

## **West Lothian Integration Joint Board Audit Risk and Governance Committee**

Date: 6 January 2017

Agenda Item: 11

### **AUDIT SCOTLAND REPORT - SOCIAL WORK IN SCOTLAND**

#### **REPORT BY HEAD OF SOCIAL POLICY**

#### **A PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The purpose of this report is to advise the committee of the Audit Scotland report on the national audit of social work published in September 2016.

#### **B RECOMMENDATION**

1. Notes the key messages contained in the report with respect to the challenges ahead.
2. Notes the recommendations made by Audit Scotland.

#### **C TERMS OF REPORT**

##### **Background**

The audit was carried out to examine how effectively councils are planning to address financial and demographic pressures facing social work in Scotland, specifically to determine the extent of the financial and demographic pressures, the strategies councils are utilising to address the pressures, the effectiveness of current governance arrangements and how councils are involving service users and carers in service planning.

The auditing team carried out fieldwork in six council areas, namely Midlothian, East Renfrewshire, Western Isles, Glasgow City, Perth & Kinross and West Lothian during 2015.

The report found a number of key challenges:

- Council budgets have fallen by 11% in real terms since 2010/11. Whilst social work budgets have increased slightly since 2010/11, this is not sufficient to meet increased demand. Audit Scotland has estimated that spending will require to increase by around 16- 21% to 2020 to meet demand should councils and Integration Joint Boards (IJBs) continue to provide services in the same way.
- Current models of social work and social care are not sustainable. Fundamental decisions need to be made nationally and locally about new delivery models. Attention needs to be given to increasing community capacity.

- Whilst the integration of health and social care has made governance arrangements more complex, councils retain responsibility in relation to statutory social work services.
- With integration and other policy and legislative changes, the role of the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) has become more complex and challenging. CSWOs need to have the status and capacity to fulfil statutory duties effectively.

## **Recommendations**

The report makes thirteen recommendations for councils and IJBs, which are summarised on pages 6 – 7 of the report. The recommendations cover:

- Social work strategy and service planning – transformative change in how services are delivered and funded is required.
- Governance and scrutiny arrangements – there should be in place robust governance arrangements that can measure and report on the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.
- Workforce – there should be a national, coordinated approach to addressing workforce issues.
- Service efficiency and effectiveness – to take a robust approach to disinvestment and to undertake a review of national eligibility criteria.

## **West Lothian position**

- Whilst West Lothian is significantly affected by financial and demographic challenges, the council benefits from its long-term financial management strategy.
- The West Lothian IJB has adopted a robust strategic commissioning approach which incorporates a number of key service redesign programmes aimed at transforming the way we deliver services across whole systems
- The IJB is developing new approaches aimed at increasing community capacity.
- The role of the CSWO is well defined and supported in West Lothian, and is linked effectively into council and partnership governance arrangements.

## **CONCLUSION**

The report highlights the need for transformative measures to be developed and implemented to address the challenges and complexities that lie ahead for social work and social care in Scotland. The report has been well received by the CSWO network, Social Work Scotland and the Office of the Chief Social Work Advisor, however it has been acknowledged that the recommendations will be extremely challenging to achieve both locally and nationally.

## **D CONSULTATION**

None

## **E REFERENCES/BACKGROUND**

None

## **F APPENDICES**

Appendix 1: Social Work in Scotland, Audit Scotland, September 2016

## **G SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS**

<b>Equality/Health</b>	The report has been assessed as having little or no relevance with regard to equality or the Public Sector Equality Duty. As a result, equality impact assessment has not been conducted. The relevance assessment can be viewed via the background references to this report.
<b>National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes</b>	n/a
<b>Strategic Plan Outcomes</b>	n/a
<b>Single Outcome Agreement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– People most at risk are protected and supported to achieve improved life chances</li><li>– Older people are able to live independently in the community with an improved quality of life</li><li>– We live longer, healthier lives and have reduced health inequalities</li></ul>
<b>Impact on other Lothian IJBs</b>	None
<b>Resource/finance</b>	None
<b>Policy/Legal</b>	The report references the key legislative and policy drivers for social work and social care services in Scotland.
<b>Risk</b>	None

## **H CONTACT**

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