

# Scottish Children's Reporter Administration

Operational Strategy 2020-2023



Care



Protect



Connect



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# 1. Introduction

Our Operational Strategy sets out our aims, approaches and priorities for planning and delivering front line services, and provides a framework within which Locality Plans can translate this into local delivery. It will dovetail with our Performance Management Framework which sets out the annual cycle by which plans and objectives at national, locality, team and individual levels are developed and aligned, performance appraised, reviewed and reported, and quality embedded into everything that we do.

Our operational teams include the following 9 Localities:

- Grampian
- Tayside & Fife
- Central
- South East
- Lanark & Dumfries
- Ayrshire
- Glasgow
- North Strathclyde
- Highland & Islands

## 2. Operational Strategy

The Operational Strategy sets out what we want to achieve during 2020-2023, in line with our Corporate Plan's 3 Aims: Care, Connect and Protect.

We have incorporated the following 4 underpinning themes within the Operational Strategy that are central to the way we plan, monitor and deliver services now and in the future.

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Corporate Parenting
- Environmental and Sustainability
- Quality

Our Corporate Plan for 2020-2023 sets out the framework by which we will realise our vision for transformational change in that period.

**CARE** Delivering a service that feels right for each child, young person and family that experiences it.

**CONNECT** Working together to receive the right referrals, for the right children, at the right time.

**PROTECT** Making high quality and timely decisions for children and young people, using the right information that is relevant, clear and secure.

We will deliver our objectives by ensuring that the our SCRA values resonate through everything we do:

**Supportive** We work with kindness to support children, young people and families, our Partners and each other.

**Child Centred** Children and young people are at the heart of everything we do.

**Respectful** Everyone is respected and treated fairly, inclusively and lawfully.

**Accountable** We are responsible for our decisions, our ethics and our learning.

## 3. Strategy Aims

We have 3 strategy aims that align with the Corporate Plan's aims and objectives.

### 1. A flexible and adaptable workforce

A flexible and adaptable workforce with the right balance of roles, skills and experience, made up of staff who all feel skilled, confident, valued and respected.

We recognise the commitment, value and contribution that our people bring to the organisation. They are our most valuable resource and are essential to the delivery of a high quality service that meets the needs and rights of every child, young person and family. We must ensure the health and wellbeing of our people and ensure that they are appropriately trained, developed and supported to deliver these services. The correct mix of roles, skills and experience will ensure that service delivery is resilient and sustainable. Happy, healthy, resilient and motivated people will deliver high quality services to children, young people and families.

### 2. Enhanced relationships

Enhanced relationships with partners, working to agreed protocols, shared goals and common standards to ensure we meet the needs of children and young people, with a focus on continually improving service delivery.

We will continue to engage with stakeholders and key partner agencies in delivery of Better Hearings to improve service delivery. We will promote meaningful and appropriate engagement with children and young people to ensure that their voices are heard and their needs met.

### 3. A high performing organisation

A high performing organisation, with quality and consistency at the heart of all that we do, that is agile, resilient and responsive and able to act effectively and timeously to change.

We must shape ourselves to ensure that we are agile, resilient and responsive to change. As an organisation, we must ensure that we have the right resources available locally and nationally and an ability to provide appropriate support in response to changes to the operating environment. We will implement and embed CSAS and capitalise on the benefits of being digitally enabled.

## 4. Strategy Objectives

Our Operational Strategy will be delivered by each of our 9 Localities. It will dovetail with our Performance Management Framework which sets out the annual cycle by which plans and objectives at national, locality, team and individual levels are developed and aligned, performance appraised, reviewed and reported on and quality embedded into everything we do. Locality Plans will set out arrangements for delivering the Operational Strategy within a local context.

The Planning and Performance Network (PPN) is the forum for locality planning nationally and progress, implementation, monitoring and review of Locality Plans is by way of regular Locality Management Team meetings in each of the Localities and bi-annual Operational Manager led reviews

Our strategy objectives highlight how we will meet our aims.

Strategy Aim 1: A flexible and adaptable workforce					
Strategy Objectives		Strategic Objective Ref. No.	Care	Connect	Protect
1.1	Embed staff health and wellbeing in localities and ensure consistency through adoption of national standards.	1.5	✓		
1.2	Ensure all staff are trained, developed and supported to meet the requirements of their roles and to meet the challenges of the local operating environment.	1.5	✓		
1.3	Develop and implement a strategy for delivery of complex court.	2.1		✓	
1.4	Review local staff profile to ensure the correct mix of roles, skills and experience in alignment with the staff profile demonstrated in the agreed sustainability model.	3.4			✓
1.5	Assess and develop succession planning to ensure the correct mix of roles, skills and experience in the future and to identify opportunities for staff development and progression.	3.2			✓

Strategy Aim 2: Enhanced relationships					
Strategy Objectives		Strategic Objective Ref. No.	Care	Connect	Protect
2.1	Continually improve the staff working environment including adoption of principles of Smarter Working to enhance wellbeing.	3.2			✓
2.2	Work with partners and other corporate parents to share responsibility for Better Hearings.	2.2		✓	
2.3	Incorporate the agreed Time and Quality standards into local protocols and arrangements.	2.1		✓	
2.4	Evaluate local Better Hearings initiatives, sharing best practice nationally and adopting locally.	2.2		✓	
2.5	Promote meaningful and appropriate engagement with children and young people to ensure that their voices are heard and their needs are met.	3.5			✓

Strategy Aim 3: A high performing organisation					
Strategy Objectives		Strategic Objective Ref. No.	Care	Connect	Protect
3.1	Implement and embed CSAS.	2.7		✓	
3.2	Support the development of the digital strategy.	2.7		✓	
3.3	Develop and implement a standard operational model for casework.	3.3			✓

3.4	Continuously improve hearing centres to ensure equality of experience for all children and young people, including assessment of options for digital hearings where minimum standards cannot be reached.	2.7		✓	
3.5	Undertake equalisation exercise to provide platform for ongoing sustainability with regular reviews.	3.3			✓
3.6	Establish a skills matrix to promote cross locality working to ensure flexible sharing of resources on an agile basis and opportunities for staff development and progression.	3.4			✓
3.7	Engage with work towards achieving the Customer Services Excellence Charter, development a customer service toolkit for staff.	3.3			✓
3.8	Support and promote a culture of excellence and continuous improvement.	3.3			✓
3.9	Develop a local sustainability plan to meet climate change duties.	2.4		✓	
3.10	Promote equalities and inclusion objectives in localities.	2.5		✓	



## 5. Action Plan - 2020-2021

The Action Plan sets out how the 9 Localities will deliver the Operational Strategy objectives during 2020-2021.

In addition to our Annual Action Plan, we have developed a specific recovery planning objectives to anticipate the impact of the pandemic.

<b>Recovery Planning Objectives</b>	1.	Focus on staff wellbeing in recognition of the impact on the staff of the shutdown and continuing increased operational pressure.
	2.	Work collaboratively with partner agencies to develop and implement exit and recovery plans.
	3.	CSAS including organisational readiness, training and implementation.
	4.	Evolving business continuity model to reflect and embed the response to pandemic flu including more remote working and virtual hearings during periods of full office closure. Support the development of an agile and flexible case processing model.
	5.	Workforce planning to respond to operational pressures including national reporter/workload equalisation and increasing assistant reporter resource to meet operational need.

OSO No.	AP No.	Action	Indicators	Timeline	
				Start	End
1.1	1.1.1	Review the mechanism and model for delivery of staff wellbeing in localities, drawing on best practice across the organisation and supporting the implementation of national wellbeing strategies including the impact of home and remote working.	1.1.1.1: Staff consultation to develop wellbeing model, and share best practice.	April 2020	Aug 2021
			1.1.1.2: Develop and implement the wellbeing model.		
2.2	2.2.1	Work with Local Authorities and other corporate parents to promote shared responsibility for Better Hearings.	2.2.1.1: Review / update agreement / protocol with corporate parents to encourage shared responsibilities.	April 2020	March 2021

	2.2.2	Shared responsibility for Information Governance.	2.2.2.1: Review / update information governance practice / protocol to ensure individual / collective responsibilities.	April 2020	March 2021
4.1	4.1.1	Work with Local Authorities, CHS and other corporate parents to ensure effective local recovery planning including provision for increased hearing activity.	4.1.1.1: Review and amend hearing schedule in consultation with AST to ensure sufficient reporter and PM capacity for additional hearings.	April 2020	July 2020
			4.1.1.2: Share data on increased hearings with local authorities.		
			4.1.1.3: Using existing local mechanisms, review/update practice/protocols for scheduling and arranging hearings including provision of information to hearings to ensure effective and efficient processes and good information governance.		
			4.1.1.4: Using existing local mechanisms, work with partners to ensure appropriate referral priorities are met.		
3.1	3.1.1	Continue organisational readiness and training for CSAS ensuring implementation and embedding of CSAS including delivery of online training while access to offices restricted.	3.1.1.1: Number of training session delivered.	April 2020	March 2021
			3.1.1.2: Number of staff trained.		
			3.1.1.3: Number of localities fully operational.		
5.1	5.1.1	Review operation of Business Continuity plan in localities during lockdown.	5.1.1.1: Review operation of BC Plan locally including lessons learned and implement any changes required to local arrangements.	May 2020	June 2020
			5.1.1.2: Consider and review arrangements for communicating with staff when offices are closed.		

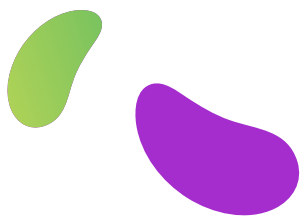
			5.1.1.3: Consider and review arrangements for provision of a limited service, including printing and complying with health and safety obligations, when offices are closed.		
			5.1.1.4: Consider and review arrangements for working across offices and localities to ensure provision of core services in periods of disruption.		
	5.1.2	Continue to develop delivery of virtual hearings and embed in business continuity planning.	5.1.2.1: Local procedure for delivery of virtual hearings by Vscene is documented and communicated to staff, AST and other key partners.		
			5.1.2.2: Procedure for provision of panel papers by Objective Connect is documented and communicated to staff, AST and other key partners.		
<b>3.5</b>	3.5.1	Participation in equalisation exercise across the organisation to address resourcing inequalities between localities.	3.5.1.1: Localities to revise workforce planning in response to national equalisation and current resourcing pressures.	<b>April 2020</b>	<b>July 2020</b>
			3.5.1.2: Continued engagement with UNISON at national and local level.		
	3.5.2	Assessment of current staff mix and level of resourcing required to meet current need.	3.5.2.1: Assessment of level of resourcing required to meet increased hearing and court activity, with focus on increase in Assistant Reporters to meet operational need.	<b>April 2020</b>	<b>May 2020</b>
			3.5.2.2: Recruitment and training of assistant reporters in line with sustainability model and on a temporary basis to end March 2021 to meet operational need.	<b>June 2020</b>	<b>July 2020</b>

**OSO:** Operational Strategy Objective Ref. No.

**AP:** Action Plan Ref. No.

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