
To: Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board

On: 22 November 2019

Report by: Chief Social Work Officer

Heading: Annual Report of the Chief Social Work Officer 2018/19

1. Summary

- 1.1. The Chief Social Work Officer provides an annual update report to Council in Autumn each year. The requirement for every local authority in Scotland to appoint a professionally qualified Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) is set out within Section 3 of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968. The particular qualifications are set down in regulations and this is one of a number of statutory requirements which local authorities must comply with. In Renfrewshire Council the role of the Chief Social Work Officer is held by the Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice.
- 1.2. The annual reports of all CSWOs are submitted to the Office of the Chief Social Work Advisor at the Scottish Government in order that a national overview report can be produced.
- 1.3. The report provides a summary of activity relating to the role of the Chief Social Work Officer during 2018/19.
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2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the IJB:-

- Note the key activities outlined in this report;
 - Note that the annual report has been submitted to the Office of the Chief Social Work Advisor at the Scottish Government; and
 - Agree that annual reports will continue to be provided to this Board
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3. The Chief Social Work Officer

- 3.1 The principal role and purpose of the Social Work service is contained within the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, which gave local authorities the responsibility of “promoting social welfare”. The Social Work Service has a statutory duty to provide care and protection to the most vulnerable people across Renfrewshire, often meaning that many of our service users do not engage with us on a voluntary basis. The role of the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) is critical in terms of achieving this purpose.

- 3.2 The CSWO is a 'proper officer' in relation to the social work function: an officer given particular responsibility on behalf of a local authority, where the law requires the function to be discharged by a specified post holder.
- 3.3 The qualifications of the CSWO are set down in regulations and stipulate that the postholder must be a qualified social worker registered with the Scottish Social Services Council. The CSWO must be able to demonstrate extensive experience of operational and strategic management at a senior level within social work or social care services.
- 3.4 The overall objective of the CSWO is to provide professional advice on the provision of social work services to elected members and officers; advice which assists authorities in understanding many of the complexities which are inherent across social work services. The CSWO should also assist authorities in understanding the key role that social work plays in contributing to the achievement of national and local outcomes, to improving local performance and in terms of the management of corporate risk. The key aspect of this locally has been the provision of an annual report to Council, and these, along with CSWO reports from other local authorities, are now being used nationally to create an overview report.
- 3.5 The scope of the CSWO role covers all social work and social care services, whether provided directly by the local authority, or in partnership with others. Where these services are purchased or commissioned from external providers, the CSWO has responsibility to advise on the specification, quality and standards of services commissioned. The environment in which social work services operate is much more complex than when the Act established the role, and current guidance reflects the increased strategic nature of the role, and the particular functions in relation to Integration Joint Boards and Health and Social Care Partnerships.
- 3.6 The CSWO has a range of other responsibilities relating to the promotion of values, standards, and leadership.
- 3.7 Social work services have a statutory duty to provide care and protection to the most vulnerable people across their local authority area. A significant proportion of service users do not engage with the service on a voluntary basis. Access to the majority of services is assessed on the basis of need, and social work staff work in partnership with individuals, carers, families and communities to meet this need within the resources available to the service and partner agencies.

4. Local Governance Arrangements

- 4.1 Within Renfrewshire Council the Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice is the Chief Social Work Officer. As well as the responsibilities associated with the children's services directorship, as CSWO he retains professional leadership for adult social work and social care services delivered by the HSCP.
- 4.2 The CSWO has a number of general and specific duties, including:
- (i) Providing regular reports to elected members on the key activities and role of the Chief Social Work Officer.
 - (ii) Leading for Social Work on the Renfrewshire HSCP Executive Governance Group and the Integration Joint Board

- (iii) Reporting directly to the Education and Children's Services Policy Board and Renfrewshire Council.
- (iv) Being a member of the Council's Corporate Management Team and the Chief Officer's Group and reporting directly to the Chief Executive and senior elected members.
- (v) Representing services and the council more widely, at a local, regional and national level.
- (vi) Chairing the twice-yearly meeting of all social work managers from both Children's Services and the HSCP.
- (vii) Providing advice on social work issues to the Chief Officers' Group
- (viii) Specific Duties

In relation to specific duties associated with the position, the CSWO within Renfrewshire Council acts as:

- Final point of appeal in relation to Adoption and Fostering decisions
- Recipient of all Mental Health and Adults with Incapacity Orders, and Guardianship cases
- Decision maker in relation to Secure Care applications for Children

- (i) Management of Risk

The Chief Social Work Officer is accountable to the Chief Executive, the Corporate Management Team and the Council as part of the Chief Officers' Group which manages public protection risks on a partnership basis. Heads of Service have responsibility for the management of risk within their respective service areas.

5. Activities of the Chief Social Work Officer 2018/19

- 5.1 The report attached as Appendix 1 summarises the key activities of the Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice in his capacity as Chief Social Work Officer in Renfrewshire during 2018/19. It does not provide an exhaustive description of the full range of duties and responsibilities undertaken by the Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice, but seeks to provide a broad overview of the CSWO role. This report and its appendices will be submitted to the Office of the Chief Social Work Officer to inform a national overview report.
- 5.2 The next report on the activities of the Chief Social Work Officer will be submitted to the Council in Autumn 2020.

6. Overview of activities within social work services

- 6.1 Services continue to experience high demand in a number of areas, which is being managed in a financially prudent manner and during a period of significant structural change for social care and the wider Council. The management of significant levels of risk to vulnerable children and adults continues to be significant for the service and for partner agencies. Many of those pressures are related to deprivation and to high levels of alcohol and drug misuse in Renfrewshire. The service works as part of a multi-agency partnership to co-ordinate the provision of services which aim to protect vulnerable people locally and continues to deliver high-quality services to vulnerable people in Renfrewshire and to innovate and improve through a programme of continuous development and improvement.

- 6.2 The CSWO has a range of statutory duties which are detailed in Appendix 1 to this report; that appendix also includes more detail of demand and provision in those areas.
- 6.3 Statutory functions in respect of children encompass looked after and accommodated children, child protection, work with the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration and work with young people who offend and are subject to secure orders. In recent years, the service, in partnership with others, has developed a strong focus on early intervention and prevention, on the use of evidence-based programmes to support families, on the use of intensive support in complex cases, and on focusing on permanence including looked after and accommodated children who are not able to return to the care of their parent(s).
- 6.4 The council has also invested in an additional children's house which can provide intensive support to a small group of young people. A specialist team supports children and young people who are unaccompanied refugees or asylum seekers.
- 6.5 Day to day management of adult social work services is delegated to Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership. The CSWO retains a professional advisory role in relation to these services and continues to have statutory duties within adult social work. The Renfrewshire Adult Protection Committee is responsible for developing, implementing and monitoring the strategic approach to the management of the protection of vulnerable adults in Renfrewshire in terms of the Adult Support & Protection (Scotland) Act 2007. There continues to be increasing demand for work related to the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000. More detail is included in Appendix 1.
- 6.6 The Criminal Justice Service supervises a range of community-based requirements on offenders, provides reports to Courts and the Parole Board, manages a service for sexual offenders, and operates a range of statutory and voluntary services to support female offenders. A number of services which previously operated on a shared basis with neighbouring authorities have now been brought in-house. Multi-agency arrangements are in place to manage high-risk offenders, violent and sexual offenders and to tackle domestic abuse. The service is also working closely with community planning partners to deliver on community justice responsibilities.

Key Priorities in 2018/19

- 6.7 Based on an assessment of internal and external factors the CSWO has identified key priorities for the year ahead:
- Supporting the wider Council to deliver on the priorities set out in the Council Plan;
 - Effectively discharging our public protection role and working with partners to ensure that vulnerable children and adults live as safely as possible within local communities;
 - Continuing to ensure strong and positive links between Children's Services and Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership;
 - Continuing to deliver high quality services in a period of financial constraint;
 - Improving outcomes for children living in Renfrewshire through evidence-based early intervention and preventative programmes and other initiatives which will aim to transform services for children;
 - Responding to the extension of the Presumption Against Short Sentences;

- Contributing to the work of Renfrewshire's Alcohol and Drugs Commission; and
- Preparing for the implementation of a new social work case management system.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – None
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None
3. **Community Planning** – The report details the progress made by the service to protect vulnerable children and adults, reduce offending behaviour, increase community safety, and promote early intervention, independent living and wider health improvement. It highlights partnership working, details the measures which ensure the workforce is skilled and effective and highlights achievements in relation to support to communities, customer service and consultation.
4. **Legal** - None
5. **Property/Assets** – None
6. **Information Technology** – None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** – The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** – None
9. **Procurement** –None
10. **Risk** - Risks related to the management and delivery of social work services within Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership are closely monitored and are included within both the RHSCP Risk Register which follows the same format as the Children's Services Risk Register which includes Children's Social Work and Criminal Justice – the latter is reported into Renfrewshire Council's Corporate and Strategic Risk Registers.
11. **Privacy Impact** – None. The information to be made available via the Publication Scheme is information which would be disclosed in response to a request under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. This therefore would not include Personal Data as defined by the Data Protection Act 1998.

List of Background Papers – Chief Social Work Officer Report

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Annual Report of the Chief Social Work Officer

2018/19

“Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing. The above definition may be amplified at national and/or regional levels.”

Definition of social work agreed by the International Federation of
Social

Workers, 2014

Chief Social Work Officer - Renfrewshire

The role of Chief Social Work Officer for the period April 2018 to mid-May 2018 was undertaken by Peter Macleod, the Director of Children's Services. Mr. Macleod had operated as the Chief Social Work Officer for the previous 12 years. The leadership and drive demonstrated by Mr. Macleod in his work as Chief Social Work Officer and the various positions he held in Renfrewshire is acknowledged. Social work staff in Renfrewshire wish him success in his new role as Chief Executive of the Care Inspectorate.

From mid- May 2018 to August 2018 the Chief Social Work was undertaken by Dorothy Hawthorn, the Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice. Ms. Hawthorn as Chief Social Work Officer ensured that the voice of those facing disadvantage or discrimination was heard and considered. Ms. Hawthorn retired from the service in August 2018 and social work staff in Renfrewshire wish her a long and healthy retirement.

The Current Chief Social Work Officer, John Trainer, Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice was appointed to the role in September 2018.

Summary of performance in 2018/19

Social work services across Scotland continue to face the challenges of increasing levels of demand for services and financial constraint. Renfrewshire continues to have areas of significant multiple deprivation and relative poverty, and above average levels of alcohol and drug misuse. The local authority area has also had historically high rates of looked after children, compared to the national average. Consequently, early intervention and preventative approaches are critical to sustainable service delivery which still has scope for innovation and continuous improvement.

Adult protection and the management of financial and welfare guardianships remain a growing area of work within adult social work. Self-directed support continues to grow in popularity with the result that more traditional services such as day care are facing a reduction in the number of people choosing to use them. Demographically-driven demand continues to put pressure on community-based services.

Renfrewshire appointed a new Head of Childcare and Criminal Justice and a new Head of Health and Social Care during 2018/19. The Head of Childcare and Criminal Justice also took over the role of Chief Social Work Officer in that period.

In Renfrewshire, Children and Families Social Work is located in the Children's Services Directorate, supporting joint working to deliver the best outcomes for children and young people in the area. Adult Social Work is delegated to Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership ensuring an integrated approach to meeting the needs of adults in the area. Social work services in both the council and HSCP continue to have a key role in local multi-agency working whether as part of statutory duties around public protection or through involvement in innovative work such as Renfrewshire's Alcohol and Drug Commission.

Partnership Working

The role of Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) was originally designed to provide professional advice on social work services to elected members and council officers, in order to assist local authorities in understanding the complexities inherent in social work and social care services. The growing incidence of strategic partnerships across the public sector, whether legislated for or developed through good local joint working, adds a level of complexity to the role of Chief Social Work Officer.

In Renfrewshire Council, social work services for children and families and criminal justice social work services are delivered by Children's Services whilst social care and social work services for adults are delivered by the Health and Social Care Partnership. As such, the CSWO fulfils the role for both the Council and the HSCP. The post is held by John Trainer, Head of Childcare and Criminal Justice. Regular meetings take place with Heads of Service from Children's Services and the HSCP to ensure that areas such as transition for young people moving to adult services and the role of parents with mental health issues are jointly addressed.

The Chief Social Work Officer is accountable to elected members via the Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board (for Adult Social Work); the Education and Children's Services Policy Board (for Children & Families Social Work) and the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board (for Criminal Justice Social Work). Public protection issues are dealt with by a Public Protection Member Officer Group.

Public protection arrangements are managed through three partnership committees comprised of senior officers from Renfrewshire Council and other public and third sector agencies – Renfrewshire Adult Protection Committee (RAPC); Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee (RCPC); and Renfrewshire Public Protection Chief Officers Group (COG). The first two of these are led by an Independent Chair, and the latter is led by the Chief Executive of Renfrewshire Council. The Chief Social Work Officer is a member of all three groups.

The Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership is the mechanism by which all Renfrewshire's corporate parents agree joint plans for services ranging from the universal to those highly targeted at particular needs.

The CSWO is co-chair of Renfrewshire's Gender-Based Violence Strategy Group. During 2018/19, this group published its first three-year strategy, and will undertake an evaluation of this during 2020/21.

Service user voice is a growing feature of the planning and delivery of services, and in Renfrewshire, service users are supported to make their views known in a number of ways. Children and young people can share their opinions and experience through the Youth Commission, the Children's Champions Board, the use of Viewpoint, and through advocacy services provided by Barnardo's and Who Cares Scotland.

For adults, the HSCP's Strategic Planning Group (SPG) brings together key stakeholders such as service user and carer representatives, partners in council and health services, third sector organisations, and care providers. The SPG is an opportunity for adult service users and carers to make their views known, and service users and carers are also represented on the Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board. The HSCP also has strong links with various service user and carer groups across Renfrewshire. The embedding of self-directed support is contributing to the delivery of more individualised care packages and a consequent shift to service users having greater control over their care is beginning to emerge.

Social Services Delivery Landscape

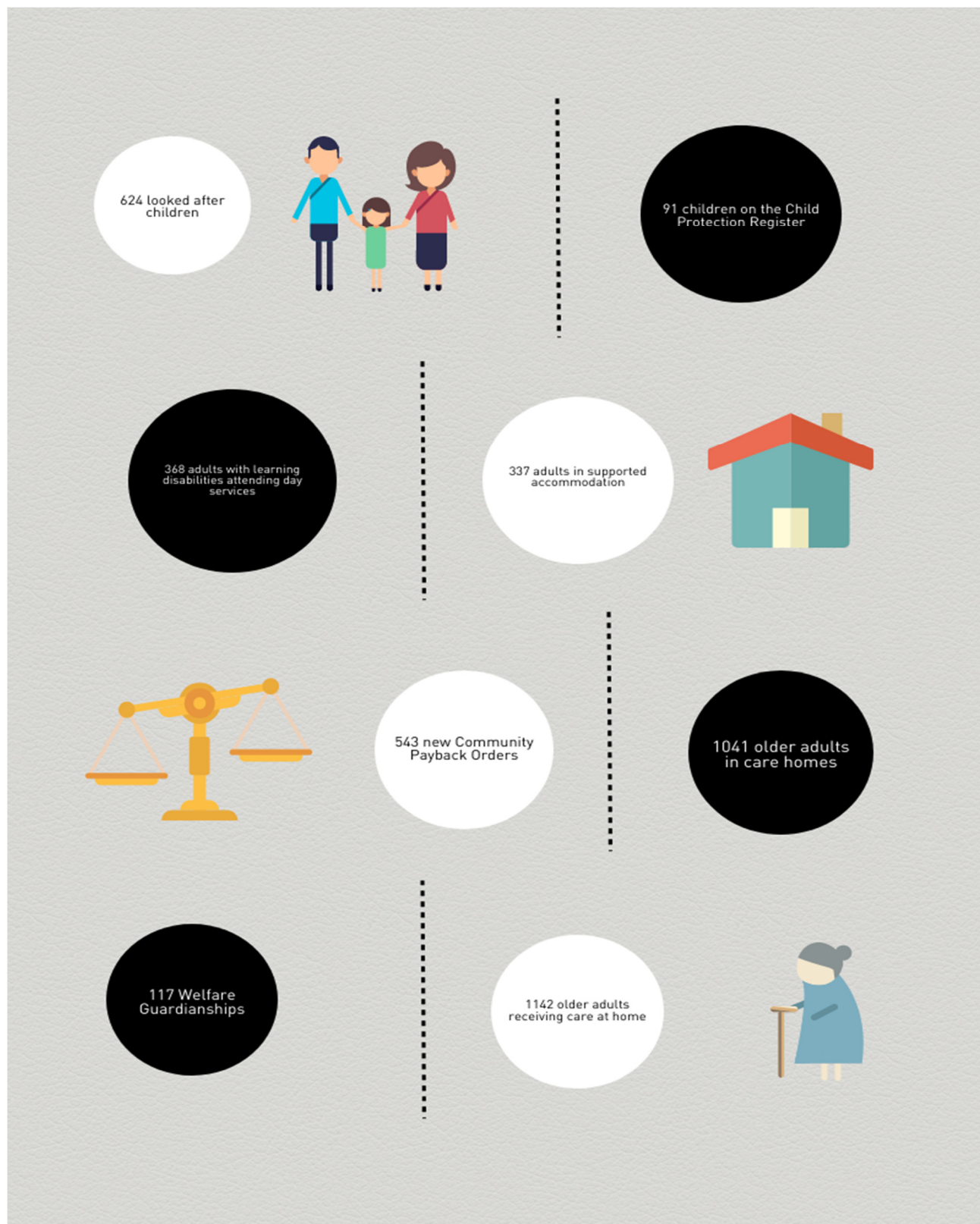
Renfrewshire has a population of 177,790 in mainly urban settlements, but with a sizeable minority living in smaller towns and villages. There are areas of severe multiple deprivation across Renfrewshire, with higher than average levels of drug and alcohol hospital admissions and rates of looked after children. The proportion of adults with a disability or long-term condition is 31.1%, according to the last census. Several large-scale new housing development and growth in specialist manufacturing are expected to generate population growth.

Renfrewshire Council retains a significant proportion of the local market in social care and social work provision, with 26 registered services including 3 care homes and 5 day centres for older adults, 6 children's houses, 4 centres providing day opportunities and 1 residential respite centre for adults with learning disabilities, 1 day centre for adults with physical disabilities, and a Care at Home service. At their most recent inspections, 17 of these services were graded Very Good or Excellent for Quality of Care and Support. The newest children's house has not yet been inspected and the remaining services were graded as Good.

The Renfrewshire local authority area also has a well-developed independent and third sector social care market. This includes more than 20 nursing and residential care homes for older people, specialist daycare provision run by Alzheimer's Scotland, national resources including the Erskine Home and the Royal Blind care home and day centre, ROAR Connections for Life, a range of supported accommodation, two secure units, and independent educational provision for those whose needs do not fit with mainstream education.

The self-directed support agenda has increased the number of smaller providers meeting tailored local needs, and the local authority also continues to work with larger framework care at home providers. As part of the strategic commissioning process required as part of the legislation on integrated health and social care, Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership has developed a market facilitation statement.

Social Services Delivery in Renfrewshire



World Social Work Day 2019

The theme of this year's World Social Work Day was 'Promoting the Importance of Human Relationships'. Social work in Renfrewshire works hard to build trusting and respectful relationships between practitioners and the people they support. Staff are trained in approaches which stress the importance of listening to and respecting the views of children, young people and families. Our services also recognise the value of family relationships for service users and encourage these to be maintained in a positive way. Renfrewshire is involved in the national Stop:Go initiative from the Care Review which includes amongst a range of aims to stop the separation of siblings unless there are important safeguarding reasons.

To mark World Social Work Day, the Chief Social Work Officer worked a late shift in one of Renfrewshire's children's houses. This allowed the Chief Social Work Officer to go back to the frontline and not only hear from staff and young people about the positives and challenges of residential children's services but to experience them first hand. As Chief Social Work Officer I want to thank the young people for opening their home to me and to the staff from being prepared to have their practice put under my scrutiny.

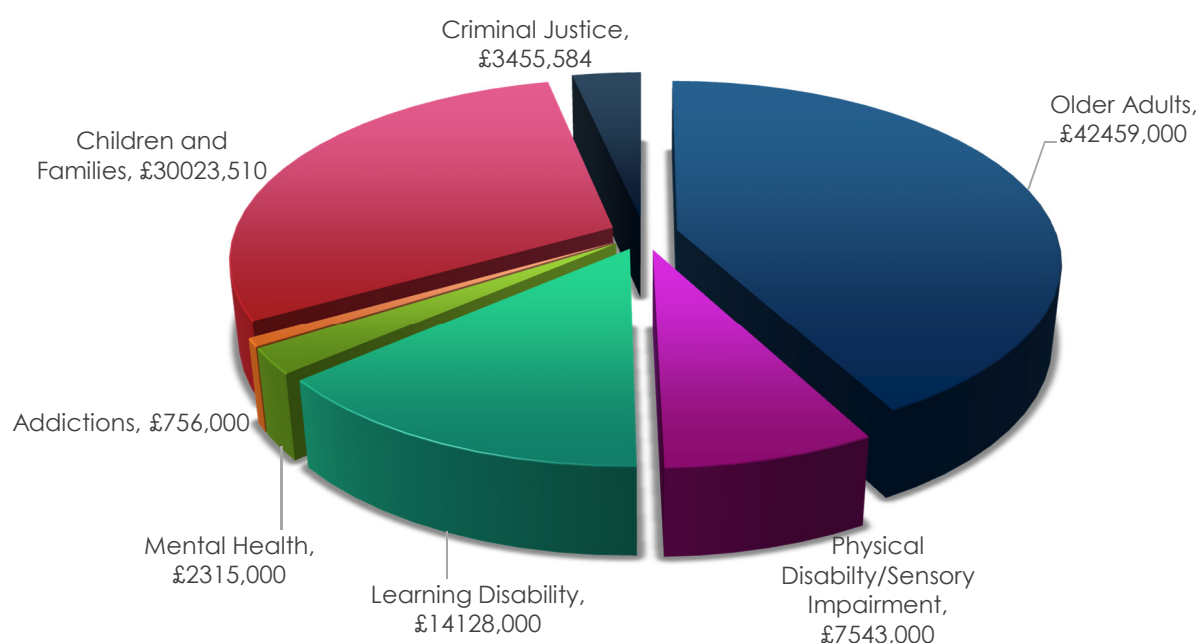
It was pleasing that I was able to experience a committed staff group who showed care and support for the young people to an extremely high standard.

It is my intention to repeat the "back to the shop floor" exercise with other staff groups over the next twelve months.

Resources

Renfrewshire Council's expenditure on social work in 2018/19 was almost £107 million. Services for older people make up the largest share at 42% and services for children and families account for a further 30%. The chart below shows expenditure by service area in 2018/19. Criminal Justice Social Work services are directly funded by Scottish Government grant. In common with other Scottish local authorities, Renfrewshire Council is trying to meet growing demand at a time of financial austerity. In its risk management plan, the Council considers financial challenges to be the greatest risk to the ongoing delivery of local services.

Expenditure on social work services, 2018/19



Demand pressures continue to generate financial challenges for social work services. These include continuing high numbers of looked after children (which is partly related to levels of deprivation, parental neglect and drug and alcohol misuse); increasing use of community sentences by courts rather than short prison sentences; the impact of longer life expectancy and a greater proportion of the population being aged 65 and over; the increasing diversity of our communities and the need to provide specialised support to, for example, refugees and unaccompanied asylum seeking children. Throughcare (that is, the support offered to care experienced young people) is an area where we will continue to see rising demand due to the ongoing implementation of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Whilst the number of looked after children in Renfrewshire remains high, Children's Services is working to ensure that the principles of minimum necessary intervention is taken forward. This has meant the number of looked after children is reducing and social work will continue to make further reductions in this area when it is safe to do so.

There are significant pressures in criminal justice social work arising from increasing demand and the issues associated with the new national funding formula agreed by COSLA and the Scottish Government. Over the past few years the changes in funding have led to the disaggregation of some services which were previously provided on a shared basis with neighbouring authorities. The extension of Presumption Against Short Sentences is likely to impact on resources in future years.

Early intervention and preventative work not only supports improved outcomes for the people of Renfrewshire but can also support a sustainable financial position. Examples of local work include the embedding of early permanency planning for looked after children where appropriate; our three-year Early Action System Change programme and the Just Learning programme for people with convictions, which addresses some of the barriers to employment and contributes to a reduction in reoffending.

Statutory Service Provision: Adult Services

Adult protection continues to be an area of high demand within Adult Services. During 2018/19, social work received 1700 adult welfare concerns and 1019 adult protection concerns. These resulted in 102 adult protection investigations and 44 initial case conferences. There were also 53 review case conferences in the year.

As was the case in 2017/18, there was another large rise in the number of applications for Compulsory Treatment Orders made by the MHO team – 161 in 2018/19, an increase of 109%. Other duties falling under the Mental Health (Care & Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 included MHO consent for 18 emergency detentions (72-hour detention for assessment), 142 short-term detentions (28 days for assessment and treatment) and 152 Mental Health Tribunals. In total, the service dealt with 773 individual pieces of work falling within that legislation during 2018/19. The service also manages 'Restricted Patients' who come under the control of Scottish Ministers.

As of 31 March 2019, the CSWO had responsibility for 117 welfare guardianships (including 25 new orders granted during 2018/19), which are managed day-to-day by a nominated officer within the MHO team. The team also supervises over 450 private welfare guardianships in line with statutory requirements and can apply for Intervention Orders where they consider a financial guardian should be appointed. The local authority applied for 25 Intervention Orders in 2018/19. The team manager is authorised to act as an Intervener for matters relating to signing for or terminating tenancies. The number of time-limited orders now being granted has created an additional pressure on MHO services due to the requirement for reports in respect of order renewals.

Renfrewshire continues to experience higher than average levels of substance use which is reflected in service usage, hospital admissions and drug deaths. Renfrewshire Drugs Service had 796 open cases at the end of 2018/19 and the Integrated Alcohol Team had 121 open cases. The number of drug deaths in the area increased considerably. Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership has recently established an Alcohol and Drugs Commission to provide in-depth consideration of the challenges facing Renfrewshire in relation to alcohol and drugs, and the ways in which these challenges might be addressed. The Commission is made up of senior officers from across health and social care, housing, criminal and community justice, and the third sector, as well as academic experts in the field.

Hoarding Short Life Working Group

A multi-agency response is typically warranted for assessment and subsequent intervention to address issues arising from hoarding that impacts on individuals, communities and partnership services. Within Renfrewshire several examples of hoarding behaviours have emerged and has led to significant resource implications, including demands on staff time and financial resource implications for Renfrewshire Council.

In recognition of the impact of hoarding behaviours, a multi-agency short life working group has been established to develop a cross-partnership approach to identifying and managing such cases. The intent is to develop interagency strategies and training as well as being a direct resource for individual practitioners.

The Chief Executive's Services are co-ordinating the short life working group with Community, Housing and Planning, Health and Social Care, Scottish Fire and Rescue, and representatives from public protection to achieve a joined-up, person-centred approach that reflects risk management and interventions to address risk to individuals and to the public.

Statutory Service Provision: Children and Families Social Work

Children's social work services in Renfrewshire are provided from locality teams, specialist teams and registered care services. The specialist teams include the Fostering and Adoption Team, the Kinship Care Team, the Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children Team, the Children with Disabilities Team and the Whole Systems Team. Children's Services has 6 children's houses and the throughcare housing support service registered with the Care Inspectorate.

Renfrewshire continues to have high numbers of looked after children but has had considerable success over the last decade in reducing both the total number of looked after children and the number placed in residential settings. The reduction in the latter was achieved as part of a planned decommissioning of in-house residential places and investment to grow the number of foster placements available. Long-term planning takes a needs-based approach and led to the opening, in 2019, of a close support unit able to provide more intensive care and support to a small number of our most vulnerable children and young people.

Renfrewshire Council had 624 looked after children at 31 March 2019; 380 looked after at home and 244 looked after and accommodated. This represents a further fall in overall numbers, a drop of 6% on the previous year. The Fostering and Adoption team continues to focus on permanency where appropriate and during 2018/19, 10 adoptions were completed. Over the last decade, the service has shifted the balance of provision substantially and the majority of foster placements are now with local authority carers rather than independent providers.

Secure orders are used only when necessary, with community-based support packages considered a better approach with complex cases. During 2018/19, 9 young people spent time in a secure placement. Children's Services opened a new close support unit in February 2019 which will allow much more intensive work with the small number of young people at risk of a secure placement and it is intended that this will further reduce the use of secure care. The Whole Systems Team, who work with young people displaying offending behaviour aged up to 21, is an important component of the community based support available in Renfrewshire.

During 2018/19, 20 children were the subject of a Child Protection Order under Section 57 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995. This compares to 15 in the previous year and 24 in 2016/17. The number of children on the Child Protection Register at any one time varies depending on the circumstances and nature of risk attending to the children and families that are being supported. As at 31 March 2019, there were 91 children on the Child Protection Register. As a snapshot, the number is subject to considerable variation. The main areas which result in children being placed on the child protection register are neglect, parental substance misuse and parental mental health.

New statutory duties in respect of young carers came into force on 1 April 2018 and Renfrewshire put in place additional resources to enhance the support available to this group of young people. During 2018/19, 105 young carers were provided with support.

Children and young people are empowered to contribute to service design and planning. Renfrewshire's Early Action System Change is working with local young people on the priorities they identified in the All Children Wellbeing study, namely coercive control in adolescent relationships and mental health. Children and young people have been involved in the redesign of pathways plans, and in developing and delivering training for foster carers.

Case Study: Supporting Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and Child Refugees

Renfrewshire Council's Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) team was set up in November 2016 in response to a humanitarian need. Renfrewshire was one of several Scottish councils who volunteered to accommodate and support children and young people as a response to the 'Calais camp' crisis and then as part of the Vulnerable Children Resettlement Scheme. The team currently supports 18 children and young people who have experienced considerable trauma prior to arriving in Scotland, including: war; military service (often forced); physical and sexual violence; trafficking; exploitation and forced labour; persecution due to sexual orientation, ethnicity or religion; domestic servitude; time spent in refugee camps; and separation and loss.

In addition to the trauma they've experienced, our young people face a language and cultural barrier, and find themselves living in an area they've no prior connection with. It's important that staff spend time helping them get to know the local area and deal with things which can be taken for granted, such as knowing where you can shop for food, or how to access a GP or a dentist. The team prepare welcome packs for all planned arrivals, which include photos of the local area and the team. Our first arrivals from the Calais camps added their own welcome messages to the packs when our last two family groups arrived.

The outcomes for our children and young people have been improved as a result of the commitment of partners to provide support and advice; they have benefitted from the involvement of the NHS, local colleges, Skills Development Scotland, INVEST, and local community groups such as religious organisations and sports clubs.

The primary focus of the team was building trusting and safe relationships with our children, and supporting them to thrive. Education is important to all our young people; nine are actively engaging in their school education and another five attend local colleges for ESOL classes, some at an advanced level. Others have undertaken IT courses or training with the Princes Trust. Sport has been another way in which our children are achieving – four play for local football teams and two play for cricket teams at a regional level, with a view to progressing to the Scottish national team. One young person has undertaken a youth work programme with the Ocean Trust and has an opportunity to volunteer with them in the future. Two of our young people are sustaining their own tenancy whilst also studying or working, and one of our family groups is in a supported tenancy and is integrating independently into the local community.

“When I came here there were many difficulties and I did not know what to do but I was lucky to meet these people. I hope you guys keep helping to me.”

“I want to learn English so I can get a job. I want to help people and my wish is to study pharmacy.”

“I have been living in Scotland for two years. I have an amazing support worker they help me so much in my life since I moved here. They support me in school and when I moved to my flat. They take me to appointments, they take me to McDonalds. I'm glad I have a support worker like them and I want to say thank you for all the support.”

Statutory Service Provision: Criminal Justice Social Work

There were 543 new Community Payback Orders handed down in 2018/19. Of these, 332 included an unpaid work element totalling over 48,000 hours, and 272 include a supervision element.

At the end of March 2019, Criminal Justice Social Work was supervising 94 licences in the community, including 7 new life licences and 7 Section 15 orders. A further 169 Throughcare cases were in custody at that date; 37 of these will have life licences on release and 3 will have an Order for Lifelong Restriction.

There were 22 individuals subject to new Drug Treatment and Testing Orders in 2018/19, and 28 subject to Fiscal Work Orders. From 106 referrals, 60 people were successfully diverted from prosecution.

The impact of the extension of the Presumption Against Short Sentences is not yet known. At present, the Scottish Court Service is unable to provide data on the number of cases in which sheriffs would have opted for a custodial rather than community sentence had the presumption not been in place. Nonetheless, the extension will result in increased community orders and it is expected that these are likely to be higher tariff, given they will be a direct alternative to custody.

Criminal Justice Social Work continues to be a key partner in Community Justice Renfrewshire, which is taking forward initiatives on employment, education and housing, key factors which can reduce reoffending.

Case Study: Unpaid Work Team

The Unpaid Work team organise and supervise work squads for people who have been found guilty of an offence and been made the subject of a community sentence, usually a Community Payback Order. In 2017/18, the service supervised just short of 60,000 hours of unpaid work across Renfrewshire. Unpaid Work focuses on rehabilitation and reparation. People who have committed an offence have the opportunity to give something back to their community. This has been shown to be much more effective than custody in reducing re-offending.

In Renfrewshire, the service undertakes a wide range of activity and much of this is focused on sustainability and improving the environment. Teams assisted in gardening and general clean-up of Ferguslie Park as part of the Paisley 2021 campaign. They've also undertaken clearing work in the Jenny's Well Nature Reserve in Paisley, restoring paths and cutting back overgrown trees. Teams also support Lamont City Farm in Erskine by clearing and cleaning animal stalls, repairing fences, and transferring manure.

The Brediland Allotment project is a longstanding and ongoing project. A worksquad grows vegetables on their plots using seeds and cuttings ethically sourced from a number of partners, including the Royal Horticultural Society. The worksquad assigned to the allotment also assists other plot holders to maintain their plot when ill health or disability is preventing them from looking after it properly. All produce grown by the squad on their allotment is donated to the Trussell trust for distribution across their Renfrewshire foodbanks. Following the death of the allotment organiser, his plot was donated to the Unpaid Work Service. This is just one measure of the success of the project, and their positive relationship with the community. The success of Brediland has led to the service working further three further allotments at Lamont Gardens and Sutherland Street. As well as donating produce to the foodbank, plants grown are used to enhance the street scene in Paisley's West End.

As well as gardening and outdoor work, the service also has recycling projects. The Lighter Duties Joinery workshop recycles old wooden pallets and transforms them into "mud kitchens" and garden seating for playgroups and nursery schools. Small pieces of scrap wood are transformed into bird boxes. These are offered for sale (along with other items produced by Unpaid Work Team service users) at Unpaid Work open days, and the proceeds pay for the materials used by the squads. Twice a week, a squad will pick up stock from charity shops which is no longer wanted. Wherever possible, this is restored/repaired, and the recycled furniture is passed on to those in need.

The service has received a great deal of positive feedback both from the beneficiaries of the work (including community groups, churches, and St Vincent's Hospice) and from service users who feel they have gained skills, are better prepared for paid employment, supported to change negative behaviours and motivated not to re-offend.

Ongoing Service Developments

The Early Action System Change programme is progressing three workstreams tackling needs identified through the All Children Wellbeing Study. These three workstreams aim to embed co-production with service users and are focused on the mental health of children and young people; coercive control in adolescent relationships; and childhood obesity. The programme is a partnership with Dartington Service Design Lab and the Ariel Trust, and is overseen by the multi-agency Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership.

Social work services are preparing for the implementation of a new case management system which will replace Swift CCM in March 2020 for Children and Families Social Work and will then roll out to Criminal Justice Social Work and Adult Social Work and Social Care.

Changes to care planning and assessment as response to national care review

The Chief Social Work Officer has been involved in discussions on the potential benefits of adopting a Barnahus model. The model, which originated in Scandinavia is a trauma-informed, rights-based, multi-agency approach to working intensively with children and young people affected by violence.

Self-directed support continues to be embedded within social care provision, and the personalisation of services is developing beyond that. The new Supported Living Framework, covering adult service users with a range of needs, will shortly be implemented. The new framework is based on the delivery of outcomes, rather than hours of care and support, and service users will have personalised budgets which will allow them to determine which mix of support services will best meet their needs.

As noted earlier, Renfrewshire has above average rates of hospital admissions linked to alcohol and drug use, and the fourth highest rate of drug-related deaths in Scotland, and these are long-standing issues. Social work services will contribute to the work of the Alcohol and Drugs Commission recently established.

An independently-led whole systems review of addiction services in Renfrewshire reported in 2018/19 following consultation with staff, service users and wider stakeholders. As a result of the review, service redesign is under way to deliver a fully integrated alcohol and drugs service. This service will include a new single point of access for service users, a new team to support GPs with shared care arrangements, and a new recovery hub to build on the excellent work delivered by the Sunshine Recovery Café.

Children & Families Social Work undertook a large-scale self-evaluation during 2018/19. This was based on the Care Inspector's latest quality framework and has also fed into a multi-agency self-evaluation undertaken by Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee.

Care at Home services are currently implementing a new scheduling system following a comprehensive review of service delivery.

Workforce

Within Renfrewshire Council, each service produces a workforce plan which details actions to be taken to tackle the council's workforce challenges. Within Children's Services, current priorities including tackling retention and succession planning within the children's residential workforce and identifying ways to increase opportunities for staff to undertake reflective practice. In the HSCP, the development of new roles within the council's Care at Home service creates opportunities for career progression through the creation of the role of Senior Home Support Worker and the implementation of a revised management structure.

During 2018/19, service redesign in Children & Families Social Work created an additional locality team and allowed for the reduction of caseloads, providing more time for social workers to spend with service users.

The potential for future staff shortages as a result of an ageing workforce remains a challenge, particularly within Adult Services. The latest release of staffing data shows that 33% of Renfrewshire's Adult Services fieldwork team are aged 55-64, as are 30% of staff within adult day services and 30% in care homes. In Care at Home, 29% of staff are over 55.

The in-house Social Work Professional Training Service continues to operate across Children's Services and the HSCP and offers a broad range of training and development opportunities for practitioners. The team also delivers multi-agency training in child and adult protection. A dedicated post provides training and support for foster carers, and Renfrewshire Council offers foster carers a wide range of training on issues such as child protection, attachment and trauma, Theraplay, internet safety, the impact of parental substance misuse, and managing transitions. Renfrewshire has one of the highest incidences of domestic abuse in the country, and we have implemented the 'Safe and Together' model to support work on reducing the impact on children. 'Safe and Together' is a child-centred approach focusing on the strengths of the survivor and the pattern of behaviour of the perpetrator. The Social Work Training Team has been supporting Care at Home staff to meet the deadline for registration with SSSC. All managers and supervisors are registered, and the training team are working with existing frontline staff to ensure they all meet the registration deadline of September 2020. All new staff are required to be registered within six months of taking up their post.

Staff also have access to more generic training offered by the Council, including a two-tier leadership development programme which runs over a 12-month period.

During 2019/20, Children and Families Social Work will undertake a staff survey and engagement exercise.

*Oh if you ever thought we were not required,
Workers on the very edge of despair,
Consider Joe, kicked out by his foster-carers
At twelve, having stolen from the little they had:
'Ah don't know why Ah done it, but it's okay
If they didny wahnt me back, it's okay -
My ma didny wahnt me either.' To live
In such an unquestioned acceptance of defeat
Is dreadful, yet we know Joe can be helped.
The value of a soul can be drawn out
By those who are trained to do so, those
Who can blow the tiniest downtrodden spark
Of self-esteem into flame*

From *Brothers and Keepers* by Edwin Morgan