

CLACKMANNANSHIRE COUNCIL

Report to People's Committee

Date of Meeting: 26th November 2020

Subject: The Promise

Report by: Fiona Duncan, Chief Social Work Officer

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive summary of the Independent Care Review (ICR) and the seven output reports contained within The Promise. The Care Review was one of the most substantial, ambitious, and necessary reviews in the history of the Scottish Parliament with cross party support. The CR and The Promise delivered a powerfully simple message: care must have love and nurture at its heart. Keeping The Promise will mean all children will grow up loved, safe and respected so they can realise their full potential.

This report highlights the strong foundations that Clackmannanshire has to build on The Promise and the critical Next Steps. Finally, The Promise asks that we begin to set out our 'honest assessment' of where we are now and what we need to do to transform the local 'care system' to ensure that Clackmannanshire 'Keeps The Promise'.

2.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that the People Committee:

- 2.1.** Notes the findings of the Independent Care Review and the seven output reports.
- 2.2.** Notes the detail of The Plan including the first key priority to have in place holistic universal and targeted family support to ensure the highest priority of early intervention and prevention
- 2.3.** Note that Scottish Government have committed to £4 million in funding to the Promise Partnership Fund to help scale up holistic family support
- 2.4.** Approve the pledge to 'Keep The Promise' in Clackmannanshire Council.
- 2.5.** Note the reflections and strengths detailing the existing strong foundations in Clackmannanshire to align and build on the work of The Promise

- 2.6. Note the critical work in *The Money and Follow The Money* that provides powerful evidence into the need to realign and move budgets ‘upstream’ by investing greater amounts into cross-cutting, collaborative early intervention, early help, prevention and family support to enable obsolescence of spend in crisis, acute and late intervention ‘downstream’, which can be devastating to children, families and communities throughout the lifespan and across generations
- 2.7. Note the challenges and the ‘honest assessment’ of where we are now, and the cross-cutting collaborative work we need to do, to achieve the aspirations of *The Promise*. This assessment and work going forward will be incorporated into the Strategic Director People’s plans for Redesign and Transformation.
- 2.8. The Deputy Convener of People, will convene a cross-party group to drive this area forward and ensure that Clackmannanshire “Keeps the Promise”.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 In October 2016, the First Minister made a commitment that Scotland would *‘come together and love its most vulnerable children to give them a childhood they deserve’*. She commissioned an independent root and branch review of the ‘care system’ - the Independent Care Review. From February 2017 until February 2020 the Care Review (CR) went to work and was ground-breaking in its approach given it was driven by those with lived experience of the care system; it was their ‘stories’ that guided the Care Review and their experiences have shaped everything it concluded.

The work of the CR culminated in the publication of 7 reports on the 5th of February 2020. These are:

- The Promise
- The Pinky Promise (for younger readers)
- The Plan
- The Money
- Follow the Money
- The Rules
- Thank You

- 3.2 There are fundamental human narratives embedded in the CR rooted in the ethnographic stories and voices of those with lived experience that we must grasp – no matter the challenges. These powerful messages are rooted in universal human needs, to be:

- Loved
- Belong
- Heard
- Ensuring Intervention ‘does no harm’
- Empowered

- Protecting human rights.
- Non-stigmatising

4.0 The Promise

The main output of the CR is contained within The Promise. The Promise and other reports have come out of a programme of work guided by the voices of over 5,500 people - over half were children and young people with care experience. The work involved the curation and commissioning of research, and the development of a detailed understanding of the legislative, policy and practice environment.

For Scotland to support our children and young people to *grow up feeling loved, safe and respected so that they realise their full potential*, the Promise outlines the need for a redesign of the 'care system', including a fundamental shift in how decisions are made and money is spent in supporting Scotland's children and families.

5.0 The 5 Foundations

The Promise sets out a vision and blueprint for transformational change. At the heart of The Promise are 5 Foundations, which provide clarity of vision, a shared purpose, and a clear direction. These are:

1. **Voice:** Children must be meaningfully heard and listened to in all decisions about their care.
2. **Family:** Where children are safe in their families and feel loved, they must stay
3. **Care:** Where living with their family is not possible, children must stay with their brothers and sisters when safe to do so
4. **People:** The children that Scotland cares for must be actively supported to develop relationships with people in the workforce and wider community.
5. **Scaffolding:** Children, families and the workforce must be supported by a system that is there when needed. The scaffolding of help, support and accountability must be ready and responsive when it is required.

6.0 A Word about Risk

The Promise also makes an important but challenging point about risk. While we must always consider the immediate risk of harm to a child, we must also consider the risk that is created when we remove a child from their family. The risk then is that we may compound their trauma and make it harder for them to enjoy stable, loving, lasting relationships. Risk must also focus on the protection of family relationships, and, above all, allow children to enjoy the kind of childhoods that others take for granted.

7.0 Next Steps - The Plan

The Plan is split into three distinct phases over ten years – Bedding Down (2021-2024); Consolidation (2024-2027) and Continuous Improvement (2027 – 2030). The Plan will allow sufficient periods of innovation and implementation of new fit-for-purpose public services including tests, pilots and roll-out. A key message is that *‘organisations and institutions must radically rethink their underlying purpose and structures’*.

The Scottish Government (SG) has committed to take **three key early steps**:

- Firstly, to creating a structure that can facilitate the re-design of whole system approaches to care and support.
- Secondly, an Oversight Board is being established to hold us all to account,
- Thirdly, SG are also supporting the establishment of a dedicated, independent Promise Team, including investing £4 million in the Promise Partnership Fund that will help embed and scale-up holistic family support..

7.1 The Clackmannanshire Journey – Reflections, Strengths, Ambitions & Challenges

Clackmannanshire Children’s Services has been on its own journey to improve outcomes for children, families and communities for several years. We knew we had to make things better. We recognised the legacy in which we were bringing too many children into the ‘care system’ and placing children out of the area into foster care and residential care - often at a distance away from their families, schools, friends, GPs and local neighbourhoods. While clearly not intended, we often had no choice but to place our children in other authorities and communities in which they had no identity, connections or ties.

7.2 Reflections & Strengths

Despite the challenges, each year we have been carefully and incrementally making progress, as we sought to safely re-calibrate Clackmannanshire’s ‘care system’. For example:

- Strategically our high level Corporate Plan, LOIP and Be the Future Transformational Programme are well aligned to The Promise given strong strategic focus on empowering families and communities, improving health, while delivering sustainable public services by creating the conditions that ensures our community enjoy the benefits of greater prosperity and wellbeing.
- Our Children’s Services operationalisation of the Vision of Family 1st - to rebalance care to safely keep as many children and families together in Clackmannanshire community.
- We increased our Family Support offer by investing in third sector partnerships to build early help and prevention, layered with intensive family support

- We have been striving to develop a strong practice model across all of Children’s Services that places restorative and relational-based foundations at the core of our practice.
- We are extremely focused on building on our Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) Team
- Kinship Care is growing
- Developing and supporting our workforce is paramount.

There is no doubt that Clackmannanshire has strong foundations to build on and ‘Keep The Promise’, but we recognise we have considerable cross cutting work to do with many stakeholders including, children and families, inter-agency partners and third sector partners across the whole Community Planning Partnership.

8.0 Ambitions & Challenges

The Human & Economic Cost: Failure Demand – The Money & Follow the Money

The Money and Follow the Money sets out very clearly the direct cost of supporting children in the care system. It is established that annually Scotland invests in the region of **£942** million in delivering the current ‘care system’ and **£198** million in universal services associated with the ‘care system’. Additionally, it invests in the region of **£875** million in meeting the needs care experienced people have as a result of the ‘care system’ failing them, and, finally, Scotland loses in the region of **£732** million in lost income tax and national insurance as a result of care experienced people having lower incomes.

9.0 Planning & Moving Forward

The Promise Team are actively asking Community Planning Partnerships to think about how they shall work collaboratively. Ideally, there is an expectation that Councils and Partnerships will join together to build collaborative networks across regions building momentum and movement across Scotland.

9.1 We are asked to consider what might ‘Keeping the Promise’ look like in our organisations. In Clackmannanshire, we are proposing that we:

- Restate our commitment to The Promise and make a public commitment.
- Make internal statements to our staff teams and ask for their views..
- Listen to children and families on the edge of care to understand what they want our priorities to be.
- We will measure what counts to children and families with a focus on stability.
- We shall undertake an honest assessment of where we are now with this reflective paper forming the beginnings of that process.

- We will understand The Promise and map against The Plan.
- We are asked to pinpoint specific priorities that need to happen now while holding the broader landscape and planning in mind.

9.2 We all have much to do in the People Directorate, across Clackmannanshire Council and with our Community Planning Partners to achieve our aspirations for our local community and to 'Keep the Promise'. A paper will go forward to the Clackmannanshire Alliance early next year to seek their support and involvement as we take this crucial area of work forward.

10.0 Considerations

10.1 Sustainability Implications

The Promise sets out in The Plan a 10 year transformational journey to transform the lives of children, families and communities.

10.2 Resource Implications

Financial Details

The Promise will require considerable planning and cross-cutting work across the People Directorate, Council and the Community Planning Partnership to consider the strong evidence in The Money & Follow The Money.

Staffing

There are no implications for staffing arising from this report at this juncture but given the transformative programme of work, there may be future implications that have to be communicated and progressed through appropriate Change Programming processes.

Exempt Reports

Is this report exempt? Yes (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No

11.0 Declarations

The recommendations contained within this report support or implement our Corporate Priorities and Council Policies.

11.1 Our Priorities (Please double click on the check box)

- Clackmannanshire will be attractive to businesses & people and ensure fair opportunities for all
- Our families; children and young people will have the best possible start in life
- Women and girls will be confident and aspirational, and achieve their full potential
- Our communities will be resilient and empowered so that they can thrive and flourish

11.2 Council Policies (Please detail)

12.0 Equalities Impact

Have you undertaken the required equalities impact assessment to ensure that no groups are adversely affected by the recommendations?

Yes No

13.0 Legality

It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes No

14.0 Appendices

None

15.0 Background Papers

Have you used other documents to compile your report? (All documents must be kept available by the author for public inspection for four years from the date of meeting at which the report is considered)

Yes (please list the documents below) No

The Independent Care Review (February 2020) & the following reports:

The Promise

The Pinky Promise

The Money

Follow The Money

The Rules

The Plan

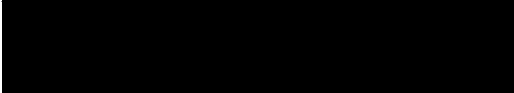
The Thank You

Keeping The Promise (October 2020)

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