

## **DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO: SOCIAL WORK AND HEALTH COMMITTEE – 24 FEBRUARY 2014**

**REPORT ON: CHILDREN'S RIGHTS SERVICE REPORT FOR 2011-2013**

**REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK**

**REPORT NO: 82 - 2014**

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To inform members of the work undertaken by the Children's Rights Officer (CRO) for children and young people looked after by Dundee City Council, for the years 2011-2012 and 2012-2013.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that the Social Work and Health Committee:

notes the content of this report and the attached report on the work of the Children's Rights Officer for the period 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2013.

### **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None.

### **4.0 BACKGROUND**

4.1 Dedicated children's rights services are delivered in Dundee by the Children's Rights Officer (CRO) employed by the Social Work Department, and by the part-time Young Persons Worker employed by Who Cares? Scotland.

4.2 The Social Work Department's Children's Rights Service reached its 23rd year on 1st December 2012. Over the years the service has matured and developed as an advice, information and advocacy service provided directly to children and young people who are looked after and accommodated by the Council, and to those with disabilities.

4.3 All aspects of the work of the CRO are underpinned by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and The Human Rights Act (1989). The CRO plays an important role in safeguarding the welfare of children and young people who have a disability, or who are, or have been, looked after by the local authority, particularly those who are placed outwith the city, and those in secure care.

4.4 The professional knowledge advice and guidance of the CRO is also available to those professionals and adults with responsibility for the welfare of children and young people who have such needs.

4.5 In the past the Department's CRO and the Young Persons Worker have taken a joint approach to providing services for looked after children and young people in Dundee. However in 2011/12 it was decided to create a clearer delineation in the services provided by each worker to improve access to the service for all children and young people who were in need of a children's rights, advocacy or support service.

- 4.6 Since then the Young Persons Worker has delivered a dedicated service to young people in residential care in the city, whilst the CRO has had a focus on work with children and young people placed in secure care and in foster placements. The CRO has also had the remit to provide a service to those young people aged 16+ as well as children and young people with disabilities in the city who have been previously looked after and accommodated. As this report will show, the services of the CRO are becoming increasingly important for those young people who are no longer looked after, but who frequently remain without significant family or community supports and are highly vulnerable.
- 4.7 This report highlights the work of the Social Work Department's CRO for the period 1st April 2011 - 31st March 2013. The report shows the number of children and young people who have received a service during this period, the total number of referrals received and the reasons for referral and their source, as well as the service evaluation activity that has taken place and the feedback received about the CRO service.
- 4.8 The two year timeframe covered by this report also offers the opportunity to identify some of the impacts of the re-targeting of the services provided by the Children's Rights Officer and the Young Persons Worker, as well as some of the outcomes for the children and young people who have received a service from the CRO during this period.
- 4.9 The report highlights a range of key themes emerging from the delivery of CRO services in 2011/12 and 2012/13 and brings forward a number of specific actions to be incorporated into the CRO's action plan for 2013/4. These actions commit the CRO to the following:
- Work with managers and resource workers in Dundee's Family Placement Service to strengthen the links and develop clear pathways to the CRO service for children and young people placed in foster care.
  - Work with managers in Children's Services to agree the CRO's continued contribution to staff and foster carer development, and to the promotion and embedding of a children's rights approach across Children's Services in the coming year.
  - Continue to provide feedback to the appropriate managers in Social Work regarding the issues of concern identified about the conduct of complaint investigations involving young people, and offer views as to the changes which are required to improve consistency and practice.
  - Continue to contribute to the work of, and support for young people involved in the Champions Board, and to the work of LAAC Theme Group and any other strategic group relevant to the CRO service.
  - Contribute with Who Cares? workers to a review of the impact of the change in the CRO remit on the children's rights service provided to young people in Dundee's foster care and children's houses.
  - Undertake a review of the impact of the changes made (in the focus for the CRO post) upon the CRO's workload to ensure that the post as a resource within Children's Services continues to be appropriately targeted and used to full capacity.
  - Continue to contribute to the consultation exercise currently being carried out with young people in Dundee, and to the production of a report bringing forward findings and recommendations.

- Conduct a service user and stakeholder survey in 2014 to help inform the ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the CRO service; this survey to be timed appropriately to take account of the demands made on young people of the above wider consultation exercise.

## **5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. No major concerns were found.
- 5.2 An Equality Impact Assessment is attached to this report.

## **6.0 CONSULTATION**

The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democratic and Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

## **7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

**Jennifer G Tocher**  
**Director of Social Work**

**DATE:** 12 February 2014

**DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL SOCIAL WORK DEPARTMENT**  
**STRATEGIC INTEGRATION, PERFORMANCE AND SUPPORT SERVICE**

**CHILDREN'S RIGHTS SERVICE**

**REPORT FOR PERIOD**

**1 APRIL 2011 – 31 MARCH 2013**

## **CONTENTS**

	<b>PAGE NO</b>
INTRODUCTION	<b>6</b>
SERVICE PROVIDED BY CRO	<b>7</b>
NO OF REFERRALS FOR CRO SERVICE	<b>7</b>
NUMBER OF CHILDREN AN YOUNG PEOPLE WHO RECEIVED A SERVICE	<b>7</b>
AGE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO RECEIVED A SERVICE	<b>8</b>
GENDER OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO RECEIVED A SERVICE	<b>9</b>
SOURCES OF REFERRAL FOR CRO SERVICE	<b>10</b>
REASONS FOR REFERRAL FOR CRO SERVICE	<b>11</b>
REASONS FOR REFERRAL TO CRO FOR ADVOCACY SERVICES	<b>12</b>
SERVICES TO CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES	<b>14</b>
SERVICES TO YOUNG PEOPLE IN SECURE ACCOMMODATION	<b>15</b>
COMPLAINTS RAISED BY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	<b>17</b>
OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	<b>18</b>
CRO USER AND STAKEHOLDER SURVEY	<b>19</b>
FOSTER CARER TRAINING	<b>19</b>
DUNDEE CHAMPIONS BOARD	<b>19</b>
CONSULTATION EXERCISE WITH WHO CARES?	<b>20</b>
KEY AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN 2013/14	<b>20</b>
PROPOSED ACTION PLAN	<b>21</b>

## INTRODUCTION

In Dundee there are three key professionals who are formally employed and work in partnership to ensure that children and young people's rights are protected and promoted, and to improve their engagement with services.

Dedicated children's rights services are delivered in Dundee by the Children's Rights Officer (CRO) employed by the Social Work Department, and by the part-time Young Persons Worker Employed by Who Cares? Scotland. Who Cares? Scotland is a national voluntary organisation providing a range of services across Scotland for children and young people with experience of care, up to the age of 25. The organisation's core work is the provision of independent advocacy, advice, support to, and representation of young people who are, or have been looked after and accommodated, by the local authority.

The third Dundee worker, the new Care and Protection Engagement Officer (EO), came into post in January 2012. The EO is employed by CHILDREN 1<sup>st</sup> as part of a partnership initiative with Dundee City Council's Social Work Department, and her role is to develop ways of improving the engagement of children, young people and families in the child protection processes in which they are involved. The Engagement Officer, the Social Work Department's CRO and the Who Cares? Scotland Young Person's Worker together provide a range of information, advice and advocacy support services to some of the most vulnerable children and young people in Dundee.

The Social Work Department's Children's Rights Service reached its 23rd year on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2012. Over the years the service has matured and developed as an advice, information and advocacy service provided directly to children and young people who are looked after and accommodated by the Council, and to those with disabilities. The professional knowledge, advice and guidance from the CRO is also available to those professionals and adults with responsibility for the welfare of children and young people who have such needs.

In the past the Department's CRO and the Young Persons Worker have taken a joint approach to providing services for looked after children and young people in Dundee. However in 2011/12 it was decided to create a clearer delineation in the services provided by each worker to improve access to the service for all children and young people who were in need of a children's rights advocacy or support service, particularly those in foster care.

Since then the Young Persons Worker has delivered a dedicated service to young people in residential care in the city, whilst the CRO has had a focus on work with children and young people placed in secure care, residential schools, and in foster placements, children and young people with disabilities, as well as those young people aged 16+ in the city who have been previously looked after and accommodated.

All aspects of the work of the CRO are underpinned by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and The Human Rights Act (1989). The CRO plays an important role in safeguarding the welfare of children and young people who have a disability, or who are, or have been, looked after, particularly those who are placed outwith the city. As this report will also show, the services of the CRO are becoming increasingly important for those young people who are no longer looked after, but who frequently remain without significant family or community supports and are highly vulnerable.

Dundee City Council was the first authority in Scotland to appoint a CRO, and the Service reached its 24th year on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2013. The Dundee Children's Rights Service has a positive reputation throughout Scotland, and CRO's now exist in many Councils in Scotland, following the model adopted and developed here in Dundee.

This report highlights the work of the Social Work Department's CRO for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 - 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013. The report shows the number of children and young people who have received a service during this period, the total number of referrals received and the reasons for referral and their source, as well as the service evaluation activity that has taken place and the feedback received about the CRO service. The two year timeframe covered by this report also offers the opportunity to identify some of the impacts of the re-targeting of the services provided by the Children's Rights Officer and

the Young Persons Worker, as well as some of the outcomes for the children and young people who have received a service from the CRO during this period.

## 1 SERVICE PROVIDED BY CRO

The following are the range of services provided by the CRO for children and young people of all ages and abilities in Dundee who meet the criteria for a service.

1. Advocacy
2. Information and advice
3. Support and advocacy at Children's Hearings
4. Support and advocacy at LAAC (Looked After and Accommodated Child) Reviews
5. Support and advocacy for young people in secure accommodation
6. Support to register a complaint where desired

These services are non discriminatory and delivered by the CRO in accordance with Article 2 of the UNCRC. Children and young people who engage with the Children's Rights Service can expect a service that is speedy, responsive, child and outcomes focussed. Details regarding the CRO's performance against specific standards set for the service are noted at Paragraphs 10 and 12 below.

## 2 NUMBER OF REFERRALS FOR CRO SERVICE

Table 1 to follow shows the total number of referrals received by the CRO in the two year period which is the focus of this report.

**Table 1: Total Number of Referrals received by CRO**

	01.04.11 – 31.03.12	01.04.12 – 31.03.13
<b>Total Number of Referrals</b>	364	220

As this table shows, there was a reduction in the number of referrals received for a CRO in 2012/13, compared with 2011/12. This change relates to two separate factors. The most significant factor is the shift in the targeting of the CRO service which took place towards the end of 2011/12, with the aim of the CRO building a higher profile with children and young people in foster care, and ensuring that they have access when required to the Children's Rights Service.

Since then the young people living in Dundee's children's houses have been receiving a service almost exclusively from the Who Cares? Scotland, Young Persons Worker. The second factor to have influenced referrals to the CRO was a period of sickness absence experienced by the CRO in 2012/13.

## 3 NUMBER OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO RECEIVED A SERVICE

Table 2 gives the actual number of children and young people who received a service from the CRO in 2011/12 and 2012/13. As this table shows, there was a reduction in the number of children and young people who received a service from the CRO in 2012/13, compared with 2011/12.

**Table 2: Total Number of Children and Young People in Receipt of Service**

	<b>01.04.11 – 31.03.12</b>	<b>01.04.12 – 31.03.13</b>
<b>Number of Children and Young People</b>	97	82

As can be clearly seen, the reduction in the level of service delivered by the CRO, which is evidenced in the lower number of referrals for a CRO service in 2012/13, is also reflected in the lower number of children and young people who received a CRO service that year.

#### **4 AGE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO RECEIVED A SERVICE**

The actual numbers of children and young people who were provided with a service by the CRO in 2011/12 and 2012/13 are broken down in Table 3 into their separate age categories to show the age spread for the receipt of CRO services across these two separate years.

**Table 3: Breakdown of Total Number of Children and Young People in Receipt of Service by Age**

<b>Age</b>	<b>01.04.11 – 31.03.12</b>	<b>01.04.12 – 31.03.13</b>
<b>0-9</b>	4	15
<b>10</b>		4
<b>11</b>	10	7
<b>12</b>	12	4
<b>13</b>	20	5
<b>14</b>	19	12
<b>15</b>	21	15
<b>16</b>	6	6
<b>17</b>	1	4
<b>18</b>	2	4
<b>19</b>		4
<b>19+</b>	1	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>82</b>

Table 4 below also shows the breakdown in the total number of referrals received by the CRO by the ages of those children and young people referred for a service in both reporting years.

**Table 4: Breakdown of Total Number of Referrals of Children and Young People by Age**

<b>Age</b>	<b>01.04.11 – 31.03.12</b>	<b>01.04.12 – 31.03.13</b>
0-9	9	17
10	9	14
11	22	11
12	31	10
13	78	9
14	103	26
15	65	29
16	33	28
17	9	16
18	5	29
19		20
19+		11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>220</b>



These figures show that there has been a marked change in the proportions of referrals received for each age group of children and young people. Firstly, compared with previous years there has been a shift towards a higher proportion of primary school aged children receiving a CRO service, in line with the change in focus of the CRO service towards children and young people in foster care.

The increase in the number of referrals of children in this age group has required the CRO to adopt a different approach when trying to ascertain the views of the children and young people involved. The CRO has used play as an effective vehicle for helping these younger children express their views and feelings. The practice example detailed below describes how the CRO worked with one family of young children to identify their views and ensure that they were appropriately represented in a formal decision-making forum.

The higher numbers of referrals to the CRO for both years still came from young people aged 14 - 15 who were in foster care, residential school, secure accommodation, or in transition towards independence. However there was also during 2012/13 a significant increase in the number of 16 – 19+ year olds seeking a service. The increased proportion of the CRO's time used to meet the advocacy and support needs of young people who have been previously accommodated reflects the significant needs presenting for such young people, as they strive to adapt to family life at home again, or to living independently. These changes together have had the effect of creating a much more even distribution of the CRO service, across a wider age range of children and young people (aged 9 - 19+ years) in Dundee.

**Practice Example: Work with Younger Children**

*The Social Worker referred three very young children to the CRO to ascertain their views about who they would like contact with and who they would not. The CRO used the facilities at one of the Family Support Centres in Dundee and the medium of play with the three children involved, and was able to obtain very clear views relating to the contact issues presenting for the children. This information was vital to the decision of a Children's Hearing, where it was decided that the children should not have contact with the person they identified to the CRO. When matters were concluded, the oldest child thanked the CRO and asked if we would meet again. The CRO assured the children that he would be available if they needed his help in future.*

**5 GENDER OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO RECEIVED A SERVICE**

The gender split for the total number of children and young people who received a CRO service in the past two years is detailed in Table 5 as follows:

**Table 5: Breakdown by Gender of Total Number of Children and Young People in Receipt of Service**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>01.04.11 – 31.03.12</b>	<b>01.04.12 – 31.03.13</b>
Male	53	45
Female	44	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>82</b>

Table 6 also provides a breakdown in the total CRO referral numbers by gender to give the male/female split in the delivery of CRO services for 2011/12 and 2012/13.

**Table 6: Breakdown of Total Number of Referrals of Children and Young People by Gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>01.04.11 – 31.03.12</b>	<b>01.04.12 – 31.03.13</b>
Male	142	74
Female	222	146
<b>Total</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>220</b>

It is clear from the figures shown in both Tables 5 and 6 that over both years there were a higher number of boys/young men than girls/young women who received a service from the CRO service. However the total referral figures show that there were significantly more referrals received in respect of girls/young women, as compared with boys/young men in both years. This has generally been the gender split in referral pattern in past years for the CRO service, and it has been concluded that this reflects the fact that for a number of reasons young women are more likely to self-refer and re-refer than young men.

It is striking however that in the last year that gap has widened further, with girls/young women being twice as likely to refer to the Children's Rights Service as boys/young men. The significant age shift in referrals may be worthy of note in this context. In 2012/13 there was the highest proportion of 17 to 19 year-olds ever to seek assistance. It may be that what these figures are showing is a difference in perceived need for a service, or in willingness/ability to seek out a service, which increases between young women as compared with young men, as they become older.

## 6 SOURCES OF REFERRAL FOR CRO SERVICE

The range of different referral sources for the CRO service is broken down in detail in Table 7 which follows:

**Table 7: Total Number of Referrals to CRO Service by Source**

<b>Referral Source</b>	<b>01.04.11 – 31.03.12</b>	<b>01.04.12 – 31.03.13</b>
Child/Young Person	286	131
Parent		13
Relative	4	
Kinship/Foster Carer	23	15
Other Young Person		1
Social Worker	33	34
Residential Worker	22	17
Residential Manager	8	5
Review Officer	5	
Service Manager	1	
Health Worker		2
Safeguarder		1
Solicitor		1
<b>Total</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>220</b>

As can be seen from the numbers of referrals received from children/young people themselves, self-referral still represents the main route into the CRO service. It is known that previous receipt of a service and 'word of mouth' are the factors which most influence children and young people to self-refer for a CRO service, and it is likely that this will continue to be the case in coming years.

The impact of the re-focussing of the CRO service is at the same time evident from these figures. In the past the CRO had a high level of day to day contact with the young people and staff in Dundee's local authority children's houses, and this regular contact resulted in a high number of self-referrals from both the young people and staff involved. However the CRO's increased focus on foster care and previously looked after young people has led to an increase in the number and proportion of referrals made in respect of younger children and older adolescents.

This change accounts for the decrease in the proportion of self-referrals to the CRO from children and young people, as younger children are often referred for a service by others acting on their behalf, and in particular by the social work staff involved with them. In 2012/13 60% of children and young people referred themselves for a CRO service, with 40% being referred by others. This compares with 78% which were self-referrals, and 25% referrals made by others in the previous year.

This promotion of access to the CRO service for younger children has also had a smaller, but similar effect in increasing the number of referrals from parents, relatives and carers, with 13% of referrals being made by this group in 2012/13, as compared with 7% in 2011/12.

The small number of referrals from additional sources in 2012/13, who do not feature in 2011/12, may also be significant. There is some evidence to suggest that this may be related to an increased awareness of the CRO service, arising from the CRO's engagement with a wider professional network.

## 7 REASONS FOR REFERRAL FOR CRO SERVICE

The reasons for referral for a service from the CRO are detailed in Table 8, which profiles referrals by different type for the years 2011/12 and 2012/13.

**Table 8: Number of Referrals to CRO by Type for 2011/12 and 2012/13**

<b>Referral Type</b>	<b>01.04.11 – 31.03.12</b>	<b>01.04.12 – 31.03.13</b>
Advocacy Only	249	68
Secure Accommodation	60	76
Children's Hearing	42	19
LAAC Review	25	9
Disability Issues	35	31
Complaint	12	4
Police	1	
Health Concerns		7
Adult Protection		2
Criminal Compensation		2
Access to Records		2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>220</b>

In this table the CRO's attendance at Looked After and Accommodated Child (LAAC) Review Meetings and Children's Hearings has been shown separately from the provision of advocacy services. This is because the provision of an advocacy service can sometimes only require the offer of advice over the telephone, whilst the task of supporting children and young people's attendance at such meetings can make a significant demand on the CRO's time, given the level of preparation required, as well as the time for attendance at the meetings themselves.

These figures show that there was a significant reduction in the number of children and young people, who were supported by the CRO to be involved in LAAC Reviews or Children's Hearings in 2012/13, as compared with the previous year. This change is directly related to the shift in focus for the CRO away from the residential units in Dundee, where many of the CRO's requests for such a service have come in the past.

It is to be noted that there are additional referral types included for 2012/13 which are not present for 2011/12. This relates to the increase in the number of young people aged 16+ who have received a service from the CRO in 2012/13 and the different support needs with which they have presented. These have included a focus on ensuring that the rights are upheld of some very vulnerable young people who presented a risk to themselves, or to others, or both; and those who required support to access health services.

Table 8 shows that the CRO was involved in 2012/13 in supporting two young people age 16+ to access their social work records. This task of supporting young people through a process which can be prolonged and distressing, involves a substantial amount of worker time. It is therefore viewed as an important role, and one which the CRO is well placed to undertake on behalf of Children's Services.

As is evident from the figures shown there has been an increase in the number of referrals for those young people placed in secure accommodation. The reasons for this are analysed in greater detail at Paragraph 8 below.

Historically a high proportion of the CRO's time has been directed towards the delivery of an advocacy service for children and young people. The figures for 2011/12 and 2012/13 show that this trend has continued to date. However the figures for these two separate years show a significant reduction in the number of referrals for advocacy in 2012/13. This parallels the reduction in the overall number of referrals for a service from the CRO in 2012/13.

## 8 REASONS FOR REFERRAL TO CRO FOR ADVOCACY SERVICES

In reviewing the reasons for referral for an advocacy service from the CRO, the following are the key areas of need and/or concern which have been the focus of referral over these past two years.

### 1) **Placements outwith Dundee**

The placement of children and young people with foster carers or in residential settings brings its own significant challenges and complexities. For the children and young people involved, not only is there the impact of separation from parents and family, but there is also the effect of removal from familiar surroundings. These stresses are compounded if such placements are at a distance from the family home, and particularly if they are outwith Dundee.

The CRO has received referrals from/on behalf of children and young people who have remained unhappy about the current placement they are in and would prefer to move back to Dundee. The CRO has also received referrals in respect of children and young people who have settled well in their placements outwith Dundee and wish to remain there, when they may have been told that it is the plan for them to return to Dundee.

The CRO has worked on an individual basis with the children and young people involved, to help them to express their views and feelings, and to ensure that these are appropriately taken into account both by the social workers who are responsible for the child's plan, and in the key decision making fora, such as Children's Hearings, LAAC Reviews and Permanence Panels, when such plans are being approved. The CRO is able to advise what the child's human rights are, and to promote a proportionate decision, when the best interests of the child are being considered.

#### ***Practice Example: Work with Child in External Placement***

*Darren is an 11-year-old boy who suffers from anxiety, which can affect his behaviour considerably. His foster carer contacted the CRO and asked if Darren could be supported through a Children's Hearing. The care plan for Darren was that he should receive permanent substitute care. New carers for Darren were identified in another local authority area and the plan was for him to move to these carers after the Hearing. Darren was in his transition year at primary and was being supported by school to move to high school at the end of term. Darren had just had the most settled year at school he had ever had. He was also very settled with his carers, even though they were only temporary carers until permanent carers could be found.*

*Darren described his world as 'falling apart' and his anxiety levels were running very high. He did not want to go to carers in another authority, as he felt he would not be able to cope with all the changes that would come at once. He had met the carers and said they were nice, but was pleading not to move just yet.*

*The CRO attended the Hearing on Darren's behalf as he could not cope with it. The CRO presented Darren's views clearly to the Hearing, presenting Darren's views that he should not move just yet, and that more work needed to be done to help prepare him for a permanent move. There was concern that coercing him at that stage would fail. Everyone concerned heard clearly what was being said by Darren, and although*

*some felt it was a lost opportunity for him, it was agreed that he remain with his current carers until a later date and he was appropriately prepared for his next permanent carers to be identified.*

The CRO notes that it is a strategic aim within Children's Services to make changes in the way in which meetings involving children and young people are organised and chaired, in order to make them more 'child friendly'. The CRO supports this initiative and will contribute within his role to this development work to take place in Children's Services in the coming year.

## **2) Family Contact**

The issue of contact with parents, grandparents and other family members was a recurring theme for those children and young people who received a service from the CRO in 2011/12 and 2012/13, as it has been in previous years. This is an issue however which has presented as a concern to more children and young people, as the number of placements outwith Dundee has grown, and if children and young people themselves have, for whatever reason, had to be placed separately from siblings.

The issue of sibling contact is a complex one, particularly in circumstances where any individual child assessment shows contact not to be in the best interests of one or more of the siblings involved. The consistent feedback received by the CRO is however that children and young people wish to be placed, and to remain placed together with their siblings; and that for those placed apart, there is often an expressed wish for continued contact with siblings.

The CRO is clear from his experience of working with social workers and managers in Dundee that most do recognise the need to take account of children and young people's views and strive to be as child-centred as possible in making placement decisions. However he is also clear that the lack of availability of suitable placements can be a significant barrier to ensuring that children and young people's needs for contact with parents, siblings and other family members are supported by the most appropriate placement arrangements.

The CRO's experience informs him that on occasion the child or young person's wish to be reunited in placement, or to have contact with siblings is not always given the level of priority within assessments of their needs which he considers it requires. In such circumstances it has been the role of the CRO to support the child or young person involved to voice his/her views and wishes and ensure that the workers responsible for the child's plan, and other decision-makers, give these due consideration when arriving at placement and contact decisions. The CRO will also assist by making his own view known in relation to the child's human rights, which helps practitioners make a balanced assessment of the child's best interests.

## **3) Bullying**

In the past the CRO has been involved in responding to concerns raised by children and young people about their experiences of bullying, and at times this has been an issue of concern highlighted by the CRO. The majority of these concerns involved young people who were placed in Dundee's children's houses, and the CRO supported the staff by working with the individual young people themselves and with groups as a whole. The CRO has remained committed to supporting an anti-bullying perspective with young people, wherever they may be placed.

The CRO currently responds to direct requests from young people and staff when his input is required, but, as has already been explained, any advocacy service required for young people in Dundee's children's houses is now provided by the Who Cares? (Scotland) Young Person's Worker. In the last two years since the CRO's remit has been changed, bullying has not been a significant focus of work or area of concern for the CRO.

#### 4) **Issues for Young People aged 16+**

Young people aged 16+ who are moving on to independence face a range of significant challenges. These include for many the expectation that they will budget effectively and cope with the demands and pressures of running their own flat. The CRO has noted that it is a common misconception that young people reach adulthood and a sufficient level of maturity to cope with independence at the age of 16 years.

In 2012/13 an increasing proportion of the CRO's workload has involved the provision of a service to such young people to help them cope with their new responsibilities and to ensure that they have appropriate access to all the relevant information, advice and support they require. This has resulted in the CRO working more closely with members of the Social Work Department's Throughcare and Aftercare Team in the provision of such advocacy and support services.

In the CRO's experience some young people to their credit cope very well. However it is also true that a number suffer from loneliness and/or mental health problems and lose their tenancies, because they are ill-equipped to deal with the responsibilities and pressures they face. Some young people become parents themselves at a very young age and have to cope with the additional responsibilities and challenges which parenthood brings. Without support many very vulnerable young people also drift into homelessness and/or offending when they are no longer looked after. This is one of the complex challenges the staff of Throughcare and Aftercare services and those working with offenders deal with on a daily basis.

#### ***Practice Example: Work with a Young Person Aged 16+***

*Young people who have gone through the through-care and after-care system often remain in touch with their worker. Those who have continued to have contact with the CRO have used the service at times of crisis or when they have needed independent advice or guidance.*

*One such young person was presenting as being deeply depressed, but felt unable to speak with her G.P. about a number of issues relating to her mental health. The CRO made an appointment for the young person and went with her to the surgery. The CRO accompanied the young person into the consultation with the G.P. and was able to explain what the concerns were and the difficulties she had in communicating, while she was so depressed. The CRO gave only the information that had been agreed with young person in advance of the appointment and left the young person with the doctor to have a confidential consultation. The young person later said that she felt the doctor understood her circumstances more and that the CRO's involvement had helped her to have this difficult conversation,*

Other examples of the CRO's work with this group of young people have seen the CRO providing similar support in dealing with housing issues or matters concerning the police.

## 9 **SERVICES TO CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

Across both years the CRO has addressed a range of issues raised by/on behalf of children and young people with disabilities referred for a service. One of the recurring themes for this group of children and young people are issues related to school. For example, it is not uncommon for support to be required by young people with ADHD, autistic spectrum disorder, or other learning disability, whose disabilities can profoundly affect how they cope in large group settings. Another significant issue for children and young people who are disabled is the transition from children's services to adult services, where the settings, funding and support arrangements can be very different.

In the latter part of 2012/13 there were a significant number of referrals for children with disabilities, who have the added complexity of a mental health diagnosis. The CRO has visited the young people involved in the mental health facilities where they have been placed, ensuring that their voices are heard and their rights respected in a setting which provides a very different care experience from that provided in other more mainstream care settings.

The issues presented by children with profound disabilities are complex and they present a real challenge to school staff and others. The CRO's role in addressing such needs and challenges is to work with the young person, school staff, parents, social workers and any other relevant parties to help improve communication, understanding and support arrangements, and the outcomes for the young person involved.

***Practice Example: Work with a Child with a Disability***

*A mother referred her son, Jamie who was diagnosed as being on the autistic spectrum for a service from the CRO. Jamie had recently moved to secondary school and had been excluded a number of times. Jamie's mother had a number of meetings with senior staff at the school, but her efforts had left her extremely frustrated, and she felt she was being dismissed as a 'difficult' parent. The CRO met with Education staff along with Jamie's mother and it quickly became clear that there was a difference of view between the Education staff and her. The CRO referred to an assessment that had been done by a specialist in autism which gave clear guidance on the best way to accommodate the boy's particular barriers to learning.*

*The CRO referred to a part of the report that highlighted Jamie's sensory sensitivity, and the fact that loud noise could have disturbing effects on him. The CRO noted that Jamie had been repeatedly sent to the refectory as an area where he could have 'time out', but because of the noise level in that area, and the fact that he then experienced sensory overload, this was extremely uncomfortable for him. This had then resulted in him presenting with aggressive behaviour. Education staff agreed that the assessment should be reviewed fully and be used as the basis of a guide to working with Jamie. The CRO suggested it would expedient to call a Co-ordinated Support Plan meeting and have the assessment made available for consideration there. This was agreed and subsequently acted upon.*

*While Jamie's mother's frustration was still evident, she felt that an appropriate plan had been agreed. She did comment that the assessment on her son had not been taken into account in the past, but was very satisfied that it would now form the basis of a way forward for her son. A subsequent conversation with Jamie's mother highlighted an improvement in Jamie's behaviour in school, although there was still some way to go. Jamie's mother's relationship with school staff had also improved and there had been no further exclusions since the meeting attended with the CRO.*

**10 SERVICES TO YOUNG PEOPLE IN SECURE ACCOMMODATION**

When a child or young person is made the subject of a secure order, it is a requirement that the CRO is notified by the relevant social worker to allow the CRO to provide a service for the young person involved. The CRO ensures that young people in secure care understand their rights in relation to their individual circumstances and gives advice, support and assistance when it is requested. At the same time the residential staff in secure accommodation settings are made aware of the CRO's responsibilities and the range of assistance offered to young people by the service.

A standard has been set for the CRO that contact is made with the young person within two working days of notification of an admission. Regular visits are arranged with the agreement of the young person. Other than on three occasions in 2011/12, and 2 occasions in 2012/13, the CRO was able to maintain this standard.

Table 9 shows the number of young people in secure accommodation who received a service from the CRO in 2011/12 and 2012/13.

**Table 9: Number of Young People in Secure Care in receipt of CRO Service**

	<b>01.04.11 – 31.03.12</b>	<b>01.04.12 – 31.03.13</b>
Male	4	6
Female	8	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>

It should be noted that Table 8 shows activity levels for the CRO across these 2 years, and that this is to be distinguished from the actual number of young people admitted to secure care from Dundee in each year. In 2012-2013 there were only 8 actual new admissions to secure care from Dundee, which represents a downward trend in secure admissions. Some of the young people who were referred for a CRO service had been placed in secure care in the previous year, and some were referred at separate times in both years. In total over the two years the CRO worked with 24 individual young people, 15 of whom were male and 9 who were female.

It is significant to note that the CRO was known to, or at least recognised by, most of the young people prior to their admission to secure accommodation. This is because the CRO has had contact with large numbers of looked after children and young people over the years. The fact that the CRO was previously known to the majority of the young people involved is considered to have been a factor for those young people who self-referred at a later stage following their admission to secure care.

From the overview which the CRO has of the unmet needs of the young people from Dundee placed in secure accommodation, the most urgent need currently, as it has been in the past, is for access to appropriate psychological services. This lack of appropriate and responsive psychological services for young people in secure settings results in young people's complex emotional and psychological needs often being unmet. This can mean that they present very challenging behaviour within their residential settings, that it can be more difficult to meet their all round needs and that it can be difficult to plan effectively for their care and return to the community.

It is important to note that the majority of young people admitted to secure care are placed there because of concerns for their welfare, rather than risks related to offending. This has certainly been the case for the high numbers of young women from Dundee placed in secure care, compared with those from other local authorities in Scotland.

The CRO believes this may be related to a lower tolerance, by professionals and the general population, of risk-taking behaviour presented by young women, as compared with young men. Such risks for the young women involved include the risks associated with being sexually active or taking illegal substances. The level of drug misuse in Dundee is seen as one of the key factors contributing to the higher than average risk taking behaviour in this small, but most vulnerable group of girls and young women in the city. The CRO notes the work currently being taken forward by the Vulnerable Young People At Risk Working Group, the Youth Justice Group and others (under the auspices of Dundee's Child Care and Protection Committee and Drug and Alcohol Forum) to improve multi-agency assessments and responses to the specific needs of this very vulnerable group of young women.

The closure of the Elms Secure unit in Dundee in 2013 means that a number of the young people who are being placed in secure care now, who might otherwise have been able to remain in the city, have to be placed in secure units elsewhere in the country. There are as a result young people placed in secure care units across Scotland. As described at Paragraph 8.1 above many of the challenges for young people placed in secure accommodation outwith Dundee are the same as for those children and young people in the range of other different types of external placement.



There are however additional challenges for those young people who are in secure placements who are returning to Dundee. These include issues relating to the provision of appropriate educational support, or, for those who are of an age to be leaving school, the challenges for young people aged 16 and over (as described at Paragraph 9.4 above) which include the need for employment opportunities.

In 2013 the Scottish Government published Guidance to the Regulations for Secure Accommodation. This new national guidance aims to improve standards and consistency of practice and service by ensuring that the child's voice is heard at the earliest stage of the assessment process. The overall aim is to ensure that the best outcomes are achieved for the young people who are placed in secure care across the country. The CRO will use this, as well as other guidance, to inform his practice in the provision of children's rights services to those young people from Dundee who require secure accommodation.

### **Practice Example**

*Emily, who is 13, was visited by the CRO shortly after admission to a secure unit. She asked the CRO if he could take her to the shops. The CRO explained that this was not possible and the reason for that. It quickly became apparent that Emily had no idea what kind of facility she was in, and had no understanding of the implications for her in terms of her loss of liberty. The CRO took time to help Emily understand the setting she was in and the reasons for her placement there. The CRO also spoke with the staff in the secure unit to ensure that they had good understanding of the Emily's vulnerabilities and the risks to her in a secure placement.*

*The following day the CRO attended the Children's Hearing for Emily for the first Hearing following her admission to secure care. When the grounds for the placement were put to the Hearing, they were presented in the normal way in a 'statement of facts'. This amounted to a list of risk taking behaviours presented by Emily, but this did not give a true picture of Emily as a child.*

*The CRO had known Emily previously and had a good relationship with her, as she was an accommodated child prior to her admission to secure care. The CRO was able to highlight her vulnerability and the lack of real understanding Emily had of her current situation. The CRO also raised concerns about Emily being in a secure setting, because he felt that she would be vulnerable to bullying and intimidation in such a placement. This concern was echoed at the Hearing by both the social worker and the residential worker involved. The CRO stated that Emily was very clear that she did not want to remain in secure accommodation.*

*The Panel members reflected on all of the information shared and decided that Emily should go back to secure accommodation, because the concerns were so great that they were worried for her safety. However they took time to explain their decision to Emily and asked that an exit plan be brought to the next Hearing in 21 days. Emily took from the Hearing that the professionals and Panel members were concerned about her, and that no-one wanted her to stay in secure accommodation any longer than necessary. This was a source of comfort to her. The CRO continued to visit frequently until Emily moved to a suitable placement.*

## **11 COMPLAINTS RAISED BY YOUNG PEOPLE**

A key role of the CRO service is to ensure that any complaints and concerns raised by young people are given proper consideration by the officers responsible. The role of the CRO is to advise and support young people to voice their complaints and offer assistance throughout the process to resolution. The majority of such concerns are resolved through mediation and negotiation between the parties concerned, without the need for initiating formal processes.

Table 10 lays out the number of complaints raised by young people through the formal complaints procedure in 2011/12 and 2012/13 and where the CRO has provided support to the young people involved.

**Table 10: Number of Young People supported through Formal Complaints Process by CRO**

	<b>01.04.11 – 31.03.12</b>	<b>01.04.12 – 31.03.13</b>
Number of Young People	12	4

It is clear that the number of formal complaints in which the CRO has been involved in supporting young people has fallen significantly between these two years. This reduction is considered at least in part to be related to the fact that by 2012/13 the CRO was no longer involved with young people placed in Dundee's children's houses, where most of the complaints in which he had been directly involved in 2011/12, had arisen.

It should be noted however that in 2011/12, 4 out of the total 12 complaints raised were made by 3 young people, who had all been party to the same incident in a residential setting, and that had then led them each individually to make a separate complaint. It is important to note also that historically when young people have sought to complain, these complaints have related primarily to their experience with other agencies, rather than the place in which they live.

The CRO wishes to report that young people have consistently commented negatively about the complaints process. They have all stated that making a complaint was a difficult thing to do, and those who have had experience of the complaints process have described it as frustrating and unhelpful for them.

The CRO is aware that these comments from young people can be very subjective, but wishes it to be noted that there have been occasions when in his view young people have not been treated fairly or appropriately. It is the CRO's view that one of the issues is the need for training for staff in how to conduct complaint investigations with young people to ensure that appropriate practice standards are adhered to and that there is a consistency of approach in how investigations are conducted across Children's Services. Discussions are currently taking place with the Head of Children's Services to decide how to take this forward as an area for development.

## **12 OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

When the CRO has completed work on each referral, it is the established practice to seek feedback from the children and young people involved to ascertain if they have been satisfied with the service they have received. The following are the satisfaction levels reported by the children and young people who received a CRO service in 2011/12 and 2012/13. It is positive to report that in 2012/13 95% of children and young people reported satisfaction with the CRO service provided, as compared with 91% in the previous year.

**Table 11: Number of Referrals reported as receiving a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory CRO Service**

	<b>01.04.11 – 31.03.12</b>	<b>01.04.12 – 31.03.13</b>
<b>Satisfied</b>	334	209
<b>Unsatisfied</b>	16	8
<b>Unsure</b>	14	3*
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>220</b>

\***Unsure** refers to those young people who did not have the capacity to provide a response, or from whom it was not appropriate to seek a response (e.g. young person upset or distressed).

### 13 CRO USER AND STAKEHOLDER SURVEY

In 2011, the CRO conducted a large survey of young people, social workers and residential staff in Dundee to seek feedback on the value of the CRO service. The outcome of that survey showed a very high level of satisfaction with the service delivered to children and young people. The conclusion drawn from the survey was that children, young people and social work staff all considered the CRO service to be very valuable, demonstrating at that time overwhelming support for the continuation and development of the service.

The value of such self-evaluation activities are clearly recognised by the CRO and it is proposed that it should form an integral part of the CRO's duties to undertake such survey work on a bi-annual basis. A further user and other stakeholder survey is planned therefore to be undertaken in the first half of 2014.

### 14 FOSTER CARER TRAINING

In accordance with the objective of promoting a culture of rights, the CRO provided training on two separate occasions to an external secure unit and contributed to 4 training sessions with new foster carers in 2012/13. The training co-ordinator for foster carers in Dundee evaluated the CRO's contribution to foster carer training as follows:

*The Children's Rights Officer makes a contribution to Preparation Groups for applicants who wish to be foster carers for Dundee City Council. These groups are run 3 or 4 times per year.*

*The Preparation Group is designed as a broad introduction to the task of fostering and takes place before the formal assessment. It focuses on the needs and rights of children and the responsibilities of those who care for them. Other issues considered include: the experiences of children who become looked after, reparative care, the impact of early experiences, contact with birth families, and the law. Input is also provided by the Looked After Children nursing team.*

*The CRO looks at the rights of children within the framework of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and domestic legislation, and invites participants to consider these and how they can be met. He contextualises this for children who are looked after away from their families and gives many examples from his own practice, suitably anonymised, which have an impact, making the issue of rights very real and memorable for participants. The CRO's style is engaging and comfortable and although he introduces some challenging scenarios, feedback is always positive. At the end of the session, participants are asked to make some reflective comments.*

*"I wasn't really aware of the UN convention."*

*"We hadn't really considered the rights of children in this way."*

*"After this session we had to have a discussion within our own family about privacy."*

*"I really appreciated that foster carers would have a role in ensuring that children got what they were entitled to."*

*"I have a better understanding of the importance of children's views being heard and taken into account in the decision making process, at LAC reviews, etc."*

*"I now understand better the role of the children's rights service and know how I can tap into support for a child or young person in my care."*

## **15 DUNDEE'S CHAMPIONS BOARD**

In Article 12 of the UNCRC it is stated that young people have the right to express their views in any decisions that are made about them. In line with this the Council reviewed its approach to its corporate parenting responsibilities and established a Champions Board in Dundee in June 2011.

The Champions Board provides a platform for looked after, and previously looked children and young people to engage with their 'corporate parent' and make their needs and views known. The Board brings together Chief Officers, Elected Members, partner agencies, young people and their supporters to discuss and make decisions on an agenda set by the young people themselves.

The young people as participants on the Board are provided with active ongoing support to facilitate their involvement and contribution to the development and activities of the Board. The CRO, along with the Who Cares? Workers and the Child Protection Engagement Officer have been active participants in the Champions Board and have been heavily involved in promoting the work of the Board. They help the young people involved to prepare for and participate in meetings, and support their individual development within this process.

All three of the workers are also responsible for the progress of a number of the actions in the Board's agreed action plan.

Recognition of the effectiveness of the approach being developed by the Champions Board has resulted in their work being held up as an example of good practice in engaging with looked after children and young people during the last Inspection of Dundee's Child Protection Services. The Board also gained further recognition by gaining a Silver Award in the COSLA Excellence Awards held earlier in 2013.

## **16 CONSULTATION EXERCISE WITH WHO CARES?**

The CRO and Who Cares? Workers in Dundee are currently undertaking a consultation exercise with a number of young people who are looked after and accommodated. The purpose of this consultation exercise is to capture young people's views about their engagement with services, whilst highlighting the opportunity for them to be involved with the Champions Board. The outcomes of this consultation will be reported in the CRO annual report for 2013/14.

## **17 KEY AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT IN 2013/14**

The CRO represents all Scottish Children's Rights Officers on 'Together', the Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights, and participates in other national groups and initiatives where appropriate. In this way the CRO continues to contribute to the developing thinking about best practice as it applies to the promotion and protection of children's rights in Scotland. The learning gained by the CRO is implemented at a local level in Dundee.

It is a key objective for the CRO to help promote a culture of rights amongst those delivering services to children and young people in Dundee. The achievement of this objective will be supported by the publication in 2014 of the Children and Young People Bill, in which some of the rights of children and young people will be clearly laid out in statute. This Bill will provide the legislative foundation on which to embed a GIRFEC approach across all Children's Services and to ensure that all agencies work together to promote the rights and best interests of all children and young people in Scotland.

At a local level the CRO will continue to work with others to help embed a child rights culture within Integrated Children's Services in Dundee. The CRO is a member of the Integrated Children's Services LAAC Theme group and will continue to make a contribution to the promotion of children's rights through this, and through other strategic groups within the city in which he is involved.

In 2012/13 the CRO's re-defined focus on children and young people in foster care, those with disabilities, and young people who have been previously looked after and accommodated, has been tested in practice. As can be seen from the figures presented in this report these changes have resulted in an increase in the number of young people aged 16+ who have received a service from the CRO. It has been concluded that the CRO is now providing a service to a population whose needs have not been as well met in the past and whose outcomes have been improved as a result. This is viewed both as a positive use of the CRO's skills and experience, and the inclusion of this group in the CRO's remit, as a positive extension of the target group for a CRO service in Dundee.

At the same time it is noted that there has been a significant reduction in the overall number of referrals to the CRO, as well as a change in the age spread of children and young people receiving a CRO service, the latter change being partly related to the inclusion of young people who have been previously looked after. This reduction in referral numbers has arisen largely because of the CRO's re-focussing of service away from Dundee's children's houses. The impact of this change on the service received by children and young people in Dundee's foster care service and children's houses has not yet been evaluated, and it is proposed that it is now appropriate to review the effects of these changes to ensure that young people continue to receive the children's rights services they need and that their individual outcomes are improved as a result.

It is proposed also to review the impact of these changes in focus upon the CRO's workload to ensure that the CRO post as a resource within Children's Services continues to be appropriately targeted and used to full capacity.

In relation to the re-focussing of service towards children and young people in foster care, it is clear that there has not been the number of referrals in respect of this group that might have been anticipated. In response, it is the plan for the CRO to work to increase his profile with foster carers, and where possible, with children and young people in foster care. The task with the latter group is more challenging than that of reaching young people in residential care, given that contact with a number of young people at once is much more easily achieved in such a congregate setting.

The CRO has continued to offer training to foster carers in the coming year to seek to raise awareness of children's rights, and of the service provided by the CRO for Dundee's looked after population. The CRO will also work with the resource workers in Family Placement Services in Social Work to strengthen the links and develop clearer pathways to the CRO service. The CRO will at the same time continue to be responsive to referrals in respect of young people in secure care, those children and young people who are placed outwith the city, and those with disabilities.

## **18 PROPOSED ACTION PLAN IN 2013/14**

The CRO will continue to provide children's rights services in accordance with the re-focussed remit for: children and young people in foster care; those who have been placed outwith Dundee; children and young people with disabilities; young people who are in transition; young people who have been previously looked after and accommodated.

In addition it is proposed that the following key actions be incorporated into the CRO's action plan for 2013/4:

- Work with Managers and resource workers in Dundee's Family Placement Service to strengthen the links and develop clearer pathways to the CRO service for children and young people placed in foster care
- Work with Managers in Children's Services to agree the CRO's contribution to staff and foster carer development, and to the promotion and embedding of a children's rights approach across Children's Services in the coming year

- Continue to provide feedback to the appropriate Managers in Social Work regarding any issues of concern identified about the conduct of complaint investigations involving young people, and offer views as to any changes which may be required to improve consistency and practice
- Continue to contribute to the work of, and support for young people involved in the Champions Board, and to the work of LAAC Theme Group and any other strategic group relevant to the CRO service
- Contribute with Who Cares? workers to a review of the impact of the change in the CRO remit on the children's rights service provided to young people in foster care and Dundee's children's houses
- Undertake a review of the impact of the changes made (in the focus for the CRO post) upon the CRO's workload to ensure that the post as a resource within Children's Services continues to be appropriately targeted and used to full capacity.
- Continue to contribute to the consultation exercise currently being carried out with young people in Dundee, and to the production of a report bringing forward findings and recommendations
- Conduct a service user and stakeholder survey in 2014 to help inform the ongoing evaluation of the effectiveness of the CRO service; this survey to be timed appropriately to take account of the demands made on young people of the above wider consultation exercise

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TOOL

### Part 1: Description/Consultation

<b>Is this a Rapid Equality Impact Assessment (RIAT)?</b> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Is this a Full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)?</b> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Date of Assessment:</b> 25/11/13	<b>Committee Report Number:</b> 82-2014
<b>Title of document being assessed:</b> Children's Rights Annual Report	
<b>1. This is a new policy, procedure, strategy or practice being assessed</b> (If yes please check box) <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>This is an existing policy, procedure, strategy or practice being assessed?</b> (If yes please check box) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>2. Please give a brief description of the policy, procedure, strategy or practice being assessed.</b>	Summary, analysis and projection of the work in children's rights over the past two years and identified plan for the year ahead.
<b>3. What is the intended outcome of this policy, procedure, strategy or practice?</b>	Advise elected members of the work of the children's rights officer over the past two years. The report highlights the focus and planned action for the coming year.
<b>4. Please list any existing documents which have been used to inform this Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment.</b>	The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is the primary source document. Also, the amended guidance and regulations on Secure Accommodation. The Children's Rights Officer's practice is founded on the principles embodied in the Human Rights Act (1989).
<b>5. Has any consultation, involvement or research with protected characteristic communities informed this assessment? If yes please give details.</b>	Scottish Government has introduced new legislation affecting children. The Children's Rights Officer has directly contributed to this at the consultation stage. Equality issues are embedded in the legislation.
<b>6. Please give details of council officer involvement in this assessment.</b>  (e.g. names of officers consulted, dates of meetings etc)	Gordon Frew, Children's Rights Officer and Joyce Barclay, Senior Officer.
<b>7. Is there a need to collect further evidence or to involve or consult protected characteristics communities on the impact of the proposed policy?</b>  (Example: if the impact on a community is not known what will you do to gather the information needed and when will you do this?)	No

**Part 2: Protected Characteristics**

**Which protected characteristics communities will be positively or negatively affected by this policy, procedure or strategy?**

**NB Please place an X in the box which best describes the "overall" impact. It is possible for an assessment to identify that a positive policy can have some negative impacts and visa versa. When this is the case please identify both positive and negative impacts in Part 3 of this form.**

**If the impact on a protected characteristic communities are not known please state how you will gather evidence of any potential negative impacts in box Part 1 section 7 above.**

	<b>Positively</b>	<b>Negatively</b>	<b>No Impact</b>	<b>Not Known</b>
Race, Ethnic Minority Communities including Gypsies and Travellers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender Reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People with a disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Socio-economic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please state)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



### Part 3: Impacts/Monitoring

<p><b>1. Have any positive impacts been identified?</b></p> <p>(We must ensure at this stage that we are not achieving equality for one strand of equality at the expense of another)</p>	<p>Positive impact as identified in part 2. The work of the Children's Rights Officer has involved supporting people from these protected characteristics groups. Such issues are central to the work of the Children's Rights Officer.</p>
<p><b>2. Have any negative impacts been identified?</b></p> <p>(Based on direct knowledge, published research, community involvement, customer feedback etc. If unsure seek advice from your departmental Equality Champion.)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p><b>3. What action is proposed to overcome any negative impacts?</b></p> <p>(e.g. involving community groups in the development or delivery of the policy or practice, providing information in community languages etc. See Good Practice on DCC equalities web page)</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>4. Is there a justification for continuing with this policy even if it cannot be amended or changed to end or reduce inequality without compromising its intended outcome?</b></p> <p>(If the policy that shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination you must stop and seek legal advice)</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>5. Has a 'Full' Equality Impact Assessment been recommended?</b></p> <p>(If the policy is a major one or is likely to have a major impact on protected characteristics communities a Full Equality Impact Assessment may be required. Seek advice from your departmental Equality lead.)</p>	<p>No</p>
<p><b>6. How will the policy be monitored?</b></p> <p>(How will you know it is doing what it is intended to do? e.g. data collection, customer survey etc.)</p>	<p>Annual review</p>

**Part 4: Contact Information**

<b>Name of Department or Partnership</b>	Social Work
--	-------------

<b>Type of Document</b>	
Human Resource Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
General Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strategy/Service	<input type="checkbox"/>
Change Papers/Local Procedure	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guidelines and Protocols	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

<b>Manager Responsible</b>	<b>Author Responsible</b>
<b>Name:</b> Heather Gunn	<b>Name:</b> Gordon Frew
<b>Designation:</b> Service manager	<b>Designation:</b> Children's Rights Officer
<b>Base:</b> Dundee House	<b>Base:</b> Claverhouse
<b>Telephone:</b> 433240	<b>Telephone:</b> 434492
<b>Email:</b> heather.gunn@dundeecity.gov.uk	<b>Email:</b> gordon.frew@dundeecity.gov.uk

<b>Signature of author of the policy:</b>	Heather Gunn	<b>Date:</b> 30 <sup>th</sup> January 2014
<b>Signature of Director/Head of Service:</b>	Jennifer G Tocher	<b>Date:</b> 30 <sup>th</sup> January 2014
<b>Name of Director/Head of Service:</b>	Jennifer G Tocher	
<b>Date of Next Policy Review:</b>	N/A	