



Notice of Meeting and Agenda 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

KENNETH GRAHAM
Head of Corporate Governance

Membership

Eileen Anderson; Derek Brama; Craig Campbell; Annemarie Currie; Brent Dorey; Edi Hanley; Jennifer Hay; John Leckie; Alex MacDonald; Ewan McNaught; Jim Melrose; Amanda Morrison; Marion Robinson; Angela Stevenson; Alison Thompson; Allan Thompson.

Representing Renfrewshire Council: Councillor John Shaw.

Chair

D Brama, Area Convener.

Further Information

This is a meeting which is open to members of the public.

A copy of the agenda and reports for this meeting will be available for inspection prior to the meeting at the Customer Service Centre, Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley and online at <http://renfrewshire.cmis.uk.com/renfrewshire/CouncilandBoards.aspx>

For further information, please either email democratic-services@renfrewshire.gov.uk or telephone 0141 618 7112.

Members of the Press and Public

Members of the press and public wishing to attend the meeting should report to the customer service centre where they will be met and directed to the meeting.

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 - 6 |
| | Minute of previous meeting held on 29 October 2019. | |
| 2 | Matters Arising | |
| 3 | Hearings Management Sub-group | 7 - 10 |
| | Minute of meeting held on 19 November 2019. | |
| 4 | Learning and Development Sub-group | 11 - 14 |
| | Minute of meeting held on 18 December 2019. | |
| 5 | Practice and Recruitment Sub-group | 15 - 20 |
| | Minute of meeting held on 20 November 2019. | |
| 6 | Deferred Hearings - North Strathclyde | 21 - 30 |
| | Report and update by the Locality Reporter Manager. | |
| 7 | Better Hearings Update | 31 - 66 |
| | Report by Children's Hearings Scotland. | |
| 8 | CHS Digital Roll Out | 67 - 72 |
| | Report by Children's Hearings Scotland. | |
| 9 | Devolved Funding | |
| | Verbal report by the Area Convener. | |
| 10 | Top Communication Tips for Panel Members | 73 - 84 |
| | Publication by Children's Hearings Scotland. | |
| 11 | Advocacy Services in Renfrewshire | |
| | Verbal report by the Area Convener. | |
| 12 | Date of Next Meeting | |
| | Members are asked to note that the next meeting of Renfrewshire Area Support Team is scheduled for Tuesday 28 January 2020 at 2.00 pm. | |



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.

HEARINGS MANAGMENT SUB-GROUP

RENFREWSHIRE AREA SUPPORT TEAM

19 NOVEMBER 2019 AT 14:00 AT SCRA OFFICE, GLEN LANE, PAISLEY

MEMBERSHIP:

EDI HANLEY (CHAIR); EILEEN ANDERSON (ROTA MANAGER); MARION ROBINSON (ROTA MANAGER); ANGELA STEVENSON (PANEL REP); JIM MELROSE (DEPUTE AREA CONVENER); ANGELA MITCHELL (SCRA) LESLEY KING/NICOLA HARKNESS (SCRA).

APOLOGIES

N/A

PRESENT

Edi Hanley; Eileen Anderson; Angela Stevenson; Marion Robinson; Jim Melrose; Lesley King; Angela Cramb

1. RESIGNATIONS

One female Panel Member has resigned since the last meeting.

2. SABBATICAL

Three Panel Members have been granted a sabbatical.

3. HEARING STATS - 16 October - 19 November

(a) Deferred Cases – Total 21

1	SW request for further investigation
2	No IAF reports received
2	IAR reports not current
1	Lack of information to make decision
2	One no education representative in attendance and necessary for discussion/decision & one education report provided did not contain sufficient information
1	No legal rep available
12	No RP's in attendance – variety of reasons; Family moved; RP on remand; RP on holiday; Children not in attendance or excused; Failed to Arrive

There was discussion around SCRA statistics for deferred cases nationally – v – locally and how Renfrewshire compare. Leslie King has subsequently provided details to Paul Shiach which will be included in minutes for discussion at full AST.

(b) Cancelled Cases/Sessions – Total 4

1 case	Mum ill
2 sessions	Better Hearings Event – Town Hall Johnstone
1 session	Reporter Training

(c) SECURE HEARINGS - Panel Members supplied in total – 6

2	Good Shepherd for Orkney
1	Good Shepherd for East Lothian
1	Good Shepherd for East Renfrewshire
2	Kibble for Edinburgh

(d) EXTRA CASES/HEARING SESSIONS

One CPO/ two WD

(e) SWAPS

10 Full Session Swaps and two single case swaps for conflict of interests.

(f) CONTINUITY

No PM agreed for continuity. There was a brief discussion around continuity, PM's don't object to continuity but only want to do the case being continued, not a full swap of all cases, this may cause unnecessary work for systems/SCRA having to create additional session and ideally PM's will need to swap full sessions. Further discussion required. AS had recently spoken to Derek Brama about the continuity process and DB was issuing e-mail to all PM's around process & when appropriate to use. **ACTION AS/DB**

4 PASTORAL CARE

None required

5 PANEL MEMBER STRENGTH

PM strength is currently 80 members, with 55 Females and 25 Males.

AOCB

6 NEW PANEL MEMBERSHIP

One new PM has resigned prior to training due to a conflict of Interest, there remain 15 new PM's to complete training.

7 BETTER HEARINGS EVENT

Positive Feedback from panel members.

8 DIGITAL TRAINING & NEW SYSTEMS

Marion provided a verbal update on her recent Digital Rota Training event, there is a need to ensure that PM's complete modules in Learning Academy, Marion will type up her own notes and distribute for further discussion – **ACTION MR**

Jim raised that he and the L & D group have serious reservations about the implementation timescales for the new digital roll out with email addresses & introduction of new Microsoft TEAMS due to go live in January 2020. JM has suggested a digital Implementation Group to drive forward channels within TEAMS. AC & AS attending Digital Champions Briefing on 22 November and further discussion will take place following this.

9 CHAIR TRAINING/CHAIR ROTA

Of those PM's spoken to about rotational chairs, all seem OK with it, and no negative feedback to date. Further discussion at AST meeting to determine implementation date and roll out. E-mail will need to be issued to notify of new process & dates once decided. **ACTION MR/DB**

JM proposed that PPA's to take up the mantle and drive forward the invitation to MOH training by pre-empting the e-mail from Learning Academy to attend and PPA's to speak to identified PM's to ascertain confidence level/provide support to attend.

10 LEGAL REPS & FORMAL DECISION MAKING

Clarification required if e-mail has been sent to Panel Members advising on process for Legal Reps who request a delay to start of hearing sessions in order to consult with their clients. Are we adopting the process that hearing will commence, and panel will make decision on deferral of start of hearing once circumstances are determined on reason/request for deferral and decision will be recorded in the record of proceedings? **ACTION DB/AS**

11 GENERAL

Three Panel Members to participate in video for Social Work training – Identified by EH Learning Academy looking for volunteers for role play for new PM's, only two names submitted so far.

EH raised the idea of a collection station/box for panel room where any panel members, who wish to participate, could drop off agreed items/vouchers/gifts for families and children which could then be distributed at Easter/Christmas to Social Work/Who Cares/Local Foodbanks or other suitable organisations. Conversations required with representatives from organisations to

ascertain if they are able to make use of same and thereby agree process and responsibilities.

12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 14 January 2020 at 2pm at Glen Lane, Paisley



Renfrewshire
Area Support Team

Learning & Development Group Meeting

18 November 2019

MINUTES

Present: Derek Bramma (DB; Chair), John Leckie (JL), Alex MacDonald (AM), David Hadden (DH), Jacqueline Doherty (JD).

In Attendance: Jim Melrose (JM), Angela Cramb (AC)

Apologies: Ewan McNaught (EM), Kirsten Miller (KM), Alison Thompson (AT).

1. Pre-Service update

Confirmation from CHS of all venues and times for new panel member training:
Three attending in Clydebank.

Twelve attending in Glasgow with seven of those in the Saturday sessions, starting 11 January 2020.

Welcome packs will be sent out 25 January.

There will be a mandatory training session on 2 December; three panel members have still to confirm, of the 12 who have confirmed only one is unable to attend.

Initially 16 new panel members were identified, with one person having to drop out. CHS asked whether Renfrewshire AST were willing to take on another trainee, this would likely be another female. But it is likely that they will stick with the 15 identified.

Amanda Morrison will start on the PPA course on 11 January 2020.

2. In-Service update

Due to family commitments JL has not been able to devote as much time to Learning and Development as he would have liked, but now feels he is up to speed again.

Following a last-minute cancellation of the training session on 11 November DB was able to arrange an alternative for the 21 November. This will be a session on advocacy presented by Barnardo's. The CHS contract for advocacy is currently undergoing a review. As this will be done on a national pro rata basis it may have a detrimental impact on Renfrewshire. It is hoped that Renfrewshire council will still maintain this provision. All agreed that the Advocacy provision in Renfrewshire is very good and something that we should push to maintain.

Cathy O'Donnell will provide a training session in February. Tracy Burns and Claire Wright are both coming along in March.

At recent Better Hearings training Susan Clocherty indicated that she would be very interested in providing a training session around the role of a Health Visitor. JD to contact Susan to ask if she would be available for the 20 April.

JL has been trying to get Darren McGarvey to come along, but unfortunately this has been proving difficult. Therefore, this session is unlikely to happen in near future.

Suggestion that we need to try to get someone to come along and from the FACT team. JD has contact at Waterfront Crossreach and shall explore possible training and/or visits.

3. Management of Hearings Training (MOHT) – Update & Actions

Information has come from CHS about the Management of Hearing training. JL and EH to get together and see where we are on this. Prompt needs to go out to any panel members who require to do this. JD to action this email, once panel members requiring to do this have been identified.

Need to keep a look out for any panel members who feel that they have not sat on enough hearings to take this next step.

At better hearings training one group had a discussion around whether it is better to have a chair in the hearing who is comfortable in this role.

In other areas it is the PPAs who are tasked with encouraging reluctant chairs to complete their MOHT. This would be appropriate particularly if the panel member has demonstrated they are a competent.

Buddies could be very good at monitoring whether enough hearings are completed prior to MOHT and also by encouraging and reassuring their buddy. They may also be best placed to have a chat with their buddy about any concerns they may have about chairing a hearing.

It would be good if the AST could pre-empt the Learning Academy's email and contact panel members about this training first.

There is a Learning and Development Forum in Edinburgh this Saturday. Unfortunately, this is short notice and no-one available to go from our LD group. JL is not being alerted and a possible reason may be that our training is split in to pre-service and in-service training with two different co-ordinators.

The proposed changes of each panel member only chairing one session per hearing will hopefully make chairing a less daunting prospect for some panel members.

4. CHS Digital - Training Requirements

There will require to be a reasonable amount of training on this. CHS will input some finances and trainers into this.

Renfrewshire will go live with new digital system, which will include a change to email addresses, in March.

Teams is a collaboration space which will go live in January. This is an App which will become the main way to communicate. This will be the first phase of getting people involved.

There will no longer be a prompt email to personal account.

CHIRP will close as the Teams collaboration tool opens. Teams is a Microsoft tool used widely for communication.

Question asked if emails automatically be forwarded to new email address. AC to find out at Friday's training session.

There will be both national and local training. Need to try and organise a training session in February for all panel members prior to going live in March.

Agreed that we have a separate group who can manage the implementation of the new digital system. Vital that we know which people need access to which parts of the digital system. Group should include two champions, AC, DB, JM, JL, a PPA, EA, MR and the Clerk. Best place for meeting would be Glen Lane as there is access to Wi-Fi, with first meeting early December.

Some issues envisaged about getting all panel members to change from current email to TEAMS system, especially as only recently got everyone to use emails.

Suggestion that we should remove any communication choices, i.e. not have option to email, only have Teams communication.

Agreement that we need someone to provide a demonstration of Teams and people who can talk individuals through the system. We need to identify reluctant app users or those who may not have devices to support app.

Some concern that this feels like this is a rapid change which we are not fully prepared for, which could throw up difficulties going forwards.

There are eight planned modules for online training. Two for all and six will be role specific. Collaboration training goes live 19 December.

Going forward there will be an online registration and attendance monitoring of training events.

5. Better Hearings Event – Actions Arising

Nicola Harkness has put out some key improvement actions;
SCRA are proposing a mock hearing be filmed to be used in their training.
Developing a feedback loop.

Discussion around the manner of which young people address audience at training events. It is evident that some of the young speakers from Who Cares Scotland are unhappy with their experience, however it isn't always appropriate to direct their anger and frustration at all volunteers and professionals involved. It was agreed that these children may not feel this way if they were fully aware of why the hearing is taking place, what exactly will happen and what to expect of a hearing. Panel members can only manage what happens

during the hearing and are reliant on the other professionals involved to manage what happens before and after the hearing.

The videos shown on the day will be made available to all panel members.

6. Social Work video – “Hearing Aids”

Dave Stokes is the driving force behind this. EH has been brought on board to identify a panel; currently FS, AM and JD have been identified. This will be filmed in December with those participating receiving a skeleton script a week before.

7. AOCB

Digital copies of panel papers:

Panel members could use their own device or be provided with a basic device to eventually receive their panel papers digitally. These papers would never be downloaded on to the machines but only available on the cloud. This will be optional and panel members would still be able to receive paper copies.

8. Date of next meeting - Mon 13 January at 7.00pm



Renfrewshire
Area Support Team

**Practice & Recruitment
Group Meeting
Wed 20 November 2019**

AGENDA

1. Minutes of 2 October 2019 –attached below
2. Recruitment update
3. PPA Forum
4. Complaints/Concerns
5. PPA Rota
6. PM Observations (Review + Forthcoming)
7. Online access to PPA observation forms - progress
8. Complaints / concern protocol – paper attached below
9. AOB
10. Date of next meeting

Meeting dates 2019 – 2020

- Wed 15 Jan 2020
- Wed 26 Feb 2020
- Wed 22 Apr 2020
- Wed 3 Jun 2020



Renfrewshire
Area Support Team

Practice & Recruitment Group Meeting 20 November 2019

Minutes

Present: J Melrose (JRM) (Chair), Anne Marie Currie (AMC), Eileen Anderson (EA), Brent Dorey (BD), Mandi Morrison (MM), Allan Thomson (AJT), Alison Thomson (AT), Jennifer Hay (JH).

Apologies : Craig Campbell (CC), Angela Cramb (AC) (ASIP).

1 Minutes of 14 August 2019

Item 5i) completed

Item 5ii) still outstanding

Action JRM

Item 5 resolved at AST

2 Recruitment update

16 (12 female, 4 male) recommended for appointment as panel members.

1 female has now dropped out. Continue with 15.

3 PPA Forum and RRG

AMC also attended the PPA forum

Items discussed at the forum included leadership in the hearing room, digital strategy.

It was pointed out that verbal feedback after an observation was not mandatory.

It was agreed PPAs in Renfrew would continue to give verbal feedback to PMs. With the electronic observation system it might be possible for the PM to read the electronic report on the screen. They would get a copy later once it is filed with the clerk.

The use of machines in the hearing room was discussed.

Possible to have machines located in Glen Lane for PPA use (at least 2).

Preferred solution would be to have each PPA issued with a dedicated machine.

Digital strategy discussed.

JH agreed to join local short life working group to plan digital implementation.

Action AC

AMC also reported on her attendance at the RRG.

Items discussed at the RRG included effective practice, recruitment process, campaign strategy effectiveness, National Pastoral support, employer letter.

Refresher training for interviewing is also available.

AMC has agreed to attend the RRG as a matter of course.

AMC will continue to attend the PPA forum in the meantime.

4 Complaints/Concerns

i) Complaint raised by young person re secure recommendation at a hearing. This may not be a complaint for Childrens Hearing system.

ii) Concern raised by PM regarding Area Convener re handling of action against solicitor.

This has been concluded by meeting with PM and AC and PPA (CC) and DAC.

From this meeting DAC has outlined a protocol that should be observed when handling concerns raised by a PM that comes to the AST.

This is outlined at end of minutes.

The protocol mirrors the system that will be in place when complaints are managed by the digital system next year and so has a limited lifetime.

5 PPA Rota

PPA December rota issued. Amendments made at the meeting

MM will do PPA training in January 2020.

MM will continue to observe PM observations- Tues 24th Dec with BD.

6 PM Observations (Review + Forthcoming)

All observations are green.

The Observation records for August to November 2019 was issued.

7 Online access to observation reports. This is working satisfactorily.

8 Complaints / concerns protocol

See item 4ii)

9 AOB

i) JRM suggested that PPAs could be involved in the support of new PMs approaching chair training. When we know the date of email from Learning Academy , observations could be arranged prior to that. Providing that PM has completed 12 sessions the PPA observing could discuss with the PM their readiness to take the chair training course. PPAs were in agreement with this.

ii) JRM indicated that from January 2020, chairing of hearings would be allocated in a different manner with potentially a number of chairs at each session.

Question raised by PPA – how are chairs identified on the rota?

Action ROTA

10. Date of next meeting : Wed 15 Jan 2020

25.11.19

JRM

Draft protocol for dealing with PM concerns.

Protocol

PM raises an issue with a member of the AST – PPA/ DAC, AC

The issue is logged by email with the PM and an outline of how it will be dealt with is indicated – who, when, ...

The PM is informed that they should consult with another member of the community as appropriate who will be able to offer advice and support.

Two members of the AST should manage the issue to ensure that it is progressing appropriately.

At a reasonably early stage a meeting should be arranged with the PM to investigate issue and ideally resolve the issue.

At the conclusion the PM should have a written report to complete the issue resolution.

Issues are usually managed by DAC.

Scottish Children's Reporter Administration

Report	Deferred Hearings report
Description	Counts of deferred hearings and the reasons for deferral.
Distribution	SCRA External
Data warning	The data contained within this report is based on live operational data and is for management purposes only. It is provided at this time to ensure that the recipients have access to information in line with their business requirements. This information must only be used for the purpose specified. No quality assurance or validation has been undertaken on this data.

Refresh date	1 Nov 2019
Document name	Deferred Hearings report - North Strath
Report creator	Donald Lamb, Data Team.

Quarters	Quarter start	Quarter end
18/19 Q2	01/07/2018	30/09/2018
18/19 Q3	01/10/2018	31/12/2018
18/19 Q4	01/01/2019	31/03/2019
19/20 Q1	01/04/2019	30/06/2019
19/20 Q2	01/07/2019	30/09/2019

Report notes

This report includes details of:

- the amount of hearings in the quarter that have had an outcome recorded
- the amount and % of hearings that were deferred
- the reasons recorded for deferred hearings (as defined in table 1)

Table 1 – CMS recording options - Reason for deferred hearing

1	For the attendance of the child or relevant person
2	To appoint a safeguarder or for a report/assessment by a safeguarder
3	Non availability or late arrival of report(s)
4	Other
5	For another report/specialist assessment
6	Non receipt or late arrival of hearing papers
7	For attendance of another person (e.g. legal rep or interpreter)
8	Child has moved on an emergency basis
9	For child/RP to be legally represented
10	Due to late/short notice stand in by a panel member

SCRA deferred hearings - North Strathclyde locality

North Strathclyde	18/19 Q2	18/19 Q3	18/19 Q4	19/20 Q1	19/20 Q2
All Hearings with outcomes count	1,006	949	1,052	1,075	941
% of all hearings recorded as deferred	17.4%	16.3%	20.5%	16.8%	18.3%
% of all hearings recorded as CSO Interim Continuation	3.6%	3.0%	2.0%	2.2%	3.2%
% of all hearings which were deferred	21.0%	19.3%	22.5%	19.1%	21.5%
Deferred hearing count	211	183	237	205	202

Notes

- Please note that a deferred hearing may have more than one deferred hearing reason recorded. Therefore the individual counts of reasons may be greater than the overall total.
- There should be no reasons recorded where the hearing was not deferred.
- The 'other' category of deferral reason should be used infrequently.

National	18/19 Q2	18/19 Q3	18/19 Q4	19/20 Q1	19/20 Q2
All Hearings with outcomes count	7,920	7,658	7,621	7,886	7,583
% of all hearings recorded as deferred	20.2%	20.8%	20.7%	18.6%	20.1%
% of all hearings recorded as CSO Interim Continuation	5.4%	4.6%	4.5%	5.0%	4.4%
% of all hearings which were deferred	25.5%	25.3%	25.1%	23.4%	24.4%
Deferred hearing count	2,019	1,938	1,913	1,845	1,847

Deferred hearing reasons recorded on CMS - North Strathclyde locality

North Strathclyde	18/19 Q2	18/19 Q3	18/19 Q4	19/20 Q1	19/20 Q2
Child has moved on an emergency basis	6	<5	<5	5	<5
Due to late/short notice stand in by a panel member			<5		<5
For another report/specialist assessment	5	9	<5	5	6
For attendance of another person (e.g. legal rep or interpreter)	<5	<5	15	13	7
For child/RP to be legally represented	<5	<5	5	<5	<5
For the attendance of the child or relevant person	45	52	46	38	63
Non availability or late arrival of report(s)	14	19	18	14	17
Non receipt or late arrival of hearing papers	8	<5	11	14	<5
Other	11	5	8	8	12
To appoint a safeguarder or for a report/assessment by a safeguarder	20	15	16	41	14
Hearings with deferred reasons	107	105	114	130	117

SCRA deferred hearings - Argyll & Bute

	18/19 Q2	18/19 Q3	18/19 Q4	19/20 Q1	19/20 Q2
All Hearings with outcomes count	114	61	82	94	94
% of all hearings recorded as deferred	16.7%	13.1%	14.6%	8.5%	21.3%
% of all hearings recorded as CSO Interim Continuation	5.3%	6.6%	3.7%	0.0%	3.2%
% of all hearings which were deferred	21.9%	19.7%	18.3%	8.5%	24.5%
Deferred hearing count	25	12	15	8	23

Notes

- Please note that a deferred hearing may have more than one deferred hearing reason recorded. Therefore the individual counts of reasons may be greater than the overall total.
- There should be no reasons recorded where the hearing was not deferred.
- The 'other' category of deferral reason should be used infrequently.

Deferred hearing reasons recorded on CMS - Argyll & Bute

	18/19 Q2	18/19 Q3	18/19 Q4	19/20 Q1	19/20 Q2
Child has moved on an emergency basis	<5	<5			
Due to late/short notice stand in by a panel member					<5
For another report/specialist assessment		<5			
For attendance of another person (e.g. legal rep or interpreter)			<5	<5	<5
For child/RP to be legally represented	<5		<5		
For the attendance of the child or relevant person	8	<5	<5	<5	11
Non availability or late arrival of report(s)			<5	<5	
Non receipt or late arrival of hearing papers		<5			
Other	<5	<5	<5		<5
To appoint a safeguarder or for a report/assessment by a safeguarder	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5
Hearings with deferred reasons	14	11	7	5	17

SCRA deferred hearings - East Dunbartonshire

	18/19 Q2	18/19 Q3	18/19 Q4	19/20 Q1	19/20 Q2
All Hearings with outcomes count	39	71	66	82	77
% of all hearings recorded as deferred	28.2%	19.7%	7.6%	13.4%	24.7%
% of all hearings recorded as CSO Interim Continuation	5.1%	1.4%	3.0%	2.4%	0.0%
% of all hearings which were deferred	33.3%	21.1%	10.6%	15.9%	24.7%
Deferred hearing count	13	15	7	13	19

Notes

- Please note that a deferred hearing may have more than one deferred hearing reason recorded. Therefore the individual counts of reasons may be greater than the overall total.
- There should be no reasons recorded where the hearing was not deferred.
- The 'other' category of deferral reason should be used infrequently.

Deferred hearing reasons recorded on CMS - East Dunbartonshire

	18/19 Q2	18/19 Q3	18/19 Q4	19/20 Q1	19/20 Q2
For another report/specialist assessment		<5			<5
For attendance of another person (e.g. legal rep or interpreter)					<5
For the attendance of the child or relevant person	<5		<5	<5	5
Non availability or late arrival of report(s)		<5	<5		<5
Non receipt or late arrival of hearing papers	<5				
Other					<5
To appoint a safeguarder or for a report/assessment by a safeguarder		<5		<5	<5
Hearings with deferred reasons	<5	5	<5	<5	12

SCRA deferred hearings - East Renfrewshire

	18/19 Q2	18/19 Q3	18/19 Q4	19/20 Q1	19/20 Q2
All Hearings with outcomes count	65	55	75	88	71
% of all hearings recorded as deferred	21.5%	12.7%	14.7%	27.3%	15.5%
% of all hearings recorded as CSO Interim Continuation	7.7%	7.3%	0.0%	5.7%	5.6%
% of all hearings which were deferred	29.2%	20.0%	14.7%	33.0%	21.1%
Deferred hearing count	19	11	11	29	15

Notes

- Please note that a deferred hearing may have more than one deferred hearing reason recorded. Therefore the individual counts of reasons may be greater than the overall total.
- There should be no reasons recorded where the hearing was not deferred.
- The 'other' category of deferral reason should be used infrequently.

Deferred hearing reasons recorded on CMS - East Renfrewshire

	18/19 Q2	18/19 Q3	18/19 Q4	19/20 Q1	19/20 Q2
Child has moved on an emergency basis	<5				
For another report/specialist assessment				<5	
For attendance of another person (e.g. legal rep or interpreter)				<5	
For the attendance of the child or relevant person	<5	<5	<5	5	6
Non availability or late arrival of report(s)	<5		<5	<5	
Other	<5			<5	<5
To appoint a safeguarder or for a report/assessment by a safeguarder	6	<5	<5	17	
Hearings with deferred reasons	11	<5	9	29	7

SCRA deferred hearings - Inverclyde

	18/19 Q2	18/19 Q3	18/19 Q4	19/20 Q1	19/20 Q2
All Hearings with outcomes count	128	154	144	177	150
% of all hearings recorded as deferred	14.1%	15.6%	17.4%	20.3%	20.7%
% of all hearings recorded as CSO Interim Continuation	2.3%	1.9%	0.7%	0.6%	2.0%
% of all hearings which were deferred	16.4%	17.5%	18.1%	20.9%	22.7%
Deferred hearing count	21	27	26	37	34

Notes

- Please note that a deferred hearing may have more than one deferred hearing reason recorded. Therefore the individual counts of reasons may be greater than the overall total.
- There should be no reasons recorded where the hearing was not deferred.
- The 'other' category of deferral reason should be used infrequently.

Deferred hearing reasons recorded on CMS - Inverclyde

	18/19 Q2	18/19 Q3	18/19 Q4	19/20 Q1	19/20 Q2
Child has moved on an emergency basis			<5	<5	<5
For another report/specialist assessment	<5		<5	<5	<5
For attendance of another person (e.g. legal rep or interpreter)		<5			<5
For child/RP to be legally represented					<5
For the attendance of the child or relevant person	7	18	15	14	12
Non availability or late arrival of report(s)	<5	<5		<5	9
Non receipt or late arrival of hearing papers		<5	<5	5	
Other	<5			5	<5
To appoint a safeguarder or for a report/assessment by a safeguarder	6	<5	<5	7	5
Hearings with deferred reasons	19	23	20	32	30

SCRA deferred hearings - Renfrewshire

	18/19 Q2	18/19 Q3	18/19 Q4	19/20 Q1	19/20 Q2
All Hearings with outcomes count	379	361	384	352	323
% of all hearings recorded as deferred	15.3%	16.6%	20.3%	13.6%	17.3%
% of all hearings recorded as CSO Interim Continuation	5.3%	4.2%	3.1%	2.6%	3.7%
% of all hearings which were deferred	20.6%	20.8%	23.4%	16.2%	21.1%
Deferred hearing count	78	75	90	57	68

Notes

- Please note that a deferred hearing may have more than one deferred hearing reason recorded. Therefore the individual counts of reasons may be greater than the overall total.
- There should be no reasons recorded where the hearing was not deferred.
- The 'other' category of deferral reason should be used infrequently.

Deferred hearing reasons recorded on CMS - Renfrewshire

	18/19 Q2	18/19 Q3	18/19 Q4	19/20 Q1	19/20 Q2
Child has moved on an emergency basis		<5	<5	<5	<5
Due to late/short notice stand in by a panel member			<5		
For another report/specialist assessment	<5	<5	<5		
For attendance of another person (e.g. legal rep or interpreter)	<5	<5	10	7	<5
For child/RP to be legally represented		<5	<5	<5	<5
For the attendance of the child or relevant person	17	21	14	15	19
Non availability or late arrival of report(s)	12	15	9	9	7
Non receipt or late arrival of hearing papers	7	<5	7	<5	<5
Other	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5
To appoint a safeguarder or for a report/assessment by a safeguarder	<5	6	<5	<5	5
Hearings with deferred reasons	44	49	48	37	39

SCRA deferred hearings - West Dunbartonshire

	18/19 Q2	18/19 Q3	18/19 Q4	19/20 Q1	19/20 Q2
All Hearings with outcomes count	281	247	301	282	226
% of all hearings recorded as deferred	19.6%	17.0%	28.2%	19.1%	15.5%
% of all hearings recorded as CSO Interim Continuation	0.0%	0.4%	1.0%	2.5%	3.5%
% of all hearings which were deferred	19.6%	17.4%	29.2%	21.6%	19.0%
Deferred hearing count	55	43	88	61	43

Notes

- Please note that a deferred hearing may have more than one deferred hearing reason recorded. Therefore the individual counts of reasons may be greater than the overall total.
- There should be no reasons recorded where the hearing was not deferred.
- The 'other' category of deferral reason should be used infrequently.

Deferred hearing reasons recorded on CMS - West Dunbartonshire

	18/19 Q2	18/19 Q3	18/19 Q4	19/20 Q1	19/20 Q2
Child has moved on an emergency basis	<5		<5	<5	
For another report/specialist assessment		<5		<5	<5
For attendance of another person (e.g. legal rep or interpreter)			<5		
For child/RP to be legally represented	<5		<5		
For the attendance of the child or relevant person	9	8	9	<5	10
Non availability or late arrival of report(s)		<5	6	<5	
Non receipt or late arrival of hearing papers			<5	7	
Other	<5		<5		
To appoint a safeguarder or for a report/assessment by a safeguarder	<5	<5	<5	12	<5
Hearings with deferred reasons	18	14	28	24	12

Better Hearings Report



Children's Hearings
Improvement Partnership

Item 7

October 2019



**Welcome to
our first Better
Hearings
progress
report!**



Better Hearings Progress Report

Welcome..

To the first comprehensive 'Better Hearings' update. This report sets out the progress to date on the work that has been taking place across the country to implement improvements linked to standards set out in the research report *Next Steps to Better Hearings*.

This report is aimed at members of the CHIP and the related organisations that seek to implement the standards - **to improve the experience of children and families attending Children's Hearings**.

This improvement work is about what all the partner organisations in the Children's Hearings System can do to enable the best possible experience for everyone who comes to a Children's Hearing. This report takes you through what has been happening so far. It provides background information about why we are doing it, sets out how we are doing it and some of the local improvement projects to give a sense of what has been done across the country and what difference it is making.

One of the themes present throughout this report is 'partnership and collaboration'; without it, Better Hearings would not be possible. The Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership has endorsed the standards, and agreement has been made by all partners coming together to take forward this work. The wealth of activity going on locally is testament to that.

This is a report on the first year of implementation. Improvement takes time to shape and agree, to enact, and longer to take effect. We are just at the start of a journey together towards Better Hearings, that is going to gather momentum ...

Better Hearings

In 2015, with implementation of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, all partner organisations in the Children's Hearings System became corporate parents. With this came a set of legal duties about how we interact, work for and treat the children and young people referred to the system.

At this time, the Tripartite Group, a group made up of the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA), Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS) and Social Work Scotland, challenged itself **to improve the experience of children and families attending Children's Hearings.**

The Tripartite Group commissioned research to Identify **what makes a Hearing work well from the perspective of those involved** and from this to develop service standards for Children's Hearings.

This research was carried out by SCRA, and comprised a literature review of consultations with young people and focus groups of professionals including social workers and Reporters and Children's Panel Members.

Through reviewing what children and young people have said about their experiences of Children's Hearings and those of practitioners, this research aimed to:

'Identify what makes a Hearing work well from a perspective of those involved and from this develop service standards for Children's Hearings'

A report *The Next Steps Towards Better Hearings* was published in October 2016 - **Better Hearings**. The Standards for Better Hearings were developed based on the areas of consensus between the findings of the literature review of children and young people's views and discussions with practitioners. The standards are written from the perspective of what children and young people should expect from their experience before, during and after their Hearings.

Young people with experience of Children's Hearings were consulted on the draft Standards and their feedback was used to revise and finalise the proposed Standards for Better Hearings.

The service standards focus on the roles and expectations of adults **before, during and after** each Children's Hearing. These 32 standards are grouped under a number of headings:

- Planning your Hearing
- Reports and Information for your Hearing
- Safety and Privacy
- Managing the Hearing
- Helping you give your views
- Decisions
- Hearings decisions and what happens next
- Your rights

The full set of standards can be found at **Appendix A**

The standards set out what agencies working with and for the child/young person should do to deliver the best possible hearing experience, as defined in the research.

The CHIP approved the standards, and the project plan laying out the approach to rolling them out nationally. The overall aim of the project is:

“to ensure that the actions for Better Hearings are recognised, planned for and implemented within each local authority area in as consistent a way as possible, using existing partnership arrangements linked to Corporate Parenting and Children’s Services Planning where possible”

“That forums are in place locally to oversee the strategic direction as set by CHIP and that there are mechanisms for collaborative planning and reporting on progress”

The following report provides an update on the progress that has been made against these aims.

Children’s Hearings Improvement Partnership (CHIP)

The Children’s Hearings Improvement Partnership (CHIP) is a strategic partnership to strengthen policy and planning to deliver a good experience and outcomes for each child and young person involved in Children’s Hearings. Chaired by the Scottish Government, the CHIP brings together people at a senior level across Scotland who have a common interest in developing and improving the Children’s Hearings System, and includes representatives from all key partners in the Hearings System.

To make the Hearings System successful, its constituent parts and supporting arrangements need to be understood and properly aligned. The CHIP is all about fostering respect for each other’s role and contribution. Sharing ideas and co-ordinating our efforts supports our work together to further the best interests of children and young people.

The CHIP’s aim, vision and values can be viewed [here](#). These pave the way for the collaboration required to ensure full delivery of Better Hearings.

Approach

Partnership is key to the delivery of Better Hearings and each local area has identified a multi-agency group to take forward the implementation of the standards.

The first task of the multi-agency groups was to assess how local performance measured up against the Better Hearings standards by undertaking a Baseline Assessment exercise. All agencies worked together actively and honestly to make that assessment and there was a lot of good feedback from these sessions, securing local ownership for the work.

Areas have used their self-assessments to inform action plans for their own partnerships to work to. The action plans have prioritised the work that needs to take place locally to meet the standards for ensuring the provision of the best possible experience for all involved in Children’s Hearings.

In some areas there was acknowledgement that there was still some work to be done in getting the basics right whilst in others they were ready to move to towards their identified improvement.

Centrally, work has taken place to review these plans, to 'pair together' areas working on similar improvement actions, and to share good practice. A number of similar themes emerged that indicated a need for support at a national level:

- Participation and engagement of young people and families
- The variable quality of reports to Children's Hearings
- Hearings management

Summary of activity towards Better Hearings

Planning your Hearing

All partnerships felt that improvements could be made;

- Guidance for professionals in preparing children and young people for Hearings.
- Training for Education on preparation of children and young people for Hearings.
- Ongoing promotion of Pre-Hearing visits for children and young people.
- Amendments made to form that is used to capture young people's views ahead of their Pre-Hearing Panel following feedback from young people

Reports and Information for your Hearing

- Case sampling of the quality of local authority reports has been initiated.
- Commitments in many areas to review and improve the social work reports
- Commitments in many areas to review the way in which young people input to their reports
- Feedback being sought from all users of one area's social work reports with a view to shaping improvement
- A co-designed Communications Charter which sets out what young people should expect from communications from SCRA
- Pilot of 'easy read' letters to help parents/carers understand things more clearly

Safety and Privacy

- Further improvements were made to Hearing rooms to make them more child/young person friendly with five being re-modelled in the year
- Research was commissioned to look into privacy and confidentiality in the Hearings System and the findings will be reported in 19/20
- Published a new privacy information leaflet for young people written by one of SCRA's Modern Apprentices
- New information added to SCRA website about 'your information and how we protect it and keep it safe'
- Created a cartoon animation about 'privacy and your information'.

Managing the Hearing and decision making

Improving the conduct of Children's Hearings was a common area of focus in local action plans. In some areas this was about improving scheduling of Hearings. Other areas found that many Hearings did not start and end on time, or were too long. Others prioritised work on making written decisions by Children's Panel Members clear and comprehensive and fit for purpose. Work to tackle these areas of need include:

- Training of Panel Members by young people in Midlothian, Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire, West Dunbartonshire, Inverclyde, Central and West Lothian
- Multi-agency training around roles and responsibilities in five local authority areas
- Training of Panel Members by Advocacy Workers to help them better understand participation and engagement.
- Analysis around attendance at their Hearing of children and young people in Fife, Dundee, Perth and Angus to provide baseline for improvement
- Survey time management of Hearings and agree actions from findings
- Development of top tips for Panel Members across a range of areas use including language, jargon, putting rights language first etc.
- Monitoring the chairing of Hearings following new training arrangements
- Trials of reduced Hearing sessions - having only two hearings per session rather than three following feedback.
- Children and young people working with panel members to develop their (PMs) understanding of the issues relevant to them in their lives to support decision making.

Helping you give your views

- Focus groups with young people around how they would like to give their views, participate and attend Hearings
- Pilots to support the improved use of technology around Hearings to encourage better participation.
- Trials of participation tools within Hearings – running emoji pilots – digital and non-digital in Falkirk, West Lothian, Central, East Renfrewshire and a number more.

Hearings decisions and what happens next

- Improved and re-launched the 'Your Rights' flyer and poster to support young people to know and exercise their rights

Your rights

- Focus groups of children and young people to garner their views and ideas for improvement.
- Feedback from children and young people to improve future practice around hearings after they have been through the experience.
- Launched an online cartoon animation about "Your Rights" - it's important that you know them'.

A closer look...

To demonstrate some of the hard work and real commitment, a number of short in depth case studies are provided below. These are just a small number from a huge amount of examples that could have been used but gives a sense of the work as it spans the full Better Hearings agenda:

Planning your Hearing

In many of the areas multi-agency groups prioritised better preparation of young people for the hearing. There are lots of people who can make a difference to this – the Social Worker, Advocacy worker/children's rights officer and the Children's Reporter. Agencies in a number of areas have collaborated to produce guidance for professionals and advocacy workers to help them prepare children to attend Hearings. These guidance notes capture everything that children and young people should know before they come along – from what the centre looks like to what their rights are.

Preparation for the Hearing is not only designed to inform children and young people and their families but, crucially, to better equip them to play a full part in the process and better inform and influence the decisions made. The guidance provides the social worker with **relevant information** to discuss with the young person, and **prompts** to ensure that a full discussion is taking place about the views of the young person; how they are feeling, what they want their Hearing to achieve, what questions they have, how they would like to get their views across in the Hearing and what their options are if they don't want to participate directly.

Guides have been developed in three areas locally – Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and Stirling, to ensure they capture the local context but cover all of the areas needed. These guides are available electronically and have links and embedded videos for workers to watch, and use with the young people that they support.

Better Hearings in Aberdeenshire

Guidelines on preparing children and young people for attending a Children's Hearing

These guidelines are for all professionals supporting children and young people who are going to a Children's Hearing. This could include social workers, police, nurses, children's rights officers, community learning and development workers etc.

It is very important that children and young people attend a hearing as best prepared as possible. This checklist provides a framework for any professional working with a child to complete this task and it is the responsibility of the lead professional to ensure that the work has been done.

Understanding what a Children's Hearing is

Ensure that the child/young person has access to the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration leaflets which can be accessed on the "Children" or "Young People" pages on the SCRA website (<https://www.scra.gov.uk/>).

There are also two information packs, one for younger and one for older children, available from the Reporter's Office (Contact no: 0131 244 8728). Copies of the leaflets are in the pack.

Go over the leaflet with the accompanying person explaining what it means and give them a chance to ask any questions. Make sure they know:

- Who will be at their hearing and why they have been invited
- What type of hearing it is for example initial hearing, Review Hearing, advice to sheriff etc.

- Why the hearing is being held
- What decisions might be made e.g. Compulsory Supervision Order (CSO), Interim CSO, appointment of safeguarder
- That they have a right to take along a friend or representative such as a Children's Rights Officer.

Explain the physical set up of the hearing Centre, who will be in the waiting room with them, that the hearing is a tribunal and may be more or less formal than they are expecting, help them think through what it might feel like for them both entering the hearing and being expected to participate. The links below show the hearing Centres in Aberdeen and Fraserburgh.

Aberdeen: <https://www.scra.gov.uk/contact-us/office-locations/aberdeen/>
Fraserburgh: <https://www.scra.gov.uk/contact-us/office-locations/fraserburgh/>

Ensure the child knows that a Children's Hearing will have a Panel of three people who have been trained to make decisions in the best interests of the child. These decisions can last up to a year.

The Panel will hear from everyone there including the child/young person and consider all the reports. Then they will decide things like: where the child will live, if away from home whether there needs to be measures about contact with family members, if there is a need for an early hearing. They will also decide if a safeguarder is needed. This is a person who is independent who will speak to everyone concerned and make a recommendation that they consider to be in the child's best interests.

Explain that decisions should be clearly explained and the child/young person can ask any questions.

Better Hearings in Stirling

Explain there are many different ways to provide their views ahead of the Hearing:


- The child/young person should be encouraged to fill in the "All About Me" form. Links to the forms are below.

12 and over



Click here to view the young person's form

11 and under



Click here to view the children form

- Encourage completion of "Your Views" for a Pre-Hearing Panel
- Suggest they write down what they want to say beforehand or getting someone else to write down what they want to say.
- They wish to draw a picture or other artwork, etc.
- They could use Talking Mats or other methods.

Help them to work out what is best for them. It is helpful if the views of a child/young person can be included in their own words.

It is very important to remind them that they can ask to speak to the panel member on their own or with their friend/representative or another trusted person if this would be helpful. However, remind them that the gist of anything discussed will still need to be shared with the larger group.

In certain circumstances it may be possible for young people to participate in their Hearing through video link if available. There must be a good reason not to attend in person eg distance or distress, and the child requests it.

6. Understanding the Local Authority's Recommendation:

3. Understanding the Grounds of Referral:

If it is a Grounds Hearing, please make sure that:

- The child/young person has received, read and understood the Grounds for Referral (to their age and maturity). ☐
- The child/young person knows that the grounds can be put to them separate from the relevant person(s) if the presence of the relevant person(s) would make it harder for them to accept or deny the grounds. They would need to ask for this at the start of the Hearing. ☐
- Do they know who their "relevant persons" are? (i.e. the parent/s and/or person/s who have or have recently had significant involvement in the upbringing of the child or young person). If they/you are unsure who the relevant people are, please contact the Reporter or the social worker for clarification. ☐
- Explain that the child/young person and the relevant persons will need to either accept or deny (e.g. answer yes or no) the grounds at the hearing: statements of fact first then the overarching ground for referral. ☐
- Amendments can be made with the agreement of the family and the reporter following discussion of the statement of facts. This will only occur when everyone is in agreement and it does not undermine the ground for referral. ☐
- That if the child or relevant persons deny the grounds and the hearing feels that compulsory measures of supervision may be required, they will send the case to the sheriff for proof. Very occasionally, if compulsory measures of supervision are not felt to be necessary, the hearing will discharge the case. ☐

In support of the preparation guidance developed in the **Stirling** locality, they have been running a series of training sessions - Preparation of Children for Hearings Guidance and Workshop - for education Staff designed to inform more fully about the Children's Hearings System to help prepare and support children and young people coming to Hearings.

These sessions brought together a mix of Education staff, Reporter staff and Children's Panel Members to work through the key messages in an interactive way. They were held in refurbished Hearing rooms in Stirling which gave practitioners sight of family friendly hearing rooms to support their work with young people.



Neil McKinlay, Locality Reporter Manager 'all tied up' in an interactive exercise demonstrating how a young person can feel when coming to a Hearing – the number of people around them, the number of ways they are pulled and the risk of being 'lost' in the process.

Feedback from both Stirling Primary and Secondary Teachers is that they feel more empowered to support the child or young person before the hearing. Education staff have assisted children to express their views before and within the Hearing. A key message in the sessions was that children have an opportunity to come along to the Hearings centre before a Hearing to check it out.

The number of children and young people visiting Hearings centres before their Hearing has increased since the sessions.

Attendee feedback: 'I recently went to the training and found it very beneficial and delivered by the Reporter and Panel Members – members of the public who were down to earth. From listening to them it was obvious they all had the child at the centre.'

As a school we are encouraged to take the child for a visit prior to the Hearing, talk them through what the process will look like. The training really helped support us in this. It was great to see the room too – child friendly décor, toys and its layout is nonthreatening – we are not sitting at a table in a formal manner but much more relaxed with comfy seats in a circle, we have come a long way and children are very much at the centre of it all' Primary Deputy Head Teacher

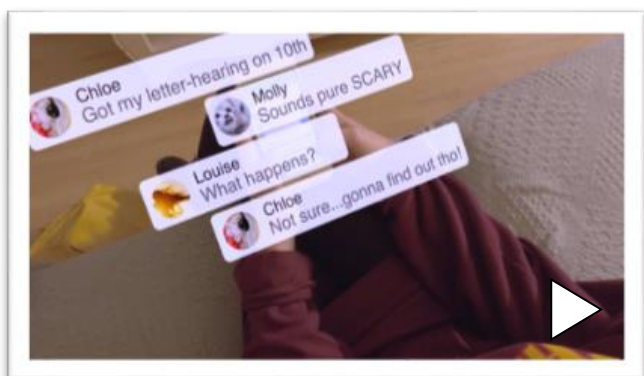
Revised guidance is now on Stirling Education Intranets. There are plans to roll this out to **Clackmannanshire, Falkirk and West Lothian** across 2019/20.

SCRA continue to promote the preparation guidance with Social Work through visiting their team meetings

Pre-Hearing visits

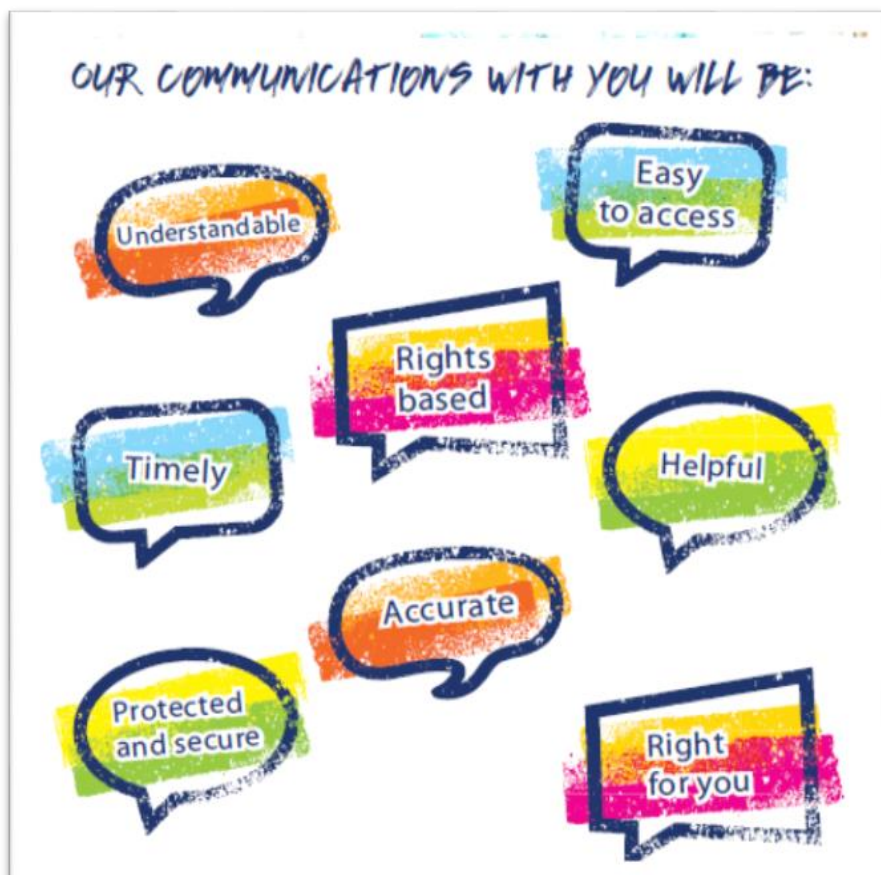
Some children and young people want to come along to the Hearing centre before they come to a Hearing for a Pre-Hearing visit. This allows the young person to see the centre, meet the staff, have a look in the rooms – see if there is somewhere that they would prefer to sit, and ask any questions they have. As part of the Better Hearings work these visits are being promoted by SCRA in the letters and flyers that are sent out and also by Social Workers when they are meeting with the children and young people.

For those who don't want to visit or aren't able to, SCRA has produced a **short film** –to promote coming along for a visit and to go through a virtual visit. This gives children and young people a chance to familiarise themselves with the place and the process ahead of their Hearing.



Reports and Information for your Hearing

SCRA co-produced a communications commitment to and with children and young people about the information they receive – its format, its content and its structure. All new communications are measured against this to see if they stand up to it.



Safeguarder Reports – Children 1st

As part of Safeguarders' pre-appointment training, they receive a Practice Note detailing the quality standards required of a Safeguarder report, and take part in a Practice Workshop on Report Writing to support this. The interactive workshop provides an opportunity to apply the Practice Note to the practical task of writing a Safeguarder report. The aim of the course is for Safeguarders to have an increased knowledge and understanding of what is expected of a Safeguarder report, to provide feedback as to strengths and areas of development and to ensure Safeguarders have an increased understanding of the 'report sampling tool' and how it is used as part of the Performance Support and Monitoring Framework. (Further info re performance support and monitoring framework can be found in appendix C)

Safety and Privacy

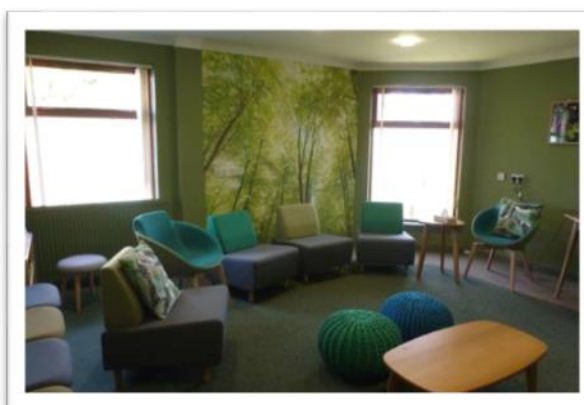
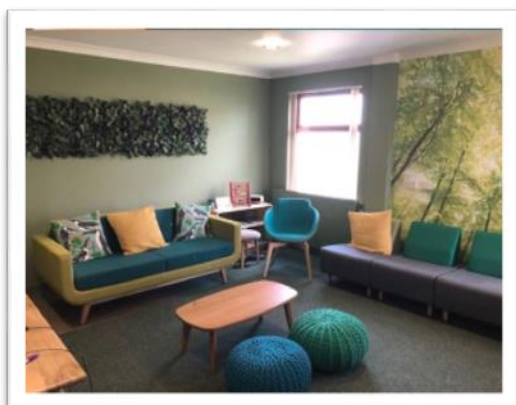
The Better Hearings standards talk about providing an environment that feels 'safe'. As part of SCRA's corporate parenting duties and commitment to the delivery of the Better Hearings Standards, the Hearing room improvement programme is a key piece of work each year.

Children and young people and professionals agree that the 'old' style hearing rooms are too formal, hearings in them can feel like 'a trial', are 'boring', the tables are too big and they do not support children and young people to feel comfortable – and are therefore not helpful in supporting young people to participate effectively in their hearing.

Young people worked with interior designers and SCRA to identify a number of distinct themes to help them feel more relaxed and better able to participate. They asked for calming, less formal rooms with friendly colours, the removal of the large table, the addition of plants, a variety of seating options to suit those with disabilities, and an identified play area for younger children. With the invaluable contribution of young people with experience of hearings, a variety of participative rooms have been successfully introduced across the country. Children and young people talk about feeling 'warm', 'comfortable' and 'not like a doctors'.

Three rooms have been given a makeover in 2018/19 – **Bellshill, Dalkeith and Falkirk.**

Bellshill opted for a green/outdoor theme and there has been great feedback received – from those using the room as well as across social media.

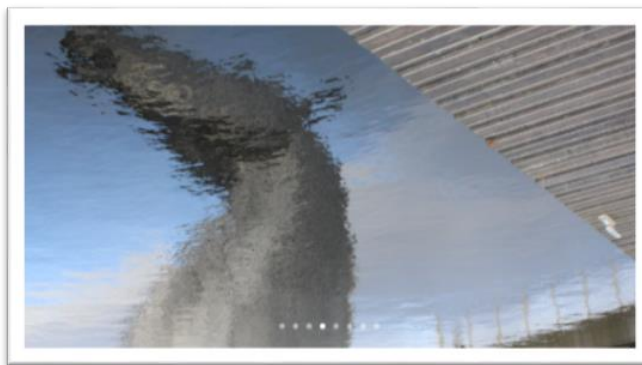


On seeing the development of the Hearing Centre there. Louise Macdonald CEO youth charity Young Scot “This makes my heart happy. When I was a Board member of [@ChildReporter](#) this work around making hearing rooms more c&yp friendly was just beginning - fantastic to see such progress now”

The SCRA Twitter post received 75 likes, 14 retweets, and four comments – “Love it!” “So good to see. The environment matters.” “Fantastic to see this roll out.” “This change in environment does make a difference for the children and young people attending Hearings.” “Much more inclusive.”

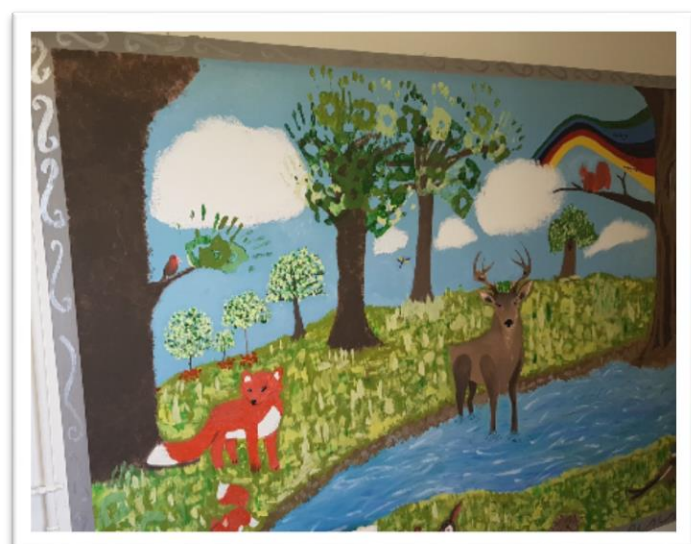


Falkirk Hearings Centre chose a Scottish seascapes theme in their new design



The refurbishment aims to provide warm, welcoming child and young person friendly setting for Children’s Hearings. SCRA recently ran a photography competition under the ‘Scottishscapes’ banner aimed at young people living in the Falkirk area. The theme of the photography competition was chosen to complement the refurbishment’s decorative ‘Scottishscapes’ theme. Young people submitted photographs they’d taken of Scottish landscapes and nature. Four of the images are now on display in Hearings Centre in Falkirk.

Dalkeith and co-design..



The **Dalkeith** Hearings Centre has also gone through a makeover – opting for an indoor peaceful theme - creating a far brighter, airier and more welcoming place for children and young people in the area. The main talking point is a mural, beautifully crafted by the young people from Midlothian Champions’ Board combining lots of individual and collective effort, stories and representations. The official unveiling took place in May with some of the young people present, along with SCRA staff and partners. More than 25 people attended the event and the Hearings Centre was buzzing. This was also an opportunity for people to see the new look

Hearing room which was recently completed with many people remarking on what a contrast there was with how the Hearing centre looked and felt in the past. Talking at the unveiling, **Ashleigh Stephen from the Midlothian Champions Board** said it was great for the young people to see

the Hearing Centre in a different light and also in a different atmosphere. She added: “It is great to see the young people laugh and enjoy themselves in the Hearing Centre.”

Neil Hunter, SCRA’s Principal Reporter/Chief Executive Officer attended the event. Neil said: “This has been a really great open event – the atmosphere has been incredibly positive. The art work and the general work by the Midlothian Champions’ Board is just fantastic. Everyone here today has been so complimentary about the mural. Everyone involved should be really proud of their work.”

Managing the Hearing

Part of the induction process for many professionals working in the hearings system is to attend a children’s hearing as an observer to support their understanding of the process.

Through the Better Hearings research (and others) a prominent issue is around the increasing number of people in the hearing room (in part due to the 2011 Act) - affecting the management of the hearing and also having an impact on full participation.

As part of the multi-agency Better Hearings action plan in Lanarkshire, it was agreed to try an alternative approach to hearing observation requests.

SCRA’s Katy Lang, Senior Practitioner Lanarkshire and Jenny West, fellow Senior Practitioner from North Strathclyde, have worked together in developing the new training module as part of their leadership qualification.

Jenny said: “The training module has two aims. One is to limit the number of people in a Hearing to only those key to the process, and the other is to provide standardised high quality training for partners, in line with the Better Hearings agenda.”

During the 2 hour training, delegates learn about the Children’s Hearings System then participate in a mock Children’s Hearing, with delegates role-playing the various roles in the Hearing.

Since 14th January 2019, staff in Hamilton House have booked over 50 staff from partnership agencies onto the new training course. This has been widely welcomed as a preferable alternative to hearing observations. The module was devised primarily to offer an alternative to social work students, but all agencies have expressed interest in attending. To date, services represented on the new training include: NHS, Police, education and interpreter services. It is anticipated the module will run monthly at Hamilton to meet the current levels of demand.

Locality Reporter Manager for Lanarkshire, Jim McClafferty, added: “This is an exciting initiative that will enhance the understanding of the Children’s Hearings System amongst a wide range of professionals, as well as providing direct experience of a mock Children’s Hearing.”

The module has now been delivered to Scottish Government Children and Families policy officials.

Katy Lang said: “Our goal was to reduce the numbers of observers in the Hearing room. Observations are an important part of the induction process for new social workers, so it was necessary to consider how the need could be met in an alternative way.”

From the beginning of 2019, partnership staff seeking to observe a Children’s Hearing have instead booked onto a new Mock Children’s Hearing Training module, which launched on 6th March 2019.

Involvement of young people in CHS training and recruitment of Panel Members

A key aim of local work to implement Better Hearings standards is to enable exchange of knowledge and develop a deep understanding of young people's experiences and needs amongst Panel Members. CHS Learning Academy involves young people from Who Cares? Scotland on day five of the national pre-service training programme for all new Panel Members. Children and young people are also involved in role playing a hearing on Day 1 of the training. Our Area Support Teams across the country regularly include care experienced young people in local training events. Training events for Panel Members which include presentations and discussions with young people are held at least annually in most of the 22 Area Support Team localities.

ASTs work closely with Champions Boards who are well placed to facilitate young people's involvement in local training events. Topics are diverse; they have included exploration of young people's experiences of hearings and of different forms of care, the value of advocacy for young people and how to break the cycle of offending. There are also opportunities for young people and Panel Members to meet and talk at other, less formal events. For example Central and West Lothian AST have planned a 'Picnic with a Panel Member' event to take place in October 2019.

The AST in Central and West Lothian hold an annual event with their local "Having Your Say Group". In addition Grangemouth High School drama group delivered a workshop to 60 Panel Members in the Falkirk area in 2017, presenting the views of care experienced young people within their school. Not only did the session inform Panel Member participants, but pupils at the school also gained a greater understanding of the challenges faced by their care experienced fellow students. In 2018 in Falkirk five young people delivered a workshop to 139 Panel Members. Another event was held in May 2019 with 23 Panel Members and six young people where the number of participants was capped to avoid the young people feeling overwhelmed.

In West Dunbartonshire AST in March 19 the local Champions Board Co-ordinator and two care experienced young people presented their work to 35 local Panel Members as part of a day long local learning and development event. Last year's event in Inverclyde involved five care experienced young people from a local support group established in 2017, 'Proud2Care', who talked to 20 Panel Members about their experiences.

Since 2017 East Renfrewshire have run four training events for Panel Members involving young people from different organisations including the local Youth Intensive Support Service, Who Cares? Scotland and the Champions Board. The latter was an interactive event supported by Comedy & Confidence, a Paisley-based project providing education through performance, with the aim of increasing PMs' understanding of young people's experiences.

During 'Care Experienced Week' in October 2018, Renfrewshire AST ran a training event in partnership with CELCIS, Clan Childlaw and Who Cares? Scotland with ten care experienced young people, eight AST members and over forty local Panel Members. The event celebrated the Year of Young People, examined current practice in children's hearings and looking at changing future practice. Two discussion workshops took place; one discussed continuing care, the Care Leavers Covenant and the legal rights of young people, and the second considered the implications of sibling separation and the effects of this on children and young people.

In November 2018 in Midlothian the Champions Board provided a briefing for approximately fifty Panel Members on creative ways of obtaining the views of children and young people at hearings through use of a digital app. The AST also asked young people to help plan their 2019 annual training day for all local Panel Members.

Young people are also involved in Better Hearings development work in East Renfrewshire. During 2019 East Renfrewshire's multi-agency Better Hearings implementation group has worked closely with Who Cares? Scotland to gather perceptions from children and young people about

being referred to and attending a children's hearing, from the point of receiving reports to after the hearing ends and beyond. Focus groups from Champions Board and Mini Champs gave views which were collated by the Who Cares? Scotland worker. Their report informed future plans and work for change. The Area Convener and Locality Reporter Manager presented the report, and the action planned in response, to the Champions Board, and will report back to the Champions Board after each Better Hearings meeting. Work has already begun on planning a learning event with young people's involvement to take place in early 2020.

Recruitment of Panel Members

Better Hearings is founded on promoting effective engagement and participation of young people in every aspect of the work of the children's hearings system. Enabling local young people to participate in recruitment activity at national and local level is a high priority for CHS. For Panel Member recruitment in 2019, CHS has produced a Toolkit for recruitment of new Panel Members including a detailed step-by-step guide to involving young people and answers to FAQs to support ASTs to do so. The guidance is framed around the inclusion of young people, recognising their capacity to contribute to decision-making in finding the best people possible to become new Panel Members, and supporting them to do so in a respectful way. Young people with lived experience of care also worked closely with CHS to create a campaign video explaining what makes a good Panel Member.

In Tayside the Area Support Team have collaborated with staff from Carolina House Trust which hosts the Champions Board to include and integrate young people into this year's recruitment of new Panel Members. Four young People on the Dundee Champions Board stepped forward. One of the Project Leads from the Charity is care experienced and has helped plan how best to empower the young people to participate to maximum effect. All the recruitment information has been shared and young people are invited to participate in all the recruitment with an equal say and contribution. They attended a full day AST Development session, met the AST recruitment team and are paired with the Panel Member representatives to review interview questions, oversee group discussions and agree how interviews will be evaluated. A young person will be present on every one to one interview for recruitment of new Panel Members for Tayside. Young people's voices and views are given as much weight as staff and volunteers when choosing Panel Members.

Monitoring the chairing of Children's Hearings

Children's Hearings are complex. Each Panel member plays their part in managing the hearing and ensuring that the child or young person understands what will happen and that they can participate as fully as possible in conversations about their future. The chair of the hearing is required by law to do certain things, or make sure that they are done. Area Conveners across Scotland have reported different arrangements for chairing hearings at local level. Local diversity is appropriate in some circumstances, but a national approach is needed to make sure that the children's hearing system delivers reliable arrangements, to reduce the likelihood of system failure, and to provide a consistent experience for all participants.

In 2018 the National Convener chaired a short life working group from the CHS community on chairing Children's Hearings. The Group developed a national policy on the chairing of Children's Hearings, and approved associated practice guidance which clarified expectations of existing and new Panel members. The group confirmed the existing well-established policy that all Panel Members should participate in chairing hearings when trained to do so. In 2019 CHS introduced extra training and support over the next two years to increase confidence amongst all Panel Members in chairing hearings. These arrangements include additional training, mentoring support and observed practice for Panel Members who do not already chair hearings. CHS will review the impact, drawing on the routine monitoring of hearings by Panel Practice Advisors and a baseline assessment of AST performance by the Area Support and Improvement Partners.

Helping you give your views

Feedback from children and young people tells us they want to know in advance who they will see in their hearing to help them feel more comfortable and better able to take part "...because you are facing three strangers who sit and stare at you and talk about you" (Scottish Executive, 2006).

In response, a number of areas now have Panel Member Profiles in their Hearing centres. This lets children and young people see who will be their panel members and learn a little about them before they go into the hearing. Stirling have adopted this approach as have East Lothian, Aberdeen and a number of other areas. This is being extended across Scotland throughout the coming year.



A 8 week trial of Panel Member Profiles in Glasgow generated around 60 responses. 100% of the children and young people and their families said that they found benefit from having the pictures and being able to see in advance some information and images of the Panel Members ahead of their hearing.

One response from a carer stated that the young person they looked after, who has an autism spectrum condition and had not previously felt able to come into the hearing room, was able to do so because they had been able to "see" the Children's Panel Members in advance. The carer was delighted with this change.

Bill Evans, Lead Panel Representative said "When we began this process my marker was if we can help one child to feel more at ease about entering the Hearing room then it is worthwhile."

SCRA Glasgow has followed suit recently and now also provide Reporter profiles at the Bell Street Hearing Centre.

Decisions

Within **West Lothian**, Children's Panel Members take part in a 'Having Your Say' session with a group of young people from the local authority area. The purpose of this is to **better inform** Panel members' practice in Hearings.

The young people are allocated one of the Panel Member development sessions and Anne Johnston, one of the Panel Practice Advisors, works with them to develop an event on a topic chosen by them and in a way which they themselves decide.

Sessions have involved an interactive exploration of the European Convention on Human Rights as it relates to Children's Hearings, discussion about what makes a good Panel Member from the perspective of the young people, and things the young people didn't like about attending a hearing

with possible solutions being developed together on the day. The sessions are well attended by Children's Panel Members. They are designed to be fun but hard hitting.

Carol Murchison, Panel Member West Lothian commented that "The positivity and confidence displayed by the young people is great."

Another fantastic initiative seen in West Lothian has been the Communication Hot Tips booklet. This is aimed at all Panel Members and provides them with a summarised version of many key learning resources



Hearings decisions and what happens next and your rights

Understanding your rights is an area that all partners need to ensure are respected and promoted. When children and young people are being prepared to come to a hearing it is very important that they know what their rights are. A very short, child friendly animation was produced by SCRA to help young people to understand these and to signpost them (and their workers) to where to find more information. The animation was launched on Tuesday 20 November 2018 to mark Universal Children's Day.



Planning and good governance

One of the key elements of the Better Hearings programme is that a group or mechanism is identified in each area to bring together **operational knowledge** of what is actually happening at grassroots level as well as the **strategic management** overview necessary to commit to change and improvement.

Broadly, there have been two approaches to the creation of the multi-agency groups. In most areas a discrete Better Hearings group has been created whilst in others work has been directed through mechanisms already in place such as Corporate Parenting groups.

Each area determines what works best for them locally:

Glasgow was the first to model its own CHIP, bringing together partners from every element of the Children's Hearings System with significant buy in and progress noted in its recent and first **annual report**. This model has worked to date for Glasgow and two other areas have now adopted this approach.

A second approach takes the national CHIP model and broadens it across local authority areas. **Lanarkshire** have taken this approach seeing the benefits of sharing resources, shared learning and consistency of approach. This new, wider partnership group is committed to working together to deliver the newly merged plan.

Dumfries and Galloway have opted for a **participative approach** to the development of their Better Hearings group and their plan is guided by the views of children and young people with input from Advocacy Service 'Hear 4 U'. This has been a feature of the work of the multi-agency Better Hearings group from the outset and has been extremely helpful in developing their improvement plans.

Lindsay Abrines, Locality Reporter Manager for SCRA in Dumfries and Galloway said: "Hear 4 U are excellent and they have current and up to date views from young people about their hearings, prior to, during and after. Involving them from the beginning has been helpful." The current action plan is to be reworded to be more child friendly and more relevant.

Inputs to improvement

All local areas have plans in place setting out the changes they will make. In many areas the local partnerships have recognised the importance of multi-agency training and of learning together. At a national level there are many inputs to take this work forward, to support the local areas and to drive strategic change. These inputs provide wraparound support that will benefit those working to deliver Better Hearings.

Supporting inputs

The successful delivery of Better Hearings across Scotland relies on local areas identifying their points for improvement, planning the actions and delivering the change. Alongside this work are local and national provisions to support this in the form of training, feedback, challenge and direction.

There have been some fantastic examples of local training events and multi-agency learning and there are plans for packages of national training that can be rolled out in local areas – through input and through collaborative learning.

Social Work services and SCRA in Glasgow and Dundee have developed protocols which agree respective responsibilities in working with each other in order to improve the smooth running of the system.

Dumfries and Galloway also has a protocol agreed to by a range of partners which helps to guide professionals how to amicably resolve any operational disagreements to achieve the best outcome for the child or young person.

Some examples of the national learning support:

CHS Learning Academy – supporting Panel Member training and ongoing learning

CHIP Learning and Development – development of material, training packages and delivery to provide multi-agency support and learning

Scottish Government Improvement Team – delivering 3-step methodology training to focus delivery partners on outcomes

Focus on learning together

Imperative to the Better Hearings standards is the need for all partner agencies to understand each other's role, contribution and responsibilities. Partners have to work together effectively and efficiently in a supportive and respectful way.

To support this a suite of learning materials has been developed.

As part of the CHIP learning and development work stream, learning events were developed to bring partners together – at a practitioner.

Two pilot sessions have taken place providing a space in a local area where front line practitioners from a variety of CHIP partner agencies could learn alongside each other; have time to discuss and reflect on current issues and practice, develop positive professional relationships, agree areas for development and plan tests of change to drive improvements.

The pilot areas were Glasgow North East and North Lanarkshire with participants that included Panel Members, Teachers, Health Workers, Police, Reporters, Safeguarders, Social Workers and Solicitors. We are now planning a wider roll-out of this learning.

Feedback from participants:-

I just wanted to thank you for all the hard work you put into the three day learning event which I thought was very thought provoking and educational in addition to clearly identifying the need for us all to collaborate more closely in bringing improvements to the system. There is no doubt that all who attended will benefit from the focus on all the elements which go together to make a child's journey through the system better and less traumatic.

I learned so much about the Children's Hearings System, reflected on my own experiences and have found the whole experience incredibly valuable. Success depends on all agencies working as closely together as possible and I really found it so helpful listening to the thoughts and experiences of others. This experience will certainly impact positively on my practice. THANK YOU!

Focus on local learning: Ayrshire

A number of areas have focussed on tri-partite training, bringing together SCRA, CHS and Social Work for some focussed work around the smooth management of the Hearing to achieve the best outcomes.

Ayrshire's action plan identified that refresher training was needed in their area around excusing children from Hearings and on non-disclosure for both Panel Members and social workers.

Erica Edwards, the Area Convenor for the Ayrshire AST and Drew Maxwell, a Team Manager in North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership, came together with Helen Etchells, LRM in Ayrshire, to develop the training. With inputs from panel representatives, they worked together to develop a presentation on the law and practice in these areas and to create scenarios for group discussion.

All Panel Members, social workers, and all reporters, senior practitioners and assistant reporters were invited. The uptake was excellent and there was in excess of 70 participants on the night. Participants were split into smaller groups of about 12 for discussion of the scenarios and careful planning went into ensuring an even mix of Panel Members, social workers and Reporters across all groups.

The evening was a great success, providing the opportunity to build empathy and understanding across the different roles.

In addition to refreshing key knowledge, the opportunity to meet outside a Children's Hearing and to share views and experiences was identified as one of the key benefits of the evening. Across the board, feedback was extremely positive.

The same format was successfully repeated with South and East Ayrshire Panel Members.

Subjects for the next tripartite sessions have been identified and now has a regular place in the training calendar in Ayrshire.

Focus on improvement:

In order to support the implementation of the Better Hearing action plans, SCRA has provided all Locality Reporter Managers with the opportunity to attend a training event on Improvement Science. This was led by the Improvement Science Team from Scottish Government in May 2019.

A follow up is scheduled for November 2019 at which the members of the multi-agency groups will be invited to work together on their improvement plans. This should help agencies to drive change and also measure improvement in order that we can all see and share what works.

Catriona Hayes from the Government Improvement Science Team said: "Applying an improvement approach to Better Hearings will support local partnerships actions to truly understand their systems and processes, particularly in relation to participation and partnership."

The approach will support local groups to work towards shared aims by developing ideas that they can test and adapt and build into their ways of working to create better experiences for looked after children and their families.”

Key input

Of course one of the main sources of learning comes from **children and young people** – through effective participation with Champions Boards, Local focus groups and work with other children’s groups and organisations. The Better Hearings standards were developed to respond to what children, young people and practitioners had said would make coming to a hearing a better experience. It is therefore important that we continue to collaborate effectively as we go along. Are children and young people involved in the planning? Would they agree with your assessment or your areas for improvement?

There are a number of effective models for participation that agencies and professionals should consider when working with young people. This cannot be a tick box exercise of ‘consultation’.

Observations, issues and challenges for 2020.

Local areas all undertook a baseline assessment against the standards as agreed. This exercise identified for them the areas that they needed to prioritise in their planning.

Review of local plans highlighted that there was disparity across the country, both in terms of maturity of partnerships and ‘readiness to improve.’ A number of areas recognised that there was still much to be done in getting the basics right. The assessment exercise was a catalyst to have these conversations and work together on an approach to take improvement forward.

The standards describe good practice across areas that we are already working on; getting the basics right has to be the foundation from which we can improve.

The standards are guiding principles of good practice. Some are directly measurable. Some are about approach, ways of working and embedding best practice. To that end much of the activity is focussed on what can be done or put in place to realise the experience described by the standards. For example as part of a conversation with the young person to help them prepare for attending a hearing, workers should address a number of the standards; Talk to you about who will be there and why they have been invited, let you know that you can bring someone with you, ask you how you would like to give your views...

To support this, areas are putting in place preparation guidelines (or similar) to provide a framework for these conversations. On an individual basis areas should demonstrate the supports they have in place to enable these discussions.

When reviewing the plans that localities have in place, there is a wealth of commitments however much of these look to describe ‘business as usual’ processes;

For some areas this is because these things are not currently happening and are therefore in the plans as actions, in other areas, this is because these things are already in place but have been put in the plans in response to the standards. This is definitely worth reflecting on – firstly we can’t assume that business as usual is just that and secondly, it is worth considering the expected response to or reporting against standards that are business as usual – e.g. there will be no perceived action against these.

This is an area that we will look to build upon in the next year – a focussed effort on the improvement areas or areas of innovation and a further look at mechanisms for assurance.

Many areas have taken on the task and really looked to develop the required mechanisms to successfully deliver. However there are still issues and barriers in others – to engagement in some, and in collective ownership in many more. This requires some attention from the national strategic group - the signed off project plan asked that every area had an identified multi-agency group in place to take forward the work, a lead/chair and develop planning and reporting mechanisms.

SCRA's Locality Reporter Managers were tasked initially with bringing together the multi-agency group and leading out the baseline assessment. Other partner agencies now have an opportunity to lead local implementation and development of the next stage of improvement planning.

There now requires to be greater governance around the planning, monitoring and evaluating of local work with clear lines of accountability to the CHIP. An agreed reporting mechanism is needed to enable local progress to be more visible and enable dissemination more widely in a regular national update. This will allow a snapshot at a given point in time of the up-to-date progress of Better Hearings standards implementation across the country. This will also enhance communication across local areas where the groups could work together or adopt or adapt the progress made in other areas to their own needs. It will also draw out areas requiring additional strategic support and direction.

Recommendation:

It is proposed that by the end of March and September in each year the chair of the local multi-agency group will oversee the submission of updated plans. These will identify progress to date and improvement aims for the coming months. These will then form the basis of a progress report to be submitted to the multi-agency Children's Hearing Improvement Partnership during June and December.

Much valuable progress taking place locally, led by partners working with a shared aim towards improving the hearings' experience. It is critical that progress continues and more national support is available to complement this. Much of this report has focused on what is happening and what will happen next.

The next challenge is how best to measure the impact of improvements which these changes will bring about. Local areas will be asked to think about how best to do that. The Scottish Government Improvement Science Team will work with those local groups taking up the offer of training to meet together as a multi-agency group to pursue their improvement aims with guided support and coaching.

What's next?

Some examples of what is coming next:

In East Renfrewshire the Area Support Team are working with the Champions Board to develop a joint video aimed at supporting children and young people attending hearings and to help build a better understanding and rapport between Panel Members, children and young people. This is at the planning stage at time of writing. When it comes to fruition the video will provide a focus for a relaunch of the updated Better Hearings plans later in the year... watch this space.

Dumfries and Galloway are working with Council education staff to have information packs available for all looked after children within schools, and ensure that every looked after child has access to a computer.

Children's Hearings Scotland has recruited nine local professional staff to support volunteer members of each Area Support Teams (ASTs) in running their local Children's Panel, and foster consistency and quality in all aspects of Panel Members' practice. The new Area Support and

Improvement Partners (ASIPs) will participate in local multi-agency partnerships, strengthen the contribution of Children's Panel members to Better Hearings implementation and support effective development of Panel Members' practice and the conduct of Children's Hearings. This significant investment increases the resource available to local ASTs and is designed to complement, not replace, the input from local Area Convenors, Panel Representatives and Children's Panel Learning and Development Co-ordinators.

In response to the views of children and young people that they find it difficult to have to re-tell their story to new strangers at every Hearing, CHS have put in place new arrangements to increase the frequency of Panel Member continuity at Children's Hearings. This would mean one of the Panel Members at a child's Hearing will be present at the next Hearing if the child or the Children's Panel think this would be helpful. This may be particularly helpful where the Hearing dates may be close together.

Many areas have identified an aim to review and improve the quality of reports whether these be shared multi agency reports or the social work Social Background Report. One area that is tackling this in 19/20 is Perth and Kinross. The Social Work department has developed a questionnaire that social workers are issuing to panel members, and other professionals asking for feedback about the use/quality of their reports. Questionnaires are also provided to children and young people to assess and improve their experience of the hearing from their perspective. The findings of these surveys will be used to inform their review.

Another key theme from the work this year has been around Hearings management. In response to this, the new CHS Learning Academy has expanded the potential to support and train panel members to develop their skills in chairing Hearings. The Management of Hearings course – an integral part of the Professional Development Award which all new Panel Members must complete – sets out what is expected of all Panel Members and the chairing member in particular during a

Hearing. CHS also now have a new course - Leadership in the hearing room - which will further develop Panel Members' Hearings management skills.

The Better Hearings standards promote the need to keep the young person at the centre of the hearing's focus; the Hearing should be considering how best to help them give their views, and how they want it to run, if they attend. SCRA are undertaking an exciting piece of work to look at more effective participation will get underway fully in 2019/20 with a large piece of research being undertaken to support and inform this as well as internal testing of suggested methods of participating and contributing views from work to date with young people ... updates to follow!

Stop / Go from the Independent Care Review

The Independent Care Review presented to CHIP the STOP/GO findings that had been prepared by the working group and that were ready to let agencies respond to. This listed a number of findings/recommendations that were seen to require no further investigative work and the request was for agencies to 'get moving' on them. In responding to this list, CHIP lined up the findings against the work of Better Hearings and were able to see clear alignment. Through this the standards for Better Hearings are further, theoretically, endorsed having been given yet another steer as to what is being asked by children and young people (and it is what we are currently working towards) as well now been given a sharper focus with the Care Review actively monitoring agencies response to this ask. Through this ask, we are invited by the Care Review to put forward areas that we are looking to 'test for change' aligned to the STOP/GO and for us, Better Hearings.

Reflections and conclusion

The most outstanding feature of the Better Hearings standards implementation project has been the willingness, right across the Children's Hearings System, of everyone to work together. Where this has been maximised the more improvements have been made and the more these improvements have become the norm in day to day practice. There is aspiration and ambition to do better. And there is real enthusiasm for change driven by a commitment to delivering Better Hearings for Scotland's most vulnerable children and young people.

Appendix A The next steps towards Better Hearings – Standards

1. Before the Hearing –

(a) planning your hearing

- Let you know 15 days in advance where and when your Hearing will happen.
- Make sure you have all the papers you need for your Hearing 5 days before it.
- Ask if you would like to visit the Hearings Centre before you come for your Hearing.
- Before your hearing we will talk to you about how the hearing should be managed and how you would like to give your views and do what we can to make sure this happens.
- Tell you who will be there and explain why they have been invited.
- We will ask you if you know you can bring someone to the hearing with you.
- Ask whether you want to attend in person - You have a right to attend your Hearing, and you also have a right not to attend.

(b) Reports and Information for your hearing

- Ask for your views when writing reports and make sure that they are included.
- Make sure that the information we send you is clear and understandable.
- Focus on the current issues in your life in reports for your Hearing.
- Make sure that the professionals coming to your Hearing have shared information so that they are fully prepared and can best support you.
- Respect your confidentiality by keeping your information safe and making sure those that only those who need to will see it.

During the Hearing -

(a) Safety and Privacy

- We will do all we can to help you feel safe and that you are safe when you are in the Hearings Centre .
- Provide a private space if you ask for one.

(b) Managing the Hearing

- Make sure that your Hearing will start and finish on time, or last only as long as necessary.
- Make sure panel members at your Hearing explain at the very start why it is being held, the issues to be talked about and who will speak about them – so that this is clear to everyone. The Chairperson will ask everyone to explain who they are and why they are there.
- Discuss things during the Hearing that are currently important and relevant.
- Make sure all discussions during the Hearing are as short, clear and understandable as possible

(c) Helping you give your views

- Ask you how you would like to give your views in the Hearing (e.g. speaking to you first, speaking to the Panel Members alone or with a representative or advocate speaking for you) and make sure this happens. If you do not want to give your views we will respect that.
- Make sure that you are at the centre of your Hearing and everyone else will respect that.

(d) Decisions

- Clearly explain the decisions made and what your rights are.
- Make decisions that are in your best interests, although you might not always agree with them.
- Make sure you have the chance to ask any questions and that these are answered.

After the Hearing

(a) Hearings decisions and what happens next

- Make sure that straight after your Hearing someone will answer any questions you have and explain what the decision means (e.g. where you stay and how often you can see people who are important to you i.e. contact).
- Send you the written decision within 5 days and answer any questions you might have.
- Make sure the written decision is clear and understandable.
- Include the Hearing's decision in your Child's Plan and make sure your Plan properly reflects it.

(b) Your rights

- Provide a private space for you to speak to people after the Hearing.
- Explain your rights to disagree and challenge the decision (this is called an appeal) and how to do this.
- Explain your right to request another Hearing (this is called an early review) and how to do this.
- Help you to ask for another Hearing.
- Listen to you about what would make your next Hearing better and make sure this happens.

The Children's Hearings System

The Children's Hearings System is the place where important decisions are made about how best to support and protect our most vulnerable children and young people.

A number of organisations work together within the Children's Hearings System to deliver care, protection and support services to children and young people in Scotland and these include: Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS), social work, the police, education and the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA).

Children and young people can be referred to the Children's Hearings System by anyone. Professionals or members of the public refer children because they are at risk of harm and need legal protection. This can be as a result of not getting the care they need or because of problems caused by a child or young person's behaviour which affects their welfare and development such as offending, truancy or self-harm.

Referrals into the system are made to the Children's Reporter. Over three quarters of referrals are because professionals think that a child needs care and protection. These children and young people face many different types of adversity and trauma such as physical and emotional neglect, domestic abuse, parental substance use, mental health concerns and physical and sexual abuse. The remainder of referrals are concerned with children and young people's behaviour.

When a young person is referred because they have committed an offence, they are treated in the same way as a child referred because of concerns about their safety or welfare. The children's hearing system looks at the whole child and all their personal, family and social circumstances within the framework of GIRFEC assessment and intervention.

When a referral has been received, the Reporter has a legal duty to carry out an investigation to establish what evidence appears to exist. If there is sufficient evidence, the Reporter has a duty to examine the child or young person's circumstances to allow them to determine the best course of action for the individual child or young person. This includes obtaining reports from schools, social work or other agencies involved with the child or young person or their family, such as doctors and health visitors.

Every child and young person is dealt with on an individual basis, and the Reporter's decision will depend on what they have learned from their investigations.

The Reporter can make one of a number of decisions, including referring a child or young person to a Hearing - If the Reporter thinks that compulsory supervision may be necessary then he or she will arrange a children's hearing. Where the Reporter considers there is no need for compulsory measures of supervision, he or she can refer the child back to the local authority for support, including advice and guidance on a voluntary basis.

A children's Hearing is a decision-making tribunal which is made up of three lay members of the community – a Children's Panel. Children's Panel Members are volunteers who live or work in the local authority area in which the Hearing takes place. They are specially selected because they have a lot of skills and life experience and they undergo intensive training before they participate in a Children's Hearing. They complete a professional development award accredited by the Scottish Qualifications Authority.

A Compulsory Supervision Order is a legal order made by the Panel Members at Children's Hearing. The order must say which local authority will provide supervision to the child and how long it will last for. A Compulsory Supervision Order can last for up to twelve months.

9,206
children
and young people
on CSOs

12,869
children and young
people referred

14 and
15 years
is the most common
age of referral

562
children and
young people on
CPOs

24.6% with
a CPO were aged
under 20 days old

lack of
**parental
care** is the most
common ground

Children 1st - The Performance and Support Monitoring Framework

The Performance and Support Monitoring Framework for Safeguarders provides for three support sessions per Safeguarder per year undertaken by the Safeguarder's support manager. Support sessions involve a positive and genuine exploration of practice and help to ensure that Safeguarders are working to the Practice Standards for Safeguarders, including Practice Standard 4: Reports. Two of the support sessions each include an in-depth discussion of a sample report as written by the Safeguarder. Each report is randomly selected from those held by SCRA. The 'report sampling tool' is used as part of this process.

If a complaint about a Safeguarder has a focus on a Safeguarder's report, then the SPT can consider the report to see if it meets the Practice Standards for Safeguarders. This consideration may or may not ultimately lead to the complaint being upheld. If it is upheld, the outcome of the complaint investigation will be used to have a discussion with the Safeguarder about their report(s) and to ensure the Practice Standards are being met. If it is not upheld, the outcome may still be used in this way depending on the circumstances of each complaint. The SPT is empowered to obtain a Safeguarders report from SCRA at any time for the purposes of looking into concerns and complaints about Safeguarders.



CELCS

Centre for Excellence for Looked after Children in Scotland – a force for change for children and young people in care



Children 1st

Scotland's National Children's Charity. Working towards a happy, healthy, safe and secure childhood for all children in Scotland.



Children's Hearings Scotland

Children's Hearings Scotland – national body supporting Children's Panel members and local AST volunteers to help improve outcomes for children and young people



COPFS

The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) is Scotland's prosecution service. They receive reports about crimes from the police and other reporting agencies and then decide what action to take, including whether to prosecute someone.



COSLA

The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) is the national association of Scottish councils and acts as an employer's association for its 28 member authorities.



Education Scotland

Education Scotland is an Executive Agency of the Scottish Government, tasked with improving the quality of the country's education system.



Includem

Charity supporting some of Scotland's most troubled and vulnerable young people 24/7 – helping them when they are most in need.



NHS Scotland

NHS Health Scotland is a national Health Board working with public, private and third sectors to reduce health inequalities and improve health.



Police Scotland

Police Scotland is committed to keeping people safe throughout the whole country.



Scottish Government

The devolved government for Scotland has a range of responsibilities which include: health, education, justice, rural affairs, housing and the environment.



Scottish Social Services Council

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is the regulator for the social service workforce in Scotland. Our work means the people of Scotland can count on social services being provided by a trusted, skilled and confident workforce.



SCRA

SCRA's vision: to transform the life chances of vulnerable children and young people in Scotland, by ensuring their needs are at the centre of everything we do.



Safeguarders Panel

Working with the Scottish Government, and all those involved in the Children's Hearing System to ensure that a child's best interests are at the heart of any children's hearing or related court proceeding.



Scottish Legal Aid

SLAB is responsible for considering applications from solicitors to represent children and adults in the children's hearing system at panel hearings and in court and for paying those solicitors



Scottish Courts

The *Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service* (SCTS) is the body which is responsible for the administration of the court system and tribunal system of Scotland.



The Centre for Youth & Criminal Justice (CYCJ)

The Centre for Youth & Criminal Justice (CYCJ) is dedicated to supporting improvements in youth justice, contributing to better lives for individuals, families and communities across Scotland.



ar n-èisteachdan, **ar guth**
our hearings, **our voice**

Our Hearings, Our Voice

Creating a children and young people's board for the Children's Hearings System

Produced by the Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership
(CHIP), October 2019



Evaluation sheets summary

1. Did the training provide you with a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of partner agencies?

Yes 76 No 0

2. What did you find most helpful?

- Other people's opinions and thoughts
- Multi-agency representation / presence of solicitors / videos / ability to discuss
- Meeting other agencies, particularly solicitors, and sharing views
- Roles and responsibilities of other professionals
- The roles explained and the opportunity to speak to other participants
- Information on the view of the child
- Breakdown of all roles and professionals involved in Children's Hearings
- Opportunity for discussion among agencies / YPs videos very thought provoking (SCRA)
- Meeting other professionals / understanding & clarify on roles
- Videos of roles / sitting at tables with mixed professionals
- The discussion between all agencies, their views and honest input
- Finding out other people's roles and responsibilities and hearing their views
- The group discussions were helpful (although sometimes hard to hear due to group size). Hearing from Theighan was most helpful and powerful
- Hearing viewpoints of other professionals
- Group discussion – the opportunity to hear perspectives of other professionals
- YPs video
- It was all very helpful, especially Theighan
- Hearing the views of young people / having the opportunity to discuss with other agencies
- The videos – professional and informative
- Understanding of who is involved / hearing YPs experiences
- Voices of YP / breakdown of all the roles involved in a children's hearing
- YP input
- Role specific information and discussion
- Hearing C&YP views
- Group discussion
- Multi-agency discussions
- Listening to the views of YP
- Table discussions / feedback from YP
- Discussion regarding the Charter / discussion re lawyers and advocates
- Hearing the views of other professionals
- Sitting in mixed groups / input from Theighan and other YP videos
- Group work discussions with partner agencies / hearing different views
- Open honest interaction offering better understanding of each other's roles
- Outline of agencies roles and responsibilities
- Understanding each person's role and the difficulties / pressures they face at each hearing

- Views of YP / explanation of roles
- YP's views
- Different views of all professionals / roles
- Explanation of roles
- Understanding other people's roles helped me reflect on my own practice
- Discussion with other professionals
- Multi-agency discussion / how I can support other colleagues and families in the process
- Multi-agency discussion / hearing from YP
- YP video and gaining an understanding of their view and feelings when attending hearings
- Views of YP very powerful and brings focus back to the child and why we need to make changes
- Discussing roles and responsibilities with other colleagues
- Discussion with other agencies / input for YP
- The videos and discussion
- Videos / networking
- Feedback from YP
- YP input & avatars
- Hearing everyone's views and what they can do to make sure the children are at the centre.
- Info re role of the chair
- YP views / mix of professionals
- Learning the views of the different agencies involved
- Mix of professionals made for interesting and informative discussions
- The clarity given to the roles was helpful
- Hearing views of C&YP
- Hearings views of YP and what they would like professionals to do differently
- Multiagency discussions
- Discussions / networking
- Video summaries

3. What did you find least helpful?

- Would have liked more time
- Size of tables / amount of people – not enough time to explore all points
- Hearing each other in large group was a bit difficult
- Noise in room
- Time constraints for discussion
- Maybe added value for YP to have been at each table (older reflective YP like Theighan)
- Could have been a full day + group feedback
- More YP input
- Shorter sessions
- Long morning / longer break would have helped
- How crammed it was
- Not including foster cares in the different roles involved

- Policy / legislation / background discussion, however perhaps this was helpful for roles
- Size of the training – might have been better over a couple of sessions
- No rep from all organisations at tables
- Square tables – round tables would have helped hearing everyone / perhaps slightly smaller groups
- Registration waiting and lack of handouts
- Not enough space / lack of packs

4. Did you feel you had sufficient time to consider each of the topics?

Yes 64 No 12

5. Detail one thing you will do differently after today's training?

- Have a more in depth pre-hearing discussion (PM)
- Push for better time management at hearings (PM)
- Listen harder to every child at the hearing (PM)
- More children attending to give their views (PM)
- Respect other agencies (PM)
- Avoiding protracting discussion (PM)
- Think more about how best to speak to the child alone (PM)
- Consider the roles of everyone involved (PM)
- Consider how to manage a hearing and try to ensure understanding (PM)
- Consider timing of hearings (SCRA)
- Promote child's participation in the hearing process (SCRA)
- Even more emphasis on preparation (SW)
- Reports to be more child friendly (SW)
- ask for the Child's plan to be reviewed (SW)
- Prepare a child and family more fully, considering all eventualities (SW)
- Prepare families for Hearings in more detail (SW)
- Ensure child/YP has awareness of advocacy and opportunity to have their views heard (SW)
- Reducing the "brief family backgrounds" section in reports (if appropriate) (SW)
- Be more mindful of everyone's role / the hearing is not punitive – nice reminder (SW)
- Ensure that children and parents are more prepared (SW)
- Help YP be better prepared for Hearings (SW)
- Be more mindful of the bigger picture for the child and how decisions will ultimately impact their futures. (SW)
- Ensure child's view is always heard (SW)
- Consider my language and use of jargon (SW)
- Consider the language I use in reports and when speaking to C&YP (SW)
- Talk to YP about who they would like to attend their hearing (SW)
- Think about sibling contact (SW)
- Reflect on my role in hearings going forward (SW)

- Think about better preparation for hearings (SW)
- Prepare children and families for hearings (SW)
- Clearer recommendations (SW)
- Focus on prep for hearings and ensuring staff have adequate time (SSW)
- Talk to staff more about prep and attending hearings (SSW)
- Communication / time keeping (SSW)
- Less jargon in reports (HV)
- Refer to GIRFEC – always taking consideration of the children's feelings / wants (HV)
- Attend more hearings (HV)
- Keeping to time in completing reports – be concise (HV)
- Liaise more with SW and reporter (HV)
- Give concise, factual information (HV)
- Prepping client as to conduct at hearing (solicitor)
- I will be more child focused (solicitor)
- Be more aware of the process to support families better (DA group worker)
- Continue to ensure the voice of the C/YP is heard (LAC nurse)
- Ensure that I always have the child's best interests at heart (Ed)
- Provide feedback to pupil support teachers about the CHS (Ed)
- Ensure all young people are better informed about the process prior to and after a hearing (Ed)
- Increase focus on children's wellbeing and avoid distraction by parental issues
- Explaining things in a child friendly manner at hearings
- Remind those attending a hearing to speak respectfully to each other
- Be more mindful of engagement with partners, my role in hearings and my input – I will encourage and implement the Charter – child friendly language
- Think more about behaviours etc
- Focus more on the child and their views
- Look at ways of hearing child's voice in hearings in a more child friendly way
- Prepare families better for hearings and post hearing
- Ensure questions to SW about their reports are not perceived as challenging / rude and purely information gathering
- Clear and concise record keeping

Renfrewshire Better Hearings Action Plan – November 2019

Area for Improvement 1: Ensure High Quality Information Is Provided To Children's Hearings					
Areas for improvement	Key Improvement Actions	Owned By	Timescale		Measures of Success
			Start	End	
Before the Hearing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality assure reports provided for reporters and Children's Hearings. Communications and reports will be understood by children and young people Children's Views should always be available for Children's Hearings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial Case Sampling of reports to be completed to assess quality, ensure they are multi-agency and provide sufficient information and justification for robust decision making. Consider front page summary for reports and implement the Hearing Preparation Guidelines Implement the Hearing Preparation Guidelines 	SCRA / SW (Nicola / Karen) SW (Kevin / Caroline) SW / Advocacy (Kevin / Caroline / Donald / Selwyn)	Jan 2020 Jan 2020 Jan 2020	May 2020 May 2020 May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel members will be better prepared for hearings and have all the information they require All agencies will share ownership of single report Children and families will better understand hearing paperwork Hearing paperwork will clearly and accurately reflect the child's views
Area for Improvement 2: The Experience of Children and Young People Attending Hearings Will Be Improved.					
Areas for improvement	Key Improvement Actions	Owned By	Timescale		Measures of Success
			Start	End	
Before the Hearing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children will be prepared and understand the process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the Hearing Preparation Guidelines 	SW (Kevin / Caroline)	Jan 2020	May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children be less anxious and more engaged
During the Hearing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hearings will be well managed and run on time. Children should feel able to participate in their own hearings and feel that their views are listened to. Children should feel like the most important person at their hearing Those attending hearings will support and encourage the participation of children and young people and ensure the atmosphere at the hearings remains calm and supportive Advocacy services will be available where appropriate Minimising numbers of attendees at hearings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renfrewshire Charter to be drafted and launched and all professionals to sign up to adhere to this. New chairperson training to be considered to support and embed the Charter Development of a "feedback loop" to share issues – good and bad Local advocacy provision will be reviewed following publication of the national Scottish Government proposals. Trial training session around a mock hearing to be set up 	ALL CHS (Derek) CHS (Derek) SW / Advocacy Services SCRA (Andrew)	Nov 2019 Jan 2020 Nov 2019 Nov 2019 Nov 2019	Jan 2020 May 2020 May 2020 May 2020 Feb 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fewer Hearings will overrun Hearing will be less acrimonious C & YP will report that their experience at Hearings has improved. Children and YP report that they feel their voices are really being heard by those involved in Children's Hearings Advocacy will be available to all children who wish to access it
After the Hearing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and YP will understand the outcome of their hearing and know their rights Gathering feedback from children and young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the Hearing Preparation Guidelines Technological solution to collecting and analysing the feedback of children and young people to be devised. 	SW (Kevin / Caroline) SCRA / SW (Nicola / Caroline)	Jan 2020 Nov 2019	May 2020 May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and YP will understand the outcomes of children's hearings and understand their rights.
Area for Improvement 3: Delay in the Hearing process will be reduced.					
Areas for improvement	Key Improvement Actions	Owned By	Timescale		Measures of Success
			Start	End	
After the Hearing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimising delay at proof and appeal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan to be developed to tackle delay in the court process 	SCRA (Julie)	Nov 2019	May 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The time between a grounds hearing and a hearing reaching a decision on established grounds will be reduced

Summary of Feedback from Group work exercises

Charter

- Keep the child at the centre / treat each child as unique (even when dealing with a family)
- make the child feel comfortable and safe - be friendly
- everyone's views need to be taken into account – respect and listen to all views – accept there will be different views – don't speak over others – “respectful debate”
- respect and support the chair
- check / ensure understanding / don't use jargon
- be open and honest
- keep to time / keep focused
- behaviours – no shouting, swearing, screaming, raised voices, pointing, blaming
- being prepared

Hearing Prep guidelines

- One key person should support the child through the process
- Talk through the report with the child / ensure child understands why that are attending a hearing and who will be there
- Signpost child to SCRA website
- Identify any issues re timing of the hearing
- Capture the child's views – and consider how best these can be shared with the Hearing – more creative ways? – raise awareness of advocacy
- Consider question of speaking to the panel members on their own
- After the hearing – ensure understanding / rights etc. – ensure any questions answered

PM Chair Training

- Chair sets behaviour expectations (based on Charter?)
- Consider where we sit / let child choose?
- Keep to time (set focus / set expectations at the start?)
- Keep focused
- Chairs need to be stronger

Child friendly summary of reports

- clear concise jargon free / bullet point summaries

Preparation / quality

- IA process needs to happen / responsibility of all professionals to provide all the information required for the hearing
- Include positives
- Spend more time with children when formulating their child's plan
- Improved scheduling

Service	Role	Person within AST	Description	Names
Expenses	Claimant	Panel members	all volunteers including AST members	ALL
	Expense Approver	Clerk	Approves claims within their local area.	
	Expense Administrator	Clerk assistant	Can only export the CSV file of all approved claims (cannot actually approve them)	
Learning & Events	Participants	Panel members	All volunteers including AST members	ALL
	Local Event Manager	LDCs/LPRs	Can only create and view local events	
Collaboration	user	everyone	Everyone will be a user.	ALL
	Local organiser/admin	AC/DAC/LPR	Equivalent of managing a local workspace, will take the lead on local channels, chats and content.	
Complaints	Local Complaints Administrator	DAC/LPR	Full oversight of all local complaints. Can assign complaints to handlers for investigation within the AST.	
	Local Complaints Handler	PPA	Individual responsible for managing and investigating the complaint.	
Concerns	Local Concerns Administrator	DAC/LPR	Full oversight of all local concerns. Can assign concerns to handlers for investigation within the AST.	
	Local Concerns Handler	PPA	Individual responsible for managing and investigating the concern.	
	Concern Raiser	Panel members	Any member of the CHS community who wishes to raise a concern via the community hub.	
Observations	Panel Member	Panel members	All panel members can view their own reports and view their observations as well as acknowledge the reports.	ALL
	Observer	PPA	The only person that can create and publish reports and can access the observations history/training history and view comments back from the panel members.	
	Observations Rota Manager	PPA rota manager	Can schedule observations, assign observers to hearings sessions. Can keep track of who needs observed.	
Personal Details	Observations Reviewer	AC/DAC/LPR	Individuals who need to view all the PPA reports once published as part of the quality assurance element of the PPAs. (normally DAC/AC)	ALL
	User	Panel members	everyone can update their own.	
	Personal Details Viewer	Panel members	Everyone will have access to search for others within their AST.	
Recruitment	Personal Details Admin	Clerk/AC	You can update an individual's personal details by proxy.	
	Application Administrators	Clerk	Can do everything on applications, stage movement, editing etc.	
	Application Evaluators	AC/DAC/LPR	Can view redacted applications that are in a specific state for short listing purposes.	
Rota Management	Application Recommenders	AC	Area Convenors	ALL
	Panel Member	Panel members	Can add and amend their availability and request swaps on hearing sessions.	
	Rota Manager	Rota managers/ deal with swaps	Can view, add and amend panel member availability, can run reports, can create and publish rotas, can accept swaps, can create LOAs.	
Volunteer Mgt	Volunteer	Panel members	Can access all their personal details.	ALL
	Volunteer Manager	AC/DAC/LPR	Can arrange review meetings, create actions from review meetings, can add that someone is chair qualified, add an end of service can view LOAs.	



Area Convener/Area Partner Briefing Paper – Digital Meeting Wednesday 6 November 2019

Appendix A – Go Live Roll out Plans

Please find enclosed updates and information within this briefing on areas affecting the CHS community both from internal and external sources. Please do share and disseminate to your AST colleagues and panel members, as appropriate.

Please contact CHS directly if you should wish to discuss any area in greater detail.

Agenda:

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Welcome - 10-10.30am | |
| 2. Digital PPM – feedback on launch - 10.30-10.45 | Rosie Megginson |
| 3. Digital Programme – Update and launch Rationale – 10.45-11.15 | Lynne Harrison |
| 4. Engagement Update – 11.15-11.30 | Ian Campbell |
| 5. Break – 11.30-11.45 | |
| 6. Launch Support Resources and planning (training) – 11.45-12.15 | Nik Maclaren |
| 7. Rota Management – 12.15-12.45 | Nik Maclaren |
| 8. Lunch – 12.45-1.30 | |
| 9. Q&A Session – 1.30-14.00 | All |
| 10. AST Planning Group Work – 14.00-14.50 | All |
| 11. Next Steps – 14.50-15.20 | Lynne Harrison |
| 12. AOB - 15.20-15.30 | |

1. Digital Go Live Plans

As we fast approach the launch of the joint CHS & SCRA digital platform – CSAS by which it has been commonly known – it's now time for us to look at how we roll this out effectively within the community.

A key advantage to the new digital platform are the linked areas of functionality between CHS & SCRA. These are primarily:

1. Hearing Scheduling (SCRA)/Hearing Population (CHS Rota)
2. Input of Reasons & Decision into the Record of Proceedings (ROP)
3. Provision of electronic papers (Hearing Information Pack (HIP))

The CHS system as a whole will be referred to as the Community Hub, this will replace CHIRP and PanelPal.

Access will be through a single log in which will take you to the CHS Community Hub landing page from which you will be able to access:

- Expenses
- Rota Availability
- Observations
- Concerns
- Collaboration – local and national teams pages.
- PPM
- Email – new email addresses will be circulated in the coming months replacing the old childrenshearings.org.uk address.
- Any many more.

There are a few key work streams still ongoing however we can advise that for going live the system will hold:

- Training record from 2014
- 6 months rota/hearing allocations
- Current Personal details (Name address etc)

Proposed National Roll out Plan

The Community Hub will be launched from January 2020. To enable effective support for every AST at launch we propose to do this on a phased basis. The proposed national roll out plan is shown in Appendix I. This approach allows for areas to be given equal amounts of support of the phases from the national team and partners respectively. Some points below in how this approach will be adopted:

- The plan will roll out over 4 months (Jan – April '20) in a phased approach.
- Phasing includes a 'soft launch' in January of 2 ASTs: Edinburgh and Aberdeen City and the National Team/CHSLA to test the Go Live approach before larger scale roll out of 3 phases (Feb/March/April) across remaining ASTs.
- Phasing has been determined by a combination of the following factors to enable learning/best practice to be captured and fed into next phase:
 - Ramped % of Panel Member community access over the period
 - Mix of single & multi authority AST
 - CHS ASIP responsibilities/SCRA localities

In order to facilitate a seamless and effective delivery into each of the ASTs a comprehensive training and support structure has been devised:

- A full complement of Digital champions have been identified across all the ASTs – these individuals will take part in a full day training session to equip them with all the necessary skills to provide

support and guidance to anyone who requires it before, during and after go live. They will be given access to all the user guides and supporting documents as well as the online training modules (when these become available). We would anticipate them being the first port of call for panel members locally.

- There is a suite of 8 comprehensive online training modules being developed which will be available through the Learning Academy:
 - Overall Digital Programme: covers all the basic activities for a panel member.
 - Rota for Rota Managers
 - Observations & Quality Assurance
 - Digital for Volunteer Managers
 - Digital handling of Complaints and Concerns
 - Digital Collaboration
 - Digital Training and Events for Events Managers
 - Managing the digital Recruitment process

There are only 2 of the above that will be completed by panel members: Overall Digital Programme and Digital Collaboration. All the others are role based training depending on what activates you undertake within the AST.

User guides and supporting documents will be available for all the services for anyone who wishes to have these to supplement the online training.

- This will also be supported by face to face training targeted for AST and Panel Members

We will be discussing the plans in detail when we meet and this will provide you an opportunity to ask questions and gain a thorough understanding of the plan and how it will affect your AST. It will also provide an opportunity to work with us and your Area Partner to plan in more detail what launch week will look like for each of your areas – i.e. what you need from us to support a successful launch.

In order to operationalise a number of the above points there is some work required in gathering the information that will take place over the coming weeks and months with your help. Exciting and challenging times ahead which we will all play a part in.

Contact details:

Names: Nicola MacLaren

Contacts number: 07881 354775

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Appendix I CHS Proposed Digital Roll Out Plan:

Activity	Timing	AST	No of PMs	% PM Community (2530)	Single/Multi Authority	Partner/SCRA Locality
Soft Launch	Mid Jan	Aberdeen City Edinburgh National Team/CHSLA	111 178 55	11% *(excludes NT)	Single Authority AST Single Authority AST	Grampian South East Scotland
Group A	Feb '20	Glasgow Central & West Lothian East Dunbartonshire East Renfrewshire Dumfries & Galloway Fife	425 269 30 22 54 144	32%	Single Authority AST Multi Authority AST (2) Single Authority AST Single Authority AST Single Authority AST Single Authority AST	Glasgow Central & West Lothian North Strathclyde (AC) North Strathclyde (KM) Lanarkshire/D&G Tayside & Fife
Group B	March '20	North Lanarkshire South East Scotland Tayside Orkney Shetland Eilean Siar Renfrewshire West Dunbartonshire	119 138 172 14 14 21 89 69	25%	Single Authority AST Multi Authority AST (2) Multi Authority AST (3) Single Authority AST Single Authority AST Single Authority AST Single Authority AST Single Authority AST	Lanarkshire/D&G South East Scotland Tayside & Fife Highlands & Islands Highlands & Islands Highlands & Islands North Strathclyde (AC) North Strathclyde (KM)
Group C	April '20	Aberdeenshire Argyll & Bute Highland & Moray Inverclyde Ayrshire South Lanarkshire	105 45 166 54 159 132	32%	Single Authority AST Single Authority AST Multi Authority AST (2) Single Authority AST Multi Authority AST (3) Single Authority AST	Grampian North Strathclyde (AC) Highlands & Islands North Strathclyde (KM) Ayrshire Lanarkshire/D&G



Communication Matters – *It's a Two Way Street*

Top Communication Tips for Panel Members





“Communication Matters – It’s a Two Way Street

Saturday 16 March 2019

The aim of this Training Event was 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.

This leaflet will detail Top Tips provided by each of the workshop contributors and should serve as a handy reminder to Panel Members on ways in which they can improve practice whilst communicating with children and young people within the Hearing Room.

Dr Lorraine Lockhart

CAMHS

Communicating with children and young people –

5 top tips

1. Think about what you know about a child's development and use language appropriate to their developmental age and not their chronological age.
2. Use empathy – try to see things from the child's point of view and let them know you understand. If a child feels understood by you, they are more likely to trust you and will communicate better with you.
3. Consider a mix of open and closed questions. Try to avoid “why” questions wherever possible when communicating with children. Not all children have the thinking skills to understand why things happen (especially their own behaviour).
4. Adopt the help of someone who knows the child well. A familiar and safe adult can help to support a child or young person to communicate effectively.
5. Use simple and concrete language that avoids jargon. Children cannot understand complex language or hold as much information in their mind as adults. Keeping your questions short, simple and focussed will help the child to think through what they are being asked.





Mary Philliben & Louise Torrance

Language & Communication Disorders

Top Tips for supporting children with language and communication needs.

Support understanding:

- Use straight-forward language: avoid jargon
- Use words that everyone will understand
- Limit what you say
- Present one idea or instruction at a time
- Give processing time
- Show more, say less: demonstrate and use visuals, signs, photographs
- Avoid sarcasm and use humour carefully
- Ask for help if you are not sure of the child or YP's level of understanding

"Front load" them – prepare them for what will happen

Support talking:



Give them the opportunity to talk

Talk about what they are interested in

Give them time to respond

Ask open ended questions

Avoid multiple questions: ask once and wait

Avoid finishing their sentences

Repeat back to make sure you have understood what
they meant

Respond to what they say, not the way they say it

Don't pretend to understand





Dr Christine Jones

Stand Up for Siblings

TOP FIVE TIPS

- **Take time to understand who the child sees as their siblings (including non-biological) and what these relationships mean to the child**
- **If siblings are living apart ask why and find out what the barriers to them living together are**
- **Make sure that sibling contact is considered in its own right not just as an add-on to parental contact**
- **Think about possible long-term consequences or unintended consequences on sibship of decisions made today**
- **Make decisions regarding sibling relationships visible in records**



SCOTTISH
CHILDREN'S REPORTER
ADMINISTRATION



Jane Rough

Communicating with Young Children

5 tips

- **Be respectful**
 - introduce yourself
 - use the child's name
 - use language the child will understand
- **Be attentive**
 - look interested
 - have a friendly posture
 - turn towards the child
- **Be encouraging**
 - show emotional warmth
 - listen actively
- **Be receptive**
 - be friendly
 - smile, nod, show you notice
- **Be attuned**
 - be aware how stressful this situation is
 - all behaviour is communication





Kirsti Bridgewater & Claire Lundy

Communicating with Young People with Behavioural Problems

Five tips - Do's and Don'ts

- ♦ **Do** look beyond the behaviour
- ♦ **Do** use total communication
- ♦ **Do** use developmentally appropriate language
- ♦ **Don't** use jargon
- ♦ **Don't** make decisions when you are angry or upset

Janis Watson

How Teenagers Manage Panel Members

Top 5 Tips

- Always speak to young person first when the Hearing starts. Encourage young people to take part in the Hearing throughout the meeting.
- After each professional/agency has spoken, check out with young person if they agree with what has been said if they disagree include this in the feedback near the end of the Hearing. You are demonstrating you have listened to what they have said.
- Be aware of your own values, attitudes and body language and tone of voice. Look for non-verbal cues for example body language, fidgeting, lack of interest from young person. Use language that is plain, simple and young person friendly. Do not use jargonistic language.
- Ask young person if they would like education or other external agencies to speak first then leave the Hearing. Respect young peoples confidentiality.
- Know what young people's Rights are. Use children's rights language that is encouraging and enabling in supporting young person to take part in their Hearing.



Edmund Cybulski

Unconscious Bias

Ten tips on how to Brave Your Bias

Here are some steps you can take to tackle your unconscious bias:

1 Question your assumptions

Get into the habit of taking a moment to pause and ask yourself, “Why am I thinking this way?” Be aware of your first impressions or gut reactions as those often are driven by unconscious biases.

2 Look for it

Be alert to the types of situations where you are particularly vulnerable to unconscious biases, such as when you are stressed and under pressure, tired or multi-tasking and make an effort to be more deliberate in your approach.

3 Own it

The intent to be unbiased isn’t enough to eliminate bias. Take advantage of opportunities to self-reflect and consider the subtle ways your biases may be influencing your actions, behaviours or decisions.

4 Focus on the individual

Make an effort to view others based on their personal characteristics rather than stereotypical ones. Avoid broad generalisations such as “All millennials want...” or “Working mothers never...” or even “Why can’t the planning team ever...”.

5 Be comfortable being uncomfortable

We all have a tendency to like “people like us” (this is an ‘affinity bias’); it’s comfortable to surround yourself with people who are similar to you. Unconscious bias operates when there is a lack of information, so push yourself, to seek out opportunities to immerse yourself in environments where you may be out of your comfort zone.

6 Understand differences

Our comfort with people “like us” can also have a negative impact on those who are “different” from us. Look for ways to increase contact among different people or groups, and actively look for complementary skill sets and perspectives. Learning more about others will help prevent your biases from filling in the gaps.

7 Embrace the positive

It’s often easy to find things to praise in people who are similar to us but push yourself to regularly find the positive in people with different backgrounds, work styles, personalities etc. Actively addressing the positive will not only help that person, but is also likely to help you prevent unconscious and unintended slights.

8 Analyse your decisions

Push yourself to look for the evidence and the objective data to support your decisions (particularly decisions that directly impact another’s future).

9 Change your perspective

Consider the situation from the perspective of different people or groups and be open to exploring multiple viewpoints. Think about how you would feel if the situation were reversed or how you would feel if someone said that about you or treated you in that manner.

10 Help someone

Volunteer to be a mentor, either through a formal programme or informally. More specifically, look to work with someone who is different than you in some way – you will both benefit and grow from the difference in perspectives and experience.

The AST would like to thank all the workshop contributors for their assistance in providing tips which will influence practice in Hearings rooms.

Thank you to:

Dr Lorraine Lockhart

Mary Philliben

Louise Torrance

Dr Christine Jones

Jane Rough

Kirsti Bridgewater

Claire Lundy

Janis Watson

Edmund Cybulski

