Equalities and Community Justice

www.aberdeencity.gov.uk

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

Welcome

to our first quarterly Equalities and Community Justice bulletin for 2020. Obviously circumstances are extremely unusual, so we have put together a bulletin which provides information about support and services available related to COVID 19. We have also included other news stories which we would like to share.

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Council services

In response to the latest government advice on the COVID-19, Aberdeen City Council is taking steps to prevent further spread of the virus; protect employee and public health; and to safeguard public services, especially to those who need us most.

CRISIS SUPPORT HELPLINE

The Council has a free crisis support line for those hardest hit and who are unable to find a link to support on this page or through existing networks. This service is for crisis only and offers welfare advice and support, including what to do if you are struggling to get food or pay bills.

The number **0800 0304 713** is being staffed initially from 8am-8pm Monday to Friday.

NOTE: This is NOT a medical helpline. See NHS (Health) Advice for more information on COVID-19.

Grampian Coronavirus Assistance Hub (GCAH)

A new website and phoneline has been launched, providing people all across Grampian with information on how to access social, practical and emotional support on coronavirus (covid-19).

The new Assistance Hub pulls together links to the latest advice from a range of partners including all three local authorities, police, health, Red Cross, volunteers and community information. It is a site for anyone in Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and Moray, with information for residents and businesses alike.

The website address is www.GCAH.org.uk or call 0808 196 3384 (8am-8pm seven days a week).

The website is full of links with up-to-date information. The main objective is as a focal point for information and assistance for anyone affected by coronavirus anywhere in Grampian. It is also a way for residents to offer their support which they can safely deliver in their communities. Staff are on the phone to provide callers with up to date information, or to link them up with the right person who can quickly answer questions.

Another important feature is that the site can be used to request help on behalf of someone else, allowing friends and neighbours to signpost to someone in need.

COVID 19: Services for people harmed by abuse

Please follow the link to find information about arrangements for accessing services for individuals harmed by abuse, as at 31st March 2020.

Details of how you or people you know can help volunteer during the Covid-19 Coronavirus crisis can be found below:

Latest information/updates on communityvolunteeringopportunities in Aberdeen: https://www.volunteeraberdeen.org.uk/community-responseandhttps://acvo.org.uk/covid-19/

Community Assistance Directory: https://covid-19.scvo.org.uk/help/for-people?lat=57.14985080754391&lng=-2.0937598165505204&sort=&support=&location=Aberdeen&distance=5&keywords

Helpful advice for individual volunteers and organisations: https://www.volunteerscotland.net/about-us/news-blog/news/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-voluntary-orgs/ and https://www.volunteerscotland.net/covid-19/

Covid 19 – Volunteering/ Community Assistance and Supports

Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland have link to be able to provide help remotely – details are at https://www.chss.org.uk/coronavirus/?ref=home

University of Aberdeen Shared Planet and Becycle group are organising food deliveries to reach the most vulnerable-all help greatly appreciated – details at https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=2763460963720667&id=402484413151679&__tn__=%2As%2As-R

The following materials are now available on NHS Inform:

The translated posters on NHS inform for download, along with a Communications toolkit. The posters have been translated into Arabic, Cantonese, Farsi, Kurdish (Sorani), Mandarin, Polish, Tigrinya and Vietnamese

https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-professionals

BSL videos on YouTube https://www.nhsinform.scot/translations/languages/british-sign-language-bsl/illnesses-and-conditions/coronavirus-covid-19

Easy Read documents https://www.nhsinform.scot/translations/

The British Deaf Association, Aberdeen City Council working with North East Sensory Services will be releasing videos on the current advice. If you wish to be included in the mailing list to receive this, please email BMcGarry@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Supporting Children and Young People

Through a programme of training, blogs and workshops, The Spark has been able to support a large number of frontline workers, CJ staff, volunteers, teaching staff and parents and carers within Aberdeen to support children and young people's mental health & wellbeing. Gaining confidence to open up a conversation with a child or young person ensures that we are not going to shy away from supporting their emotional issues. Younger children will lack the ability and vocabulary to communicate their emotional state and older children may not consciously understand that such issues may be at the root of their behaviour. By attempting to understand the triggers for behaviour, we can be better able to deal with the source of the problem and potentially support and reduce the likelihood of repetition.

At The Spark, our blog is continuously tackling topics that we want to share and support with a wider audience. Please follow the link https://www.thespark.org.uk/about-us/the-spark-blog/ to see issues being discussed on Talking to our Child about Mental Health, Childhood Anxiety, Tackling Challenging Behaviour and many further topics. We also have a number of free marketing materials available through NHS Resources and directly through The Spark, please email e.cameron@thespark.org.uk

MAP moves into new phase . . .

The Big Lottery funded Media Access Project (MAP) within HMP & YOI Grampian, which worked with over 600 prisoners and up to a hundred different services over the last five years will come to an end in its present form on 31st March 2020. New funding has been secured through Cashback for Communities Phase 5 funding for an exciting new media-based employability programme which aims to commence in April 2020, which will include a rolling 10-week pre-release media and personal development course for under 25s. Our organisation has been honoured to have had the opportunity to work with so many incredibly talented and inspiring prisoners over the last five years, and we look forward to continuing this work through the investment from CashBack.

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Funded by:

A partnership project with:

map Creating Media, Transforming Lives

Cuckooing Project Awards Success

#CountyLines
Scotland
CrimeStoppers.
0800 555 111
100% anonymous. Always.

Police Scotland North East Division's Cuckooing Project was nominated by local Senior Management for a 'Chief Constables Bravery and Excellence Awards' Excellence Award 2019, and the awards ceremony was held on Friday 28 February 2020. The nomination was based around all the work on Cuckooing in the North East, from its design and initiation in Aberdeenshire to its evolution and implementation in Aberdeen (having been identified as a priority as part of Aberdeen's Local Outcome Improvement Plan), and the frontline work carried out by the partners involved.

The project won the category award for "Greatest Contribution to Policing Priorities". Inspector Ian McKinnon commented: "This is no small feat when considering all the fantastic work that is carried out across Scotland. I have no doubt that the strong multiagency approach within it was key to it being held above the others." 'Cuckooing' in Policing terms is described as taking over a person's home by intimidation or other means, including the use of violence, by an Organised Crime Group (OCG) for the purposes of utilising the premises in the course of criminality. The term 'cuckooing' is taken from the Cuckoo bird which invades the nests of other birds and utilises it for its own purposes. This activity is a blight on our communities and brings with it significant harm to many.

It is known that individuals involved in serious organised crime gangs from areas such as Liverpool, West Midlands and London travel to other parts of the country, including Aberdeen City. These individuals will then take over the property to assist with their illegal operation, be it for storing or dealing drugs. This is often achieved through the use of threats and actual violence towards the occupants or their loved ones.

More often than not, the occupier of the house is a vulnerable member of the community either through addiction, age, mental health or other vulnerabilities which makes them a target for such crime groups.

Multi agency visits involving staff from Police Scotland, Housing and Substance Misuse services (as relevant) take place to residences affected, with a view to engaging individuals into support services and diverting them from involvement in criminality. The aim is to protect those who are most vulnerable to such crime whilst disrupting the operation of OCG's who prey upon them.

Education of members of the public, Police Officers, key partners and other agencies is central to the initiative and it runs alongside traditional Police enforcement against the OCGs, reducing their opportunity to use cuckooing and further disrupting their criminal activities to facilitate the overarching aim of identifying and safeguarding vulnerable persons.

Community Justice Snippets

Prevention and early intervention in Youth Justice Study:

A new report has been published, titled Prioritising Prevention? Opportunities and barriers to inclusion, prevention and early intervention in Scottish Youth Justice. It is a scoping study, undertaken as part of the Intervention as Prevention project, and aims to provide a picture of prevention in youth justice across Scotland.

Rights Respecting -

Scotland's approach to children in conflict with the law: Last year, Claire Lightowler took time out from her role as the Director of CYCJ (Centre for Youth and Criminal Justice) to review literature and data. The report she produced with her findings outlines the changes that our youth justice system must make if Scotland is to uphold its commitment to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The full report can be read here.

First PASS Stats published:

The Scottish Government has now published the first statistics on the extension of the presumption against short sentences (PASS). PASS came into force in July 2019 and states that a court must not pass a sentence of imprisonment for a term of 12 months or less on a person unless the court considers that no other method of dealing with the person is appropriate. Due to the period covered by the data and the delay in cases subject to the presumption coming to court, the report concludes that it is too early to tell whether the presumption has had an effect on the sentences passed by the judiciary. Scottish Government will continue to monitor the effect of PASS and will publish a further report in June and again in the Autumn. You can read the full publication here.

Sacro 'Team of the Year' Award

Chair of Sacro Board of Trustees, Sandy Cameron (left) presents Sacro Aberdeen staff member, Dougie Bogie with the Chairman's Award for his outstanding contribution to the team and local communities through the development of the 'Ower n' Abeen' programme.

The staff from Sacro's Aberdeen services have been awarded the Team of the Year award, voted on by staff from across the organisation nationally. This was presented by the Chair of the Sacro Board, Sandy Cameron, at the annual Sacro Staff Conference. An individual award was also made to staff member Dougie Bogie for his outstanding contribution to the team and local communities through the development of the 'Ower n' Abeen' programme.

The awards were made in recognition of the contribution made by local staff to deliver services enhancing the quality of life for Supported Persons with whom they are working. This was across all the services available in Aberdeen, ranging from provision for those with Learning Disabilities to those involved with the criminal justice system.

Sacro services available in Aberdeen include the Intensive Support Service for people in crisis requiring interventions to help them achieve stability and progress and the Specialist Housing Support Service for people with Learning Disabilities requiring assistance to help them live as independently as possible in the community. The Enhanced Framework Community Justice Service supports individuals with complex needs and often forensic backgrounds to live in the community, whilst the Supported Tenancy Service supports individuals with offending backgrounds where mental health has been a factor.

The 'Ower n' Abeen' programme is a series of therapeutic activities which all service users can access and focuses on mindfulness, meditation and relaxation techniques. This gives service users access and opportunity to enjoy alternative activities that will enhance individual experience and help them meet their own goals and identified outcomes. Of note, elements of this programme have also been delivered to local businesses on request as part of team building or organisational development days.

In addition, Sacro Aberdeen provides Community Mediation, Domestic Abuse, Veterans Mentoring and Restorative services to meet the needs of our diverse communities, as well as the National Refresh service, delivered in schools to assist with young people facing differing challenges to achieve positive destinations in the learning environment.

Community Justice Snippets

Domestic abuse figures published:

The Scottish Government have published the latest statistics on incidents of domestic abuse recorded by police in Scotland for 2018/19, which you can find here. The report shows a 2% increase in incidents over the previous year, although the levels of domestic abuse recorded by Police Scotland have remained relatively consistent since 2011/12. You can read the full report here and you can read the Cabinet Secretary's response here.

Scottish Sentencing Council Guidelines Consultation:

The Scottish Sentencing Council (SSC) have launched their draft guideline for sentencing young people for consultation. You can find the consultation documents and the draft guideline here. This is the latest set of guidelines they have prepared and it follows their guidelines on the Principles and Purposes of Sentencing and on the Sentencing Process. The guidelines contain lots of interesting proposals but two in particular are of interest – firstly, following the research the SSC commissioned on brain development (available here) they have proposed the definition of young people include anyone aged under 25 (which means the guidelines would apply to about 17,000 people annually). The second is that the draft guideline proposes that rehabilitation should be the primary consideration when sentencing young people (as opposed to the other potential considerations set out here in their first guideline). The consultation will be open until Friday 22nd May 2020.

Community Justice Scotland Consultation: Community Justice Scotland have published a consultation on their Corporate Plan 2020-2023, which can be found here. The consultation closes at mid-day on 7th April 2020.

Aberdeen Helping Hand

A facebook group whose admins are "working directly with Aberdeen City Council to organise neighbourhood response teams... we are actively looking for volunteers for each of these neighbourhoods to help us distribute food parcels, pick up necessities, prescriptions, dog walk etc. Anyone looking to do their bit for the local community to email: communities@aberdeencity.gov.uk

THIRD SECTOR SUPPORT

ACVO have been hard at work coordinating their response to the virus and have compiled a number of resources:

- Coronavirus Community Assistance Directory
- COVID-19 Directory
- Community Response Page

Aberdeen Cyrenians have launched a new service called AC2U delivering essential items to those most in need. Click here to get help, or here if you are a professional looking to refer someone you are supporting.

BEMIS Scotland have formed an Ethnic Minority National Resilience Network to help coordinate aid for ethnic minority communities during this time- click here

GREC services

GREC is still open for business and our services will still be running remotely.

Casework (Advice, Support & Employability)

Caseworkers are available by phone or email. All current clients can continue meeting with their caseworkers remotely via video call. Any new clients are encouraged to direct enquiries to casework@grec.co.uk.

In-Trans (Interpreting & Translation)

GREC will offer interpreting and translation services through phone or video conferencing
Please direct any enquiries to in-trans@grec.co.uk.

English Classes & Language Cafes

All ESOL courses currently running will be completed online.

More information can be found at the Learning English in Aberdeen page and join the Language Cafe Group on Facebook for more information & to keep up to date.

Please direct any enquiries to language-cafe@grec.co.uk.

Counselling Services

All current clients can continue seeing their counsellors remotely via video call. Any new clients are encouraged to direct enquiries to mthomson@grec.co.uk.

ABERDEEN

We are Aberdeen City Mutual Aid, a group of community volunteers.

If you are self isolating due to COVID-19 we can:

DELIVER YOUR MAIL | GET URGENT SUPPLIES | CALL FOR A CHAT

Reach us at:

@AidAberdeen

Aberdeen City Mutual Aid

Call: 01224 515513

Email: aberdeenmutualaid@Outlook.com

ABERDEEN BANGLADESHI WELFARE TRUST

Working for better community in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire

Covid-19 Support

If you are,
self-isolating | affected by the virus | collection or drop off shopping | General advice

HOTLINES

- 07737 118390
- 07401 401701
- 07932 845357

Email: abwt.org@gmail.com | www.abwt.org.uk

Watch our new Equalities Team video here...the story so far

https://youtu.be/GjCS-Gr3a1I

Read our new Equality Outcomes here...

https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/services/people-and-communities/equality-and-diversity/equality-outcomes-and-mainstreaming-report

BSL Version at:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UgvF3_ERk2o&feature=youtu.be

Further information about Community Justice here:

https://communityplanningaberdeen.org.uk/community-justice/

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Ma tha thu ag iarraidh eadar-theangachadh den sgrìobhainn seo ann an cànan neo cruth eile (clò mòr neo clàr claistinneach) feuch an cuir thu fios gu

If you are deaf or have a hearing impairment, you can still communicate with the Council via Text Relay by dialling 18001 + telephone number: **01224 523542**