ABSTRACT

This report advises Elected Members of the notification by HMie of the full follow-through inspection of services to protect children in the Angus area.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the committees:

(i) note the contents of this report;
(ii) instruct the relevant Directors to report to the respective committees at a future date on the outcome of the full follow-through inspection.

2 BACKGROUND

In 2002, the Scottish Executive undertook a multi disciplinary audit and review of child protection across Scotland. This subsequent report, "It’s everyone’s job to make sure I’m alright" recommended that a national review of child protection should be undertaken by a multi disciplinary team in all areas in Scotland.

The Services for Children Unit was established in March 2004 within Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education to undertake these inspections. The aim of the inspections is to ensure that children are being protected and to help agencies improve their service and share good practice.

The Joint Inspection of Services to Protect Children took place in Angus in June and September 2006. The report of the findings of the inspection was published in February 2007 (Report no. 162/07).

The four main points for action outlined in the report were to:

• develop clear and shared thresholds of risk to ensure that staff consistently apply procedures for reporting and responding to concerns;
• ensure the full involvement of health and medical staff in child protection processes;
• improve the processes for assessment of need and ensure that children who require compulsory measures of care are identified and receive this when they need it; and
• improve the recording monitoring and assessment by health practitioners.
A multi agency action plan was developed in response to the main points for action. This was submitted to HMIe in April 2008 (Report No. 498/07). Since then the child protection committee and Angus Executive Group for Child Protection have monitored progress in respect of this plan.

On 16 June 2008, Chief Officers received notification of the full follow-through inspection of services to protect children in Angus during the week of 20 October 2008.

3 FOLLOW-THROUGH INSPECTION PROCESS

In preparation for the follow-through inspection, Chief Officers were asked to submit the following to HMIe by 22 August 2008:

- a joint self evaluation report on the progress which had been made on each of the main points for action in the report of February 2007;
- an updated pre-inspection return which outlines key factual information about the agencies involved in the protection of children;
- updates to Angus Child Protection Committee; Interagency Child Protection Guidelines for Professional Staff and the Integrated Children's Services Plan;
- a copy of the action plan produced in response to the joint inspection report; and
- the latest child protection committee annual report and business plan (Report No. 692/08).

The follow-through inspection commences on 20 October 2008 with a short briefing by the chairperson and development manager of the CPC and the NHS Tayside nurse consultant for child protection and vulnerable families, which is to be given to the inspection team. Thereafter the inspectors will undertake a range of interviews and focus groups with staff to ascertain the progress in respect of the remaining points for action outlined in the report of February 2007.

Verbal feedback will be given to Chief Officers on Friday 24 October 2008 and the report of the findings of the follow-through inspection will be published on 29 January 2009.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However once the findings of the follow through inspection are known there may be financial implications for the key agencies responsible for the protection of children in Angus.

4 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

There are no Human Rights implications arising as a result of the recommendations contained in this report.

5 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

The issues dealt with in this Report have been the subject of consideration from an equalities perspective (as required by legislation). An equalities impact assessment is not required.

6 CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive, the Director of Corporate Services, the Head of Finance and the Head of Law and Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.
7 CONCLUSION

This report informs Elected Members of the follow through inspection of services to protect children in Angus by HMie.

R Peat
Director of Social Work and Health

Jim Anderson
Director of Education

Ron Ashton
Director of Neighbourhood Services

NOTE: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.