Violence Against Women Partnerships, Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) for Offender Management and Alcohol & Drugs Partnerships.

The HPPCOG first met in December 2018 and agreed a Terms of Reference that included a schedule of quarterly meetings with extraordinary meetings to consider findings from Initial and Significant Case Reviews.

In 2020, the Community Justice Partnership was added to the HPPCOG structure in recognition of its links to the wider public protection agenda.

The Terms of Reference were revised during 2021 to take account of development of other key national drivers including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, The Promise, Independent Review of Adult Social Care in Scotland and Age of Criminal Responsibility legislation.

The HPPCOG provides formal oversight and governance for:

- The Highland Child Protection Committee
- The Highland Adult Protection Committee
- Offender Management (MAPPA)
- The Highland Violence Against Women Partnership, including Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC)

In recognition of the links between public protection and alcohol and drugs and criminal justice, the HPPCOG receives reports from and monitors delivery of partnership plans from:

- The Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership
- The Highland Community Justice Partnership

Formal oversight and governance of these two partnerships is directly to the Highland Community Planning Partnership Board.

This report summarises key progress and achievements of each committee/partnership during 2022-2023, highlights key risks for delivery and outlines priorities for future development.



## Highland Adult Protection Committee

### Highland Adult Protection Committee (HAPC)

#### Progress/Achievements

- Review of structure, terms of reference, work plans, risk register and reporting mechanisms completed and new arrangements for delivery and reporting implemented.
- Learning Review Sub-Group set up to make decisions around new learning review referrals and oversee reviews that are being undertaken.
- Completion of a self-audit which reviewed 5% of all referrals (32 cases).
- Completion of a review of learning and development within Adult Protection in Highland.
- Training needs assessment tool developed and distributed to relevant staff groups.
- A review of the adult protection training programme and compliance with training requirements completed, training recovery plan developed and training updated.

Numbers trained to June 2022 can be found in the following table.

Staff Group	No. identified on TURAS	Training > 3 years	% Up-to-date
Social Workers Ex. NQSW and TSW	99	8	92%
Nominated Officers Health	8	0	100%

- Externally commissioned statutory training delivered to relevant practitioners.
- Recruitment to the Adult Protection Training Officer post completed.
- Update to the adult protection webpage and resources completed.
- Initiation of work to update procedures and case conferences with Adult Care Review team achieved.
- Initiation of work to review the Nominated Officer role in ASP procedures achieved.
- Development of tools to gather information on service user experience and outcomes.
- Strengthened links between Adult Support Committee and the HPPCOG.
- Development of stronger networks nationally and locally to support delivery of work on adult support and protection.
- Significant increase in learning review activity and procedures for learning reviews developed.

## Impact

---

- Through audit there is improved understanding of practice and quality of adult support and protection processes in Highland, particularly in relation to:
  - How well we discharge the duty to enquire
  - How well we apply the three point test
  - Quality of risk assessments and protection plans
  - How well timescales for adult protection work fit with the needs/risks of the individuals
  - Outcomes for individuals
- Audit activity has allowed development of a benchmark which will allow comparisons against future data and allow monitoring of trends over time.
- Audit activity has facilitated focussed activity on quality improvement to be undertaken for specific areas of practice.
- Improvements in practice are informed by service user experience and outcomes by routinely gathering relevant information through implementation of service user feedback tools.
- Closer links between the Highland Adult Protection Committee and the HPP COG developed.
- Improved knowledge and skills in relation to adult support and protection with relevant staff groups.
- Improved compliance with training requirements and numbers of 'Council Officers' and 'Nominated Officers' who are able to discharge their roles and responsibilities by appropriately applying all relevant protective legislation maintained.
- Information and resources to support practice are up to date and accessible across Highland.
- Strong networks developed to support delivery of adult support and protection work.
- Increased knowledge and understanding of what improvements need to be made to process and practice from completion of learning reviews.

## Next Steps

---

- Work with advocacy and review team to obtain service user feedback and progress participation within adult protection work.
- Continue with quality assurance and evaluation work, with a calendar of audit work on a rolling basis. The next area for planned audit is participation in case conferences and then chronologies (area of national improvement).
- Develop a Quality Assurance Officer role jointly with the Highland Child Protection Committee.
- Analysis and consideration of learning and development survey feedback. Re-establish continual training programme including development practitioner sessions.
- Ensure Nominated Officer's (NO) for Health and Police have involvement in, and contribution to decision making and outline expectations around the NO role.
- Implementation of Interagency Referral Discussions.
- Finalise revised Large Scale Investigation (LSI) procedures and launch alongside the new national IRISS training resource on LSI's.
- Set up and co-ordinate a multi-agency adult protection shared interest forum/conference.
- Update HAPC terms of reference, Continuous Improvement Framework, and membership.

- Support two current external learning reviews, review final reports and implement learning and recommendations.
- Develop local policy as a result of new national learning review guidance and revised ASP code of practice.
- Support the improvement of Transitions services through a transitions sub-group that will look at shared learning and recommendations from joint learning reviews and implement this learning into practice improvement.

## Emerging Risks

---

- Significant demand in requests for child protection/joint/adult learning reviews which indicates an increase in significant incidents particularly in relation to young people transitioning from children's to adult's services.
- Challenges in participation – and involving those with lived experience without causing further distress.
- Capacity to meet audit and quality assurance goals.
- Increased demand and competing priorities across social work teams.

## CPP Considerations

---

To note the progress and achievements.

To support the Continuous Improvement Framework work of the HAPC.

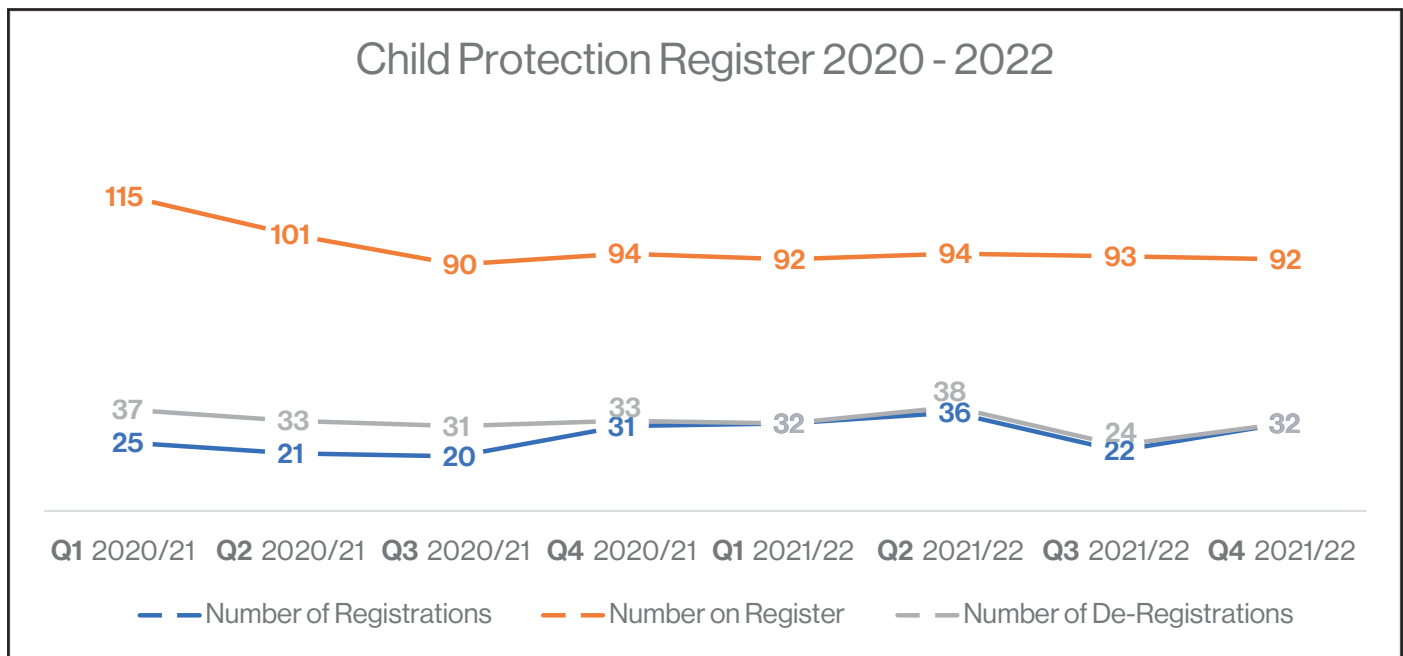
To note implications of risks outlined above for individuals at risk of harm in Highland.



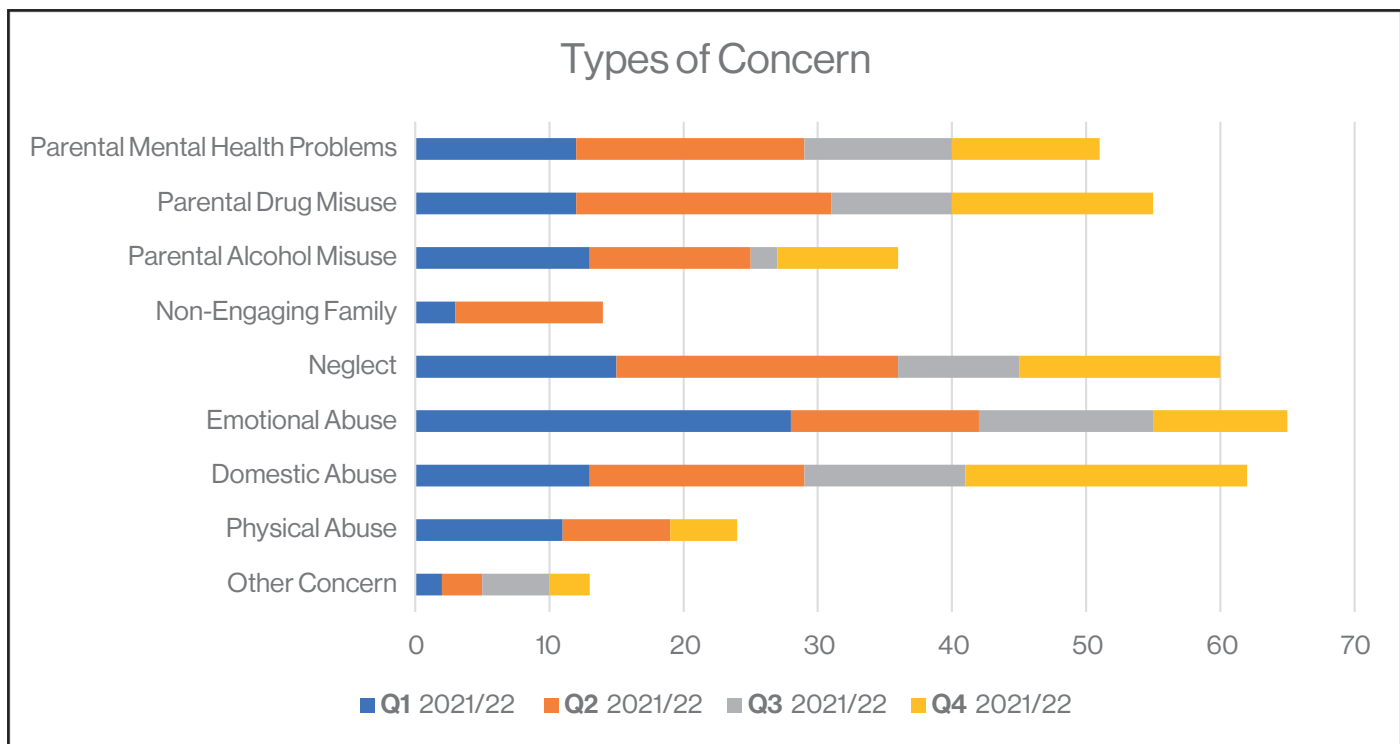
## Highland Child Protection Committee (HCPC)

### Progress/Achievements

- Continue to monitor relevant data in line with the national minimum dataset to highlight trends and inform audit cycles. Most recent data outlined below:



- Main messages
  - Number of registrations has remained steady
  - Number of registrations and d-registrations have remained steady
  - Registrations have returned to pre-pandemic level



- Main messages

- Increased number of concerns noted in registrations
- Increased numbers of children at risk from community harm
- Parental factors still account for the majority of registrations
- Registrations citing domestic abuse, emotional abuse and neglect have increased
- The numbers of children placed on the child protection register are relatively low and any increase or decrease can appear significant

- Development of audit cycle and audit tool to support multiagency case file audits and thematic reviews.
- Quality Assurance Strategy updated.
- Completion of an audit of child protection cases.
- Engagement events delivered alongside The Promise Programme Manager to support implementation of The Promise in Highland.
- Initiation of work with the Integrated Children's Service Planning Board to develop a Participation Framework to support the co-production of materials and services.
- Delivered 130 CALA child protection e-modules courses to 2161 practitioners and 3996 people accessed the e-learning modules available.
- Recruited to a new Learning and Development Officer.
- Supported Barnardo's RISE project to provide services to families affected by exploitation, as well as developing a range of resources for partners. These are available on our [HCPC website](#).
- Supported Police colleagues to develop a Child Exploitation Risk Assessment Group (CERAG) to identify young people at risk of harm and disruption approaches to prevent exploitation across our communities.
- Updated Care and Risk Management protocols to ensure there is a focus on supporting young people with harmful sexual behaviour.



- Developed a 7-minute briefing around the new Age of Criminal Responsibility Act.
- Initiated work to develop whole family approaches to supporting families who are in need of support with the Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership.
- Hosted a 'Whole Family Approach' Seminar in Highland to begin the discussions about what's needed in Highland and how we can work together to support families.
- Working with the Highland Violence Against Women Partnership, secured funding for implementation of the Safe and Together programme, recruited a programme co-ordinator and supported implementation of the programme.
- Supported the new SARC service to deliver a forensic service suitable for children.

## Impact

---

- Increased knowledge and understanding of staff through delivery of a range of training.
- Through audit activity there is improved understanding of practice and quality of child protection practice and processes in Highland.
- Increased opportunities to hear the voices of young people and co-produce services and resources.
- Support and resources available to those at risk of or affected by exploitation.
- Up to date resources and protocols available to support staff to deal appropriately with harmful sexual behaviour.
- Improved support to women and children affected by domestic abuse.
- Improved networking and sharing of information across the partnership.

## Next Steps

---

- Implementation of the new national child protection guidance.
- Participation in a virtual reality pilot project with Inspiring Young Voices to hear the views of children in residential care.
- Audit work to ensure that the right decisions have been made at the right time in relation to child protection processes and develop effective continuous improvement processes, including developing a more effective learning culture across the partnership.
- Develop work on contextual safeguarding to ensure children and young people are protected and supported in the most effective way.
- Review and update the CPC Learning and Development Strategy.
- Further develop responses to keep young people safe in relation to child sexual exploitation.
- Bring together practitioners from across the Partnership to discuss and plan for children and young people at risk of harm in our communities.
- Mentoring and training for Learning Reviewers to undertake reviews in Highland.
- Establish Transitions Sub-Group in partnership with Adult Support and Protection for young people at risk of harm.
- Develop proposals for young people in crisis.
- Implementation of Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM).
- Consideration of implications for Bairn's House implementation in Highland.

## Emerging Risks

---

- Increasing risks in relation to young people at risk through exploitation and those in crisis.
- Capacity to undertake all HCPC functions with existing resources.
- Capacity to respond to increased Learning and development needs.
- Capacity to complete learning reviews although plans in place to address.

## CPP Considerations

---

Note that further work is required in relation to support for young people at risk of exploitation/in crisis and the likely resource implications.

Note the need for significant training required to implement the new Child Protection Procedures.

Note the approach to use of Learning Review's to support quality improvement across the partnership.

Note the need to share Quality Assurance processes across Adult and Child Protection Committees.



## MAPP Strategic Oversight Group

### Background

---

Scotland's Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPP) framework is designed to protect the public through the assessment and management of the risk posed by certain individuals, therefore the introduction of a new Communication and engagement strategy will ensure effective public engagement and the sharing of appropriate information are fundamental, not just to the delivery of the public protection arrangements, but also in terms of the way the public perceive the difficult and often challenging job which the agencies do

### Progress/Achievements

---

- Refreshed all operational links within MAPP in relation to their respective Recovery Plans and arrangements or adjustments made as necessary.
- Increased attendance at MAPP meetings resulting in improved information flow due to use of technology.
- Completed a review of the revised MAPP National Guidance and how it relates to Highland.
- Completed a review of MAPP Level 1 process to assimilate review periods and risk management plans with other area to ensure that it is in line with the new National MAPP Guidance 2021.
- Commissioned the services of a forensic consultant psychologist to assist professionals with risk assessments, risk management and 1-1 intervention work with offenders within the community.
- Completed a review of the Independent Review into the Delivery of Forensic Mental Health Services to understand specific implications in relation to MAPP.

### Impact

---

- Improved information sharing to support MAPP processes.
- Improved understanding of how new national guidelines can be implemented in Highland.
- Improved understanding of the implications of the independent review on forensic mental health services.

### Next Steps

---

- Implement sections 10 to 40 of the Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm (Scotland) Act 2016 ("the 2016 Act") in Highland to apply two preventative orders to relevant sex offenders and those who pose a risk of harm.
- Develop an Information Sharing Agreements for MAPP.

- Develop a programme to deliver National Training for MAPPA Chairs based on an analysis of training needs.
- Review and implement the national Risk Management Authority (RMA) Internet Offending framework model in Highland taking account of learning from pilot work.
- Review and implement use of 3 new/updated tools from the Risk Assessment Tools Evaluation Directory - Violent Extremist Risk Assessment 2 Revised (VERA-2R), and Terrorist Radicalization Assessment Protocol-18 (TRAP-18).
- Review and implement recommendations of the Scottish Government ViSOR short life working group where applicable.
- Review alternatives for delivery high intensity prison programmes for men convicted of sexual violence who are assessed as high risk of causing harm and implement as appropriate.

## Emerging risks

---

- Increased numbers of offenders travelling to Highland from areas such as England and Wales after legislative orders/licences have been completed and increased number of transfer requests both cross border and from other areas in Scotland to have offenders managed in our area will have an impact on other services such as housing and local communities.
- Possible increase in offender numbers due to the backlog of pending cases within the court system as a product of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Possible impact of considerations by Scottish Government in relation to management of Cat 4 Terrorist offenders within MAPPA.

## CPP Considerations

---

Note progress and achievements

Note emerging risks



ENDING VIOLENCE  
AGAINST WOMEN

## Highland Violence Against Women Partnership (HVAWP)

### Progress/Achievements

---

- Appointment of Independent Chair.
- Reviewed and updated the HVAWP Priority Action Plan in line with the National Equally Safe Strategy and the Quality Standards and Performance Framework.
- Completion and submission of the Equally Safe Annual return to Scottish Government.
- Funding for the Safe and Together programme secured with the Highland Child Protection Committee and recruitment completed for the Safe and Together co-ordinator post.
- First round of the core, supervisor and overview Safe and Together training delivered.
- Completed a review and update of the HVAWP training programme.
- Continued delivery of the MARAC process.
- Initiation of work to develop a financial governance framework.
- Further developed links with other public protection groups/committees.
- Completed remobilisation of the Addressing Perpetrators – The Caledonian Programme.
- Initiated work to develop support for women and girls who are victim of Commercial Sexual Exploitation
- Delivered a programme of work to raise awareness of Violence Against Women through local activity to support the 16 Days of Action campaign.

### Impact

---

- Improved knowledge and skills through delivery of the refreshed training programme.
- Increase reach of training through development of digital solutions.
- Improved communication, networking and sharing information with other public protection groups/committees.
- Increased awareness of Violence Against Women and the support available through communications work.
- Improved support to families affected by domestic abuse.
- Improved support to women and girls in relation to commercial sexual exploitation.

## Next Steps

---

- Further develop work to support women and girl victims of Commercial Sexual Develop.
- Plan activity to support this year's 16 Days of Action campaign.
- Develop a social media strategy to improve use of social media to support communications and awareness raising work on VAW.
- Complete and implement recommendations arising from the self evaluation exercise.
- Undertake an evaluation of MARAC.
- Plan and deliver a HVAWP development day.
- Pursue input from the Procurator Fiscal to the VAWP.
- Review and update the HVAWP Risk Register.
- Develop our approach to improve the voice of people who have been victims of VAW in the work of the partnership.
- Develop our approach to working with local community partnerships.

## Emerging Risks

---

- Engagement and capacity to deliver MARAC including non adherence to national best practice guidelines and operational risk in relation to scrutiny in the event of a critical incident.
- Sustainability of community services to support women and families affected by Violence Against Women including risks in relation to security of funding and impact of inflation on ability to deliver services.

## CPP Considerations

---

Note progress and achievements.

Note emerging risks.

Note the position in relation to insecure funding for services and support continued investment in VAW.



## Highland Alcohol and Drugs Partnership (HADP)

### Progress/Achievements

---

- Developed and promoted the [Highland Overdose Awareness & Engagement \(HOPE\) App](#) to encourage greater awareness of preventing drug overdose and potential drug related deaths.
- Reviewed and updated the [Highland Alcohol and Drug Partnership Directory of Services](#).
- Delivered campaigns to raise awareness on issues such as [Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder](#) and [Alcohol Awareness Week](#).
- Promoted use of the [Highland Substance Awareness Toolkit \(H-SAT\)](#), an online resource to promote prevention and education strategies specifically around drugs and alcohol to young people, parents/ carers and professionals.
- Delivered the annual [Substance Aware School \(SAS\) Award](#).
- Piloted the [Planet Youth](#) (Icelandic Alcohol Tobacco and other Drugs Prevention) model in five high schools in Highland with 4th year pupils (ages 15–16 years).
- Developed an evidenced based framework to implement a structured approach to prevention and education.
- Established a lived experience panel to facilitate greater involvement in service and policy development.
- Supported implementation of a new [Drug and Alcohol Information System \(DAISY\)](#).
- Progressed work to embed the [Medication Assisted Treatment \(MAT\) Standards](#) for people with drug and alcohol problems accessing support services.
- Supported work to meet national treatment waiting times for the drug and alcohol recovery service.
- Supported the drug related deaths review group to collate and share learning from each individual death to improve practice.
- Strengthened the existing non-fatal overdose alert system and developed it in to an immediate response pathway.
- Delivered the Housing First pilot project in the Inverness area for people with drug and alcohol problems that are homeless and have complex needs.
- Delivered initiatives to improve use of Naloxone.
- Initiated work with Beechwood House and the Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service to extend and improve access to residential rehabilitation places.
- Completed work to identify priorities in relation to drugs and alcohol for the integrated Children's Service Plan.



- Contributed to establishment of a [national framework](#) for whole family approaches and family inclusive practice for children and family members affected by drug and alcohol problems.
- Supported work with partners to develop a successful bid for funding to support vulnerable families across Highland
- Delivered a joint online learning event with Scottish Government.
- Working with partners, developed initiatives to divert vulnerable people with drug and alcohol problems away from the criminal justice system and into treatment, where appropriate.
- Rolled out Drug Treatment and Testing Order Lite in Highland with the aim of preventing further offending.
- Developed a public health approach to policing to provide a bridge in to treatment and support services for vulnerable people, particularly those subject to cuckooing.

## Impact

---

- Increased knowledge and skills for staff across the partnership in relation to drugs and alcohol prevention, early intervention and support.
- Improved quality through implementation of national standards.
- Improved understanding of issues for young people in relation to drugs and alcohol through survey work as part of the Planet Youth initiative.
- Up to date and evidenced based information and resources available to staff and the public.
- Improved access to information on where to get support for drug and alcohol issues.
- Work of HADP better informed by people with lived experience.
- Improved practice through implementing learning from drug related deaths.
- Improved response to drug overdose.
- Increased awareness of drug overdose and the appropriate response to take.
- Improved support for people with complex needs.
- Improved access to residential rehabilitation.
- Improved support for families affected by drugs and alcohol.
- Improved pathways into support.

## Next Steps

---

- Continue to progress the education and prevention strategy with a particular focus on the Planet Youth model, promotion of the HOPE app and public messaging.
- Continue work to embed MAT Standards 1 – 5 by April 2023 and standards 6 – 10 by April 2024.
- Continue work to improve access to residential rehabilitation.
- Support implementation of the national whole family framework in Highland.
- Support a public health approach to community justice.
- Implement the HDP improvement plan developed following a recent self assessment.
- Support provision of assertive outreach and short-term intensive support for people that have overdosed or are higher risk of drug related death to engage with support services.
- Develop a peer Naloxone initiative initially focused in Inverness.



## Emerging Risks

---

- Recruitment related challenges are impacting on capacity to implement the range of improvements required to embed the MAT Standards, other relevant standards and targets and residential rehabilitation.
- Financial risks posed by delays in project development and recruitment challenges.
- The cost of living crisis poses a risk in relation to worsening underlying poverty and impacting negatively on the reduction of deaths.

## CPP Considerations

---

Note progress and achievements

Note the emerging risks

Support the process of continuous improvement through implementation of standards and improvement plans.



**POLICE**  
**SCOTLAND**  
Keeping people safe  
**POILEAS ALBA**



Published in **July 2023**