
**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER
2014/2015**

Report by Chief Social Work Officer

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

7 October 2015

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This is the eighth annual report on the work undertaken on behalf of the Council in the statutory role of Chief Social Work Officer.**
- 1.2 The report provides the Council 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 as Appendix A.
- 1.3 It also gives an overview of regulation and inspection, workforce issues and social policy themes over the year April 2014 to March 2015, and highlights some of the key challenges for Social Work for the coming year.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Council approves the report of the Chief Social Work officer attached as Appendix A and in particular notes the elements noted in section 4 of this report.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 Following the review of the Corporate Management structure in Scottish Borders Council during 2014 a specific service director role was created for the Chief Social Work Officer, reporting directly to the Depute Chief Executive for People.
- 3.3 In 2014 the Scottish Government published a 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.

4 OVERVIEW AND EVALUATION

- 4.1 2014 has been a period of consolidation of the new governance arrangements for Social Work in Scottish Borders Council. However, significant changes including the continuing implementation of Self Directed Support and further work to fully implement legislation to integrate Adult Health and Social Care Services and the Children and Young People's Bill. Public Protection arrangements have continued to be a high priority for the Council during this period.
- 4.2 There have been a number of achievements during this period. Ongoing improvements in the discharge process have enabled people to move to appropriate care settings in a timely way. The implementation of Getting It Right For Every Child is well under way and the Early Years agenda is well advanced. Processes for Self Directed Support are in place to provide service users and carers greater say in choice and the management of their care arrangements and over 300 people are now using this approach.
- 4.3 Challenges facing Social Work for 2015/16 are identified which include work to maintain the quality of the social care provision, recruitment and retention of Social Care Staff across all sectors, ongoing financial constraints and introducing new arrangements for children and young people including the named person. Work is also progressing for the implementation of the new arrangements for Community Justice. However, as a Council we are well placed to face these challenges and continue to deliver high quality services and improve outcomes for all people who access Social Work services.

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

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

this report.

5.2 Risk and Mitigations

There are no specific concerns that need to be addressed in respect of the recommendations contained in this report.

5.3 Equalities

Social Justice and equality are key values in Social Work and there are no adverse equality implications arising from the work contained in this report

5.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no anticipated economic, social or environmental effects.

5.5 Carbon Management

There is no impact on the Council's carbon emissions.

5.6 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes required to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation.

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, or will be made available at the meeting.

Approved by

Elaine Torrance, Chief Social Work Officer

Signature

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Background Papers: None

Previous Minute Reference: None

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