

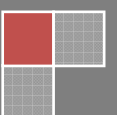
# CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER

## Annual Report 2013/14



**EILEAN SIAR**

September 2014



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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 There is a statutory requirement for all Local Authorities to appoint a professionally qualified Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) who is registered with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). The overall role of the CSWO is focused on the provision of effective professional advice and guidance to Local Authorities, Elected Members and Officers in the provision of Social Work services, whether directly provided or commissioned. The CSWO also has a responsibility for overall performance improvement and the identification and management of corporate risk insofar as these relate to Social Work services.
- 1.2 This Report for 2013/14 adopts a different reporting framework from previous years. These changes have been made following a request from the Scottish Government's Chief Social Work Advisor that Local Authorities consider adopting a standardised reporting timeframe and a standardised framework to help ensure that key issues are highlighted and to better enable the sharing of information and learning on a national basis.

## **2 AREA PROFILE**

- 2.1 Comhairle nan Eilean Siar area is made up of Lewis and Harris, North and South Uist, Benbecula and Barra. The island chain, which lies off the north western perimeter of Scotland, is some 140 miles from Lewis in the north to Barra in the south.
- 2.2 The current population estimate for the Western Isles is 27,400 as at 30 June 2013. This represents a decrease in the overall population of 160 persons (0.6%) from mid-2012 to mid-2013. This was mainly due to estimated negative natural change, but also due to estimated negative net migration.
- 2.3 The population is concentrated in Lewis (19,492), Harris (1,858), Uists and Benbecula (4,805) and Barra and Vatersay (1,245). Stornoway Settlement has the highest population (6,230). Around 30% of the population live in Greater Stornoway (8,002). The remaining population is scattered over some 280 townships. The rural population continues to be largely Gaelic speaking communities.
- 2.4 The Gaelic language continues to be an important part of island life and a key consideration in the delivery of services.
- 2.5 The Western Isles is one of the six council areas in which one fifth of the population are aged 65 and over, equating to 21.6%. This represents a 13.8% increase in population aged 65 and over in the Western Isles from 2001 to 2011.
- 2.6 The Western Isles also experienced a decrease of 11.8% in the population aged 5 to 14 with a slight increase of 4.7% in the under 5 age group.
- 2.7 Broad age groups were as follows: 16% in the 0-15 year age group while Scotland has 17%; 58% working age population while Scotland has 63%; and 25% pensionable age while Scotland is 20%.
- 2.8 The 2012 population projections show a decline in broad age groups as follows: a 28% decline in the 0-15 years group (the second largest decline in Scotland), a 19% decline in

the working age population (the third largest percentage decline) and a 20% increase in those of pensionable age (seventh highest increase):

- By 2037 the Western Isles is projected to have the highest percentage of pensioners, representing 34% of the population total.
- The Western Isles is projected to see a 31% decline in the number of annual births from 228 in 2012/13 to 158 in 2036/37.
- The population of the Western Isles is projected to decline by 10.8% over the 25 year period 2012/2037, the third largest percentage projected decline in Scotland.
- The Western Isles is projected to continue to experience positive net migration (more people moving here than leaving) at 3.4%; thus the anticipated population decline is due to more deaths than births (negative natural change) at -14.2%, despite net in-migration.
- From the perspective of forward planning it is important to note that projections become more uncertain the further ahead they go, especially for smaller areas, as these populations are affected more by the migration assumptions.

### **3 PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURES / GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**

- 3.1 The Chief Social Work Officer in Eilean Siar is also the Director of Social and Community Services and therefore a member of the Comhairle's Corporate Management Team which is led by the Chief Executive.
- 3.2 The Director of Social and Community Services is responsible for the Comhairle's Community Care and Criminal Justice Social Work services, with the Children and Families Social Work service now part of the Education and Children's Services Department, the Director of that Department supported by a Head of Service and two social work qualified Service Managers.
- 3.3 The Director is accountable to the Chief Executive and reports to the Environment and Protective Services Committee (Criminal Justice and Community Safety), Health and Social Care Committee (Community Care), Education and Children's Services Committee (CSWO related matters) and the Policy and Resources Committee as the parent Committee in relation to community care business.
- 3.4 In terms of multi-agency work, the Child Protection Committee, following a development day event, agreed to further strengthen the work of the Committee by establishing, for the first time, an Independent Chair position (appointment made in September 2014).
- 3.5 Also, the Chief Officers Group reviewed its multi-agency membership to achieve a more strategic overview of both the Child and Adult Protection agendas.
- 3.6 Western Isles Adult Support and Protection arrangements continue to develop and improve. Multi-agency procedures have been reviewed and updated. All Social Workers in the Community Care Team are now trained 'Council Officers' and carry out initial enquiries and Adult Support and Protection investigations. Local data collection processes are being revised to further enhance monitoring and scrutiny arrangements.

- 3.7 The Outer Hebrides Alcohol and Drug Partnership provides a valuable forum for multi agency strategic planning for substance misuse issues and there are a range of strategic commissioning arrangements in place. With alcohol, in particular, impacting negatively on so many individual and family situations being dealt with across agencies throughout the Western Isles, the work of the Partnership has focused on both prevention and support interventions and services.
- 3.8 The Criminal Justice Service plays an active role in the work of the Northern Community Justice Authority and local Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) while the multi-agency 'Getting It Right for Every Child' (GIRFEC) and Early Years initiative continues to develop positively.
- 3.9 The reviewing and updating of the Children Services Plan has fallen behind and arrangements are now in place to have this key task completed.

#### **4 SOCIAL SERVICES DELIVERY LANDSCAPE AND MARKET**

##### 4.1 Key strategic challenges include:

- Managing demographic changes (increasing older population and declining working age population).
- Meeting the requirement of external scrutiny and compliance.
- Affordability – reducing finances within a landscape of increasing demands and complexity of service needs.
- Recruitment and retention of qualified and experienced social work qualified staff in the key statutory service areas.
- An increase in the number of children needing permanency arrangements.
- Establishing a sustainable and recruitment model for the Home Care service.
- Realising the potential benefits of Health and Social Care Integration.
- Improving Delayed Discharge outcomes for older people.
- Developing and providing key services locally for children and adults, to minimise the need for mainland resources.
- An increase in the adult learning disability population – development of a commissioning strategy, along with stakeholders, to clarify and prioritise the key services needed locally.
- Developing appropriate support and training arrangements in Criminal Justice to address implications arising from the disestablishment of Community Justice Authorities in 2016.

- 4.2 The Comhairle is the main provider of Home Care services, although supported in some areas by Third sector provision. One national private company provides 40 nursing beds with two local voluntary providers providing a further 37 beds. A two year contract fee agreement was reached with the three external care home providers, allowing stability for

all parties involved. Delayed Discharge outcomes continue to highlight an increase in the number of people requiring nursing/residential accommodation and through the NHS/Local Authority Joint Planning Group a range of initiatives, some using Change Fund monies, are in place. A more strategic overview of older people's residential care and intermediate care is also under consideration.

4.3 Recruitment to middle management and Head of Service Social Work posts continues to be challenging and it is not unusual to be unsuccessful in filling vacancies after two or three advertising/interview processes. This impacts on the day-to-day management of the service, particularly so given the relatively small scale of the social work management structure.

## **5 FINANCE**

5.1 Comhairle nan Eilean Siar's social work budget for 2013/14 was £22.701m. The broad financial breakdown was £18.896m in Adult Care and Older People's Services, £0.129m in Criminal Justice Service and £3.676m in Children and Families.

5.2 Adult Care and Older People's Services had an overspend of £243k for the financial year 2013/14, the most significant variances as follows:

- Home Care - £348k overspent
- Residential and Housing Support (Adult Care) - £82k overspent
- Adult Mainland Placements - £106k underspent.

5.3 It is inevitable that as the number of adults and older people requiring care and support increases, the budgetary challenges will escalate.

5.4 Additional staff training is also essential so that staff are confident and competent to deliver care to people with multiple conditions and more complex care needs.

5.5 Services for children and adults with learning disabilities and other complex needs are also creating additional pressures, with a number of individual care packages costing in excess of £150k per annum.

5.6 The Children and Families service has strengthened the local Fostering service and has invested in developing small scale residential respite and Housing Support arrangements for children aged 16+ to enhance early support arrangements and prevent off island placements. These initiatives have led to improved outcomes for children and young people and reduced the level of financial spend commissioning care on the mainland.

5.7 The Children Mainland Placement budget was overspent by £52k during 2013/14. However, as investment in local service developments such as respite and prevention develops, fewer children are being placed off island.

5.8 Mainland placement activities for both adults and children are reported on regularly to the relevant Service Committees.

## **6 PERFORMANCE**

6.1 In 2013/14, the performance of Social Work services is reported on a quarterly basis to the relevant committees. This includes a range of Action Points and Key Performance

Indicators. Similarly, the findings of major scrutiny exercises undertaken by the Care Inspectorate on services are reported, as appropriate.

- 6.2 Arising from the above, action and improvement plans are developed, in partnership with stakeholders, where appropriate. Monitoring overview arrangements are to be implemented by the Outer Hebrides Chief Officer Group for Public Protection to scrutinise progress and ensure planned improvements are being delivered.
- 6.3 The Care Inspectorate have continued to inspect individual regulated services, for example, Home Care Service and Housing Support Services to homeless people, residential homes and day services. Specific details of these inspections can be found at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).
- 6.4 The Care Inspectorate have allocated 32 days to the Western Isles to provide a support and development resource that will support our self evaluation and continuous improvement work, with much of this welcomed input involving our multi agency partners in NHS, Police Scotland, SCRA and the Third Sector.
- 6.5 In addition, case reviews and file audits have been undertaken to measure performance and highlight areas for learning and/or improved practice, training, policy development etc.
- 6.6 Care Inspectorate grading in the Western Isles have in the main, during 2013/14, been good or very good. Services that received satisfactory grade outcomes in some categories of scrutiny, ie Home Care Service, is the subject of a service redesign programme, complementing the improvement plan in place to maintain the progress their particular service is now achieving.
- 6.7 In 2013/14, the Care Inspectorate were asked by Scottish Ministers to undertake the additional task of ascertaining the effectiveness of multi agency Public Protection arrangements across Scotland. This exercise noted areas of strength and also highlighted areas that required further focus and development such as joint performance management arrangements, workforce planning, appointing an independent chair for the Child Protection Committee and self evaluation.

## **7 STATUTORY FUNCTION**

- 7.1 Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Committees have welcomed the information provided in previous CSWO annual reports.

### **Secure Care**

- 7.2 As highlighted earlier, the Education and Childrens Services Department have increased its level of investment in early intervention activities and also strengthened the Fostering service locally, reducing the need for mainland placements.
- 7.3 During 2013/14 there were no secure placements needed for any Western Isles child or young person.

### **Adoption**

- 7.4 Adoption in the process whereby parental rights and responsibilities are transferred from birth parents to adopters.

- 7.5 Although the Courts ultimately determine whether an Adoption is granted, the CSWO is the ultimate Comhairle decision maker on matters pertaining to Adoption.
- 7.6 Although during 2013/14 there were no Adoption plans for individual children approved locally, there were however 5 children matched with 3 prospective adopters. All children adopted in 2013/14 were from outwith the Western Isles. There are no couples currently awaiting matching.
- 7.7 In February 2014, the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 was passed into legislation and this required Local Authorities (and registered Adoption services) to provide specific information on approved adopters who are waiting to be matched to the Adoption Register.
- 7.8 The intention is that the Register will help facilitate the matching of children with approved adopters on a national rather than Local Authority basis.

## **8 WELFARE AND FINANCIAL GUARDIANSHIP**

- 8.1 If an adult is unable to make key decisions or take necessary action to safeguard his/her own welfare, a Court can appoint a “welfare guardian” to do so. A welfare guardian might be a friend, relative or carer but the Courts can also appoint the CSWO.
- 8.2 Financial Guardianship arises where there is impairment to the adult’s capacity to safeguard his/her property or financial affairs. As with welfare applications, the Court is involved and it may be necessary at times for Local Authorities to undertake this function and responsibility where no one else can do so.
- 8.3 The Comhairle presently has four Mental Health Officers (MHOs), all of whom meet the requirements necessary to continue in practice. To ensure business continuity, one Social Worker is presently undertaking MHO training.
- 8.4 Three of our current MHOs could retire over the next two or three years; therefore business continuity/succession planning is critically important for the Western Isles service so that it is capable of meeting statutory responsibilities in this area of work.
- 8.5 MHO activities during 2013/14 were as follows:
- Adult with Incapacity (AWI) Reports – 15
  - Compulsory Treatment Orders – 6
  - Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 Short Term Certificates – 8
- 8.6 The MHO service is able to respond within the timeframe required, the exception to this being outwith office hours, but is committed to responding on the first following working day. This does not prevent people being admitted to hospital when they need to be admitted as the Emergency Detention Certificate does not require the assessment and consent of the MHO.

## **9 COMPLAINTS**

- 9.1 The Social Work (Scotland) 1968 Act places a duty on Local Authorities regarding Social Work complaints, with direction and guidance provided by Scottish Government.



9.2 The Comhairle now has well established and appropriate arrangements in place for the independent chairing of its Social Work Complaints Review Panel. Panels are convened once the second stage of a complaint has been concluded and the complainant remains unsatisfied.

9.3 The Scottish Government is currently undertaking a national review of Social Work Complaints Procedures. This review may recommend that the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO) model 'Complaints Handling Procedures' will apply to Social Work complaints. However, until any legislative change is passed and implemented, Complaints Review Panels will remain a legal requirement of Local Authorities.

#### 9.4 **Number of Complaints 2013/14**

	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
Children and Families	7	6	8
Community Care	5	8	15
Criminal Justice	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>24</b>

9.5 In 2013/14, of the 24 complaints:

- 2 were fully upheld
- 2 were partially upheld
- 12 were not upheld
- 6 were withdrawn
- 2 are still in progress.

9.6 When taking into consideration withdrawn complaints, there has been a reduction from 6 to 5 in children and families complaints, with the number of community care complaints increasing from 8 to 12.

9.7 There was one complaint received in relation to the Criminal Justice service, similar to the previous year.

9.8 The Children and Families complaint categories ranged from staff conduct, disputed assessment decision and service provision issues.

9.9 The Community Care complaint categories ranged from care charges, staff conduct, service continuity arrangements during inclement weather, unavailability of home carers, missed home care visits and concessionary travel card application processes.

9.10 Complaints are recorded and learning points, whether the complaint is upheld or not, are used to influence and inform service improvements and learning.

## **10 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

10.1 At a corporate level, the Comhairle established a Member Officer Working Group, including the full membership of the Corporate Management Team to progress the performance management and self evaluation culture and practice of the Authority. Chaired by the Comhairle Leader, the group considered Audits of Best Value and Community Planning and the Comhairle's Assurance and Improvement Plan 2014-17.

- 10.2 While the Local Area Network (LAN) assessed the Comhairle as “no scrutiny required” it is focused on implementing the five recommendations made by the Audit Commission covering self evaluation, workforce development, sickness absence monitoring, customer satisfaction measurement and public performance reporting.
- 10.3 In addition, service specific initiatives and projects such as the redesign of the Home Care Service, procurement of a Community Meals Service, replacement Care Home and Hospital for the Barra community (jointly with NHS Western Isles), Core and Cluster residential accommodation and housing support for adults with a learning disability in Stornoway, redesign of the integrated transport arrangements for children and adults with special needs are ongoing.
- 10.4 The Comhairle, through its Capital Programme, has delivered a new care home in Harris and highlights the commitment to having modern and fit for purpose resources available in each locality.
- 10.5 The Comhairle has also supported additional funding and staffing in the Fostering team and in early prevention and support strategies which has improved outcomes for children and young people.
- 10.6 A key priority for the Comhairle is to reach agreement with NHS Western Isles on the model to drive forward the integration agenda. Once this stage has been reached, the Comhairle will be considering the role of the CSWO within the arrangements and the monitoring of the statutory social work service within both the Comhairle and Health and Social Care Partnership governance and reporting arrangements.
- 10.7 Experienced external social work consultancy was used to provide professional support and supervision to the two Service Managers in the Children and Families service during this reporting period.
- 10.8 To ensure improved outcomes for children and young people, training has been provided to staff, specifically around neglect, thresholds for intervention and how this impacts on the child’s development and learning.
- 10.9 As earlier indicated, the Care Inspectorate is supporting the Comhairle social work service in developing and implementing self evaluation practices, to improve service user outcomes and practice standards.
- 10.10 In recognition of the *National Framework 2012: A Fresh Approach*, arising from the recently published National Framework for Child Protection Learning and Development in Scotland 2012, the previous *basic awareness level 1* and the *one day advanced* Child Protection Courses have been superseded by *General Contact Workforce* and *Specific Contact Workforce* multi-agency training.
- 10.11 During 2013/14 a total of 300 multi-agency staff across the local authority attended either or both these courses and a full account of the training activity can be accessed in the Child Protection Awareness Training report (2013).
- 10.12 Other important training has also been delivered to relevant audiences. The Children’s Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 and its consequences for education and children’s services staff, and interested others, was organised and delivered by Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration (SCRA) with support from the Child Protection Committee, and bespoke training on the application of the Graded Care Profile assessment mechanism was delivered to around 20 practitioners by an accredited trainer in December 2013.

- 10.13 A specialised training event to inform and better equip staff in respect of the recent publication of the National Risk Assessment Framework and its application for the assessment of risk was delivered recently to social work, education and health staff. Additionally, all Head teachers and other designated Child Protection Officers attend the *Specific Contact Workforce* training events every two years. A series of bespoke training events on Neglect and Sexting was also delivered locally.
- 10.14 During 2013/14, events were organised to promote the Western Isles Under Age Sex Protocol multi-agency training. Specialised Visually Recorded Interviews (VRI) training was delivered to police and social work staff to familiarise them with both the portable and static facilities available in the Western Isles. Members of Police Scotland and social work staff who are identified as suitable candidates for the full Child Protection Joint Investigative Interviewing Training (JIIT) are either allocated to Inverness based training courses or those available at Jackton in Strathclyde.

## **11 PLANNING FOR CHANGE**

- 11.1 The future direction of the Comhairle's social work services are being driven by a number of local and national factors and initiatives. Alongside Health and Social Care, Self-Directed Support will be the biggest change in the delivery of social work services.
- 11.2 I have already described the changing arrangements for the Criminal Justice Social Work service. The Scottish Government's response to the Community Justice national review is anticipated in the autumn and will clarify the national governance framework that will replace the current arrangements provided through each Community Justice Authority.
- 11.3 The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 has led to joint discussions between the Children and Families team and Community Care colleagues, to consider and plan how the new legal requirements can best be introduced and implemented locally and improve transition planning outcomes for service users.
- 11.4 Within the Home Care service, and also more generically across all care services, capacity for a reablement approach is being addressed.
- 11.5 As part of the Budget Strategy, the Comhairle is seeking to allocate additional revenue funding to the Community Care budget, in recognition of the pressure that demographic growth places on the service. However, the Comhairle's reducing revenue budget also requires the social work service to deliver savings through achieving efficiencies and this is proving to be a challenge.
- 11.6 Once the future arrangement for Health and Social Care have been agreed locally, the joint priorities will become clearer and consideration can be given to how best to agree a joint vision for Community Care services in the Western Isles.
- 11.7 For Children and Families services the production of an updated and revised Children Services Plan will bring together the key areas of work presently being delivered and will help shape the future direction of our children and young people's services.

## **12 WORKFORCE PLANNING AND DELIVERY**

- 12.1 The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) continues to progress its agenda for all members of the workforce to be registered. Failure to support staff to achieve the

necessary qualifications presents a significant risk to the employability of staff affected and also would impact on the ability to deliver services.

- 12.2 A Health and Social Care Training Plan (2014-17) will be considered by Health and Social Care Committee later in the year, highlighting the achievements to date and outlining proposals and the financial implications of the three-year plan. Since 2013, over 200 courses have taken place, with over 900 attendees and 54 staff have completed Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs). For a small authority this is a significant achievement.
- 12.3 A training records management system has been put in place and all training since September 2013 undertaken by Health and Social Care staff is recorded. The e-Learning platform "Learn Pro" has been set up and a number of courses produced and adapted by in-house facilitators and these are ready to be undertaken in the coming year. Good progress is also being made in meeting SSSC registration deadlines and undertaking of PVG checks.
- 12.4 This work would not be possible without effective work with partners within NHS Western Isles and the University of Highlands and Islands (UHI).
- 12.5 To strengthen business continuity and succession planning, one social work member of staff is undertaking MHO training; a social work trainee in Uist and Barra area team is half way through her Distance Learning Diploma training; a Community Care social worker is undertaking post-graduate dementia studies at the University of Stirling.
- 12.6 In addition, one of the Heads of Service will enrol at the Robert Gordon University Social Work Diploma course next year. Fourteen Modern Apprentices in care have been sponsored by the Comhairle since 2012 and the majority of these have now secured permanent employment in the Department.
- 12.7 Using Change Fund finance, a project focusing on Career Pathways was established with NHS and schools and further education establishments to develop local options for more integrated working and joint training opportunities.
- 12.8 The social work staff of the Criminal Justice social work service are trained and accredited to use the nationally agreed LS/CMI risk assessment tool in Criminal Justice social work reports and written case management. Self evaluation work took place in regard to service delivery of the LS/CMI risk assessment tool locally as part of a national Care Inspectorate support programme and an action plan for improvements was completed.
- 12.9 The Criminal Justice social work service also took part in the Northern Criminal Justice Authority wide 'peer challenge' event in February 2014 relating to these action plans which was considered beneficial in sharing best practice and achieving consistency.

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

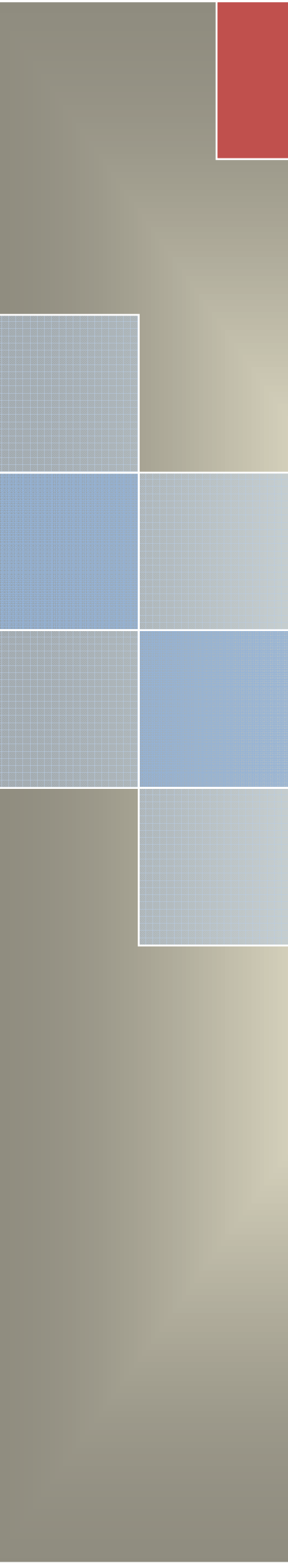
- 13.1 The Social Work service in the Western Isles continues to provide a broad range of statutory services which are appreciated by service users and the wider community.
- 13.2 However, customer feedback, service complaints and inspection and audit work highlight for us areas for improvement and learning.
- 13.3 Key pressures continue to be brought about by rising demand for services in many areas, new legislation and national policy requirements such as Health and Social Care

Integration, Self-Directed Support, The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and Public Sector referrals, all at a time of reducing budgets.

- 13.4 Joint working with all our Community Planning Partners, Third Sector and community groups is therefore essential to ensure maximum efficiency and the reduction in duplication of processes.
- 13.5 Recruitment at all levels of the workforce continues to be a challenge. Developing career pathways through training and service redesign will support the social care sector being seen as a worthwhile and rewarding profession.
- 13.6 Encouraging and enabling staff into training that focuses on developing leadership skills and abilities will improve performance and will lay the foundation for ensuring business continuity and succession planning.
- 13.7 The demographic data for the Western Isles, with the dual impact of the increasing number of older people and the reducing workforce population, presents a major challenge in delivering Home Care services. Plans to improve delayed discharge outcomes for our older people will require to be developed and jointly agreed by the Comhairle and the NHS.
- 13.8 Delivering safe and sustainable social work service in an environment of reducing public finances will continue to place significant workforce and financial pressure on the Comhairle.
- 13.9 Continuing to implement service improvement and delivering on action plans arising from inspections and audits will continue to be prioritised alongside further development of self evaluation and quality assurance processes.
- 13.10 Reviewing service eligibility criteria and local charging policy for services will need to be considered when considering options for efficiency savings.
- 13.11 Exploring options and opportunities of partnership working arrangements through Health and Social Care Integration and the implementation of The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 will be necessary to achieve resource efficiencies and improve outcomes for service users. Therefore, key achievements for 2014/15 will be the agreement of the model for Health and Social Care Integration and production of an integrated plan, the delivery of a reviewed and updated Children's Plan for the Western Isles and pre-planning arrangements in relation to the Criminal Justice services in preparation for the disestablishment of the Northern Community Justice Association.

Iain Macaulay  
Chief Social Work Officer  
Eilean Siar

September 2014



Ag Obair Comhla airson na h-Eileanan Siar **COMHAIRLE NAN EILEAN SIAR**  
Working Together for the Western Isles

