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**SCOTTISH BORDERS ADULT PROTECTION COMMITTEE  
ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018**

**Report by Chief Social Work and Public Protection Officer**

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**SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL**

**28 March 2019**

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**1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 **This report updates 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 (in Appendix 1) covers the activities of the Scottish Borders Adult Protection Committee during the period 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018. The report highlights the continuing work being undertaken in the Scottish Borders in regard to meeting the Council's statutory duties to support and protect adults at risk of harm in the area. This includes information on the Adult Protection Committee and its sub-committees; 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 Scottish Borders Council:-**
- (a) Endorse the Annual Report of the Scottish Borders Adult Protection Committee 2017/18;**
  - (b) Agree 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 thirteenth 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 2017 - 2018**

- 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 Business Plan for the Protection of Adults at Risk in order to meet the statutory requirements of the Adult Support & Protection (Scotland) Act 2007. There are three sub-committees established in order to help the Adult Protection Committee and the Adult Protection Unit achieve the priorities in the current Interagency Strategy. The current interagency strategy and business plan for 2018–2020 is in place.
- 4.3 (a) The number of cases progressing from Referral to Adult Protection concerns (AP Referrals), as defined by the Act, displays an increased pattern with 265 cases in 2017-2018 compared to 204 cases in 2016-2017 and 171 cases the previous period. Adult Protection concerns were investigated where it was known or believed that an adult was at risk.
- (b) 'Adults at risk' are adults who:
- (i) Are unable to safeguard their own wellbeing, property, rights or other interests;
  - (ii) Are at risk of harm, and
  - (iii) 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.
- (c) For those referrals that did not meet the above criteria, they 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 in line with what would be the least restrictive, most beneficial and proportionate response. Most situations are progressed by negotiation

and co-operation, 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 delivers a bespoke approach to learning. In 2017-2018, a focus has been to review and renew the Scottish Borders ASP L&D Matrix, which includes multi-agency (statutory, independent and third sector) training at 4 levels from induction through to specialist and advanced knowledge, including bespoke training. Adult Support and Protection E-learning continues to be mandatory for Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders. 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.
- 4.6 Activity – Financial and physical harm continue to be the most prominent types of harm in the Scottish Borders. Work with Trading Standards last year to tackle financial harm and scams has seen a positive impact on adult protection referrals, particularly in the age range 65–79 years of age, as figures are down by a third. Most cases of physical harm happen in the adult’s own home, usually by someone known to them. Reports of physical harm and neglect are also reported in private care home settings. Scottish Borders investigate all incidents of harm in these settings and have now delivered bespoke adult protection training into all 22 care homes within the Scottish Borders. Within the under 65 year age range, social media and smart phone technology is particularly impacting on relationships. Many adults are introduced to a wider group of friends/acquaintances through this technology. However, this technology can also be used in some situations, to target and harm our most vulnerable adults.
- 4.7 Priorities for 2018–2019  
There are a number of priorities for the Adult Protection Committee:
- (a) Quality Assurance – Following an inspection of Older Adult Services in Scottish Borders, including Adult Protection, further work is being done around risk assessments, chronologies and risk management plans. To ensure ongoing improvement, there is increased focus on quality assurance through the monitoring of Key Performance Indicators and through scrutiny groups. We recognise the challenge to further develop quality assurance systems to demonstrate performance and outcomes.
  - (b) Multi-agency Public Protection Unit – Planning is underway to set up a multi-assessment screening hub with co-location of agencies, to improve efficiency and risk management.

## **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. The Adult Protection Committee Risk Register has been developed in line with the Council's approach to risk management and assesses risks to the achievement of the Committee's objectives using a risk score based on likelihood and impact; this is regularly reviewed and new mitigation actions agreed as appropriate.

## 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 Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR, Communications 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 sub-groups were consulted.

### Approved by

**Stuart Easingwood**  
**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. Linsey McGillivray can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

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