

# Business Plan 2016-17

Ensuring positive futures for children and young people in Scotland



SCOTTISH  
**CHILDREN'S REPORTER**  
ADMINISTRATION



# Welcome to the SCRA Business Plan - 2016/17

Welcome to the SCRA Business Plan for 2016/17, which sets out the key priorities that we intend to deliver, and provides detailed actions by which we intend to do so. In March 2014, SCRA published its three year Corporate Plan for 2014-17, specifying five high level desired outcomes and describing core strategies by which we would address them. This Business Plan covers the third and final year within this three year cycle.

The key themes of the 2014-17 Corporate Plan focused on enhancing SRCA's long term sustainability by:

- Consolidating on the significant programme of change and modernisation undertaken in recent years.
- Driving further qualitative and quantitative improvements.
- Reinforcing our customer focus and having meaningful engagement with service users, partners and our own staff.

As we enter the final year of our Corporate Plan, we have made real and substantial progress on these themes during 2014/15 and 2015/16. Our programme of change and modernisation has led to a range of benefits including a more stable and supportive working environment for staff, enhanced electronic data exchange with partners, reduced timescales for important elements of our core processes and harmonisation of processes across Localities. Our efforts to continually place children and young people at the centre of what we do, have driven further qualitative and quantitative improvements, with establishment of our Customer Commitment, delivery of a national customer service training programme and introduction of support and orientation for children and young people within the Hearings Centre environment all being achieved.

Meaningful engagement with stakeholders has been progressed in a number of ways, including surveys of children, young people and families, staff and partners, development of a refreshed communications strategy, and undertaking several research projects, acting on findings and sharing these with partners and Government where appropriate.

We were particularly committed to the recruitment of a third cohort of Modern Apprentices to continue our commitment to providing direct opportunities for young people with experience of the Hearings System, joint development with Children's Hearings Scotland of a digital strategy for the Children's Hearings System and the continued partnership with staff in developing organisational direction and improving our workforce planning arrangements through partnership with UNISON, are further examples of our commitment to meaningful stakeholder engagement, and our work within the strategic inter-agency Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership provides an opportunity for us to continue to deliver a co-ordinating role on issues of national importance with other important partners in the Hearings System.

During 2016/17 we aim to consolidate on these gains, ensuring that we realise optimum benefit across the organisation, and moving to full implementation for those elements where this has yet to be completed. A range of further actions are also included in this plan which will allow us to continue to address the above mentioned key themes, and these are listed under our core delivery strategies. We also commit to a number of planned improvements aimed at sustaining and developing our infrastructure, all of which will contribute to our efforts to address the above mentioned key themes. These include managing alignment with the digital strategy for the Children's Hearings System, addressing a number of operational and developmental IT objectives, implementing a programme to ensure we meet our environmental obligations and developing and implementing a joint property strategy with Children's Hearings Scotland.

As in previous years, the strategic and financial context within which we operate continues to present significant cumulative challenges, and we again find ourselves managing a range of pressures. These require difficult decisions to be made as we seek to balance service provision, qualitative improvements and planning for a sustainable future, all within continuing budgetary constraints. As in the first two years of this Corporate Plan, we continue to operate a range of measures to address this, such as workforce planning, property rationalisation and expenditure reduction initiatives including shared services arrangements.



Neil Hunter, Principal Reporter/Chief Executive



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## Our Role and Purpose

Focused on children and young people most at risk, SCRA's role and purpose is to:

- Make effective decisions about a need to refer a child/young person to a Children's Hearing;
- Prepare for and participate in court proceedings where statement of grounds or Hearings findings are appealed, and ensure the wellbeing of children and young people – particularly vulnerable witnesses – are protected throughout the court process;
- Support Panel Members (though we are not involved in making Hearing decisions) and ensure fair process in Hearings;
- Enable children, young people and families to participate in Hearings;
- Disseminate information and data to influence and inform the wider Children's Services community;
- Provide premises for Hearings to take place;
- Work collaboratively with partners to support and facilitate the Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) approach.

SCRA also shares responsibility with other agencies for how the Hearings System performs, and actively works with these partners in support of better outcomes for children and young people.

## Our Outcomes

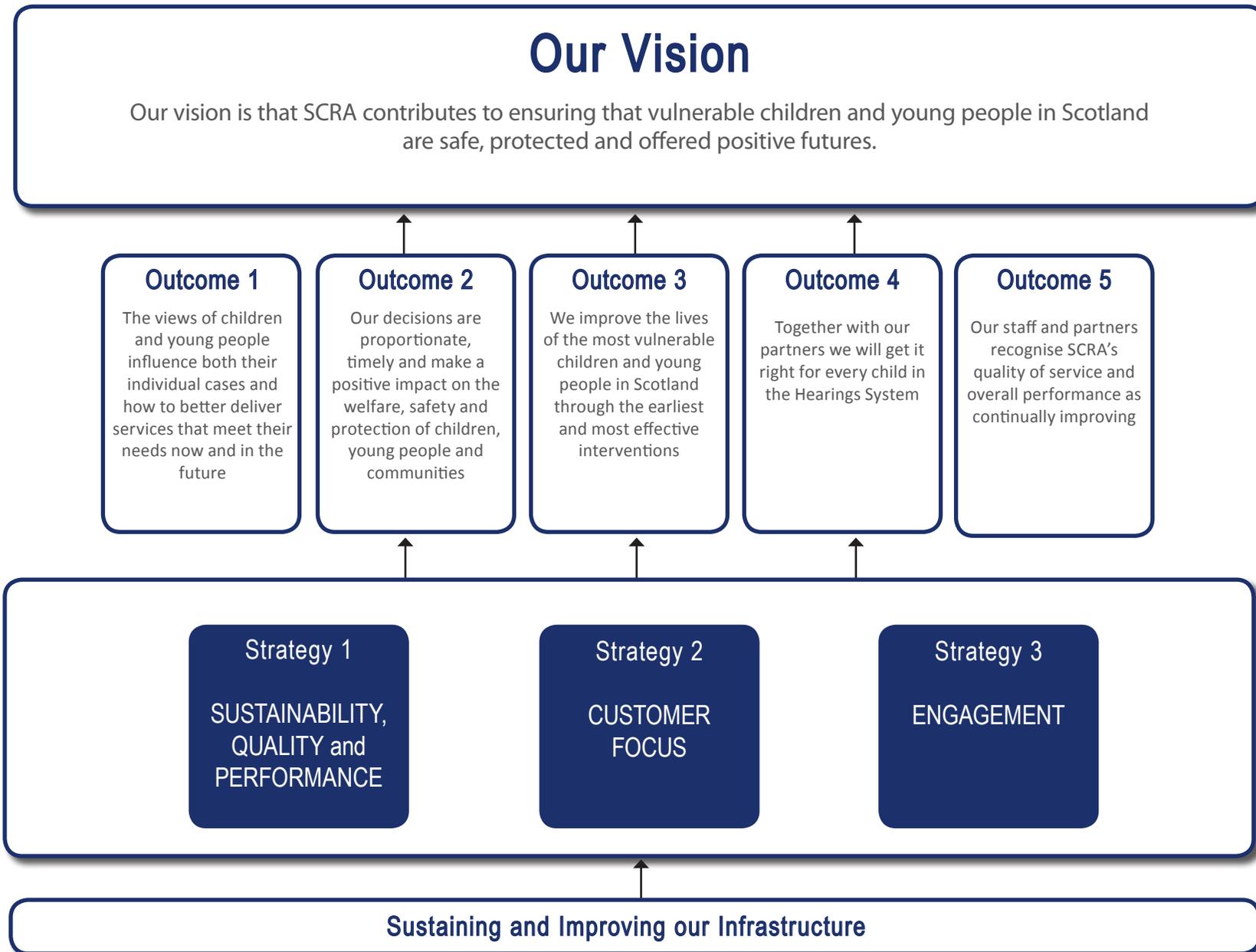
Our Corporate Plan for 2014-17 outlines our vision and strategic direction over those three years, based on achieving five outcomes:

- The views of children and young people influence both their individual cases and how to better deliver services that meet their needs now and in the future;
- Our decisions are proportionate, timely and make a positive impact on the welfare, safety and protection of children, young people and communities;
- We improve the lives of the most vulnerable children and young people in Scotland through the earliest and most effective interventions;
- Together with our partners we will get it right for every child in the Hearings System; and
- Our staff and partners recognise SCRA's quality of service and overall performance as continually improving.

These outcomes contribute directly to the delivery of the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework.

This Business Plan provides details of the specific activities we will be carrying out and detailed indicators of how well we are performing during 2016/17 in pursuit of these outcomes.

# Our Strategic Framework



## Core strategy - Sustainability, Quality and Performance

This strategy focuses on how we make best use of our resources, particularly our skilled and committed staff group, and optimise our systems and processes to maintain service delivery in an environment of increasing resource constraints. Key elements of the strategy for delivery during 2016/17 include SMART working projects to enhance the efficiency of how we receive information from partner agencies, process this and communicate outwards, reviewing Reporter capacity to maximise time spent of core functions, and working to improve resilience in how we plan, manage and resource court work.

## Core strategy - Customer Focus

Focusing on the needs of service users allows us to identify current and future improvement opportunities and address these through service design and delivery. Our Customer Focus strategy aims to deliver a personalised experience for children and young people. They can come to expect a high standard of customer care when they come into contact with us. Key elements of the strategy for delivery during 2016/17 include improvements to how we support and orient children and young people through the Hearings System, extending our national customer services training programme to cover a wider range of staff roles, implementing systems to monitor satisfaction of service users and analysis of customer feedback to enable us to identify and act on improvement opportunities.

## Core strategy - Engagement

Our Engagement strategy is the mechanism we use to interact fully with our staff, service users and partners, all of whom have a part to play in making the Hearings System work for the benefit of children and young people passing through it. It allows us to identify the views, expectations, priorities and concerns of service users, staff and partners and use these to plan effectively. Key elements of the strategy for delivery during 2016/17 include improving the way that we gather the views of our stakeholders to fully inform our next corporate planning cycle, rollout of our Management Development Programme as part of our Organisational Development Strategy, implementation of our Communications Strategies and embedding the relevant provisions of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 in our practice.

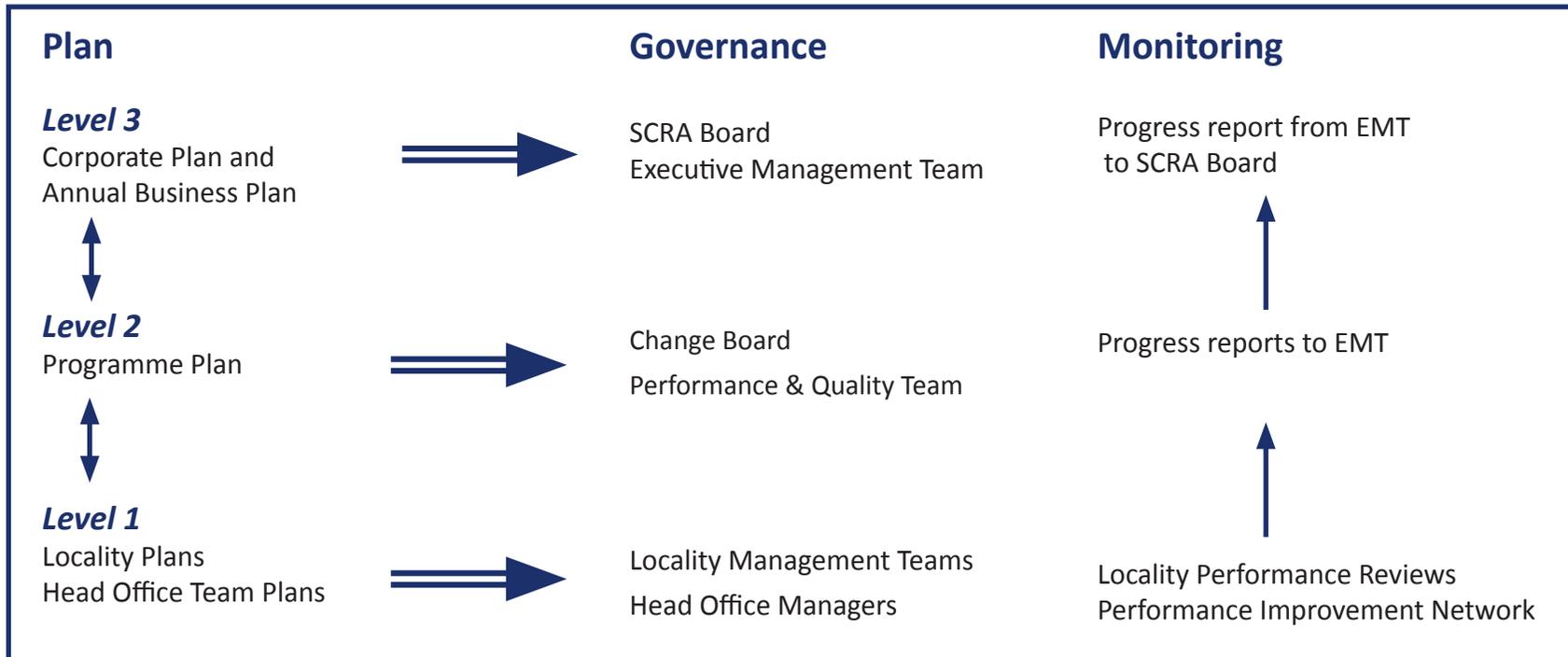
## Sustaining and Improving Our Infrastructure

Maintaining an efficient and effective support infrastructure that provides best value is central to successful delivery of our core strategies. Key developments for 2016/17 include managing alignment with the digital strategy for the Children's Hearings System and the wider Scottish Digital agenda, implementing a programme to ensure we meet our environmental obligations and developing and implementing a joint property strategy with Children's Hearings Scotland.

# Governance Arrangements

Monitoring and review – All plans within SCRA must support delivery of the outcomes and priorities which are set out in SCRA’s Corporate Plan 2014-17. The Business Plan outlines the detailed, high level actions requiring implementation during 2016/17.

The diagram below sets out the various levels, governance and monitoring arrangements for all SCRA plans. These have been adjusted over the course of the 2014-17 Corporate Plan through enhancements to SCRA’s Performance Management Framework



# Delivering SCRA Outcomes

## Core Strategy 1: Sustainability, Quality and Performance

What we will achieve in 2016/17

No.	Actions	Lead	Timeline	
			Start	End
1.	<p><b>We will</b> continue to operate workforce planning to optimise use of our resources with a particular focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Flexibility in how, where and what we deliver in our roles.</li> <li>■ Succession Planning.</li> <li>■ Performance Management.</li> <li>■ Absence Management.</li> <li>■ The development of a rounded and holistic learning and development package that is available to all staff.</li> <li>■ Development of a 3 year Workforce Strategy in line with the 2017-20 Corporate Plan.</li> </ul>	Susan Deery	01/04/16 01/04/16 01/04/16 01/04/16 01/04/16 01/06/16	31/03/17 31/03/17 31/03/17 31/03/17 31/03/17 31/03/17
2.	<p><b>We will</b> develop a 3 year Corporate Plan for 2017-20 that is aligned with;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A 3 year Financial Plan.</li> <li>■ A 3 year Workforce Strategy.</li> <li>■ A 3 year Organisational Development Strategy.</li> </ul>	Lisa Bennett  Ed Morrison Susan Deery Lisa Bennett	01/06/16  01/06/16 01/06/16 01/06/16	31/03/17  31/03/17 31/03/17 31/03/17
3.	<p><b>We will</b> undertake an end to end review of our processes and technical methodology for communicating with the people and agencies involved in successfully delivering the Children's Hearing System. We will use this review to inform the Digital Strategy of our recommendations to improve our service to partners, children, young people and families whilst making the best use of resources and skills of our staff.</p>	Donald Lamb Kirsty MacDiarmid	01/04/16	30/10/16
4.	<p><b>We will</b> maximise Reporters' time to carry out the core functions of managing referrals, making decisions, drafting grounds and undertaking Hearings by implementation of improvement plans developed through the Reporter Capacity Project.</p>	Iain Gault	01/01/16	30/09/17
5.	<p><b>We will</b> deliver a series of improvements to SCRA's arrangements for planning, undertaking and managing court activity, leading directly to greater efficiency and consistency, and contributing to staff health and wellbeing through delivery of the Court Project.</p>	Pauline Proudfoot	01/10/15	30/09/17

## Core Strategy 1: Sustainability, Quality and Performance contd ...

What we will achieve in 2016/17

No.	Actions	Lead	Timeline	
			Start	End
6.	<b>We will</b> deliver a quality assurance programme to gain assurance and identify improvements to be made in our application of operational and practice direction. We will continuously improve our practice and quality through implementation of action plans derived from this programme.	Kirsty MacDiarmid Malcolm Schaffer	01/04/16	31/03/17
7.	<b>We will</b> develop and implement a process for transfer of information to the National Records of Scotland for permanent preservation and revise our Records Management Policy accordingly.	Gillian Henderson	01/04/16	31/03/17
8.	<b>We will</b> implement a further phase of Locality development and consolidation to deliver a customised improvement plan for each area that will be held within the Locality plan and its implementation reviewed in accordance to the Performance Management Framework.	Tom Philliben Alistair Hogg	01/04/16	31/03/17
9.	<b>We will</b> implement a new national learning framework for children's hearings partners as part of the Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership (CHIP) which will lead to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ More effective inter-agency work across Scotland.</li> <li>■ Improved opportunities for joint training in local areas.</li> <li>■ Better understanding of roles and responsibilities in the Hearings System.</li> <li>■ Improved consistency and quality of practice and service delivery by all key professionals involved in Hearings.</li> </ul>	Neil Hunter Malcolm Schaffer	01/04/16	31/03/17
10.	<b>We will</b> make significant contributions to the Youth Justice Improvement Board in order to advance the whole systems approach and youth justice capacity with a particular emphasis on contribution to improvements in the Hearings System for 16/17 year olds.	Neil Hunter Malcolm Schaffer	01/04/16	31/03/17

## Core Strategy 2: Customer Focus

What we will achieve in 2016/17

No.	Actions	Lead	Timeline	
			Start	End
1.	<p><b>We will</b> improve the support and orientation of children and young people to the Hearing Centre environment and enhance their quality of experience and understanding by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Providing an opportunity of a pre-Hearing visit for children and young people attending a Hearing for the first time, monitor this uptake and its effectiveness to seek improvements where identified.</li> <li>■ Improved opportunities and methods for participation in Hearings.</li> <li>■ Rolling out a further 6 Model Hearing Suites.</li> </ul>	<p>Jennifer Orren</p> <p>Ian Allen</p>	<p>01/04/16</p> <p>01/04/16</p>	<p>31/03/17</p> <p>31/03/17</p>
2.	<p><b>We will</b> enhance the quality of the customer service that we provide through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reviewing the effectiveness of the previous customer service training and refreshing as required.</li> <li>■ Extending the range of staff to receive customer service training.</li> <li>■ Monitoring customer feedback on the quality of our customer service.</li> </ul>	<p>Kirsty MacDiarmid</p>	<p>01/05/16</p> <p>01/10/16</p> <p>01/06/16</p>	<p>31/08/16</p> <p>31/03/17</p> <p>31/03/17</p>
3.	<p><b>We will</b> deliver the 'Better Hearings' project through implementing an improvement plan which will improve service standards and 'personalisation' in the planning for Children's Hearings by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Concluding a series of focus groups identifying what makes a Hearing work well, at each stage of the process, from the perspectives of our professional partners.</li> <li>■ Developing and implementing an improvement plan through the CHS/SCRA and Social Work Scotland Tri-partite group.</li> </ul>	<p>Neil Hunter</p>	<p>01/04/15</p>	<p>31/03/17</p>

## Core Strategy 3: Engagement

What we will achieve in 2016/17

No.	Actions	Lead	Timeline	
			Start	End
1.	<p><b>We will</b> embed Organisational Development within SCRA to develop a 'fit for future' workforce, enhanced organisational performance and adaptability through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The design and implementation of a management development programme that will provide our managers with the opportunity to equip themselves with the skills needed to support and lead our staff as well as build upon their own continuing professional development.</li> <li>■ Embedding an organisational coaching culture that provides managers with ongoing training and support to use coaching skills and approaches in supervision, mentoring and team meetings to better support staff in their own development.</li> <li>■ A cascaded commitment to continuous improvement demonstrated through use of current improvement methodologies, through measurement of improvement outcomes and full deployment of lessons learned.</li> </ul>	Lisa Bennett	01/04/16	31/03/17
2.	<p><b>We will</b> promote equality of opportunity by exploring in a series of focus groups with female staff how best to encourage and support leadership development.</p>	Susan Deery	01/05/16	30/09/16
3.	<p><b>We will</b> ensure that the relevant provisions of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 are embedded in our practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ We will work with partners, children and young people to develop a plan that will demonstrate, through a series of practical and demonstrable actions, how we will implement our responsibilities as Corporate Parents.</li> <li>■ We will provide staff and management training in the various aspect of the Act and its interplay with practice.</li> </ul>	Malcolm Schaffer	01/04/16	31/03/17
4.	<p><b>We will</b> promote a full alignment of GIRFEC and the Children's Hearings System by working with agencies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ensure a proper understanding of when a referral should be made to the Reporter, so that children are referred at the right time.</li> <li>■ Develop understanding of how the roles of named persons and lead professional operate within the Hearings System and in conjunction with the Reporter.</li> <li>■ Influence thinking on how the child/young person's plan is used within Hearings to ensure that Panel Members receive information that is sufficient, appropriate and accurate.</li> </ul>	Malcolm Schaffer	01/04/16	31/03/17

## Core Strategy 3: Engagement contd ...

What we will achieve in 2016/17

No.	Actions	Lead	Timeline	
			Start	End
5.	<b>We will</b> work with partners to address the areas for improvement that were identified in our permanence and CPO research. This will ensure that referrals are made appropriately and we consistently make the right decisions to ensure that interventions are timely and effective at protecting children and young people from harm.	Malcolm Schaffer	01/04/16	31/03/17
6.	<b>We will</b> ensure internal and external stakeholders are kept fully engaged and informed through successful implementation our Communications Strategy 2015-18 and its supporting action plan. A key deliverable from the plan for 2016/17 is the launch of our new corporate website.	Maryanne McIntyre	01/04/16	31/06/16
7.	<b>We will</b> lead the establishment of a Young People's Board for the Hearings System to ensure that young people's experiences and voices are more consistently acted upon and contribute to improvement of the system.	Neil Hunter	01/04/16	30/10/16
8.	<p><b>We will</b> deepen our understanding across some key societal and internal issues to better inform policy and decision making by undertaking research in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The quality of engagement for children and young people from ethnic minorities in the Hearings System.</li> <li>■ Assessment and support of sibling relationships of long term fostered and adopted children and young people (through a joint project with Strathclyde University - externally funded).</li> <li>■ Planning and decision making for children and young people on compulsory measures of supervision at home.</li> </ul>	Gillian Henderson	01/02/16 01/02/14 01/06/16	31/03/17 31/08/16 31/03/17
9.	<b>We will</b> align individual supervision and appraisal processes to Locality plans and objectives to ensure our staff are supported in our collective delivery of our strategic vision.	Tom Philliben Alistair Hogg	01/03/16	31/05/16

## Sustaining & Developing Our Infrastructure

What we will achieve in 2016/17

No.	Actions	Lead	Timeline	
			Start	End
1.	<p><b>We will</b> implement the 2016/17 IT strategy and operational plan to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A technology refresh strategy.</li> <li>■ Analysis of data management needs.</li> <li>■ Review of the overall IT offering across SCRA and CHS.</li> <li>■ Development of detailed costings and budget spend profiles for the period to March 2019.</li> </ul> <p><b>We will</b> address a number of developmental IT objectives to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reviews of wireless infrastructure.</li> <li>■ Improving video conferencing capabilities.</li> <li>■ Business systems.</li> <li>■ Online collaboration.</li> <li>■ Communication systems.</li> <li>■ A move towards a single corporate drive.</li> </ul>	Lawrie McDonald	01/04/16	31/03/17
		Lawrie McDonald	01/04/16	31/03/17
2.	<b>We will</b> align future direction with the digital strategy for the Children's Hearings System and the wider Scottish Government Digital Agenda.	Lawrie McDonald	01/04/16	31/03/17
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>We will</b> have our new Perth Hearings Centre completed, occupied and delivering services.</li> <li>■ <b>We will</b> implement a programme to ensure we meet our environmental obligations, and actively engage all Localities and project groups in operating the necessary approaches.</li> <li>■ <b>We will</b> develop and implement a joint property strategy with CHS, with a particular focus on improving arrangements for Outreach Hearings Centres.</li> </ul>	Ian Allen	01/02/16	31/07/16
		Ian Allen	01/04/16	31/03/17
		Ed Morrison	01/10/15	31/03/17

# Monitoring and Managing Performance

During the lifetime of the Corporate Plan 2014-17, we have introduced a revised mechanism for target setting as part of the development of our Performance Management Framework. This is based on each of our nine Localities setting their own targets based on evaluation of recent performance, assessment of their operating context and determination of customer focused performance targets that will be challenging but realistic and achievable. These are then aggregated to provide national targets. This has necessitated revision to some of the targets set in the 2014-17 Corporate Plan. While varying from the “top down” approach previously adopted, we consider this to be a more sustainable way of driving improvement. Having operated it successfully during 2015/16, it is now established as a central element of our performance management arrangements, and has been adopted again for 2016/17.

Targets for 2016/17 are shown below.

<b>Outcomes for Children and Families</b>	<b>Target 2015/16</b>	<b>Performance 2015/16*</b>	<b>Target 2016/17</b>
The percentage of Hearings scheduled to take place within 20 working days	74%	70%	76%
The percentage of decisions on referrals made within 50 working days of receipt	73%	76%	78%
<b>Outcomes for Panel Members, Partners and Staff</b>			
The degree to which SCRA core properties comply with SCRA property standards	90%	86.5%	90%
The percentage of initial Hearings proceeding to disposal	75%	76%	76%
<b>Organisational Efficiency Outcomes</b>			
Variance in annual revenue spends as a percentage of the available revenue budget	Within 1%	0.7%	Within 1%
Variance in annual capital spends as a percentage of the available capital budget	Within 5%	2.4%	Within 5%
The Scottish Government efficiency savings target will be met	Meet target	On target	Meet target
The percentage of revenue savings achieved in the year	2.8%	1.8%	2.4%
The percentage of working days lost to absence	4%	4.8%	4%

\* Financial, Property and HR based performance figures are forecasts for the year. All other performance figures are April – December 2015

# SCRA Resources

The 2016/17 Revenue and Capital Budgets are shown below and are aligned with the budget provided by the Scottish Government. The revenue plans are based on the existing organisational structure and workforce and incorporate a 2.4% savings target. The capital plans include resources for replacement/upgrading of the IT infrastructure and for the completion of property works in Perth.

Revenue Budget 2016/17	£'000
Staff costs	16,157
Property costs	2,806
Travel & subsistence	232
Supplies & services	2,298
Unfunded pensions	189
Income	(382)
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,300</b>

Capital Budget 2016/17	
Information technology	325
Property strategy	812
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,137</b>





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