



		<b>Paper</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies</b>	
<b>2.</b>	<b>AOB</b>	
<b>3.</b>	<b>Draft Minute of Meeting held on 24 April 2016</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Accuracy &amp; Matters Arising</li><li>• Action Tracker</li></ul>	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Implementation of GIRFEC Proposals in 2014 Act and Implications for Children's Hearings System</b>	<b>Malcolm Schaffer - Verbal</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Panel Pocket Update</b>	<b>Iain Gault - verbal</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Video Conferencing Project</b>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Standby</b>	<b>Malcolm Schaffer – Verbal</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Risk</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strategic &amp; Operational Risk Register – Board report</li><li>• New Risks</li></ul>	
	<b>Date of Next meeting: 23 August 2016 at 10.30 a.m.</b>	

**Present:**

Neil Hunter (Chair), Lesley Siewert Kenneth Ritchie Anne Gerry Joe Hamilton Gordon Brechin, Shona Spence, Rosemary Burnett, Jill Richards, Malcolm Schaffer, Gill Short, Neil McKinlay, Alistair Hogg, Tom Philliben

**In attendance:**

Kirsty MacDiarmid, Janis McDougall

		<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Action</b>
1.	Apologies were received from Tricia Morris		
2.	<p><b>AOB - Timing of Case Sampling Exercise</b></p> <p><b>Noted:</b> The Quality Assurance Manager will respond to concerns raised in relation to the timing of the case sampling exercise scheduled to take place during July/August (given that this is the peak annual leave period).</p>	<b>May 16</b>	<b>KMacD</b>
3.	<p><b>Minute of Meeting held on 4 March 2016</b> The minute was agreed as a correct record.</p> <p><b>Matters Arising</b> <b>Checking of Panel Papers</b> <b>Noted:</b> A paper on requirements for Checking of Panel Papers will be scheduled for the June Ops Group meeting. (It was also noted that this will incorporate existing guidance used by South East Locality)</p> <p><b>Case Examples</b> <b>Noted:</b> Four localities (Glasgow, South East, Central and Ayrshire) have provided information. The importance of provision of case examples to demonstrate complexity of workload for use in discussions with the Minister/Sponsor Team was re-emphasised.</p> <p><b>Agreed:</b> Localities still to provide case examples should send these to the Head of Practice &amp; Policy by June 2016.</p>	<p><b>June 16</b></p> <p><b>June 16</b></p>	<p><b>AH</b></p> <p><b>LRMs</b></p>

		<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Action</b>
	<p><b>Action Log</b> The action log was reviewed.</p> <p><b>Noted:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An evaluation of the Panel Pocket evaluation will be scheduled for the June operational meeting.</li> <li>2. Secure Accommodation Protocol <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Head of Practice &amp; Policy will continue to liaise with Scottish Government to produce a branded version of the Secure Accommodation protocol for use by LRMs.</li> <li>• Not all secure units are aware of the protocol (irrespective of this, all Reporters should follow the protocol)</li> <li>• The Practice Manager confirmed that it is the responsibility of the home Reporter to ensure that the risk assessment is made available</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Translation &amp; Interpretation – Use of Single Translation Leaflet – the use of a single leaflet will be not be progressed at this stage and will be considered as part of a review of the impact of practice direction – the review is scheduled for Summer 2016.</li> <li>4. LRMs confirmed that staff have been reminded of the need to check Panel Papers.</li> <li>5. Notification of replacement safeguarders – the issue of inconsistency in relation to the process of notification of replacement safeguarders has been raised with Children 1<sup>st</sup>. An MOU has been agreed and will be circulated.</li> </ol>	<b>May 16</b>	<b>MS</b>
4.	<p><b>Implementation of GIRFEC Proposals in 2014 Act and Implications for Children’s Hearings System</b></p> <p>The Head of Practice &amp; Policy spoke to the paper on the implementation of GIRFEC proposals in 2014 Act and Implications for the Children’s Hearings System.</p> <p><b>Noted;</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Guidance is already in place around the GIRFEC workstreams.</li> <li>2. The Practice Team has circulated a draft of training material which can be used if requested for named person training at local level.</li> </ol>		

		<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Action</b>
	<p>3. CHIP will look at the development of national multi-agency practice training on relevant areas and whether it can be delivered at local levels.</p> <p>4. Practice Direction will be issued, especially on information sharing with named person.</p> <p>5. The vulnerability around health service liaison was highlighted.</p> <p>6. The Act does not come into force until the end of August.</p> <p><b>Agreed:</b></p> <p>1. There is a need for a concise focused briefing paper to be circulated in advance of the implementation date on what the legal situation is in relation to named person so that there is clarity for Reporters in terms of procedure. In addition further consideration to be given to follow-up face to face briefings for Reporters – e.g. would this be beneficial and appropriate timing for a follow-up session.</p> <p>2. Alistair Hogg, Senior Operational Manager will raise the issue of CMS requirements in relation to named person with the Change Advisory Board.</p> <p>3. The Head of Practice and Policy will check that the guidance on the website is up-to-date.</p> <p>4. In terms of information flow and sharing of experiences as minimum the Operational Group membership should be used as the forum for this. The Head of Practice &amp; Policy will liaise with the Comms Team around options for a shared area/workspace for exchange of views/information/sharing of experiences.</p>	<p><b>Aug 16</b></p> <p><b>May 16</b></p> <p><b>Immediate</b></p> <p><b>May 16</b></p>	<p><b>MS</b></p> <p><b>AH</b></p> <p><b>MS</b></p> <p><b>MS</b></p>
5.	<p><b>Order of Panel Papers</b></p> <p>The Group discussed the paper which proposed the order of panel papers which would be adopted on a national basis to ensure consistency of practice.</p> <p><b>Noted:</b></p> <p>1. Consultation has taken place within SCRA, the Panel Community and with the Hearings Management Group.</p> <p>2. While there has not been full agreement as to the nature of the order of panel papers there has been complete agreement and recognition of the advantages in having one national recognised order.</p>		

		<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Action</b>
	<p>3. In reaching an agreed order, Localities will be required to compromise and alter current practice.</p> <p><b>Agreed:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The national order of panel papers will comprise a blend of chronological order within stratified elements and reports will placed at the back of the set of papers. The full report of proceedings should be included.</li> <li>2. The Head of Practice &amp; Policy will issue the revised order to Ops Group members and liaise with CHS and the Hearings Management Group.</li> <li>3. Further consideration will be given to the implementation date for the new order of panel papers taking account of the impact on panel members and staff. Implementation will however be on gradual basis starting with new cases.</li> </ol>	<b>May/June 16</b>	<b>MS</b>
6.	<p><b>Non-Disclosure</b> The Group discussed the paper which detailed feedback on the non-disclosure principles.</p> <p><b>Noted:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Several localities have a protocol in place with Local Authorities and other partners in relation to duties of redaction and this arrangement is working well and promotes a collective sense of responsibility for securing non disclosure.</li> <li>2. The two areas where there were disagreements were (1) in relation to use of two different types of non-disclosure forms and (2) the inclusion of the address on the report of proceedings.</li> </ol> <p><b>Agreed:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All localities should move to have a protocol in place in relation to redaction of reports.</li> <li>2. In view of the divergence of views on the report of proceedings, the issues would be considered further outwith the main meeting. (Subsequently agreed to refer to the Executive Management Team for decision).</li> <li>3. To form a reference group drawn from across the localities and job titles which can review draft guidance in terms of how easy it is to follow. The group can progress this work via email and be linked by the Practice Manager.</li> <li>4. Non-disclosure national training to be mandatory for all staff.</li> </ol>	<p><b>June 16</b></p> <p><b>May 16</b></p>	<p><b>LRMs</b></p> <p><b>MS</b></p>

		<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Action</b>
7.	<p><b>Hearings Management</b> The Head of Practice &amp; Policy gave an update on Hearings Management.</p> <p><b>Noted:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Hearings Management Group were asking all areas to review how hearing management arrangements were working and what current issues were most problematic or what was working well.</li> <li>2. Panel Members from two localities had reflected on good sessions on time management delivered by Shona Spence and Neil McKinlay. Other Panel reps expressed an interest in such a session and Locality Reporter Managers are encouraged to offer such to their local panel.</li> </ol>		<b>LRMs</b>
8.	<p><b>Risk</b> <b>Operational Risk Register</b> <b>Noted:</b> A review of the register has still to be undertaken – the updated register will be circulated to members.</p> <p><b>New Risks</b> No new risks were identified.</p>		
9.	<b>Date of Next Meeting:</b> 14 June at 10.30 a.m.		

## **Video Conference Project**

In December 2015 a Video Conferencing Project Initiation Document (PID) was submitted to the SCRA Change Programme Board. The aim of the VC Project was to clarify, consolidate and develop the use of video conferencing within SCRA for Children's Hearings and Court.

The SCRA Change Programme Board narrowed the focus of the project to explore how video conferencing is currently used by staff and what the current attitudes are towards using the technology. It was expected that the analysis from this work would inform the Digital Strategy.

A revised PID with the aim to provide an evaluation of the current VC capabilities and produce VC guidance was approved at the February SCRA Change Programme Board. It was recommended at that meeting that the governance should transfer to the Ops Group as the project no longer fitted under the remit of the SCRA Change Programme Board.

This paper has been produced to update the Ops Group on the progress made to date by the VC Project and ask for approval to be given to the recommended next steps.

Lorna McNaughton  
Improvement Projects Officer (Digital)

## Video Conference Survey

### Introduction

Following discussion at the Locality Support Manager meeting a survey of Locality Support Managers was completed to determine:

- the VC equipment available across the country;
- its current use;
- any difficulties offices experienced;
- any ideas localities had about the ways in which SCRA could use VC.

The survey<sup>i</sup> is attached at Appendix 1.

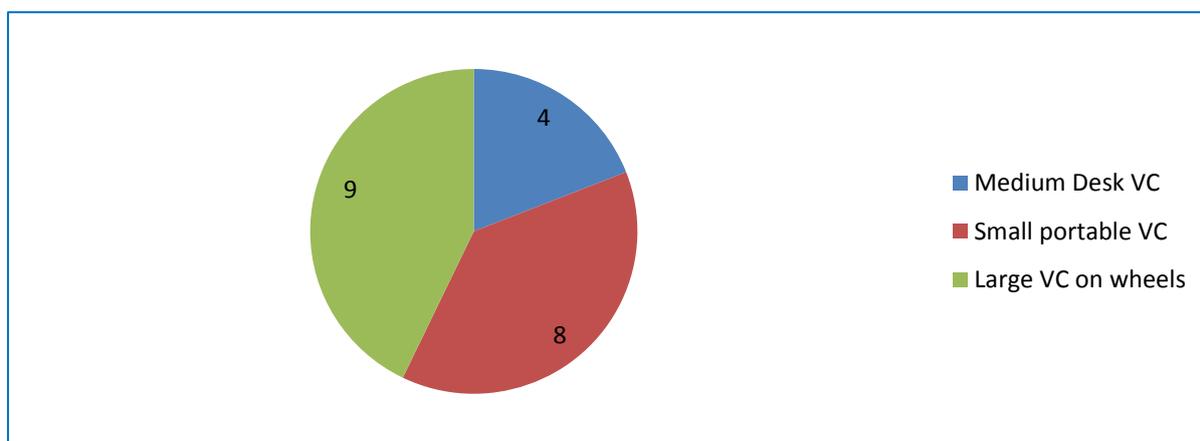
Responses to the survey came back quickly once it had been circulated on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2016. Responses were then collated and analysed. Where more than one response was received from a locality the different responses were included where they contained additional information. Two responses were received from South East – but they were the same and only one was counted.

### Survey Results

Locality	Number of survey returns
Ayrshire	1
Central	2
Glasgow	1
Grampian	1
Highlands and islands	3
Lanarkshire, Dumfries and Galloway	3
North Strathclyde	3
South East Scotland	1
Tayside and Fife	1

The national response to the survey ensures that views from all localities are known.

The Video Conferencing equipment available is as follows:



One small portable VC is broken and is in Tayside and Fife.

From the SCRA website we have 22 core offices across the country with 21 VC units and there are 20 working VC units available to these offices. Outreach hearing centres have no VC facilities.

Access to Video Conferencing facilities is not automatic and consequently is not at the forefront of our thinking.

Every respondent indicated that VC equipment was regularly used, apart from Ayrshire, whose view was that they prefer to attend SCRA meetings in person, and not many partner agencies have or use VC regularly.

14 of the 16 respondents indicated that staff were able to use the VC equipment and were familiar with how it works, although 1 qualified the 'yes' with most staff, but not all familiar with the equipment and 1 qualified 'yes' with some staff needing further training.

10 respondents indicated there had been issues with using the VC equipment. 6 indicated that there had been no issues with using it.

The issues that were highlighted were:

- Sometimes we don't have clear picture/no sound/no picture.
- Screen is very small and volume is not good. If people rustle papers then it is difficult to pick up the conversation.
- There are sometimes problems with the connection.
- Occasional connection issues, sometimes picture but no sound or vice versa.
- The equipment is currently unusable (possible fault with remote control?)
- Only occasionally - usually just quality of sound if big group at other side so can be difficult to pick up all the conversation. We have had issues with no sound or unable to see & just hear other side – most of those issues were not specific to our vc but problems on the other end
- Dropped connections although this has been better of late.
- If the VC is moved, it often won't easily come back on.
- Occasionally able to hear but not see, occasionally able to see but not hear.
- Sometimes the VC freezes and requires to be switched on and off from the wall socket.

These issues can prevent the VC units being an effective form of communication, and once people have negative experiences of using the units they are less likely to use them in the future. Every locality apart from Grampian indicated that VC units were used mainly for SCRA internal meetings. Ayrshire, one Central office, one Lanarkshire, Dumfries and Galloway office, 2 North Strathclyde offices and Tayside and Fife did not use the VC for any external meetings. The other localities did.

The external meetings where VC had been used were:

- We did try to set up an external meeting with a prison. SCOTS were contacted to arrange a "bridge" but the trial run did not work due to security arrangements in place at the prison. The prison were due to try to VC in to us, but before this was tried out, the VC was no longer required.
- Children's Hearings in other localities.
- We sometimes have requests to VC into hearings.
- "Linking to child protection committee and Panel Liaison Group in Elgin.
- Regularly used by Scot courts for vulnerable witnesses.
- Used in hearing rooms to provide a link for those in placements where distance is considerable.
- VC meeting room also used for attendees linking into hearings taking place at other SCRA offices.
- Used mainly be HQ staffed based in Hamilton to VC into meetings, team uses it weekly to VC into the other part of our locality which is Dumfries.
- External Hearing & Social Work Meeting.
- VC to prison in England.

14 of the 16 responses indicated that the VC had been used for a children's hearing. 2 responses said it had not. Some issues with the use of the equipment did arise, and they were:

- In relation to the VC equipment for a children's hearing there were no issues as we were contacting another SCRA office. We did try to set up an external meeting with a prison. SCOTS were contacted to arrange a "bridge" but the trial run did not work due to security arrangements in place at the prison. The prison were due to try to VC in to us, but before this was trialled, the VC was no longer required.
- There was a problem with the sound but this was quickly resolved.
- The link to the child protection committee has only been successful once and believe there were problems linking into some of them. Usually have no problems for other uses other than having to trundle it to the hearing room when its used for the purpose of a hearing. Would prefer to have a smaller unit available for hearings taking place here.
- Yes when it was the "old" unit but now we have a new one hoping no issues will arise!
- All seemed to be fine.
- Yes, not compatible with VC at other end.

12 of the 16 respondents felt staff are provided with the information they need in order to use the VC. 4 respondents didn't think staff had this information. These respondents indicated what might help:

- Step by step instructions on how to use it especially when phoning outside SCRA.
- A quick guide to using VCs would be useful – something which could be left beside the VC units. If this could include basic faults and how to resolve them (as we have in photocopier/franking machine manuals e.g. no sound – what to check; no picture – what to check) this would be helpful.
- Training on how to make calls, including multiple users, how to switch off, how to chair meetings effectively and Guidance on how to ensure secure connections and when VC can or can't be used would be helpful, especially for hearings/court activity.
- A simple 'idiots guide' would be useful.

Additional comments about the VC units we have were also collected. They were:

- It would be helpful to have VCs at outreach hearing centres.
- It would be good to have some updated VC's.
- Perfect. Could we have another unit?
- It's a welcome bonus within this remote office.
- Given our geography here we use the VC regularly for meetings. However, sometimes, I have been unable to VC into a meeting due to number of folks using VC & only 4 can VC in, therefore unless you get in quick you have to miss a meeting as a consequence. As I would always indicate I intended to VC in, it would be good if those furthest away were given priority over those closer to meeting base.
- Have recently received 2 requests from Localities in the North of Scotland and the Islands to have use of our VC equipment for family members resident here to VC into Hearings up there.
- Every office should have a large unit.
- Would not mind further training on the functionality of the VC.
- We currently use for hearings. As the VC equipment is in the staff area this presents health and safety issues as potentially volatile situations are brought into the main office. We are also piloting vulnerable witness VC for court and have equipment set up in Hearing Room 3, provided by the Scottish court service.
- As we do not have a meeting room the VC is based in the LSM's office when required for hearings it needs to be carried through to the hearing room and set up each time, we did have a smaller VC unit that we used for hearings but this no longer works, it would be helpful to have a 2nd one which can be based in the hearing room.

## **Conclusions**

Within the group surveyed – Locality Support Managers - Video Conferencing is held by SCRA staff to be a useful tool. When it has been used it is regarded as a positive addition to the resources we have available to enable all SCRA staff to be involved / included in work being done nationally and to ensure effective participation within children's hearings. It has not been taken up by all localities in the same way though.

The technology is also used to facilitate partnership working, but this is not fully established and there are regional differences in how this happens. There are also technical problems in using the technology SCRA has invested in with the technology operated by partners in some areas.

The technology SCRA currently uses can be unreliable. As a result it has not become something every SCRA office uses regularly to improve the work that we do.

In addition, LSM's do not consider the use of VC technology in the same way as reporters / practitioners, who are assessing more regularly whether it would be of use in particular cases. I have been contacted with questions, eg:

- whether it is appropriate for Women's Aid to support mother's to VC into children's hearings.
- what reporter's can do if relevant people are in custody in England / Wales (or in Scotland) and would wish to VC into a hearing
- what SCRA can do to support Courts using VC technology in SCRA Court proceedings.

These questions move our consideration of VC technology on from assessing whether it works / how it works towards a more complicated position – how VC can be used in reporter practice to improve the work we do and improve the experience of those involved in children's hearings and how it can improve participation in hearings as well.

### **Recommendations for the next steps:**

1. Ensure localities are in a position to easily explain to all staff how their available VC technology works – single sheet guides, volunteers to help produce these to be requested from LSM group.
2. Assess how practitioners would want to use the VC technology available to them in their day to day work just now.
3. Assess how practitioners view the use of VC and similar digital technology in the future.

**Melissa Hunt**  
**Project Manager**

**Wednesday, 18 May 2016**

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**i VIDEO CONFERENCING IN SCRA – NATIONAL INFORMATION GATHERING**

1. What Locality are you based in?	Click here to enter text.
2. What VC equipment do you have?	Choose an item.
3. Is the VC equipment used regularly?	Choose an item.
4. If you answered no to question 4 why is the VC equipment not used regularly?	Click here to enter text.
5. Are staff within your office who need to use the VC equipment familiar with how it works?	Choose an item.
6. Have you experienced any issues using VC equipment?	Choose an item.
7. If you answered yes to question 6 please give details	Click here to enter text.
8. Is the VC equipment mainly used for SCRA meetings?	Choose an item.
9. Is the VC equipment used for any external meetings?	Choose an item.
10. If you answered yes to question 9 please give examples of the external meetings	Click here to enter text.
11. Has the VC equipment been used for a children's hearing?	Choose an item.
12. If you answered yes to question 9 or 11 did you have any issues with the VC equipment?	Click here to enter text.
13. Overall do you feel that staff are provided with the information they need to use the VC equipment ?	Choose an item.
14. If you answered no to question 13 what information do you think staff need about the use of VC equipment?	Click here to enter text.
15. Is there anything else you would like to say about Video Conferencing equipment or use within SCRA?	Click here to enter text.

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire**