

## First Quarter Organisational Performance Report 2009/10: (1 April 2009 to 30 June 2009)

### Executive Summary

The first quarter data for 2009/10 shows that the pattern established over previous quarters of increasing numbers of children subject to compulsory measures continues this quarter. Emergency measures such as Child Protection Orders and Place of Safety Warrants have increased significantly when compared to the first quarter of 2008/09. Significant increases in the number of Hearings held and in Court Applications and Appeals are also recorded this quarter.

These changes have occurred against a backdrop of further reductions in the number of children referred to the Reporter overall. It is important to highlight the distinction however between the number of children referred to the Reporter on offence grounds (which is down by 13.6%) and children referred on care and protection grounds (which is up marginally by 0.6%). Although there remain significant local variations, the overall picture suggests that child protection is the primary issue which needs to concern everyone involved in providing services and support to Scotland's most vulnerable children and young people.

	Q1 2008/09	Q1 2009/10	
Referrals received	21,093	20,409	↓ 3.2%
Non-offence referrals received	13,698	13,994	↑ 2.2%
Offence referrals received	7,414	6,434	↓ 13.2%
Children referred	15,705	15,197	↓ 3.2%
Children referred on non-offence grounds	11,732	11,802	↑ 0.6%
Children referred on offence grounds	4,791	4,140	↓ 13.6%
Child Protection Orders (CPOs)	125	202	↑ 61.6%
Supervision Requirements at 30 June	13,320	13,687	↑ 2.8%
The number of Children's Hearings held	10,649	11,308	↑ 6.2%
The number of Court applications	986	1,178	↑ 19.5%
The number of Court applications led	133	124	↓ 6.8%
The number of Place of Safety Warrants made	701	802	↑ 14.4%
The number of appeals concluded	114	188	↑ 64.9%

**Analysis:** There is now a timely opportunity to look across a number of sources of information and intelligence (including data sets, research reports, inspection reports, significant case reviews and independent inquiries) to draw out the key issues and challenges in seeking to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people in Scotland. SCRA is examining the range of information available and plans to share some conclusions with partners at a Child Protection event in November 09. Of particular concern is the vulnerability of very young children (under two years of age), who may not yet even be known or reported and who live in households where drug and alcohol abuse and violence are standard occurrences.

## Organisational Performance

SCRA performance in Q1 2009/10 has been strong against increased targets. During Q1, SCRA met or exceeded eleven of its fifteen reportable indicators. Where indicators have missed the target, management action will be taken to try and ensure that they are met for 2009/10. Performance across the regions was good, with any differences reflecting the particular challenges within regions.

### Outcomes for Children and Families:

	Q1 2008/09	Q1 2009/10
The percentage of Hearings that take place within 20 working days from Reporter decision (Target for the year: 71%)	71%	75%
The percentage of Hearings that take place within 30 working days from Reporter decision (Target for the year: 92%)	92%	93%
The percentage of written notifications of referral outcomes sent to children and families from the Reporter within 5 working days (Target for the year: 85%)	84%	83%
The percentage of written notifications of Hearing decisions sent to children and families from the Reporter within 5 working days (Target for the year: 90%)	95%	94%
The percentage of decisions on <u>referrals</u> made within 50 working days of receipt (Target for this year: 68%)	77%	76%
The average number of days for referrals on <u>offence</u> grounds from date of receipt of referral to Hearing decision (Target for the year: 67 days)	60	64
The average number of days for referrals on <u>non-offence</u> grounds from date of receipt of referral to Hearing decision (Target for the year: 123 days)	117	118

### Outcomes for Panel Members, Partners and Staff:

The percentage of non-offence applications established at court (Target for the year: 94%)	95%	91%
The degree to which SCRA core properties comply with SCRA property standards (Target for the year: 79%)	79%	80%
The percentage of initial Hearings proceeding to disposal (Target for the year: 75%)	74%	74%

### Organisational Efficiency Outcomes:

Forecast variance in annual revenue spends as a percentage of the available revenue budget (Target for the year: within 5%)	1.7%	1.0%
Forecast variance in annual capital spends as a percentage of the available capital budget (Target for the year: within 10%)	0.1%	6.2%
Forecast percentage of efficiency savings achieved in the year and re-invested in frontline services (Target for the year: 1.5%)	1.5%	1.5%
Forecast percentage of staff turnover savings achieved in the year – Regions (Target for the year: 4.25%)	4.7%	1.8%
Forecast percentage of staff turnover savings achieved in the year – Head Office (Target for the year: 4.25%)	5.9%	6.0%

## Financial Performance

The Q1 position reflects a net forecast revenue overspend of £255k. Budget holders will be required to develop robust action plans to deliver outturn expenditure within budget and the Director of Finance will report on this process to the September Board.

There is a brought forward budget overspend of £336k from 2008/09 which must be addressed through a corresponding budget underspend in 2009/10.

A business case for exceptional legal costs has been submitted to the Scottish Government and, if successful, this will reduce the overall deficit position.

Dumfries and Kilmarnock capital projects are underway and business cases have been submitted in respect of programme expenditure. An updated capital position will be presented to the September Board.

## Management Response

An announcement on the future of the Children's Hearings System was made by the Scottish Government during Q1 and a more recent announcement has amended the timetable for a Children's Hearings Bill entering Parliament (now early next year). SCRA continues to plan for these changes through its Transition Programme and the delayed timetable for the Bill affords an opportunity for SCRA to work with its partners and with the Government to ensure that the new arrangements coming forward lead to a strengthening of the Children's Hearings System.

Modernising processes and maintaining day to day services for children and families remain key priorities for SCRA.

The first quarter of 2009/10 has seen the development of a range of Project Plans and Business Cases through its Programme Management Framework.

The Executive Management Team (EMT) has completed a thorough challenge and review exercise of the budget and current plans. This renewed focus will be essential to reduce organisational risk in light of the forecast revenue overspend and will be a feature of budget monitoring throughout 2009/10.

Training for Reporters on some limited revisions to their role within the Hearing took place to enhance European Convention on Human Rights compliance. Work continues also in improving SCRA's information handling arrangements and the multi-agency Information Working Group looking at non-disclosure arrangements completed its work in the first quarter.