1. To what extent do you believe the Scottish Government’s national drugs strategy, The Road to Recovery, and the approach by Integration Authorities and NHS Boards are preventative?

As a national guidance document, The Road to Recovery document sets out the broad aims of Government with regards to addressing drug misuse within Scotland’s communities. There is significant attention paid within the document to the Curriculum for Excellence; this is welcome, as a framework for ensuring that drug and alcohol education is a mandatory part of any child/young person’s education. The document also rightly notes the role of individuals other than teaching staff in this important field. Likewise, the explicit connection of health and social inequalities and deprivation and problem drug use within the document is welcome.

More focus on addressing and understanding the role of Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) would be welcome within the refresh of the drug strategy and the preventative agenda. This, along with a commitment to tackling social and health inequalities is key in any proposed prevention strategy.

Locally, the Integrated Joint Board and NHS Board have evidenced a commitment to the prevention agenda; two locally commissioned services provide direct educational input to schools and to young people out with the school environment. Trauma informed practice is a priority with workforce development opportunities available that will enhance this.

The connection between the protecting people agendas of violence against women, child protection, adult protection and suicide prevention and alcohol and drugs has been made explicit with the creation of “Protecting People Angus”, a strategic partnership of each of the above strategy groups.

The IJB and NHS Tayside (as represented on Angus ADP) have supported the pilot of the Whole Family Approach, a model of early intervention that recognises the interconnectedness of issues such as mental health, substance misuse etc and the importance and impact of family (in its broadest sense) support to people experiencing difficulty.

2. Is the approach adequate or is more action needed?

As stated, the causal link of trauma and ACEs requires to be emphasised and recommendations regarding how to address made explicit.

3. What evaluation has been done of interventions?

Evaluation is carried out on an annual basis via the annual report that is sent to Scottish Government. Locally, service user consultation is carried out on an annual basis and services are monitored on a quarterly basis. The above data/information provides a foundation from which we can evaluate the effectiveness of our ROSC.

4. Are the services and national drugs strategy being measured and evaluated in terms of cost and benefit?

Angus ADP would welcome some assistance on how to measure impact.