



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

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Tuesday, 27 October 2020	14:00	Teams Meeting,

### **Present**

E Anderson, Derek Brama; C Campbell; Annemarie Currie; J Doherty; Edi Hanley; Jennifer Hay; H McCulloch; J Melrose; A Morrison; M Robinson; A Stevenson; A Thompson.

### **Also Present**

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

### **Chair**

D Brama, Area Convener, presided.

### **In Attendance**

P Shiach, Finance & Resources.

### **Apologies**

Councillor J Shaw and J Trainer.

### **Declarations of Interest**

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

## **Additional Items**

The Area Convener indicated that there were three 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 4, 11, 12, 13 and 14 of the agenda were competent and relevant, authorised their consideration.

### **1 Minute of Previous Meeting**

This item is exempt.

### **2 Matters Arising**

**DECIDED:** That it be noted that there were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

### **3 Locality Reporter Manager - Update**

This item is exempt.

### **4 Hearings Management Group**

The Lead Panel Representative provided an update on the number of panel members currently on sabbatical, indicating that there were two male and four female panel members in that category. In addition , there had been eight resignations during the current year, one male and seven female panel members.

The Lead Panel Representative advised that five panel members could not currently be contacted. In addition, one of these panel members was in possession of a CHS Chromebook. The current panel strength stood at 78.

The Lead Panel Representative provided an update on training; statistics on cancelled hearings and the reasons therefore; and a number of technical issues which had arisen in October where there had been difficulties in relation to residential homes; and technical difficulties with virtual hearings and their timings which required to be resolved. A full discussion then followed on the issues raised in the report, and the Lead Panel Representative was heard in answer to questions on the report.

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

### **5 Learning and Development Sub-group**

This item is exempt.

### **6 Practice and Recruitment Sub-group**

This item is exempt.

### **7 Panel Member Recruitment 2021 - Information Template**

This item is exempt.

## **8 PPA and L&D Co-ordinator recruitment - update**

This item is exempt.

## **9 CHS quality improvement programme development**

This item is exempt.

## **10 Hearings planning/rota management**

The Rota Manager provided an update on Rota Management indicating that the November rota remained as planned, however there were no face to face meetings scheduled for the week prior to and the week following Christmas. Virtual hearings would proceed as planned.

The Area Convener referred to “swaps” and requested that where rota changes were required, that the Lead Panel Representative be the sole point of contact for the Reporters office.

The Lead Panel representative requested that he be given direct numbers for the Reporters as there were occasions when he needed to contact a Reporter quickly and the Reporters Office answering machine could, on occasion, lead to delays.

A discussion followed on difficulties being encountered with the CSAS system and the requirement, currently, for the Rota Manager to record swaps manually. The Area Support Improvement Partner advised that CHS was aware of the problems and was working towards a solution.

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

## **11 Writing of Reasons - Guidance**

The Lead Panel Representative referred to the return of face to face Hearings at the Hearing Rooms in Glen Lane and in particular to the practice of having 45 minutes for a hearing and 15 minutes to write reasons for decisions.

He indicated that given the time pressures involved, Panel Members were writing reasons at the end of the Hearing session rather than the end of the Hearing. He expressed concern with regard to the possible health and safety impact on Panel members being in a small enclosed space for a prolonged period.

The Area Convener indicated that he intended to visit Glen Lane with the Lead Panel representative and revisit Panel Member guidance as it was his understanding that reasons should be written following each Hearing.

The Area Support Improvement Partner indicated that it was her intention to work on a revised draft of the guidance.

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

## **12 Communications Protocol**

The Area Convener indicated that he had received requests with regard to communication with Council support during the pandemic when Council offices were closed.

The Clerk indicated that the generic AST mailbox was available and regularly monitored.

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

## **13 Panel Member Recognition**

The Area Convener proposed that, in recognition of the efforts of Panel Members being available for virtual and face to face hearings and training during the current pandemic, he would write to all Panel Members in suitable terms with a £10 gift voucher in appreciation of their efforts.

**DECIDED:** That the Area Convener write to all Panel Members in suitable terms with a £10 gift voucher in appreciation of their efforts during the current pandemic.

## **14 Receipt of Hearings Papers**

The Learning and Development Coordinator reported an instance during a recent Hearing where papers from the Social Work department updating a Social Work report had been received on the day prior to the Hearing.

She indicated at a recent training video on Enhanced Practice she had seen it had been indicated that papers were required no later than three days before the Hearing and not three working days, which had been her understanding. She indicated that this could have a significant affect on rota management as Panel Members may not want to commit to Hearings on Mondays or Tuesdays if they received papers at weekends.

The Locality Reporter Manager advised that the minimum timeframe was three days, however it was her expectation that this occurred only under exceptional circumstances and that papers were normally issued one week in advance. She indicated that the three day timeframe was required to take account of emergency transfers but would anticipate that papers would normally be issued one week in advance.

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

## **15 Date of Next Meeting**

**DECIDED:** That it be noted that the next meeting of the AST was scheduled for Tuesday 24 November 2020 at 2.00 pm.