

Towards the very best...

Housing and Social Work

Service Plan 2010-2011



Aberdeenshire 
COUNCIL

Serving Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea – the very best of Scotland



Serving Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea – the very best of Scotland

The best area

Helping to create and sustain the best quality of life for all through . . .

- happy, healthy and confident people
- safe, friendly and lively communities
- an enterprising and adaptable economy
- our special environment and diverse culture

The best council

Aiming to provide excellent services for all by . . .

- involving, responding and enabling
- finding new and more efficient ways of doing things
- providing elected leadership for our area
- working with our partners in the North East and beyond
- always looking to the future

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1. Introduction

The housing and social work service plan covers the period 2010-2011 and sets out what we intend to achieve over the next year based on the financial and other resources available to us. Aberdeenshire council has a clear vision for the area and expects council services collectively to support people in Aberdeenshire to enjoy the best quality of life in safe, friendly and lively communities. A detailed profile of Aberdeenshire is available in our single outcome agreement available on our community planning website at <http://www.ouraberdeenshire.org.uk/images/media/docs/soa/aberdeenshiresoa2009-10.pdf>

This plan identifies anticipated challenges for the coming year and how we aim to meet them. It sets out our vision and strategic priorities for housing and social work and assesses how well we have performed in delivering our objectives over the past year. We have agreed challenging targets for the service in order to continuously improve the way we work and to take account of the views and needs of our customers.

This year we have designed our service plan with the involvement of social work managers around better outcomes for vulnerable people and our SOA responsibilities. In future years, we intend to involve a wider cross-section of employees and partners in this process.

Integral to our success is our commitment to planning and delivering personalised services in partnership with others, notably residents, service users and carers. Our other major partners are NHS Grampian and Aberdeenshire Community Health Partnership, Grampian Police and the judiciary, housing associations and the independent/voluntary sector as well as other council services such as education, learning and leisure.

Housing and social work services in Aberdeenshire are planned within strategic partnership arrangements and are reported to formal committees of the council and published on our website, www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk. These include:

- Integrated Children's Services Plan
- Routes to Recovery
- Northern Community Justice Authority Action Plan
- Local Housing Partnership Strategic Action Plan
- INEA and other Quality Improvement Plans
- Health and Community Care Strategic Action Plan

2. Service Role and Main Activities

The primary role and purpose of social work is to promote social welfare as defined by the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968. Other guiding legislation is set out in the National Health Service and Community Care Act 1980 and Children's (Scotland) Act 1995. The principal role and purpose of housing is contained within Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 as amended by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

Social work services are delivered to people in need of care or protection in order to lead safe, independent, healthy lives. Social work has a statutory responsibility to assess individuals' need for care or protection and make arrangements to meet those needs in an appropriate and holistic way. To meet its responsibilities social work directly provides and commissions a range of services. Social work and housing services contribute primarily to the SOA theme of community wellbeing.

The council's housing service focuses on the housing needs of identified groups in the local population, including council and other tenants, owner occupiers and individuals with particular needs, such as gypsy travellers and homeless people. The service works jointly with the private rented sector and has a responsibility to address fuel poverty across all tenures.

Housing and Social Work is the council's second largest service. In 2009/10 our annual budget was **£122,540,000** and we employed **1,830** whole time equivalent employees. Commissioned care accounted for 51% of the social work budget. 49% of care costs are attributable to directly provided care.

In Aberdeenshire, in 2009/10, around **480** children are looked after by the local authority, **150** of whom live in children's homes or with substitute families. We support about **110** children in kinship care. We provide **15,000** hours of care at home per week to over **2,000** vulnerable adults and older people and we fund the care costs of around **1,100** older people in residential care, over **200** of whom live in council care homes. We are landlords to approximately **21,000** people in **12,900** council houses and are working to accommodate **400** homeless families or individuals in Aberdeenshire. We manage risk in the community through our work with around **750** offenders per year who are subject to supervision and through alternatives to custody. Aberdeenshire Council supports around **560** people with learning disabilities in day services and a further **550** people receive help with employment options. We support around **860** adults who experience severe or enduring mental health problems. Around **440** people are receiving help to recover from problematic alcohol or drug use and build meaningful lives.

The geography of Aberdeenshire presents challenges in relation to accessibility and sustainability of services. Housing and Social Work services are provided from 89 locations, giving a local presence in most communities. An increasing number of our activities and services operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This reflects the council's aspiration to deliver modern, accessible and efficient public services for the citizens of Aberdeenshire.

3. Service objectives

Aberdeenshire Council's vision is

From mountain to sea, the very best of Scotland

The Housing and Social Work service will make an active and major contribution to achieving this vision and our Single Outcome Agreement. The service plan is set within the context of the council's strategic priorities. We have a particular responsibility for actions within the themes of Community Wellbeing and Lifelong Learning, and we ensure that the way we work contributes to the corporate themes of Sustainable Development and Developing our Partnerships.

As a service, we aim to change lives by valuing the individual, promoting independence and helping people to achieve their full potential; helping vulnerable children to have the best start in life; protecting children and adults at risk of harm; preventing homelessness, improving community safety and reducing re-offending. More specifically we aim to:

- **Social Work:**
 1. act early to protect and care for those children and adults at risk of harm or neglect
 2. enhance opportunities for people who are vulnerable by virtue of age, disability, illness, income deprivation or other circumstances, to optimise their independence and life choices
 3. improve community protection
- **Housing:**
 4. improve access to good quality, affordable housing
 5. prevent homelessness
 6. reduce fuel poverty
- **Service-wide:**
 7. demonstrate best value and continuous improvement in the way we plan and deliver public services
 8. enhance the voice of users and carers in the design and delivery of social work and housing services

4. How Are We Doing?

Service Strengths

- (a) Between 2008/09, we carried out a self evaluation of the housing service, in preparation for inspection. Housing inspectors agreed that our housing management is good in areas such as housing allocations and working with tenants. We demonstrated excellence in asset management and repairs. In addition, inspectors found the service provides good quality homeless accommodation and that service users were pleased with the quality of accommodation.
- (b) We have comprehensive arrangements for involving tenants in service development across Aberdeenshire. A wide range of information for tenants is available through the website, tenants' handbook, quarterly tenants' newsletter and leaflets. Housing inspectors found that our tenants' handbook contains excellent information
- (c) Social Work Inspection Agency found in 2009 that when children and young people in Aberdeenshire were identified as being at risk, immediate action was taken to protect them and keep them safe.
- (d) Our performance in statutory indicators demonstrates speed of response in general is a strength of Aberdeenshire's social work service, especially in relation to child protection, referrals for assessment of need, delivery of home care services and delayed discharges.
- (e) We are ranked in the top three councils for the percentage of older people receiving free personal care and our provision of overnight respite care also compares favourably with other councils. In 2008/09 we completed 78% assessments of need with target timescales and ranked 6th of all Scottish local authorities on this indicator.
- (f) The proportion of children in Aberdeenshire who are looked after by the local authority is significantly less than for Scotland as a whole (5.9 per 1000 as compared to 11.4) and less than comparator authorities (7.7). 88% of looked after children live in community settings, including children who are under supervision orders at home, which is around the national average.
- (g) We are facilitating employment and training opportunities for a significant proportion of adults with learning disabilities. 27% of the adults that we are in contact with are in some form of employment (compared with a national average of 14%) and 18% are receiving training (compared with 7% nationally).
- (h) The Mental Welfare Commission reported that in 2008 Aberdeenshire had a much lower rate of short term detentions under the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003, than the Scottish average (38 per 100,000 compared with 76 per 100,000). Emergency detentions in 2008/09 were also lower than the national average, indicating that our mental health officer service responds well to the needs of people with mental health problems. Service user involvement in service design and delivery is valued; in 2008/09 a national evaluation of peer support projects commended our pilot project in the introduction of formal peer support in mental health.

Areas for Improvement

- (a) We acknowledge the challenge of improving our performance in occupational therapy services at a time when increasing demand is placing greater strain on the service to respond quickly to assess and meet needs for equipment and adaptations which support people to live independently.
- (b) We need to do more to involve children, families and frontline employees in reviewing services, and we will work to ensure that children's health needs are considered fully during investigations of children at risk of harm.
- (c) It is essential that we work with Education, Learning and Leisure to support children ceasing to be looked after by the council to achieve their full potential. Our performance in comparison with other councils shows a worsening trend with regard to children gaining qualifications in English and Maths.
- (d) Our role in leading corporate parenting has been effective to the extent that all partners recognise their respective responsibilities as a corporate parent. Despite this, we acknowledge that outcomes for young people leaving care could be significantly improved if we are able, with partners, to assist more of these young people to access education, training and employment.
- (e) We also recognise there is room for improvement to ensure timely and effective reviews of individual care arrangements. This will be linked to a review of assessment and care management procedures to ensure that service users are at the centre of our care planning activity.
- (f) Following our housing inspection, we are actively working to reduce the time taken to re-let empty houses and improve services to homeless people by reducing the use of bed and breakfast accommodation
- (g) Residential care remains an important element in the spectrum of care services available to older people in Aberdeenshire. However, we need to work harder to shift the balance of care in favour of options which allow more older people to live at home with support as they become more frail or develop dementia. Around 50 people per thousand population aged 65 plus live in care homes, as compared with 41 in Scotland overall, and 46 in comparator authorities.
- (h) The number of adults with learning disabilities living in their own tenancies, having regular short breaks or in further education in Aberdeenshire is below the Scottish average, and fewer adults in Aberdeenshire have a personal life plan that in other parts of Scotland. We need to improve outcomes for adults with learning disabilities and during 2009/10 we initiated a number of workstreams which will report with options for change during 2011/12. This includes a review of all high cost care packages and of care of people placed "out of area";
- (i) There continues to be a low uptake of carers' assessments in Aberdeenshire and we plan to improve support for carers by promoting carers rights and making it easier for them to access short breaks.

5. What Challenges Face Us?

Our activities in the coming years will be influenced by the wider social and economic climate, national policy drivers, local priorities, demographics and the views of local people who use services.

We will establish robust systems to ensure service user and carer views are reflected in service priorities, planning and design. This year, a survey of up to 1,000 service users will be conducted, analysed by an independent external organisation. In future years the process of gathering service user feedback and input will be integrated into assessment and review processes. The views of Aberdeenshire residents about our services are also gathered in other ways – through Citizens’ Panel surveys, citizen and service user representation on planning fora, through area community planning activities such as “With Inclusion in Mind” and in regular and ad hoc planning events.

Relevant national policy drivers are listed below. Full details can be found on the Scottish Government’s website www.scotland.gov.uk.

Changing Lives: A Review of Social Work in the 21st Century

Crerar Review of Regulation, Audit, Inspection and Complaints Handling of Public Services

Achieving Our Potential: a framework to tackle poverty and income inequality in Scotland

Equally Well: reducing health inequalities in Scotland

The Same as You: Review of Services for People with a Learning Disability

Firm Foundations: the Future of Housing in Scotland

Housing (Scotland) Bill

Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)

These are our Bairns: a guide for Community Planning Partnerships on being a good corporate parent

Protecting Scotland’s Communities: Fair, fast and flexible justice

Changing Scotland’s Relationship with Alcohol

Draft National Strategy for Self Directed Support in Scotland

All Our Futures: Planning for a Scotland with an aging population

Choose Life: Suicide prevention in Scotland

Delivering for Mental Health

Towards a Mentally Flourishing Scotland

In the coming year we face a number of external challenges, the most significant of which are listed below:

- We anticipate a growth in the number of older people which is higher than any other part of Scotland: by 2020 the number of people over 85yrs in Aberdeenshire is expected to rise by 75%. Based on national prevalence rates, it is estimated that by 2020, the number of people aged over 85 with a diagnosis of dementia will rise by 62.5% and almost double by 2024. Simultaneously we expect a reduction in the number of informal carers available to support older relatives. This shift in the demography of Aberdeenshire is likely to have a significant adverse impact on future demand for care and housing and a need for a national debate on the future costs of care and how these might be funded.
- We expect to deal with an Increasing number of children at risk of harm or neglect. This is in line with trends elsewhere in Scotland and is largely attributable to rising incidence of parental drug and alcohol misuse.
- Medical and technological advances have led to increased life expectancy in children and adults with complex disabilities. Social work services across Scotland have, in recent years, faced significant additional cost pressures as a consequence of caring for such individuals and supporting families to care.
- Public service reform, national and local elections and promoting the voice of citizens in shaping public services are national drivers of change. This will be reflected in 21st century services which offer customers greater choice and individual control over the design and delivery of care and housing and promote individual responsibility for maintaining good health, reducing harm, increasing capacity for self-care and contributing to community capacity.
- The impact of new legislation will place added responsibilities on local authorities and a need for change. Specifically this will arise from the forthcoming Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act, the Welfare Reform Act, the impact of new sustainability targets on our housing stock and exercising new powers and responsibilities in the Adult Support and Protection (S) Act 2007.
- Aberdeenshire, like all councils, has in the past expended a great deal of resource in preparing for and supporting external inspections. Under the Public Service Reform Bill, national scrutiny bodies will work closely together and are revising their models of inspection to focus on helping councils to self-evaluate their activities. By taking advantage of these changes we can demonstrate a streamlined and effective approach to continuous improvement.
- Traditionally Aberdeenshire has been reliant on agriculture, fishing and forestry. In recent decades oil and gas industries and the service sector have boomed, contributing to rapid population growth in and around the six main towns. The global recession has slowed local economic growth in the past year and this is a trend which we anticipate will continue in the short to medium term. Inevitably the most marginalised members of

society will be most affected by this economic downturn through reduced opportunities for employment, housing, financial and family stability.

- The local government grant settlement will reduce significantly in each of the next 3 – 5 years. The impact on social work and housing services will be sustained budget reductions from 2010/11 onwards that will be addressed through reviewing priorities in line with the Council's overall strategy, improved efficiency, reducing the cost base of our services and reviewing other sources of income.
- Electronic information systems underpin the efficient working of a modern business such as the social work and housing service in Aberdeenshire. ICT and evolving electronic management information systems have become the basic tools that help us manage and share client and service information accurately and quickly as well as monitoring, evaluating and reporting routinely on our performance. Increased investment of time and other resources is required to ensure that our ICT and systems development keeps pace with the evolving strategic and operational needs of the service.
- We are committed to achieving quicker access to more effective services for customers and we believe there are opportunities to do so through integrated and shared services with other local partners like health, education and police.

6. Service Priorities for 2010/11

During 2010/11 we will:

- (a) reduce the number of children looked after in “out of authority” placements
- (b) increase the numbers of supported lodging placements for care leavers
- (c) reduce the length of time taken by offenders to complete community service orders;
- (d) provide support to help vulnerable tenants sustain occupancy and prevent homelessness
- (e) increase our supply of temporary accommodation (excluding bed and breakfast) for people who are homeless
- (f) improve speed, accuracy and efficiency of electronic information systems to help us improve services
- (g) achieve better outcomes for service users by shifting the balance of care towards more care at home and in homely settings
- (h) improve access to personalised care and support through direct payments and individual budgets
- (i) support informal carers to enable them to continue to care
- (j) review our models of assessment and care planning with a focus on prevention, promoting independence, resilience and recovery

7. Demonstrating Continuous Improvement

In 2010/11 we are aiming to be one of the top performing social work and housing services in Scotland. We will do so by setting challenging targets for our services to achieve and by benchmarking our performance against the best-performing local authorities in Scotland. We are at an early stage of developing an approach to self-evaluation which will allow us continually to improve the effectiveness of our activities and, most importantly, to evidence how our contribution improves outcomes for people who use our services.

Our performance reporting arrangements cascade from the Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnership's Single Outcome Agreement, through the Council's strategic priorities to this service plan. Each of these plans has complementary performance measures to demonstrate progress towards achieving our service objectives. Performance is reported regularly to relevant council committees and management teams. We routinely monitor trends in our own performance over time and against other comparable organisations. This, along with results from service user and staff surveys, influences where we focus our improvement activity.

Housing and Social Work managers routinely review local performance data on service delivery. Employees have opportunities to reflect on and improve their practice through training and, in future years this will be closely aligned to our strategic service objectives and priorities. Our employee development and review scheme feeds directly into the service's training plan.

HOUSING				
Improve access to good quality, affordable housing				
Single outcome agreement outcomes 7.3, 10.2				
Key Performance Measures	Targets & Achievements			
	Achieved in 2008/9	Achieved in 2009/10 (Q3)	Target in 2010/11	Ranking against 32 L.As
Average days to re-let council housing	45	49		15
Number of new affordable homes developed	273	Available at year end	350	N/A
Percentage of council housing that meets SHQ Standard	14.4%	Available at year end		
Projects/Actions that contribute to this objective				
110 new council housing units to be developed by March 2012. 36 will be built in phase 1 by March 2011.				

Prevent Homelessness				
Single outcome agreement outcome 7.5				
Key Performance Measures	Targets & Achievements			
	Achieved in 2008/9	Achieved in 2009/10 (Q3)	Target in 2010/11	Ranking against 32 L.As
Percentage of homeless households in bed and breakfast accommodation	36.7%	36.3%		Not available
Percentage of unintentionally homeless re-housed	44.6%	42.9%	100% by 2012	
Percentage of homeless provided with permanent council housing who maintained their tenancy for at least 12 months.	90%	87%		
Projects/Actions that contribute to this objective				
Launch a PSL scheme to deliver 100 housing units by 2012/13. 35 new units will be developed by March 2011				
Evaluate, by November 2010, the family mediation pilot project that aims to sustain tenancies and reduce homelessness				

Reduce fuel poverty				
Single outcome agreement outcome 7.2				
Key Performance Measures	Targets & Achievements			
	Achieved in 2008/9	Achieved in 2009/10 (Q3)	Target in 2010/11	Ranking against 32 L.As
Percentage of households in fuel poverty	28%	28%	23%	24th
Percentage of council housing achieving SAP rating of 50 or more		82%		
Projects/Actions that contribute to this objective				
Record energy performance rating for every council house by 2013				
Insulate all council houses. 85% current have loft insulation >300mm				
561 new heating systems to be installed in 2010/11				

SOCIAL WORK

Act early to protect and care for those children and adults at risk of harm or neglect and, in partnership with other agencies, reduce risk

Single outcome agreement outcomes 5.1, 6.3, 7.1, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3

Key Performance Measures	Targets & Achievements			
	Achieved in 2008/9	Achieved in 2009/10 (Q3)	Target in 2010/11	Ranking against 32 L.As
Percentage of assessments completed within local target times	79.2%	85.5%		
Percentage of OT assessments carried out within agreed timescales	93%	92%		
Percentage of children being seen within 15 days of a new supervision requirement being made	100%	100%	100%	1st
Percentage of reports submitted to Children's Reporter within target timescale (SBR; IAR)	43.1%	Not yet available		20th
Total percentage of children aged 16 or 17 ceasing to be looked after attaining at least SCQF level 3 in English and Maths	33.3%	Annual figure		25th

Major projects that contribute to this objective

The quality of data relating to reports submitted to the Children's Reporter will be assured by September 2010 through better joint work and liaison with SCRA

Monitor and evaluate referral patterns of adults in need of support & protection and follow-up arrangements through Aberdeenshire Adult Protection Committee

Review and update a common risk management framework for social work service incorporating function/care group specific risk assessment tools

Ensure all relevant social work staff attain appropriate level of competency to achieve SSSC registration by due dates.

In partnership with NHS Grampian, complete a review by 30 June 2010 of maternity/health visitor guidelines to improve early identification of families in need.

Enhance opportunities for people who are vulnerable by virtue of age, disability, illness, income deprivation or other circumstances,

to optimise their independence and life choices				
Single outcome agreement outcomes 6.1, 6.2, 6.4, 8.2, 13.4				
Key Performance Measures	Targets & Achievements			
	Achieved in 2008/9	Achieved in 2009/10 (Q3)	Target in 2010/11	Ranking against 32 L.As
Number of supported lodging placements for care leavers	13	11	20	N/A
Percentage of children looked after away from home who experience 3 or fewer placements	80.8%	90%	Not set	
Percentage of care leavers in education, training or employment	32%	Not yet available		7th
Percentage of over 65s with intensive care needs receiving care at home (ie clients receiving 10+ hrs per week)	14.6%	Not yet available		To be added
Volume of respite provided for carers of:	Adults – 4,562 weeks	Adults - 4,693 weeks	430 extra weeks across all care groups	N/A
Older people				
Adults with disabilities	Children with disabilities – 1,402 weeks	Children with disabilities – 807		
Children with disabilities				
Projects/Actions that contribute to this objective				
Work with Education and other partners to reduce number of children looked after in “out of authority” placements from 150 to 135 by March 2010				
Develop and launch care management manual and training for all care management practitioners by March 2011				
Roll out electronic single shared assessment (eSSA) to all health and community care teams				
Implement commissioning team’s efficiency and quality reviews of learning disability care services				
Publish 10 year commissioning strategy for older people and people with dementia by July 2010				
Complete and implement review of home care and day services for older people				
Complete and implement review of employment development service				

Improve community protection				
Single outcome agreement outcome 9.1				
Key Performance Measures	Targets & Achievements			
	Achieved in 2008/9	Achieved in 2009/10 (Q3)	Target in 2010/11	Ranking against 32 L.As
Time taken to complete Community Service Orders week	2.4 hours per week	2.4 hours per week	3.2 hours per week	31st
Projects/Actions that contribute to this objective				
Investigate the factors underlying performance in completing community service orders, starting in April 2010. Actions to improve performance will then be agreed.				
Develop an enhanced diversion scheme for women offenders coming into the Criminal Justice system. A project will be developed jointly with the Scottish Prison Service to better re-integrate women offenders in the community after prison sentence. These projects will start in Summer 2010				
Improve information sharing with Grampian Police in connection with violent offenders to enhance risk assessment and risk management, starting in May 2010				

SERVICE-WIDE				
Demonstrate best value and continuous improvement in the way we plan and deliver public services				
Single outcome agreement outcomes 8.1, 15.1, 15.2, 15.3				
Key Performance Measures	Targets & Achievements			
	Achieved in 2008/9	Achieved in 2009/10 (Q3)	Target in 2010/11	Ranking against 32 L.As
Achieve a balanced budget by year end	Target achieved	Slight overspend forecast	Balanced budget	N/A
Projects/Actions that contribute to this objective				
Specific efficiency targets will be identified for each care group function.				
Roll out Care First 6 electronic client recording system to all social work practitioners				
Pilot and evaluate mobile technology for staff who carry out assessment and care management tasks, and housing staff				
Increase range of social work call handling services to Aberdeenshire Contact Centre (ie OT, home care; hospital social work referrals) by March 2011				
Achieve a fully operational joint equipment store with integrated procurement, prescribing, decontamination and delivery/uplift capacity by March 2011				
Demonstrate continuous improvement in child care processes through implementation of How Good Is Our Team self evaluation				

**Enhance the voice of users and carers
in the design and delivery of social work and housing services.**

Single outcome agreement outcome 11.1

Key Performance Measures	Targets & Achievements			
	Achieved in 2008/9	Achieved in 2009/10 (Q3)	Target in 2010/11	Ranking against 32 L.As
Percentage of service satisfied with involvement in the design of their care package		Not yet available	to be set once baseline is known	
Projects/Actions that contribute to this objective				
Carry out a programme of consultation with care home residents, families, communities, staff on modernisation of 8 residential care homes				
Launch carers self-assessment form by March 2011 with electronic access				
Carry out a review of the "In Control" pilot project for self-directed support				
Launch Viewpoint for all looked after and registered children to capture views on quality of care and outcomes				

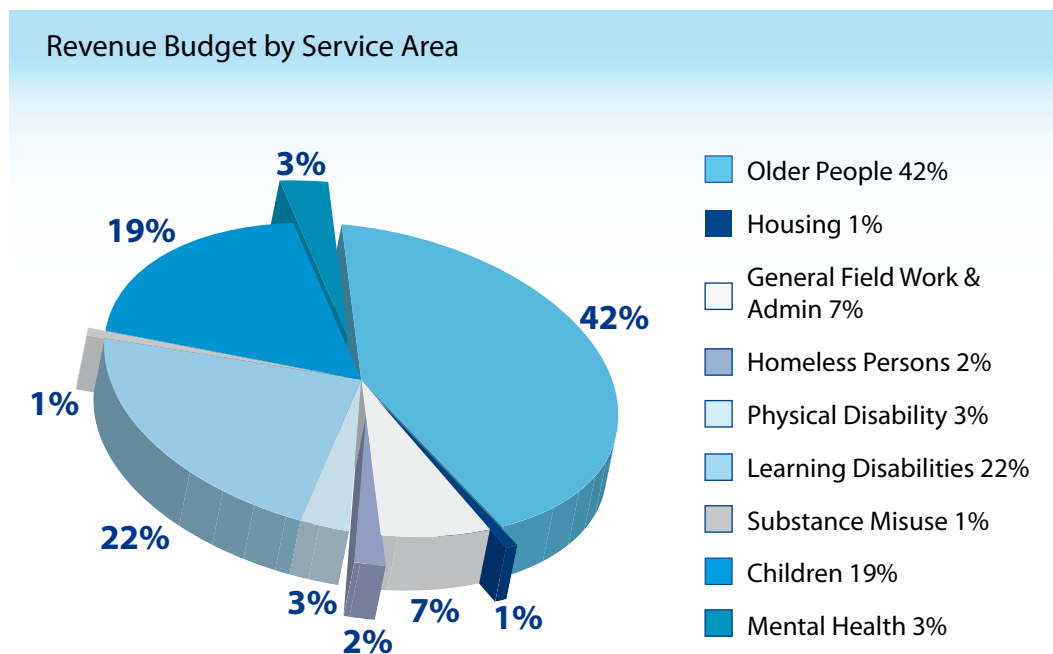
8. Resources

(i) Financial Analysis

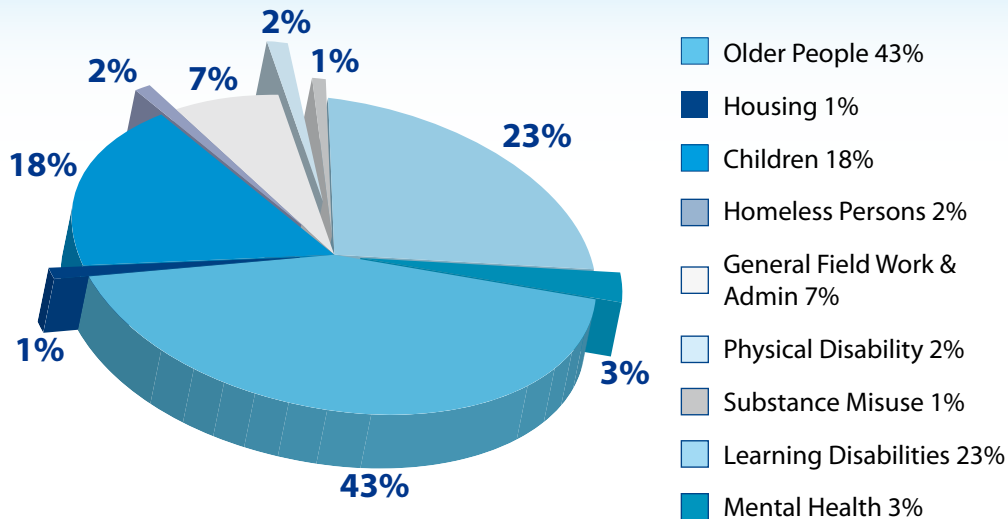
Table 1: Allocation of Revenue Budget across Social Work & Housing

Service Area	Budget 2009/10 (£'000)	Budget 2010/11 (£'000)
Older People	52,252	53,238
Children	23,086	23,196
Learning Disability (Adult)	27,408	28,495
Mental Health	3,627	3,822
Physical Disability	3,082	2,990
Substance Misuse	1,487	1,517
Housing (excluding HRA)	878	992
Homeless Persons	2,456	3,129
General Fieldwork & Admin	8,264	8,502
Total	122,540	125,881

In addition to the figures shown in the table above there is also a separate Housing Revenue Account budget. This is self financing, and not related to the Social Work & Housing Revenue Account. The expenditure within this budget varies on an annual basis, but is controlled overall via a 30 year business plan.



Social Work & Housing Revenue Budget 2010-11



(ii) Service Change

In 2010/11 the council agreed to increase the service's budget to reflect growing demands. However, due to budget constraints within Aberdeenshire Council as a whole, the increase was not at a level required to match the growth in service provision. As a result, savings and efficiencies have been made across all areas to allow the level of service currently provided to continue for 2010/11. The financial pressures are expected to increase in future years, so further savings and efficiencies will be required and the Service are looking at all areas for improvements. In 2009/10 and 2010/11 Social Work and Housing Service has contributed to the council's efficiency agenda as follows:

Table 3: Summary of Service Efficiencies

Service Change	2009/10 (£'000)	2010/11 (£'000)
Procurement	170	No figure at present
More efficient use of learning disability resources	100	354
Service redesign in older people services	0	750
Limited inflationary increases for Care Providers	0	387
Across service savings applied via policy led budgeting	N/a	277

Table 4: Summary of Service Pressures

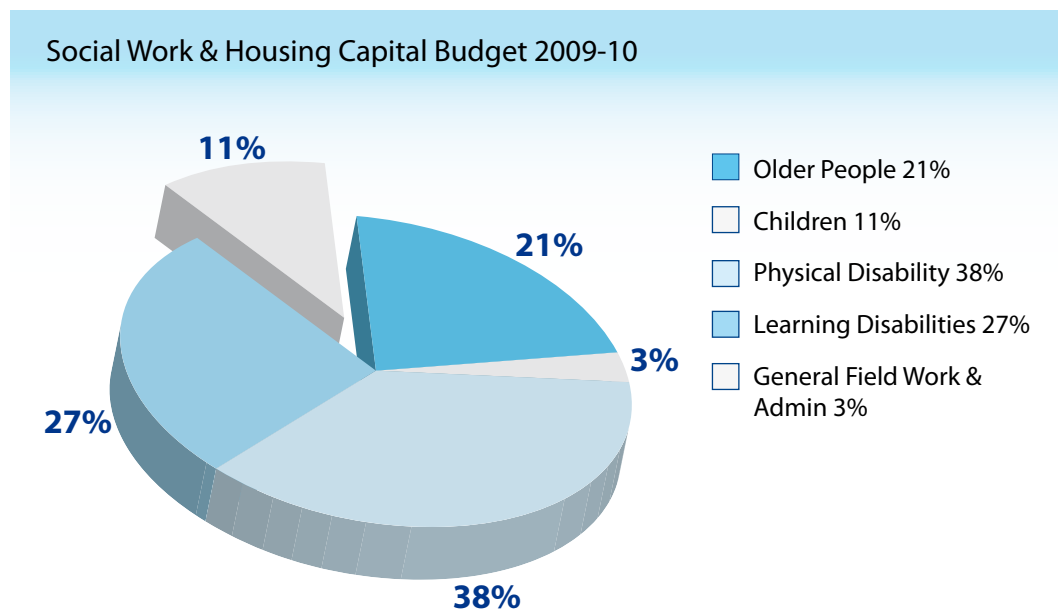
Service Change	2009/10 (£'000)	2010/11 (£'000)
Children's services (increasing demand on out of authority placements and foster care)	2,084 (forecast at January 2010)	2,100 (Estimate)
Older people (rising ageing population and associated needs)	493	933

(iii) Capital

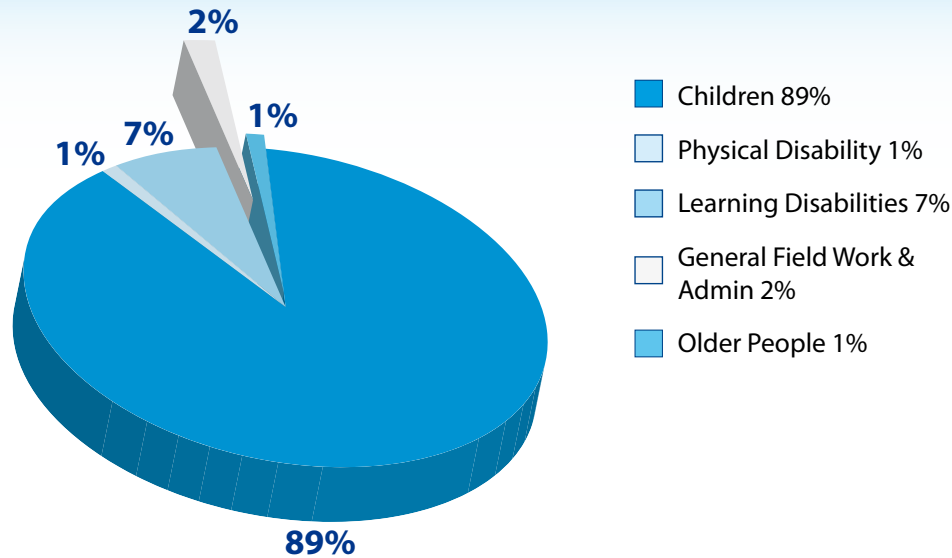
Table 5: Allocation of Capital Budget across Social Work & Housing

Service Area	Budget 2009/10 (£'000)	Budget 2010/11 (£'000)
Older People	675	45
Children	358	2,780
Learning Disability (Adult)	857	227
Physical Disability	1,260	25
General Fieldwork & Admin	82	70
Total	3,232	3,147

In addition to the figures shown in the table above there is also a separate Housing Revenue Account capital budget. This is self financing, and not related to the Social Work & Housing Revenue Account. The expenditure within this budget varies on an annual basis, but is controlled overall via a 30 year business plan. This expenditure addresses improvement works, new build council housing and enabling works.



Social Work & Housing Capital Budget 2010-11



(iv) Workforce Development

We are re-configuring the management structure of the service to better meet future service pressures. We have revised the strategic development, support services and information function to include the creation of a business services function and a service improvement function and will implement these changes during 2010.

Managing and supporting the workforce

Our annual training plan brings together the strategic requirements for the service and the training needs identified through the Employee and Development Scheme and team training plans. Priorities for training during 2010 are

- ensuring that employees who require to be registered with SSSC over the next five years gain the relevant SVQs
- providing training in protecting children and vulnerable adults
- ensuring that there are sufficient Mental Health Officers to meet current and projected need

Worksmart is a project designed to help us provide better services for our customers, to make efficient use of our property and to offer more flexible working arrangements for employees. We expect that one of the benefits will be a reduction in the time and distances employees have to travel. Strategic development employees will be among the first to trial the new arrangements, which will be evaluated.

Social workers in children and families teams can be under particular pressure. We aim to support these employees by ensuring effective supervision is available, by providing training and support for staff development and by monitoring and managing workloads.

(v) Risk Management

This service plan identifies our service priorities and targets for improvement. The risks associated with delivery are detailed in the service's risk register which will be reviewed in June 2010 and monitored at six monthly intervals thereafter. Social Work and Housing have put in place effective controls to mitigate significant and major risks. A mid year report to the service management team will report on progress in managing categories of risks within the service.

Risks identified within the social work and housing register comprise factors which affect our ability to deliver a safe and effective service. These can be summarised as:

- having resources to meet levels of demand
- high risk activities of child and adult protection, managing sex offenders and violent offenders
- partnership working within the council and across other agencies, particularly about persons at risk and those who present risks to the community
- having sufficient employees with relevant skills and knowledge
- having reliable ICT, robust arrangements to manage system loss/ failure and effective data protection arrangements to meet statutory obligations and professional standards
- robust commissioning and contracts activity which delivers best value and sufficient range of sustainable independent care providers
- effective representation in corporate planning for civil contingencies which ensures social work and housing's role and responsibilities are clearly defined

Monitoring and reporting progress

This plan will be presented to Housing and Social Work Committee in April and a progress report in November 2010.

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Towards the very best...

Housing and Social Work

Service Plan 2010-2011