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### **GUIDANCE ON THE ROLE OF THE CHIEF SOCIAL WORK OFFICER**

I am pleased to commend to you the attached Guidance on the Role of the Chief Social Work Officer. This is one of the key products to be developed as part of the Government's response to *Changing Lives*, the Report of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Social Work Review. The Guidance responds to a key recommendation within *Changing Lives* for the need to strengthen the governance and leadership roles of the Chief Social Work Officer. It provides the opportunity to consider whether you, and Community Planning partners, are making best use of this post and its contribution to managing risk and improving outcomes.

The Guidance on the Role of the Chief Social Work Officer:

- will assist local authorities in the discharge of their social work responsibilities;
- will help local authorities maximise the added value of the Chief Social Work Officer – both at a corporate and professional level;
- acknowledges that local authorities operate with very different management and organisational structures
- provides advice on how best to locate the Chief Social Work Officer role within operational structures to maximise its effectiveness;
- is sufficiently generic to remain relevant in the event of future management or organisational structural change.

The Guidance has been subject to a full public consultation and the responses received have been published on the Scottish Government website. The Guidance has been improved further as a result of this consultation and I would like to thank everyone who took the time to contribute.

I would also like to thank the *Changing Lives* Practice Governance Group, chaired by Andrew Lowe, Director of Social Work at the Scottish Borders Council, for all its work in drafting this Guidance. I also look forward to two further products from the Practice Governance Group scheduled for publication in 2009 - the Contribution of the Social Work Profession to Delivering Better Outcomes for Scotland and a Practice Governance Framework for Social Work Services – which will complement this Guidance.

I hope you and your colleagues will take this opportunity to consider the role and remit of your Chief Social Work Officer and consider whether it can be further strengthened to improve professional and corporate support and engagement.



**Adam Ingram**  
**Minister for Children & Early Years**