

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	Council
DATE	11 <sup>th</sup> December 2017
REPORT TITLE	Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report
REPORT NUMBER	ECS/17/065
DIRECTOR	Gayle Gorman
REPORT AUTHOR	Bernadette Oxley

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:-**

- 1.1 This report presents to Elected Members the Chief Social Work Officer's Annual report for 2016-17 financial year. The purpose of 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. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

It is recommended that the Council note the content of the Annual Report, as attached at Appendix 1.

### **3. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES**

- 3.1 The role of the Chief Social Work Officer 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 single CSWO for the purposes of listed social work functions.
- 3.2 The required qualifications of the Chief Social Work Officer 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 and was 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. For members' interest, the guidance is attached as Appendix 2.

- 3.3 The Chief Social Work Officer 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. Social Work in Scotland, an Audit Scotland Report published in September 2016, outlined the increased complexity of the role as follows: “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”.
- 3.4 This report is consistent with the content and format 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 is an opportunity to provide an overview of the range of services and initiatives in 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 direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

#### **6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

- 6.1 There is no risk associated with this paper, as it presents a historical review of activity. There are risk registers in place within the Education and Children’s Services Directorate and for the Health and Social Care Partnership.

#### **7. IMPACT SECTION**

##### **Economy**

- 7.1 Effective social work provision across children’s and adult’s social work improves the life chances of those it impacts. It increases the potential for people to become active economic citizens and to determine their own future. There is evidence across Aberdeen City of social work services supporting young people and adults to live independently, but more work is required to ensure our Looked After Children have improved educational and employment opportunities.

##### **People**

- 7.2 Social work is a targeted, statutory service with clear thresholds for intervening in people’s lives. This is important, because state intervention of

this nature must be applied responsibly, proportionately and in line with peoples' rights to liberty, privacy, and a family life. Good social work services are easy to access, responsive, treat people with dignity and respect and, where possible, are delivered in partnership with those requiring or requesting them. The strength based and solution focused approach of Reclaiming Social Work, the child centred redesign of residential care and the locality based model in adult social work, supporting people to remain in their own homes are examples of this in Aberdeen.

## **Place**

- 7.3 There is evidence across children and adult's social work of locality planning that uses the strengths in communities to support those needing help and to complement services delivered. The work of Children's social work of bringing children back to Aberdeen from Out of Authority placements, and redesigning residential care to provide a more therapeutic approach is an example of this. Similarly, the four health and social care partnerships are designed to support people to live independently at home, and in their communities.

## **Technology**

- 7.4 The Council is undergoing a transformation programme which will enhance its ability to use technology more effectively for the benefit of social work services. The current social work case recording system requires modernisation and work is taking place across children's and adult's social work to deliver more effective and coherent provision.

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

## **9. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1: Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report 2016/17

Appendix 2: Template and Guidance for production of CSWO Annual Report 2016/17

## **10. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

NAME: Bernadette Oxley  
JOB TITLE: Head of Children's Social Work and Chief Social Work Officer  
✉ [boxley@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:boxley@aberdeencity.gov.uk)  
☎ 01224 522110

## **HEAD OF SERVICE DETAILS**

NAME: Gayle Gorman  
JOB TITLE: Director of Education and Children's Services  
✉ [ggorman@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:ggorman@aberdeencity.gov.uk)  
☎ 01224 523458