



## **Minute of Meeting Renfrewshire Area Support Team**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Tuesday, 18 August 2020	14:00	Teams Meeting,

### **PRESENT**

E Anderson, Derek Brama; Annemarie Currie; Edi Hanley; Jennifer Hay; Alex MacDonald; H McCulloch; Jim Melrose; A Morrison; M Robinson; Councillor John Shaw and Angela Stevenson.

### **CHAIR**

D Brama, Area Convener, presided.

### **ALSO PRESENT**

A Cramb, Area Support and Improvement Partner (Children's Hearings Scotland), and N Harkness, Local Area Reporter.

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

M McCargo, (Children's Services) and C Macdonald and P Shiach, (both Finance & Resources).

### **APOLOGIES**

A Macdonald and Alan Thompson.

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest intimated by members prior to the meeting.

## **MYRA SPEIRS**

The Area Convener advised the Committee of the sad passing of former Depute Area Convener and CPAC Member Myra Speirs in July. He expressed his condolences to the family of Mrs Speirs.

## **HANNAH MCCULLOCH**

The Area Convener welcomed Hannah McCulloch, a recently appointed PPA, who was attending the first meeting of the Area Support Team since her appointment.

## **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

To facilitate the conduct of the meeting the Area Convener proposed that item 12 of the agenda, Locality Reporter Manager Update be considered prior to item 4 of the agenda, Return to Face-to-Face Hearings, and item 3 of the agenda, Going Liver Strategy after item 9 of the agenda, PPA Involvement.

## **ADDITIONAL ITEMS**

The Area Convener indicated that there were four additional items which had not been included in the notice calling the meeting. The Area Convener, being of the opinion that the items which were dealt with at items 11 to 14 were competent and relevant, authorised their consideration.

### **1 MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

There was submitted the Minute of the previous meeting of Renfrewshire Area Support Team (AST) held on 10 March 2020.

**DECIDED:** That the Minute be approved.

### **2 MATTERS ARISING**

#### **(a) East Renfrewshire AST**

The Area Convener advised that East Renfrewshire Area Support Team had appointed an Area Convener, Richard Reynolds. He thanked J Melrose for his role in acting as temporary Area Convener until the appointment had been made.

#### **(b) Panel Member Recognition Event**

The Area Convener advised that some Area Support Teams were considering the possibility of holding virtual Panel Member Recognition events. He was of the opinion that it would be preferable to defer the recognition event until face to face events were possible. In response to a question from A Stevenson, the Area Convener undertook to advise Panel Members that the event had been deferred.

**DECIDED:** That the information be noted.

### **3 LOCALITY REPORTER UPDATE**

The Locality Reporter Manager referred to the return of face to face hearings and indicated that there was insufficient space for these to be held in the Glen Lane offices. She indicated that the removal of a wall in the larger hearing room would allow a

Hearing of up to 11 participants. If more than 11 were present, the remainder would require to participate in the Hearing via video link from the smaller hearing room.

The Locality Reporter Manager indicated that funding had been provided for Hearing Room 2 and that this would be used for Hearing Room 1.

She also advised that arrangements would require to be put in place to allow rooms to be cleaned between Hearings and that SCRA was looking at a system which, if successful would allow two hearings per session rather than three. A trial hearing had also taken place at the Accord Hospice, and that two hearings could be accommodated there twice per week.

The Locality Reporter Manager was then heard in answer to questions from members on the report.

**DECIDED:** That the report be noted.

#### 4 **RETURN TO FACE-TO-FACE HEARINGS**

The Area Convener referred to the current position with regard to face to face Hearings and a full discussion followed regarding whether the Accord Hospice could accommodate two sessions, a morning and an afternoon once hearings commenced there in September.

M Robinson indicated that a discussion was needed on how many Panel Members were available for face to face Hearings given the COVID-19 restrictions on particular demographics, and the lack of clarity over electro-static cleaner.

The Locality Reporter Manager intimated that Glasgow Panel Members and Reporters were undertaking face to face hearings at present but most other areas were undertaking virtual hearings. She indicated that she would draw up a provisional timetable for M Robinson and E Anderson for comment.

In response to a question on face to face hearings being undertaken by Panel Members who were over 70, the Area Convener indicated that he had been lobbying Children's Hearings Scotland but no decision had been reached meantime.

**DECIDED:** That the information be noted.

#### 5 **VIRTUAL HEARINGS**

The Area Convener open discussion in relation to Virtual Hearings.

The Locality Reporter Manager indicated that there were currently eight virtual hearings being undertaken per week.

M Robinson advised that she had emailed Panel Members in relation to the hearing options available and had received 51 responses.

In response to a question on face to face hearings being undertaken by Panel Members who were over 70, the Area Convener indicated that he had been lobbying Children's Hearings Scotland but no decision had been reached meantime.

**DECISION:** That the information be noted.

## 6 **HEARINGS CAPACITY AND RESILIENCE**

The Area Convener advised that Panel Members who had missed out on Management of Hearings training may be afforded the opportunity to attend training later in the year as West Lothian College was considering a training programme in the Autumn.

**DECIDED:** That the information be noted.

## 7 **ROTA ARRANGEMENTS**

M Robinson updated the Committee on the position with regard to rota arrangements, requesting that the Reporters Office provide her with dates for the rota for September and October rotas. She also indicated that the 2019 trainees would require to be factored into the rota in some capacity for hearings in terms of the “buddy” arrangements.

**DECIDED:** That the information be noted.

## 8 **LAW SOCIETY DETERMINATION**

Under reference to item 9 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 21 August 2018, the Area Convener referred to a complaint taken out by a Panel Member and member of the AST against a Solicitor at a Hearing she had attended. The complaint related to the alleged attitude of the solicitor in relation to the Panel Members and the Social Worker in attendance.

The Area Convener advised that the Law Society had found in favour of the complainant on three charges solicitor in question, and that he has received a fine and been censured as to his future conduct. The complainant had also been awarded compensation.

**DECIDED:** That the information be noted.

## 9 **PPA INVOLVEMENT**

The Area Convener indicated that several meetings of the RRRG Group and advised that Children’s Hearings Scotland was investigating employer involvement in the 2021 recruitment campaign, which was expected to be challenging during the current pandemic and resultant economic uncertainties.

The Area Support and Improvement Partner advised that the Group was looking at PPA recruitment and indicated that the PPA Forum Channel on Teams was working well.

In terms of the creative campaign for Panel Member recruitment she indicated that it was intended that the campaign would begin in January 2021 with recommendations submitted to the National Convener by July 2021.

The Area Support and Improvement Partner intimated that the CHS panel member recruitment tool was in the final process of development and there were plans in place to develop a template for local planning which would link into the national planning programme.

The Area Convener indicated that dependent on capacity, CHS was considering ways

in which to allow PPAs to attend Hearings, either virtual or face to face to undertake observations. The Area Support and Improvement Partner advised that the next training course for PPAs was scheduled to take place in the Autumn and it was intended that PPAs would be involved in Management of Hearings training.

**DECIDED:** That the information be noted.

#### 10 **GOING LIVE STRATEGY**

The Area Convener referred to the CHS “Going Live Strategy and sought clarification on access to the Community Hub.

A Stevenson indicated that access was restricted to the Area Convener, Rota Manager(s) the Digital Champion(s) and the AST Clerk.

The Area Support and Improvement Partner advised that she had been asked to monitor Teams access by Area Support Teams and Renfrewshire had recorded one of the highest access rates.

**DECIDED:** That the information be noted.

#### 11 **RESPONSE TO WELLBEING SERVICE**

The Area Support and Improvement Partner advised that the Wellbeing Service well received and all details were available on Teams. The service was available to Panel Members and AST members and was confidential and free of charge.

**DECIDED:** That the information be noted.

#### 12 **LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

The Area Convener indicated that it was intended to resume meetings of the Learning and Development Sub-group in September.

The Locality Reporter Manager indicated that SCRA could participate to provide relevant updates.

In response to a question from the Area Support and Improvement Partner, the M McCargo agreed to provide an update to the Sub-group in the impact of Covid-19 on Renfrewshire

**DECIDED:** That the information be noted.

#### 13 **CHILD AND YOUNG PERSON INVOLVEMENT**

The Area Convener referred to the involvement of young people in the Panel Member recruitment process and sought the opinion of Members on having a young person involved in AST meetings.

The Area Support and Improvement Partner indicated that she was unsure if the CHS Children’s Rights and Inclusion Strategy would be in place by the time of the next AST Meeting but would more likely be in place prior to the October meeting of the AST.

**DECIDED:** That the information be noted.

14 **NORTH STRATHCLYDE HUB**

The Area Convener advised that the next meeting of the North Strathclyde Hub was scheduled to take place on 7 September 2020 and requested that any concerns members had should be passed to him for inclusion on the agenda.

**DECIDED:** That the information be noted.

15 **ARRANGEMENTS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

There was submitted a report by the Clerk proposing the following dates for future meetings of the Committee: -

Tuesday 15 September;  
Tuesday 27 October;  
Tuesday 24 November 2020; and  
Tuesday 15 December 2020.

A further report proposing dates for 2021 would be submitted to the December meeting for consideration.

**DECIDED:** That the proposed dates, as detailed in the report, be approved.