

Interim Joint Chief Social Worker for Adults announced

Lyn Romeo, the Chief Social Worker for Adults, will be taking a 12-month leave of absence for personal reasons from October. Fran Leddra and Mark Harvey will cover the post on a job-share basis.

Fran is currently Principal Social Worker and Strategic Lead of Safeguarding and Adult Social Care in Thurrock Council. Mark Harvey is Operations Director for adult disability services in Hertfordshire County Council. They will retain their current roles in local authorities, which will put them in a unique position to take on the role of Chief Social Worker.

Fran has worked in the social care sector for more than 30 years and is currently at Thurrock Council in a team that is recognised for making transformative changes. She is a strong advocate of safeguarding practice and building partnerships across the sector, ensuring the profession upholds its values and responsibilities.

Mark has over 25 years' experience in the sector, starting as a care assistant in a learning disability residential unit. Throughout his career he has worked in local authorities and NHS trusts, predominantly in mental health and learning disability services.

Over the past few years he has been the Principal Social Worker for Hertfordshire and co-chair of the national Principal Social Workers (PSW) network. He is now the operations director for adult disability services in Hertfordshire.

Fran Leddra, new joint Chief Social Worker for Adults, said:

I'm delighted to be able to job-share the Chief Social Worker role with Mark Harvey and continue the work we do on a national platform.

Mark and I have both held the co-chair role for the Principal Social Workers Network and this experience undoubtedly led us to apply for this secondment opportunity. With a challenging year ahead, we want to continue to drive forward the Chief Social Worker priorities and to ensure social work and social care is high on the political agenda.

Mark Harvey, new joint Chief Social Worker for Adults, said:

To work alongside Fran as the Chief Social Worker is a fantastic opportunity and something I am immensely keen to bring my front-line experience to. The year ahead is likely to be one of

significant change and opportunity. I am looking forward to continuing Lyn Romeo's work to lead an approach that can embed social work at the core of DHSC's work to achieve a better outcome for the people we serve.

Lyn Romeo, Chief Social Worker for Adults, said:

As the first ever Chief Social Worker for Adults in the Department of Health and Social Care, I have been very privileged to have undertaken this role since September 2013. During this time social work has been repositioned as the key social care profession in working alongside people, carers and communities to ensure they get the support they need in the right way to enable them to have better safer and fulfilling lives.

I am delighted that Fran Leddra and Mark Harvey will be the new chief social workers. I know they will do a fantastic job and am sure they will receive the support that I have enjoyed from the department and the wider sector.