

**FALKIRK COUNCIL**

**SUBJECT: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER**  
**MEETING: FALKIRK COUNCIL**  
**DATE: 8 OCTOBER 2014**  
**AUTHOR: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK SERVICES**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1. This annual report provides Members with an overview how the statutory duties of the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) have been fulfilled over the year 2013/2014. The report, which is attached, is written in a format which complies with a request made by the Chief Social Work Advisor that CSWOs adopt a common framework for their reports. It is intended to make this report available to the Chief Social Work Advisor for Scotland, following consideration by members.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1. Section 3 of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 requires the local authority to appoint a professionally qualified CSWO and the qualifications which apply to the post are covered by the qualification of Chief Social Work Officers (Scotland) Regulations 1996. In addition to this, national guidance on the risk of the CSWO was published in 2009.

- 2.2. The responsibility of the CSWO is to:-

- Promote values and standards of professional practice and provide a clear statement of expectation of Social Services workers and employers.
- Ensure that these values and standards are communicated on a regular basis, adhered to and reviewed periodically.
- Work with Human Resources to ensure that all Social Services workers meet the requirements of the SSSC Code of Practice and that all registered workers meet the requirements of their regulatory body.
- Support and advise Managers in maintaining and developing high standards of practice and supervision.
- Ensure that only registered social workers undertake those functions reserved in legislation or are accountable for those functions described in Guidance.
- Ensure that there are effective governance arrangements for the management of the complex balance of need, risk and civil liberties, in accordance with professional standards. Where the Council's corporate policy on risk does not

reflect this balance, the CSWO is required to bring this to the attention of the Chief Executive and to contribute to the development of appropriate governance arrangements.

- Ensure appropriate advice is provided on corporate workforce and planning and quality assurance, including safe recruitment practice, probation/mentoring arrangements, managing poor performance and promoting continuous learning and development for staff.
- Actively promote continuous improvement, raising standards and evidence-informed good practice, including the development of person-centred services that are focussed on the needs of the service user.
- Oversee the quality of practice learning experiences of social work students and effective workplace assessment arrangements, in accordance with SSSC Code of Practice for Employers of Social Service workers.
- Ensure that appropriate systems are in place both to promote good practice and to identify and address weak and poor practice.

The CSWO should work with Managers to ensure these systems are effective and, where this is not the case, the CSWO has the responsibility for bringing this to the attention of the Chief Executive and contributing to the development or improvement of such systems.

- Ensure that significant case reviews are undertaken into all critical incidents either resulting in – or which may have resulted in – death or serious harm.
- Take final decisions on behalf of the local authority in relation to a range of Social Work matters, including adoption, secure accommodation, guardianship and other statutory decisions required from time to time.
- Contribute to reports to the Chief Executive and Elected Members – providing independent comment where necessary – on the findings of relevant performance reports setting out:
  - Implications for the local authority, for services, for service users and carers, for individual teams/members of staff/Partners as appropriate implications for delivery of national and local outcomes;
  - Proposals for remedial action;
  - Means for sharing good practice and learning;
  - Monitoring and reporting arrangements for identified improvement activity.
- Report to the local authority on any other Social Work related issues
- Prepare an annual report to the local authority on all of the statutory, governance and leadership functions of the role.

3. **THE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2013/2014**

- 3.1. The Annual Report for 2013/2014 provides an overview of:-
- The local authority Governance & Partnership arrangements
  - Context of Social Work Services
  - Finance
  - Performance
  - Statutory Function
  - Continuous Improvement
  - Planning for Change
  - User & Carer involvement and empowerment
  - Workforce Planning & Development
  - Key Challenges for the year ahead

4. **RECOMMENDATION**

**Members of the Council are asked to:-**

- 4.1. Note the contents of the attached report.
- 4.2. Acknowledge the commitment, skills and experience of staff in continuing to deliver high quality Social Work Services for the benefit of Falkirk citizens.
- 4.3. Request that the policy on the role of the Chief Social Work Officers is revised to reflect the changes which will come into effect as a consequence of the integration of Adult Health & Social Care and is presented to a future meeting of the Executive.

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**Margaret Anderson**  
**Director of Social Work Services**  
**Contact 4035**

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

# **CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER**

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

**2013/2014**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overview of how the statutory responsibilities of the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) have been fulfilled over the period 2013/2014. The local authority is required by Section 3 of the Social Work Scotland act to appoint a professionally qualified CSWO and the responsibilities attached to this role are outlined in national guidance which was published in February 2009.

## 2. THE COUNCIL AREA

The population of the Falkirk Council area is projected to increase from 156,800 to 164,223 between 2012 and 2022, an increase of 7,433 or 4.7%, slightly higher than the 3.9% increase projected for Scotland as a whole.

The number of births each year peaked at 1,913 in 2008, which was the highest figure for over 15 years, then falling but only marginally since. This peak is now resulting in an increase in the number of primary school age children and will affect school rolls for several years to come.

By 2016 there will be an 8% increase in the number of people aged 75 and over compared to 2012; by 2022 this increase will be 33%. These increases are greater than for Scotland as a whole and are having a growing impact on the demand for social work services for the older people.

In recent years the natural population increase has also been bolstered by net migration; during 2011/12 this amounted to 601, a decrease from 1,021 in 2010/11. The average annual net migration since 2000 has been 850.

Life expectancy for men in Falkirk for 2010-2012 was 76.9, marginally higher than the Scottish average, and 80.6 for women, marginally below the Scottish average, but both continue to show small increases over time. Life expectancy at 65 for males in Falkirk is half a year less than the national average, for females just one fifth of a year less.

Across the Council Wards there are variations in the proportions of the population in different age groups. Grangemouth (19.4%) and Falkirk North (18.2%) have the largest proportions of older people population; Upper Braes (14.4%) and Larbert & Bonnybridge (13.5%) the lowest.

Larbert & Bonnybridge (21.7%) and Upper Braes (20.5%) have the highest percentage of the population who are children aged 0-15; Grangemouth (17.0%) and Lower Braes (16.6%) the smallest.

With the economic downturn, unemployment rose since 2008 when the number of unemployed in the Council area was 2,088. It rose to peak at 4,792 in 2011, but has declined slightly since with the latest reported figure for March 2014 being 3,623. Unemployment rates for all ages and among young people are slightly higher in Falkirk than Scotland as a whole.

Falkirk Council has 18 data zones in the most deprived 15% in Scotland according to The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2012. This is an increase of one compared to the previous Index published in 2009.

However, components of deprivation are not evenly spread across the Council area. Falkirk has 24 data zones in the most deprived 15% for income deprivation, 25 for employment deprivation, 27 for education deprivation, 20 for crime, 16 for access, but just 5 for health deprivation and 2 for housing.

### 3. **GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR SOCIAL WORK SERVICES**

- 3.1. Falkirk Council Social Work Services is managed by a Director of Social Work Services who is supported by two Heads of Service.
- 3.2. The role of the CSWO has been fulfilled by the Director of Social Work services, who is a member of the Council's Corporate Management Team (CMT) and who reports directly to the Council's Chief Executive. In her absence Heads of Service acts as deputies. As a member of the Council's Corporate Management Team, the CSWO contributes to policy development and ensures that senior managers received advice on social work matters.
- 3.3. The CSWO is also directly involved in developing and managing the Social Work budget and is able to offer advice on how budget decision can impact positively and negatively on service delivery.
- 3.4. As a member of the Corporate Management Team the CSWO is consulted on a range of reports which are considered by the Council and is also able to present reports to members on Social Work matters.

Over the course of 2013/14 reports have been presented on:-

- Social Work Performance
  - Health & Social Care Integration
  - Redesign of the Community Justice System
  - Self Directed Support
  - Supported Accommodation
  - Transport
  - Joint Commissioning Plan of Older People
  - Integrated Carers Strategy
  - Autism Strategy
  - Following the Public Pound
  - Reporting of Contractual Matters
- 3.5. The CSWO has also met formally and informally with elected members on a regular basis and on request to offer advice and information on social work matters. The ability to have direct access to both senior managers and elected members has been a key strength of the Council's governance arrangements to date and it is hoped that this strength can be preserved in any new arrangements which the Council develops to support the integration of health & social care.

#### 4. **PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURES**

4.1. Partnership working is crucial to the effective delivery of Social Work Services and the CSWO has an important role to play in supporting partnership working. This has been achieved over the last year by:-

- Membership of the Community Planning Partnership Leadership Group and presentation of reports as requested
- Attendance at the Community Health Partnership Board and presentation of reports as required
- Co-chairing of the CHP Joint Management Team
- Co-chairing of the Children's Commission
- Chairing of the Child Protection Committee
- Chairing of the G5 Reporting Group
- Contributing to the Adult Support & Protection Committee

4.2. In general, partnership arrangements are considered to be strong and there has been a strong emphasis on evaluating the effectiveness of partnership arrangements and bringing about improvements where required. This is particularly important in the light of organisational changes which impact on partners e.g. the shift from local Police Forces to Police Scotland. Over the last year there has been a particular focus on the effectiveness of partnership governance arrangements for public protection. Senior management oversight of public protection has historically been achieved by the Chief Executives of the three Forth Valley local authorities, the NHS Chief Executive and the Chief Constable meeting on a regular basis to monitor performance. This group, known as G5, has now agreed to focus governance arrangements for public protection within the Community Planning Partnerships governance framework and the CSWO has been asked to lead the work associated with the development of the new arrangements.

#### 5. **THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL WORK SERVICES IN FALKIRK**

5.1. A range of factors impact on our communities and on the demand for Social Work Services. These include:-

- Demographic changes which in this area means that the population of both younger people and older people is increasing with consequent increases in demand for both children's services and adult services.
- The economic downturn and impact of welfare reform resulting in concerns about levels of poverty and vulnerability. Services are encountering people on a daily basis who are struggling to meet their basic needs and who are dependent on the support of the local foodbanks and the voluntary sector.
- The ongoing impact of substance misuse, domestic abuse and mental health on family life and on the wellbeing of children.
- The volatility of the market of social care providers in the area with some providers now struggling to recruit and retain staff.

- The pressure on local hospital provision arising from emergency admissions.
- The limited capacity of care homes for older people in this area which can contribute to delayed hospital discharges.

## 6. **FINANCE**

- 6.1. As a Council Service, Social Work Services are affected by the wider financial constraints affecting the Council as a whole. During the financial year 2013/14 the Council faced a funding gap of £10.7m. This was met by a combination of budget rebasing, corporate initiatives, service savings and the application of reserves. Against this backcloth the Social Work budget increased by £1.96m to £87.507m.

Provision of £250k was made for demographic increases and £195k to increase the compliment of Occupational Therapists by 5. Although in a more favourable position than other services, Social Work Services nevertheless required to make some savings through procurement and vacancy management.

The outturn at the end of March 2014 was a very slight overspend of 0.7% (£607k). This was attributable to the pressures on 24 hour care budgets in adult services, children's residential care and the costs of pension auto enrolments.

- 6.2. There is a clear upward trajectory of demand for services across both adult and children's services albeit one that has been moderated by the steps taken to implement an agreed set of eligibility criteria or adult social care services and efforts to maintain a focus on preventative services. This creates significant financial pressures and resultant pressures on staff to balance a sound approach to financial management with robust and defensible decision making about service provision and responding to the needs of services users.
- 6.3. Against this challenging backdrop, consideration also requires to be given to how financial constraints can be managed in future years and the CSWO has been actively involved in the consideration of potential savings options, including any risks or equality issues associated with these.
- 6.4. The arrangements adopted by the Council to date in budget setting and the development of savings options has enabled the CSWO to offer clear advice on these matters and this has been a strength of current arrangements.



## 7. PERFORMANCE

### 7.1. Social Work Services have clear and robust arrangements for monitoring performance.

- The Social Work Service Plan sets out the priorities for the year ahead and also contains an Annual Performance Statement for the previous year. The Service Plan for 2014/15 was considered by members of the Council's Performance Panel on 19 June 2014.
- Performance throughout the year is now monitored through the Council's Performance Panel which gives in-depth consideration to the performance of the service in contributing to the Council's corporate plan and single outcome agreement as well as to local outcomes.
- The Council's Corporate Management Team has developed a system of peer reviews which provides peer scrutiny of service performance on a bi-annual basis.
- In the last year of the Service's has also developed a performance outcomes framework which consolidates the improvements we have been making in performance management.

### 7.2. The Annual Performance statement for 2013/2014 indicated that:-

#### **Target performance was achieved or exceeded in 23 indicators:**

- The number of service users receiving a Rapid Response service during the year (total admissions prevented and early discharge facilitated);
- Home Care Service: The number of people aged 65+ receiving Home Care;
- The number of Home Care hours per 1000 population aged 65+;
- The proportion of Home Care service users aged 65+ receiving personal care;
- The proportion of Home Care service users aged 65+ receiving a service during evenings/overnight;
- The proportion of Home Care service users aged 65+ receiving a service at weekends;
- The percentage of calls to the social work contact centre answered at 1st attempt;
- The proportion of children requiring home supervision seen by a supervising officer within 15 days;
- The proportion of young people who are looked after and accommodated who have a plan;
- Community Care: The number of people whose community care assessment was completed during the year;
- The number of carers' assessments carried out during the year;
- The total number of calls to MECS during the year and the proportion of mobile warden responses involved;
- The proportion of Criminal Justice Social Work reports submitted to courts by the due date;
- Community Payback: The average number of hours per week taken to complete orders
- Staff turnover - % staff who have left;

- Budget outturn variance from planned budget;
- The percentage of older people aged 65+ with intensive care needs receiving services at home;
- The total overnight respite weeks provided to children with a disability;
- Privacy – percentage of residential care places for older people (65+) that are in single rooms;
- Privacy – percentage of residential care places for other adults (18-64) that are in single rooms;
- The proportion of people in single rooms with ensuite provision in care homes for older people (65+);
- The proportion of people in single rooms with ensuite provision in care homes for other adults (18-64);
- The number and rate per 1,000 population of new adaptations provided during the reporting year.

**Performance did not improve on previous year, but within 5% of achieving target, for 2 indicators:**

- The number of children receiving Playscheme Respite sessions provided by the children with disabilities team
- The proportion of complaints completed within the response time of 20 working days

**Performance last year did not improve on the previous year, and we failed to meet our target performance by more than 5%, in 12 indicators:**

- The number of months during the reporting year that the target was achieved of no delayed discharge patients waiting 4 weeks or more
- The number of 'OT' equipment items provided by the Joint Loan Equipment Scheme during the year
- The proportion of social background reports submitted to the Reporter within 20 days
- The proportion of looked after children in community placements
- The number of 'OT' pending assessments at the end of the year
- The proportion of individuals on new orders seen by a supervising officer within 1 week
- Sickness absence - % days lost
- Staff qualification – the percentage of care staff working in care homes for older people (65+) who are qualified (sector wide)
- Staff qualification – the percentage of care staff working in care homes for other adults (18-64yrs) who are qualified (sector wide)
- The total daytime respite weeks provided to children with a disability
- % of looked after children who on leaving care achieve both English and Maths at SCQF level 3 or higher
- % of looked after children who on leaving care achieve at least one subject at SCQF level 3 or higher

7.3. The above areas are a focus for improvement in the current year.

- 7.4. Registered services are subject to regular inspections by the Care Inspectorate. Over the last year the performance of our 31 registered services continues to improve. 89% of the grades awarded to these services are good, very good or excellent. Where weaknesses are identified, action plans are in place to address these and are monitored by managers.

## 8. **STATUTORY FUNCTIONS**

### 8.1. **Statutory Decision Making**

The CSWO is responsible for taking final decisions on behalf of the Council in certain circumstances involving high levels of risk and vulnerability for service users.

#### 8.1.1. **Interim Placement/Moves to Secure Accommodation**

In terms of the Children (Scotland) Act, the CSWO is the decision maker who requires to determine whether a child subject to a supervision requirement with a secure authorisation is placed in secure accommodation. In addition, the CSWO has significant powers under the Secure Accommodation (Scotland) Regulations 1996, including the power to place children in secure accommodation on an interim basis pending consideration by a children's hearing, and moving children committed to the care of the Local Authority by the criminal courts to secure accommodation. Because of the significance of the decisions to be taken, Parliament has required that the decision be taken by the CSWO.

Five young people required to be accommodated in Secure Accommodation over the period April 2013 – March 2014.

#### 8.1.2. **Temporary Placement Changes**

Under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 the CSWO may decide that a child requires to be moved to a new placement, notwithstanding that the child requires to reside there by virtue of a condition on a supervision requirement made by the Children's Hearing.

Decisions are usually linked to moves from one residential care or foster care placement or to another, and can be triggered by concerns within the care setting.

In making the decision the CSWO has to be satisfied that these powers require to be used, rather than requesting a review children's hearing. It usually relates to situations where it is clear that the current placement has broken down irretrievably. Over the period April 2013 – March 2013 11 such transfers were authorised by the CSWO.

#### 8.1.3. **Statutory Functions (Adults With Incapacity)**

The Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act ascribes a number of significant roles to the CSWO. These roles emphasise the importance of the exercise of social work professional skills in relation to Falkirk Council's functions in respect of the guardianship of adults with incapacity. The statutory framework does not, however, require the CSWO to exercise a personal decision making function.

The roles of the CWSO under the 2000 Act are:-

- To act as guardian to an adult with incapacity where the guardian's powers relate to the welfare of the adult;
- To act as the recipient of notices that applications for guardianship or intervention orders are to be made, and to ensure that appropriate reports are provided for the court process; and
- To provide reports to court on the appropriateness of a guardianship or intervention order where the incapacity relied upon is not a mental disorder.

Falkirk Council currently has 88 Local Authority Welfare Guardianship orders for which the CSWO is the appointed guardian. There are 2 Welfare Guardianship Orders where the CSWO is joint Welfare Guardian with private individuals. There are a further 91 Private Welfare Guardianship Orders, 47 of which the guardian holds both welfare and financial powers. There are 77 Private and Local Authority AWI Welfare Guardianship Order applications currently in progress, an increase of 157% from the previous year. The Local Authority has a duty to supervise the appointed private guardians and review the continued need for the powers granted under the order. This area of work has seen a substantial year on year increase. The number of Local Authority Guardianship Orders has increased by 36% from the previous year. The number of Private Guardianship Orders has increased by 40%. In addition to the increase in requests for the provision of the required statutory MHO report this has a consequential increase in the duty to supervise the private guardians of the Adult. From January to March 2014 the MHO service supervised 76 proxies of the Adults subject to a Guardianship Order.

The CSWO is the appointed guardian for Falkirk Council Welfare Guardianship orders and as such has responsibility to ensure that the welfare powers granted under the order are exercised within the principles of the Adult with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000. This responsibility is completed through delegation to a supervising Mental Health Officer and/or the case manager and the Order is reviewed every 12 months, unless identified as required earlier, to ensure the Order is still required and that it continues to be relevant to the adult's needs.

The CSWO is required to allocate a MHO to complete a suitability report for a Private Welfare Guardianship Order application. The CSWO also has a responsibility to ensure the supervision of all Private Welfare Guardianship Orders within the Falkirk Council area. Within Falkirk Council this supervision is carried out by the full-time MHO team. This supervision involves an initial 3 month review followed by 12 monthly review of the continued need for the powers granted by the Guardianship Order and the continued fitness of the named guardian/guardians to exercise those powers in keeping with the principles of the Act.

It should also be noted that in addition to the work in relation to the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 the MHO service has a specific duty in relation to statutory detentions under the Mental Health (Care & Treatment)(Scotland) Act 2003 and the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995.

Under Section 32 of the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 the Local Authority has a responsibility to appoint a sufficient number of approved (as detailed within the Act) Mental Health Officers to discharge the duties and responsibilities under the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003, the Criminal procedure (Scotland) Act 1995 and the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000. The increase in demand outlined above has implication for staff training and this is referred to in paragraph 12.7.

#### 8.1.4. **Assessment and Management of Risk**

The CSWO has specific responsibilities for ensuring effective governance arrangements for the management of risk. Risk Assessment and Risk Management is a particularly complex area of Social Work practice which involves balancing needs, risk and civil liberties in accordance with professional standards. The exercise of such responsibilities is fundamental to work with children on the Child Protection Register, Looked after Children, vulnerable adults who may be in need of support and protection and work with high risk offenders, including registered sex offenders.

Over the course of the last year we have updated a range of policies and procedures to take account of national guidance relating to Adult Protection, Child Protection and Public Protection. We have also provided a range of training in respect of risk assessment and risk management to front line staff.

As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 there were 85 children on the Child Protection Register and 374 children looked after, 228 of who were looked after away from home.

### 9. **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

- 9.1. The service has embedded continuous activity into management arrangements for the service and has a Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement calendar which is monitored through continuous improvement groups chaired by each Head of Service.
- 9.2. In addition to this service specific activity the service contributes to a range of multi-agency continuous improvement activities and has undertaken regular audits of child protection activity. The findings from these audits demonstrated a range of strengths as well as areas for improvement which are monitored on a multi-agency basis.
- 9.3. Social Work Services are required to operate a complaints procedure for the handling of complaints which conforms to national guidance. The Social Work Complaints procedure differs from the Council's corporate procedure in that there is a final stage which may involve a complaint being heard by a Complaints Review Committee consisting of Elected Members and an independent Chairperson. Over the course of 2013/2014 a total of 334 complaints were received in relation to Social Work Services, a decrease of 124 from the previous year. It should be noted that 94% of complaints were resolved at stage 1 of the complaints process with only 2 proceeding to stage 3.

The Service remains committed to using learning from complaints more generally to improve practice.

## 10. **PLANNING**

- 10.1. Our Service Performance Plan sets out the priorities for Social Work Services for 2014–2017. This plan sets out our objectives for this period under the Corporate Goals and Values of the Council. Our Service Performance Plan takes account of the Council’s Strategic Community Plan and the Corporate Plan and the priorities they contain. We have also ensured our Plan links to the latest Single Outcome Agreement that has been developed by the Council and our Community Planning Partners.
- 10.2. Our Service Performance Plan looks at the context within which we work. By reviewing this we can take account of challenges and opportunities, and make sure we plan for changes in our environment. The plan then sets out how we will continue to improve the services we deliver over the coming year and beyond. Our priorities are clearly linked to and developed to support our Community Planning Partners vision for our area as ‘the Place to be’. We recognise we have a particular role in Social Work in ensuring this vision includes all citizens, including the most vulnerable and the most challenging.
- 10.3. Our objectives, tasks and performance measures are aligned to the Council’s goals. These are:
- Further developing a thriving, sustainable and vibrant economy
  - Continuing to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of our citizens and communities;
  - Increasing our efforts to tackle disadvantage and discrimination in all its forms; and
  - Enhancing and sustaining an environment in which people want to live and visit.
- 10.4. To achieve our goals, we undertake to ensure that we work in a manner that promotes the Council’s values and these govern the way we work. These values are:
- Partnership
  - Performance, and
  - Public Service.
- 10.5. Our main aims are:
- To deliver, through a highly skilled and confident workforce, high quality care and protective services that make a real and positive difference to the quality of people’s lives;
  - To work with people who use and need our services to develop services that as far as possible meet their unique circumstances, whilst promoting their independence
  - To ensure our services are appropriately integrated and understandable by working with other partners; and
  - To ensure courtesy, care and respect are at the core of our values and evident in everything we do, and communicating clearly and effectively

- 10.6. As indicated in previous sections of this report, Social Work Services works closely with other services and other partners to deliver the commitments articulated in the Council's Single Outcome Agreement and have developed a range of partnership plans.
- 10.7. The last year has also seen a considerable amount of partnership activity in relation to reshaping care for older people which has been influenced by the Joint Commissioning Plan for Older People. Related to this, the Council and partners have been planning for the changes which are now contained in the Public Bodies (Joint Working) Scotland Act 2014.
- 10.8. The changes relating to the integration of Adult Health & Social Care integration are extensive and have an impact not just on Adult Services but also on the other Social Work Services and other Council Services.

The role of the CSWO will be crucial in any new arrangements in ensuring effective professional governance of adult, children and criminal justice services even if the operational management of these services are subject to change.

- 10.9. Following the passing of the Act on 1 April 2014, the Council has agreed in principle to the formation of an Integration Joint Board for Health & Social Care and work is being progressed to develop more detailed proposals for the Board's Integration Scheme.

## 11. **PARTICIPATION & ENGAGEMENT WITH SERVICE USERS**

- 11.1. In the last year the Service has developed detailed action plans relating to how service users and carers can be involved in the development of services and a number of developments have taken place.

Young people in residential care have been actively involved in the development of a move on facility which recently won a national award. Likewise, young care leavers helped to shape a successful bid to the Big Lottery Fund for a Peer Mentoring Service for care leavers.

Older people were directly involved in the development of the Joint Commissioning Plan for Older People and a specific Change Fund project has been very successful in promoting the engagement of local communities in the development of supports for older people.

Innovative approaches have also been piloted in relation to self-directed support, with the development of a voucher scheme for the provision of respite care for people with mental health problems.

A significant amount of staff training has also been undertaken in relation to Self Directed Support and, following a period of detailed preparation, the service was able to implement new legislative requirements for new people accessing services following the implementation date of 1 April 2014.

## 12. **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING**

- 12.1. The Service has developed a training and workforce development plan and has maintained a good track record in providing training and support for staff development.
- 12.2. A significant and growing proportion of the Service's workforce is subject to registration with the SSSC and this requires an ongoing commitment to workforce development and support to staff to be given the qualifications required for their posts.
- 12.3. The following range of staff have been required to register with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and have done so successfully;
- Social Workers
  - Social Work students
  - Managers of Residential Child Care Services
  - Supervisors in Residential child Care Services
  - Residential Child Care workers
  - Managers of Adult Day Care services
  - Managers of Care Home Services for Adults
  - Supervisors in Care Home Services for Adults
  - Practitioners in Care Home Services for Adults
- 12.4. Practitioners in Care Home Services for Adults were required to register by 29<sup>th</sup> March 2013. The Service supported this group to register and we now have 100% registration. Newly appointed practitioners (social care worker) have to register as soon as possible after commencing in post and have a 'six months grace' period to do so. The service has high levels of qualification in this job role and so only a small number require to be assessed for and complete a SVQ level 3 in Health and Social Care. The Service has its own SVQ Assessment Centre and so has the resources to provide these awards.
- 12.5. Managers of Care at Home Services and Housing with Care Services were required to register by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2014. Supervisors of Care at Home Services and workers in Care at Home Services will be required to register by 2017 and 2020 respectively.
- The Service has made provision to assess and support the large number of staff in Home Care to enable them to complete the required SVQ awards in preparation for registration by these deadlines.
- As Registered Workers, these staff members are required to comply with the SSSC's 'Code of Practice'. Falkirk Council, as an employer, is also required to comply with 'The Code of Practice for Employers'.
- 12.6. The Council runs a very successful ILM Managers programme and managers across the Service are able to take part in this programme which provides qualifications up to Diploma level.



- 12.7. In response to shortages in approved and trained mental health officers, the service is supporting 4 social workers through the MHO training course provided by Edinburgh University and due to start in December 2014. This is an exceptional number for Falkirk Council and is in recognition of the increase in demand on the service and attrition to date in the number of practising MHOs within the service. Market forces are such that recruitment of qualified MHOs to posts is a challenge; as such there is recognition of the need to capacity build within service. Releasing 4 social workers to complete this training is in itself a challenge but necessary.

### 13. **KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE YEAR AHEAD**

- 13.1. The year ahead brings with it an unprecedented level of challenge and change as well as opportunities.

#### 13.1.1. **Health & Social Care Integration**

During this period decision will be made on the future arrangements for Adult Health & Social Care Services and related to this, the future arrangements for social work services to Children & Families and for Criminal Justice Services. These changes require to be carefully planned and managed and have the potential to create anxiety and uncertainty amongst staff. It will be important to ensure that professional leadership is maintained through the role of CSWO even if organisational arrangements are subject to change.

#### 13.1.2. **Redesign of Community Justice**

During this period it is expected that progress will be made in shaping proposals for how Community Justice Services can become more fully integrated with the community Planning Partnership. This will be preparation for the potential dissolution of Community Justice Authorities in 2016. It will be important to ensure a coherent approach to any redesign which takes account of the wider landscape of change and which continues to ensure connections with other Social Work Services.

#### 13.1.3. **Developments in Children's Services**

The impact of the Children's & Young People's (Scotland) Act will be experienced over the course of the coming year and beyond with the Council acquiring additional responsibility in relation to the implementation of GIRFEC and in relation to looked after children and care hours.

#### 13.1.4. **Rising Demand & Budget Pressures**

Social Work Services are experiencing rising demand across all service areas, with consequent budget pressures, combined with the prospect of more severe financial constraints in the years that lie ahead.

#### 13.1.5. **Supporting Frontline Staff and Service Delivery**

All of the above factors have the potential impact to significantly on front line staff and service delivery and a key management priority will be to continue to support effective delivery of services through effective support to the staff who provide those.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend the work they do in very difficult and demanding circumstances.

14. **CONCLUSION**

- 14.1. This has been a very demanding period for Social Work Services. The work which Social Work Services staff undertake on behalf of Falkirk Council is life changing work. Our work enables vulnerable citizens to gain independence, to be safe and to be cared for and it contributes to the overall safety and well being of our communities. Although not often publicly recognised, our staff are skilled, experienced and highly committed to delivering the best possible services to the people in Falkirk, and as such, are our greatest asset in facing the challenges which lie ahead.

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**Contact 4035**