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## **CHILD 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 activities of the Child Protection Committee during the period 1 July 2013–31 July 2014 aimed at protecting children and young people in the Scottish Borders from abuse and neglect.**
- 1.2 The Annual Report covers the main activities of the multi-agency Child Protection Committee (CPC) and its Sub Committees. This information is presented in the Annual Report of the Scottish Borders Child Protection Committee which is included as an addendum to this report.
- 1.3 SBCPC oversees the development of all multi-agency child protection policies and procedures in the Scottish Borders and at the very forefront of this work are the online multi-agency child protection procedures. A number of new sections and protocols were added or updated to ensure best practice and that they are in line with national guidance and legislation.
- 1.4 The management of child protection performance and practice is overseen by CPC. Performance information and self evaluation reports continued to be routinely reviewed by CPC and on a single agency basis to identify trends and inform practice as required.
- 1.5 Lessons learned and good practice examples from National and local child protection case reviews were brought to CPC through the Practice Development and Review Sub Committees. Where required, updates were made to the child protection procedures.
- 1.6 CPC continued to maintain and develop strong working links with local and national strategic groups. The CPC Chair, Lead Officer and CPC Training Officer attended a number of National Child protection meetings during the period. The report in Appendix 1 summarises the work of the Committee, performance and key issues identified.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 I recommend Council endorses the content of the Child Protection Committee Annual Report (Appendix 1) and agrees it is published on the Council's website and distributed.**

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Scottish Borders Child Protection Committee (CPC) is an inter-agency group of senior staff which provides leadership in promoting the continual improvement of services in this area of work. This entails ensuring that there is an efficient and effective multi-agency response to reports of abuse through, for instance, reviewing and revising practice guidelines, joint training and reviewing of individual cases – all conducted within a culture of continuous learning. In addition, the Committee has a role to promote the safety of children through raising awareness in communities across the Scottish Borders of the key role which members of the public play.
- 3.2 The Child Protection Committee reports directly to the Critical Services Oversight Group (CSOG) consisting of Chief Executive (SBC), Chief Executive (NHS Borders) and Divisional Commander Police Scotland (Police).
- 3.3 During the reporting period 1<sup>st</sup> July 2013 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2014, CPC was briefly chaired by Alan Blackie, who retired on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013 and was replaced by Duncan MacAulay on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2013. Duncan has worked in the social work profession for over 35 years, holding several senior management posts including Director of Social Work and Chair of Child Protection Committee.
- 3.4 Members of CPC remain committed to the protection of children as the focus of the Committee's work. CPC has met regularly during the year. Much has been achieved by CPC and its Sub Groups through its inter-agency agenda and effective partnership work.

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

- 4.1 The Annual report highlights the Child Protection Committee's work on training, awareness raising and performance monitoring as well as addressing key issues relating to this. Detailed below is a summary of key points.
- 4.2 There were 93 child protection investigations in 2013/14 with concerns identified including emotional abuse and alcohol and drug misuse. Referrals came from a range of routes including police, family/friends, neighbours and members of the public.
- 4.3 Staff training remains a key priority with a range of training opportunities available including awareness raising, as well as specific training including joint investigative training and child trafficking and exploitation
- 4.4 The CPC regularly monitors key performance information and has noted that the numbers of children on the register has recently decreased. The number of children on the Register in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2014 was 17. Further research is being undertaken to ensure there is continual improvement in keeping children and young people safe. The findings of this research will be reported back to the Child Protection Committee in 2015.

- 4.5 The CPC Independent Chair has actively promoted the role and remit of the CPC and given brief presentations about his role within the CPC to the Scottish Borders Localities in Eildon, Galashiels, Peebles and Hawick as well as giving a short presentation to Primary Care Administrators, Community Nurses, GPs, Allied Health Professionals and Practice Nurses at Tweed Horizons Centre.
- 4.6 CPC continued its commitment to raising awareness of child protection through the delivery of child protection training events, the CPC website and CPC newsletters.
- 4.7 Child Protection Training remains a key responsibility of CPC with a range of multi-agency and single agency events being held throughout the year.
- 4.8 CPC continued its commitment to creating a positive and transparent culture of continuous learning based upon feedback from those who use and experience our services.
- 4.9 CPC has firmed up cross border links with Northumberland Safeguarding Children's Board and Cumbria Safeguarding Children's Board. Training calendars will be shared between authorities on a regular basis and link names have been exchanged.
- 4.10 CPCs priorities for the forthcoming year (2014/2015), which are the basis of the CPC business plan, are included in the annual report.

## **5 IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1 Financial**

There are no financial implications.

### **5.2 Risk and Mitigations**

The Annual Report is an important document for monitoring activity and for identifying areas of improvement. The risk of not collating information in this way would be a reduction in the quality of strategic work relating to Child Protection.

### **5.3 Equalities**

There are no equality implications.

### **5.4 Acting Sustainably**

There are no implications identified.

### **5.5 Carbon Management**

There are no implications identified.

### **5.6 Rural Proofing**

There are no implications identified.

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

There are no implications identified.

## 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.

### Approved by

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

**Signature .....**

### Author(s)

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**Background Papers: Nil**

**Previous Minute Reference: Nil**

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

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