
SCOTTISH BORDERS PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

Report by Chief Social Work and Public Protection Officer

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

30 March 2023

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report summarises the activity of the Public Protection Committee (PPC) and associated Delivery Groups for the year 01 August 2021 – 31 July 2022.**
- 1.2 The Annual Report covers the main activities of the multi-agency Public Protection Committee, highlighting the continuing work being undertaken in the Scottish Borders to meet the Council’s statutory duties to protect children and adults at risk of harm.
- 1.3 The Report includes information relating to Child Protection, Adult Support and Protection, Violence Against Women and Girls, Justice Services and PREVENT. It includes statistical information relating to the PPC Performance Indicators and training and development activities.
- 1.3 The Annual Report describes the continuing challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions, and the considerable work undertaken by staff and services to meet the needs of the most vulnerable members of our communities.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 I recommend that the Committee:- note the content of the Public Protection Committee Annual Report 2021-2022**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Scottish Borders Public Protection Committee is an inter-agency group of senior staff which provides leadership in promoting the continual improvement of services in this area of work. The PPC incorporates the statutory responsibilities of Child Protection Committees and Adult Support and Protection Committees.
- 3.2 This entails ensuring that there is an efficient and effective multi-agency response to reports of harm, abuse or neglect through, for instance, reviewing and revising practice guidelines, providing joint training and reviewing of individual cases – all conducted within a culture of continuous learning. In addition, the PPC has a role to promote the safety of children and adults through raising awareness in communities across the Scottish Borders to support the key role which members of the public play.
- 3.3 The Public 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).
- 3.4 Members of PPC sit on a variety of national groups, including Child Protection Committees Scotland, Adult Support and Protection Conveners Group and the National Lead Officer's Group. Links with a variety of local strategic and operational groups are maintained, and 3rd sector partners are represented on PPC and through the Delivery Groups.
- 3.5 Members of PPC remain committed to the support and protection of children and adults as the focus of its work. The PPC and associated Delivery Groups met regularly during the year, and much has been achieved through their inter-agency agendas and effective partnership work which is detailed in the report
- 3.6 Towards the end of the prior reporting period (June 2021) the PPC appointed a new Independent Chair, Sue Ross. Ms Ross resigned her position at the end of this reporting period

4 PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

- 4.1 The PPC Annual Report details the work of the PPC and Delivery Groups against the key functions of the Committee:
- 4.2 **Continuous Improvement:** The Report describes a range of audit and improvement work that ensures our local policies and practice are fit for purpose and effective in keeping children and adults safe. Examples of work by our partner agencies, both locally and nationally are highlighted.
- 4.3 **Strategic Planning and Connections:** This section of the Report highlights examples of effective partnership working across statutory and third sector services, on a local and national level.

- 4.4 Public and Professional Information, Engagement and Participation: The Report describes activity to ensure that our workforce and community have the knowledge and skills they require to play their part in keeping adults and children safe. This includes training for our multi-agency workforce, information leaflets for service users and their families and media campaigns and events.
- 4.5 The Appendices to the Report include more detailed statistical information relating to child protection, adult support and protection, violence against women & girls and Justice services, and training provision.
- 4.6 The Report acknowledges two significant challenges that have impacted the work of the Public Protection Committee and associated services: Firstly, the ongoing impact of the Coronavirus pandemic has placed limitations on some areas of work and secondly the Inquiry Report by Andrew G Webster QC into the handling by SBC of assault allegations against a former teacher resulted in the need for a substantial Action Plan to respond to the recommendations therein (this Action Plan is reported to Council separately).

5 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Financial

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

Or

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 of the PPC, and subsequent impact on the safety of adults and children in our community.

5.3 Integrated Impact Assessment

Not applicable to this Report.

5.4 Sustainable Development Goals

- a. (3) The Report describes partnership working across statutory and third sector organisations, with the purpose of ensuring adults and children in our community are safe from harm, abuse and neglect.
- b. (5) The Report describes work to reduce the occurrence and impact of violence against women and girls, through our Violence Against Women and Girls partnership and Domestic Abuse Advisory Service.
- c. (16) The work describes the efforts of our Justice Services to reduce violence in our communities.

5.5 Climate Change

There are no significant climate change impacts associated with this report. PPC Business and training activity is carried out online where possible, to reduce travel demands on staff.

5.6 Rural Proofing

~~This section should only be completed if this is a new or amended policy or strategy.~~

5.7 Data Protection Impact Statement

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

5.8 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to be made to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of this Report.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 Director (Finance & Corporate Governance), the Monitoring Officer/Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications and any comments received will need to be incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

Stuart C. Easingwood

Director – Social Work & Practice

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Background Papers: none

Previous Minute Reference: none

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

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