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## **SCOTTISH BORDERS ADULT PROTECTION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT (2013 – 2014)**

**Report by Chief Social Work Officer**

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### **SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**

**19 February 2015**

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#### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report informs members of the continuing progress in Scottish Borders in the development of an interagency approach to the support and protection of adults who are at risk of harm (as defined in the Adult Support & Protection (Scotland) Act 2007).**
- 1.2 The Annual Report covers the activities of the Scottish Borders Adult Protection Committee during the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013– 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 (attached). The report highlights the continuing work being done in the Scottish Borders regarding completing statutory duties in relation to supporting and protecting adults at risk of harm in the area. This includes information on the Adult Protection Committee and its subcommittees; statistical information collated by the Adult Protection Unit; the operational work undertaken in order to meet the statutory requirements of the Adult Support & Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 Act; and the Learning & Development programme adopted by the Scottish Borders.

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Council endorses the Annual Report of the Scottish Borders Adult Protection Committee 2013/14 and agrees that it be published on the Council's website and distributed.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The interagency Scottish Borders Adult Protection Committee and the Adult Protection Unit were established in 2005. This is the Ninth Annual Report published, on behalf of the Adult Protection Committee.
- 3.2 The Adult Support & Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 was passed by the Scottish Government in February 2007 and received royal assent on 22 March 2007. Part 1 of the Act deals with the protection of adults at risk of harm and was implemented in October 2008. It introduced new measures to protect individuals who fall into the category of 'adults at risk'.

### **4 ANNUAL REPORT 2013 - 2014**

- 4.1 The Annual Report details the range and variety of activity undertaken by the Adult Protection Committee in working together to protect adults at risk in the Scottish Borders, and implement fully the Adult Support & Protection (Scotland) Act 2007.
- 4.2 In order to achieve its objectives, the Adult Protection Committee agreed an 'Interagency Strategy and Plan for Protection of Adults at Risk (2012-2015)' in order to meet the statutory requirements of the Adult Support & Protection (Scotland) Act 2007. There are three subcommittees established in order to help the Adult Protection Committee and the Adult Protection Unit achieve the priorities in the Interagency Strategy.
- 4.3 A review of Adult Protection activity shows an overall increase in protection concerns since 2008. In 2013 – 2014 there were 1253 referrals received where there was a suspicion of an adult at risk of harm. This progressed to 190 Adult Protection concerns being investigated where it was known or believed that an adult was at risk as defined by the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007. 'Adults at risk' are adults who
  - (a) Are unable to safeguard their own well – being, property, rights or other interests
  - (b) Are at risk of harm, and
  - (c) Because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed than adults who are not so affected.

For those referrals that did not progress to an Adult Protection concern, as defined above, a significant number were signposted to other services for support.

- 4.4 Under the Adult Support & Protection (Scotland) Act 2007, the Council has a duty to inquire and investigate situations where harm is suspected. The majority of inquiries and investigations are managed through the use of supportive interventions without resorting to the use of Protective Orders available via this Act; or other appropriate interventions via the Mental Health (Care & Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 or the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000. This is in line with the principles of these Acts and what would be the least restrictive, most beneficial and proportionate response. Most situations are progressed by negotiation and cooperation, and consideration is given to other legal avenues where

appropriate. The sharing of appropriate information between partner agencies has ensured that individuals are suitably protected from harm without unnecessary intervention.

- 4.5 The Learning & Development programme adopted by the Scottish Borders attempts to deliver a bespoke approach to learning. The rolling programme of standard training sessions is open to all agencies (statutory, independent and third sector) based in the Scottish Borders, and the outcomes are based on the national training programme developed for the Scottish Government. It is acknowledged that it is important for all partners to work together in supporting and protecting adults at risk of harm, and multi-agency training helps to deliver this message to people who may have contact with adults at risk. In 2013-2014, a total of 2,031 people completed training modules.

## **5 IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1 Financial**

There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

### **5.2 Risk and Mitigations**

This report makes an important contribution to the overall management of risks of the Council and the governance of this important area of activity.

### **5.3 Equalities**

It is anticipated there will be no adverse equality implications due to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religion/belief arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### **5.4 Acting Sustainably**

There are no known effects on economic, social or environmental implications arising from this report.

### **5.5 Carbon Management**

There are no known effects on carbon emissions arising from this report.

### **5.6 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

There are no known changes required to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals in this report.

## 6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Service Director Regulatory Services as Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Service Director Strategy and Policy, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR, and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and their comments have been incorporated into the final report.
- 6.2 The Adult Protection Committee and relevant subgroups were consulted and comments have been incorporated into the final report.

### Approved by

**Elaine Torrance**  
**Chief Social Work Officer**

**Signature .....**

### Author(s)

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### Background Papers: Nil

**Note** – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Diane Milne can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact Diane Milne, Social Work, Scottish Borders Council, Council Headquarters, Newtown St. Boswells, Melrose, TD6 OSA.