

Scottish Borders Health & Social Care  
Integration Joint Board



Meeting Date: 17 December 2019

Report By	Stuart Easingwood, Chief Social Work & Public Protection Officer
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**CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT**

<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	<i>For the IJB to note the CSWO Annual Report</i>
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<b>Recommendations:</b>	The Health & Social Care Integration Joint Board is asked to:  <i>a) Note the report</i>
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<b>Personnel:</b>	There are no specific implications arising from this report.
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<b>Carers:</b>	There are no specific implications arising from this report.
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<b>Equalities:</b>	Social justice and quality are key values in Social Work and there are no adverse equality implications arising from the work contained in this report.
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<b>Financial:</b>	There are no specific implications arising from this report.
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<b>Legal:</b>	There are no specific implications arising from this report.
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<b>Risk Implications:</b>	There are no specific concerns that need to be addressed in respect of the recommendations contained in this report.
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## **Aim**

This is the twelfth annual report on the work undertaken on behalf of the Council in the statutory role of Chief Social Work Officer.

The report provides the IJB with an account of decisions taken by the Chief Social Work Officer in the statutory areas of Fostering and Adoption, Child Protection, Secure Orders, Adult Protection, Adults with Incapacity, Mental Health and Criminal Justice. The report of the Chief Social Work Officer is attached.

It also gives an overview of regulation and inspection, workforce issues and social policy themes over the year April 2018 to March 2019, and highlights some of the key challenges for Social Work for the coming year.

## **Background**

The requirement that every local authority should have a professionally qualified Chief Social Work Officer is contained within Section 45 of the Local Government etc (Scotland) Act 1994. This requirement was reinforced by the recommendation contained in the Changing Lives Report published by the 21st Century Social Work Review Group to strengthen the governance and leadership roles of the Chief Social Work Officer.

A specific role of Chief Social Work and Public Protection Officer has responsibility in Scottish Borders for the leadership of professional Social Work across the Council and ensuring the Council's statutory Social Work legislative requirements are met. This role reports directly to the Chief Executive.

In 2017 the Scottish Government published an updated template and guidance to enable Chief Social Work Officers across Scotland to develop a more consistent approach to the production of their reports and allow summary comparison of the delivery and performance of Social Work across different areas. This template has been used to provide this report. This has provided helpful comparative data for Social Work which has been published to give a picture of Social Work across Scotland.

## **Overview and Evaluation**

In 2017 the governance arrangements for Social Work in Scottish Borders Council were revised with the Chief Social Work Officer reporting directly to the Chief Executive. The Chief Social Work Officer attends the Integration Joint Board as a non-voting member to provide professional advice and guidance in matters pertaining to Social Work. The Chief Social Work Officer also has a role in the strengthening of Children and Young People's leadership group, as well as maintaining oversight of public protection arrangements at a local level.

There have been a number of achievements during this period, including an ongoing focus on improving arrangements for the discharge process from hospital to enable people to move to appropriate care settings in a timely way, the ongoing development and redesign of wider Public Protection services and Key Social Work performance data is contained in the report in Appendix B.

Challenges facing Social Work for 2017/18 are identified in the report. There are ongoing financial constraints and we continue to strive to identify and implement new ways of working and engaging those who use our services to improve outcomes.

There continues to be challenges in recruitment and retention of staff in many aspects of service delivery and we are planning on launching a trainee program to create opportunities for some of our existing 'unqualified' staff to progress onto professional social work courses.

The work on reviewing and developing our Public Protection services is progressing with the suggested realignment of governance, enhanced co-location arrangements and improved working practices being at the centre of the changes. A significant factor in this is the clear focus on looking at risk through the lens of a 'think family' approach.

## **Summary**

This report is reflection of the breadth and complexity of social work activity for 2017/18. Members of the IJB are asked to note this report.

**Stuart C. Easingwood**  
**Chief Social Work & Public Protection Officer /**  
**Interim Service Director Children and Young People**