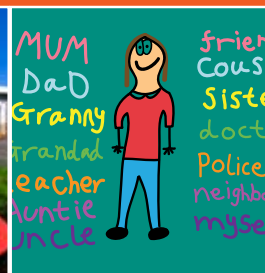




2011

# Integrated Working Policy Statement



# Integrated Working

## Part A – Rationale

***“Perth & Kinross Council is fully committed to the principle of integrated working. It is fundamental to community planning and the wider delivery of services in which organisations come together to plan and provide for the wellbeing of the people that they serve”.***

The purpose of this policy is to articulate a continuing commitment to the delivery of services through integrated working, both within this Service, and with partners from other agencies and voluntary organisations.

Authorities have a legislative duty to advance the well-being of the communities they serve, and to deliver services under Best Value principles through long-term community planning. In doing so, it is implicit that partnership working is at the core of service delivery. Increasingly, Services are subject to external audit which has a focus on integrated working and a requirement to evidence genuine engagement with the communities they serve.

‘Integrated working’ can include many models of collaboration such as multi-agency and partnership working with specific tasks, or a collaboration of professionals within a single team, but commonly it is agencies and Services working together in the pursuit of common objectives. Integrated working is of value when agencies are more able to deliver outcomes, agreed with users of the services, more effectively and efficiently than they could on their own or when the outcome could not have been achieved by a single agency. This is particularly important in a time of economic restraint. It requires the development of a common understanding of strengths and needs, and, as a result, the traditional professional boundaries which commonly exist between agencies, Services and workers become less distinct. The barriers which can develop through the use of distinctive professional language can be reduced.

Integrated working can exist at various organisational levels. It exists in groups of senior managers who may meet to develop common policies or joint funding arrangements, and it exists in operationally collaborative teams or workers from different Services or professions. In all of these, objectives of the group or team will take precedence over individual Service objectives, and common practices will develop between workers.

Integrated working derives from the belief shared by those who deliver frontline services, community planners and policy makers within the Scottish Government, that in order to achieve the **“Getting it right for every child” (GIRFEC)** vision of children who are safe, nurtured, healthy, achieving, active, included, respected and responsible there is a:

***“need to work together to ensure vulnerable children and their families get the help they need when they need it; provide high quality health education and other services to all children; and empower children, their families and their communities”***

## Part B – Policy Principles

In order to achieve better outcomes, the Key Principles upon which this policy statement is based are as follows:

- ❑ *A commitment to the value of collaborative working, and delivery of outcomes beyond the capacity of individual agencies.*
- ❑ *Respect for individual and agency expertise and the development of mutual trust and understanding.*
- ❑ *Empowerment of employees and service users.*
- ❑ *A focus on the identified needs of individuals, families and communities.*
- ❑ *Challenging of traditional perspectives and a reduction of artificial boundaries between Services.*
- ❑ *Continuous improvement through integrated monitoring and self-evaluation.*
- ❑ *Better co-ordination and targeting of Services.*
- ❑ *More holistic planning for individuals and communities which builds the capacities of individuals and communities.*
- ❑ *Strengthening of communities through networking and more effective information and skill sharing across services.*
- ❑ *The development of comprehensive assessments which bring together individual Service expertise and knowledge.*
- ❑ *Networking and innovative development of services, supported by the alignment of resources and the co-ordination of funding streams.*

## Part C – Policy Outcomes

The primary purpose of integrated working is to ensure that individuals, families and communities experience the best possible outcomes from the range of services available within the community. More specifically, the following outcomes are expected:

### **Planning**

- ❑ *Strategic Planning is integrated and co-ordinated across all Services and other agencies; has appropriate agency representation; and is informed by people who use the Service.*
- ❑ *Planning is informed by shared, agreed priorities which are identified by robust evaluation processes, including service user feedback.*
- ❑ *Planning is proportionate, responsive and empowers providers of services to meet individual and community need.*

## **Delivery**

- Communities and individuals are empowered as 'partners' within an integrated approach to service delivery.*
- Users of services are confident that those services will be appropriate, timeous and co-ordinated.*
- People are supported at all stages to access easily a wide range of services in the community.*
- Children, young people in 'need', and their families receive services which are based on a single shared assessment.*
- A reduced likelihood of vulnerable people failing to access services through widely skilled workers within universal services.*

## **Workforce Development**

- A wide range of achievements are valued.*
- Artificial boundaries between services are reduced through a focus on shared outcomes.*
- Individuals working together, learn and create opportunities together.*
- A culture of respectful, mutually supportive and empowering working relationships exists.*
- A wider, shared knowledge and understanding of the range of resources and expertise within the Service.*
- Continuous professional development through sharing of values, skills and integrated working practices.*
- Protocols are in place to facilitate information sharing.*

## **Improvement and Performance Management**

- Improved outcomes through integrated working are demonstrated in line with 'GIRFEC' and in the wider community.*
- Self-evaluation is on a collaborative basis.*
- Service user evaluation is routinely sought to inform future development of services.*
- There is a commitment to the continuous improvement of integrated services.*

## Part D – Responsibilities

In order to achieve the vision of effective integrated working there are clear responsibilities for employees at all levels.

**Employees** will:

- support the development of a culture of integrated working;*
- work across traditional boundaries;*
- respect all individuals as partners in achievement;*
- take time to respect and understand the nature of other professionals' work;*
- take ownership of the 'wider' vision and commit to the purpose of the 'team';*
- take a holistic approach to meeting the needs of children in line with GIRFEC;*
- confidently provide a single agency response when appropriate;*
- be responsible for having a good working knowledge and relationships with the range of services in an area, and make and receive referrals accordingly;*
- work pro-actively with partner agencies;*
- contribute professional expertise and knowledge and flexibly carry out identified tasks with others;*
- competently gather and exchange information over a sustained period;*
- seek out actively a wide range of opportunities which encourage individuals to fulfil their potential;*
- contribute to the evaluation of the effectiveness of integrated working.*

**Leaders and Managers** will:

- publicly endorse the principle of integrated working, demonstrate this at a senior level, and ensure effective leadership;*
- ensure Corporate policies are in place to facilitate integrated working;*
- promote equality of opportunity throughout all localities;*
- ensure adequate front line resources to support achievement of the Single Outcome Agreement;*
- develop and sustain funding for the efficient delivery of integrated services;*
- encourage and support innovative ways of working, and flexible and creative ways of interpreting professional roles;*
- provide effective leadership of integrated working;*
- work together to agree whole service priorities based on full consultation with Service and stakeholders;*
- agree a model for integrated working in unique communities and respond to priorities at a local level;*

- ❑ *commit time to building effective relationships with partner agencies;*
- ❑ *ensure structures are in place to support planning for individuals based on an inter-agency framework for intervention;*
- ❑ *inform the community planning process through Community Planning Partnerships;*
- ❑ *ensure a flexible workforce to support the delivery of Service priorities;*
- ❑ *ensure frontline services focus on agreed priorities and deploy employees and resources to support integrated working;*
- ❑ *commission research to inform practice and focus activity;*
- ❑ *actively promote multi-agency training, continuous professional development and networking to encourage a common knowledge and skills base;*
- ❑ *ensure staffing is in place and the training of employees to support integrated assessment;*
- ❑ *ensure planning/tracking mechanisms for individual children are in place to monitor individual outcomes;*
- ❑ *promote the development of protocols and IT to support information sharing;*
- ❑ *establish a culture of inter-agency monitoring, evaluation, and improvement planning.*