



Renfrewshire
Area Support Team

Notice of Meeting and Agenda Renfrewshire Area Support Team

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday, 14 December 2021	14:00	Remotely by MS Teams,

KENNETH GRAHAM
Head of Corporate Governance

Membership

Eileen Anderson; Derek Brama; Craig Campbell; Annemarie Currie; Jacqueline Doherty; Edi Hanley; Jennifer Hay; Alex MacDonald; Ruth MacLeod; Hannah McCulloch; Ewan McNaught; Jim Melrose; Marion Robinson; Angela Stevenson; Alison Thompson.

Representing Renfrewshire Council: Councillor John Shaw.

Chair

D Brama, Area Convener.

Items of business

Apologies

Apologies from members.

Declarations of Interest

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

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|----------|---|----------------|
| 1 | Minute of Previous Meeting | 1 - 8 |
| | Minute of previous meeting held on 26 October 2021. | |
| 2 | Matters Arising | |
| 3 | Hearings Management Sub-group | 9 - 12 |
| | Minute of meeting held on 1 December 2021. | |
| 4 | Learning & Development Sub-group | 13 - 18 |
| | Minute of meeting held on 7 December 2021. | |
| 5 | Practice & Recruitment Sub-group | |
| | Verbal report by Depute Area Convener. | |
| 6 | Renfrewshire AST Development Day 2022 | |
| | Verbal report by Area Convener. | |
| 7 | Recognition Event - 28 January 2022 | |
| | Verbal report by Area Convener. | |
| 8 | Panel Member Recruitment | |
| | Verbal report by Area Convener. | |
| 9 | Arrangements for Future Meetings | 19 - 20 |
| | Report by Clerk. | |



Renfrewshire
Area Support Team

Minute of Meeting Renfrewshire Area Support Team

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday, 26 October 2021	14:00	Remotely by MS Teams,

Present

Eileen Anderson; Derek Brama; Annemarie Currie; Craig Campbell, Jacqueline Doherty; Edi Hanley; Alex MacDonald; Hannah McCulloch; Ewan McNaught; Jim Melrose; Marion Robinson; Angela Stevenson and Alison Thompson.

Chair

D Brama, Area Convener, presided.

Also Present

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

In Attendance

P Shiach and C MacDonald, (both Senior Committee Services Officers), and D Pole End User Technician (all Finance and Resources).

Apology

J Hay.

Declarations of Interest

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

Additional Items

The Area Convener indicated that there were three additional items which had not been included in the notice calling the meeting. The Area Convener, being of the opinion that the items which were dealt with at items 4, 15 and 16 of the agenda were competent and relevant, authorised their consideration.

Order of Business

In order to facilitate the business of the meeting Item the Convener proposed that item 10 of the agenda be considered before item 3. This was agreed.

1 Minute of Previous Meeting

There was submitted the Minute of the previous meeting of Renfrewshire Area Support Team (AST) held on 17 August 2021.

The Locality Reporter Manager indicated that under Item 5, line three, face-to-face Hearings should be amended to read “virtual Hearings”

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved subject to an amendment under item 5 line three that “face-to-face Hearings” be amended to read “virtual Hearings”.

2 Matters Arising

DECIDED: It was noted that there were no matters arising from the Minute of the previous meeting.

3 Area Plan Progress

There was submitted a presentation by the Area Support and Improvement Partner relative to progress with the Area Plan.

The presentation provided information in relation to progress in quarter 2, (July to September) which related to the embedding of the digital programme and supporting Panel Members.

For quarter 3 (October to December) the presentation provided information on the feedback loop, Children and Young Peoples menu of options for attendance; Children and young people attendance; the PPA aide memoire; a review of the Hearing Practice proforma and aide memoire; the improvement project; decisions and reasons; PPA feedback. The Area Support & Improvement Partner then asked for questions or comments on the first part of the presentation

The Area Convener indicated that in terms of the aide memoire, a section on advocacy be introduced to indicate whether a child had or had not accepted advocacy with this included as part of the reasons for a decision.

The Area Support and Improvement then continued with her presentation providing information on the CHS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Draft Strategy, highlighting the themes of Communication and engagement; training, development and support; and recruitment and retention.

The Area Convener advised that the Area Improvement Plan would be a standing item on future AST meeting agendas and that any suggestions for improvement would be welcomed.

DECIDED: That the presentation be noted.

4 **Locality Reporter Manager - Update**

The Locality Reporter Manager provided an update of staffing indicating that training was being undertaken for the current week on new national processes and as a result, no hearings had been scheduled during this period, with the processes being implemented during the week commencing 8 November 2021.

She advised that at the fortnightly meetings with the Area Convener, the Area Support and Improvement Partner, the Lead Panel Representative and the Rota Manager, she had indicated that some data protection issues had arisen in terms of Panel Members remaining logged onto the various systems after they had left the building and asked that Panel Members be reminded to log out of the system when using the equipment in Glen Lane.

In terms of staffing, the Locality Reporter Manager indicated that front office staffing was being affected by long term illness which had resulted in some instances of Hearings being cancelled and Panel Member and PPAs not being advised, or not receiving papers within the agreed timescales. She indicated that new procedures were in place to try and ensure that this did not reoccur.

In terms of availability of private spaces for Panel Members the Locality Reporter Manager indicated that discussions had taken place between both Locality Reporter Managers and members of the AST where assurances were given that private and secure spaces would be available for Panel Members for pre and post panel discussions.

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

The Area Convener indicated that in terms of tables in the Hearing Rooms an impasse had been reached and opened the discussion to AST members.

The Area Support and Improvement Partner indicated that she would raise the issue at her forthcoming meeting with CHS. However, she indicated that she saw no impediment to Panel Members having the current hearing room tables at the side of their chairs.

The Area Convener requested that the Area Support Team be appraised of any proposals for the refurbishment of Glen Lane prior to them being finalised. The Locality Reporter Manager indicated that it had previously agreed that this would be done through discussions with both the Area Convener and the Area Support and Improvement Partner, and that plans would be shared when available.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

5 **Hearings Management Sub-group**

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Hearings Management Sub-group held on 12 October 2021.

The Minute provided updated information in relation to sabbaticals; resignations; hearing statistics for the period for the period 11 August to 11 October 2021 including deferred and cancelled sessions, secure hearings, additional hearings; swaps and continuity hearings; pastoral care; and panel member strength which indicated that there were currently 86 panel members 62 female and 24 male panel members; of this number there were currently 75 Panel members available for rota scheduling, made up of 54 females and 21 males

The Lead Panel representatives were then heard in answer to questions on various issues highlighted in the Minute.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

6 Learning and Development Sub-group

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Learning & Development Sub-group held on 7 October 2021.

The Minute provided information relative to mandatory training; pre-service update; in-service update; and Management of Hearings training.

The Learning and Development Co-ordinator provided updates on training which would be undertaken over the next few months.

The Area Convener advised that J Leckie , formerly one of the Learning & Development Co-ordinators had resigned as a Panel Member. He indicated that membership of the groups would be revisited in the coming weeks with a view to filling posts as they become vacant.

A Macdonald updated the position in terms of the number of Panel Members who had yet to complete the siblings and advocacy training courses.

C Campbell advised that he had undertaken a reappointment interview with a Panel Member, and that the Panel Member in question was unavailable for training evenings on Monday evenings. The Panel Member had asked whether consideration could be given to training dates being changed from Mondays, and if not, could the training materials be available on-line.

The Area Convener indicated that the Monday dates had been accommodation led, and that a number of virtual events could be added to the virtual training calendar. He also indicated discussions were on-going with CHS in relation to scoping the recording face to face sessions and adding these to the online platform.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

7 Practice and Recruitment Sub-group

There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Practice and Recruitment Sub-group held 7 October 2021.

The Minute provide information on observations on observations; comments from the Panel Member Chair; support for Inverclyde PPAs; Re-appointment interviews; CSAS feedback and the PPA forum.

The Depute Area Convener was then heard in answer to questions from members on the Minute.

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

8 **Better Hearings Renfrewshire**

There was submitted the Minute of the Renfrewshire Better Hearings meeting held on 27 October 2021.

The Minute provided updates on the Better Hearings Action Plan; keeping the number of attendees at a Hearing at a minimum; and quality assurance of referrals.

A Stevenson requested that the issue of Panel Members being invited last into virtual Hearing be raised with CHS and cited an example of her concerns. The Area Support and Improvement Partner undertook to raise the issue with CHS. The Area Convener also requested that issues with RAHVI be raised with CHS.

DECIDED:

(a) That the Minute be noted; and

(b) That the issues highlighted be raised by the Area Support and Improvement Partner with CHS.

9 **COP26 Arrangements**

The Area Convener provided an update on Police Scotland activity in terms of COP 26 arrangements and the potential affect on Children's Panel Hearings.

H indicated that discussions had taken place between AST members and the Locality Reporter Managers and two dates – 6 and 13 November – had been identified for standby Hearings for custody cases. Panel Members had been identified to be on standby from 1.00pm onwards on those dates.

The Locality Reporter Manager indicated that it was not anticipated that there would be many custody hearings during the period.

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

10 **Capacity**

The Area Support and Improvement Partner advised that a number of Area Support areas had been sharing panel members as a result of capacity issues. She indicated that CHS were attempting to formulate a plan to ensure that all areas could fulfil their rota obligations. It had been noted that Panel Member sharing had become more prevalent over the past eight months. She indicated that nationally, there was no capacity issue, but these figures do not reflect the position locally, and that some Panel Members were undertaking four or five Hearings a month and others were undertaking one hearing due to this issue. The position was likely to become more acute towards the end of the emergency legislation period. CHS were looking at a model where a supply of Panel Members could be available to assist areas where capacity issues were prevalent.

CHS were looking at four hubs within Scotland where Panel Members could be “borrowed” to assist were required. A pilot scheme was being introduced in South West Scotland and further information would be submitted to a future meeting of the AST.

DECIDED: That the information be noted.

11 Lead Panel Representative

The Area Convener advised that E Hanley had indicated his intention to step down as Lead Panel Representative in 2022. In terms of succession planning, A Stevenson had been appointed joint Lead Panel Representative to ensure a smooth transition when E Hanley resigned in September 2022.

DECIDED: That the information be noted.

12 Devolved Funding

The Clerk advised that there had been no significant expenditure on the Devolved Funding budget during the current financial year, and that the budget stood at £2357.

DECIDED: That the information be noted.

13 Clerking Services

The Clerk advised the AST of the current procedures and timescales in relation to obtaining hard copies of correspondence for Panel Members. He further indicated that in terms of the forthcoming Local Government that was not anticipated that there would be any issues in term of capacity and support for the AST.

DECIDED: That the information be noted.

14 Recognition Event

The Area Convener advised that following discussions on various forums, there was an appetite to resume Panel Member Recognition Events, and he proposed that the feasibility of such an event be investigated with a possible date for the event proposed as the end of January 2022.

DECIDED: That the possibility of a Recognition Event be explored and a report submitted to the next meeting of the AST.

15 Craig Bilsland

The Area Convener updated the position with regard former panel member Craig Bilsland who had not engaged with either the Area Convener, Lead Panel Representative or Rota Manager for a considerable period of time. As a result of this non-engagement, Mr Bilsland had not been recommended for reappointment as a panel member.

Subsequently Mr Bilsland had indicated that he wished to remain a Panel Member.

Following discussion, the Area Support Team agreed that the course of action open to Mr Bilsland would be to apply for membership of the Children’s Panel during the forthcoming recruitment campaign.

C Campbell proposed that Mr Bilsland be afforded one further opportunity to engage with the AST prior to a final decision being taken

DECIDED: That it remained open to Mr Bilsland to apply for Panel Membership during the forthcoming Panel Member Recruitment campaign.

16 **Rhiannan Dock**

The Area Convener referred to Rhiannan Dock who had not engaged with the AST in terms of PPA training and indicated that there was a Panel Member applicant who had not been able to continue her application due to a conflict of interest but had expressed an interest in becoming a PPA.

DECIDED: That the individual on the PPA waiting list be approached to confirm her interest in filling the PPA vacancy.

17 **Date of Next Meeting**

DECIDED: Members noted that the next meeting of the AST was scheduled for Tuesday 14 December 2021 at 2.00 pm.

HEARINGS MANAGEMENT SUB-GROUP

AGENDA

Minutes of Meeting 1st December 2021

Virtual @ 10:00AM

1. Apologies

Lesley King; Angela Mitchell - Angela asked that her thanks be passed on to all for their patience and understanding following recent challenges with the changes in systems, procedures and staff.

2. Sabbatical

There are currently 6 panel members off rota, 5 females and one male (who will be active until end of December) as a result of being on sabbatical or not responding to communications, and one who is awaiting chromebook before she can return.

3. Resignations

1 Female

4. Hearing Stats - period 12th October - 30th November 2021

- Deferred Cases - Seven virtual cases deferred; one to appoint a safeguarder; three no social work reports available; two awaiting grounds to be established; one due to technical difficulties with accessing papers.

Five face to face deferred - One Relevant Person had tested positive for Covid; three no social work reports available; one for a further assessment to be completed

- Cancelled Sessions - Five virtual sessions in October; November six cancelled virtual sessions. For face to face hearings there was one for October and one for November.

- Secure Hearings - None
- Extra Hearings/Sessions - None

- Swaps - Four swaps in total

- Continuity - one request
- One panel member provided for East Renfrewshire
- Two standby sessions not required for 6th and 13th November; COP26

5. Pastoral Care

No additional support being required at this time.

6. Panel Member Strength

Eighty four panel members, of which sixty one are female and twenty three are male. Currently there are seventy eight panel members who are available for rota scheduling, this is made up of fifty six females and twenty two males.

7.AOCB

For noting: November scheduling was one week shorter than normal as a week had been dropped due to staff training within SCRA.

Edi advised that it had been raised at another meeting, where Leslie had been in attendance, about the panel having chairs returned to the wall which now contains the mural. It was previously positioned there for egress for panel members in the event of any risks to them, the current layout does not provide the same option. It was agreed by Leslie that SCRA could revisit the layout, once the current one way system is no longer in use. The current system allows for the families and other attendees to exit the door which would have been the previous egress for panel members, and as such, returning to that position currently could potentially place panel members at more risk.

Edi advised that a panel chair had contacted him to enquire on the decision around scheduling of cases. There had been three cases allocated to the session, two cases which were clearly recommendations for CSO to be terminated, and one case which was much more challenging, as a result the panel had felt that the first two cases had finished quickly and there was some waiting time between these sessions. The third case, unfortunately ran on for some time and combined with the time taken to complete the ROP, the panel did not leave until late. The panel had raised if the more challenging case should have been scheduled first. Discussion between members today had differing views, with some seeing the need to schedule as last hearing to avoid any run into other

cases, others not in agreement and with views that there may be scope to reduce the time allocated to green cases to avoid unnecessary waiting time between and bring forward schedule. SCRA discussion to clarify current scheduling system.

Enquiry was made about the possibility of a coat stand being provided for the hearing room, currently panel members hang their coats outside the hearing room, but for security purposes would prefer not to. It was felt that having coats hanging over chairs or placed on the floor would not only be unhygienic, but unprofessional looking. In addition the current season is likely to result in wet outerwear, which if placed on furniture is likely to damage or mark seating. Cleaning wipes could be left out and the last person to use, would wipe down the coat stand

An inquiry from a panel member on the need or reason for the large coffee table which has been placed in the hearing room, it is felt that this may be seen as a barrier and it does not appear to be currently in use.

Following ongoing discussions between SCRA and CHS regarding the use of CHS provided telescopic tables for panel members, agreement has been reached that the room will remain in the current layout, but the tables supplied by CHS/AST, will be available and should panel members wish to use them, they can ask on arrival and the tables will be swapped out. Edi has raised concerns about the need for additional space to place papers for other cases and any drinks, water etc. The feedback from children and young people previously is that having two tables could be seen as a barrier between panel members and other participants. Prior to COVID and changes to the panel room, panel members only had access to one white table. To be fully clarified on process before communication to panel community is made on use of the tables/stands.

Panel members will now be asked to use the restroom facilities in the main reception area, as these will also be used by families and other visitors to the premises, the AST would appreciate having clarification of the current cleaning schedule/regimine for this area and the panel room as some comments have been passed to Edi that areas are not always as expected.

The AST had received a request, from social work management, seeking additional information and clarification on a hearing which took place in October. Separate decisions had been taken for two older children, against sw recommendation, whilst two younger children had the care plan supported. The investigation has concluded with some learning outcomes identified in terms of scheduling of multiple sibling hearings, the number of participants and the impact on panel members mentally and ensuring that ROP are reflective of full verbal discussion/reasons & decisions; the need for a good practice ROP aide memoir to ensure that all relevant information is included in ROP, i.e. consideration

to all views and what those views were; correct wording for legal tests when used to make decisions and how test is met. Feedback will be provided to the relevant social work department and any learning outcomes shared with the panel community once formalised.

A positive feedback and congratulations email was received from Johnstone Social Work thanking three panel members and the children's reporter for their handling of a very complicated case, involving review of the order, advice to the sheriff, termination of contact and an early review, which took place in October. Social Work asked that the panel and reporter were thanked for their preparation and handling of the case. "There was a lot to consider and a lot to cover. All aspects of the hearing were covered thoroughly and with careful consideration. I really appreciated how they approached the task at hand. We got a fair outcome and the child's plan was able to move on."

Thanks have been passed to the relevant panel members and reporter. It is nice to have some positive feedback to end on a good note.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 12th January 2022 Virtual at 10:00am



Renfrewshire
Area Support Team

Learning & Development Group Meeting 07 December 2021

MINUTES

Present: Derek Bramma, Alex Macdonald, Jacqueline Doherty, Alison Thompson, Ruth Macleod

In attendance: Edi Hanley, Angela Stevenson

Apologies: Ciara McLean

1. Mandatory training completion update

Need to check who cannot sit on rota due to not having completed mandatory training.

Advocacy and sibling course must be completed.

34 panel members have been identified and out of those, 5 not contacted, 16 have now completed all, 2 had issues therefore system saying only 80% complete, 2 resigned, 2 have stated they will complete asap and 7 no response.

2 of the 7 no responses are currently on sabbatical but will need to complete before back on rota.

Discussion around how to best proceed, whether to keep gently nudging panel members along or remove from rota for a month. It is a difficult decision as we don't want to cause panel members to resign if they are removed from rota but accept that the courses need to be completed and these panel members have had a number of prompts already.

Suggestion that Marion could send email to these panel members to say that if they didn't have courses completed then they couldn't be included on rota.

One panel member hasn't indicated any inclination of completing these courses and has stated that they don't check emails, and this wouldn't be a priority.

Another panel member who is currently on sabbatical has indicated they are still busy with work and family commitments and therefore not sure when they will return or time available to complete training.

It was decided that Alex would call the PMs once again to give a gentle prompt before a recorded delivery letter is sent.

There is a need to identify those panel members who may decide that they won't complete this training, and therefore intend to resign, before next recruitment drive. All other areas may have similar issue and CHS solution would be sharing of panel members. Regardless the maximum number of new panel members we can recruit is 20.

PMs and PPAs due for reappointment must complete a form on CSAS. This is off-putting for some PMs and there is also a technical issue with the form link on CSAS.

2. Pre-Service Update

The recruitment selection timetable has now been released by CHS. Once all members of LDC are aware of their availability to facilitate pre-service then a plan can be made going forwards.

The information evening presentation prepared for last year is still relevant and will be provided to those seeking appointment in 2022.

There will be an initial sort of applicants checking for eligibility as per previous years.

It was agreed that we should try to get local services along to provide virtual training sessions to trainee panel members. If this isn't possible then a pre-recorded information session could be made available.

3. In-Service update

There has been very positive feedback from last Thursday's training session.

Link to recording will be made available to all.

It was suggested that this training should be provided to new PMs. If the recording was stored on CSAS for 3 years as a training resource, then they could be signposted to this.

Derek has submitted a bid for recording equipment which would allow future face to face training sessions to be recorded and stored on CSAS as training resource.

North Strathclyde training proposal (reasons & decisions) update

This is going to happen in March, date & venue to be confirmed. Derek will find out who will be presenting this training and advise further.

Angela has been working on an aide memoire for panel members to ensure that all points are covered when completing ROP. Would this be something which could be provided by CHS at a national level.

This may require 2 separate aid memoires, one for general hearing protocol and one for closing of hearing.

Angela will share her notes to date for further discussion.

4. Forthcoming local development sessions

Ciara is currently trying to organise training around internet safety and gender identity, although is having some difficulty finding a contact from Police Scotland. Edi, Alex and Derek are able to provide contacts.

Potential training could be around fostering and adoption and what happens when a placement breaks down.

Following on from a significant case review learning outcome:

- CAHMs are now under pressure to reduce their waiting times.
- Children's reporters and panel members require additional training in dealing with young people with addictive personalities and how they can display manipulative behaviours to ensure the right questions are asked.
- May be challenges finding a training provider.
- Additional training required around termination of orders when a child reaches 16 as there is some discontinuity around throughcare.

- Discussion about frustrations which families and panel members feel around the lack of CAHMs provision for children. It is hoped that the alternative strands for helping these children can be made available sooner.
- The new school nurse provision is also going to be used to tackle mental health issues. Health and social care partnership will hopefully provide further information on this at a future training session.

5. Management of Hearings Training

Only have information that one panel member has a date to complete this training. Need to get an idea of how panel members are feeling about this and encourage them to participate. It would be good to have their views to feedback to Learning Academy.

6. Proposed AST Development Day 2022

Wallneuk identified as venue. Possibly looking at first Thursday in March. Need to reach out for ideas for plenary sessions.

7. AOCB

Request made for members of AST to be given access to digital access logs in order that they can keep track of anyone who may be struggling.

Jim is happy to collate a newsletter once appropriate information has been identified.

Teams training evening could be provided as there are still some who are unsure of Teams. Alex, Angela and Jacqueline will meet in new year to discuss.

Derek has joined group looking at upcoming RAHVI survey and would appreciate some feedback.

Angela has several concerns with the RAHVI hearings around the length of time it takes for panel members to be admitted to room and delay in these hearings getting started.

Clarification required as to who has responsibility for ensuring that panel members receive papers on time. Is it RAVHI teams or local SCRA team? There are currently conflicting views being given to panel members.

8. Date of next meeting - To Be Advised



To: Renfrewshire Area Support Team

On: 14 December 2021

Report by: Clerk to the AST

Heading: Arrangements for Future Meetings

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report details proposed arrangements for meetings of the Renfrewshire Area Support Team until December 2022.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the AST considers and, if appropriate approves the dates for meetings of the AST until December 2021

3. Background

- 3.1 Since its inception in April 2013, the AST has met on an eight-week cycle, with meetings held on Tuesdays at 2.00 pm.
- 3.2 It is proposed that this practice continue. In this regard, the following dates are proposed for meetings of the AST until December 2022: -

Tuesday 25 January 2022
 Tuesday 15 March 2022
 Tuesday 3 May 2022
 Tuesday 21 June 2022
 Tuesday 16 August 2022
 Tuesday 25 October 2022
 Tuesday 13 December 2022

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