



Executive Manager: Jordan Sutherland  
Director of Children's Services: Helen Budge

Children's Social Work  
Children's Services  
Hayfield House  
Hayfield Lane  
Lerwick  
Shetland  
ZE1 0QD

## **In Confidence**

Investigation Lawyer  
Scottish Child Abuse Enquiry

Telephone: 01595 744000  
Fax: 01595 744460  
[www.shetland.gov.uk](http://www.shetland.gov.uk)

If calling please ask for:

Direct Dial: [REDACTED]

Date: 10<sup>th</sup> January 2023

Our Ref: DM/SCAI  
Your Ref:

Dear Ms [REDACTED]

### **SCOTTISH CHILD ABUSE INQUIRY FOSTER CARE CASE STUDY INQ. Section 21 Notices.00587**

Thank you for providing Shetland Islands Council with the opportunity to provide a further response to our case file review and original Section 21 response.

In terms of Question 1, the Council does not have any further reflections to submit with respect to Part B of its original Section 21 response and does not wish to submit a revised Part B. The original response continues to represent the situation during the stated time period.

In terms of Questions 2 and 3, we have taken the opportunity to reflect on the questions posed in the initial Section 21 notice and our response and maintain that there has been no systemic abuse or failures within foster care in Shetland. The abuse/allegations of abuse we found were minor and infrequent and were responded to appropriately within the procedures at that time. We identified areas of good practice when responding to allegations of abuse, with children being listened to and support being provided to the child and foster carers. We also identified areas for improvement with record keeping and the need to maintain robust audit trails of the implementation of new legislation and guidance.

Foster carers play a vital role in providing caring and supportive homes for children who can no longer live with their families. We value the contribution made by foster carers and the need to ensure all placements are safe for our children. We are in the process of reviewing foster care procedures and will ensure our learning is incorporated into the review.

Actions we aim to take include:

- We will continue to treat allegations seriously and in line with child protection procedures. The child's plan will continue to focus on person centred care and support and encourage children and young people to be aware of their human rights.

- Allegations of abuse will be recorded on the child's file and the foster carer's file. The Chief Social Work Officer will take an overview of all allegations of abuse involving children in foster care.
- Foster Carers will have a formal support and training plan to complement the current high level of informal support provided. Responsibilities and expectations of fee paid and non-fee paid foster carers will be reviewed to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the child and service. Foster care fees will be reviewed annually in the context of cost of living and inflation.
- We will introduce a procedure for foster carers transferring from other areas.
- We will look at a central recording system for implementing new legislation and guidance.

Shetland Islands Council is aware that some individuals will not report abuse during their time in care and may only pursue this during adulthood. If this occurs, we will respond timeously and with compassion.

Yours sincerely



Denise Morgan  
Chief Social Work Officer  
Shetland Islands Council