



Notice of Meeting and Agenda Renfrewshire Area Support Team

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday, 21 March 2023	14:00	Corporate Meeting Room 3, Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

MARK CONAGHAN
Head of Corporate Governance

Membership

Derek Brama; Craig Campbell; Jacqueline Doherty; Edi Hanley; Jennifer Hay; Alex MacDonald; Ciara McLean; Ruth MacLeod; Ewan McNaught; Jim Melrose; Cairistiona Manson; Marion Robinson; Anne Tucker.

Representing Renfrewshire Council: Councillor Lisa Marie Hughes.

Convener

D Brama, Area Convener

Items of business

Apologies

Apologies from members.

Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare an interest in any item(s) on the agenda and to provide a brief explanation of the nature of the interest.

- | | | |
|-----------|--|----------------|
| 1 | Minute of Previous Meeting | 1 - 4 |
| | Minute of previous meeting held on 24 January 2023 | |
| 2 | Matters Arising | |
| 3 | Management of Hearings Sub-group | 5 - 8 |
| | Minute of meeting held on 7 March 2023 | |
| 4 | Recruitment & Retention Sub-group | 9 - 10 |
| | Minute of meeting held on 7 March 2023 | |
| 5 | Learning & Development Sub-group | 11 - 14 |
| | Minute of meeting held on 2 February 2023 | |
| 6 | Area Support Improvement Partner - Update | |
| | Verbal report by Area Support Improvement Partner | |
| 7 | Hearing Schedules/Referrals | |
| | Verbal report by Area Convener | |
| 8 | Locality Reporter Manager - Update | |
| | Verbal update by Locality Reporter Manager | |
| 9 | Observations at Children's Hearings | 15 - 22 |
| | Joint report by Scottish Children's Reporter Administration and Children's Hearings Scotland | |
| 10 | Tribunal Support Model Update | |
| | Verbal report by Area Convener | |
| 11 | Recognition Event | |
| | Verbal report by Area Convener | |

12 Date of Next Meeting

Members are asked to note that the next meeting of the Committee is scheduled for Tuesday 9 May 2023 at 2.00pm



Renfrewshire
Area Support Team

Minute of Meeting Renfrewshire Area Support Team

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday, 24 January 2023	14:00	Corporate Meeting Room 3, Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

In Attendance

Craig Campbell; Jacqueline Doherty; Edi Hanley; Councillor Lisa-Marie Hughes; Ciara McLean; Jim Melrose; and Marion Robinson.

Chair

J Melrose, Depute Area Convener, presided.

Also Present

L King, Locality Reporter, S MacRae, Promise Ambassador (in respect of item 1 only) and P Wilson, Area Service Improvement Partner (CHS).

In Attendance

P Shiach Senior Committee Services Officer, (Finance and Resources).

Apologies

D Brama, A MacDonald, E McNaught and A Tucker.

Declarations of Interest

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

Additional Item/Order of Business

The Depute Area Convener indicated that there was one additional item of business which had not been included in the notice calling the meeting. The Depute Area Convener, being of the opinion that the item was competent and relevant, authorised its consideration.

In order to facilitate the business of the meeting, the Area Convener intimated that the additional item, Presentation on Promise Keepers, would be considered prior to item 1, Minute of Previous Meeting, of the agenda.

1 Presentation - Promise Keepers

There was submitted a presentation by S MacRae, Promise Ambassador relative to the role of Promise Keepers.

She provided information on the Promise Keeper network; the requirement for representatives from across the authority to act as Promise Keepers; the use of looked after definitions; and information on the role of the Fostering and Adoption Team.

She further advised that there were currently 99 Promise Keepers, and outlined the process involved in applying to become a Promise Keeper and the training involved. She further intimated that anyone could become a Promise Keeper, and that the service was looking for as many Promise Keepers as possible.

S MacRae was then heard in answer to questions from members on the presentation.

DECIDED: That the presentation be noted.

2 Minute of Previous Meeting

There was submitted the Minute of the previous meeting of Renfrewshire Area Support Team (AST) held on 13 December 2022.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

3 Matters Arising

(i) Item 5 – Hearings Management Sub-group

The Depute Area Convener indicated that he had contacted PPAs to request that when undertaking observations, they identify Panel Members with suitable skill sets to be trained in Management of Hearings (MoH) training.

DECIDED: That the information be noted.

4 Hearings management Sub-group

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Hearings Management Sub-group held on 16 January 2023.

The Minute provided information in relation to sabbaticals, resignations; hearing statistics for the period 6 December 2022 to 13 January 2023; pastoral care; panel strength; rotas; postal strikes; safety; and deferral information.

A full discussion took place with regard to issues trainees were having around training, which was an issue to be addressed by the Learning Academy; continuity; and clarification on the protocol with regard to who can request police presence at Hearings and when.

The Depute Area Convener indicated that an item on safety at hearings could be published in the next Panel Member newsletter.

DECIDED:

(a) That an item on safety of Panel Members at hearings be included in the next Panel Member newsletter; and

(b) That the Minute be otherwise approved.

5 Learning & Development Sub-group

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Learning and Development Sub-group held on 16 January 2023.

The Minute provided updates on pre-service training; Learning Academy training; the role of the Reporter event to be held on 6 February; trainee support arrangements; observations update; observations; in-service training; Kibble visits update; and MoH/Enhanced practice update;

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

6 Locality Reporter Manager - Update

The Locality Reporter Manager provided a verbal update report on local Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) operational arrangements, in particular with regard to staffing arrangements; appeals feedback, which would be available at the next meeting; and deferred hearings.

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

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

7 Area Support Improvement Partner - Update

The Area Support and Improvement Partner provided a verbal update on various issues, indicating that she was looking for one or two Panel Members and AST member volunteers for communications training on support for the Tribunal Model System. This would involve a one-day online session. The date had not meantime been finalised.

In terms of Trauma-informed Training, she indicated that CHS Scotland was anticipating that 80% of Panel Members would have completed the training by June 2023, with the remainder having completed by March 2024. It was expected that this would form part of the Area Support Plan for 2023/24.

Full discussion followed on the feasibility of having 80% of Panel Members trained by June, and the Area Support Improvement Partner indicate that CHS was also looking to have PPA workshops for Trauma Informed Practice

The Area Support and Improvement Partner was then heard in answer to questions from members on the update.

DECIDED: That the information be noted.

8 **Date of Next Meeting**

DECIDED: That it be noted that the next meeting of the Area Support Team was scheduled for Tuesday 21 March 2023 at 2.00pm in Renfrewshire House.

MANAGEMENT OF HEARINGS SUB-GROUP MEETING – TUESDAY 7th MARCH 2023, 11.15am

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

Sabbaticals

8 in total.

Recorded delivery letters sent to three PMs who haven't been responding/engaging, with a request to respond by 20th March, after this date it will be assumed their service will end.

One other PM who hasn't been engaging and as all other forms of communication have failed a recorded delivery letter may also be required.

4 other PMs are on sabbatical – 3F and 1M.

For 1 of the female PM included here resignation to be confirmed.

Resignations

1 male 2 female

Panel Strength

69 PMs in total - 52F and 17M 61 active – 46F and 15M

28 chair qualified – 19F and 9M – all active chairs

Hearing Statistics – 16th January to the 10th March

- Deferrals – 3 virtual, 19 face to face

Of these hearings: 4 child/children not in attendance, 7 RP not in attendance, 4 RP had not received papers, 8 reports late/missing, 1 SW not in attendance, 1 Safeguarder not in attendance, 2 to appoint safeguarder, 3 emergency hearings, 2 LR not in attendance. 1 more time needed to secure placement. 6 hearings - 2 reasons given.

F2f	RP hadn't received papers	
F2f	RP hadn't received papers	
F2f	Case SW could not attend (SW requested deferral)	Safeguarder could not attend
F2f	No SW report received	
F2f	RP and LR did not receive papers on time	
F2f	Additional report received late	
F2f	Safeguarder appointed	
F2f	Emergency hearing	
F2f	Emergency hearing	
F2f	RP did not receive the translated papers	
F2f	Child failed to attend	RP failed to attend
F2f	Child failed to attend	RP failed to attend
F2f	Child failed to attend	RP failed to attend
F2f	RP failed to attend	
F2f	Children failed to attend	RP failed to attend
F2f	No SW report	
F2f	No SW report	
F2f	Awaiting safeguarder report	
F2f	LR unavailable	
F2f	Safeguarder appointed	
F2f	No SW report	
F2f	Child's LR unable to attend	RP unable to attend (prison)

F2f	RP unable to attend (prison)	
F2f	More time required to secure place of residence	
v	Awaiting safeguarder report	
v	Emergency hearing	
v	Safeguarder report unavailable	

- Swaps

January – 4 f2f, 2 v February – 9 f2f, 2 v March – 7 f2f Total 24

2nd March - first time all 3 PMs have had to swap.

- Cancelled hearings

Virtual - 3 no cases allocated Face-to-Face - 11 no cases allocated
-1 reporter annual leave

These are generally spread across the week: Mon - 3, Tues – 3(v), Wed – 3, Thur – 1, Fri – 5

- Standby

None

- Continuity

1 There have been 3 this period – 27/1, 30/01 and 24/2. Further continuity request on 30/1 as no substantive decision yet able to be made, this will now be 27th March, so included in next stats.

- Cross-area assistance

3 of these: Aberdeen City on 18th Jan and 2nd Feb SE Scotland on 22nd Feb

- Additional Hearings

1 CPO added to hearing slot.

Request by child for hearing to be held in GS secure unit – PMs from previously cancelled session asked to cover this, with 2 out of 3 able to do so.

Short discussion around difficulties for some secure units getting young people to hearing centres and therefore heavy reliance on virtual element of hearing. Good that young persons views are being considered and SCRA have been able to accommodate this request. Not easy for other areas to get reporters or PMS to be able to attend hearings in secure units due to travel involved.

Not sure what to expect at the hearing as previously no laptops allowed in the centre, so all hearing notes and ROP may need to be hand written. Follow up required to be able to set expectations for future hearings.

- Police presence

This has been requested for 2 hearing slots (same case as previous police presence)

Pastoral Care

5 PMs have received pastoral care.

AOB

There was a brief discussion around the impact of auto-generated messaging and question raised as to whether this impacted rota preparation - It doesn't appear to affect rota as many either don't check emails or ignore these ones. It may be worth encouraging volunteers to get PowerApps prompts to their personal email address.

April rota ready to go.

May and June won't be published until buddies have been identified and allocated.

It would be helpful for us to gather some Buddy System feedback as previously this worked well.

Recruitment and Retention subgroup (PPAs)

Agenda 7th March 2023

1. previous minute - 29th Nov 2022. - attached to email
2. Update on observations / rota / CSAS
3. PPA Representation at National groups
4. Panel member reappointments in 2023
5. Trauma Informed practice
6. Complaints
7. PPA recruitment
8. AOB

Next meeting : 25th April 2023

Minutes Meeting 7th March 2023

Present : Jim Melrose, Craig Campbell, Jennifer Hay

Apologies : Cairis Manson Derek Bramma, Pam Wilson , Anne Tucker, Ruth Macleod

1. previous minute - 29th Nov 2022. - attached to email
No issues
2. Update on observations / rota / CSAS
No issues
Confirmed that PPAs can access previous observations.
3. PPA Representation at National groups
confirmed
4. Panel member reappointments in 2023
Discussion regarding approach to this.
Agreed on Mid April for reappointment discussions.
PMs would be consulted regarding face to face or Teams meetings.
5. Trauma Informed practice
3 PPAs and DAC attending training session.
6. Complaints

Complaint from social work completed with front line resolution.

PMs notified in newsletter regarding role of the safeguarder.
7. PPA recruitment

National recruitment process in progress.
8. AOB
Discussion on minute of PPA Forum minutes (meeting 6th March 2023).

PPA learning and development days noted.

Question regarding MOMO. (Item 5)

Next meeting : 25th April 2023
Dependent on reappointment schedule.

Learning and Development Group Meeting

2nd February 2023



Renfrewshire
Area Support Team

MINUTES

Present: Derek Bramma, Alex MacDonald, Jim Melrose, Ciara McLean, Jacqueline Doherty

Apologies: Pam Wilson, Ewan McNaught

1. Next Local Training

Presenters are from Cyber Crime Unit Police Scotland.

6pm entry to set up. Refreshments to be provided.

There will be break out groups. Additional accommodation will be explored but can form clusters within the hall, if necessary.

Presenters will bring all their own IT equipment.

Training on 13th March will be provided by members of Social Work department who will focus on Youth Offending and The Care and Justice Bill.

2. Trauma Informed Practice (TIP)

At AST we were informed that CHS would like 80% of all PMs to have completed this training by June 2023. PPAs should also receive training in identifying TIP by March 2023.

There are concerns about the timescales we have been given and lack of clear information to the AST and LDCs to provide support.

Noted that target setting is only part of the issue; it is vital that we have clear outcomes which would be (see next sentence) observable for PPAs; they need to understand what will be looking for.

Group had a number of questions: Whether this training will be mandatory? If so, why the target of 80%? What will happen to those who do not/cannot complete this training?

Point made that for some volunteers this training may be traumatic and therefore if training is mandatory will these volunteers be exempt?

The AST would like a plan in place to be best able to support the volunteers in Renfrewshire.

First cohort to face this will be those due for reappointment. The AST would not support making 'completing TIP' a condition of reappointment.

Derek to take this forward with CHS.

It was noted that the TIP is not currently in this area plan which ends in March. All agreed that we fully support this going into the next year's area plan.

3. PPA recruitment

Renfrewshire would like to recruit additional PPAs – the campaign will run concurrently with the next PM recruitment drive.

Suggestion that perhaps some of our PMs may wish to become PPAs. Worth exploring with PMs who have recently resigned.

4. Promise Keepers

Derek will put his name on that directory. Agreement that this needs to be a member of the AST – initially this will be the AC and will be expanded if necessary.

5. AOB

SCRA are organising observations for social work trainees. Although we fully support this, there was a reminder that entitled observers, PPAs should be prioritised, then trainee PMs.

Who Cares would be willing to come along to provide a young care experienced person's perspective – this will be scheduled for late October during Care Experienced.

Proposal to host the recognition event on 9th June at the Glynhill in Renfrew.

Further to this meeting

Tom Laurie has been liaising with both the Kibble and Good Shepherd Secure Units with regards to proposed visits.

Kibble is currently undergoing an inspection and therefore are happy to facilitate visits once this is over. The Good Shepherd are in a bit of flux as they are appointing a new management team but would hope to be able to facilitate visits after the summer.

It is proposed that no more than 3 or 4 visitors at any time to avoid young people feeling overwhelmed, but these visits could be done on a rolling programme so 3 or 4 visiting every month. If we agreed on a specific date, e.g. last Thursday of every month, this would allow Kibble and GS to build into their planning.

We might also want to consider individuals having the opportunity to visit both centres.

Centres would need to know how many in total to visit – a best estimate would be approximately about 30 (many will already have been).

In terms of our management of this it was suggested that as numbers attending at any one time are low, we have a reserve list ready to allow substitutions to be made at short notice.

Suggest that the current trainees are advised that this is part of training and stress its importance. For those who have not had an opportunity to visit we also need to stress the importance of this as 'catch-up'.

Previously tours could be organised afternoon or evening as not everyone can attend during the day, therefore useful to continue this model.

Suggestion that whoever is coordinating is there at start to ensure attendees attend and no issues.



Observers at Children's Hearings

Summary

- a member of an Area Support Team and a representative of a newspaper or news agency have a right to attend a children's hearing. All other observers are in attendance at the discretion of the chairing member and cannot observe if the child or relevant person objects
- SCRA and CHS will facilitate the observation of children's hearings by a person with a genuine professional or research interest in the system and where this is the only way in which they can obtain the knowledge required
- as both SCRA staff and AST members will be involved in arranging observations there is a need for good communication between the SCRA locality and AST about observers
- there is a presumption that only one observer will be present at a children's hearing
- ordinarily all observers at a children's hearing should have a Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) certificate or a similar assurance
- in relation to trainee panel members, every effort will be made to conclude their PVG check prior to them observing a hearing. Where this is not practicable their successful completion of the selection process and competent participation in pre-service training will provide adequate assurances that will allow them to observe hearings as an essential part of their pre-service training. Where a request is made by CHS for a trainee panel member to observe a hearing, SCRA staff are to make the arrangements
- with the exception of trainee panel members, observers without the right to attend the hearing should be asked to wait outside the hearing room until their attendance has been discussed with the child and relevant persons present

Observers may wish to be present at children's hearings for a variety of reasons. Observers can include trainee panel members, Area Support Team (AST) members who are observing panel member practice, new Children's Reporters, SCRA or CHS staff with a legitimate interest in the conduct of hearings, bona fide members of the press, or professionals who wish to understand more about the operation of the children's hearings system.

The Hearings Management Practice Guidance (HMPG), section 7, sets out the practical arrangements for the attendance of observers, with an emphasis on it as part of the regular communication between SCRA localities and ASTs. This note has been developed by the joint SCRA/CHS Hearings Management Group to supplement the HMPG by giving information to panel members and children's reporters about the law and practice in relation to observers at children's hearings. It should be read alongside section 7 of the Guidance.

1. The Legislation

Under the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011, some observers have a right to attend a children's hearing or pre-hearing panel:

- A member of an Area Support Team, acting in the person's capacity as such, for example a Panel Practice Advisor (PPA)
- A representative of a newspaper or news agency

In addition a constable, prison officer or other person (for example a prisoner escort) who has a person who is to attend a hearing in their custody, is authorised to attend the hearing.

Any other observer at the hearing or pre-hearing panel must be granted permission to attend by the chairing member. In making a decision about an observer's attendance:

- the chairing member cannot grant permission to a person if the child or relevant person objects to the observer's presence
- the chairing member must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the number of persons present at the hearing is kept to a minimum

AST Members

Typically the members of ASTs who will be observing children's hearings will be Panel Practice Advisors (PPAs) for the purpose of observing the practice of panel members and providing them with feedback.

Rarely another member of the Area Support Team may wish to attend a children's hearing. Area Conveners and Depute Area Conveners will have an overview of AST attendance at hearings and make sure there is a clear reason and purpose for AST members attending a

children's hearing. The overriding concern of AST member must be the privacy of children and families who attend hearings and therefore they should only attend children's hearings where it is the only way of obtaining the information they require to fulfil their role on the AST.

Although AST members have a right to attend hearings, this right should not be exercised when the child or a relevant person objects to the attendance of the AST member at the hearing.

Representative of a newspaper or news agency

The attendance of a journalist at a children's hearing will usually be arranged by CHS and SCRA national offices. If prior notice of attendance is known, panel members and the relevant AST will be notified by the SCRA locality or CHS as appropriate.

On the day of the hearing all journalists must produce a form of photographic identification to confirm that they are 'a representative of a newspaper or news agency'. The reporter will confirm this before the hearing begins, but the chairing member may also request to see the identification at the start of the hearing if he or she wishes.

There are strict rules about the publication of information from a children's hearing. Where the attendance of a journalist has been arranged in advance this will have been explained to the individual. However, it would be good practice for the chairing member to remind all present of the restrictions at the start of the hearing.

It is a criminal offence to publish "*protected information*" if the publication of the information is intended, or is likely, to identify a child, or the child's address or school. "*Protected information*" means information in relation to a children's hearing, an appeal against a decision of a children's hearing, proceedings before the sheriff or an appeal from any decision of the Sheriff or Sheriff Principal made under the 2011 Act. To 'publish' includes printed media, television, radio, online and social media.

A representative of a newspaper or news agency may be excluded from a children's hearing where the hearing is satisfied that:

- it is necessary to do so to obtain the views of the child, or
- the presence of the person is causing, or is likely to cause, significant distress to the child.

When the person is invited back into the room following a period of exclusion the chairing member may, where it is appropriate to do so, explain the substance of what has taken place in the person's absence.

Information for journalists is available on the **SCRA website**.

Observers without a right to attend the hearing

Other individuals with a genuine interest in the operation of the children's hearings system may also wish to observe children's hearings. This may include trainee panel members, new Children's Reporters or other SCRA staff, CHS staff, researchers, professionals who will interact with the hearings system as part of their role, politicians or observers from outside Scotland.

Children's hearings are private proceedings. However, SCRA and CHS will facilitate the observation of children's hearings by a person with a genuine interest in the system and where this is the only way in which they can obtain the knowledge required. 'Mock' hearing resources are available and consideration should be given to using these in the first instance.

2. Practical Arrangements

Before the hearing

As both SCRA staff and AST members will be involved in arranging observations there is a need for good communication between the locality and AST. The HMPG contains further information on the practicalities of arranging observers.

There is a presumption that only one observer will be present at a children's hearing. In exceptional circumstances where more than one observer wishes to be present at a hearing agreement must be sought in advance from the child, family, Locality Reporter Manager and member of AST leadership team, where possible.

Trainee panel members should be given first priority to observe hearings, followed by Panel Practice Advisors.

Ordinarily all observers at a children's hearing should have a Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) certificate. The person arranging the observer is responsible for clarifying this, which may include seeing a copy of the certificate if there is any doubt. Where the individual does not have a PVG certificate, for example because they are visiting from outside Scotland, they must provide an equivalent assurance before the observation is arranged. Equivalent examples may be Scottish or Westminster Parliament clearance, a police or national security check or a PVG equivalent from their own country.

All observers are subject to a duty of confidentiality and must not discuss anything they have seen or heard outwith the hearing room. This must be clearly explained at the time the observation is arranged and again on their arrival at the hearing centre.

Observers must not be sent papers in advance of the hearing. Hearing papers are available to AST members on request on the day of the hearing. More information about this can be found in the CHS Observation and Feedback policy.

It is good practice for the children's reporter to speak to the child and relevant persons present in the waiting room before the hearing to explain the presence of any observer and give the opportunity to consider if they wish to object. The reporter may communicate the child or relevant person's objection to the attendance of the observer at the start of the hearing if the child or relevant person asks them to.

At the hearing

Where an observer does not have a right to attend he or she should be asked to wait outside the hearing room until the matter of their attendance has been discussed with the child and relevant persons present. This approach allows the child or relevant person a fair opportunity to object to the attendance of the observer without the potential observer present.

The exception to this is a trainee panel member, part of whose training is to observe the preparation of serving panel members before the hearing and how they start the hearing. However, should a child or relevant person indicate to the reporter before the hearing that he or she objects to the presence of the trainee panel member the reporter should seek permission to pass this information to the panel members to allow the trainee panel member to leave before the hearing starts.

All observers should be introduced by name at the start of the hearing and the purpose of their attendance explained. The child and each relevant person should be given an opportunity to indicate if they object to the presence of the observer. In the case of an AST member, although the child and relevant persons do not have a right to object to the member's attendance, it is expected that the AST member will not exercise their right to attend the hearing if the child or a relevant person objects.

After the hearing

With the agreement of the chairing member the observer may remain in the hearing room at the end of the hearing, but must have no input into the writing of the reasons.

Where there is another hearing in the session that the observer without a right to attend wishes to observe, he or she should leave the hearing room before the hearing starts to allow discussion with the next child and family about their presence. The exception to this is a trainee panel member.

3. Contacts

SCRA

Your Senior Practitioner, Locality Reporter Manager, Senior Operational Manager or the Practice team – practiceteam@scra.gov.uk

CHS

Your Lead Panel Representative or member of the Practice and Policy Team, practiceandpolicy@chs.gov.scot

Updated March 2023

