

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by the Chief Social Work Officer****Council: 27 November 2019**

Subject: Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2018-19**1. Purpose**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to provide the Council with the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) Annual Report for 2018-19 which provides information on the statutory work undertaken on the Council's behalf, including a summary of performance, partnership working and performance.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** The Council is asked to note the content of the Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2018-19 and approve its submission to the Office of the Chief Social Work Advisor to the Scottish Government.

3. Background

- 3.1** The requirement for each Council to have a Chief Social Work Officer was initially set out in section 3 of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 and is also contained within section 45 of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994.
- 3.2** The role of the CSWO is to provide professional guidance, leadership and accountability for the delivery of social work and social care services – both those provided directly by the HSCP and also those commissioned or purchased from other providers.
- 3.3** The CSWO Annual Report has been prepared in line with national guidance: 'The Role of the Chief Social Work Officer' (Scottish Government: 2016). This report also fulfils the statutory requirement for each CSWO to produce an annual report on the activities and performance of social work services within the local area.
- 3.4** Following approval, the annual report will be provided to the Chief Social Work Advisor to the Scottish Government and will be posted on the Council and HSCP websites.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** Revised guidance and a suggested template for production of the report were circulated in May 2019 by the office of the Chief Social Work Advisor to the Scottish Government.
- 4.2** Each CSWO Annual Report is required to provide information on the local context within which services are delivered and to provide information on the following areas:
- Summary of performance: key challenges, developments and improvements
 - Partnership Working: Governance and Accountability Arrangements
 - Social Services Delivery Landscape
 - Resources
 - Service Quality and Performance including delivery of statutory functions
 - Workforce planning and development.
- 4.3** The report also considers issues for 2019-20 including key challenges and pressures for social work services delivered by the HSCP.
- 4.4** The annual report for West Dunbartonshire refers to demand for services and particular budget pressures around placements for children and young people, home care and residential accommodation for older people during 2018-19.
- 4.5** The inspection of Self Directed Support (SDS) and the more recent inspection of criminal justice social work services presented particular challenges, however robust improvement plans have been endorsed by the Care Inspectorate and are currently being delivered by a range of partners.
- 4.6** For SDS, a multi-agency Programme Board meets monthly to monitor progress on the improvement plan and influence changes to practice. A current key stage is piloting an improved assessment across a range of teams to enable individuals and carers to more easily access the most appropriate supports for them.
- 4.7** For criminal justice, professional support from Community Justice Scotland has informed the improvement plan which is now being led by a recently appointed service manager, fully focussed on criminal justice social work. Other key changes include developing ongoing engagement with sentencers to look at performance improvement, sentencing options and interventions with people subject to Community Payback Orders.
- 4.8** The Focussed Intervention Team is a further positive development in West Dunbartonshire with the multi-disciplinary team now in place, providing greater support in the community to reduce the likelihood of people being admitted to hospital.

- 4.9** In children and families, social worker vacancies have been recruited to, augmented by a commitment to recruit a further six social workers above the staffing establishment which is currently ongoing.
- 4.10** Additional recruitment is underway for six new support worker posts, to provide family support, improved parenting assessments and support young people at risk of being accommodated or returning to the local community.
- 4.11** These additional posts will enhance the capacity of the service to develop practice improvements which support better outcomes for children, young people and families and seek to shift the balance of care, away from continued demand for community and residential placements, towards earlier, intensive interventions.
- 4.12** Our continued involvement in Permanence and Care Excellence (PACE), in partnership with the Centre of Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS) is an important aspect of this – now in its third year, practice changes include improved decision-making for children who need to be looked after away from home.
- 4.13** Meanwhile, access to Family Group Decision Making and Functional Family Therapy has been expanded to provide evidence-based interventions to families which build their capacity to reduce the likelihood for continued social work involvement.
- 4.14** Enhanced performance reporting processes are also being developed, so operational managers are better able to track changes in demand, monitor caseloads and manage risk.
- 4.15** Overall, these developments are supported by working more closely with a range of professional partners, reflecting the benefits of integration alongside the importance of professional liaison and support.

5. People Implications

- 5.1** The CSWO Annual Report refers to workforce planning and development which recognises activity to support staff compliance with professional registration as well as recruitment and retention activity.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 6.1** Financial implications have been highlighted within the annual report which are impacted by the demographic profile of West Dunbartonshire, particularly provision of Care at Home and services to children and young people who are looked after away from home.

6.2 Work to address these financial pressures is a key priority of the Health and Social Care Partnership and will require continued efforts, including with key partners, to ensure available resources are targeted appropriately to meet need and shift the focus of practice to ensure sustainable service provision to meet statutory duties.

7. Risk Analysis

7.1 Provision of statutory social work services requires appropriately qualified and skilled staff – analysis of activity and future demand is intended to inform future service planning to continue to meet statutory duties.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1 There is no equalities impact as the report does not recommend a change to existing policy, function or strategy.

9. Consultation

9.1 The CSWO Annual Report has been informed by information provided by managers across the HSCP and Heads of Service within the HSCP Senior Management Team have been consulted on the report content.

10. Strategic Assessment

10.1 The findings and analysis of activity, resources and performance within the CSWO Annual Report provide assurance that social work services in West Dunbartonshire continue to be planned and delivered in a way that reflects statutory requirements.

10.2 The report also includes information to reflect how services support the Council's strategic priorities, particularly by supporting individuals, families and carers to live independently and with dignity, as well as meaningful community engagement with active, empowered and informed citizens who feel safe and engaged.

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30 October 2019

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Appendices:

Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2018-19

Background Papers:

The Role of the Chief Social Work Officer, Guidance issued to Ministers pursuant to section 5 (1) of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, revised version: July 2016
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/role-chief-social-work-officer/>

Wards Affected:

All