



Renfrewshire
Area Support Team

Minute of Meeting Renfrewshire Area Support Team

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday, 29 October 2019	14:00	Corporate Meeting Room 2, Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

Present

Eileen Anderson; Derek Brama; Craig Campbell; Annemarie Currie; Edi Hanley; Alex MacDonald; Jim Melrose; Amanda Morrison; Marion Robinson; Angela Stevenson; Alison Thompson; Alan Thompson.

Chair

D Brama, Area Convener, presided.

Also Present

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

In Attendance

P Shiach, Committee Services Officer and N O'Brien, Assistant Committee Services Officer both (Finance & Resources).

Apologies

P Shiach, Committee Services Officer and N O'Brien, Assistant Committee Services Officer both (Finance & Resources).

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 two additional items which had not been included in the notice calling the meeting. The Area Convener, being of the opinion that the items which was dealt with at item 4, 10, 11 and 12 respectively, 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 20 August 2019.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

2 Matters Arising

The Area Convener referred to item 4 of the previous Minute, Practice and Recruitment Sub-group and indicated that in terms of recommendation (d), the Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice would provide an update to the next meeting on a process for dealing with information which was missing from social work reports.

DECIDED:

(a) That the Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice would provide an update to the next meeting on a process for dealing with information which was missing from social work reports; and

(b) That the information be otherwise noted.

3 Hearings Management Sub-group

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Hearings Management Sub-group held on 15 October 2019.

The Minute provided an update on resignations; sabbaticals; hearing statistics including deferred cases, cancelled cases/sessions, secure hearings, extra cases/hearings sessions, swaps and continuity; pastoral care; panel member strength; better hearings; management of hearings training; secure hearings and use of laptops; and digital champion training.

The Lead Panel representative referred to Chairing duties and suggested that if two chairs were appointed to the same panel then both should share the chairing duties in order to broaden the experience of all chairing members. The Area Convener suggested that this be agreed in principle subject to logistical considerations, and that an item be placed in the next Panel Member newsletter, and an update be provided to the next AST meeting in December This was agreed unanimously.

C Campbell then sought clarification on whether the reasons for Panel Member resignations were known, and what follow up action was taken in terms of exit interviews. The Area Convener indicated that this was an area which required further investigation. He advised that the current protocol required CHS to contact the Panel Member with an exit letter, and he undertook to raise the issue at the next Area Conveners' Liaison Meeting.

In terms of secure hearings and the use of laptops, it was agreed that this be raised with the Locality Reporter Manager.

J Melrose provided an update on the recent Better Hearings Event which had taken place on 28 October 2019. The event had considered what measures could be undertaken to assist all stakeholders in their respective roles and to this end a Renfrewshire Charter had been suggested. M Robinson advised that the number of Panel Members attending had been very low and asked whether an additional evening session would be considered. J Melrose indicated that videos were available on the SCRA website and these would be used for initial training sessions to discuss the various roles at a Hearing session. He further indicated that the Charter would be circulated to Panel Members for comment when available, and that most of the material used therein would be available online.

DECIDED:

(a) That the sharing of Chairing duties within hearings duties in order to broaden the experience of all chairing members be agreed in principle subject to logistical considerations, and that an item be placed in the next Panel Member newsletter and an update be provided to the next AST meeting in December, be approved;

(b) That the Area Convener raise the issue of Panel Member exit protocols with CHS National Team; and

(c) That the Minute be otherwise be approved.

4 Practice and Recruitment Sub-group

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Learning and Development Sub-group held on 2 October 2019.

The Minute provide an update on Panel Member recruitment; new PPA appointments; the PPA Forum; complaints and concerns; the PPA rota; Panel Member observations; Panel Member profiles; and online access to observation reports.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

5 Locality Reporter Manager - Update

The Area Convener proposed that in the absence of the Locality Reporter Manager, this item be continued to the next meeting of the AST. This was agreed.

DECIDED: That the Locality Reporter Manager's report be continued to the next meeting of the AST.

6 Panel Member Recruitment - Update

The Area Convener advised that following two interview sessions, 16 candidates would be recommended for appointment. He had sent confirmation emails to all 16.

He further advised that the Clerk had sent letters to the 26 unsuccessful candidates.

The Clerk advised that PVG application forms had been completed and forwarded to Disclosure Scotland for approval; training preferences had been submitted to CHS and that the respective referees had been contacted for references. Nine references had been received.

DECIDED: That the information be noted.

7 Panel Member Profiles - Update

The Clerk advised that Panel Members from the 2019 and 2018 intake had been to provide a photograph and some facts about themselves for the Profiles, and that currently 12 had responded positively.

DECIDED: That the information be noted.

8 Research Recruitment Form

There was submitted a report from Children's Hearings Scotland relative to the form to be used by researchers wishing to involve members of the Children's Hearing Scotland (CHS) volunteer community – panel members and AST members - in research.

The form required researchers to provide information on the Researcher organisation; the research project; and permissions. Details of the CHS process for external researchers recruiting volunteers, board members and CHS staff were also provided together with the relevant guidance.

DECIDED: That the information be noted.

9 CHS Community Survey 2019 - Renfrewshire

There was submitted a report by Children's Hearings Scotland relative to the CHS Community Survey results for 2019 for the Renfrewshire area.

The report provided information relative to support for Panel and AST members and local and national support; living our values; organisational culture; engagement; training; skills; confidence; personal development; skills development; observation and feedback; contact with CHS; customer service; expenses; and communication.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

10 Respect at Hearings

A Stevenson referred to respect at Hearings and advised members of a hearing she had attended recently where the case had been deferred due to the parent having no legal representation. She indicated that the Senior Social Worker had been derogatory towards her as a result of this and requested that the matter be raised with the Social Work Group.

The Area Convener suggested that the issue also be raised at the next meeting of the Better Hearings Group. This was agreed unanimously.

DECIDED: That the issue of respect at hearings be raised at the next meeting of the Social Work and Better Hearings groups.

11 Complaint

A Stevenson provided an update on progress with regard to complaint against the conduct of a solicitor at a Hearing which she had attended. She indicated that the complaint had been submitted to the Scottish Legal Complaints Commission.

DECIDED: That the information be noted.

12 Recognition Event - Feedback

M Robinson referred to the Panel Member recognition event which had taken place in May 2019 and indicated that while feedback had been generally positive, some panel members had considered the venue to be inappropriate.

The Area Convener suggested that a venue be identified for discussion at the next meeting. This was agreed unanimously.

DECIDED: That M Robinson identify a venue for the 2020 Recognition Event for discussion at the next meeting of the Area Support Team.

13 Date of Next Meeting

DECIDED:

Members noted that the next meeting of the Area Support Team is scheduled for Tuesday 3 December 2019 at 2.00pm.