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| <b>Meeting of South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership</b>  | <b>Strategic Planning Advisory Group</b>                |  |
| <b>Held on</b>   | <b>21<sup>st</sup> June 2022</b>                        |  |
| <b>Agenda Item:</b>  | <b>10</b>   |  |
| <b>Title:</b>  | <b>Strategic Advocacy Plan</b>                          |  |
| <b>Summary:</b>  |   |  |
| <p>This report seeks the approval of Strategic Planning Advisory Group to provide oversight and strategic direction to a new, dedicated Strategic Advocacy Plan. This report sets out why an advocacy strategy is required now and the rights of the residents of South Ayrshire to access advocacy from a legal perspective.</p>  |   |  |
| <b>Author:</b>   | <b>Rebecca Hunter, Planning and Performance Officer</b> |  |
| <p><b>It is recommended that the Strategic Planning Advisory Group:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i. Agrees to provide oversight and strategic direction to a new Strategic Advocacy Plan for South Ayrshire; and</b></li> <li><b>ii. Notes that progress reports on the revised strategy will be brought to SPAG until the strategy is approved at IJB by the end of 2022.</b></li> </ul> |   |  |
| <b>Route to meeting:</b>   |   |  |
| A report was presented to the DMT on the 18 <sup>th</sup> of May 2022.   |   |  |
| <b>Directions:</b>   | <b>Implications:</b>                                    |  |
| 1. No Directions Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>  | Financial <input type="checkbox"/>                      |  |
| 2. Directions to NHS Ayrshire & Arran <input type="checkbox"/>   | HR <input type="checkbox"/>                             |  |
| 3. Directions to South Ayrshire Council <input type="checkbox"/>   | Legal <input type="checkbox"/>                          |  |
| 4. Directions to both SAC & NHS <input type="checkbox"/>   | Equalities <input type="checkbox"/>                     |  |
|  | Sustainability <input type="checkbox"/>                 |  |
|  | Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>              |  |
|  | ICT <input type="checkbox"/>                            |  |

## Strategic Advocacy Plan

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks the approval of South Ayrshire Strategic Planning Advisory Group to provide oversight and strategic direction to a new, dedicated Advocacy Strategy. This report sets out why an advocacy strategy is required now and the rights of the residents of South Ayrshire to access advocacy from a legal perspective.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Strategic Planning Advisory Group:**
- i. Agrees to provide oversight and strategic direction to a new Advocacy Strategy for South Ayrshire; and**
  - ii. Notes that progress reports on the strategy will be brought to SPAG until the strategy is approved at IJB by the end of 2022.**

### 3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 This report seeks to provide an update on the current activity to draft a Strategic Advocacy Plan for South Ayrshire. The Plan applies to both children and adults and is being developed with the guidance of the Mental Welfare Commission's 2018 report ['The Right to Advocacy'](#). The strategy seeks to enhance and strengthen the advocacy support that South Ayrshire provides to its community members whilst also working in partnership with those who use and provide advocacy services to develop the Plan.
- 3.2 Everyone has the right to access an independent advocate to help express their views and wishes where they might not be able to on their own. Some people have a legal right to access advocacy i.e., if someone has mental ill health, a learning disability, autism, or dementia, then the Mental Health Care and Treatment (Scotland) Act 2003 protects their right to advocacy.
- 3.3 Advocacy services also provide support to our community members who may be vulnerable. This includes children who are subject to Child Protection measures and/or looked after. Advocacy also supports vulnerable adults who are subject to adult support and protection measures and/or require support under the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000.
- 3.4 Advocacy can come in a range of services from independent advocacy, peer advocacy, group advocacy and should be flexible to meet the need of the individual who requires their support.
- 3.5 Within South Ayrshire the HSCP currently funds three advocacy services which provide support to adults and children and includes advocacy support for complex

issues such as mental health, learning difficulties and children and adults subject to protection measures. In line with the development of the Strategic Advocacy Plan, children's advocacy services is currently in the process of a redesign and advocacy contracts will be out for tender in September 2022 and the development of the strategy will work closely with this.

### 3.6 The current services funded by the HSCP are:

- **Circles Advocacy:** provides independent professional advocacy to people aged 16 or over who live in South Ayrshire to understand their rights, get the right information to help them make informed choices, raise issues they are worried about and safeguard people in situations where they are vulnerable. Circles supports all adults including those with a learning disability and/or mental health needs.
- **Barnardo's - Hear4U:** aims to provide an independent accessible community-based advocacy service for children and young people under eighteen who are living in South Ayrshire. Hear4U also provides advocacy for children and young suffering with emotional health and well-being and are subject to the terms of the Mental Health (Care & Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 or been admitted to a mental health ward on a voluntary basis including those currently accessing support from the Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service.
- **Who Cares? Scotland:** provides professional, independent advocacy services in South Ayrshire. The service works one on one with a young person to help them have a say in what is happening to them. Who Cares? Scotland strive to provide advocacy that helps young people feel respected, included, listened to and understood. The service is independent to any care services a young person receives. Who Cares? Scotland also supports children and young people who are currently on the Child Protection register and/or attending Children Hearings.

## 4. REPORT

- 4.1 Since the commencement of the strategy development in 2019, a draft version was developed. Further work is required to update the Plan prior to a public consultation taking place.
- 4.2 We will look to reform a steering group to support the final development of a draft strategy and continue engagement with the local community to support the development of the strategy.
- 4.3 Whilst the strategy will be based around the needs of the local community it will be informed by guidance from the Mental Welfare Commission, the Scottish Governments report: [Independent advocacy: guide for commissioners](#), national legislations and the UNCRC's report on [Children's Rights](#).

4.4 In developing the Plan, a survey questionnaire was made available to the community and workforce in 2019 to express their views on the current advocacy provisions in South Ayrshire. Within the survey there were:

- 229 people participated of which:
  - 52% had no knowledge of advocacy
  - 21% worked with an adult who used an independent advocacy
  - 13% had other knowledge/involved with advocacy
  - 7% have used an independent advocate.
  - 5% Carer/family member of someone who uses/has used
  - 3% were someone who independently advocates for adults/older people in South Ayrshire
  - 1% were someone who independently advocates for children/young people in South Ayrshire

4.5 This survey has provided perspective from individuals within the community to form the current drafting on the Strategic Advocacy Plan. Moving forward we propose the following series of steps be follow:

#### **Communication and Engagement:**

- As a significant level of the draft has already been completed, a final draft version of the plan will be ready to go to consultation towards the end of 2022 and feedback from the participants will be utilised to form the final plan ready for approval and publication by the end of the year.
- We will seek to engage with people on a range of levels to inform the plan.
- We will seek to create a communication plan to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the development of the strategy and allow the opportunity for them to input any feedback into the strategy.

#### **Governance**

- A Steering Group is currently being reformed to develop and agree on the scope and vision of the strategy; oversee the development of the strategy document; develop arrangements for the implementation and review of the strategy and oversee the communications strategy.
- The group will meet on a regular basis and be formed with representation from the Chief Social Work Officer, Children and Families, Adults and Older Services, Commissioning, Planning and Performance, Commissioned Services and Third Sector Organisations.
- The Group will also receive regular oversight from the IJB Strategic Planning Advisory Group.

#### **Review, Plan and Monitor**

- As a draft version of the Strategic Advocacy Plan had already commenced the information already gathered has begun to be reviewed and updated.
- A review of our current provision will take place with the engagement with stakeholders to ascertain what provision is required for the strategy to reflect the needs of the local population within South Ayrshire.

- The next stage will be to plan how activities are implemented to ensure engagement with the wider organisation and community members is accessible to reflect people's life experiences and views about solutions for the draft plan before a final strategy is published.
- An implementation plan will be formed which will have measurable performance indicators and outcomes within it. The plan should also include agreed responsibilities with timescales, a clear reporting process, a feedback process that ensures the HSCP learns along the way and enables it to change course when needed whilst also allowing for community members to influence change when required.

4.6 Monitoring and review of the approved Strategic Advocacy Plan will be undertaken by Performance and Audit Committee.

## **5. STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

5.1 Advocacy services in South Ayrshire serve a core service to the people the HSCP support and the Advocacy Strategy sets out its outcomes to support the community. The IJB Strategic Plan outlines seven key objectives, and the Advocacy Strategy will align clearly with these:

- 1) We focus on prevention and tackling inequality
- 2) We nurture and are part of communities that care for each other
- 3) We work together to give you the right care in the right place
- 4) We help build communities where people feel safe
- 5) We are an ambitious and effective Partnership
- 6) We are transparent and listen to you
- 7) We make a positive impact beyond the services we deliver

## **6. IMPLICATIONS**

### **6.1 Financial Implications**

6.1.1 There will be financial implications as a result of the Advocacy Strategy however these implications will be brought to the IJB as appropriate.

### **6.2 Human Resource Implications**

6.2.1 There are no HR implications to agreeing this report.

### **6.3 Legal Implications**

6.3.1 There are no legal implications to agreeing this report.

### **6.4 Equalities implications**

6.4.1 A previous equalities assessment was undertaken at the first stages of the strategy development and will continue to be updated as the strategy progresses.

### **6.5 Sustainability implications**

6.5.1 There are no sustainability implications to agreeing this report.

### **6.6 Clinical/professional assessment**

- 6.6.1 The views of professional groups will be taken into close consideration as the strategy is developed.

## **7. CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

- 7.1 Proposals for consultation and a partnership approach are set out above and will be further developed.

## **8. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 8.1 There is no risk associated with agreeing this report.

### **REPORT AUTHOR AND PERSON TO CONTACT**

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### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

[Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance: Independent Advocacy Principles, Standards & Code of Best Practice \(2019\).](#)

[The Mental Welfare Commission: The Right To Advocacy \(2018\)](#)

[The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.](#)

[The Scottish Government: Independent advocacy: guide for commissioners \(2013\).](#)

**14.06.2022**