



Renfrewshire  
Area Support Team

## Minute of Meeting Renfrewshire Area Support Team

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday, 03 December 2019	14:00	Corporate Meeting Room 3, Council Headquarters, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AN

### **PRESENT**

Derek Brama; Craig Campbell; Annemarie Currie; Edi Hanley; Alex MacDonald; Jim Melrose; Alison Thompson.

### **CHAIR**

D Brama, Area Convener, presided.

### **ALSO PRESENT**

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

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

J Trainer, Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice (Children's Services) and P Shiach, Committee Services Officer (Finance & Resources).

### **APOLOGIES**

Councillor J Shaw, E Anderson, B Dorey, J Leckie, M Robinson, A Stevenson and Allan Thompson.

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

## **ADDITIONAL ITEM**

The Area Convener indicated that there was one additional item which had not been included in the notice calling the meeting. The Area Convener, being of the opinion that the item which was dealt with at item 8(a) was competent and relevant, authorised its consideration.

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

There was submitted the Minute of the previous meeting of Renfrewshire Area Support Team (AST) held on 29 October 2019.

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

### **2 MATTERS ARISING**

#### **(a) Social Work Reports**

The Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice advised that work was on-going with the Social Work teams on a process for reporting relevant information from social work reports to Panel Members.

#### **(b) Chairing Duties**

The Area Convener advised that a protocol on the sharing of chairing duties during a Hearing Session had been agreed and that a report would be submitted to the next meeting.

#### **(c) Secure Hearings**

The Locality Reporter Manager referred to an instance at Kibble where Panel Members from Inverclyde had completed reasons on a laptop and had printed them on a printer. She advised that Inverclyde had provided their own small printer which had allowed them to do this. However, there was no similar facility at Glen Lane and such a facility was not used often enough to be viable. She also indicated that while SCRA had various protocols in relation to information security, there were none in relation to printers.

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

## **SEDERUNT**

J Melrose entered the meeting during consideration of the following item.

### **3 HEARINGS MANAGEMENT SUB-GROUP**

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Hearings Management Sub-group held on 19 November 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; new panel membership; the better hearings event; digital training and new systems; chair training/chair rota; legal representatives and formal decision making; and general issues.

The Lead Panel representative referred to issues regarding Legal representatives and proposed that an email be sent to all Panel Members advising that, should a solicitor wish to consult his client, the Hearing commence and be immediately adjourned. Following comments by the Locality Manager, it was proposed that the implementation date for this should be February 2020 to allow the Reporter to advise solicitors accordingly. This was agreed.

The Lead Panel Representative raised the possibility of providing a facility to allow Panel Members to make donations to local charities around certain times of the year. The Area Convener suggested that consideration of this be continued to the January meeting. This was agreed.

**DECIDED:**

(a) That it be approved that an email be sent to all Panel Members advising that, should a solicitor wish to consult his client, the Hearing commence and be immediately adjourned and that the implementation date for this should be February 2020 to allow the Reporter to advise solicitors accordingly;

(b) That the possibility of providing a facility to allow Panel Members to make donations to local charities around certain times of the year be continued to the January meeting; and

(c) That the Minute be otherwise be approved.

**4 LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT SUB-GROUP**

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Learning and Development Sub-group held on 18 November 2019.

The Minute provide an update on pre-service training; in-service training; management of hearings (MOH) updates and actions; CHS digital training requirements; the better hearings event and actions arising therefrom; the Social Work video "Hearing Aids"; and digital copies of panel papers.

In terms of observations by trainee Panel Members, and in response to comments in terms of more difficult Hearings, the Depute Convener proposed that the Chair should advise the trainees prior to the hearing of what they might expect to be discussed during the Hearing. This was agreed.

**DECIDED:**

(a) That it be approved that in terms of the more difficult hearings the Chair should advise the trainees prior to the hearing of what they might expect to be discussed during the Hearing; and

(b) That the Minute be otherwise approved

**5 PRACTICE AND RECRUITMENT SUB-GROUP**

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Practice and Recruitment Subgroup held on 20 November 2019.

The Minute provided an update on recruitment; the PPA Forum and the Recruitment Reference Group; complaints and concerns; the PPA role; observations; online access to observation reports; the complaints and concerns protocol; and; the potential involvement of PPAs in the support of new Panel Members in approaching chair training.

In relation to complaints, the Area Convener proposed that CHS be contacted with regard to the provision of revised guidance. The Area Support and Improvement Partner undertook to contact CHS and report thereafter to the next AST meeting. This was agreed.

**DECIDED:**

(a) That it be approved that the Area Support and Improvement Partner contact CHS in relation to the provision of revised guidance in terms of complaints and thereafter report to the next meeting of the AST; and

(b) that the Minute be otherwise approved.

**6 DEFERRED HEARINGS - NORTH STRATHCLYDE**

There was submitted a report by the Locality Reporter Manager relative to the number of deferred hearings in North Strathclyde for the quarter to 1 November 2019.

The report included details of the amount of hearings in the quarter that had had outcomes recorded; the amount and percentage of hearings that were deferred; and the reasons recorded for deferred hearings.

The Locality reporter Manager was then heard in answer to questions from members on the content of the report. She advised that an additional staff member was expected to be in post after the Christmas break. She further indicated that no standby arrangements were required for the Christmas period.

The Locality Reporter Manager was then heard in response to questions raised in the report.

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

**7 BETTER HEARINGS UPDATE**

There was submitted a report by the Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership relative to progress on Better Hearings.

The report set out the progress to date on the work that had been undertaken across the country to implement the improvements linked to standards set out in the research report "Next Step to Better Hearings"

The report indicated that the improvement work was related to what partner organisations in the Children's Hearings System could do to enable the best possible experience for everyone who came to a Children's Hearing.

The report covered year 1 of the Better Hearings implementation.

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

**8a CHS DIGITAL ROLL OUT**

There was submitted a briefing paper by Children's Hearings Scotland relative to the forthcoming digital roll out within the CHS community.

The paper provided information on the digital go live plans and the proposed national roll-out plan including the proposed timetable for the soft launch, scheduled for mid-January 2020; and the groupings of the various AST areas with their proposed roll-out dates. Renfrewshire AST was situated in Group B with an estimated roll-out date of March 2020.

**DECIDED:** That the briefing paper be noted.

**8b DIGITAL GO LIVE PLANS - RENFREWSHIRE**

There was submitted a report by the Area Convener relative to the plans for Renfrewshire Area Support Team in terms of the digital go live roll out.

The report summarised the background to the initiative and provided information on the Community Hub; the Panel Member hearing rota; training; migration of existing data; access to the CHS Digital System; the role of Digital Champions; AST requirements; the training plan; the January to March 2020 rota; communication; and AST Digital Roles.

The Area Convener advised that all Panel Members and AST members would receive new email addresses from CHS in January 2020 together with log in instructions. He further indicated that a meeting on the digital roll out had been arranged for Friday 13 December 2019 in the Reporters Office, Glen Lane, Paisley. Members of the Area Support Team and the Clerk would be in attendance.

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

**9 DEVOLVED FUNDING**

The Area Convener provided an update of the position with regard to Devolved Funding, indicating that the bulk of the allocation remained unspent at this time.

He advised that a number of invoices for speakers' gifts had not meantime been submitted. He suggested that the AST might consider holding an AST development day and requested that suggestions be submitted for consideration at next meeting of the AST.

**DECIDED:**

(a) That suggested topics for an AST Development Day be submitted to the Area Convener for consideration at the meeting of the Area Support Team to be held in January 2020; and

(b) That the report be otherwise noted.

## 10 TOP COMMUNICATION TIPS FOR PANEL MEMBERS

There was submitted a document from Children's Hearings Scotland entitled "Communication Matters – It's a Two Way Street" which followed a CHS training event held on 16 March 2019.

The aim of the event had been to provide panel members with a better understanding of how to improve communication between all attendees and most importantly between the Panel Members and the child or young person in a hearing.

The document detailed top tips provided by each of the workshop contributors and was intended to serve as a reminder to Panel Members on ways in which they could improve practice whilst communicating with children and young people within the Hearing Room.

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

## 11 ADVOCACY SERVICES IN RENFREWSHIRE

Under reference to item 4 above, in relation to the meeting of the Learning and Development Sub-group meeting held on 18 November 2019, the Area Convener referred to item 5 of that Minute, "Better Hearings Event – Actions Arising.

The Minute had indicated that the Locality Area Reporter had suggested key improvement actions including filming mock hearings to be used in training and the development of a feedback loop.

Discussion had taken place around the manner in which young people addressed the audience at training events and it had been evident that some of the young speakers from Who Cares Scotland were unhappy with the experience. It had been agreed that these children might feel differently if they were fully aware of why the hearing was taking place; what exactly would happen; and what to expect of a hearing.

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

## 12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

**DECIDED:**

Members noted that the next meeting of the Area Support Team is scheduled for Tuesday 28 January 2020 at 2.00pm.