

# **ROTA and MANAGEMENT OF HEARINGS SUB-GROUP**

## **MINUTES**

**THURSDAY 8<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2024, 10.00am**

**In attendance:** Derek Bramma, Lesley King, Marion Robinson, Edi Hanley, Jacqueline Doherty

**Apologies:** None

### **Panel Strength**

Panel Member strength is as follows:

71 PMs in total – 53 F and 18 M          65 active – 49 F and 16 M

26 PMs are now eligible to complete the MoH training.

### **Sabbaticals**

6 in total - 2 m and 4f

One of these due to retrain and one requires bespoke training package before returning to rota.

New PMs will go onto rota in May – buddies to be identified and allocated prior to recognition event on 26<sup>th</sup> April.

Discussion around obtaining feedback from PMs re the buddy system.

### **Cross area assistance**

2 – South Lanarkshire

### **Resignations**

1 resignation – F      1 transfer – M      1 trainee PM

### **Swaps**

28 in total

December 9 f2f and 4v    January – 11 f2f and 1v    February – 3f2f

### **SCRA update**

Hearing room 2 will receive a repaint and new carpet between 23<sup>rd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> February – hearings have been cancelled and sessions removed from CSAS on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>. New furniture won't be arriving until March.

Qu. Will technology capacity be looked at as part of this?

A. Someone has been out to look at general specifications but this will be trialled in a couple of areas before it is rolled out nationally.

Qu. Will heating be addressed as part of refurbishment?

A. No the purpose of this is to refresh the panel room which hasn't be touched for a number of years – essentially it is mainly cosmetic at this time.

There followed a short discussion about the regulation of temperature in hearing rooms which is proving problematic. It is often far too hot in the afternoons resulting in heating being turned down but then not being turned up again, therefore it is far too cold in the morning. Suggestion that perhaps as part of evening checks the radiator could be checked to try to help with this situation.

### **Hearing Statistics – 4<sup>th</sup> December to 9<sup>th</sup> February**

- Deferrals –

7 RP/child not in attendance, 6 reports late/missing, 1 safeguarder appointed, 1 safeguarder not in attendance, 1 additional report requested, 3 grounds at court, 1 LR not in attendance, 2 no SW/allocated SW, 1 papers not received.

5 hearings - 2 reasons given.

Noted that in this period there were 2 deferrals due to no-one attending on the day.

Allocated SW not available	
RP failed to attend	
Grounds still at court	
Grounds still at court	
No SW report	
No parenting capacity report	
No SW report	SW not in attendance
RP didn't receive papers	
RP incarcerated and unable to attend	LR unable to attend
Safeguarder appointed	
No invited parties attended	
Grounds still at court	
No SW report	RP failed to attend
No safeguarder report	Safeguarder not in attendance
No RP, LR or SW in attendance	
Additional information required from SW	

RP added significant additional report on day of hearing	
RP not in attendance	
RP not in attendance	Child not in attendance
RP not in attendance	

- **Additional Hearings**

18<sup>th</sup> January 2<sup>nd</sup> WD CPO – panel members attended early to cover this additional case – making 4 cases in total that session.

26<sup>th</sup> January 8<sup>th</sup> WD hearing – all three PMs agreed to cover extra case in their session.

5<sup>th</sup> February 2<sup>nd</sup> WD CPO – PM agreed to add extra case to their hearing session.

- **Cancelled hearings**

12 in total – 9 no cases and 3 reporter annual leave

- **Standby**

December 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> – not required.

January 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> changed to standby and moved from f2f to virtual. Only one of these required.

- **Continuity**

4 requests

## **Pastoral Care**

3 PMs have received pastoral care.

## **AOB**

### **Social work trainee as observers**

Question asked as to whether SCRA facilitates this for SW. SCRA don't facilitate this if it clashes with trainee PMs or PPAs attending a hearing, however as long as number of attendees can be managed then this is facilitated.

Qu. If SW trainees aren't allowed to observe the hearing what happens when a worker attends with a trainee who is involved in the case?

A. It is understood that this will continue.

It was noted that SW would like to have trainees attend.

### **Scheduling of hearings**

Further concerns have been raised by PMs re scheduling of hearings. Renfrewshire is the only area in the North Strathclyde Hub where PMs are expected to sit on up to three substantive cases per session – all other areas have 2. Mo Quinn is exploring this, and the plan is to have this standardised across North Strathclyde. This is something the AST would support and will continue collecting data and feedback in relation to this. Current feedback from PMs continues to be that with increasing complexity of cases, multiple children and delays to start of hearings it is increasingly difficult to cover three cases in one session.

Qu. When a hearing is cancelled are PPAs automatically informed via CSAS.

A. Currently someone from the office will email PMs and cc LPRs and Jim.

There does seem to be an issue as PPA observers aren't necessarily appearing on CSAS.

### **Continuity**

There was a discussion around continuity cases as PMs have raised concern that in recent months several have been missed when cases are scheduled.

Once we move over to TSM there will be a template which SCRA must complete when a measure of continuity is made. This will be filled in and submitted to the CHS rota team at the time the decision is made. As per current arrangement PMs covering a continuity case will not be expected to cover the entire session (unless by prior agreement) and therefore concurrent hearing sessions on CSAS will need to be set up.

Currently relies on reporter picking up on continuity requirement and this is usually the responsibility of the reporter in attendance on day measure is made. Unfortunately, this may be missed, particularly if the reporter at next hearing is different. There doesn't appear to be any systems in place to avoid this being missed, however it was suggested that Marion could be emailed to notify of pending cases at time request is made. This would not replace the reporter's need to pick up on continuity request but would provide an additional safety net.

### **Cancelled hearings**

Request made that when a hearing is cancelled it is removed from CSAS – as per other areas – as these impacts on figures, e.g. PMs are recorded as having sat on hearing which in actual fact were cancelled.

Discussion around the new system whereby once a hearing is cancelled one week from the hearing it will change to a standby. The issues around this were discussed and in particular the impact on panel members and how they will be informed if they were required and whether there be some flexibility for PMs who find this difficult.

### **Future meetings**

No plans can be made for a future meeting at this time as we are still awaiting clarification with regards to how the implementation of the new TSM will impact on a number of meetings. Information will be communicated once it is known.