



Renfrewshire  
Area Support Team

## Minute of Meeting Renfrewshire Area Support Team

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday, 25 January 2022	14:00	Remotely by MS Teams,

### Present

Eileen Anderson; Derek Brama; Annemarie Currie; Craig Campbell, Jacqueline Doherty; Edi Hanley; Alex MacDonald; R MacLeod; Cairistiona Manson; Jim Melrose; Angela Stevenson and Alison Thompson.

### Chair

D Brama, Area Convener, presided.

### In Attendance

P Shiach, Senior Committee Services Officers, D Cunningham, Assistant Committee Services Officer and D Pole End User Technician (all Finance and Resources).

### Also Present

L King, Locality Reporter Manager and J Sutherland, Reporter (both SCRA) and P Wilson, Area Support and Improvement Partner (Children's Hearings Scotland).

### Apologies

Councillor J Shaw, C Campbell; E McNaught and m Robinson.

### 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, 5 and 9 respectively of the agenda were competent and relevant, authorised their consideration.

## **Order of Business**

The Area Convener proposed that in order to facilitate the business of the meeting items 4 and 5 of the agenda be considered before item 3 of the agenda. This was agreed.

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

There was submitted the Minute of the previous meeting of Renfrewshire Area Support Team (AST) held on 14 December 2021.

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

### **2 Matters Arising**

Recognition Event

The Area Convener advised that the Recognition Event, scheduled for 28 January 2022 had been postponed and that the event would be rescheduled.

**DECIDED:** That the information be noted

### **3 Panel Member Recruitment**

The Area Convener indicated following a Recruitment Planning meeting on 17 January, it had been agreed that that an on-line Information Evening for all candidates would be scheduled for Thursday 24 February 2022. The candidates would receive an electronic invitation and instructions for joining Teams meetings.

He advised that the interviews would take place between 7 and 18 March with interviews commencing at 10.30am. M Robinson would supply interview slots. The selection will take place on 21 March with Recommendations to the National Convener by 28 March 2022.

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

### **4 Area Plan Progress**

The Area Support and Improvement Partner (ASIP) provided a verbal update and presentation on progress in relation to development in Area Plan.

She advised that during the last quarter of the Plan, outstanding items from the 2021/22 Plan were being completed and the focus would turn to items to be included in the Plan for 2022/23.

The ASIP referred to the maintenance agenda which included pastoral support, sign posting Panel Members to training and Partnership Liaison groups.

The ASIP highlighted outstanding items from the current Plan which included reasons and decisions training; and the Hearing Practice proforma/aide memoire and whether this should be carried forward to the 2022/23 Plan.

In relation to the practice manual A Stevenson indicated that she had agreed with two other AST members to look at supplementing current guidance in relation to for Chairs regarding the inclusion of legal guidance in decisions; safeguarder recommendations if there were any, and general good practice to assist new Chairing members.

The ASIP indicated that PPA observations were going well and advised that in terms of working with Partners to develop a framework on an agreed menu in terms of how children could attend Hearings. Better Hearings had produced a "Preparation for Hearings " document which was now being used by social workers.

Other issues highlighted were the involvement of minimising the use of acronyms in hearing documents; and how to appoint a care experienced young person to the AST and what their role would be.

Full discussion followed on whether any such appointment could be a care experienced person, not necessarily restricted to a young person; the best method of identifying such a person within the Renfrewshire Panel Community; and on the most effective method of consultation in relation to finalising common themes to be considered for inclusion in the Area Plan. It was suggested that information be circulated to the Panel Community through the newsletter.

#### **DECIDED:**

(a) That that information in relation to themes for the Area Plan be circulated to the Panel Community through the newsletter ;

(b) That drop-in sessions for panel members be arranged to highlight and discuss items for the Area Plan;

(c) That the ASP arrange a meeting with the Area and Depute Area Convener to agree a timeframe for the Area Plan, and

(d) That the information be otherwise noted.

## **5 Hearings Management Sub-group**

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Hearings Management Sub-group held on 12 January 2022

The Minute provided updated information in relation to sabbaticals; resignations; hearing statistics for the period for the period 1 December 2021 to 11 January 2022 including deferred and cancelled sessions, secure hearings, additional hearings; swaps and continuity hearings; pastoral care; and panel member strength which indicated that there were currently 84 panel members 61 female and 23 male panel members. In addition one Panel Member had been provided for East Renfrewshire.

The Lead Panel Representative highlighted an issue which had arisen at one face to face session where the Hearing had lasted over seven hours. He outlined the circumstances which had led to this which included the late arrival of the first family and technical difficulties and indicated that there had been no food or drink available for

Panel Members during this lengthy session. The Locality Reporter Manager indicated that she had been unaware of the issue until recently and intimated that she would have expected as a minimum tea and coffee would have been available be available.

The Area Convener advised that in terms of Hearings Management provisions, SCRA should supply tea and coffee, and that Panel Members could claim subsistence expenses dependent upon the length of a session.

A Stevenson referred to the RAVHI reception facility and indicated that this tended to delay the hearings process. She highlighted some of the issues being experienced including delays in bringing families into Hearings.

Following full discussion in relation to RAHVI issues the Area Convener undertook to raise the concerns raised with SCRA.

**DECIDED:**

- (a) That the Area Convener raise the concerns in relation to RAHVI with SCRA; and
- (b) That the Minute be approved.

**6 Recruitment & Retention Sub-group**

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Retention & Recruitment Sub-group held on 30 November 2021.

The Depute Area Convener provided a verbal update on the meeting which had taken place on 11 January 2022 and provided an update on PPAs accessing remote hearings; progress in relation to the PPA rota for observations February 2022; and details of a meeting held on 11 January in relation to arrangements for the 2022 Panel Member recruitment campaign.

A Thompson referred to the digital observation form which she indicated took longer to complete than previous observation forms.

The ASIP indicated that amendments to the form were being undertaken and the completed form would be submitted to a PPA Group on the CHS Forum for comments. The proposed amendments would thereafter to the Practice Team for approval prior to being uploaded to the CSAS platform.

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

**7 Learning & Development Sub-group**

the Depute Area Convener provided a verbal update of the meeting of the Learning & Development Sub-group held on 18 January 2022.

The Minute provided information relative to pre-service update and in-service update.

The Area Convener advised that as East Renfrewshire AST had decided not to recruit during the current campaign, he had contacted CHS for guidance on dealing with any applications submitted to Renfrewshire from East Renfrewshire and was awaiting a response.

In terms of in-service training, the Area Convener indicated that an online meeting had taken place with Police Scotland cyber-crime harm prevention unit relative to a training session and advised that this would take place on 3 March 2022.

A Stevenson referred to a training package she had seen in Ireland but had been unable to source anything similar in Scotland relating to the mental health of children and young people and the impact of social media and the pandemic and suggested that an approach be made to CELSIS seeking information in this regard.

**DECIDED:**

(a) That avenues be explored in relation to future options for training in terms of mental health issues; and

(b) That the Minute be approved.

**8 Locality Reporter Manager**

The Locality Reporter Manager provided an update on staffing arrangements indicating that administration staff were present in the Glen Lane office on a rota basis. Reporter were mainly working from home.

She advised that a virtual Hearings Rota had been agreed with the Rota Manager for February and March 2022.

The Locality Reporter Manager provided statistics relative to the percentage of Hearings which and been held either face to face, virtual or hybrid between June and November 2021, indicating that 62% had been delivered face to face; 26% virtual and approximately 11% hybrid. Nationally, the figures were more evenly spread with 26% face to face; 53% virtual and 20% hybrid.

In terms of staffing the Locality Reporter Manager indicated that the Reporter s group was stable with one Reporter returning from maternity leave. S at the end of January. Support staff continued to be under pressure due to long term absences.

The Reporter Locality Manager was then heard in answer to questions from members on the report. Concern was expressed that SCRA had reverted to virtual hearings in January 2021 and that there had been the possibility of children being at the periphery of the system and being overlooked.

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

**9 Better Hearings/North Strathclyde Hub**

The Area Convener advised that the next meetings of the Better Hearings and North Strathclyde Hub Groups were scheduled for 23 and 28 February respectively.

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

**10 Date of Next Meeting**

**DECIDED:** That it be noted that the next meeting of the Area Support Team was scheduled for Tuesday 15 March 2022 at 2.00pm