

Meeting of South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership	Integration Joint Board	
Held on:	12th November 2025	
Agenda Item:	9	
Title:	Chief Social Work Officer Annual Report 2024 - 2025	
Summary:		
The purpose of this report is to update the Integrated Joint Board on the performance of statutory social work services for 2024-2025.		
Author:	Gary Hoey, Chief Social Work Officer – HSCP	
Recommendations:		
It is recommended that the IJB considers the performance of statutory social work services and pressures outlined.		
Route to meeting:		
Directions:		
1. No Directions Required	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
2. Directions to NHS Ayrshire & Arran	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Directions to South Ayrshire Council	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Directions to both SAC & NHS	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Implications:		
	Financial	<input type="checkbox"/>
	HR	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Legal	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Equalities	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sustainability	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
	ICT	<input type="checkbox"/>

CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT 2024 - 2025

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Integrated Joint Board on the performance of statutory social work services for 2024-2025.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that the IJB considers the performance of statutory social work services and pressures outlined.**

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Every local authority must have a professionally qualified Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) as per Section 45 of the Local Government etc. (Scotland) Act 1994. The role of the CSWO is to ensure the provision of appropriate professional advice in the discharge of a local authority's statutory functions as described in Section 5 (1B) of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968.
- 3.2 The role covers the full range of a local authority's social work functions to provide a focus for professional leadership and governance. The role provides strategic and professional leadership in the delivery of social work services.
- 3.3 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 – for example, a Health and Social Care Partnership.
- 3.4 The Scottish Government requires the CSWO to produce an annual report of service quality and performance and key challenges.

4. REPORT

- 4.1 The CSWO annual report (Appendix 1) highlights areas of performance across statutory Social Work services. The CSWO would wish to draw attention to the following key points within the report:
- 4.2 AHSCP demonstrates a continued commitment to our strategic vision of start well, live well and age well. We are progressing our vision to deliver the right care at the right time by the development of locality-based services, integrated and early intervention opportunities.
- 4.3 The report observes an increase in demand in relation to Child Protection with regards to Initial Referrals, Initial Referral Discussions and children placed on the Child Protection Register in the reporting year. The leading vulnerabilities and adversities remain as in previous years, domestic abuse, parental drug use and parental mental health.

- 4.4 The report observes a decrease in children being referred to the children Scottish Childrens Reporter administration for consideration of statutory measure. 87% of children are cared for in community settings contributing to our efforts to fulfil the Promise.
- 4.5 The report observes an increase in relation to Adult Support and Protection and Adult Concerns. There is an increase in ASP referral advancing to investigation and an increase in the use of planning meetings and case conferences. External inspections show improvement in ASP and Children's Houses.
- 4.6 The report observed a slight decrease in assessment and support plans in Adult Services and a slight increase in relation to the review of these. We see a positive shift in the numbers of carers being offered Carers Support Plans and more demand on self-directed support with a shift towards option 1 and 2.
- 4.7 The report observes that with regards to delayed transfers of care these were lower than the previous reporting year and the continued investment in intermediate and reablement to further impact on this however we still experience Recruitment challenges especially in care at home.
- 4.8 The report observes that our MHO service shows increasing demand. The numbers of guardianships with a named supervising officer is extremely positive with no waiting for assessments for Adults with Incapacity
- 4.9 The report notes that in Learning Disability an expansion of cores and cluster provision and the development of resource to address crisis. Our League of Champions continue to inform our strategy moving forwards.
- 4.10 The report notes increasing pressure within our Justice Service with an increase in community payback orders and unpaid work making a positive contribution to communities in South Ayrshire.
- 4.11 The report observes an increase in our suspected drugs related deaths driven by the changing landscape in terms of drug formulation and toxicity. The report highlights the steps that the ADP are taking to increase support for those experiencing issues with substance use and support while in recovery.
- 4.12 The report notes the positive initiatives within workforce development to ensure that we have a skilled, confident, and competent workforce to support people to start well, live well and age well.
- 4.13 Alongside these key issues, the CSWO would wish to publicly recognise and acknowledge the skills, compassion and dedication shown by our practitioners, managers and partners every day to provide services to our communities.
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5. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

5.1 Elements of the CSWO Annual Report relate to the following strategic objectives:

- We help build communities where people are safe
- We focus on prevention and tackling inequality
- We are transparent and listen to you
- We nurture and are part of communities that care for each other
- We are an ambitious and effective Partnership
- We make a positive impact beyond the services we deliver
- We work together to give you the right care in the right place

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial Implications

6.1.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report beyond those contextualised within the body of the annual report. It is however of note the increasing demand on services and increasing of care and support packages place considerable pressure on SAHSCP as we strive to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our people.

6.2 Human Resource Implications

6.2.1 There are no human resource implications arising from this report beyond those contextualised within the body of the annual report

6.3 Legal Implications

6.3.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report beyond those contextualised within the body of the annual report.

6.4 Equalities implications

6.4.1 The proposals in this report allow scrutiny of performance. The report does not involve proposals for policies, strategies, procedures, processes, financial decisions and activities (including service delivery), both new and at review, that affect the Council's communities and employees, therefore an equality impact assessment is not required.

6.5 Sustainability implications

6.5.1 This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme or strategy or document otherwise described which could be considered to constitute a plan, programme, policy or strategy.

6.6 Clinical/professional assessment

6.6.1 The report contains professional assessment of key performance measures and pressures across social work services.

7. CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

- 7.1 The report draws on local and national data. The portfolio holder and cabinet have been appraised of the content of the reports and approved.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 There are no risks associated with this report beyond those contextualised within the body of the annual report.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Chief Social Work Officers Annual Report 2024 - 2025

BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

REPORT AUTHOR AND PERSON TO CONTACT

Name: Gary Hoey
Phone number: 07934775681
Email address: gary.hoey@south-ayrshire.gov.uk