



**WESTERN ISLES HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICE**

Report by Chief Social Work Officer

**PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of the Report is to update Members of the recent findings from a Care Inspectorate inspection of the Housing Support Service.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The Housing Support Service is a relatively new service for vulnerable young people between the ages of 16 and 19, with a particular focus on supporting the needs of care experienced young people.
- 2.2 This was a short notice announced inspection which took place on 21 and 22 October 2024. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.
- 2.3 Key finding of the report are as follows:
  - Young people were well understood, listened to, and valued as individuals.
  - Young people benefitted from good quality and regularly reviewed interagency plans and were empowered to request reviews of their plans at any time.
  - Young people's needs and capacity are constantly assessed and any significant concerns were shared with partner professionals to help deliver good outcomes for young people.
  - Young people living with the service's housing provision felt safe, and the staff team took a measured approach to supporting young people manage risks outwith the service.
  - The service needs to ensure that all relevant incidents are notified to the Care Inspectorate in accordance with legislation.
  - The service took a flexible approach to staffing arrangements, which took into account people's practical and wellbeing needs.
  - Young people benefitted from the support of a committed, skilled and well-trained staff team.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 **It is recommended that the Comhairle the Report.**

Contact Officer: Jack Libby, Chief Officer, Children's Services/ Chief Social Work Officer

Appendix: Western Isles Housing Support Service Inspection Report

Background Papers:

## IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The following implications are applicable in terms of the Report.

<b>Resource Implications</b>	<b>Implications/None</b>
Financial	none
Legal	none
Staffing	none
Assets and Property	none
<b>Strategic Implications</b>	<b>Implications/None</b>
Risk	none
Equalities	none
Corporate Strategy	Protection of the most vulnerable in our communities.
Environmental Impact	none
Consultation	none

## BACKGROUND

5.1 Western Isles Housing Support is provided by the Comhairle and is based in Stornoway on the Isle of Lewis. The service aims to provide accessible, flexible and personalised housing support services to young people aged from 16 - 19 in critical need or as part of a transition plan to securing or maintaining permanent housing. At the time of this inspection, the service was provided by three support workers and a service coordinator. Four young people staying in their own tenancies within the service in central Stornoway were supported, and outreach support was offered to several other young people experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless. The service has undergone significant development since the time of the last inspection, with the development of new premises and the development of a dedicated staff team.

## DETAIL

6.1 To prepare for the inspection the Care Inspectorate reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making their evaluations of the service they spoke with service users, front line staff and management, observed practice and daily life, reviewed documents, reviewed survey responses from young people, and six external professionals with regular contact with the service.

6.2 The outcome of the inspection was as follows:

How well do we support people's wellbeing? 5 - Very Good

How good is our staff team? 5 - Very Good

## CONCLUSION

7.1 The Housing Support Services is a service that supports amongst the most vulnerable people in our community. Its takes skill, patience and perseverance to work with young people who have sadly experienced so much adversity and trauma in their lives. This inspection report highlights the positive impact on these lives the Housing Support staff can have. The staff and the young people should be commended in their efforts to turn adversity and trauma into opportunity and positive outcomes.