

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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| COMMITTEE | Education & Children's Services Committee |
| DATE | 8 November 2022 |
| EXEMPT | No |
| CONFIDENTIAL | No |
| REPORT TITLE | Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2021/22 |
| REPORT NUMBER | OPE/22/246 |
| DIRECTOR | Angela Scott |
| CHIEF OFFICER | Graeme Simpson |
| REPORT AUTHOR | Graeme Simpson |
| TERMS OF REFERENCE | 2.5 |

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present Elected Members with the Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report for year 2021/22. The report is to inform Members of the role and responsibilities exercised by the Chief Social Work Officer; to provide information on statutory decision making in the period; and to give a progress report on key areas of social work provision within Aberdeen City.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the content of the Annual Report, as attached at Appendix 1.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The role of the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) is a statutory post in accordance with the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, as amended by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1994. This requires Local Authorities to appoint a CSWO for the purposes of listed social work functions.
- 3.2 The required qualifications of the CSWO are set out in regulations and the post holder must be able to demonstrate senior strategic and operational experience. National Guidance on the role was published by the Scottish Government in 2009, revised in May 2017. It provides an overview of position, outlining the responsibility for values and standards, complex decision making, particularly in relation to deprivation of liberty decisions and professional leadership. The guidance also covers accountability and reporting arrangements.
- 3.3 The CSWO provides advice to the Council on social work matters; undertakes decision making in respect of statutory functions and provides professional governance, leadership and accountability for the delivery of social work and social care services, whether they are provided by the Council or on behalf of the Council by another agency.

3.4 In its 2016 report on Social Work in Scotland, Audit Scotland outlined the increased complexity of the role: *“With integration and other changes over recent years, the key role of the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) has become more complex and challenging. Councils need to ensure that CSWOs have the status and capacity to enable them to fulfil their statutory responsibilities effectively”*.

3.5 This report is consistent with the content and formal guidance laid down by the Chief Social Work Adviser for Scottish Government. The annual report does not provide a complete account of social work activity over the year. Rather it provides an overview of the range of services and initiatives in social work and social care and to highlight key achievements and challenges.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

| Category | Risks | Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level | *Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions | *Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set? |
|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Strategic Risk | No strategic risks identified | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Compliance | No compliance risks identified | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Operational | This report reflects the impact of social work services delivered by the Council, the IJB and | | L | Yes |

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| | <p>commissioned services.</p> <p>It provides a clear narrative as to the critical role social work staff undertake to assess and manage risk posed to and by vulnerable children and adults.</p> | | | |
| Financial | No financial risks identified | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Reputational | <p>This report provides assurance to the citizens of Aberdeen City on the quality of social work services delivered to those who meet the threshold for social work support and intervention.</p> <p>The delivery of effective social work and social care services is critical to the protection and care of vulnerable children and adults. Failure to discharge our statutory responsibilities effectively can bring significant</p> | <p>Customers have the opportunity to complain about the quality of services both directly and via the SPSO. A learning approach is actively taken to all complaints.</p> <p>Customers also contribute to inspections via various feedback opportunities enabling them to know that their views and listened to and considered.</p> <p>The public can be assured that the Council ensures compliance with legal requirements and identified areas for improvement are addressed.</p> | L | Yes |

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| | media interest and scrutiny. | | | |
| Environment / Climate | No environmental risks identified | N/A | N/A | N/A |

8. OUTCOMES

| <u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2022-2023</u> | |
|---|---|
| | Impact of Report |
| Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement | <p>Ensuring the effective planning for children and young people for whom secure care might be considered has a direct relevance to the delivery of the following statements contained within the Council Delivery Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the Council follows best practice as a corporate parent to get the best outcomes for looked-after young people, those in kinship care and those with additional support needs such as autism, developmental disorders or mental health problems • Continue to seek to support young people to receive care in Aberdeen, through fostering, adoption and other services and seek to reduce “out of authority” placements. • Commit to realising the potential of each individual, by seeking to widen curriculum choice and implement progressive choices. • Seek to make Aberdeen a UNICEF Child Friendly City |
| <u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u> | |
| Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes | <p>Social work services have a significant contribution to make delivering on the LOIP outcomes for Children and Adults – Outcomes 4 to 13.</p> <p>There is also strong alignment to LOIP Outcome 1 in relation to poverty.</p> <p>These outcomes require agencies to work in partnership and the attached report sets out the extent to which social work services delivers on these.</p> |

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

| Assessment | Outcome |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|
| Integrated Impact Assessment | Not required |

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| Data Protection Impact Assessment | Not required |
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10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Chief Social Work Officer Report 2021/22

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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