

**Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EqHRIA)**

# Summary of Results

## Policy/Practice Name:

Corporate Parenting Plan 2024-2027

## Owning Department:

Policing Together – Children and Young People

## Date EqHRIA Completed:

21/02/2025

## Purpose of Policy/Practice:

The purpose of the Corporate Parenting Plan 2024-2027 (The Plan) is to outline how Police Scotland will fulfil its moral and statutory obligations as a named Corporate Parent under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. A Corporate Parent is any organisation, whether public, private or voluntary, who has responsibility to make decisions that impact on people with experiences of care in Scotland. Everyone in Police Scotland has a role to play as a corporate parent, and in line with the wide variety of roles and responsibilities that officers and staff have, this will mean different things across our workforce.

The Plan focusses on supporting children, young people and adults with experience of care to ensure their rights are respected and their wellbeing is promoted in line with the Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) framework and The Promise (Scotland Governments commitment to Care Experienced children and young people that they will grow up loved, safe and respected). The Plan is published both internally and publicly on completion and so communicates these goals both to all officers and staff across the organisation, and externally, to the Care Experienced community, the wider public in general, partner agencies, fellow Corporate Parents and other organisations.

Many people helped create this plan, but the most important things we heard came from children and young people directly. We have carefully thought about what people with experience of care told us they need from Police Scotland to make sure we, as a Corporate Parent, do everything we can so that they grow up loved, safe and respected.

We commissioned [Scottish Youth Parliament](https://syp.org.uk/) to lead a process of engagement and participation to run alongside our development of this Plan. Two Youth Engagement Workers who have direct experience of care were recruited to design, deliver, and evaluate an engagement and participation programme. The engagement approach was co-designed with Care Experienced Members of Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) who collaborated in the survey creation process and in analysing the results gathered from young people with experience of care. They engaged and facilitated workshops with children and young people with care experience to hear their thoughts and ideas, and their feedback is included throughout the Plan.

Ongoing consultation and inclusion of the voice of members of Police Scotland’s Care Experienced Colleagues Group, formed during the consultation phase of The Plan (2021-24) with officers and staff with care experience from across Police Scotland and now including staff from the Scottish Police Authority, has also been paramount.

We brought together a Corporate Parenting Advisory Group of organisations working within the children and young people and care sectors, namely [Who Cares? Scotland](https://www.whocaresscotland.org/), [YouthLink Scotland](https://www.youthlink.scot/), [Each and Every Child](https://eachandeverychild.co.uk/), [Children in Scotland](https://childreninscotland.org.uk/), [Young Scot](https://young.scot/), the [Care Inspectorate](https://www.careinspectorate.com/), the [Scottish Violence Reduction Unit](https://www.svru.co.uk/), [The Promise Scotland](https://thepromise.scot/), [Scottish Youth Parliament](https://syp.org.uk/), [Scottish Police Authority](https://www.spa.police.uk/home), members of [Police Scotland’s Care Experienced Colleagues Group](https://consult.scotland.police.uk/ppcw/care-experienced-colleagues-group/) and our Youth Engagement Officers, who as mentioned above are both Care Experienced. The group’s collective professional and personal wisdom and guidance helped us both in review our previous Corporate Parenting Plan (2021-24) and in the development of this new Plan (2024-27).

We know it is important to listen to children, young people, and communities and act based on what we hear. Genuine engagement will remain a priority for the next three years of this plan and beyond. We are focused on our Vision 2030 of safer communities, less crime, supported victims and a thriving workforce. We are committed to engaging, listening and responding to public, community, colleague and stakeholder insights to better inform our services.

The Plan provides key commitments, setting out our organisational aspirations arrived at following this extensive engagement with children, young people and adults with Care Experience as well as key internal and external partners listed above, to improve upon policies and practices in relation to Corporate Parenting matters for a period of 3 years, with Annual Action Plans and reviews between 2024 to 2027. This means that whilst The Plan is in essence a standalone document, it forms part of a journey of improvement for Police Scotland with respect to the Care Experienced community over the last decade which has been continually monitored, assessed and improved upon both during the life of each Plan, and from one Plan to the next.

A review of our progress so far, with specific focus on delivery of the Corporate Parenting Plan 2021-2024 was undertaken (published [here](https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/how-we-do-it/strategic-planning/children-and-young-people/care-experienced/)). Learning from this review, alongside extensive meaningful engagement and consultation with children with experience of care, the statutory and third sector organisations that support them and our Care Experienced Colleagues Group as detailed above, have ensured our Vision and commitments for The Plan 2024-2027 are purposeful, inclusive and reflective of our journey so far and our ambition going forward.

The review found that whilst great progress has been made across all five priority areas, such as in our Language and Stigma priority where we collaborated with Each and Every Child to deliver language and reframing training to staff across our organisation; and in our Building Better Relationships and Offering Employment and Development priorities where the continued promotion, development and support of our Care Experienced Colleagues Group has resulted in increased representation, ensuring that we are responsive to the voices of those with lived experience across our service, and expanding the Group’s remit, such as with members of the Group now supporting new applicants with experience of care in conjunction with Recruitment’s Positive Action team; that we cannot be complacent and must continue to drive forward positive change with respect to Corporate Parenting as there is still room for progress to be made, especially with respect to working with partners to continue to develop a shared understanding through better use of data and practices to evaluate our progress in future.

This, alongside wider engagement as mentioned above, has informed development of, and is reflected in, The Plan 2024-27, such as in our commitment to continue to work collaboratively to reduce the disproportionate criminalisation of children and young people with experience of care. At the same time this will ensure improvement of justice outcomes, continuous monitoring of our progress, reflecting on and understanding the impact of our activities within each commitment area to ensure we make a positive difference to the children, families, and communities who have experience of care and for whom The Promise was made.

The Plan has given due regard and consideration tackling discrimination, victimisation, harassment, unnecessary criminalisation or any other unlawful conduct towards those with experience of care whilst upholding rights with cognisance of the European Convention on Human Rights (the ECHR), the Human Rights Act 1998 (the HRA), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (the UNCRC) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024.

## Summary of Analysis / Decisions:

### What the assessment found, and actions already taken.

The assessment found that The Plan would likely have an impact on Police Officers and staff, Special Constables, Scottish Police Authority Staff, communities and partnerships.

In terms of the Equality Impact Assessment, from all available evidence and existing legislation and research it was assessed that:

* With respect to ‘General / Relevance to All’ - a general positive impact across all protected characteristics groups would likely occur as a result of The Plan. Despite not being recognised as a protected group in legislation to date, people with experience of care can be vulnerable, often facing compounded inequalities due to their experiences and any intersectionality with protected characteristics groups. This emphasises the importance of providing inclusive support which is embedded in The Plan.
* Engagement with the Advisory Group, as outlined above, suggests that The Plan will likely positively impact on children and young people with experience of care, and ultimately help protect their rights in Scotland.
* Engagement with children, young people and adults with experience of care has shaped this Plan to ensure Police Scotland strives to improve the lives of children and young people with care experience in Scotland. This engagement shaped each theme and ensures that a fair, caring approach will be taken by Police Scotland engaging with people with experience of care at every opportunity.
* Whilst the Age protected characteristic group is not specifically referenced in The Plan, it is assessed that The Plan will have a positive impact due to the nature of the recognition of lifelong impact of care, and lifelong rights of people with care experience. This includes how Police Scotland conduct themselves as a prospective and supportive employer. These aims are weaved throughout The Plan and all priorities are themed on how to directly influence, improve or ensure the rights of and generally positively impact on children, young people and adults with experience of care living in Scotland. The Plan has also been published in a ‘child-friendly’ format with additional graphics and short summaries of information written in understandable language to increase appeal and accessibility to children and young people.
* Whilst not specifically referenced in The Plan it is assessed that it will have a positive impact on the Disability protected characteristic. Engagement with the Advisory Group and Care Experienced community as outlined above has ensured a positive, caring approach to all children and young people with experience of care, including those with a disability. The plan has also been published in a plain text accessible format, to be inclusive of people with disabilities such as visual impairments or literacy related neurodiversity who may use text-to-speech software that it not compatible with certain formats.
* Whilst not specifically referenced in The Plan it is assessed from currently available evidence and existing research into intersectionalities between people with experience of care and any of the other protected characteristics groups (namely Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex, Sexual Orientation) would likely be positive.
* The Plan incorporates mechanisms for regular monitoring ensuring any unintentional or indirect impact on protected characteristic groups or other emerging issues would be addressed promptly.

In terms of the Human Rights Impact Assessment, it was assessed that The Plan protects several rights / freedoms relevant to policing, namely:

* Article 2 (Right to Life) – The plan focuses on the needs of people with experience of care, improving their safety and wellbeing generally.
* Article 3 (Prohibition from Torture) – The plan focuses on the needs of people with experience of care, improving their safety and wellbeing generally including protection from harm and abuse in any setting.
* Article 5 (Right to Liberty and Security) – The Plan protects the right to liberty and security of people with experience of care in several respects. This includes with respect to any restriction of liberty such as in police custody; through collaboration with other Corporate Parents, ensuring any policy changes or decisions that affect children and young people with experience of care with respect to their liberty or security are implemented with their needs at the forefront of any decision made; and in seeking to improve relationships and increase the feeling of safety and security wherever a person lives as well as in the wider community.
* Article 6 (Right to a Fair Trial) – The plan seeks to support anyone with care experience who is in conflict with the law.
* Article 8 (Right to Respect for Private and Family Life) – The plan focuses on the needs of people with experience of care, improving their safety and wellbeing generally which also improves stable family and social relationships, enhancing young people’s private lives wherever they live and whoever they live with.
* Article 10 (Freedom of Expression) – The Plan encourages children and young people with care experience to have a voice and express their views about matters that affect them.
* Article 14 (Prohibition of Discrimination) – The plan focuses on the needs of people with experience of care, improving their safety and wellbeing generally and with respect to language, stigma and unconscious bias causing discrimination.

## Summary of Mitigation Actions:

### What the assessment found, and actions already taken.

The assessment found no potential for unlawful discrimination or adverse impact on equality duty or interference with human rights.

The Plan’s commitment to continuous evaluation and improvement as noted above, will help mitigate any unintended or indirect negative consequences and promote positive outcomes for all people with experience of care, including where any intersectionality with protected characteristic groups is present.

During engagement and consultation it was highlighted that the full version of The Plan may not be accessible for all. Taking cognisance of the target audience including children and young people, as well as that some people may have learning disabilities or visual impairments whereby use of ‘text-to-speech’ software is usually not compatible with many formats, there was a requirement to create a ‘Summary’ version of The Plan to make it more accessible and understandable for children, and a plain text ‘Accessible’ version of each document to ensure compatibility with such software. Final versions of all documents were published together [here](https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/how-we-do-it/strategic-planning/children-and-young-people/care-experienced/) on the external Police Scotland website on 20/12/2024, and can be requested by emailing [PolicingTogetherChildrenAndYoungPeople@scotland.police.uk](mailto:PolicingTogetherChildrenAndYoungPeople@scotland.police.uk) .

Consideration has also been given to providing The Plan in languages other than English. Should this be required by any individual or organisation this can be requested by emailing the above mailbox also.

Consideration was given to ensuring the whole organisation and a wide external audience, especially the Care Experienced community, hear about and understand The Plan. As a result a comprehensive communications strategy was created in conjunction with Police Scotland Corporate Communications. On 20/12/2024 all versions of The Plan (full, summary and accessible), the 3-Year Report of the previous Plan (and accessible version) and the Scottish Youth Parliament’s Engagement Report were published on both internal and external sites with an internal launch news article highlighting the Plan and its contents to all officers and staff within the organisation.

On 04/02/2025 an in-person launch event was hosted at Dalmarnock Police Office with identified internal Corporate Parenting leads from across all local and national divisions. This included workshops, Corporate Parenting training from Who Cares? Scotland and keynote speakers from the Care Experienced Colleagues Group, Strategy and Insight, and local and national departments sharing examples of good practice.

The Plan was formally launched on Care Day (21/02/2025) with a news article internally and across all social media platforms Police Scotland have a presence on.