

Renfrewshire **AREA PLAN**

April 2021- March 2022



children's
hearings
scotland

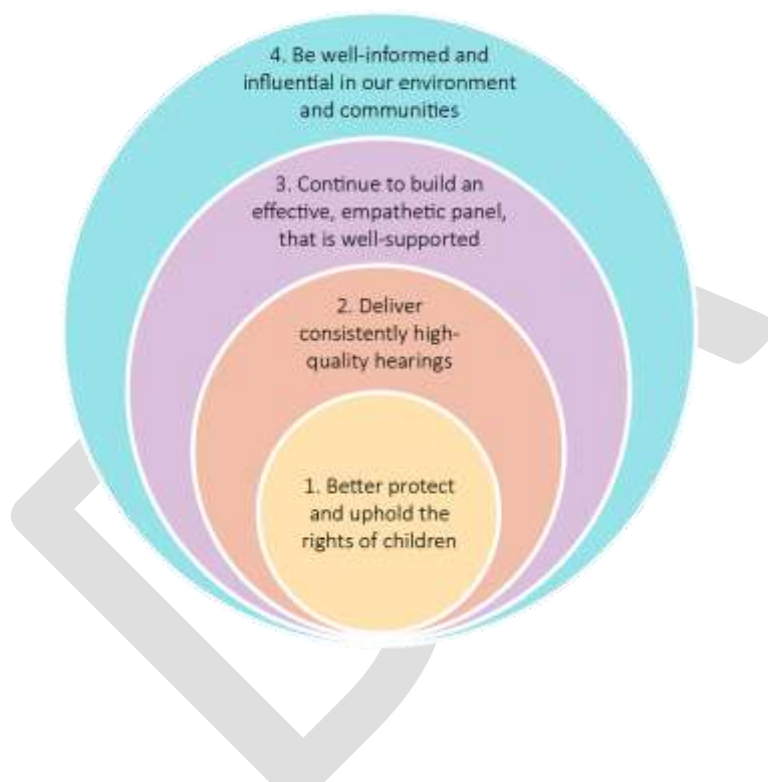
VERSION 1

Introduction

This plan sets out the main actions for the Renfrewshire Area for the year April 2021 to March 2022. It has been developed by the AST and the wider volunteer community to allow it to set short and medium term priorities in a time of rapid and often unpredictable change. It will be reviewed regularly and revised to take account of developments in the wider environment. The plan will be revised and updated to include the new Improvement Aims as part of the CHS Promise Programme currently being developed by CHS to reflect the major improvement-focussed priorities within each of our Corporate Plan Strategic Themes.

CHS Corporate Plan Strategic Themes 2020-2023

In the new CHS corporate plan, *Our Strategic Outlook 2020-2023*, it sets out what our priorities for the next three years will be. We call these our “Strategic Themes” and together, they set out an ambitious, improvement-driven direction for CHS that places children’s rights at its centre. Our Strategic Themes are:



The work outlined in this Area plan is designed to contribute towards the delivery of these themes at a local level and the actions will be aligned to one or more of the strategic themes, as noted in the tables below. The number of objectives and actions will vary and be determined by the priorities agreed by each local area.

Devolved Funding

The actions included in this plan will be delivered in line with the 2020 Devolved Funding policy and the allocated devolved funding budget from CHS to each AST. The table at the end of the document gives an estimated budget against specific actions

Focus Areas

The main areas of work covered in the plan will include the following, to reflect our current priorities:

- 1. Responding to Coronavirus – our Recovery Plan**
- 2. Recruitment and Reappointment**
- 3. Learning and Development**
- 4. Communication and Engagement**
- 5. Inclusion of Young People**
- 6. Partnership Development**
- 7. Digital Developments**
- 8. Quality Assurance**

Within each strategic theme the main tasks identified will be linked to an area of work noted above, and will also reflect the CHS Business Plan Objectives.

Area 1, Responding to Coronavirus, is included in the plan as it represents the current unique challenges and actions required at a local and national level as a result of the global pandemic. The actions noted in this area are taken from the current CHS Business Plan as they are agreed as necessary across all areas. The aspiration is that the actions to be implemented in this area will be short term and driven by the status of the pandemic and the restrictions implemented by the Scottish Government. As the year progresses these actions will hopefully be reduced and the aims and actions of the CHS Promise programme will be added, with the emphasis on what is required locally to support those aims.

Responding to Coronavirus – our Recovery Plan

The global pandemic of coronavirus has had a significant impact on the functioning of Scotland's children's hearings system and on the operations of CHS. Inevitably, significant time, resources and effort have had to, and continue to be, diverted to dealing with our reaction and response to the evolving situation and how we continue to protect and care for the infants, children and young people who have hearings.

At a local level and in direct response to the coronavirus outbreak, we will continue for as long as is necessary to carry out the following:

	Objective	Milestones/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Through multi-agency collaboration, continue to develop local solutions to the changing circumstances to ensure hearings can take place and that they increasingly allow opportunities for participation.			
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Supporting our volunteer community to carry out remote hearings and keep them well-informed about our changing arrangements, engaged and feeling supported.			
3.	Ensure panel member capacity.			

As and when restrictions begin to be lifted and how we operate can start to change, we will then:

	Objective	Milestones/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with SCRA to ensure that any hearings outstanding as a result of the coronavirus outbreak can take place. 			
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide ongoing support and advice to our volunteer community to continue the return to face to face hearings. 			
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with SCRA and other partners at a local level to review the efficacy and future role of virtual hearings, following testing during coronavirus. 			

THEME 1: BETTER PROTECT AND UPHOLD THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

	Objective	Milestones/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date
1.	Provide children and young people (CYP) a menu of options for attendance at their hearings, to assist them to participate effectively and empower them to have their say about how they would like their hearing to be conducted and their views shared, in line with their needs and rights.	<p>Work with partners such as SCRA, Social work, WC?S, and children and young people (CYP) to develop a framework and agree a menu of options, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how the CYP attend their hearing - either virtually or face to face. • how the CYP give their views, feelings and thoughts ahead of the hearing and at the hearing itself. • Establish attendance levels of CYP at hearings and develop strategy to maintain attendance 	AC/ASIP/Hearings Management Group	Consultation Q 2 Completion Q4
		Pursue through relevant fora, the option of attending the hearing virtually or hybrid.	AST	Q2
		Pursue through relevant fora, Face to face options (determined by Covid restrictions and return to F2F hearings)	AST	Q2
		Set up a pilot through test of change a framework and menu of options, noted above.	ASIP/AST	Q3

		Work with CHS and SCRA to support the work being done to develop a virtual hearings platform that is reliable and fit for purpose for all attendees.	AC/ASIP/LPR/Digital Champions	Q2
2.	Create a comfortable, supportive, and safe hearing environment for the child or young person to support effective participation.	Work with SCRA to optimise the layout of the hearing rooms to ensure they are as child friendly as possible whilst ensuring the health and safety of all attendees	AC/LPR/PRs	Q2
3.	Aim for all record of proceedings (included in the reasons for decisions) to have a record of the views of the child or young person, and when appropriate, the chair to ask for the child or young person's understanding of the decision.	Work with partners to create a streamlined and consistent process to ensure the child's understanding of the hearing decision and incorporate in the record of proceedings.	AC/ASIP/LPR/Practice and Recruitment Group	Q4
		Support panel members to ensure that their decisions and reasons demonstrate how the rights of the child have been safeguarded and protected, alongside how the views of the child have been considered and acted upon, in a child friendly way.	LPR/L&D Group	Q3
		Ensure feedback loop from SCRA on appeals is re-established post COVID	AC/ASIP	Q2

		Support panel chairs to ensure that the child or young person understands the decisions, by explaining these clearly at the end.	AC/LPR/PPAs	Q3
--	--	--	-------------	----

DR

THEME 2: DELIVER CONSISTENTLY HIGH QUALITY HEARINGS

	Objective	Milestones/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date
1.	Ensure all panel members have a baseline of practice that is current and compliant.	Work with the Learning Academy to review and update the hearing practice proforma, and provide to all panel members, of all levels of experience.	LDC/LPR/PRs	Q3
		Develop a hearing practice aide memoir for use by all panel members and promote awareness through local communication channels (including pre-hearing child friendly practice).	AST	Q3
2.	Increase feedback to panel members and learning opportunities to support good practice and promote better hearings.	Work with partners to review and develop a common approach to feedback for panel members, that's timely and constructive.	LDC/LPRs/PRs	Q2
		Create PPA checklist to create opportunities for consistency in support in additional areas such as wellbeing and other identified objectives	P&R Group	Q2
		Create more opportunities for sharing feedback and promoting good practice, individually and collectively.	LDC/LPRs/PRs/PPAs	Q3

3.	Support children and families by successfully providing panel member continuity, when requested.	Work with panel members to raise the profile of continuity, so it's actively considered, and support the implementation through local communication and training.	AC/LPR/PRs	Q2
		Ensure the process for continuity is followed with the rota manager and SCRA.	AC/LPR/Rota Manager	Q1
		Work with CHS to support the option of requesting panel continuity through CSAS.	ASIP/AC/LPR/Rota Manager	Q1
5.	Work to improve the timings of hearings to avoid unreasonable waiting times for all involved, but particularly the child or young person.	Work with SCRA fortnightly to review the scheduling of hearings, and panel members to keep to the timings on the schedule.	AC/LPR/ASIP/Rota Manager	Q1
		Work with CHS colleagues to improve the ROP functionality in CSAS to allow spell check and copy and paste, to allow completion time to be reduced.	AC/ASIP	Q2

THEME 3: CONTINUE TO BUILD AN EFFECTIVE, EMPATHETIC PANEL, THAT IS WELL-SUPPORTED

	Objective	Milestones/Actions	Responsibility	Target Date
1.	Broaden the learning base of panel members and PPAs, to support trauma informed practice, empathy in hearings and the knowledge of the human rights of children.	The L&D Group to plan and coordinate an annual programme of training and training support.	L&D Group	Q2
		Continue to support panel members and PPAs to complete national training such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocacy • United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). 	L&D Group/P&R Group	Q2
		Signpost & support panel members and PPAs to access additional training on broader issues including the effects of trauma reinforcing an empathetic approach.	L&D Group/P&R Group	Q1-4
3.	Review and change the language used in hearings, verbal and written (reasons for our decisions), to ensure it is child friendly.	Coordinate feedback from PPA observations and consider further training to enhance how panel members communicate and interact effectively with children and young people, including those with additional support needs.	L&D Group/P&R Group	Q3

		Coordinate further training to ensure that the panel's decisions and reasons demonstrate how the human rights of the child have been safeguarded and protected alongside how the views of the child have been considered and acted upon in a child friendly way.	L&D Group	Q3
		Aim to minimise the use of acronyms in Hearings documentation and verbal discussions through liaison with partner agencies	AC/DAC/LPR/PR	Q4
		Consider ways to improve support to panel chairs to manage the hearing in a way that keeps the number of professionals in a hearing to a minimum.	LPR/AC	Q2
4.	Provide a programme of quality local training/development meetings that offer a variety of learning and networking	Agree a programme of meetings at the start of the year with a minimum of 6 local meetings	L&D Group	Q2
		Incorporate the use of the virtual platforms & recording to support attendance at local meetings, particularly during the winter months to ensure information is disseminated in a timely manner to the panel community	AST	Q1

5.	Ensure the Wellbeing of panel members is paramount and provide them with the necessary support.	Promote the wellbeing services offered by CHS to new panel members and existing panel members	LPR/PRs/PPAs	Q1-4
		Liaise with stakeholder agencies to identify, communicate & address areas of additional pressures before and during a Hearing	Hearings Management Group/LPR	Q1-4
		Ensure all panel members know how to access pastoral support. Consider a format for digital feedback re. concerns/anxieties	AC/LPR	Q1-4
6.	Review and develop the Buddie system for new panel members, new Chairs and PPA's from a bank of experienced volunteers.	Further develop and implement the buddie system	LPR/Rota manager	Q1
		Identify willing and capable volunteers to be buddies and support them.	LPR/Rota Manager	Q4

THEME 4: BE WELL-INFORMED AND INFLUENTIAL IN OUR ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITIES

	Objective	Milestones/ Actions	Responsibility	Target Date
1.	Include a young person as a member of the AST to contribute to discussion and decision making to represent a care experienced perspective on our work.	Engage with partners to identify how best to achieve this.	ASIP/AC	Q4
		Appoint a CEYP to the AST	ASIP/AC	Q4
2.	To be better informed and more influential through engagement with local partner organisations in public and third sectors.	To maintain participation in various liaison groups (eg Better Hearings, Promise Voice Group, CHS/SCRA/HSCP Liaison Group, Social work local area liaison meetings)	AST	Q1-4
		Further explore shared training with partner agencies.	L&D Group	Q1-4
		Work with partners on specific improvement projects that support our commitment to The Promise	AC/ASIP	Q1-4

3.	To improve effectiveness of engagement and better share learning through improved communications.	Develop & maintain a list of CHS national and local objectives, and key messages. Promote to AST members for their use in engaging with partners.	ASIP	Q3
		Develop written material and PowerPoint presentation(s) to support engagement.	ASIP/AC	Q3
4.	Engage with employers to raise awareness of our work and encourage support of employees volunteering for the Panel.	Develop a strategy for employer engagement.	P&R Group	Q3
		Begin implementation of engagement strategy	AST	Q4

Monitoring the Area Plan

Once the plan has been developed and agreed with the AST, the plan will be monitored on a quarterly basis with updates provided to AST meetings.

Owing to the unprecedented circumstances in which the Area Plan is being developed, there will be a flexible approach to our monitoring. Each of the activities and milestones noted above have been assigned a timescale in which, to the best of our current knowledge, we anticipate they will be completed by. They may, however, have to change in response to our environment.

Area Plan Budget

The Insert Renfrewshire AST has been allocated an annual devolved budget of £2357. Where necessary, a budget will be allocated to an activity in the plan and reporting against that budget will form part of the overall reporting process. If any projected spend sits out with the scope of the devolved funding policy, or would require additional funding than the amount allocated, then approval must be sought through the Senior Management Team.

The table below includes any Actions that will require a budget allocation and the estimated allocation required.

[illegible]