

Scottish Borders Health and Social Care Partnership Integration Joint Board

15 November 2023

Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2022/23

Report by Gwyneth Lennox, Head of Adult Social Work



1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1. This is the Chief Social Work Officer annual report on the work undertaken in 2022/23 on behalf of the Integration Joint Board and the Scottish Borders Council by the Chief Social Work Officer in their statutory role for both organisations.
- 1.2. It provides the Integration Joint Board with an account of the decisions taken by the Chief Social Work Officer in the delegated statutory areas of:
- Social work services for adults and older people
 - Services and support for adults with physical disabilities and learning disabilities
 - Mental health services
 - Drug and alcohol services
 - Adult protection and domestic abuse
 - Carers support services
 - Community care assessment teams
 - Adult placement services
 - Aspects of housing support, including aids and adaptations
 - Occupational therapy services
- 1.3. The report also gives an overview of regulation and inspection, workforce issues and social policy themes over the year April 2022 to March 2023, and highlights some of the key challenges for that year.
- 1.4. This year the Office of the Chief Social Work Advisor to Scottish Government has sent out a new format for this year's report. The report contained as appendix A conforms to that format.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. The Integration Joint Board is asked to note the report from the Chief Social Work Officer attached as Appendix A.

3. ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND WAYS OF WORKING

- 3.1. It is expected that the work outlined in the report has impacted on the Health and Social Care Strategic Framework Objectives and Ways of Working below:

Alignment to our strategic objectives					
Rising to the workforce challenge	Improving access	Focusing on early	Supporting unpaid carers	Improving our effectiveness and thinking	Reducing poverty and inequalities

		intervention and prevention		differently to meet need with less	
x	x	x	x	x	x

Alignment to our ways of working					
People at the heart of everything we do	Good agile teamwork and ways of working – Team Borders approach	Delivering quality, sustainable, seamless services	Dignity and respect	Care and compassion	Inclusive co-productive and fair with openness, honesty and responsibility
X	x	x	x	x	x

4. INTEGRATION JOINT BOARD DIRECTION

4.1. A direction is not required.

5. BACKGROUND

- 5.1. In compliance with the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 and associated Regulations, all Integration Joint Boards have a Chief Social Work Officer. This requirement was reinforced by the recommendations 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.
- 5.2. The Chief Social Work Officer has a role in providing professional advice and guidance to an Integration Joint Board to which social work functions have been formally delegated.
- 5.3. Where social work services and support are commissioned on behalf of the Integration Joint Board by the Local Authority, including from the independent and voluntary sector, the Chief Social Work Officer has a responsibility to advise on the specification, quality and standards of the commissioned services and support.
- 5.4. The Chief Social Work Officer in the Scottish Borders leads professional Social Work and works to ensure that both the Integration Joint Board’s and Council’s statutory Social Work legislative requirements are met.
- 5.5. The Chief Social Work Officer is empowered and enabled to provide professional advice and contribute to decision-making in the Integration Joint Board and Health and Social Care Partnership arrangements, raising issues of concern with the Integration Joint Board Members, or the Chief Officer of the Integration Joint Board, in regard to:
- Effective governance arrangements for the management of the complex balance of need, risk and civil liberties, in accordance with professional standards;
 - Appropriate systems required to 1) promote continuous improvement and 2) identify and address weak and poor practice;
 - The development and monitoring of implementation of appropriate care governance arrangements;

- Approaches in place for learning from critical incidents, which could include through facilitation of Adult Support and Protection Committees where that will result in the necessary learning taking place;
- Requirements that only registered social workers undertake those functions reserved in legislation or are accountable for those functions described in guidance;
- Workforce planning and quality assurance, including safe recruitment practice, probation/mentoring arrangements, managing poor performance and promoting continuous learning and development for staff;
- Continuous improvement, raising standards and evidence-informed good practice, including the development of person-centred services that are focussed on the needs of people who use services and support;
- The provision and quality of practice learning experiences for social work students and effective workplace assessment arrangements, in accordance with the SSSC Code of Practice for Employers of Social Service Workers;

6. OVERVIEW AND EVALUATION

- 6.1. There are reflections of key Social Work performance data, including both those delegated to the Integration Joint Board noted above, and non-delegated services contained in the report.
- 6.2. A number of the challenges faced by Social Work in 2022/23 are identified in the report including ongoing financial constraints. Social Work services continue to strive to identify and implement new ways of working and engaging with those who use our services – and to do so in a cost-effective way, whilst always aiming to deliver improved outcomes for our service users.
- 6.3. Social Work services continue to experience challenges in the recruitment and retention of staff. The Social Work trainee program is continuing to create opportunities for some of our existing ‘unqualified’ staff to progress onto professional Social Work qualification.
- 6.4. Our Public Protection services continue to do everything possible to keep people in Scottish Borders as safe as possible. In this year we note the outcomes of two external joint inspections for Adult Support & Protection and Children at Risk of Harm.
- 6.5. Despite the challenges, Social Work services continue to be well placed to deliver high quality services and improve outcomes for all of the people who access these services.

7. IMPACTS

Community Health and Wellbeing Outcomes

- 7.1. It is expected that the Adult Social Work service has impact on the National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes as outlined below:

N	Outcome description	Increase / Decrease / No impact
1	People are able to look after and improve their own health and wellbeing and live in good health for longer.	x
2	People, including those with disabilities or long term conditions, or who are frail, are able to live, as far as reasonably practicable, independently and at home or in a homely setting in their community.	x

3	People who use health and social care services have positive experiences of those services, and have their dignity respected.	x
4	Health and social care services are centred on helping to maintain or improve the quality of life of people who use those services.	x
5	Health and social care services contribute to reducing health inequalities.	x
6	People who provide unpaid care are supported to look after their own health and wellbeing, including to reduce any negative impact of their caring role on their own health and well-being.	x
7	People who use health and social care services are safe from harm.	x
8	People who work in health and social care services feel engaged with the work they do and are supported to continuously improve the information, support, care and treatment they provide.	x
9	Resources are used effectively and efficiently in the provision of health and social care services.	x

Financial impacts

- 7.2. There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report but managing service change and efficiencies in the light of increasing demographic demand whilst maintaining service quality remains a significant challenge.

Equality, Human Rights and Fairer Scotland Duty

- 7.3. 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.

Legislative considerations

- 7.4. The Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014 provides for the delegation of certain social work functions by a local authority to an integration authority. The Chief Social Work Officer's responsibilities in relation to local authority social work functions continue to apply to functions which are being delivered by other bodies under integration arrangements.

Climate Change and Sustainability

- 7.5. There are no anticipated economic, social or environmental effects associated to this report

Risk and Mitigations

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

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1. The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

Integration Joint Board Officers consulted

- 8.2. The Chief Social Work Officer, IJB Board Secretary and the IJB Chief Officer have been consulted, and all comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

8.3. In addition, consultation has occurred with our statutory operational partners at the:

- HSCP Joint Executive
- Scottish Borders Council

Approved by:

Chris Myers, Chief Officer

Author(s)

Stuart Easingwood, Chief Social Work Officer

Background Papers: n/a

Previous Minute Reference: n/a

For more information on this report, contact us at Gwyneth Lennox, Head of Adult Social Work