



Notice of Meeting and Agenda Renfrewshire Area Support Team

Date	Time	Venue
Tuesday, 15 March 2022	14:00	Remotely by MS Teams,

MARK CONAGHAN
Head of Corporate Governance

Membership

Eileen Anderson; Derek Brama; Craig Campbell; Annemarie Currie; Jacqueline Doherty; Edi Hanley; Jennifer Hay; Alex MacDonald; Ruth MacLeod; Ewan McNaught; Jim Melrose; Cairistiona Manson; 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.

- | | | |
|----------|---|---------------|
| 1 | Minute of Previous Meeting | 1 - 6 |
| | Minute of previous meeting held on 25 January 2022. | |
| 2 | Matters Arising | |
| 3 | Area Plan 2022/23 | |
| | Verbal report by Area Support & Improvement Partner. | |
| 4 | Hearings Management Sub-group | 7 - 8 |
| | Minute of meeting held on 1 March 2022. | |
| 5 | Learning & Development Sub-group | 9 - 12 |
| | Minute of meeting held on 1 March 2022. | |
| 6 | Locality Reporter Manager - Update | |
| | Verbal report by Locality Reporter Manager. | |
| 7 | Recruitment Update | |
| | Verbal report by Area Convener. | |
| 8 | Devolved Budget | |
| | Verbal report by Area Convener. | |
| 9 | Date of Next Meeting | |
| | Members are asked to note that the next meeting of the Area Support Team is scheduled for Tuesday 23 May 2022 at 2.00pm | |



Renfrewshire
Area Support Team

Minute of Meeting Renfrewshire Area Support Team

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

Present

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

Chair

D Bramma, Area Convener, presided.

In Attendance

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

Also Present

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

Apologies

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

Declarations of Interest

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

Additional Items

The Area Convener indicated that there were three additional items which had not been included in the notice calling the meeting. The Area Convener, being of the opinion that the items which were dealt with at items 4, 5 and 9 respectively of the agenda were competent and relevant, authorised their consideration.

Order of Business

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

1 Minute of Previous Meeting

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

DECIDED: That the Minute be approved.

2 Matters Arising

Recognition Event

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

DECIDED: That the information be noted

3 Panel Member Recruitment

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

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

DECIDED: That the information be noted.

4 Area Plan Progress

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DECIDED:

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

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

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

(d) That the information be otherwise noted.

5 Hearings Management Sub-group

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

DECIDED:

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

6 Recruitment & Retention Sub-group

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

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

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

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

DECIDED: That the Minutes be approved.

7 Learning & Development Sub-group

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

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

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

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

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

DECIDED:

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

(b) That the Minute be approved.

8 Locality Reporter Manager

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

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

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

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

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

DECIDED: That the report be noted.

9 Better Hearings/North Strathclyde Hub

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

DECIDED: That the information be noted.

10 Date of Next Meeting

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

HEARINGS MANAGEMENT SUB-GROUP AGENDA

Minutes of Meeting 1st March 2022

Teams Virtual @ 10:00AM

1. Apologies

Lesley King; Eileen Anderson

2. Sabbatical

There are currently seven panel members off rota, five females and two males. There are potentially five panel members who will have to be removed from rota due to non completion of Information Governance mandatory training. We may also lose a male panel member due to a change in work arrangements, requested time off may exceed sabbatical period, further discussion between Derek and Panel Member to be had before final decision made.

3. Resignations

One male panel member.

4. Hearing Stats - period -12th January - 28th Feb 2022

- Deferred Cases - Twelve deferred cases all virtual - one awaiting safeguarder report; five grounds still at court for determination; three relevant persons failed to attend; one grounds sent to court as children too young to understand; one no social work report and one where a panel member failed to attend - panel member had taken ill due to covid and had failed to notify lead panel rep.
- Cancelled Sessions - Two; one where social workers were not in a position to prepare a report as unable to speak to the child and one session cancelled by SCRA with no reason given.
- Secure Hearings - One
- Extra Hearings/Sessions - Two extra slots requested; three sessions had three cases instead of two, panel had agreed to do but lead panel rep not aware beforehand.
- Swaps - Seven swaps all virtual hearings.

- Continuity - Two requests made.

5. Pastoral Care

Two panel members receiving pastoral care.

6. Panel Member Strength

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

7.AOCB

A Stevenson had enquired with the office regarding not having received hard copies of grounds papers for a couple of recent hearings, one hearing was passed to Alex McDonald to chair as a result of being too difficult to read from the screen and engage with family at same time. The SCRA administration team has now been informed and will be resolved going forward.

Another panel member had recently sat on her first virtual hearing, having previously received hard copy papers, she only received digital copies this time. E-mail sent to SCRA administration staff to check if any changes to protocol for notifying on preference.

Inverclyde AST are currently requesting panel members to complete five hearing sessions per month due to a shortage of available members, we are providing a male panel member for two sessions so far. Situation will have to be monitored to ensure it does not impact on our own rota especially with reduction in available males.

Work should be underway in the SCRA offices for building alterations which are expected to last around three weeks or so. All works being completed the Rota for April will be five face to face and five virtual sessions per week.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 19th April Teams Virtual at 10:00am



Learning & Development Group Meeting

1 March 2022

MINUTES

Present: Derek Bramma, Alex MacDonald, Ciara McLean, Ewan McNaught, Kirsten Miller, Jacqueline Doherty.

Also in attendance: Pamela Wilson

1. LDC Forum Update

Session began with update from LDC in Aberdeen around their Better Hearings training – this is part of the wider initiative to allow areas to share examples of their training.

Linda Quinn presentation on Pre-service training. This will be similar to last year and will have 2 intensive online training sessions, however there will also be 2 face-to-face sessions.

Similar to RAVHI receptionist there will be a designated person to provide support.

There is some concern around the virtual training particularly as the feedback we received from last year trainees is that this was far from ideal.

Even with breaks a 7-hour online day will be hard going.

2 mock hearings during first 2 days of training – 1 straight forward and 1 more challenging – this will allow them to see both good and bad practice and discuss this.

Max 24 in each cohort and these will all be from one area.

Any area support days should not be on national training days.

There will be a summer school for those who could not attend all training sessions.

Trainees can attend live observations after day 2.

Facilitators have yet to receive the training materials.

It is not unusual for facilitators to get the material only a week or two before training begins.

There was a recent request for additional facilitators this year, which would indicate a likely shortage.

There has been a reduction in the number of applicants nationally.

This led to discussion about lack of PMs in some areas:

Inverclyde have capped hearings at max of 5 per month for any individual PM.

There remains an issue on CSAS with PMs from one area accessing the ROP for hearings in another area.

This issue was highlighted last year and still no fix. There are some work arounds, but it does involve extra work for PMs.

Question asked as to why PMs are being asked to sit in hearings in other areas when there can be a shortage within Renfrewshire. It was noted that Renfrewshire hearings will be prioritised by the AST.

Alex asked about permissions to access LDC channel as neither he nor Jacqueline can view this on their Teams page.

2. Pre-Service update

Pre-service training arrangements (local sessions)

There were no organised local sessions last year due to Covid – although information videos were provided.

It was agreed that there is value in having face-to-face training sessions for new trainees – 20 trainees plus presenters and few AST would comfortably be safely accommodated at Walneuk.

Presentations from SCRA, social work and Who Cares (representing young people and role of advocate) to be arranged at these training sessions.

Need to decide on a date for these training sessions – need to find out details of the national training dates.

Feedback from trainees last year is that they would have preferred the opportunity to meet with peers and have the opportunity to share experiences – this is very difficult to do virtually.

Observation arrangements

The most recent reasons given for no pre-training observations are that the trainees may view bad practice prior to training, or they may observe something which hasn't been covered in training.

Previously this has been discouraged as not all areas are able to facilitate as many observations as Renfrewshire.

These observations are also an indication of PM future availability/commitment.

CHS wish all trainees to have a national consistency of experience which is resulting in previous practice recognised by PMs as being helpful and supportive, being discouraged.

3. In-Service Update

North Strathclyde ROP Training

At Hub meeting yesterday it was proposed to have two sessions - 29th March (evening) and 30th (day) – 30 people per session.

No thought has yet been given as to how PMs would be selected and how to reach out to those who weren't able to attend due to restricted numbers.

CHS will be running this training and are looking for help with regards to facilitators.

Suggestion that we ask for CHS for the materials and then arrange this training locally. No date in mind at this time.

Discussion around consistency of training and directions given from reporters and it was noted that this lack of consistency can have an impact on ROP. Examples were given as to different training experiences and to different reporters giving different advice.

Cyber Security Training

There will be a meeting at 2pm today to firm up plans for Thursday evening.

Reminder email to be sent after this meeting.

This should be an informative session.

LGBTQIA+ Training

This has been organised for 5th May. This session was hoped to provide information to PMs to allow them to feel more comfortable about correct language, diversity and inclusion. There was some concern around the training provider and whether the session would meet the needs of the Renfrewshire Community. At the meeting with provider there didn't appear to be a lot of flexibility with regards to tailoring the session to meet our needs. The training was more tailored to dealing with individuals and their personal experience rather than empowering the Renfrewshire Community to be able to treat all young people with respect and compassion.

CHS is planning to pull together a toolkit with regards to this subject matter and therefore it may be better to wait until this has been produced.

It was agreed to postpone this training, although acknowledged that it is important this goes ahead at some point. In the meantime, Ciara will go back to provider and ask for a breakdown of subject matter and then Jacqueline will reach out to the Renfrewshire Community to ask what type of information they would like to have covered.

'The Promise' Panel member info session

CHS plan to reach out to all areas to gauge opinion. They will give a 20-minute presentation then have 40 minutes for discussion.

It was agreed that a face-to-face session would be the best way to do this as it is a better way to have an interactive discussion.

There is a lot of information and concern surrounding 'The Promise'. What has happened, where are we and what is the plan for the future and how this will impact the panel community.

Proposed date would be Thursday 28th April in Walneuk.

Training completion update

IG training for cohorts '16, '19 and '20 – 3 still to complete training, with cut-off date being 28th.

Some PMs have already been sent letter from CHS.

PMs cannot sit on hearings without this training and must be removed from the rota.

Alex keeping a track of this and contacting PMs has proved helpful.

There have been no recent updates on Sibling and Advocacy training.

Enhanced Practice training is also active for some PMs.

4. Panel Member Recognition Event

It is hoped that this event, which had to be postponed in January, will now take place in May or early June. This event previously worked well when it was paired with the buddy night.

The Boarding House in Howwood was suggested as a possible venue.

Friday 6th May would be preferred date.

5. AOCB

Derek will purchase iPad in advance for face-to-face training to allow these sessions to be recorded.

Issue raised about advocacy. Number of hearings where advocacy are invited and don't attend or provide any update. Some providers are better than others at attending hearings. SCRA and social work are monitoring this.

6. Date of next meeting - To Be Advised

