



# HOUSING & SOCIAL WORK SERVICE PLAN 2011 – 2014

## CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Service Role and Main Activities
3. How Are We Doing?
4. What Challenges Face Us?
5. Service Objectives
6. Service Priorities for 2011-14
7. How Will We Evidence How We Are Doing?
8. Demonstrating Improvement
9. Resources
10. Monitoring and Reporting Progress

## 1. Introduction

Aberdeenshire council has a clear vision;

***“Serving Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea, the very best of Scotland”***

It expects council services to collectively 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 (SOA) available on our community planning website at: <http://www.ouraberdeenshire.org.uk/images/media/docs/soa.pdf>. Our Strategic Priorities are directly linked to the SOA; to simplify them they are reflected into three pillars (Economy, Early Intervention, and Demographic Change). These will be the key building blocks for the future.

**Figure 1: Graphical representation of the council’s community planning and improvement framework**



The Service Plan is the anchor to the “Golden Thread” that runs down from the Community Plan and SOA through the Councils Strategic Priorities and Service Plan to Section/Team/Individual work plans.

### **Our Vision**

The Housing and Social Work Service is about providing care, housing and support to those that need it. Our vision is to provide the right service to the right people at the right time and to do that in an effective and efficient way.

We are very aware of the reduced resources that are available to public agencies however the Council and the Service is well positioned to deal with this, positively and confidently. There remains a significant budget to deliver our services and it is important we recognise that.

There are some key themes that we will take forward in terms of how we will deliver H&SW services. These reflect the need to maintain our focus on improving services and in ensuring we are able to manage demand pressures –

demand which continues to rise. There are also opportunities we have seen emerge that can play a part in shaping how our services are determined in future.

The key themes that will influence our work over the coming years will be:

- Continuing to improve the services we deliver
- Promoting early intervention and preventative services
- Supporting people and communities to be more independent and self supporting
- Delivering services to be as personal as possible
- Ensuring we get the most out of our partnerships
- Continuing to make sure we get value for money in the services we either provide or commission
- Ensuring we continue to support our staff
- Managing risk appropriately
- Being fair and equitable
- Increasing our efforts around self-evaluation to inform improvement
- Working fully with service users, tenants and families to inform any service redesign

This Service Plan has been developed taking into account the wider economic and financial issues and takes into account the Council's priorities. The Plan also reflects the way in which our partnerships are evolving and it also reflects the outcome from a significant consultation process undertaken with our own colleagues across the Service.

The Plan is important in setting the direction for Housing and Social Work services over the next 3 years in particular but in reality they will influence services well beyond these first 3 years. The Plan is therefore extremely important and we will be absolutely committed to delivery on the actions and outcomes that it contains. We look forward to sharing progress with Members, staff and partners as it develops further.

### **Why do we need a plan?**

This plan identifies anticipated opportunities and 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.

### **How is our Service Plan developed?**

Integral to our success is our commitment to planning and delivering personalised services in partnership with others, notably residents, service users and carers. This plan is formed using various intelligence such as our Residents Survey, Service User feedback, Employee Engagement events (engaging with a large cross representation of our staff), discussions and planning with our Senior Managers, performance indicators and conclusions drawn from our own self assessment known as AIM (Aberdeenshire Improvement Model - EFQM-based).

### Item: 3 Page: 6

In addition it takes into consideration good practice from other areas and councils and external scrutiny reports.

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 & Leisure (EL&L).

Shared priorities and commitments are integral to our planning in Housing and Social Work (H&SW) services in Aberdeenshire and are reported to formal committees of the council and published on our website, [www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk). The different plans which we ensure is integrated in our planning include:

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

The Service Plan sits alongside the Corporate Improvement Plan. The Corporate Improvement Plan has concurrent themes which cross all Services. These include; Leadership & Culture; Performance; Engagement & Reputation; Governance & People. Details as seen below in figure 2.

Figure 2



## 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 2011/12 our annual budget is £128,780,000. In addition, there is also a separate Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget which is self financing. The planned expenditure for 2011/12 is £40,912,000. We employed **2,462** full-time equivalents (FTE) in 2010/11. Commissioned care accounted for 51% of the social work budget. 49% of care costs are attributable to directly provided care.

In Aberdeenshire, in 2010/11, around **490** children were looked after by the local authority, **150** of whom live in children's homes or with substitute families. We supported about **100** children in kinship care. We provided **15,000** hours of care at home per week to over **2,000** vulnerable adults and older people and we funded 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 7500 households on Aberdeenshire's waiting list. 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 supported around **560** people with learning disabilities in day services and a further **550** people received help with employment options. We supported 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. How Are We Doing?

The following outlines our strengths and areas for improvement and it is in consideration of both of these that our objectives and improvement projects have been identified.

#### Service Strengths

- (a) Following our employee engagement events and employee survey our staff identified several key areas as a fundamental strength. In addition, our Residents Survey noted our staff and customer service as the Service's greatest strength which continues to improve year on year.
- (b) In 2009, the Housing Service was inspected by the Scottish Housing Regulator. 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.
- (c) Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA) conducted a national inspection for all Scotland's prisons published in 2011. The report for HM Prison Peterhead found that the prison-based service was valued by other prison staff and was making a real contribution to the assessment, management and treatment of a difficult group of prisoners. Staff were positive and enthusiastic and they had a commitment to quality assurance which was well-established and integrated with the wider criminal justice service in Aberdeenshire.
- (d) 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. They also commented that the inclusion of tenants in officer function working groups was a good example of where tenants are clearly involved in the decision making process.
- (e) Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA) carried out an inspection of social work service in 2010. You can find the full report on the SWIA website at [www.swia.gov.uk](http://www.swia.gov.uk). Inspectors noted good practice across all areas of social work. They made three recommendations:
  - to carry out an audit of case files in a year's time to assess the impact of care management training and IT developments
  - to put in place a management information system to record unallocated work and waiting lists
  - to revise guidance on risk assessment and management for all care groups
- (f) HMIE (His Majesty's Inspectorate of Education) 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.
- (g) Our performance in statutory indicators demonstrates speed of response in general is a strength of Aberdeenshire's social work service, especially in

### Item: 3 Page: 9

relation to child protection, referrals for assessment of need, delivery of home care services and delayed discharges.

- (h) 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 6<sup>th</sup> of all Scottish local authorities on this indicator.
- (i) The proportion of children in Aberdeenshire who are looked after by the local authority, while rising, is 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 family settings, including children who are under supervision orders at home, which is around the national average.
- (j) 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).
- (k) 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 ensure that the way we assess, plan and provide care for children and adults reflects the move away from inputs, towards achieving better outcomes.
- c) We will continually improve our practice in working to keep adults and children safe, and ensure appropriate recording.
- d) We should have a better quality information system to help manage the workload to record unallocated work and waiting lists.
- e) We will 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.
- f) 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.

**Item: 3 Page: 10**

Our performance in comparison with other councils shows a worsening trend with regard to children gaining qualifications in English and Maths.

- g) 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.
- h) 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.
- i) 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.
- j) 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.
- k) 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 than 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".
- l) 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.
- m) The SWIA inspection of the Social Work Unit at HM Prison Peterhead 2010 recommended that there should be development to measure the differences services make to prisoners' needs, and to the risks they present, in collaboration with SPS and other providers. It was also noted that discussions should be initiated with partners in regard to the implementation of adult protection procedures within the prison setting and when release-planning. It should be noted that both of the above areas featured in the national prison based social work inspection report.

#### 4. What Challenges Face Us?

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

- (a) The current economic climate will be one of our biggest challenges with the local government grant settlement being reduced significantly over 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.
- (b) 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 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.
- (c) 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**.
- (d) **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 service and cost pressures as a consequence of caring for these individuals and supporting families to care.
- (e) 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 21<sup>st</sup> century services which offer customers greater choice and 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.
- (f) 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. The impacts from the implementation of the Homelessness etc (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 along with the forthcoming outcomes from the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010. We are working towards the Scottish Government's 2012 target to abolish priority need distinction and that all unintentionally homeless households will be entitled to settled accommodation. The Scheme of

**Item: 3 Page: 12**

Assistance has to be implemented along with a strategy for Below Tolerable Standard housing. The Self Directed Support and Children's Hearing Bills (2010) will also mean significant consequences once consulted and passed.

- (g) An important challenge for the whole service, but in particular the Housing Service, will be meeting the sectoral targets as identified in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. Particular reference will have to be made to meeting the Scottish housing quality standard for all Council housing and all new build programmes.
- (h) Self assessment -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 Act, 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.**
- (i) 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.
- (j) 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. Also in finding new and innovative ways to make our services more efficient and accessible.
- (k) We are committed to achieving earlier and faster access to more effective services for customers through changing culture, systems and practice to **maximise shared resources and provide more effective/ responsive services, ensuring early intervention** where possible. We believe there are opportunities to do so through integrated and shared services with local partners like health, education and police.

While these challenges are real, they can be positively managed as our Service objectives, priorities and actions will set out.

## 5. Service Objectives

The Council has clear aspirations for the future of Aberdeenshire and these are reflected in the Aberdeenshire Council vision:-

***Serving Aberdeenshire 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 promises made within the Single Outcome Agreement. The Service Plan is set within the context of the Council's strategic priorities with a particular responsibility for actions within the 2 themes of 'Community Wellbeing' and 'Lifelong Learning'. We ensure that the way we work also contributes to the corporate themes of, 'Sustainable Development' and 'Developing our Partnerships'.

For Housing & Social Work we have identified 8 key objectives to achieve this vision;

### **Housing:**

1. ensure access to good quality, affordable housing
2. prevent and address homelessness
3. reduce fuel poverty

### **Social Work:**

4. act early to protect and care for those children and adults at risk of harm or neglect
5. 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
6. improve community protection

### **Service-wide:**

7. ensure all aspects of our service are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to people's needs
8. enhance the voice of users and carers in the design and delivery of social work and housing services.

## 6. Service Priorities for 2011- 14

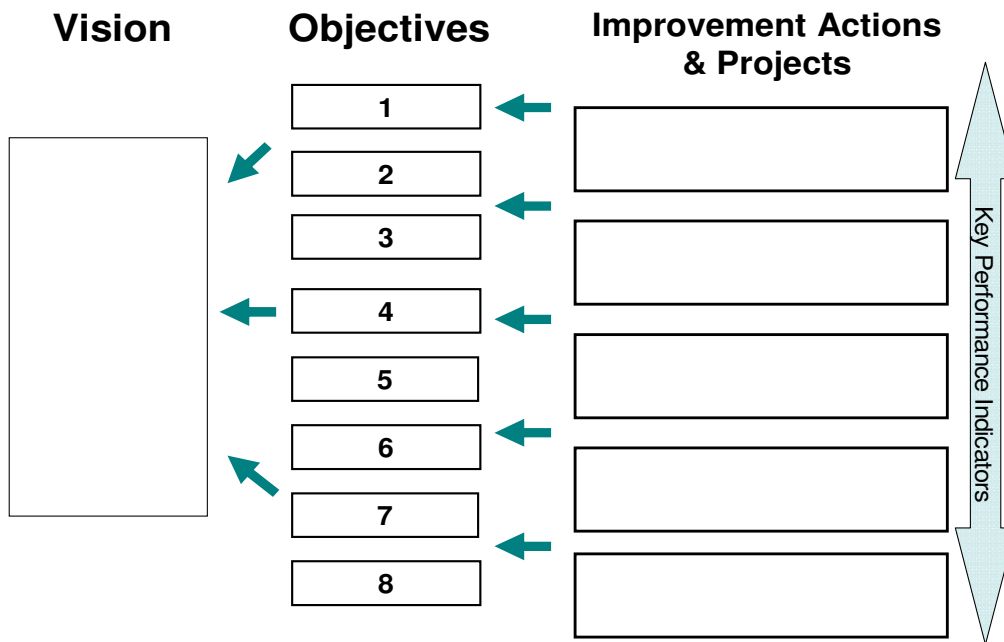
As well as our core services we have a number of current priorities which are crucial to the Service to achieve. These priorities are areas for action for the Service. These will be reported and monitored by senior management to ensure delivery. These will also be subject to regular review.

- (a) To ensure that our service redesign ambitions are progressed;
- (b) To realise the efficiencies and savings as described in budget reports from April 2011;
- (c) To ensure integration and delivery of new system of Community Payback Orders;
- (d) To contribute to the increase community capacity as part of a long-term strategy;
- (e) To provide and enhance the range of local services for children in need;
- (f) To achieve better outcomes and choice for our service users through shifting the balance of care toward more community and home settings;
- (g) Improve access to personalised care and to support through direct payments and individual budgets to empower our service users;
- (h) To prioritise housing need, including homelessness, with our Community Planning partners.

## 7. How Will We Evidence How We Are Doing?

In order to know if we are achieving our objectives we have identified a set of performance measures that enable us to regularly assess how we are doing and identify what improvements we need to make. We have identified a range of projects and actions that we need to deliver on that will also help us achieve our objectives. Each project has milestones identified to ensure we can monitor our progress.

Figure 1. Driver Diagram of the linkages between H&SW Vision, Objectives & Projects



### EXAMPLE

CORE SERVICE OBJECTIVE 1				
THIS PART DESCRIBES AT A HIGH LEVEL WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE				
<i>The table below details how this links to our overarching council strategy</i>				
Golden Thread				
Strategic Priority Reference			Single Outcome Agreement 2009/10 Reference	
-				
Key Performance Measures	Targets & Achievements			
	Achieved in 2009/10	Achieved in 2010/11	Target in 2014	Ranking against 32 LA's
<i>a) These measures are to evidence any improvements made by the Service via our projects and actions.</i>			<i>Targets are set to give us something tangible to work towards</i>	<i>Comparison of how we are doing against our counterparts in other Council</i>
<b>Projects/Actions that contribute to this objective</b>				
<b>Action</b>			<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<i>X.1 List of actions These are actions which will contribute to the above 'Core Objective' and which will be measured as part of the Key Performance Indicators above in achieving this. X.2 (etc)</i>			<i>Delivery within these set timescales/milestones</i>	<i>Named person at senior management level responsible</i>

**CORE SERVICE OBJECTIVE 1****To ensure access to good quality, affordable housing****Golden Thread**

Strategic Priority Reference

Single Outcome Agreement 2009/10  
Reference

CW7, CW10

7.3,10.2

**Projects/Actions that contribute to this objective**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
1.1 Supply: New Build (council) – Phase 1- 13 units, Phase 2 – 72 units, phase 3 – 45 units, Phase – 4 11 units ( to be approved)	141 completed by 11/12	Head of Service (Housing)
1.2 Supply: To enable the provision of affordable housing	350 per annum (including Council new build)	Head of Service (Housing)
1.3 Access: To review of allocation policy	Strategic review completed. Completion by September 2012	Head of Service (Housing)
1.4 Access: To have a Common Housing Register to improve “access” to waiting list	Being developed. Completion by January 2012	Head of Service (Housing)
1.5 Access: To establish a Common Allocation Policy for the allocation of affordable housing in Aberdeenshire	Ongoing. Completion by June 2014.	Head of Service (Housing)
1.6 Quality: Invest in stock to achieve Scottish Housing Quality Standard	Ongoing. Annual update in Sept 2011 (Completion by April 2015)	Head of Service (Housing)
1.7 Quality: As part of Housing modernisation review to implement outcomes of Housing repairs business plan	Ongoing. Completion by Sept 2012	Head of Service (Housing)
1.8 Affordability: Housing Business Plan ensures investment in own stock and retaining affordable rent levels.	Business Plan reviewed summer 2012 and reported Dec 2012	Head of Service (Housing)

**CORE SERVICE OBJECTIVE 2**

**To Prevent & Address Homelessness**

Golden Thread	
Strategic Priority Reference	Single Outcome Agreement 2009/10 Reference
CW3	7.3.1

**Projects/Actions that contribute to this objective**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
2.1 Develop provision of comprehensive advice and information on housing options	March 2012	Head of Service (Housing)
2.2 Formulate specific prevention services	March 2012	Head of Service (Housing)
2.3 To work with Education Services to embed housing education in the school curriculum	Implement by August 2012	Head of Service (Housing)
2.4 To strengthen corporate ownership and partnership working in preventing and addressing homelessness	March 2012	Head of Service (Housing)
2.5 To regularly consult with and provide progress updates to the Community Planning Partnership.	March 2012	Head of Service (Housing)
2.6 To maximise the role of Registered Social Landlords in addressing homelessness	March 2012	Head of Service (Housing)
2.7 To complete the review of housing support	March 2012	Head of Service (Housing)
2.8 To develop alternative accommodation options and to minimise the use of Bed and Breakfast.	March 2012	Head of Service (Housing)

**CORE SERVICE OBJECTIVE 3****To Reduce Fuel Poverty**

Golden Thread		
Strategic Priority Reference	Single Outcome Agreement 2009/10 Reference	
CW4.1	7.2	
<b>Projects/Actions that contribute to this objective</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
3.1 Identifying properties (Council stock) with poor energy performance	March 2013	Head of Service (Housing)
3.2 Undertake a feasibility study examining hard to treat properties in conjunction with Robert Gordon's University.	December 2011	Head of Service (Housing)
3.3 Implement pilot to address energy efficiency issues in hard to treat properties	March 2013	Head of Service (Housing)
3.4 To investigate and obtain funding for improving energy efficiency in the private sector	Annually	Head of Service (Housing)
3.5 Evaluate impact of Service Level Agreements with independent advice services.	March 2012 and annually thereafter	Head of Service (Housing)
3.6 To implement Scheme of Assistance to private households	Annually	Head of Service (Housing)

**CORE SERVICE OBJECTIVE 4**

**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**

Golden Thread		
Strategic Priority Reference	Single Outcome Agreement 2009/10 Reference	
	5.1, 6.3, 7.1, 8.1-8.3	
<b>Projects/Actions that contribute to this objective</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
4.1 Embed a Risk Management Framework	Medium term	SMTe & Continuous Improvement Groups
4.2 Raise awareness of Elder Abuse	Medium term	Head of Service & Adult Support and Protection Committee
4.3 Revise and embed new child protection guidance in all of social work	June 2011	Heads of Service (Community Care & Children's)
4.4 Embed the Integrated Assessment Framework (IAF) as core business model & framework for all work with children and young people.	Regularly audited via Joint Management Group	Joint Management Group & Head of Service (Children's)
4.5 Enhance consistency and reduce waste through embedding core assessment and recording model	Winter 2011 March 2011 to be launched	Head of Service (Children's)

**CORE SERVICE OBJECTIVE 5**

**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**

Golden Thread	
Strategic Priority Reference	Single Outcome Agreement 2009/10 Reference
	6.1, 6.2, 6.4, 8.2, 13.4

**Projects/Actions that contribute to this objective**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
5.1 Redesign of Learning Disabilities Day Service Delivery	3-5 years	Social Work Manager (SWM) (Day Services Redesign & Short Breaks)
5.2 Future planning shared assessment (SA) for adult community care service users	Ongoing	Head of Service (Adult Services)
5.3 Develop Self Directed Support Strategy for Aberdeenshire	December 2011	Social Work Manager SWM (Older People / Physical Disabilities Care Mgt)
5.4 Establish integrated Rehab and Enablement Service	October 2011	Social Work Manager (Rehab. & Reablement)
5.5 Complete & implement review of employment development service	November 2011	Social Work Manager (Day Services Redesign & Short Breaks)
5.6 Shifting balance of care: Joint Delivery Plan	March 2013	Head of Service with Older Peoples Strategic Outcomes Group (OPSOG)
5.7 Streamlining joint Substance Misuse Service (SMS) to produce improved outcomes	December 2011	Social Work Manager (SMS) & ADP Services Sub-Group
5.8 Continue to deliver care management. Training across all functions.	March 2012	Social Work Manager (Older People & Physical Disabilities)
5.9 Deliver care home modernisation project	2014	Social Work Manager (Residential Care for Older People)
5.10 Reduce the number of children presented for out of authority placements by extending alternatives	Ongoing Regularly monitored	Head of Service (Childrens) & Head of Service (EL&L)
5.11 Ensuring that all Council services understand and fulfil their corporate parenting responsibilities	Ongoing	Head of Service (Childrens) & Joint Management Group (JMG)
5.12 Promote the "Lead Professional" concept where appropriate with colleagues in Adult Services	August 2011	Head of Service (Childrens)

<b>CORE SERVICE OBJECTIVE 6</b>		
<b>Improve Community Protection</b>		
Golden Thread		
Strategic Priority Reference	Single Outcome Agreement 2009/10 Reference	
	9.1	
<b>Projects/Actions that contribute to this objective</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
6.1 Investigate the factors underlying performance in completing community service orders, starting in April 2010. Actions to improve performance will then be agreed.	March 2012	Social Work Manager (Criminal Justice)
6.2 Implement new Community Pay Back Scheme.	June 2013	Social Work Manager (Criminal Justice)
6.3 Provide targeted support to young people with challenging behaviour via Integrated Assessment Framework (IAF).	Regularly Audited by JMG	Head of Service (Childrens) & Joint Management Group (JMG)

**CORE SERVICE OBJECTIVE 7**

**Ensure all aspects of our service are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to people's needs**

Golden Thread		
Strategic Priority Reference	Single Outcome Agreement 2009/10 Reference	
	8.1, 15.1, 15.2, 15.3	
<b>Projects/Actions that contribute to this objective</b>		
<b>Action</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
7.1 Performance management framework to focus more on outcomes and improvements that are required	March 2012	Heads of Service
7.2 Roll out of Kaizen for Daily Improvement programme across the Service over next 3 years to embed an improvement culture and empower staff to improve their own processes	December 2011 update	Service Improvement Manager
7.3 Staff (as appropriate) to work flexibly within 2 years via Worksmart and Recordsmart programme and an increase in use of virtual communication e.g. Web-X, Video conferencing, Meet-Me. To ensure a flexible and adaptable workforce.	September 2011 update  March 2013 Ongoing	Business Services Manager
7.4 Roll out of Care First 6 and training to ensure quality and accessible recording.	Ongoing	Systems & Data Manager
7.5 To have better financial information for managers to aid effective decision making and efficiencies	August 2011	Principal Accountant
7.6 To improve attendance management through enhancing the quality of management information of e.g. absences	Ongoing Update September 2011	Business Service Manager
7.7 Increase completion of staff EARs (Employee Annual Reviews) to enhance systematic workforce development	Ongoing Review annually	All line managers
7.8 To increase quality of Human Resources information to manage people issues effectively	September 2011	Business Service Manager & Corporate HR
7.9 Pilot and evaluate mobile technology for staff e.g. those who carry out assessment and care management tasks	December 2011	Social Work Manager (Older People & Physical Disabilities & Care Management)
7.10 To develop and embed a self evaluation model across the Service to improve our core processes	August 2012	Service Improvement Manager

**CORE SERVICE OBJECTIVE 8**

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

Golden Thread	
Strategic Priority Reference	Single Outcome Agreement 2009/10 Reference
	11.1

**Projects/Actions that contribute to this objective**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
8.1 Increase use of talking points to evaluate the effect of service changes	March 2013	Senior Management Team
8.2 Develop framework for non-tenant groups	Sept 2011	Head of Service
8.3 Ensure that users' voice is implemented and promoted to wider users and audience	March 2012	Service Improvement Manager
8.4 Continue to embed Viewpoint; research novel approaches to customer input on service initiatives on quality of care and outcomes	October 2012	Head of Service (Children's)
8.5 To understand current system of service user and tenants feedback and to embed a cross-service system and to enable its use for service design and planning	September 2012	Continuous Improvement Groups

## 8. Demonstrating Improvement

By 2014 we aim to be one of the top performing Housing and Social Work services in Scotland, in terms of exemplar customer-focus and delivery our services more effectively and efficiently. 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 annual review scheme (EAR) feeds directly into the Service's training plan.

As a council and a service we are committed to 'doing things differently' in order to build on the services we deliver to our residents. The council is delivering a range of interlinked business transformation programmes that, as a service we actively promote and we are engaged with, including:

**Asset Management Programme** - The effective utilisation of the council's assets and resources are fundamental in realising the council's vision. There is a commitment by the council to reduce office space by 25% over the next two years supported by programmes such as Worksmart and the council's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Strategy.

**ICT & Recordsmart Strategy** – this identifies the key areas for ICT-related improvement across services focusing on implementing simpler and more efficient ways of working, enabling flexible working arrangements, providing better customer service, supporting innovation in learning and teaching, and developing contingency and disaster recovery facilities

**Customer Relationship Management** is all about improving how the council and its customers interact. The council contact centre has already demonstrated major improvements in dealing with customer enquiries and key service processes. The first town centre service point has opened in conjunction with community partners recently which allows customers to undertake any council transaction in one place. A series of service points are planned and the location of these will be integrated into the Office Accommodation Strategy of the Asset Management Programme. The council aims to make over 90% of transactions

and other suitable customer interactions available through the council's contact centre, service points and website. *Service specifics*

**Worksmart** is one of the most significant organisational development projects ever undertaken by Aberdeenshire Council. By delivering a variety of new working methods for employees it help the council become more efficient. It is an inclusive programme which affects every employee of the council. Through the adoption of a range of flexible working practices (for example working from home, flexible hours, using technology to enable mobile working, etc.), the council is delivering increased team productivity and improved service delivery. As well as assisting with the Asset Management Programme, outcomes including reduced sickness absence and improved staff retention, reducing reliance on office space, travel and commuting costs and the associated carbon reduction. Also, delivering and sustaining significant benefits to the work/life balance of employees are expected.

**Kaizen for Daily Improvement** (KDI) programme is the council's framework for embedding continuous improvement throughout the council. It ensures **sustainable improvement** through a culture of empowerment, involvement and engagement. The KDI approach constantly challenges the status quo; the culture of the organisation is one in which services are always seeking to improve and maximise customer satisfaction and create a 'can do' culture. We continue to **use the expertise and skills of our employees** to deliver **solutions in real time** for our customers, as well as re-designing services around need. The types of tools we use come from lean and six sigma methodology. They include; value stream mapping, root cause analysis (5 Whys), statistical analysis, 5S (workplace organisation), metrics for improvement and many more.

**Information Management Strategy** supports asset management, Worksmart and customer expectations. Information is at the heart of every service that Aberdeenshire Council delivers and is part of every activity that the Council undertakes. The information management strategy supports the decision making process with accurate and timely information and enables staff to work more efficiently.

## 9. Resources

### 9.1 Financial Analysis

The revenue budget for Housing & Social Work can be broken down as follows;

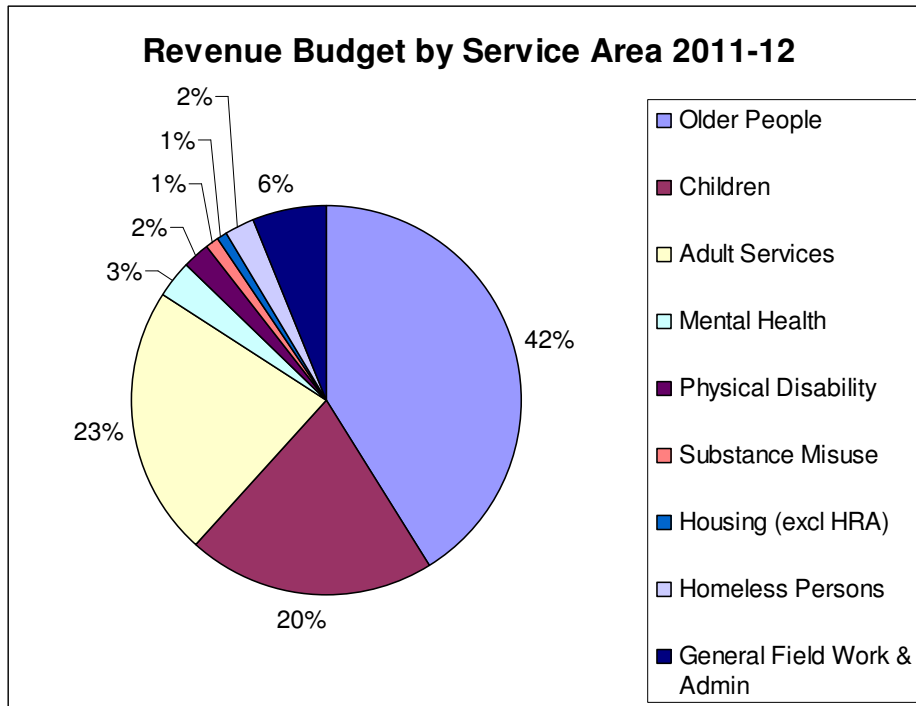
**Table 1: Allocation of Revenue Budget across Social Work & Housing**

	<b>Budget 2011/12 (£,000)</b>	<b>Budget 2012/13 (£,000)</b>	<b>Budget 2013/14 (£,000)</b>
Older People	53,015	53,155	53,872
Children	26,356	25,980	26,458
Adult Services	29,035	28,637	28,969
Mental Health	3,845	3,852	3,903
Physical Disability	3,020	3,014	3,065
Substance Misuse	1,349	1,353	1,376
Housing (excl HRA)	1,140	988	814
Homeless Persons	3,096	3,068	3,099
General Field Work & Admin	7,924	7,397	7,498
<b>Total</b>	<b>128,780</b>	<b>127,444</b>	<b>129,054</b>
H&SW General Fund	119,882	118,324	119,706
Out of Authority Placements	8,898	9,120	9,348
	<b>128,780</b>	<b>127,444</b>	<b>129,054</b>

In addition to the figures shown in the table above there is also a separate Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget. This is self financing, and not related to the Social Work & Housing Revenue Account (HRA). 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. Planned expenditure for 2011/12 is £40,912,000.

Revenue Budget by Service Area 2011-14 (Figures 1-3)

Figure 1



*N.B Figures 1-3: In addition to the figures shown in the table above there is also a separate Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget. This is self financing, and not related to the Social Work & Housing Revenue Account (HRA).*

Figure 2

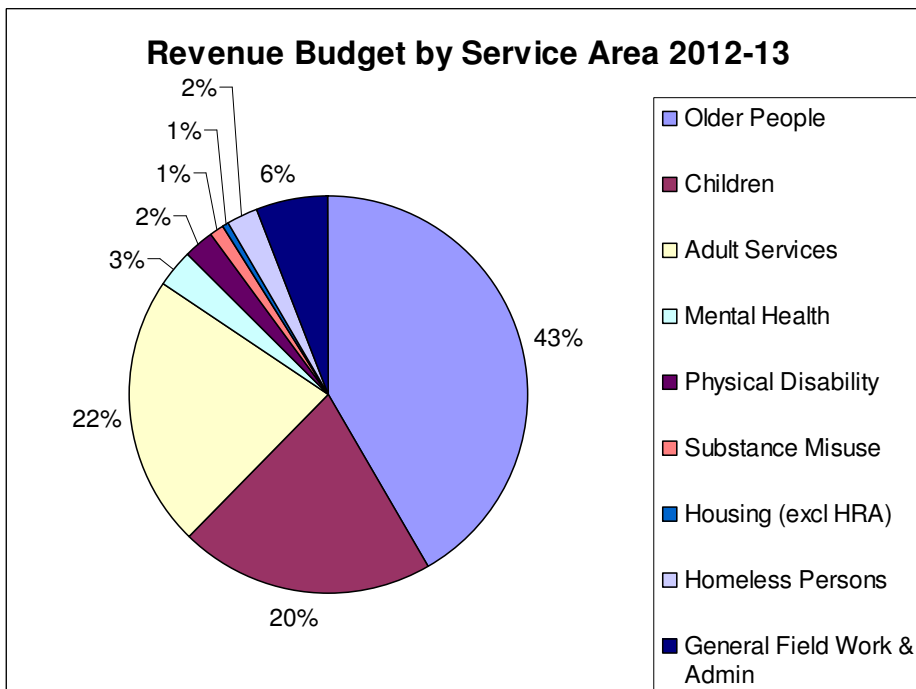
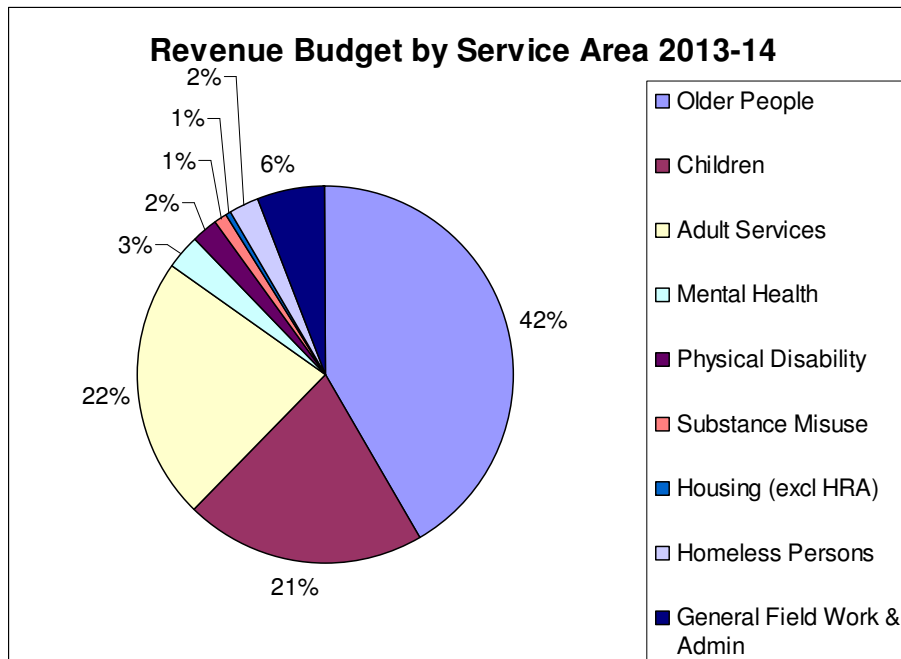


Figure 3



### 9.2 Service Change

As a result of the broader economic downturn the resources available to the Council have been significantly reduced. A Council wide process looked at areas of possible efficiency savings and service reductions and these were presented to, and agreed by, Full Council on the 25th November 2010. The budget was then agreed in final on the 10th February 2011. Work is now ongoing to make sure these savings are achieved in a managed way. In addition to this, the service continues to look at further areas for improvement and efficiencies so resources can be redirected to meet increasing needs. The Social Work & Housing Service has contributed to the Councils efficiency agenda and this will be monitored as part of the ongoing budget management process.

### 9.3 The Housing and Social Work Capital Plan (General Fund) can be summarised as follows.

Table 2: Allocation of Capital Budget across Social Work & Housing

	Budget 2011/12 (£,000)	Budget 2012/13 (£,000)	Budget 2013/14 (£,000)
Older People	8,903	8,400	1,349
Children	1,334	1,027	220
Adult Services	70	70	70
Physical Disability	750	750	750
General Field Work & Admin	73	73	73
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,130</b>	<b>10,320</b>	<b>2,462</b>

Figure 4

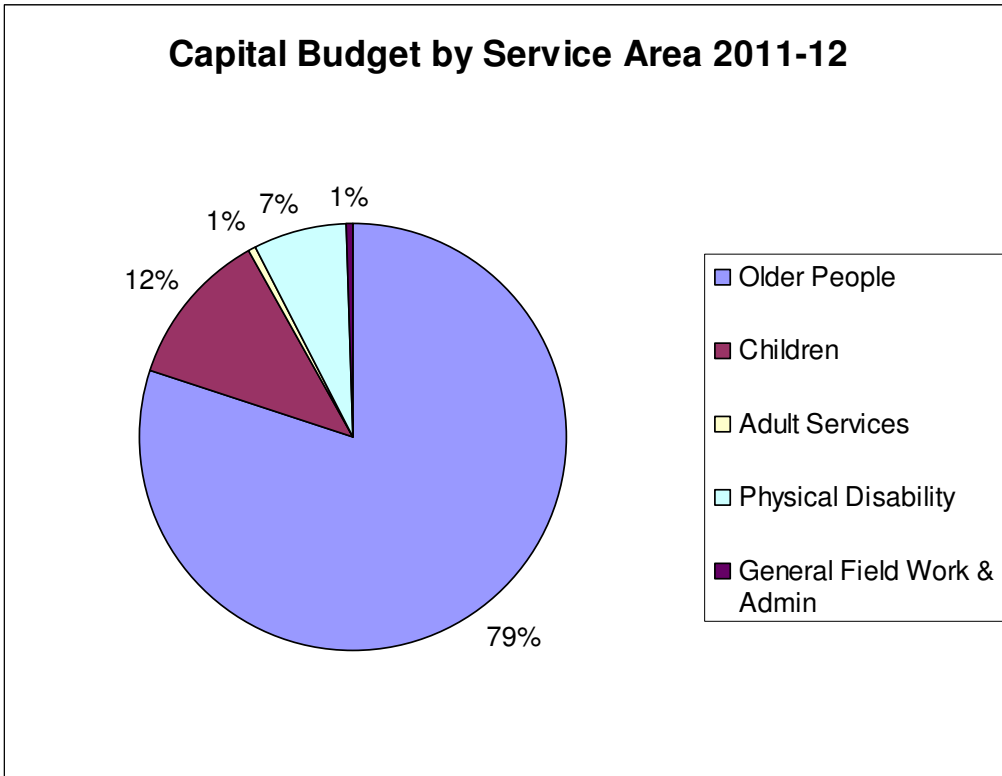


Figure 5

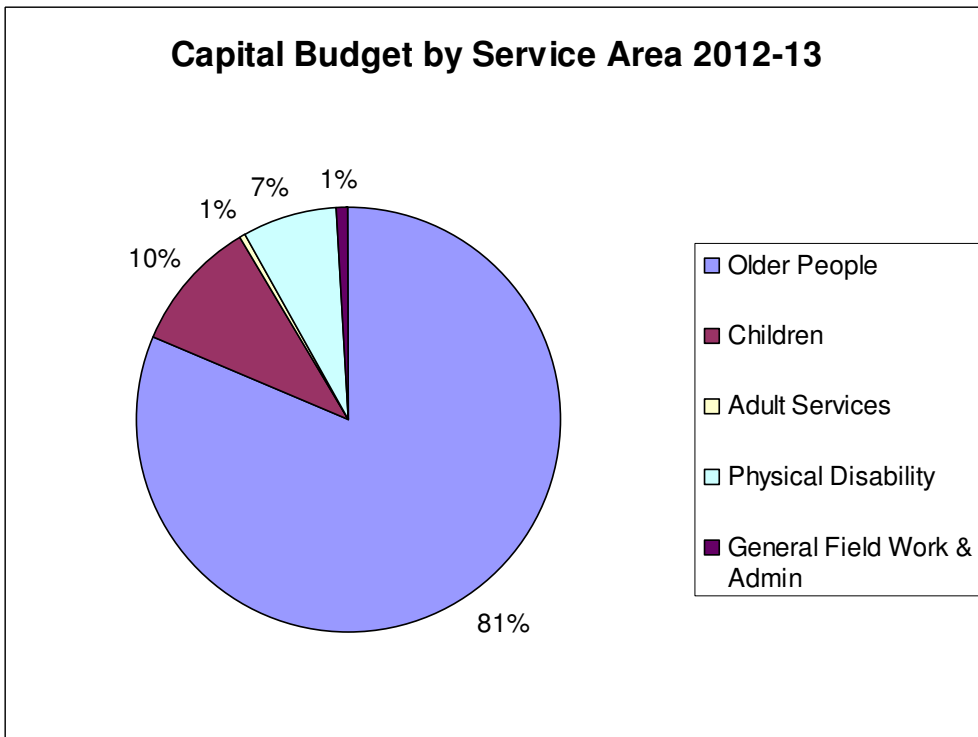
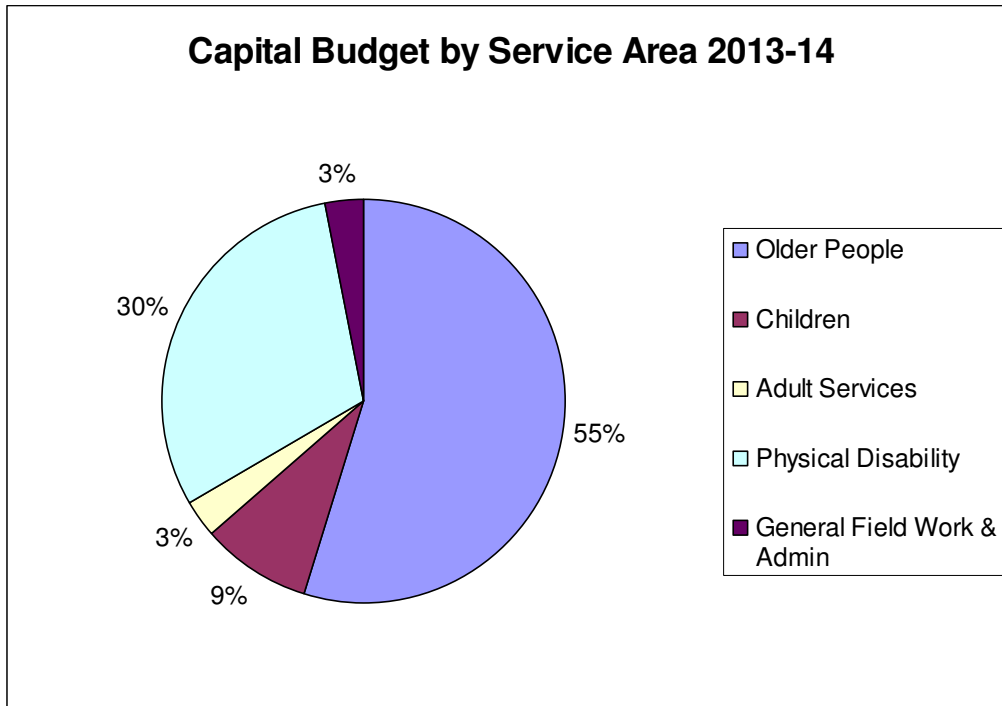


Figure 6



In addition, the HRA supports a capital programme for stock improvement and other enabling works. The projected budget for the HRA Capital programme for the next 3 years is £26.8m, £16.9m and £15.2m respectively.

#### 9.4 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 2011 and monitored at six monthly intervals thereafter. Housing and Social Work 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 Housing and Social Work 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

## **9.5 Workforce Development**

Our aim is to assist in achieving the Council's vision by ensuring staff are equipped with the right skills/knowledge and confidence to deliver quality services.

### **Annual Training Plan**

Our annual training plan brings together the strategic requirements for the service and the training needs identified through the Employee Annual Review Scheme, Practice Learning & Development team and team training plans. Priorities for training during 2011 are

#### **Priorities:**

- To ensure that all employees have access to the appropriate training to enable them to initially register and maintain their registration with SSSC.
- Identifying and delivering statutory training requirements including protecting children and vulnerable adults, and ensuring sufficient Mental Health Officers are trained to meet current and projected needs.
- To ensure all employees have an understanding of the Employee Annual Review (EAR) system and are proactively committed to its principle
- Developing expertise and supporting transformational change in social work practice through professional and para-professional induction and development programmes.
- Developing competence and practice leadership skills at all levels of the service through engagement with and support of social work students.

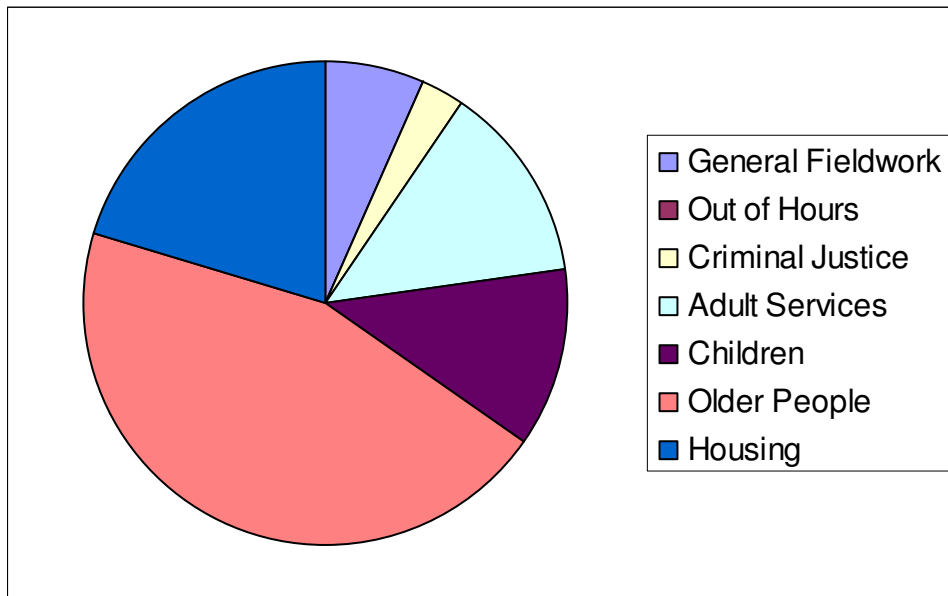
#### **Challenges:**

Challenges include financial pressures, an increasingly aged population in the area we cover and rising incidents of challenging behaviour. Our employees are our greatest resource and we aim to build a flexible/adaptable workforce to meet these challenges.

<b>Division/Team (2011/12)</b>	<b>No. of Full-Time Equivalent Staff</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
General Fieldwork	162	6.6
Out of Hours	5	0.2
Criminal Justice	68	2.8
Adult Services	323	13.1
Children	300	12.2
Older People	1108	45.0
Housing	496	20.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,462</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figure 1 below shows how the functional areas are split in terms of staffing numbers.

**Figure 1: Housing & Social Work Employees**



## 10. Monitoring and Reporting Progress

Progress will be reported and monitored via our new Performance Framework known as 'Aberdeenshire Performs'. Quarterly monitoring reports and annual reviews focussing on the agreed performance indicators and projects will continue for the lifespan of this 3 year report. The reports will follow the Social Work and Housing Committee cycle, followed by the subsequent Area Committees for scrutiny and audit.

The Service Plan is considered to be a 'live' working document and as such will be reviewed and amended accordingly as work is progressed or challenges arise.