SCRA Board Meeting
Agenda
Wednesday 15 December 2021 at 10.30am, By Teams

	Item	Purpose	Lead
1.1	**Apologies**		
1.2	**AOB**		
2.	**Declarations of Interest**		
3.	**Board member Updates**		
4.	**Minutes/Committees**		
4.1	Minute of Board Meeting held on 22 September 2021	Approval	
4.2	Board Workplan		
4.3	Action log		
4.4	Matters Arising		
5.	**Audit & Risk Committee**		
5.1	Draft Minute of Meeting held on 18 November 2021	Information	
	Reports		
6.	**Chief Executive's Report**	Noting	PR/CE
7.	**Budget Monitoring**	Approval	Head of Finance and Resources
8.	**Data and Performance Report**	Approval	Head of Strategy and OD/Data Manager

9.	**SCRA Corporate and Business Plan**
	   a. SCRA Business Plan 2021/22 – Performance Report
	   b. SCRA Corporate and Business Plan 2022/23
		Noting
		Approval
			Head of Strategy and OD/Data Manager "

10.	**Keeping The Promise Update**	Noting	Head of Strategy and OD/Data
11.	**Policy and Influencing Report**	Noting	Head of Policy and Practice/Policy and
12.	**Research Plans 2022/23**	Noting	Head of Policy and Practice/Information
13.	**SCRA Whistleblowing Policy**	Approval	Head of HR
14.	**Annual Policy Review**	Approval	Governance Officer
15.	**Strategic and Operational Risks**	Approval	Head of Finance and Resources
16.	**New risks**		Board Members/Executive
	Date of Next Meeting Thursday 20 January 2022		

SCRA Board Meeting

A G E N D A

Wednesday 22 September 2021 at 10.30am
By Teams

Present:
Michelle Miller (Chair)
Jim Edgar
Anela Anwar
Martin Toye
Catherine Robertson
Tam Baillie

In Attendance:
Neil Hunter - Principal Reporter/Chief Executive
Ed Morrison - Head of Finance & Resources
Lisa Bennett - Head of Strategy & OD
Susan Deery - Head of Human Resources
Helen Etchells – Senior Operational Manager
Paul Mulvanny – Senior Operational Manager
Monica Sweeney - UNISON
Pamela Armstrong - Governance Officer, Minutes
Donald Lamb - Data Manager, Item 7

	Item	Timescale	Action
1.1	**AOB** None		
1.2	**Apologies** Alistair Hogg		
2.	**Declarations of Interest** None		
3.	**Minutes/Committees**		
3.1	**Minute of Meeting held on 23 June 2021** Agreed as an accurate record.		
3.2	**Board Action Log** Reviewed and agreed.		
3.3	**Workplan** Reviewed and agreed.		
3.4	**Matters Arising** No matters arising.		

3.5	**Audit & Risk Committee - Draft Minute of Meeting held on 26 August 2021**
	Jim Edgar, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee and Board Member updated the Board in the following areas:
	• Information Governance
	• Quality Assurance and Performance
	    o Data Quality Exercise
	• External Audit
	    o Annual Report 2020/21 (Restricted until publication)		

	Item	Timescale	Action

	o Report to those charged with Governance on the 2020/21 Audit (ISA 260) and the Management Representation Letter
	     o Draft 2020/21 Accounts
	     o General Update
	 • Internal Audit
	     o Internal Audit Progress Report
	 • Digital Strategy Joint Committee Update
	 • Pensions Update
	
	 The Board Chair acknowledged the high levels of detailed assurance provided by the Committee.		

	Reports		
4.	**Board Member Recruitment** The Board Chair provided a verbal update on the recent Board Member recruitment. **Noted:** • The recruitment process has concluded, subject to Ministerial approval. • One of the critical criteria was fully delegated to OHOV, who provided insightful feedback. **Issues arising during discussion:** • Analysis of the demographics reached though the recruitment exercise will be conducted. • What else can be done to ensure we do our best to attract a more diverse cohort of more diverse people? SG Sponsor team will take forward comments to the Public Appointments Team.		
5.	**SCRA Sustainability Review** The PR/CE introduced the report recommending the Board; a) Note the completion of the vast majority of the sustainability programme since 2018. b) Note the significant and unforeseen changes to the SCRA operational environment as a result of the COVID pandemic c) Agree the PR/CE's assessment that reductions is senior management and operational management capacity, first approved in 2018 are now no longer safe to proceed with as originally envisaged d) Approve a programme of further work to continue with professional development opportunities for operational managers as described **Noted:** • In June 2018 the SCRA Board approved the SCRA sustainability programme. • A number of updates were provided to the Board during the course of the review and by March 2019 significant progress has been made in a number of areas.		

	Item	Timescale	Action
	• With the exception of the senior management review, all of the other aspects of the sustainability review have been significantly progressed. • There is no doubt that the operational and organisational stability that SCRA had achieved to the end of 2019 has been severely impacted by the COVID pandemic. Our response to the pandemic has illustrated clearly that a reduction in overall management capacity at either senior or locality management level is not now achievable without considerable risk to SCRA. • To meet the challenges of the next 4 – 5 years SCRA needs to do some re-shaping around, and in support of, our core statutory Reporter role. The expansion of Assistant Reporter roles, the consolidation of our Senior Practitioner grade, realignment of and being more agile in allocation of resources are all part of this picture. **Agreed:** • To agree the PR/CE's assessment that reductions is senior management and operational management capacity, first approved in 2018 are now no longer safe to proceed with as originally envisaged. • To approve a programme of further work to continue with professional development opportunities for operational managers.		

6.	**Chief Executive's Report**
	The Principal Reporter/Chief Executive spoke to the update report which detailed a wide range of activity across the organisation.
	
	Noted:
	• Staff Partnership
	• Strategic Partnership
	    o Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership (CHIP)
	    o Youth Justice Improvement Board (YJIB)
	• Sponsor Team Liaison
	• Programme For Government
	• Keeping the Promise
	• Press & Communications Update
	• Research & Information Team Update
	
	Issues arising during discussion:
	• A number of staff are concerned around pace of change and job security.
	• The creation of the Virtual Hearings Team has been welcomed.
	• Support around CSAS is welcomed by localities.		

	Item	Timescale	Action
7.	**Data Report** The Data Manager introduced the report, providing the Board with oversight of the data relating to the current operating environment. **Noted:** • The data presented continues to be an amalgam of data provided to the Scottish Government in relation to the use of the provisions set out in the emergency legislation and data in relation to Hearings and referrals as we track our progress against recovery plans. • This report draws on data that is currently available for reporting through Power BI and provides a data set against the indicators set out in the Business Plan 21/22 for monitoring recovery activity across the year. • We continue to run data on a monthly basis to monitor and track progress through the recovery plan. On top we are running a full data set each month to analyse the context and profile of our activity as well as to manage workload. • Data is shared with CHS on a monthly basis and with the Covid Recovery group quarterly to report on the progress against the system wide plan. • Data is shared monthly with all operational teams to support managers and staff to manage their workload and team performance. Managers have access to reports via CSAS and through Power BI along with excel spreadsheets that are being produced right now for ease. **Issues arising during discussion:** • The Board were advised there is capacity to support the number of expected hearings. • The Head of Strategy and OD, and the Data Manager will discuss data further at the Board development day in November.		
8.	**Budget Monitoring Report** The Head of Finance & Resource introduced the report which provides a summary of SCRA's financial position for the year to August 2021 and forecast (based on July results) for the full year 2021/22. **Noted:** • The Scottish Government has allocated revenue funding of £25.16m for 2021/22. In discussions with Sponsor Team and the Scottish Government about hand back of 2020/21 grant funding, it was agreed that SCRA retain revenue underspends and review in the autumn the requirement for the additional in-year funding of £1.5m assumed in setting the 2021/22 revenue budget. The Board approved a revenue budget of £26.96m in March, on the basis that a further £0.3m of reserves could be used to support business priorities. • The Scottish Government has allocated capital funding of £1.9m for 2021/22 and the Board approved a £1.9m capital budget in March.		

	Item	Timescale	Action
	• The overall accruals based revenue overspend is £111k (0.4%). The revenue overspend is highly likely to reduce in future forecasts, potentially resulting in a significant underspend as set out in section 3.8. The capital budgets show little variance at this stage.		
9.	**Financial Strategy** The Head of Finance & Resources introduced the report, providing an updated Financial Strategy for the period 2022/23 to 2026/27 following a review by the Head of Finance & Resources in conjunction with EMT. The Strategy is essentially a 5 year Financial Plan based on funding requirements and includes a number of funding scenarios with potential options to address funding gaps. **Noted:** • Financial sustainability over the term of the Financial Strategy will require continued in year support from Scottish Government for new and unforeseen budget pressures, around 4% increases in annual revenue funding, delivery of efficiencies from major programmes, clear outcomes from the work on service change and resilience, continuing capital investment in infrastructure and ongoing vigilance from budget holders, supported by Head Office business partners. • The next 18 months will see a transition from pandemic recovery to business as usual at the same time as preparing the organisation and wider hearings system for the significant changes in the policy and legislative landscape that will take place over the course of the five year Financial Plan. • Discussions are underway with Sponsor Team to ensure a good, shared understanding of SCRA's corporate and financial objectives for 2022/23 and the period to 2026/27. It is hoped this will build on the very productive dialogue that led to the increased revenue funding in 2021/22. **Agreed:** • To approve the updated Financial Strategy 2022/23 – 2026/27.		
10.	**Annual Accounts 2020-21 & Management Representation Letter** The Head of Finance & resource introduced the paper recommending the Board approve the 2020/21 accounts for signature by the Accountable Officer and approved the Management Representation Letter for signature by the Accountable Officer. **Noted:** • Audit Scotland (AS) has completed the audit of SCRA's 2020/21 accounts and has submitted a final audit report to the Accountable Officer. The audit report expresses an unqualified opinion on the financial statements and		

	Item	Timescale	Action
	on the regularity of the financial transactions. • The accounts were submitted to the Audit & Risk Committee on 26 August 2021 and were approved on that date. **Issues arising during discussion:** The Head of Finance and Recourses expressed his thanks to the Audit Scotland Team, the Corporate Planning and Performance Manager and the Finance manager for their continued support. **Agreed:** • To approve the 2020/21 accounts for signature by the Accountable Officer. • To approve the Management Representation Letter for signature by the Accountable Officer.		
11.	**SCRA Annual Report** The Head of Strategy and OD introduced the report recommending the Board approve the SCRA Annual Report 2020/21 and approve arrangements for the publication of SCRA's Annual Report 2020/21. **Noted:** • The report covers the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. • The Annual Report will be published at 10am on Thursday 28 October 2021 and will be available on SCRA's website (www.scra.gov.uk). **Agreed:** • To approve the SCRA Annual Report 2020/21. • To approve arrangements for the publication of SCRA's Annual Report 2020/21. • Review the use of abbreviations used within the report.	**Sep 22**	**LB**
12.	**Business Plan 2021/22 Performance Report** The Head of Strategy & OD introduced the report recommending the Board note SCRA's performance against the objectives set out in the 2021/22 Business Plan. **Noted:** • The Business Plan Performance report provides the Board with an overview of how the organisation is delivering on the objectives set out in the Business Plan 2021/22 between April '21 and August '21. • The report provides a level of narrative to also give a sense of what is being delivered. • The report should be read as an interim report, to provide assurance, ahead of the fuller detail contained within the Annual Accounts that is compiled at year end.		

	Item	Timescale	Action
13.	**Agile Working Policy** The Head of HR introduced SCRA's new Agile Working Policy and supporting documentation. **Noted:** • Since the first lockdown in March 2020, SCRA staff have principally been working from home and where necessary attending the office to undertake essential tasks. Our operational service delivery model can support this and all staff have the necessary technical kit to enable them to work from home. • We have listened to staff, and like many other public bodies, have developed an Agile Working Policy that provides for the majority of staff to have flexibility about where they deliver their roles where this can align with the operational needs of our service. The Policy was developed in partnership with UNISON and we consulted widely with our managers on the policy development. We also asked our managers to consult with their Locality Teams on the policy and provide feedback to inform and refine the development. • Following a final paper based consultation, the HR Sub Group formally adopted the policy on 8th September. The Policy was launched to all staff during week commencing 13th September. In formally adopting the Policy, it was agreed that the policy would be kept under continual review as standing item on the HR Sub Group agenda to ensure the policy worked for SCRA as we developed into an agile working organisation. **Issues arising during discussion:** • SCRA are redefining the relationship with staff, based on trust rather than visibility. • Reasonable adjustments will be replicated at home. **Agreed:** • To approve SCRA's new Agile Working Policy and supporting documentation.		
14.	**Digital Programme Update** The PR/CE introduced the report asking the Board to; • Note the contents of the report. • Note the approval of the Digital Delivery Oversight Committee of the CSAS MVP Closure Report and Lessons Learned • Note the intention to submit this report formally to the Scottish Government as part of the Digital Assurance arrangements • Note the intention to close the DDOC and amend the reporting requirements in line with future reporting and governance.		

	Item	Timescale	Action
	The report provides information in the following areas; • Key lessons learned • Post Project Tasks and Activity Recommendations • Project Closure Report Recommendations • Virtual Hearings – RAVHI roll out • Standard Operating Model • Change Management • Future reporting and governance **Noted:** • Overall the CSAS MVP has been successfully delivered and will become an increasing asset for both CHS and SCRA over time. The Programme Directors closure report details 14 key lessons learned, ranging from the background and experience of the chosen supplier, nature of agile projects, fixed price contracts and resource phasing, asset ownership and organisational readiness. • The Programme Director makes a number of post project recommendations on tasks that require to be undertaken in the immediate post MVP period in order to make the most of the delivery of CSAS Many of these (e.g. the mainstreaming of the SCRA Digital team are well underway, with others at an earlier stage such as review of Enterprise Agreement arrangements for management of software licensing costs). • The roll out of the RAVHI platform to all SCRA Localities is happening in tandem with CHS as both SCRA staff and panel members are supported to migrate to the new platform and in complete replacement of the previous virtual hearing software. Feedback from those areas who have migrated has been positive. • The standard operating model is now being rolled out across SCRA Localities as a cornerstone of our optimisation programme. Localities are engaging well in the process, despite this being yet another significant change in working arrangements for staff. • The Change Control and Change Management arrangements for CSAS that will stratify, prioritise and deploy investment in CSAS across the 21/22 period are now up and running. The supplier has been engaged by CHS and SCRA to deliver a number of development sprints are releases in line with CHS and SCRA discrete priorities. The arrangements that we have put in place allow for continued pro-rata cost sharing of supplier related project overheads, an innovative solution developed by the Programme Director. **Issues arising during discussion:** • The Board have felt more and more reassured as the programme progressed. • The Board thanked the Programme Director for an honest and encouraging closure report.		

	Item	Timescale	Action
15.	**SCRA Framework Document** The PR/CE introduced the updated framework document, drawn up by the Scottish Government (SG) in consultation with the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration. **Noted:** • The Framework Document forms a key part of the accountability and governance framework and should be reviewed and updated as necessary, and at least every 2-3 years. Any proposals to amend the framework document either by the Scottish Government or SCRA will be taken forward in consultation and in the light of Scottish Government priorities and policy aims. • The most notable change to the Framework Document includes updates to the Scottish Minister's objectives and priorities, such as The Promise on the 2021-2024 Promise Plan and delivery of the Covid Recovery Plan. **Agreed:** • To approve the revised Framework Document.		
16.	**New Risks** No New Risks Identified		
17.	**Proposed 2022 Board/Committee Dates** The Board agreed the proposed 2022 Board and Committee dates.		
	Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 15 December 2021		

Board Action Log as at December 2021

Meeting/ Item	Action	Timescale	Owner	Comments	Status
Dec 20 **Overview of policies**	Consider a change to governance and approach to reporting format, which more clearly set out policies in play and review schedules	Dec 21	PA	Report format refreshed and updated to include suggested additions to core polies and information on SCRA's Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) process.	To be presented at the Dec 21 Board.
Sep 21 **SCRA Annual Report**	Review the use of abbreviations within the report.	Sep 22	LB		Not yet due

SCRA Board Meeting Workplan January 2022

Business Item	Wed 15/12/21	Thu 20/01/22	Tue 22/03/22	Wed 22/06/22	Wed 21/9/22
Strategic/Corporate					
Policy & Influencing Report	✓			✓	
Research Programme	✓				
Risk Register	✓			✓	
Governance					
Audit Committee Minutes	✓		✓	✓	✓
Committee Annual Reports				✓	
Nominations Committee Minutes			✓	✓	
Board Committee Membership	✓				
SCRA Standing Orders Review (Next due 2022)			✓		
Finance					
Budget Monitoring Report	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Draft Budget			✓		
Annual Report & Accounts					✓
Financial Strategy					✓
Planning					
Draft Corporate, Corporate Parenting & Business Plan	✓ (BP)	✓	✓		✓
Draft Annual Report					✓
Annual Workforce Planning Report			✓		
Communications Plan				✓	
Performance					
Organisational Performance Report	✓		✓	✓	✓
Operational					
Locality Performance Reviews				✓	
Chief Executive's Report	✓		✓	✓	✓
Complaints Review				✓	
Equalities Annual Report				✓	

Business Item	Wed 15/12/21	Thu 20/01/22	Tue 22/03/22	Wed 22/06/22	Wed 21/9/22
Environmental Annual Report			✓		
Overview of Policies Annual Report	✓				
Health & Safety Annual Report			✓		
Efficiency Report			✓		
Procurement Report				✓	
Property Strategy				✓	
Keeping the Promise update	✓		✓	✓	✓
Review of Risk Policy			✓		
Staff Survey		✓			
Agile Policy (Next review Sep 2024)					
SCRA Framework Document (next review 2024)					
SCRA Whistleblowing Policy (next review Dec 2024)	✓				

Present:
Jim Edgar (Chair),
Martin Toye
Tam Baillie
Kay Barton

In Attendance:
Neil Hunter – Principal Reporter/Chief Executive
Alistair Hogg - Head of Practice and Policy
Lisa Bennett, Head of Strategy/OD, (Item 6)
Ed Morrison, Head of Finance & Resources,
Lindsay MacFadyen – Quality Assurance Manager (Item 6)
Pamela Armstrong, Governance Officer – Minutes
Susan Deery, Head of HR (Item 7)
Lorraine Moore, Board Member (Observer)

Internal Auditors – BDO
Claire Robertson

		Timescale	Action
1.	**AOB** There was no other business.		
2.	**Apologies** None		
3.	**Declarations of Interest** There were no declarations of interest.		
4.	**Minute of Previous Meeting: 26th August 2021** The minute was agreed as an accurate record. **Action Log & Work plan** The action log and work plan were reviewed and approved by the Committee.		
5.	**Matters Arising** There were no matters arising.		
6.	**Quality Assurance Update Report**		
6.1	**Identification of the most relevant/appropriate section 67 ground for the referred child (non-offence referrals)** The Quality and Assurance Manager introduced the report containing detail and analysis of the case sampling exercise undertaken on Reporter decision making. For this exercise the sample was in respect of decision making about selection of the appropriate section 67 ground at the point of final decision as to whether compulsory measures of supervision are required for the		

		Timescale	Action
	referred child. The exercise was undertaken by localities as part of the Quality Assurance Work Programme approved by the Audit and Risk Committee in February 2021 The key focus of the exercise was to assess the quality of recording and analysis of the key concerns for the referred child and the selection of the section 67 grounds or grounds which most appropriately reflects these concerns, and which would allow for focussed and appropriate decision making by a Children's Hearing, should one be arranged. **Noted:** • A level of assurance is provided by the finding that for 85% of all cases reviewed, the Reporter had selected and recorded what appeared to be the appropriate section 67 ground when assessed in light of the principal concerns for the child's welfare. For the cases where the reporter's decision was to arrange a hearing for the child, the result was 93%, providing further assurance about selection of hearing grounds. • In over 94% of the cases reviewed, the Reporter had either fully or partly explained what the principal concerns for the child were. However, there cannot be complacency here as for over a quarter of the total sample, the Reporter had only partly explained what the principal concerns for the child were. • The small number of cases where either the Reporter had concluded there was insufficient evidence to proceed further but had selected a ground anyway, or where the reviewer's assessment was that there was insufficient evidence despite the final decision being made under another category, suggests that there may be a need for a reminder about this category of case and associated recording. • Because the practice of selecting the appropriate section 67 ground at the point of final decision is a new one, facilitated by CSAS design it is not possible to make a direct comparison of these findings with those of previous exercises on decision making. However, some aspects of this exercise do allow for cautious comparison to previous ones, in particular the use of multiple grounds. • The findings of this exercise provide point in time assurance about one aspect of Reporter decision making and interaction with our new case management system, in what are still the very early days of familiarisation and use. Future case sampling on Reporter decision making and recording will allow for comparison against this baseline. **Agreed:** • To approve the findings of the case sampling exercise on Reporter selection of the appropriate section 67 ground at the point of final decision. • To approve the management action plan.		

		Timescale	Action
6.2	**Case Sampling Annual Progress Report** The Quality and Assurance Manager introduced the report providing the Audit and Risk Committee with an update on the progress of actions arising from the Quality Assurance Case Sampling Programme and an update on the progress and detail of the current case sampling programme. **Noted:** • The Quality Assurance Case Sampling Programme comprises a quarterly exercise on an area of casework practice and process, and compliance with the relevant Practice Direction and legislation. The topics and scope of the exercises are developed by the Practice and Quality Network, in conjunction with the Executive Management Team, and the programme is presented to the Audit and Risk Committee every February for approval. Draft reports are considered by the Practice and Quality Network, following which the Head of Practice and Policy develops an action plan. • Following a period of suspension through 2020 due to the Covid pandemic and the rollout of the new case management system (CSAS), the case sampling programme resumed in 2021. The February 2021 Audit & Risk Committee approved a revised timetable of exercises. • The Committee can be assured that there will be a return to the full involvement of Localities in more in-depth case sampling, with all the benefits to the organisation which this approach brings and that this will be one of a variety of methods we use for assurance going forward. There will be a phased return allowing the programme to resume and continue, and providing a baseline for operational activity in this area for future action and improvement. • A programme for 2022/23 will be brought to the February Committee for its consideration. **Agreed:** • To approve the status of the one remaining action in the case sampling action plan tracker • To approve the detail of the current case sampling programme.		
6.3	**Annual report on Joint Inspections of Children's Services** The Quality and Assurance Manager introduced the report providing the Audit and Risk Committee with an overview of the programme of Joint Inspections of services for children and young people in need of care and protection and SCRA's engagement in this to date. This report covers 2 years of activity, due both to the post of Quality Assurance Manager being vacant in November 2020, and to the planned inspection programme having been temporarily suspended in response to Covid.		

		Timescale	Action
	Noted: • The Care Inspectorate is the national body that leads Joint Inspections of services for children and young people in need of care and protection across Scotland (children and young people under the age of 18, or up to 21 and beyond if they have been looked after). This is delivered in partnership with Education Scotland, Healthcare Improvement Scotland and HMICS, to provide assurance and protection for people who use services, their families and carers and the wider public. Inspection teams also include young inspection volunteers, who are young people with direct experience of care or child protection services. **Agreed:** • To note the contribution of SCRA managers to the preparation for and engagement in joint inspections and to approve the findings.		
7.	**Internal Audit**		

7.1	**Inclusion & Equalities**
	Claire Robertson, BDO, introduced the Inclusion and Equalities Internal Audit report. The Head of HR provided the management response.
	
	Noted:
	• It was agreed with management and the Audit & Risk Committee within the 2021-22 Internal Audit Plan that Internal Audit would undertake a review of the inclusion and equalities arrangements in place at SCRA. The purpose of our review is to provide independent assurance to management and the Audit & Risk Committee over the controls in place in relation to inclusion and equalities.
	• A number of areas of good practice are being demonstrated by the organisation in relation to equalities and inclusion. These included:
	   o There are a range of policies, procedures and guides in place at SCRA, which exhibit a strong culture of inclusivity and equality. These include an Equal Opportunity policy, a Transgender policy, and a Stress policy.
	   o SCRA have a strong governance structure in place to promote and ensure an inclusive, diverse and equal culture within the organisation. This includes support from the Board, and groups like the Inclusion & Diversity steering group.
	   o An Equalities & Inclusion strategy, and underlying action plans and outcomes are in place, outlining the aims and targets that the organisation have in place to continue to improve.
	   o A robust process is in place for EHRIA's, with templates, and oversight, review and approval		

| | | provided by the Equality Review Group for all impact assessments completed.
○ Performance reporting is in place, and includes an annual equalities mainstreaming report, and an annual equalities network report, which are both presented to the Board.
• Areas where further improvement could be made to the inclusion and equality arrangements include,
○ Policies and Procedures
○ Training Programme
○ Action Plans
• BDO are able to provide substantial assurance over the inclusion and equalities arrangements in place at SCRA.

Issues arising during discussion:
• The organisation has demonstrated inclusion and equalities mainstreaming across all activities.
• The work done on the current EHIRA's had been adopted by other NDPB's.

Agreed:
• To approve the Inclusion and Equalities Internal Audit report. | | |
| 7.2 | **Locality Risk Management**
Claire Robertson, BDO, introduced the Locality Risk Management Internal Audit report. The Head of Finance and Resources provided the management response.

Noted:
• As part of the 2021-22 Internal Audit Plan, it was agreed by management and the Audit and Risk Committee that Internal Audit would undertake a review of the risk management arrangements in place at localities. The purpose of our review is to provide assurance over the effectiveness of the risk management arrangements within localities, and provide management with advice and recommendations for improving the arrangements further.
• Areas of good practice identified include,
○ An approved Risk Management Policy which details the organisation's approach to identifying and assessing risks.
○ Localities have developed their own risk registers
• Areas where further improvement could be made to the inclusion and equality arrangements include,
○ Risk Management Guidance
○ Locality Review of Risk Registers
○ Oversight and Escalation of Risks
○ Training
○ Risk Register Template
• BDO can provide moderate assurance over the design and operational effectiveness of the risk management controls in place. | | |

		Timescale	Action
	Issues arising during discussion: • The timeline for all process improvements to be reviewed and risk training to be included for Board Members and relevant staff **Agreed:** • To approve the Locality Risk Management Internal Audit report.		**EM/PA**

7.3	**Progress Report 2021-22**
	Claire Robertson, BDO, introduced the report advising the Audit Committee of the progress of the Internal Audit Plan for 2021-22.
	
	Noted:
	• Since the last Audit Committee meeting, the following internal audit reports have been finalised, and are presented under separate cover:
	   o Inclusion & Equalities
	   o Locality Risk Management
	
	Agreed:
	• To approve the Progress Report 2021-22		

8.	**Digital Strategy -** CSAS MVP Closure Report The PR/CE introduced the report which covers the following key aspects: • Overview of the CSAS project – including the assessment of CHS and SCRA digital capabilities (2017), options appraisal, the CSAS Business Case, route to market, invitation to tender and award of contract • Project Milestones with a focus on goals and objectives, performance against milestones and budget/financial parameters • Key controls such as resource and risk management, asset and quality management • Lessons Learned and Recommendations **Noted:** • Overall the CSAS MVP has been successfully delivered and will become an increasing asset for both CHS and SCRA over time. The Programme Directors closure report details 14 key lessons learned, ranging from the background and experience of the chosen supplier, nature of agile projects, fixed price contracts and resource phasing, asset ownership and organisational readiness. • The Programme Director makes a number of post project recommendations on tasks that require to be undertaken in the immediate post MVP period in order to make the most of the delivery of CSAS. Many of these (e.g. the mainstreaming of the SCRA Digital team are well underway, with others at an earlier stage such as review of Enterprise Agreement arrangements for management		

		Timescale	Action
	of software licensing costs). • The CSAS project and delivery of what was intended as the minimal viable product MVP (that is the functional and non-functional set of services, data and tools required) has been delivered as planned and is now in full production use. • The joint CHS/SCRA Digital Delivery Oversight Committee (DDOC) Scottish Government and two executive teams of SCRA and CHS take some time to consider what they have achieved through the delivery of CSAS into both organisations. • In addition the respective Boards, DDOC, SG and two executive teams are invited to congratulate the efforts of the many staff members, volunteers and suppliers in the successful delivery of CSAS against a backdrop of turmoil and uncertainty, the delivery was a real credit to all those who contributed directly and indirectly. **Agreed** • Progress against benefits realisation over the course of the next financial year will be presented to the Committee	**May 2023**	**NH**
9	**Strategic & Operational Risk Registers** The PR/CE introduced the report on the updated Strategic and Operational Risk Registers. **Noted:** • The Risk Registers are kept under review by the Executive Management Team (EMT) and the Planning and Performance Network (PPN). • In this period the review of both Operational and Risk Registers has been extensive and in – depth. Several potential new risks are currently under assessment by respective lead officers and these are detailed in the report. • 2021/22 Locality Plans have linked Locality Risk Registers and the common risk themes have been reviewed by EMT. • The risk register format includes an assessment of inherent, residual and target risk in order to demonstrate the impact of existing control mechanisms and to link the agreed organisational risk appetite. • The risks across both registers focus on the ongoing challenges in the delivery of a safe and effective service with the focus on capacity, resources and information governance. **Agreed** • The Committee noted and agreed the latest changes to the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers.		

		Timescale	Action
10.	**Risk Management Policy** The Head of Finance and Resources introduced the report recommending the Committee; • Consider and review the Committee's risk appetite • Comment on proposed changes to the attached Risk Management Policy. • Identify areas of further development of the risk management approach in SCRA. **Noted:** • The current Risk Management Policy was approved by the Board in June 2019 following review by the Audit & Risk Committee at its meeting in May 2019. • BDO reviewed risk management arrangements in 2017/18 and identified a number of areas of good practice and some improvements which were implemented. In 2021/22 BDO have reviewed Locality Risk Registers and made a number of recommendations which will be implemented in the coming months. Further work is required to develop a risk management training plan/programme and include risk management training within the induction of staff with Risk Management responsibilities. • The main terms of the policy document remain unchanged but it has been updated to reflect the latest auditors' findings and minor changes to terminology and roles. • The risk management approach has evolved over time and most participants are comfortable with the techniques currently in use. However there may be ways in which the approach could be improved and the Head of Finance will develop any ideas generated at the ARC meeting before bringing the Policy back to the ARC in February 2022. **Agreed:** • Risk Management refresher training to be provided to the Board • Updated Risk Management Policy to be taken to the March 2022 Board for approval. • Assurance mapping to be developed further. • Consult with Auditors in terms of best practice.	 **Jan 2022** **Mar 2022** **Mar 2022** **Mar 2022**	 **EM** **EM** **EM** **EM**
11.	**Annual Fraud Report 2020-21** The Head of Finance and Resource introduced the report, providing an annual update to the Audit and Risk Committee on fraud related matters. The report covers SCRA's responsibilities in relation to managing the risk of fraud, reported fraud in 2020/21 and an update on SCRA's participation in the National Fraud Initiative.		

			Timescale	Action
	Noted: - The Scottish Government's Counter Fraud Strategy which has been in place since 2012 includes 5 strategic objectives: - Awareness - Prevention - Teamwork - Investigation - Enforcement - The Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM) requires organisations to develop a Fraud Policy Statement to communicate their approach to fraud and a Fraud Response Plan to ensure that timely and effective action is taken in the event of a fraud. - It was stated in last year's report that controls in SCRA can generally be assessed as Developing or Established. Two areas which have been prioritised for 2021/22 are communication and fraud risk assessments. - There were no reported instances of fraud in 2020/21. - SCRA continues to participate in the National Fraud Initiative in Scotland (NFI). The 2022/23 NFI exercise is scheduled to start in October 2022. - The Internal Auditors ran a fraud workshop on 29th March 2021. The workshop covered definition of fraud, the legal background, an overview of fraud in the UK, why people commit fraud, examples of fraud, COVID-19 emerging fraud risks, what public bodies can do to reduce fraud risks, 7 point anti-fraud plan and useful links. **Agreed:** - To approve the Fraud Report for 2020-21. - To approve the Fraud/Corruption Response Plan. - To increase the frequency of review of the Fraud Policy and Fraud/Corruption Response Plan to annually		 **Nov 22**	 **EM**
	Standing Items			
12.	**Topical/Regulatory Issues/Governance Issues** None			
13.	**New Risks** No new risks were identified.			
	Date of Next Meeting: - Thursday 17th February 2022, by Teams, - Thursday 19th May 2022, by Teams, - Thursday 18th August 2022, location TBC, - Thursday 17th November 2022, by Teams.			

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Chief Executives Report

Accountable Director:	Neil Hunter	**Date:**	15 December 2021

Recommendation:

1.   To note the Chief Executives update report

Reason for Report   At request of Board

Resource Implications   In line with revised budget

Strategy   In line with Corporate Plan

Equalities Duties   Indicate whether an Equalities and Human Rights Impact assessment (HRIA) is required and has been completed. Describe in the body of the report any issues/findings/adjustments that have been made.

Equalities Impact Assessment Required/Completed

☐   Yes

■   No

Issues/action points:-

Consultation   EMT/Communications Manager/Information and Research Manager

Document Classification   Open

1. Staff Partnership

1.1 As previously reported to the Board SCRA and UNISON have embarked on a number workshops to examine long term challenges for SCRA and our workforce in the next 3 – 5 years. The first of these workshops focussed on the challenges and opportunities of Keeping the Promise, implementation of UNCRC, the National Care Service proposal, the 2022/23 Care and Justice Bill. Key areas of deeper dive in the initial session focussed on:-

- SCRA's Organisational structure
- SCRA's Organisational culture
- Engagement and communication across SCRA
- Managing change effectively within SCRA

1.2 Further sessions are planned for the remainder of 2021/22 and are proving to be a very constructive way of taking a wider, longer term perspective, working beyond the day to day.

2. Strategic Partnerships

2.1 The Youth Justice Improvement Board met on 6 December and focussed on a number of key policy and legislative issues:-

- UNCRC and arrangements for bringing this Bill back to Parliament for amendment following the UK Supreme Court ruling
- Age of Criminal Responsibility – noting the agreed implementation date of 17 December 2021 for the key remaining elements of the Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019 – specifically those relating to aspects of Police Powers, appointment and registration of Child Interview Practitioners (CHIRPS), a register of designated 'places of safety' for children under 12 years and Court Rules and procedures including our of hours applications for authority.
- Age of Referral to the Principal Reporter and the Scottish Governments intention to take forward the recommendations of the cross system working group which was chaired by SCRA
- Imprisonment of children and the establishment of a short life working group to consider the HM Inspector of Prisons pre-inspection survey of children under 18 ahead of a full inspection of HMYOI in 2022.

2.2 The Childrens Hearings Improvement Partnership (CHIP) met on 24 November. There was a considerable focus on the work Our Hearings Our Voice – in particular:

- How CHIP agencies are responding to the OHOV 40 Calls for Action – including SCRA's detailed response 1 year on.
- Our Hearings Our Voice - 3 year evaluation report – which was undertaken by the SCRA Research team

2.3 The OHOV evaluation is a powerful piece of work which sets out an exciting next phase for the group in bringing young people's experiences of hearings into the centre of the transformation of the system. In summary the evaluation found that:-

- There was a necessary degree of complexity and lead into the establishment of OHOV
- The quality and impact of their work in this first phase has been universally welcomed and recognised by core partners such as CHS, SCRA and SG

- There is high value placed on the current and future role of OHOV in bringing young people's experience and voice to the centre of the programme of change and improvement in Childrens Hearings
- OHOV have been successful in raising the issues that are the most important from a young person's perspective and demanding action and positive change from key agencies
- A clear sense of growth and personal development amongst OHOV members as a result of their involvement in the group
- There is an ongoing need by all partners in the hearing system to promote OHOV and raise its visibility and profile over time in order to further amplify its impact
- To move forward to expand and refresh the OHOV membership base and expand its range of activities
- Longer term sustained engagement between OHOV and senior decision makers across CHIP
- A clear understanding by senior leaders in all CHIP organisations that it their job to ensure they make themselves accountable to OHOV in keeping their commitments for and making visible progress against improvement and transformation – in particular, as one current example, in relation to the 40 Calls for Action – but there will be others

2.4   SCRA has immediately moved to increase the OHOV staffing in order to take these findings and recommendations further and will continue to fully support the work of OHOV, actively support and promote its work, its impact on organisations like ours, our commitment to publically account and report to OHOV on our plans, priorities and progress as a central partner in the Hearing System.

3.   Virtual Hearings

3.1   The transition from VScene is now complete and since 15th November all virtual hearings and digital links to face to face hearings are taking place using the RAVHI platform. Planning has begun to progress the next development of virtual hearings and to define the service model for the future. It has always been our aim and intention to re-absorb virtual hearings back to mainstream, locality delivery and re-integrate virtual hearing delivery within local teams. Work is now underway to achieve the next phase of that.

3.2   We are developing a new structure for delivery of virtual hearings which retains a central team with a revised remit and functions alongside a balanced model of local management with agreed remit and functions. We will do this in consultation with the local and central teams. That will ensure that we understand the elements of service delivery that should remain with the central team, which of the more agile elements are better served by local teams and ensure that the hand offs between the two are seamless.

3.3   The next stage of virtual hearings development will provide a resilient resourcing model to support anticipated virtual hearing volumes by re-skilling support staff to support and deliver virtual hearings. This will re-establish local ownership of virtual hearings and give localities certainty on delivery of virtual hearings for future planning. We will agree service definitions and quality standards which reflect operational requirements and support service delivery. This is a step on the route to an agreed national approach to hearings and will link into the next stage of the Standard Operating Model.

3.4   In addition, there is development work underway to streamline the current processes, using auto-population from CSAS to avoid duplication and improving workload management, increasing efficiency and avoiding double keying of information.

3.5   The timing of these changes is planned for the first quarter of 2022.

4.   Standard Operating Model

4.1   The standard operating model, aimed at ensuring a consistent approach to casework across SCRA and optimising the opportunity of new technology represented by CSAS has now been rolled out across the country. Localities have had varying degrees of change to make in working to the revised approach and we remain in a period of adaptation. The next phase of this work is to review and evaluate the feedback we have received during the roll out and training phase. There are some issues of concern from Reporters in particular that the division of labour and demarcation of roles and responsibilities between themselves and Support Administrators requires further work in order to ensure optimal and efficient working – particularly in relation to key administrative tasks (such as hearing scheduling). We will review all of the feedback we have received over this period and make any necessary adjustments.

5.   CSAS implementation

5.1   The planned programme of improvement work, beyond delivery of the minimum viable product (MVP) has commenced with our supplier. The focus of this improvement and quality programme is on the hearing information pack (HIP), scoping further integration of the RAVHI 'sandbox' platform into CSAS as well as the priority MVP improvements and fixes identified by Locality teams through the CSAS implementation programme.

5.2   The HIP drives and is central to a number of other key processes such as the rendering of documents from a variety of sources, document redaction (implicit to the effective and efficient management of non-disclosure) and the production of e-panel papers for secure transmission to partner agencies.

5.3   The CSAS platform has recently been adversely affected by outages and performance issues within the Scottish Wide Area Network (SWAN). SWAN provides a common ICT infrastructure for the public sector in Scotland. This has had a direct impact on many aspects of the staff experience and on the virtual hearings platform. This has since been stabilised by iTECS (SCRA's direct supplier of IT network services), they have identified the issues with a view to providing sustained improvements and are installing more reliant and redundant links to prevent further outages. The service had until this point been at least 99.7% uptime.

6.   Sponsor Team Liaison

6.1   The quarterly accountability meeting between SCRA and the Scottish Government, which reviews and regulates our relationship between our body and officials, met in early November. The agenda, whilst dominated by issues of budget settlement for 2022/23 also managed to focus on:-

   • SCRA's progress on COVID response and recovery – with a clear articulation of our assessed need to retain all of our current recovery resource into 2022/3 given the highly uncertain position in relation to the pandemic, the withdrawal of the emergency COVID emergency legislation and the resultant acute impact on SCRA staff in relation to time pressured interim orders, emergency order and Court. In retrospect SCRA expressed our belief that elements of the emergency legislation had been withdrawn prematurely, albeit we recognise the pressure being brought to bear on Ministers by the organisations such as SCCYP. SCRA have advised officials that we intend to pick up a discussion about further legislative means by which operational and time

pressures could be released should the pandemic enter a new phase. Board will wish to note that SCRA staff's immense efforts have led to a point of balance of all existing CSO's and annual reviews.

- Practice and Legislation – noting the Ministerial agreement on timescales for implementation of the balance of the Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019, and a complex ongoing set of jurisdictional issues pertaining to children and young people placed by English and Welsh Local Authorities on "deprivation of liberty orders" in facilities not necessarily registered as secure establishments in Scotland. These cases are currently being heard in the Scottish Court of Session under powers of Nobile Officium. The hearing system is being considered as a more appropriate forum to determine such welfare and rights issues, should the jurisdictional issues be subject to resolution. SCRA is in ongoing dialogue with SG officials on this issue
- SCRA quarterly performance report and review
- Board recruitment update

6.2   The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy will announce the Scottish Budget on 9 December. This is a crucial settlement for SCRA in a volatile and highly unpredictable environment. an update will be provided to the Board at its 15 December meeting

7.   Inclusion and Diversity Forum

7.1   The Forum met at the end of November and received detailed updates in relation to the work of the Disability Network, the LGBT Forum and the Mental Health and Trauma workstream. An update on our work to embed Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessments (EHRIAS) across SCRA was also given. In 2021 the Equality Review Group, which quality assures EHRIA's and provides advice and direction to leads, oversaw 21 impact assessments on a wide range of policy developments and revisions. The group will also support managers in putting in place action plans, changes and refinement to our approach in order to address any adverse impacts identified as well as enabling and expanding positive equality impacts of our policy review.

7.2   The Race and Ethnicity group for SCRA has now been refocused and met in late November. This will be chaired by the PR/CE and has drawn staff from across the organisation. Key priorities have been agreed as anti-racist training for all staff commencing 2022/3, a focus on immediate improvements to staff and non-executive recruitment after recent discussion at Nominations Committee, a programme of work focussed on Reporter practice and decision making - potentially with mixed method case audit and longer term research components. The group has agreed to partner with a specialist BAME/Equalities specialist organisations as previously suggested by the Board in order to help us baseline our approach to date and forward plan over the next 2-3 years.

8.   Families Affected by Drug and Alcohol Use in Scotland

8.1   SCRA recently chaired a national programme of work to develop a [Framework for Holistic Whole Family Approaches and Family Inclusive Practice](#) for families affected by substance use. Parental and familial Substance use remains one of the key reasons why children and young people are referred to the Reporter. The framework, launched on 8 December 2021, with a supporting foreword from four portfolio Ministers (Public Health, Drugs Policy, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Children and Families) as well as CoSLA. The framework will release £60m of investment over the next 5 years - £30m direct to Alcohol and Drug Partnerships at local level and £30m via the Corra

Foundation to 3rd and voluntary sector providers in order to expand provision and promote family inclusive workforce and skills development.

9.   SCRA staff survey 2021

9.1   230 staff returned this year's staff survey, slightly down on 2020. The survey closed on 3rd December. It's the first survey of the new adapted format. The SCRA/UNISON Health and Wellbeing Group agreed that, given that 2020 signalled a radical shift in the staff survey towards COVID response, that a revision which took the best of the historical 13 year staff survey, aspects of the 2020 approach a number of new elements was timely. We had expert advice from the SCRA research team in the content and methodology, sequencing and measurement scaling. The survey covers the following key themes:-

- Keeping connected and included
- Working for SCRA
- SCRA's future priorities
- My team
- Managing change
- Technology and tools for the job
- SCRA's vision and priorities
- Equalities and Diversity
- Health and Wellbeing
- Learning and Development

9.2   The issues which immediately surface to the top are those that we should have been anticipating given the 18 months the service has experienced:-

- Workload
- Constant change, stress and fatigue
- Virtual Hearings
- CSAS
- Access to training
- Morale

9.3   There are some strong results in areas such as inclusion and respect, regularity and sufficiency of communication and sense of pride in working for SCRA amongst others. Nonetheless the findings remain very challenging. The plan of action the EMT have put in place between now and end of financial year are a key element of delivering the change and improvement that many SCRA staff want to see – whether this is in relation to virtual hearings, CSAS, managing non- disclosure, effective change management and learning/development opportunities.

9.4   The data manager is undertaking a more detailed breakdown of the results and these will be available by team, role and other relevant variables within the boundaries of anonymity. A full analysis will be reported to the Board in January 2022 and simultaneously in a special Team Brief to the whole organisation. The headline findings will be reported in the December Team Brief in lieu of the full analysis.

9.5   Our annual SCRA staff survey is a valued resource to both shape and   sharpen our programmes of work to support the organisation and address the   key issues people are experiencing over the next phase.

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Budget Monitoring Report Period 7 2021/22

Accountable Director: Principal Reporter/Chief Executive   **Date:** 15 December 2021

Report prepared by: Head of Finance and Resources

Recommendations:

1. To note the revenue and capital positions for the year to November 2021.

Reason for Report: Board review and approval

Resource Implications: Within available resources

Strategy: Within agreed plans

Consultation: Sponsor Team, EMT and Budget Holders

Equalities Duties: An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required.

Document Classification: Not protectively marked

1.   Introduction

1.1   This report provides a summary of SCRA's financial position for the year to November 2021 and forecast (based on October results) for the full year 2021/22.

2.   Background

2.1   The Scottish Government has allocated revenue funding of £25.16m for 2021/22. In discussions with Sponsor Team and the Scottish Government about hand back of 2020/21 grant funding, it was agreed that SCRA retain revenue underspends and review in the autumn the requirement for the additional in-year funding of £1.5m assumed in setting the 2021/22 revenue budget. The Board approved a revenue budget of £26.96m in March, on the basis that a further £0.3m of reserves could be used to support business priorities.

In light of SCRA's revised forecast expenditure of £26.745m (including £180k for unfunded pensions) the £1.5m in-year funding has been reduced to £1.1m and the reserves contribution increased to £485k.

2.2   Depreciation is a non-cash charge, and is excluded from the expenditure tables in section 3.

2.3   The Scottish Government has allocated capital funding of £1.9m for 2021/22 and the Board approved a £1.9m capital budget in March. A request for an additional £100k of capital funding was discussed at a recent meeting with Sponsor Team and Scottish Government Finance Business Partner and has been included in grant requests.

3.   Revenue

3.1   The following table summarises the position to November by expense head:

Previous Full Year Actual £000	Expense Head	Budget Year to Nov £000	Actual Year to Nov £000	Variance Year to Nov £000	Full Year Budget £000	Full Year Forecast £000	Forecast Variance £000	Forecast Variance %
19,494	Staff Costs	14,132	13,810	-322	21,198	21,316	+118	0.6%
2,900	Property Costs	2,064	1,564	-500	3,097	2,940	-157	-5.1%
37	Travel Costs	109	39	-70	163	87	-76	-46.6%
2,273	Other Operating Charges	1,846	1,601	-245	2,769	2,625	-144	-5.2%
3	Capital Financing	2	2	+0	3	3	+0	0.0%
-481	Other Income	-299	-227	+72	-449	-406	+43	-9.6%
24,226	**Sub-total**	**17,854**	**16,789**	**-1,065**	**26,781**	**26,565**	**-216**	**-0.8%**
-25,694	Grant In Aid	-17,773	-16,560	+1,213	-26,660	-26,660	+0	0.0%
-1,468	**Net Total for SCRA**	**81**	**229**	**+148**	**121**	**-95**	**-216**	

3.2   Revenue expenditure in the year to date is £1,065 under budget.

The staffing year to date underspend, which is still expected to reverse over the rest of the year, is due to a high volume of recruitments this year particularly in the first two quarters. The Property year to date underspend is largely on rent/rates/shared costs/ repairs and maintenance and the Other Operating Charges year to date underspend has arisen on a number of lines, particularly IT (principally SCOTS charges) and Hearing and consumable costs and legal fees.

3.3   The following table summarises the position, excluding depreciation and unfunded pensions, to November 2021 by budget centre.

Previous Full Year Actual £000	Cost centre	Budget Year to Nov £000	Actual Year to Nov £000	Variance Year to Nov £000	Full Year Budget £000	Full Year Forecast £000	Forecast Variance £000	Forecast Variance %
249	Communications	143	120	-23	215	190	-25	-11.6%
8,992	East and Central Scotland Area	6,234	6,175	-59	9,351	9,449	+98	1.0%
302	Executive	250	171	-79	375	298	-77	-20.5%
6,885	North West Scotland Area	4,787	4,712	-75	7,181	7,123	-58	-0.8%
1,170	Practice and Policy	960	805	-155	1,440	1,376	-64	-4.4%
6,627	Support Services	5,480	4,804	-676	8,220	8,129	-91	-1.1%
24,225	**Net Total for SCRA**	**17,854**	**16,787**	**-1,067**	**26,782**	**26,565**	**-216**	**-0.8%**

3.4   The forecast spend by Locality is detailed as follows:

Locality	Variance Year to Nov £000	Forecast Variance to March £000	Variance %
East & Central Scotland Office	+5	+17	+10.3%
Tayside And Fife Locality	-8	+19	+0.9%
South East Locality	+13	+39	+2.2%
Central Locality	-19	+8	+0.6%
Lanarkshire Dumfries & Galloway Locality	-51	-44	-1.9%
Ayrshire Locality	+1	+59	+3.7%
North West Area Office	+16	+20	+15.7%
Highlands And Islands Locality	+13	+20	+1.7%
Grampian Locality	+3	-20	-1.9%
North Strathclyde Locality	-40	-20	-0.9%
Glasgow Locality	-66	-57	-2.1%
	-133	**+41**	**+0.2%**

The Locality and Head Office position is shown in greater detail in Appendix A.

3.5   **East and Central Scotland**

Salary costs across all localities are expected to significantly exceed budget by £209k mainly due to temporary supernumeraries and additional hours to support the RAVHI project and additional specific overspends supported by savings or budget within Head Office.

The staffing forecast does not anticipate any further savings from casual vacancies arising, from leavers or internal secondments.

The staffing pressures are offset by anticipated non-staff savings of £111k arising particularly from staff travel costs and postages.

3.6   **North West**

Additional staff costs for RAVHI and in Highlands & Islands are leading to a £48k overspend on staff costs.

These overspends are more than offset by non-staff savings particularly from travel costs, hearing costs, postages and consumables.

3.7 **Head Office**

Support Services
Material items within the support services £91k forecast underspend are:

Cost centre	Over-spend	Under-spend	Comment
FN		(22)	Staff: Arising from vacancies (Accountant).
PL		(57)	Staff net of income: Delayed recruitment to Promise Team
HR	44		Staff: Extensions to contracts in VH and Recovery Teams (in addition to £125k RAVHI costs referenced in 3.5 and 3.6 above, in order to achieve organisational recovery as swiftly as possible)
PR		(136)	Rent (£25k), rates (£23k), shared costs (£28k), repairs & maintenance (£60k)
IT	75		SCOTS charges (new charging model)
IT	23		Docking stations, delayed from 20//21
IT	66		Digital programme research costs charged to revenue
IT	32		Hardware components charged to revenue
IT		(98)	CMS hosting savings arising from efficient and effective approach to decommissioning and Leidos costs
PL		(64)	The £80k provision for a data solution for CSAS will not be fully required in 2021/22
PR	49		Agency fees and Land and Buildings Transaction Tax on Hamilton and Elgin (£49k)

Executive
Executive are forecasting £77k underspend due to savings on Operational Manager posts.

Press and Communications
An underspend of £25k is forecast due to a delayed recruitment of a Modern Apprentice and no staff event in 2021/22.

Practice and Policy (including Our Hearings, Our Voice)
Practice and Policy is forecasting an underspend of £64k due mainly to expected underspend on legal fees. Our Hearings, Our Voice anticipates spending to budget.

3.8 While Sponsor Team encourages SCRA to report variances as early as possible, and there is strong monthly dialogue between Sponsor and SCRA, SCRA was required to confirm its resource needs before the Autumn Budget Review (ABR). Based on this set of forecasts SCRA plans to drawdown £26,260k of grant in aid and fund the balance of forecast spend from reserves (2020/21 underspend).

4. **Efficiencies**

4.1 As approved by the Board in March 2021 efficiency savings of £153k (0.6%) have been targeted in 2021/22 (vacant space savings £15k, procurement savings £50k, Head Office staff savings £50k, Interpreting & Translating £13k, Locality initiatives £25k).

4.2 The Budget Efficiencies Group, Business Managers and Finance Manager focus on ensuring Locality efficiencies (both cash and time releasing) are tracked and captured for inclusion in efficiency reports in line with the organisation's Efficiency Framework.

5. Core Capital

5.1 Net expenditure in the period to October 2021 is £97k. Details of the budgets, actual spend and forecast are as follows:

	Board-approved Budget March 2021 £000	Adjust-ments £000	Available Budget 2021/22 £000	Actual YTD Oct £000	Full Year Forecast £000	Variance forecast to budget £000
Property Programme						
Aberdeen - meeting room/admin areas	25	35	60		65	5
Elgin – Hearing suite upgrade and staff areas	85		85		5	(80)
Glasgow – 2F-4F phase 3 development	100		100		140	40
Glenrothes 1F feasibility	20		20		20	0
Paisley - Hearing Suite alterations	15	25	40		40	0
Project contingency	80	(60)	20	14	18	(2)
Stirling – extend Hearing Suite into office space	50		50	1	39	(11)
LED Lighting retrofits	30		30		30	0
Livingston capital element of rent	45		45		45	0
Hearing Room Improvement Programme	100		100		170	70
Various condition surveys, upgrades, redecoration	50	28	78		137	59
Minor Works	100	97	197	17	175	(22)
Digital Programme						
Aim One – Maximising the organisational benefits from delivery of the CSAS MVP	392		392	0	392	0
Aim Two – Digitally Enabled Service Redesign	308		308	42	242	(66)
Aim Three – Strong Digital Governance and Ownership	450		450	23	418	(32)
CHS CSAS Development	0	117	117	0	250	133
Other projects						
Corporate projects	50		50		50	0
Total capital	**1,900**	**242**	**2,142**	**97**	**2,236**	**94**

5.2 The budget adjustments above reflect agreed use of reserves and transfers from contingency budget to projects in Aberdeen and Paisley. The forecast overspend of £94k will be offset by the additional £100k of capital grant referenced in section 2.3.

5.3   Discussions are ongoing around Elgin's lease renewal and it is now expected that project works will take place in 2022/23. The original £85k was an estimate adopted some months ago prior to the scope being developed and there is a significant risk of tenders coming in substantially higher than this due to market conditions.

5.4   Following recent discussions with the Glasgow managers there is now a proposal for works on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th floors and an anticipated site start in late January 2022.

5.5   The scope of works in Aberdeen and Paisley have been extended in discussion with local managers and it is anticipated that physical works can be completed by end March 2022. The work in Stirling to extend the hearing room is complete and a project underspend is forecast.

5.7   Furniture orders for the Hearing Room Improvement Programme have been placed and physical works are still expected to be completed in quarter four. Cost of works and fees are higher than previous years and additional works are being considered in Kirkwall and Alloa, all contributing to an anticipated £40k overspend.

5.8   Of the £197k budget available for Minor Works, £143k has been allocated against site-specific projects, with the remaining £54k held for emerging works. Latest forecast is an underspend of £22k spread across a number of projects.

5.9   Significant works arising from condition surveys will be progressed this year in Edinburgh and Kirkwall resulting in a forecast overspend of £59k on this budget. Further consideration is being given to priority works resulting from the condition survey of Dalkeith premises.

5.10   The Property Team continue to track a risk of capital underspend defined as "Lack of clear plans and insufficient capacity (Property Team and key suppliers) leads to delays in initiating projects which results in a significant underspend on the 2021/22 property capital budget." This risk includes a risk around lack of capacity and availability of colleagues to support projects. The Head of Property's approach to mitigating this risk has been to focus on delivery of the existing plan, utilising the contingency of £80k to extend the scope of existing projects in Aberdeen and Paisley. The main slippage issue at this stage concerns Elgin and any year end underspend up to £80k will be targeted towards contributing to completion of this project in 2022/23.

        Further risks to the Property Programme spending as forecast stem from procurement exercises and increased market volatility and uncertainty around prices and inflation.

5.11   The Digital Programme Director has developed three Digital Aims and Objectives for 2021/22. Aim One comprises CSAS development £316k and contingency £76k. Aim Two comprises external reporting development costs £66k, unallocated £36k, virtual hearing development £63k, improved hearing room connectivity £77k and user research/strategy consultancy £66k. Finally Aim Three comprises refresh of laptops and mobile devices £324k and programme consolidation activity (environments and technology refresh) £120k. The balance of available funding is £6k. The budget of £66k for user research/strategy consultancy and £32k of the laptop refresh budget has been transferred to revenue.

        Actual spend to date is very low however laptops have now been delivered, invoices for the connectivity project are expected in December and there is increased activity on CSAS development work following action by the Digital Programme Director.

As SCRA owns CSAS expenditure on CHS CSAS changes will be accounted for by SCRA. Scottish Government have approved a capital budget transfer of £117k for this investment which together with £98k of digital capital expenditure which will now be charged to revenue keeps SCRA capital largely on budget.

6.   Conclusion

6.1   The overall accruals based revenue underspend forecast is £216k (0.8%). The revenue budget will be brought back into balance if there are no further changes to forecast and SCRA draws down grant in aid of £26.260m and contributes £485k from reserves. With additional capital funding of £100k the capital budgets show little variance at this stage.

7.   Recommendation

7.1   To note the revenue and capital positions for the year to November 2021.

East And Central Scotland Area

	Ayrshire Locality	East & Central Scotland Office	Central Locality	Lanarkshire Dumfries & Galloway Locality	South East Locality	Tayside And Fife Locality	Total
Staff Costs	+83.5	+17.7	+28.0	-32.8	+73.0	+39.5	**+208.9**
Property Costs	-8.5	+0.0	-1.5	+1.5	-0.5	-2.0	**-11.0**
Travel Costs	-4.5	+0.0	-2.0	-7.5	-12.0	-11.0	**-37.0**
Other Operating Charges	-12.0	-0.3	-16.9	-5.3	-21.4	-7.5	**-63.4**
Total	**+58.5**	**+17.4**	**+7.6**	**-44.1**	**+39.1**	**+19.0**	**+97.5**

North And West Scotland Area

	North West Area Office	Highlands And Islands Locality	Grampian Locality	North Strathclyde Locality	Glasgow Locality	Total
Staff Costs	+24.0	+39.0	-4.5	+0.0	-10.5	**+48.0**
Property Costs	+0.0	-0.5	-1.0	-5.0	-5.0	**-11.5**
Travel Costs	-0.5	-15.0	-3.0	-5.5	-2.5	**-26.5**
Other Operating Charges	-4.0	-4.0	-11.5	-9.0	-39.0	**-67.5**
Total	**+19.5**	**+19.5**	**-20.0**	**-19.5**	**-57.0**	**-57.5**

Head Office

	Communi-cations	Executive	Finance	Human Resources	Information Systems	Planning	Practice & Policy	Property	Total
Staff Costs	-14.5	-77.0	-9.0	+43.5	+13.0	-102.0	+2.0	+5.0	**-139.0**
Property Costs	+0.0	+0.0	+0.0	+0.0	+0.0	+0.0	+0.0	-134.5	**-134.5**
Travel Costs	+0.0	+0.0	-1.0	+0.0	-6.0	-1.0	-4.0	-1.0	**-13.0**
Other Operating Charges	-10.5	+0.0	-12.0	+0.0	+95.0	-73.0	-62.0	+49.0	**-13.5**
Other Income	+0.0	+0.0	+0.0	+0.0	+0.0	+43.0	+0.0	+0.0	**+43.0**
Total	**-25.0**	**-77.0**	**-22.0**	**+43.5**	**+102.0**	**-133.0**	**-64.0**	**-81.5**	**-257.0**

SCOTTISH
CHILDREN'S REPORTER
ADMINISTRATION

Organisational Performance Report (OPR) review

Accountable Director: Lisa Bennett (Head of Strategy and Organisational Development)

Date: 15/12/2021

Report Author: Donald Lamb (Data Manager)

Recommendation:

1.   **To approve the proposed changes to the OPR**

Reason for Report: Board approval

Strategy: Within approved plans

Consultation: EMT and Board Members

Equalities Duties: None required

Document Classification: Not protectively marked

1. **Introduction**

1.1 A discussion was held at the Board development day in November to look at the OPR and decide the best way to proceed with its development based on elements of:-
   - our historical approach to the OPR,
   - relevant data reporting from the pandemic and recovery period and
   - new reporting capabilities arising from CSAS implementation.
   - Alignment to the priorities within our corporate and business planning.

1.2 This document provides a proposal based on those discussions for agreement with the Board.

2. **Background**

2.1 The OPR is a report produced quarterly by the Quality and Performance Team to provide the Board with oversight of SCRA performance. This supports Board members in terms of ensuring that they are holding SCRA accountable for performance and have the information they require as a Board.

2.2 The OPR was paused during 2020 due to the pandemic and migration to our new case management system but should now be reinstated. Rather than just continuing the existing report, the discussion at the Board development day provided useful insight around how the report could be improved in relation to the changes seen over the past year.

3. **Proposed changes**

3.1 There was support for the current Balanced Scorecard approach separating data out into four quadrants and also for the locality level splits of the data. The Board also felt that some element of exceptions reporting could be helpful to manage down the number of indicators. In addition, it was noted that the quadrants should align with our three aims as contained within our Business Plan:

   - 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.

3.2 It was also felt that recovery data is still important at this time. Therefore it seems logical to develop the OPR to map across to these four areas whilst refreshing the indicators within. The recovery area should only be required for a period of time, therefore this could transition to showing exceptions as time progresses. Exceptions can be defined as missing target or showing a strong trend or concern.

3.3 There was strong support for including more outcome focussed work in the OPR but also the acknowledgement that to do this alone for SCRA is challenging. In the context of a quarterly report a viable option seems to be to produce a 'spotlight on' page where we look at an area showing change in depth or reference some outcome work whether through case sampling or research to provide the Board with more detail around work within SCRA.

4. Quadrant mappings

4.1 The below outline the proposed mappings. In terms of corporate governance though, there should still be a key performance indicator table at the beginning of the document showing progress regardless of whether the indicator is included in one of the quadrants below (though if target is being missed it should at least be picked up as an exception) A mock up can be seen at Appendix A.

4.2 Care: Delivering a service that feels right for each child, young person and family that experiences it

- Non-disclosure cases
- Time taken for referrals from receipt to Hearing decision (working days expressed as mid-point)
- Notifications of Hearing decisions sent to children and families within 5 calendar days
- Child attendance at Hearing, potentially including aspects such as average attendees per Hearing or a virtual/F2f/hybrid Hearing split
- Freedom Of Information responses responded to within 20 working days
- Complaints
- Appeals

4.3 Connect: Working together to receive the right referrals for the right children, at the right time

- Children referred on non-offence grounds
- Children referred on offence grounds
- Child Protection Orders (CPOs)
- Joint reports retained by Reporter
- Conversion rate from referral to Hearing (for children not on CSO)

4.4 Protect: Making high quality and timely decisions for children and young people, using the right information that is relevant, clear and secure

- Decisions on referrals made within 50 working days of receipt
- Referrals over 100 working days old
- Hearings scheduled to take place within 20 working days
- Hearings deferred
- Percentage of applications established at court
- Hearing's decisions upheld at appeal (appeal refused)
- Breach incidents (SCRA)
- Percentage of working days lost to short term absence
- Percentage of working days lost to long term absence

4.5 Recovery: Moving the Children's Hearings System back to normality after the pandemic (will later become outliers)

- Open referrals
- Arrange Hearing decision with no Hearing
- Forecast vs actual slots
- Established grounds awaiting Hearing

4.6 Potential exceptions reporting (only being reported if exception occurred/new or different trend became apparent etc)

- Non-offence referrals received
- Offence referrals received
- Pre-Hearing Panels (PHPs) held
- Hearings held (split by grounds/review)
- Interim orders made
- Compulsory Supervision Orders (CSOs) made
- Compulsory Supervision Orders (CSOs) terminated
- Open court applications
- Court applications determined
- Staffing profile by FTE
- Compliance with SCRA property standards
- Forecast variance in annual revenue spends
- Forecast percentage of revenue savings achieved in year
- Forecast variance in annual capital spends
- Scottish Government efficiency savings
- Training per employee (days)
- Business Plan delivery
- Strategic Risk Register – risk scores
- Internal audit programme - reviews complete
- Quality assurance programme – case sampling undertaken

5. Other areas of the report to consider

5.1 The remaining area of the report was the management response. There was no discussion around this at the development day but Board members have in the past commented on the useful context within it so it is proposed that this remains unchanged

5.2 Usually in quarter 4 we provide a combined quarter 4/annual update to the June Board. For future years we plan to remove the annual data from the OPR and move the official statistics date forward a month so that the Board get to see the official statistics pre-release on the morning of the June Board meeting. We can then provide an overview of the year and answer any questions around the data at that meeting.

5.3 It should be noted that the report provided today, whilst using live data, is a working document for EMT and the Board and is still undergoing quality assurance. Data definitions are yet to be finalised and as such the report is not currently for publication.

6. Conclusion & Recommendation

6.1   To approve the proposed changes to the OPR:

- Changing the four quadrants;
- Updating the measures within;
- Adding in a 'spotlight on feature'; and
- Removing annual data from the Q4 OPR and bringing the official statistics to the June Board meeting.

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Business Plan 2021/22 Performance Report

Accountable Director:	**Head of Strategy/OD**
Report Prepared By:	**Corporate Planning and Performance Manager**
Date:	**15th December 2021**

Recommendations:

1. **To note SCRA's performance against the objectives set out in the 2021/22 Business Plan.**

Reason for Report:	For noting
Resource Implications:	Within current agreed budget
Strategy:	Corporate Plan 2020/23, Business Plan 2021/22 and related strategies
Consultation:	EMT
Equalities Duties:	An equalities impact assessment is available for the Business Plan 2021/22
Document Classification:	Not protectively marked

1.   Introduction

1.1   This report introduces the Business Plan performance report 2021/22 April Nov.

1.2   This report will be used as one of the mechanisms to inform the development of the Business Plan 2022/23.

2.   Background

2.1   Performance against the Business Plan has historically been reported through a line in the quarterly OPR, giving the Board a sense of relative completeness of objectives.

2.2   A new software system was implemented this year, to aid planning and monitoring of the organisational aims, objectives and actions – ZOHO; the system details each action and links them to corporate aims and objectives, allowing users to update their progress against these.

2.3   Interrogation of ZOHO allows the planning manager to assess performance against plans, identify areas not progressing and form a greater sense of what is being delivered.

2.4   In September, the Board were introduced to an improved style of monitoring performance against the objectives in the form of a Business Plan Performance Report. Feedback was received, taken on board and now reflected in the report at Appendix A.

3.   Performance

3.1   The attached Business Plan Performance report provides the Board with an overview of how the organisation is delivering on the objectives set out in the Business Plan 2021/22 between April '21 and November '21.

3.2   The report provides a level of narrative to also give a sense of what is being delivered.

3.3.   This report should be read as an interim report, to provide assurance, ahead of the fuller detail contained within the Annual Accounts that is compiled at year end.

3.4   The Board may note that the organisation has engaged well with the tool for monitoring performance.

3.5   It should also note that whilst there are many tasks marked as completed, there are many more yet to be actioned and that these will all be taken into consideration in the planning process for the Business Plan 2022/23 – assessed for their continued relevance, priority and any dependencies.

4.   Recommendation

4.1   To note SCRA's performance against the objectives set out in the 2021/22 Business Plan.

Prepared by: Myrian Lazo
Corporate Planning and Performance Manger
December 2021

2021-22 Business Plan Performance Report

December 2021

Contents

1.   Introduction

The Business Plan Performance Report provides an overview of the progress made against the actions as set out in the Business Plan 202122, during April to November, 2021.

The Business Plan objectives are subdivided under the aims of Care, Connect, Protect, and are delivered across the 7 plans. The Operational Plan is delivered by the 9 Localities. The 2021-22 Business Plan consists of 693 actions (tasks) across all of the strategy/locality plans. During April to November, 144 actions (20.8%) were marked as completed.

2.   Performance Overview

The following images and tables provide a high level overview of the progress made across the strategies during April to November, 2021.

Zoho (online project management system) enables the organisation to monitor progress through a wide range of status options, which provides greater context compared with the traditional Red, Amber and Green status.

Image 1.

The following image provides a monthly breakdown of tasks completed versus planned for all strategy and locality plans.

Open Tasks: Refers to all the open (live) tasks.
Closed Tasks   Includes the total tasks completed.
Closed Task %:   The total percentage of completed tasks.
Overdue Tasks: All tasks that are overdue up to the end of November.

Image 2.

Image 2 provides an overview of the status for the tasks within each strategy/locality plan. Each Strategy/Locality Lead has a level of flexibility in their approach for marking or for viewing the status for their tasks. For instance, some plans only utilise Open, In Progress and Closed status, whereas others wish to see them in greater context/detail – On Hold, In Review, Delayed, etc.
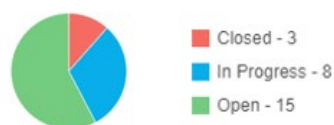
It should be noted that this is the first year that this software has been used and staff are still getting used to what it can do and offer – that can be seen in the level of detail that some leads use compared to others – for now we are trying to bed this in, get managers comfortable with the tool and allow them to work with it to best meet their needs – to drive forward actions within their area of responsibility – at the level that they feel is helpful.

It is also worth noting that some strategies have a far broader portfolio and thus do have far more tasks as a result e.g. Practice and Policy covers Information and Research, Information Governance, Policy, Victims etc. whereas e.g. Communications and Engagement has a more focused portfolio of comms, participation and engagement – with many actions sitting within Rights, Inclusion and Corporate Parenting.
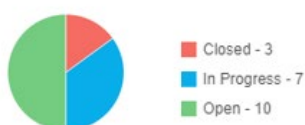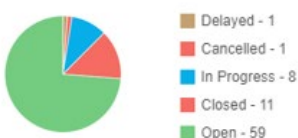
People

Open - 1
Cancelled - 1
Closed - 5
In Progress - 19

Finance and Resources

Closed - 3
In Progress - 8
Open - 15

Communications and Engagement

Closed - 3
In Progress - 7
Open - 10

Digital

In Progress - 7
Open - 20

Practice and Policy

Delayed - 1
Cancelled - 1
In Progress - 8
Closed - 11
Open - 59

Rights, Inclusion and Corporate Parenting

Delayed - 1
On Hold - 2
In Review - 3
Open - 20
Closed - 21
In Progress - 44

4

The Operational Strategy Plan consists of 41 tasks, and these are replicated across the 9 Locality Plans. Some localities developed additional tasks within their plans, which is reflected in the variances in the total amounts of tasks in Table 1.

Lanarkshire
- Cancelled - 1
- Closed - 5
- Open - 13
- In Progress - 24

Central
- Delayed - 3
- On Hold - 6
- Open - 7
- Closed - 16
- In Progress - 19

Ayrshire
- In Review - 1
- On Hold - 3
- Open - 7
- Closed - 8
- In Progress - 25

Tayside and Fife
- Delayed - 2
- Open - 3
- In Review - 3
- On Hold - 7
- Closed - 14
- In Progress - 21

South East
- In Progress - 11
- Open - 12
- Closed - 18

Grampian
- On Hold - 5
- Closed - 16
- In Progress - 22

Glasgow
- Closed - 8
- Open - 14
- In Progress - 31

North Strathclyde
- In Progress - 7
- Closed - 10
- Open - 40

Highlands, Islands and Moray
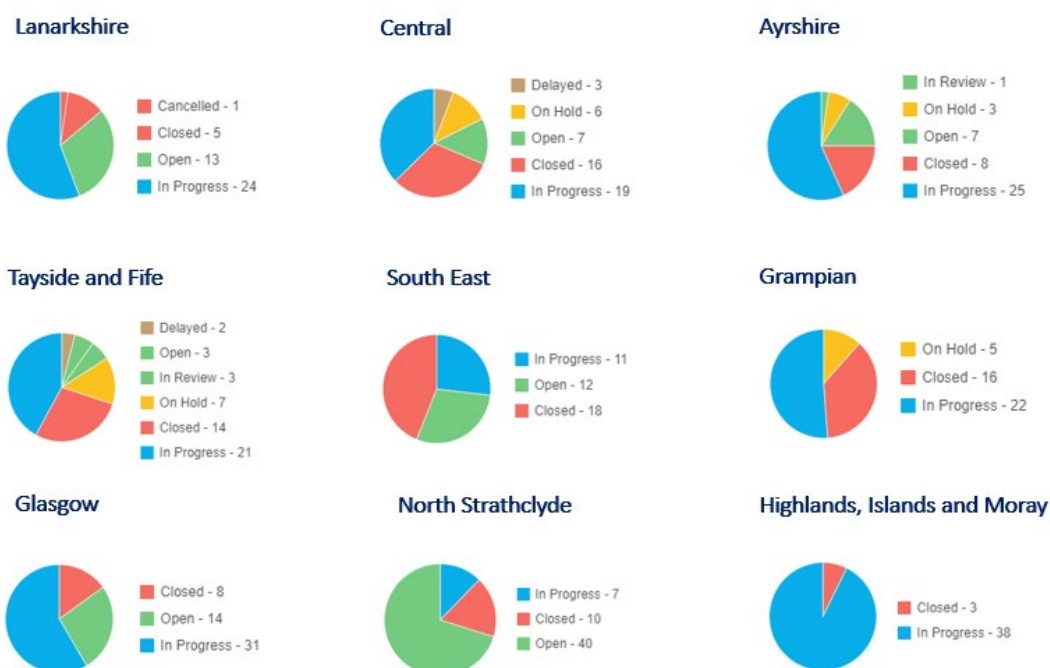- Closed - 3
- In Progress - 38

Table 1.

The following table provides a comprehensive breakdown of the task status, and completion rate for each strategy/locality plan. Some plans have a wider timescale for completion, which reflects in the variances of closed tasks within this table.

Plan(s)	% Comp.	Open	In Progress	In Review	On Hold	Closed	Delayed	Cancelled	Total Tasks
Communications & Engagement	15%	10	7			3			20
Digital	0%	20	7						27
Finance & Resources	11%	15	8			3			26
People	23%	1	19			5		1	26
Practice & Policy	15%	59	8			11	1	1	80
Rights, Inclusion and Corporate Parenting	23%	20	44	3	2	21	1		91
Ayrshire Plan	18%	7	25	1	3	8			44
Central	31%	7	19		6	16	3		51
Glasgow	15%	14	31			8			53
Grampian	37%		22		5	16			43

Highlands and Islands and Moray	7%		38			3			41
Lanarkshire, Dumfries & Galloway	13%	13	24			5		1	43
North Strathclyde	17%	40	7			10			57
South East	43%	12	11			18			41
Tayside and Fife	28%	3	21	3	7	14	2		50
Total		225	288	7	23	140	7	3	693

3.   Progress

The Business plan is a live document, which enables it to be flexible and responsive to change - to meet new and unexpected requirements. Changes to, or additional objectives and actions (tasks) are routinely updated to plans in Zoho.

Quarterly progress reports on all activities undertaken within the 15 plans are provided to EMT, for review, monitoring and analysis. Localities also receive quarterly progress reports of all 9 Locality Pans, to enable them to view each other's progress and share best practice.

The following tables (2, 3 and 4) provides an overview of some key areas of work undertaken during April to November, 2021 - across all strategy and locality plans, in alignment with the Corporate Plan's three aims; Care, Connect, Protect. New activities (September to November) are highlighted in purple.

Table 2

Care Delivering a service that feels right for each child, young person and family that experiences it.	
Corporate Plan Objectives	**Key Updates**
1.1: We will demonstrate compassionate and proactive Corporate Parenting - asking, listening and acting, being open to try new approaches.	*Obtained ethical approval and established a Research Advisory Group to oversee and guide the evaluation for the evaluation of Our Hearings Our Voice.*
1.2 Our service will be informed by experience – working with children and young people in Our Hearings, Our Voice, Local Champions Boards and others, we will welcome challenge, evaluation and partnerships to get it right.	*Worked with children and young people to create a new cartoon character animation to promote advocacy services.*

1.4:	Our service will be equally accessible to all, including people with protected characteristics to ensure it meets everyone's individual needs and rights.	*Developed and tested a toolkit to identify children in care who may be likely to have a disability, and submitted a report to Disabled Children Child Protection Network on the feasibility of the toolkit.*
		Working with key partners and children to co-produce information and training on Children's Rights, UNCRC Article 12 and Secure Care Pathway and Standards.
1.5	Our staff will feel skilled, confident, valued and respected to enable them to work compassionately and with high quality.	*Development and implementation of Locality Health and Wellbeing Programme and actions plans; to promote and support staff wellbeing, whilst sharing of best practice from across the organisation to encourage consistency.* *Locality Managers are ensuring discussions of employee wellbeing in supervision - with reference to the tools available to support staff is promoted and encouraged. This includes access to Vicarious Trauma support and wellness plans.* *All localities are ensuring engagement with national networks, initiatives and events to promote staff wellbeing. This includes local representation at the Health and Wellbeing Group and supporting a training package for Mental Health First Aiders and Mindfulness Champions.* *Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment's (EHRIA) have been undertaken on new/revised policies, practice or process to ensure children and families are not discriminated against and ensure their human rights are upheld.*
		We are listening to children and families, and learning from the national response to and experience of the pandemic to identify best practice to inform improvements (creating more accessible, participative and personalised hearings). *Developed and implemented an overarching Rights, Inclusion and Corporate Parenting strategy to ensure a rights based approach and to deliver The Promise and 40 Calls to Action.*

	Localities established Health & Wellbeing groups, promote national initiatives and provide Mindfulness sessions across the Locality to support staff' wellbeing.

Table 3

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3" align="center">Connect
Working together to receive the right referrals, for the right children, at the right time.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2" align="center">Corporate Plan Objectives</td><td align="center">Key Updates</td></tr>
<tr><td>2.1</td><td>We will work effectively with our partners; to agreed protocols, shared goals and common standards to ensure we meet the needs of children and young people.</td><td>We raised awareness of public, practitioners and policy makers on the extent and types of child exploitation in Scotland. This included establishing a working group of partner organisations and developing materials for training by SCRA and partner organisations.

We are working in partnership with CHS to develop common understanding and alignment for new developments, in particular the implementation of sibling rights in the Hearing System, and implementation of the expectations of The Promise. Constructive weekly meetings of the Hearings Recovery Group and fortnightly meetings of the Senior Management Team are held, with Practice meetings taking place several times this year.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td></td><td>Localities continue to work with CHS, Local Authorities and other partners to ensure effective hearings.

The Standard Operating Model has been rolled out across all localities to ensure greater process alignment and consistency.</td></tr>
<tr><td>2.4</td><td>Our organisation is kind and connected to the world we live in – from the way that we work and travel,</td><td>We re-branded and re-launched the national Reporter – staff e-zine that promotes greater organisational engagement and transparency.</td></tr>
</table>

	to the culture we promote.	
		Reviewed Benefits Reporting Guidance to understand potential savings, as part of the recommendations by the Procurement & Commercial Programme. *We reviewed our Equalities Review Group to grow expertise in rights and inclusion across all levels of the organisation, resulting in the proposal of the Inclusion Steering Group, which aims to ensure inclusion and diversity is considered across all aspects of the organisation, and provide the governance and set priorities each year.*
2.5	Our organisation is fully inclusive as employers, as partners, as a service to children and families.	*Implemented mental health charity Mind's Wellness Action Plans (WAP's) to provide a practical way for managers to support the mental health and well-being of their staff.* *Drawing on our experience of the national response to COVID-19 and in recognition of the high value staff place in being able to work flexibly we revised our Flexible Working Policy (to specifically incorporate agile working) to ensure that our staff are adequately supported, their caring responsibilities can be balanced with the demands of work and to ensure our service is responsive to future challenges.*
2.7	We will have digital connectivity with partners to allow automated and secure sharing of information.	*Embedded virtual hearings and expanded the digital hearing infrastructure; undertaking staff training and supporting local partners with virtual hearings.*

Table 4

Protect Making high quality and timely decisions for children and young people, using the right information that is relevant, clear and secure.		
	Corporate Plan Objectives	Key Updates
3.2	Our organisation will be flexible, resilient, and responsive to allow us to act effectively and timeously to	*Locality engagement with the Recovery Team has ensured full use of reporter and assistant reporter resources in support of locality*

	change.	*recovery. Localities have also supported the Recovery Team by hosting, and providing training to develop staff for deployment.* *Localities have been working steadfastly to clear existing referral backlogs caused by Covid and are working through recovery plans with the SOM's and partner organisations.* *We published the 2020/21 Annual Report (including Two Year Forward Plan and Review of Regulated Procurements) highlighting compliance with regulations and best practice.*
3.3	We will continue to be a high performing organisation, with quality and consistency at the heart of all that we do.	*Finance and Resources worked with strategy leads to ensure resources are in place to deliver most significant objectives in Operational Plan, Corporate Parenting, People, Digital and Property Strategies.*
		We are consulting with managers on approaches to Learning & Development, with a view to re-introducing the management development programme..
3.4	Our workforce will be flexible and adaptable with the right balance of roles, skills and experience.	*Localities ensured opportunities for learning and development are available and supported, promoting PDA candidates to resume diploma where suspended as a result of pandemic..*
		We are reviewing the management structure to ensure that it fits the needs of SCRA and provides sustainability..

4.   Appendix 1: 2021-22 Business Plan Objectives

Table 5

	CARE Delivering a service that feels right for each child, young person and family that experiences it.			
No	**Communication & Engagement Strategy Objectives**	**Timescale**		**Corporate Plan Ref**
1.1	Through effective, meaningful and trauma-informed participative approaches, we will work with children and families to empower them to participate and engage in Children's Hearings processes.	April	March	1.2
2.1	We will consult with and engage with Hearings experienced young people employed within the service, as well as with external partners to develop new methods of communication.	April	October	1.2
3.1	Working with children and young people, including Champions Boards, Our Hearings, Our Voice, Modern Apprentices, internal work experience placements, and other groups, we will review and refine/improve the information that we provide.	April	June	1.2
3.5	We will continue to provide safe communication spaces and tools led by children and young people, including child-and-young-person-centred Hearing rooms, sensory gardens/areas, toolkits/information for people with autism, sensory and learning difficulties.	April	March	1.1
No	**People Strategy Objectives**	**Timescale**		**Corporate Plan Ref**
5.3	Following the implementation of our new case management system, CSAS, we will, in partnership, assess the impact on our roles and where change is necessary, consult with postholders, amend job descriptions and provide appropriate role based training to post holders.	April	March	1.6
5.10	We will ensure our staff have the digital skills to support children and young people to engage with SCRA.	April	March	1.6
No	**Finance and Resources Strategy Objectives**	**Timescale**		**Corporate Plan Ref**
2.1	To invest in key resources such as staff, digital and property to build sustainability and resilience.	April	March	1.6

No	Objectives	Timescale		Corporate Plan Ref
5.3	We will consider equality, diversity and inclusion throughout our tender processes and comply fully with legislation.	April	March	1.4
No	Operational Strategy Objectives	Timescale		Corporate Plan Ref
1.3	Develop and implement a Locality Health and Wellbeing Programme to promote and support staff wellbeing.	April	March	1.5
1.4	Managers to ensure discussion of employee wellbeing in supervision with reference to the tools available to support staff.	April	March	1.5
1.5	Ensure Locality engagement with national networks, initiatives and events to promote staff wellbeing.	April	March	1.5
No	Practice and Policy Strategy Objectives	Timescale		Corporate Plan Ref
	PRACTICE			
1.9	Develop and deliver training for external agencies to support shared understanding and implementation of legislation and policy.	April	March	1.1
	INFORMATION AND RESEARCH			
1.2	Research - Children aged 12-15 years involved in offending referred to the Reporter and Procurator Fiscal in Scotland	April	March	1.3
1.3	Carry out research on children under 12 years old in residential care – their needs, supports, care history, decision making, and outcomes.	April	February	1.3
1.4	Initiate a research programme on how the COVID-19 period has impacted on the operation of the Children's Hearings System, on the rights of children, on their relationships with family and care providers, and on their wellbeing.	May	March	1.2
1.5	Evaluation of Our Hearings, Our Voice.	February	March	1.1
1.4	Develop and test a toolkit to identify children in care who may be likely to have a disability.	February	March	1.4
	VICTIMS			
1.13	Improving support of victims who are seriously harmed by the actions/behaviour of children under the age of 12.	April	March	1.3
	RIGHTS			
3.1	We can and will explain why we need to act in ways which affect rights.	April	March	1.2

4.1	Our approach should result in family rights being recognised and supported and impacted only when necessary and in order to make a situation better.	April	March	1.4
No	**Digital Strategy Objectives**	**Timescale**		**Corporate Plan Ref**
1.1	Maximising the organisational benefits from delivery of the CSAS MVP.	April	March	1.6
2.1	Digitally Enabled Service Redesign.	April	March	1.6
4.1	Managing the Digital Supply Chain.	April	March	1.5

Table 6

CONNECT Working together to receive the right referrals, for the right children and the right time.				
No	**Communication & Engagement Strategy Objectives**	**Timescale**		**Corporate Plan Ref**
2.2	We will work with the Senior Management team and Locality Management teams to promote an open and transparent engagement culture in SCRA aligned to organisational values.	April	March	2.4
No	**People Strategy Objectives**	**Timescale**		**Corporate Plan Ref**
4.5	We recognise the high value staff place in being able to work flexibly to balance responsibilities within and out with work. SCRA takes pride in being able to support a flexible approach and will continue to do so where it can align with operational service delivery and the aims of the Operational Strategy.	April	June	2.5
5.1	SCRA will develop Inclusive Leadership Standards to underpin an inclusive organisational culture which values and develops our people, providing them with the tools and support they need to be skilled, confident, valued, respected and cared for in maximising their potential. The standards will reflect our leadership values and beliefs describing leadership characteristics and indicative behaviours in line with our organisational values and beliefs and will complement our current Management Standards.	April	September	2.4

No		Timescale		Corporate Plan Ref
6.4	We will work to the principles of the Scottish Government's Fair Work in Public Bodies Principles which will see SCRA invest in skills and training, take action on our gender pay gap, genuine staff engagement through our strong partnership working model with UNISON and continue to support and promote Scotland's Living Wage.	April	March	2.5
No	Finance and Resources Strategy Objectives	Timescale		Corporate Plan Ref
2.14	To undertake further Hearing Room improvements across the country that support Better Hearings.	April	March	2.2
2.20	Environmental sustainability.	April	March	2.4
No	Operational Strategy Objectives	Timescale		Corporate Plan Ref
1.7	Promote equalities and inclusion objectives in localities.	April	March	2.4
2.2	Work with CHS, Local Authorities and other key partners to ensure effective continuing response to pandemic for the Hearings sSystem while subject to ongoing restrictions.	April	March	2.1
2.3	Engage with local Promise teams.	April	March	2.1
3.1	Learning and development of CSAS and CSAS+.	April	March	2.7
3.2	Embed the Standard Operating Model.	April	March	2.1
3.3	Develop and embed virtual Hearings and the digital Hearing environment.	April	March	2.7
3.4	Develop a local sustainability plan to meet climate change duties.	April	March	2.4
No	Practice and Policy Strategy Objectives	Timescale		Corporate Plan Ref
	PRACTICE			
1.2	Use our expertise, knowledge and experience to influence partners, including the Scottish Government on legislative and policy matters.	April	March	2.1
1.4	Work with Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS), to ensure common understanding of policy and practices, and to ensure good information governance across the Hearings System through the Joint CHS-SCRA information Governance Group.	April	March	2.1
1.5	Participate in and influence national partnership work across a broad range of issues and agencies, including the Scottish Government, Police Scotland, COPFS, SLAB, SWS, and thirdsector.	April	March	2.1
3.6	Manage appeals and other proceedings in the Sheriff Appeal Court, Court of Session and UK Supreme Court.	April	March	2.1

3.16	Support Practice compliance in operation of CSAS and operational process.	April	March	2.1
	INFORMATION AND RESEARCH			
1.1	Raise awareness of public, practitioners and policy makers on the extent and types of child exploitation in Scotland.	April	November	2.1
	RIGHTS			
1.1	Children's Rights and Human Rights underpin all the work we do.	April	March	2.4
2.1	We are all aware of rights and aware when our work is affecting rights.	April	March	2.5
No	Communication & Engagement Strategy Objectives	Timescale		Corporate Plan Ref
5.1	Building on Relationships in a Digitally Enabled Context.	April	March	2.1

Table 7

PROTECT Making high quality and timely decisions for children and young people, using the right information that is relevant, clear and secure.				
No	Communication & Engagement Strategy Objectives	Timescale		Corporate Plan Ref
1.4	We will provide Hearings and/or care experienced young people with salaried opportunities to work, learn and develop in safe, supported, trauma-informed environments within our service.	April	December	3.4
No	People Strategy Objectives	Timescale		Corporate Plan Ref
1.1	We will reintroduce our management development programme in 2021, to support how we support and manage our services differently.	April	June	3.3
1.2	We will take appropriate action to attract a diverse range of applicants for each of our vacant roles in seeking to reflect the communities we serve in our own demographics.	April	June	3.3
1.3	We will develop e-recruitment to support end to end recruitment from application to new start within the organisation.	April	June	3.3

No		Timescale		Corporate Plan Ref
1.5	We will review our Youth Employment Strategy that will provide broader opportunities for work experience, graduate and voluntary placements as well as ensuring our Modern Apprenticeship Programme continues to meet the needs of both SCRA and the Apprentice.	April	March	3.3
4.3	We will seek to achieve the Mental Health at Work Standards that will strengthen our commitment to supporting good mental health in the workplace, encourage a culture where our people can talk about mental health and wellbeing, and we will bring together in a more meaningful way, all our strands of support into one accessible forum.	April	March	3.2
4.2	We will continue to develop opportunities within the workplace for wellbeing activities that can be accessed by all staff fairly across the organisation and that will improve resilience and ability to manage competing and complex pressures in the workplace.	April	March	3.2
5.2	We will encourage staff to take responsibility for their own learning and development, seeking opportunities to learn within and out with SCRA, through a variety of mediums and ensuring that they fully record their learning requirements and achievements on their personal learning on Itrent. Having this information recorded enables SCRA to understand the talent within SCRA and how best to use that talent.	April	September	3.3
5.5	We will further develop our approach to Succession Planning, the aim of which will be to develop our talent and offer clarity on career paths through the organisation. We will provide opportunities to develop, shadow and be mentored as part of the succession planning approach.	April	March	3.3
5.6	Through the development of an annual Training Plan, we will ensure that all staff have access to good quality training that meets their individual and team/role based needs.	April	June	3.4
5.8	We will continue, to conclusion, the review of the shape of our resources and associated structures under the Sustainability Work being led by EMT to ensure that the key role of Reporter is appropriately resourced and supported.	April	December	3.4
No	Finance and Resources Strategy Objectives	Timescale		Corporate Plan Ref
1.1	We will ensure Corporate Plan objectives and planned resources are appropriately aligned to achieve long term financial sustainability.	April	March	3.3
2.2	Scope for investment in new developments which will improve future performance and reduce annual running costs.	April	June	3.2
2.9	We will ensure necessary steps are taken to embed Cyber Security in our procurement processes.	April	March	3.6

2.11	We will produce the Statutory Annual Procurement Report in accordance with The Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014.	April	June	3.2
2.12	We will undertake planned improvements that relate to our existing properties.	April	March	3.2
2.13	Flexible service delivery/smarter working/feasibility studies.	April	December	3.2
2.15	To manage the process of key lease events that are due over 2021-22 and 2022-23.	April	March	3.2
2.17	We will undertake a programme of minor works to improve or replace the equipment, services or fabric of our buildings including environmental benefits where possible.	April	March	3.3
2.19	We will further embed our approach to Savings & Benefits by implementing recommendations from the Procurement & Commercial Improvement Programme (PCIP).	April	March	3.2
2.21	We will ensure SCRA's procurement practices contribute to the Scottish Government's objective for sustainable economic growth and contribute to the achievement of relevant National Outcomes.	April	March	3.3
3.1	Align the Finance Strategy with organisational strategies to ensure interdependence.	April	March	3.3
5.6	We will work to improve the cyber security and resilience of our suppliers by further embedding actions from the Public Sector Action Plan on Cyber Security in our procurement processes.			
No	**Operational Strategy Objectives**	**Timescale**		**Corporate Plan Ref**
1.1	Ensure regular workforce planning mechanism is in place.	April	March	3.4
1.2	Engagement with Recovery Team to ensure full use of reporter and assistant reporter resources in support of locality recovery.	April	March	3.2
1.6	Ensure opportunities for learning and development are available and supported.	April	March	3.4
1.8	Continually improve the staff working environment including adoption of principles of Smarter Working to enhance wellbeing.	April	March	3.2
2.2	Shared responsibility for Information Governance.	April	March	3.2
No	**Practice and Policy Strategy Objectives**	**Timescale**		**Corporate Plan Ref**
	PRACTICE			
3.1	Continually develop and maintain Practice Direction and other Practice materials.	April	March	3.3
3.2	Provide direct Practice support to Localities on all aspects of casework.	April	March	3.3
3.4	Continually develop and maintain a programme of national Practice Training, including core modules, more specialised modules and mandatory ongoing training.	April	March	3.4

	INFORMATION AND RESEARCH			
1.7	Deliver training on Non Disclosure and preventing breaches to all Localities.	June	March	3.3
1.8	All to staff to have received GDPR refresher training as recommended by ICO.	June	March	3.3
1.9	Ensure SCRA's compliance with Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 and Data Protection Act 2018, and liaison with Scottish Information Commissioner, Keeper of the Records of Scotland, and Information Commissioner's Office.	April	March	3.6
1.10	Ensure the provision of information to Disclosure Scotland on its requests under PVG Scheme within required timescales.	April	March	3.6
1.11	Manage SCRA's Complaints Handling Procedure in line with SPSO requirements.	April	March	3.6
	VICTIMS			
1.12	Improving support of victims harmed by children and young people who are in conflict with the law.	April	March	3.5
	RIGHTS			
5.1	We will offer positive support and solutions to people in order for their rights to be respected in our work.	April	March	3.5
No	Digital Strategy Objectives	Timescale		Corporate Plan Ref
3.1	Strong Digital Governance and Ownership.	April	March	3.2

Table 8

The Corporate Parenting and the EDI objectives are now integrated into the Rights, Inclusion and Corporate Parenting Strategy

Underpinning Themes				
No	Corporate Parenting Objectives	Timescale		Corporate Plan Ref
1.1	All staff will be trained in trauma and its impact, corporate parenting, rights and inclusion.	April	March	1.1, 1.3, 1.5
1.2	We will work closely with the Promise team and with Partners to plan, prioritise and deliver the findings from the Independent Review of Care – developing our own internal structures to support this.	April	March	1.2

		April	March	
2.1	We will work with Our Hearings, Our Voice, groups of Young People and our Partners as we plan, prioritise and deliver the 40 calls to action, to keep them informed of progress, to check that what we are doing is what we should be doing, and to seek their expertise in areas that we are better working together on.	April	March	2.1, 2.2
2.2	We will work in partnership with Children's Hearings Scotland, 'Our Hearings, Our Voice' and other partners to work towards a Children's Hearings - wide approach to rights, inclusion and participation.	April	March	2.1, 2.2
2.3	We will focus on the way that we communicate with and the information that we provide to children and to ensure that they have the information that they need, know what to expect, and how they should expect to be treated, know how to complain and importantly, know how to have their voice heard.	April	March	2.6
3.1	We will continue to make our Hearing centres feel safe, comfortable and welcoming.	April	March	3.5, 3.6
3.2	We will use our learning from our response to COVID-19 and the research conducted, previous research – internal and external, staff experience, previous improvement projects and, importantly, the voices of children and young people to identify and describe best practice for future service improvement – to support us in Keeping the Promise.	April	March	3.5
No	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Objectives	Timescale		Corporate Plan Ref
1.1	Our staff will continue to treat all children and families with dignity and respect.	April	March	1.5
1.2	Our services will be procured, designed, shaped and delivered to meet the needs of children and families.	April	March	1.5
2.1	Our leaders will foster a culture where our people feel included, valued, respected and cared for.	April	March	2.5
2.2	Our staff will feel supported, respected and cared for.	April	March	2.5
3.1	We will make our workforce more diverse through our recruitment and selection processes.	April	March	3.4

Appendix 2: 2020-23 Corporate Plan Aims and Objectives

Table 9

Strategic Aim 1:   CARE

CARE **Delivering a service that feels right for each child, young person and family that experiences it.**	
Objectives	
1.1	We will demonstrate compassionate and proactive Corporate Parenting - asking, listening and acting, being open to try new approaches.
1.2	Our service will be informed by experience – working with children and young people in Our Hearings, Our Voice, Local Champions Boards and others, we will welcome challenge, evaluation and partnerships to get it right.
1.3	Our service will be trauma sensitive – recognising the impact of a 'system' on already traumatic circumstances and ensuring that it is the best and kindest it can be.
1.4	Our service will be equally accessible to all, including people with protected characteristics to ensure it meets everyone's individual needs and rights.
1.5	Our staff will feel skilled, confident, valued and respected to enable them to work compassionately and with high quality.
1.6	Our service will be digitally enabled to allow children and young people to engage with it in ways that suit their needs.

Table 10
Strategic Aim 2: CONNECT

CONNECT	
Working together to receive the right referrals, for the right children and the right time.	
Objectives	
2.1	We will work effectively with our partners; to agreed protocols, shared goals and common standards to ensure we meet the needs of children and young people.
2.2	Through local partnerships and our connections with local children and young people, we will ensure that we are all working together to deliver and assess 'Better Hearings'.
2.3	That we are connected to the local community through local events, and we will work with practitioners, children and young people and make a meaningful contribution to local initiatives.
2.4	Our organisation is kind and connected to the world we live in – from the way that we work and travel, to the culture we promote.
2.5	Our organisation is fully inclusive as employers, as partners, as a service to children and families.
2.6	We will recognise, promote and support the rights of individuals as they connect with the Hearings System and will work with others to do the same.
2.7	We will have digital connectivity with partners to allow automated and secure sharing of information.

Table 11

Strategic Aim 3: PROTECT

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

3.1	Our organisation will be visible in the community, in schools and in health services with our key role in the delivery of GIRFEC clear and understood.
3.2	Our organisation will be flexible, resilient, and responsive to allow us to act effectively and timeously to change.
3.3	We will continue to be a high performing organisation, with quality and consistency at the heart of all that we do.
3.4	Our workforce will be flexible and adaptable with the right balance of roles, skills and experience.
3.5	We will enable all children and young people have the opportunity to participate in a way that suits them to ensure that their voice is heard in all decisions being made.
3.6	Our organisation will continue to prioritise the privacy and confidentiality of children and their families, and have systems, processes and people skilled to ensure that all data is held securely and used appropriately.

SCOTTISH
CHILDREN'S REPORTER
ADMINISTRATION

2022/23 Corporate and Business Plan

Head of Service: Lisa Bennett, Head of Strategy

Date: 15th December 2021

Recommendation:

1. To approve the proposal to extend the Corporate Plan 2020/23 to 2024.

2. To note/provide feedback on version 1.0 of the 2022-23 Business Plan and to agree timetable for development.

Reason for Report: For noting and approval

Resource Implications: Within current budget

Strategy/Service Plan Implications: Corporate Plan, Business Plan and related strategies

Consultation: EMT/Scottish Government

EHRIA Duties: Will be required on Business Plan/Corporate Plan

Document Classification: Not protectively marked

1 **Introduction**

1.1 This paper seeks Board approval for a one year extension to the Corporate Plan 2020/23 following recommendation from EMT.

1.2 It provides a first draft of the Business Plan for 2022/23, and timescales for completion.

2 **Context**

2.1 Every year SCRA publishes its Business Plan for the year ahead. The purpose of the plan is to:

- Set out the actions that will deliver SCRA 's strategic outcomes and key priorities during the forthcoming year;
- Outline the governance arrangements supporting the plan; and
- Provide information about the ways in which SCRA will measure and monitor performance improvement.

2.2 Planning for the development of the Business Plan begins towards the end of October/ beginning of November, with a skeleton draft going to Board in December each year.

2.3 Development of the Business Plan will be informed by the performance to date against the current business plan alongside what is still outstanding in the Corporate Plan and any new or related activity that requires to be prioritised. SCRA's Performance report will be used with strategy leads to support this work.

2.4 In accordance with the current framework, the 2022/23 plan will provide a detailed picture of how SCRA will seek to deliver the third year of its Corporate Plan 2020/23.

3 **Current Position – Corporate Plan/Business Plan**

3.1 The Corporate Plan 2020/23 was developed following broad consultation through 2019 and was published April 2020.

3.2 The plan was developed pre-pandemic however since going live has only seen the organisation working in times of the COVID pandemic.

3.3 The business plans that have taken us through the first two years of the Corporate Plan have recognised the pandemic and have sought to ensure that as an organisation we were able to prioritise our objectives to allow us to respond appropriately to this and to recover from it – which continues to be a priority.

3.4 The business plans have also seen us through the implementation of CSAS, our approach to virtual hearings and the standard operating model – all of which have involved large scale organisational change, that, on

top of the response/recovery work brought about by the pandemic have had an enormous draw on staff capacity and energy.

3.5   A recent review by the planning manager of the work undertaken to deliver on the aims of the corporate plan has determined that all three of our overarching aims – Care, Connect and Protect have been attended to with only two of our objectives not having progressed at all. However, it is recognised that a lot of activity has been de-prioritised as a result of the pandemic and is still outstanding.

3.6   Looking ahead to next year, there are a number of immediate priorities that have to be our focus – and whilst some of this activity was planned for, not all of it was and not in the timescales being experienced or in the approach required.

3.7   To that end, a very honest review of planned activity will require to be undertaken to consider 'what else' and that may be a combination of work that was planned to be completed during the first two years along with work envisaged for the third but all will need to be looked at afresh alongside the identified urgent requirements as we move into the third year of the Corporate Plan..

3.8   In addition to these organisational pressures, developments in the policy arena, namely The Promise, have to play a huge part in our thinking and planning;

3.9   As the current Corporate Plan was being developed, the Independent Care review was finalising its recommendations that were then published as The Promise. Having been part of the Promise journey, we had insight enough to allow for some flexibility within the plan to take this agenda into account.

3.10   The Promise Plan has been set with three year 'blocks' of time – the first being 2021/24 and our own planning has responded to this in terms of our Promise Route Plan and our appointments to take forward the work.

4   **Proposal – Corporate Plan**

4.1   It is with the above in mind that we propose two areas for Board consideration and approval:

4.2   The first, a more strategic consideration, is that we are seeking Board approval to extend our current Corporate Plan by one year – until 2024.

4.3   **The rationale for this proposal being:**

- This would line up with the Promise plans – we are really just getting started with the work related to the Promise – this was included in our planning however until The Promise published their 2021/24 plan, we weren't able to fully respond to the detail of that

work – which we now are, and all of our planning in this area sees us through until 2024

- Extending would allow us additional time to meet the aims – that still feel right and relevant, that we set ourselves – that we haven't been able to meet fully (or will be able to meet fully by end next year) due to the shift in focus over the past two years to the pandemic.

- The plan itself went through huge internal consultation and had a fantastic buy in from staff – Care, Connect and Protect as our Aims resonated with people and the strategies that fell from these felt really full, progressive and inclusive – it would feel like a missed opportunity not to continue with this having not 'completed' it.

- Given everything that the organisation has had to face and work through over the past couple of years (and continues to work through) it doesn't feel at all appropriate to be asking people to start to consider new aims/objectives, to have conversations about what we see over the next three years – when staff are feeling burnt out, we haven't nearly worked through the current plan, and on top, the Promise are setting out the landscape until 2024 – when there will be a new plan for us to work to – and will require us to review at that point.

- It would allow for an additional year for real recovery and consolidation to then allow a move into the final year (year four) to land a lot of what had to be pushed back and to really embed the Promise work in our current strategies.

4.4 **There are a few of risks that we do have to consider alongside this:**

- We may not have enough information about the plan 2024/27 to allow for us to fully develop our corporate plan in the timescales required. This risk will be mitigated in part by our close working relationships to The Promise through our work in the Hearings System Working Group and ongoing liaison.

- It puts our plans out of kilter with CHS' Corporate Plan (which they changed to line up with ours') however early discussions with them will seek to mitigate any issues that this may cause.

- It may appear an 'easy option' to continue with a plan that hasn't been completed. At any other time this would be a risk - that reputationally we wouldn't want, in this instance it feels more credible to continue with the plan despite the knocks that we have had to see it through to completion, more it would be easier in some cases to leave it and move on.

4.5   EMT discussed this matter at November EMT and agreed that extending the plan was appropriate and the recommended option for approval;

4.6   Advice was sought (in November) from Scottish Government, regarding the extension of the 2020/23 Corporate Plan; They are supportive of the extension, agree that this is a credible request and one that carries real strength in its commitment to the Promise.

4.7   Scottish Government require SCRA to stipulate within the 2022/23 Business Plan the reasons for the extension and for SCRA to publish the 2020-24 Corporate Plan and 2022-23 Business Plan at the same time.

4.8   Scottish Government advised they will notify the Minister that the Corporate Plan is being extended and the reasons for that.

4.9   **Recommendation**: **The Board to approve the one year extension of the 2020/23 Corporate Plan to 2024.**

4.10   **The second area for consideration and action is planning for the business plan 22/23.**

4.11   Regardless of the outcome of the first area for consideration, we still require to develop and publish a business plan for 2022/23 to detail the activity planned across the organisation to deliver on the aims set out in the current Corporate Plan – albeit, the decision in the first area may alter our thinking slightly.

4.12   There are some very clear areas of focus for the remainder of 2021/22 identified through current change programmes (RAHVI, CSAS, Non-Disclosure etc) that will carry across into the new year, along with outstanding actions in the current business plan.

4.13   2022/23 will be a year for consolidation, stabilisation and building resilience. With a clear focus on Recovery, The Promise and ensuring the Standard Operating Model and CSAS become stabilised across the organisation.

4.14   The work that will be generated through SCRA's Keeping The Promise Route Plan will cascade across all strategies, in one shape or another, under the three themes of Rights, Inclusion and Corporate Parenting. For this reason, it is important that strategy leads leave enough room for Improvement and Reform work in their plans

4.15   EMT strategy leads are now working with their teams to assess progress against their own strategies – utilising zoho and the support of the Quality and Performance team to:

- Understand what has been completed, what will be completed by year end and, of actions not complete, what remains relevant to take forward.

- Consider any actions that were de-prioritised as a result of COVID-19, to ensure that these are considered in their planning for next year.
- Ensure 2022/23 plans are aligned with the Corporate Plan objectives, and external requirements are considered, namely The Promise.

5   Timescales for Business Plan 2022/23

5.1   **November**:
- Scoping/contemplating high level areas of work for 2022/23. Planning manager will be in touch with each strategy lead to support these discussions and offer guidance/support.

December:
- The first skeleton draft of the 2022/23 Business Plan to EMT and the Board (Appendix A).
- Strategy leads start to formulate 1 year priorities with teams (developing specific objectives and formulating the actions) supporting documentation provided to managers (Appendix B)

January:
- EMT strategy session to fully map out planned activity – longer terms and to cover the two years 'till 2024 to feed into Business Plan with a greater level of detail
- Liaison with the Scottish Government and CHS on our proposed 2022/23 Business Plan.
- Locality Plans are developed to align with the Operational Plan.

February:
- 2nd draft of the Business Plan is developed using the detailed strategy plans.
- Draft plan submitted to Scottish Government for comment
- 2022/23 Business Plan to discussed at the Challenge and Review.

March:
- Board recommended to approve 2022/23 Business Plan.
- Business Plan 2022/23 submitted to Scottish Government for noting.
- Corporate Plan 2020/24 (If approved) submitted to Scottish Government for sign off.

6   Business Plan (Appendix A)

6.1   Provided at Appendix A is a skeleton draft of the 2022/23 Business Plan (version 1.0) This has now been to EMT and work is being taken forward by the strategy leads as described.

6.2 **Summary of plan**:

Section 1, (Welcome) this will include an explanation as to why we are extending the 2020/23 Corporate Plan to 2020/24.

Section 3, (Direction) will incorporate input from the Strategy Leads, to help identify relevant information to conclude the sub-headings.

Section 4, (Plans) requires high level objectives from Strategy Leads by end of December (aligned to Care, Connect, Protect.)

Section 5, (Priorities) will provide a one page timeline of key priority areas of work throughout the year.

Section 6, (Key Performance Indicators) EMT will discuss/agree these for 2022/23.

6.3 Recommendation: The Board note/provide feedback on version 1.0 of the 2022/23 Business Plan and to agree timetable for development.

7 Appendices

7.1 Appendix A - skeleton draft of the 2022/23 Business Plan (version 1.0)
Appendix B - Planning Template Strategy /Business Plan Priorities 2022 – 2023

8 Recommendation

8.1 **1. To approve the proposal to extend the Corporate Plan 2020/23 to 2024.**

2. To note/provide feedback on version 1.0 of the 2022/23 Business Plan and to agree timetable for development.

Appendix B – supporting document for managers use (Board for info only)

Planning Template

Strategy /Business Plan Priorities 2022 – 2023

Contents

1.   Good Practice

The following is a quick reminder for planning and serves as good practice to ensure consistency.

SCRA's Vision, Mission and Values	It is important that the these are taken into account when developing annual plans to ensure they underpin all that we do.		
	Vision	Mission	Values
	Children and young people will be listened to, protected and supported to have a positive future where they are safe, valued and respected	We protect and support Scotland's children and young people, by making high quality decisions, upholding their rights and working collaboratively as compassionate, inclusive Corporate Parents to enable the most positive and personalised experience of the Children's Hearings System.	**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.

| Aims, Objectives, Actions

Aims: Strategic goals that are reached through objectives.

Objectives: Detailed steps to achieve the aim.

Actions: Specific steps required to achieve the objective. | To ensure aims and objectives are achievable, it is useful to test them using SMART+C (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound, Challenging) methodology. Undertaking SMART+C ensures the aims and objectives are clear and unambiguous - and they are concise in what is expected and required to achieve the required outcomes.

The following questions can be useful pointers during the development of aims and objectives. | |
|---|---|---|
| | Specific | • What do we want to accomplish?
 • Why are we doing this (purpose).
 • Who is involved (internal & external)?
 • Where is it going to happen?
 • Which resources or limits / constraints are involved? |
| | Measurable | • How much?
 • How many?
 • How will we know when it is accomplished?
 • What indicators are required to ensure it is quantifiable? |
| | Achievable | • How realistic is the aim / objective based on other restraints?
 • How can the aim / objective be achieved? |
| | Relevant | • Are the aims / objectives worthwhile?
 • Is this the right time?
 • Does this complement our other needs and requirements?
 • Is it applicable in its widest context? |
| | Time-bound | • When will these be achieved?
 • Are they time and cost limited?
 • Are they time-sensitive? |
| | Challenging | • Are the aims / objectives more than the day-to-day work activities?
 • Are they ambitious?
 • Will they contribute towards a progressive organisation? |

		• Will they encourage new opportunities to develop the organisation? • Will they contribute towards making considerable changes?

2. Review

Identify which actions from the 2021-22 Business Plan (refer to **Plans - ZOHO)** that have not commenced, and are unlikely to (because of other priorities), should be carried over into the 2022/23 Business Plan.

Carry over objectives / actions

Objective(s) Ref No.	Action(s) Ref. No.

Corroboration

It is worthwhile considering shared objectives between the strategies, for instance, there may be a specific objective and actions relating to CSAS, that requires inputs from various strategy leads, but it could sit in one plan and all leads then feed into that plan. This will streamline objectives and prevent duplicating the same objective across various strategy plans.

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3.   Plan and prioritise 2022 -23 objectives / actions

To ensure we are consistent in delivering the aims (Care, Connect, Protect), it is important that the strategy objectives are aligned with the Corporate Plan objectives.

CARE Delivering a service that feels right for each child, young person and family that experiences it.					
Corporate Plan Objectives	Strategy Objectives	Actions	Owner	Timescale	
				Start	End
1.1 We will demonstrate compassionate and proactive Corporate Parenting - asking, listening and acting, being open to try new approaches.					
1.2 Our service will be informed by experience – working with children and young people in Our Hearings Our Voice, Local Champions Boards and others, we will welcome challenge, evaluation and partnerships to get it right.					
1.3 Our service will be trauma sensitive – recognising the impact of a 'system' on already traumatic circumstances and ensuring					

	that it is the best and kindest it can be.					
1.4	Our service will be equally accessible to all, including people with protected characteristics to ensure it meets everyone's individual needs and rights.					
1.5	Our staff will feel skilled, confident, valued and respected to enable them to work compassionately and with high quality.					
1.6	Our service will be digitally enabled to allow children and young people to engage with it in ways that suit their needs.					

CONNECT Working together to receive the right referrals, for the right children, at the right time.						
Corporate Plan Objectives		Strategy Objectives	Actions	Owner	Timescale	
					Start	End
2.1	We will work effectively with our partners; to agreed protocols, shared goals and common standards to ensure					

	we meet the needs of children and young people.					
2.2	Through local partnerships and our connections with local children and young people, we will ensure that we are all working together to deliver and assess 'Better Hearings'.					
2.3	That we are connected to the local community through local events, and we will work with practitioners, children and young people and make a meaningful contribution to local initiatives.					
2.4	Our organisation is kind and connected to the world we live in – from the way that we work and travel, to the culture we promote.					
2.5	Our organisation is fully inclusive as employers, as partners, as a service to children, young people and families.					
2.6	We will recognise, promote and support the rights of individuals as they connect					

		Strategy Objectives	Actions	Owner	Timescale	
2.6	with the Hearings system and will work with others to do the same.					
2.7	We will have digital connectivity with partners to allow automated and secure sharing of information.					

PROTECT						
Making high quality and timely decisions for children and young people, using the right information that is relevant, clear and secure.						
Corporate Plan Objectives		Strategy Objectives	Actions	Owner	Timescale	
					Start	End
3.1	Our organisation will be visible in the community, in schools and in health services with our key role in the delivery of GIRFEC clear and understood.					
3.2	Our organisation will be flexible, resilient, and responsive to allow us to act effectively and timeously to change.					
3.3	We will continue to be a high performing organisation, with quality and consistency at the heart of all that we do.					

3.4	Our workforce will be flexible and adaptable with the right balance of roles, skills and experience.					
3.5	We will enable all children and young people have the opportunity to participate in a way that suits them to ensure that their voice is heard in all decisions being made.					
3.6	Our organisation will continue to prioritise the privacy and confidentiality of children, young people and their families, and have systems, processes and people skilled to ensure that all data is held securely and used appropriately.					

Anything else that does not fit under the specific Corporate Plan objectives					
Strategy Aim	Strategy Objectives	Actions	Owner	Timescale	
				Start	End

4.   Keeping The Promise

Whilst you plan your strategy priorities for 2022-23, it is also worth building in flexibility within your plan to incorporate new activities that will be generated through SCRA's Keeping The Promise Route Plan for 2021-24.

The Route Plan is built on **Rights**, **Inclusion** and **Corporate Parenting** strategic themes, and these will be delivered through all of our organisational strategy plans.

Rights

Children's rights will be front and centre in the Children's Hearing. Children's rights are recognised alongside the rights of other people in their family and need to be protected, encouraged and developed if they are to made real for every child in every Children's Hearing.

- Devote time and resources to examining how we currently engage with children in every way and at every level.
- Make sure that we give information to children effectively.
- Communicate with children clearly and appropriately.
- Equip children to understand every stage of their Children's Hearing journey.
- Work with our partners to support children to participate effectively at every stage of their Children's Hearing journey.
- Develop ways of getting feedback and ideas from children, and ways of communicating what we have done as a result of the feedback we receive.

We will be creative and forward thinking in the development of new approaches. We are determined to co-develop and implement creative and innovative solutions that:

- Protect children's rights.
- Make sure children's voices are heard.
- Increase children's meaningful participation in all the Children's Hearing decision-making that affects their lives.

Inclusion

Creating an equal, diverse and inclusive SCRA will help us better serve children, and their families in Scotland, uncover new ways of doing things and keep our people engaged and motivated to do their best work.

Being inclusive not only makes SCRA a great place to work, it ensures that we can work in the best ways with children and their families so that the Children's Hearing is equally accessible for everyone as well as meeting individual needs and rights.

Corporate Parenting

As a corporate parent, SCRA has a responsibility to promote the wellbeing of children who are experiencing the children's hearing, and to do that we should understand the lives of our children and respond to their needs.

Corporate parenting is a role which should complement and support the actions of parents, families and carers, and working with these key adults we aim to deliver positive change for children. SCRA are not sole corporate parents – we share our corporate parenting responsibilities with other professionals and services who may be involved with a child and family. All of a child's corporate parents are focused on making sure that their wellbeing needs are met.

Corporate parenting is not a role that sits with one or two named individuals in SCRA. Every member of our staff has a role in the way we behave as a corporate parent, and in the positive impact we can have on a child's wellbeing.

5.　　Engagement

It is worth keeping a log of internal/external engagement to ensure there is evidence that internal/external viewpoints have been considered (also helps when completing the EHRIA).

It is also important that staff are provided with opportunities to share their views and contribute towards the development of the plan (as they will be undertaking the actions).

INTERNAL & EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT		
About what	With who	When

6.   Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA)

To comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty, all new/revised policies, processes and/or practices require an EHRIA. EHRIA's should be conducted for any restructuring of the workforce, including department/team restructuring, prior to any decisions being made.

The EHRIA word template and guidance documents are embedded within this document for ease of access.

For further guidance, examples of completed EHRIA's, please access Connect: EHRIA Document Library - All Documents

SCRA Equality and Human Rights Impact

SCRA SHORT Equality and Human R

SCRA 2021 EHRIA Guidance.pdf

SCRA 2021 EHRIA Flow Chart.pdf

7.   Support

If you require support with your 2022-23 Strategy Plan, please contact Myrian Lazo.

When the plans are agreed, Myrian will add these into ZOHO.

SCOTTISH
CHILDREN'S REPORTER
ADMINISTRATION

Head of Service:	Lisa Bennett, Head of Strategy
Date:	15th December 2021
Report Author:	Lisa Bennett

Recommendation:

1. **To note the progress update on SCRA's Keeping the Promise Programme.**

Reason for Report:	For Noting
Resource Implications:	Within current budget.
Strategy/Service Plan Implications:	Corporate Plan and all related strategies
Consultation:	Head of Practice and Policy
EHRIA Duties:	Not Applicable
Document Classification:	Not protectively marked/protectively marked/commercially sensitive

1	**Introduction**	
	1.1	It was agreed that a report be brought to the Board to provide an update on progress in Keeping the Promise
	1.2	This report seeks to provide an overall update of the activity that has been taking place as well as provide visibility of a number of related reports and information that has been circulated to advance this work.

2	**Background**	
	2.1	SCRA committed to Keeping the Promise and to ensuring that we positively and effectively collaborate with our partners in doing so.
	2.2	Since the Promise reports were published and later the Plan 21/24 and the Change Plan, work has been taking place internally to ensure that we were well placed to see through our commitment to this work.
	2.3	Previous reports to the Board have laid out our interpretation of the 'asks' of the Promise – that we see it forming two key strands of work, Reform and Improvement and that we recognise the interplay between these strands.
	2.4	The June Board agreed that a core, multi-agency group, looking at the critical areas for reform be set up – with CHS, Scottish Government, facilitated by the Promise and with an independent Chair.
	2.5	The June Board also agreed SCRA's approach to improvement – through the development of a Route Plan aligned to the Promise 2021/24 change plan.

3	**Progress Update**	
	3.1	**SCRA's internal Keeping the Promise Structure**
	3.2	A **Keeping the Promise project team** has been established with leads from all key areas – policy, rights, inclusion, participation, improvement, learning and development – demonstrating a cross - organisational approach to change, improvement and reform.
	3.3	A **Programme Manager** (Roma Bruce-Davies) is now in post to support both improvement and reform work – overseeing internal projects, engagement and partnership liaison. Roma is a highly competent and experienced Locality Reporter Manager from Grampian and will be line managed by Lisa Bennett
	3.4	An **Operational Change Lead** has also been appointed to provide clean lines between the change programme of the Promise, and Operational

		'reality'. This will be a key role to enable effective two way communication between the programme and operations, leading engagement, supporting change and local partnership liaison but also working across areas such as the Standard Operating Model and IT change to ensure everything lines up.
	3.5	A **Keeping the Promise Programme Board** has also been established and will be shaped and developed to own and oversee our plans and strategy across SCRA's route plan – improvement and reform, reporting to the Board to ensure sufficient scrutiny and assurance.
	3.6	**Partnership working**
	3.7	The **Hearings System Working Group (HSWG)** has now met three times (more detail below) and has representation from SCRA, CHS, Scottish Government, facilitated by the Promise and Chaired by Sheriff David Mackie.
	3.8	Monthly meetings focussed on Improvement are in place between SCRA, CHS and the Promise. These meetings also consider the interplay between the improvement strand and the reform work of the HSWG.
	3.9	The two senior teams in SCRA and CHS have been meeting for half day workshop sessions to look at the joint programme of work and will be reporting into the two Boards in February.
	3.10	A **joint improvement group** with CHS is being established to move forward joint programmes of work. Links have been made with the improvement team at Scottish Government and they have agreed to work with both SCRA and CHS on this.
	3.11	The **Childrens Hearings Improvement Partnership (CHIP)** is re-shaping itself to oversee and support multi-agency change and identified within this improvement work are a couple of areas that we are keen for multi-agency drive on – and that the promise can help facilitate - principal amongst these are a consistent country wide approach to Social Work reports and language across the hearing system. A report was provided to CHIP summarising our current plans (Appendix C).
	3.12	A partnership with the designers at Scottish Government is in the early stages with a couple of very positive meetings to date and a presentation to the senior teams. This partnership will consider an approach to re-design using the Scottish Approach to Design and will look to work alongside the HSWG as they consider the reform needed.
	3.13	**SCRA's current Improvement activity**
	3.14	A draft Route Plan was developed for the improvement activity (informed by the evidence from the Promise, Better Hearings, OHOV's 40 Calls to Action, previous research) and this was shared with the

		Programme Board in September and went out for consultation to the staff group through October.
	3.15	Consultation sessions were set up and were attended by approx. 50 staff members, an online forum was set up and a mailbox enabled – to give a range of options to engage. The plan was also shared with the Promise team and with CHS for comment.
	3.16	The feedback received was really positive, there were some questions, some suggestions and all have been considered and accounted for in the version that went to the programme board on 14th December 21 – yesterday. Attached as Appendix A
	3.17	Any further comments received will be considered and a final version will be formatted for publication.
	3.18	From the plan, the main improvement project that will run next year with be that of 'Options, Choices and Participation' that covers a number of different work-streams – all focused around better preparations for hearings – voice, choice, needs, supports.
	3.19	Project planning for this is underway with leads being identified to take forward the various streams of work.
	3.20	Detailed update reports were shared with the Programme Board on 14th Dec around each area of activity and this reporting will be further developed as the projects begin.
	3.21	**Reform agenda – Hearings System Working Group**
	3.22	The Hearings System working group has now met three times and is establishing an agenda for its ongoing remit. The group is in its infancy and as such is fully establishing its approach and methodology to the task ahead.
	3.23	Currently a list of issues (Appendix D) forms the key focus for the group and will be the primary focus for the work going forward around the redesign. Ensuring that the list fully captures what is required remains live with a final version required by the end of December.
	3.24	At the request of the Chair, an exercise was undertaken in November to map across improvement activity to the list of issues that the HSWG are looking at and is attached at Appendix B. the intention for this work being to have an awareness of any activity or learning that could be brought into the discussion as the themes are explored.
	3.25	The 3rd meeting of the Hearing System working group (HSWG) took place on Monday 29th November. The agenda for the meeting focussed on the following areas:-

		- The Issues list – which we reviewed at last SCRA Promise Programme Board – and which now forms a draft action plan - Service Design – with an input from the SG Service Design Team - Communications
	3.26	A few summary points from the meeting covered: - The list of issues (Appendix D) was discussed and it was agreed that some further development was required to condense and group the issues, and better articulate them. Also require to match against what is stated within the Promise. - Once complete, the issues will be transposed into an action plan - CHS/SCRA and SG are required to finalise the list and populate that plan before Christmas. - Input was provided from the Office of the Chief Designer on the Scottish Approach to Service Design (SAtSD). The importance of engagement methods was highlighted. CHS have suggested a series of "stakeholder events" around the country to gather views and ideas on the priority issues. We would broadly support this – but not as a standalone approach. Other forms of engagement will be required as well. We would need to be convinced that these activities would not simply restate the Independent Care Review findings. A deeper more specific and focussed dive into the Hearing System issues might have value, if well designed and executed. - The Chair spoke about his own engagements. He had spent a day with OHOV and this had made a huge impression on him. He also has meetings with SCTS, John Scott QC to link in with his Mental Health Law Review, Maggie Mellon from Parental Advocacy and Rights, and the SCRA/CHS Chairs. - Some views were expressed that the chair should engage with some stakeholders with a degree of caution, and that this might not be perceived very well by other stakeholders who may be patiently waiting for the HSWG to approach them. - There was a fair bit of discussion around communications, and the desire to put minutes out publicly. Whilst they don't need to be detailed, they do need to be sufficient to show what progress is being made. - There was a sense of urgency from the Promise Team to get something tangible to publicise by the end of the year. This seemed to drive the tight timescales mentioned above. It is important to keep reminding the Promise that we are still in a pandemic and still in recovery. Further meetings are being scheduled for new year.

	3.27	**Issues/Areas for consideration**
		As we undertake the critical work presented in Keeping the Promise, there are a number of areas that we must bear in mind:
		• Recognising the change and improvement that is and has historically been happening – albeit slowly and seeing the evolving Promise Action Plan as significantly adding to this in terms of scale of ambition
		• Recognising (and accepting) that certain organisations such as SCRA are in an acute pandemic response and recovery state and balancing a plethora of competing pressures, operational risks and challenges
		• The need for a programme of engagement at regional and national level – at the appropriate time – bringing a wider range of voices into the conversation
		• Keeping a watching brief on the 'structural' discussions to ensure that they do not go in the wrong direction, follow all due process, don't consume all of our energy and preoccupy our time.
		If any of these issues were to escalate or others become apparent, further detail would be brought forward to the Board for visibility/discussion.

4	**Next Steps**	
	4.1	The Route Plan will be finalised, formatted and published.
	4.2	Project plans and charters will be developed for the various work-streams and the leads will be identified to undertake this work.
	4.3	The list of issues will be finalised and comment on the timings/approach will be provided.
	4.4	A meeting with the designers is scheduled early January to map out the scope of the work and the resources required.

6	**Appendices**	
	6.1	Appendix A – SCRA's Keeping the Promise Route Plan Appendix B – Mapping of improvement activity to the Issues List Appendix C – CHIP paper on SCRAs Promise activity Appendix D – Current Issues List from HSWG

7	**Recommendation**	
	7.1	1. **To note the progress update on SCRA's Keeping the Promise Programme.**

Appendix A

SCRA Keeping the Promise 2021 – 2024 Route Plan

Our Vision and Commitment

Our vision is that children and young people will be listened to, protected and supported to have a positive future where they are safe, valued and respected.

SCRA is committed to Keeping The Promise. In order for us to demonstrate our commitment, plan our journey and show our activity to get there, SCRA has developed this Keeping the Promise Route Plan. The Route Plan contains the high level activity we will do to Keep the Promise. It will sit alongside detailed project plans with actions through which these activities will be delivered.

Our Keeping The Promise 2021-24 Route Plan contains two interlinked strands of work – Improvement and Reform. This Route Plan focusses mainly on improvement. SCRA is also actively involved in reform through our work as a member of the Hearings System Working Group. We will work with partners in key organisations and with children and families to redesign the structures, processes and legislation of the children's hearings system.

Keeping the Promise Aims 2021-24

SCRA's aims are led by the Promise Change Plan 2021-24. Some of the work that we will do to give effect to this includes:

- Hearings will be inclusive, rights based and trauma informed.
- Everyone attending hearings will have the information they need, be prepared and be able to participate.
- The reasons for coming to a hearing will be clear and explained as will the decisions of the hearing.
- Rights to appeal will be clear and accessible.
- Everyone in our organisation will work with children and families with kindness.
- The language that we use to talk and to give information will be clear, accessible and appropriate.
- We will be open and constructive in our conversation with partners about how the Children's Hearing can and should change, and we will do all we can to prepare our staff for this change, whilst continuing to improve the current Children's Hearing experience of children and families.

💙 Keeping the Promise Approach

SCRA is Keeping the Promise across the organisation by ensuring every member of staff can be involved, promoting an inclusive approach to achieve sustainable improvement and delivering on the Promise.

A Keeping the Promise team, comprised of roles from across the organisation and led by a Programme Manager, has been identified and will be working together to develop plans, engage with staff, partners, and children and families, to help us transform our plans into demonstrable actions.

💙 Keeping the Promise Activity

1. Preparation for your Hearing – Options, Choices and Participation

This is an area of work that already has a lot of evidence for improvement as well as recommendations and achievements in Better Hearings to build from. A Better Hearing is inclusive, it is listening, it is rights based. Everyone going to a Better Hearing is well prepared, has all of the information that they need, know what they would like to say – how they would like to say it, and what they need to support them. This will see children and young people have a far more personal interaction with the Reporter and enable the sense of a bespoke Hearing. To enable this:

- We will evaluate, consolidate and expand the good work from Better Hearings to promote and embed the different aspects of what makes a good hearing across the country.
- Review and analyse experiences from virtual and hybrid hearings during the pandemic to inform what children and young people need to support effective and accessible virtual attendance, and identify the most appropriate method.
- This work will look at introductory letters from the Reporter – explaining who they are and what their role is.
- This strand will focus on needs and inclusive service provision to ensure equity for everyone attending.
- We will develop an easy to use form (electronic and paper) detailing what to expect, what is available and asking what would be preferable – what would help support them when they come in (in person or virtually) if they have any particular needs.
- It will incorporate and build on the new 'Hearing about Me' form, which has been developed in partnership with Proud 2 Care to replace the All about me and is far more about what young people would like the panel to know – about them, their situation, what they would like to happen.
- We will also consider methods of participation and explore video content, as well as more creative options to participate.

- Explore with local partners different options for hearing locations and for hearing scheduling – to make sure these work for children and families. With our partners, we will consider who should to be involved in scheduling and interacting with families.
- We will work with our partners to ensure that young people are as prepared as they can be to attend their hearings by receiving support in advance of their hearing from knowledgeable professionals.

2. Rights Based Grounds

An exploration of UNCRC in grounds – this piece of work takes the description of the grounds for referral and re-frames it from a rights based perspective to shift blame to an unfulfilled right. This is at an early stage and requires to be scrutinised in terms of practice and operational enablement – in partnership with CELCIS.

3. Reports for Hearings

We will work with partners to promote more concise, relevant reports for Hearings which genuinely support high quality decision-making for children – building on work carried out in response to COVID, and one of the clear recommendations coming through from the Promise, as well as from Better Hearings - in partnership with CELCIS and Our Hearings, Our Voice.

4. Hearing Rooms

We will do all we can to promote the safety, comfort and privacy of children at the hearing centre by ensuring our hearing rooms are upgraded to make them feel safe, inclusive and support participation. We will be exploring hearing rooms that take a sensory approach. We have another set of rooms that are being re-designed this year – and another lot the following year. Options, Choices and Participation work will be developing this to ensure that the views of young people are at the heart of the redesign process.

5. Child Friendly CSOs

Looking at how a CSO and its conditions can be described in a way that is family friendly – accessible and able to be explained, whilst still fulfilling statutory requirements. Working in partnership with CELCIS and Our Hearings, Our Voice.

6. Trauma Training

Staff awareness raising and training on trauma – understanding trauma and its impact, vicarious trauma, what trauma informed practice is and how to become a trauma informed workforce/place. We will ensure that our staff carry forward this approach into the work they do.

7. Safeguarding

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to the harm or risk that can be faced by children out of the family home – at school or in the wider community. A greater understanding of this approach will be promoted in order for the exploitation of children in Scotland to be fully understood and addressed – without a child taking the blame for their 'behaviour'. We will link this work with the trauma informed approach and wider work on promoting rights based approaches for children and young people. We will carry forward lessons from research on exploitation of children to ensure that reporters play a key role in ensuring exploited children are treated appropriately and fairly in the hearing system.

8. Referrals

We will work with our partners locally and nationally to ensure that we have the right referrals for the right children at the right time. We will take a data informed approach to understanding referral patterns and outcomes. As well as focussing on care and protection referrals, we will work together with our partners at Police Scotland and COPFS to promote that children in conflict with the law are retained within the Children's Hearing System rather than entering the adult criminal justice system. We will work together with partners to maximise clarity in communication about care plans and interventions and to minimise delay in decision-making on joint referrals.

9. Your Rights

Your Rights – working with a group of reporters to present creative ways to let people know and understand their rights. This piece of work will produce full and detailed information for people about their rights in the system and when coming to Hearings – to include the rights of children in hearings, relevant persons in hearings, brothers and sisters, victims, rights around offending and around secure care. Working in collaboration with CYCJ, Staff, and others to ensure consistent messaging and clear links.

10. UNCRC

Staff awareness raising and training on UNCRC and in particular Article 12 through a series of workshops. We will work to expand the knowledge of our staff and embed a rights-based approach to our work.

To find out more about how we are approaching this work, read on… and to find out *even more* our strategy can be accessed here

💛 Getting the conditions right

To ensure that the improvements outlined in our Route Plan are as bold and sustainable as they can be SCRA will support our staff to engage in and deliver improvement. SCRA will focus on 'getting the conditions right' through workforce awareness, support and training, capacity planning, inclusive recruitment, good data collection, research, and much more. The activities outlined in the following section aims to capture the actions to get the conditions right.

What we will do next to make this happen

- Conduct a UNCRC Audit in the organisation.
- Work with the Promise team - looking at data to provide the information required to support them.
- Look at our own data to make sure we are collecting and reporting on the things that matter.
- Undertake research to understand the impact of the pandemic and how we can use this to inform our improvement journey.
- Use a range of platforms to engage with our motivated workforce to participate in delivering on The Promise and to communicate our plans and work with children, young people, families and partner agencies.
- Continue to focus on staff wellbeing as a priority to support our staff to do their best at work and have the space and time to be involved in sustainable improvements.
- Ensure that we promote staff in all roles in SCRA, becoming involved in testing and delivering improvements to the experience of children and young people attending children's hearings.

Inclusive language and communications

Working with CHS and Our Hearings, Our Voice and other partners in the system, we will look at recommendations around language, from both The Promise and 40 Calls To Action. We will develop communication standards for the information that we provide, which will impact all aspects of how we communicate. The work of this group will help inform the Options, Choices and Participation work, along with work on all the information and communications that we provide. It will also seek to recognise and address the areas that are not about language per se, more a lack of information - making it feel inaccessible.

Working in Partnership

We will be working with our partners in the Hearings system to take forward the actions – working with CHS, with Social Work, with Police Scotland and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, with Advocacy Providers, and with many other partners.

Key to our partnership work will be the work that we do with children and young people. We are not looking to go forward and consult on our work, we are looking to genuinely develop our work going forward in partnership at every stage. This is going to take time and commitment to get right across the country. Please tell us when you have feedback about how we are doing. KeepingthePromise@scra.gov.uk communications@scra.gov.uk

Keeping the Promise- Monitoring, Evaluation and Governance

The SCRA Route Plan will be approved by the Keeping the Promise Programme Board and will be led and reported on by the Programme Manager. The Programme Board will review progress on a quarterly basis. The Route Plan is a fluid and live document, and will be subject to change, as we continue to further consult and engage with internal and external stakeholders.

All of our Route Plan activities will have detailed project plans and actions with timelines and leads, journey maps and full descriptions of the actions to enable the Keeping the Promise Programme Board to monitor and have an oversight of our progress. We will plot our activities across our route plan, under the themes of Rights, Inclusion and Corporate Parenting.

We have staff trained and qualified in Improvement Methodology and it is our intention to use robust methodology to test, monitor, evaluate and improve as an integral part of our approach. Throughout, we will be accountable to children and families and seek feedback on how we are doing.

Strategic Framework.
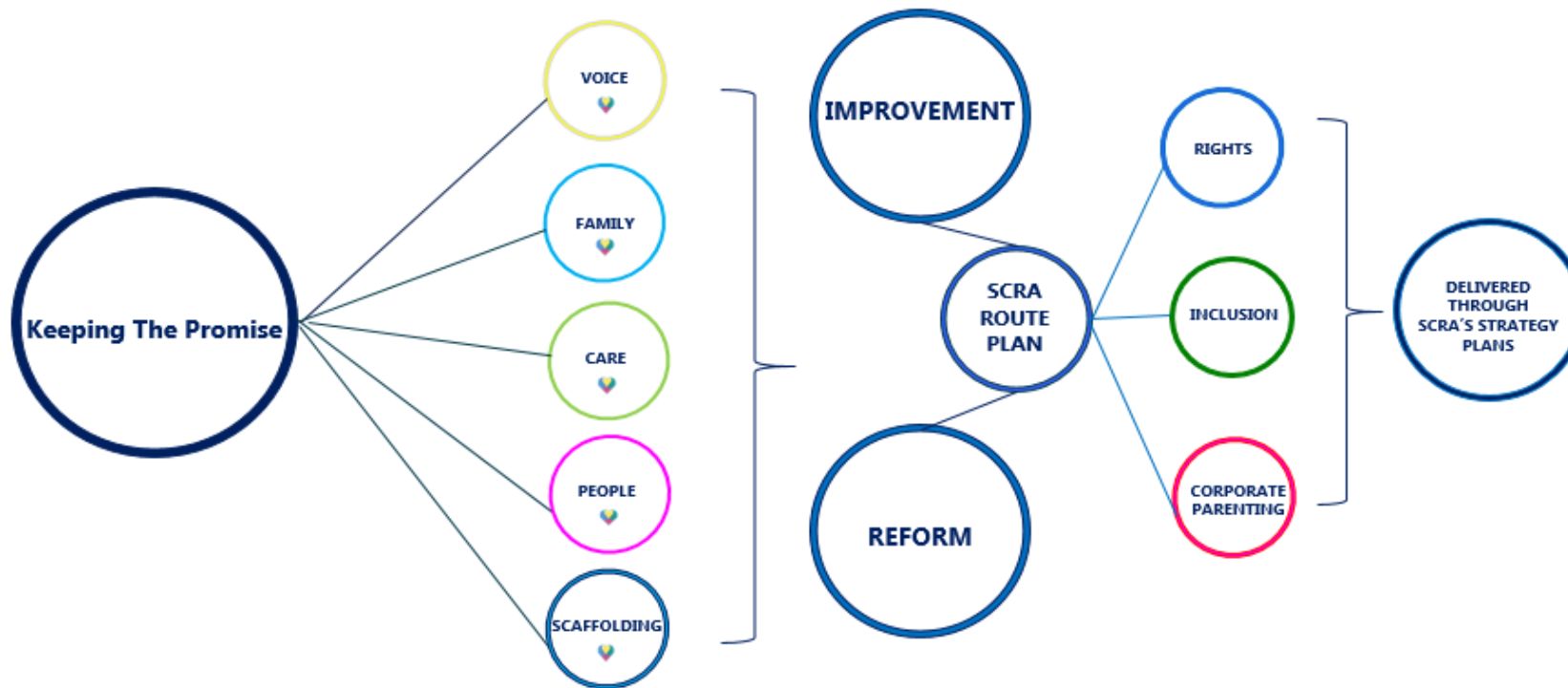
The Rights Inclusion and Corporate Parenting Strategy creates a dynamic way for us to plan and manage the activity required to #KeepThePromise in SCRA. We will recognise actions, develop plans, establish and support working groups and ask for support and advice from our expert partners across Scotland. Our dynamic approach means that we will be able to change what we are doing if that becomes necessary. We are determined that we recognise what doesn't work and that we promote and encourage what does work.

Appendix B

Keeping the Promise

SCRA is committed to Keeping The Promise.

In order for us to demonstrate our commitment, plan our journey and detail our activity to get there, SCRA are developing a Keeping the Promise Route Plan.

This Plan aligns to the Promise 21-24 plan and describes a number of discreet but interlinked projects to deliver on a set of agreed Aims.

Keeping the Promise Aims 2021-24

SCRA's aims (draft) have been led by the Promise Change Plan 2021-24, some of the work that we will do to give effect to this (but not all) includes:

- Hearings will be inclusive, rights based and trauma informed.
- Everyone attending hearings will have the information they need, be prepared and be supported to participate.
- All reports and information for the hearing will be clear, easy to read and relevant.
- The reasons for coming to the hearings and the decisions of the hearing will be clear, explained and hearings decisions will be open to appeal.
- Everyone working with and around the children and families will do so with kindness.
- The language that we use to talk and to give information will be clear, accessible and appropriate.
- We will be open and constructive in our conversation with partners about how the Children's Hearing can and should change and we will do all we can to prepare our staff for this change, whilst continuing to improve the current Children's Hearing experience of children and families.

Keeping the Promise – Route Plan

SCRA have been developing a Keeping the Promise Route Plan.

The Route Plan takes into consideration the work of Better Hearings, Our Hearings Our Voice's 40 Calls to Action and the recommendations from The Promise.

The Route Plan recognises the connectivity between our ongoing corporate parenting, inclusion and diversity, and Rights work with the asks of the Promise – and draws them together to provide a more rounded response to the improvement.

Our Rights, Inclusion and Corporate Parenting strategy will support us to take forward the work of the Promise Route Plan – a version for young people was published earlier this year. SCRA's Rights, Inclusion and Corporate Parenting Strategy for Young People

The draft Promise Route Plan has gone out to all staff, as well as the SCRA Promise Board for consultation and a final version is now being developed to include timelines, leads, stakeholders etc. for monitoring progress. Once signed off by our Keeping the Promise Board, this will be sent on and published.

Keeping the Promise – Activity Mapping

The activity planned within the Route Plan can be seen in the table below, mapped to the matters for discussion on the list of issues.

The planned work has been provided at a relatively high level but aligned to the agenda of the HSWG, and when the various themes are to be discussed, further detail will be provided alongside any feedback/evaluation/data to support.

A key area of activity *not* directly mapped to the issues list is that of 'getting the conditions right'. In undergoing much improvement of the past few years and in developing our plans for the Promise, it has become very clear to us the importance of the right conditions for taking forward change and improvement –some of this can be structural or physical e.g. technology, some of this can be around learning and training, and some can be around data and evidence. A short section has been added to cover the conditions with this is mind.

Included below the table are links to previous work / research that may be of interest and that the learning from which, will feature in our planned work.

Prepared by Lisa Bennett, Head of Strategy/OD SCRA
Date: 29/11/21

Area	Improvement work
Structure of the Hearing System	**Your Rights** Current/Planned work - Your Rights – working with a group of reporters to present creative ways to let people know and understand their rights (and various mediums for doing so). This piece of work will produce full and detailed information for people about their rights in the system and when coming to Hearings – to include the rights of children in hearings, relevant persons in hearings, victims, rights around offending and around secure care. Working in collaboration with CYCJ, Staff, and others to ensure consistent messaging and clear links.
Referral	**Safeguarding** Current/Planned work - Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to the harm or risk that can be faced by children out of the family home – at school or in the wider community. A greater understanding of this approach will be promoted in order for the exploitation of children in Scotland to be fully understood and addressed – without a child taking the blame for their 'behaviour'.
Hearing	**Preparation for your Hearing – Options, Choices and Participation** This is an area of work that has a lot of evidence and recommendation to build from and will form a key part of our Route Plan for next year and will see Children and Young people have a far more personal interaction with the Reporter and enable the sense of a bespoke Hearing. • This work will look at introductory letters from the Reporter – explaining who they are and what their role is in child friendly, creative ways. • This strand will focus on needs and inclusive service provision to ensure equity for everyone attending • It will look to provide children and young people with what they need to know – and what they need us to know, before their hearings - what they can expect when they come to a hearing (face to face or virtual), what is available to them – laying out what their options are – for attendance, participation, rooms, layout, etc and asking what would be preferable – what would help support them when they come in (in person or virtually) if they have any particular needs. We would like to test this using sent forms as well as supported input i.e. with advocacy, SW.

	- We will look to incorporate and build on the new 'Hearing about Me' form, which has been developed in partnership with Proud 2 Care to replace the All about me and is far more about what young people would like the panel to know – about them, their situation, what they would like to happen. - We will provide training packages to the professionals working to support the child coming to a hearing to better equip them to do this (previously tested and evaluated through Better Hearings) along with supportive materials for them to use. - This piece of work would also consider methods of participation – exploring video content, as well as more creative options to participate. - It will consider the various tools currently being used and worked with to prepare children for hearings and seek to improve their reach and benefit. - We will be exploring with local partners different options for hearing locations and for hearings scheduling – to make sure these work for everyone. With our partners, we will consider who should to be involved in scheduling and interacting with families. There is work ongoing within some local areas currently looking at parts of this project – we are looking to work and provide direction at a national level to support driving a consistency but will be working with the local areas to undertake local testing and implementation. We will be engaging with all local areas on this and drawing on the expertise and learning that is out there to take this forward. This project will deliver across a number of workstreams and will require multi-agency buy in. (link across to the work of CHS' ASIPs)

Decision	**Rights Based Grounds**
	    Current/Planned work - An exploration of UNCRC in grounds – this piece of work takes the description of the grounds for referral and re-frames it from a rights based perspective to shift blame to an unfulfilled right. This is at an early stage and requires to be scrutinised in terms of practice and operational enablement – in partnership with CELCIS.
	
	Reports for Hearings
	    Current/Planned work – Shortened reports for Hearings – building on work carried out in response to COVID, and one of the clear recommendations coming through from the Promise, as well as from Better Hearings - in partnership with CELCIS and Our Hearings, Our Voice. - *This is now requiring national policy development

	Child Friendly CSOs Current/Planned work - Looking at how a CSO and its conditions can be described in a way that is family friendly - accessible and able to be explained, whilst still fulfilling statutory requirements. Working in partnership with CELSIS and Our Hearings, Our Voice.
Getting the Conditions Right There are a number of asks that are around 'getting the conditions right' through workforce awareness, support and training, capacity planning, inclusive recruitment, good data collection, research, and much more. The activities outlined in the following section aims to capture the actions to get the conditions right.	**Communication – good communication is key to 'getting the conditions right' -** it cuts across everything – from the letters we send to the information we put on websites to the way that we talk to families to the way that we frame our grounds… Some work started with CHS earlier this year with CHS and Our Hearings, Our Voice, to begin look at recommendations around language, from both The Promise and 40 Calls To Action. This work will help inform many of the projects going forward - the Options, Choices and Participation work, along with work more generally about the information that we provide and how we communicate. It will seek to recognise the areas that are not about language per se, more a lack of information - making it feel inaccessible. There is work taking place across the country to look at language – in many areas and many themes – it would be our view that this would be an area that could be helpfully supported centrally by the promise team/a working group/other, directed by the HSWG to take forward a national approach – whilst learning from local initiatives and improvement projects. Without this national direction across all partners, there is a risk that everyone tackles the same issue and we end up with endless different (all improved in their own way) approaches and despite the efforts, still a lack of consistency in the way we use language. Local initiatives: Currently we are working with Proud to Care in Inverclyde as well as OHOV to consider specific elements, we are working with CHS locally in Grampian to look at language as well as at a national level through the participation leads.

Link here to information provision – we have been working with OHOV around information to be provide on our website – films, podcasts, QandAs etc to support children coming to hearings. Planned work with OHOV around information to be sent out to younger children to explain the process, the hearings and what it means for them.

Hearings Rooms

Ongoing work - We have another set of rooms that are being re-designed this year in partnership with young people – and another lot the following year. To make them feel safe, inclusive and support participation. Options, Choices and Participation work will be developing this.

(We have now redesigned over 30 rooms, in the style co-designed by Hearings-experienced young people. These rooms are much lighter and brighter – natural light where possible, neutral colours with some funky accessories. Lots of comfy seats – in all shapes and sizes, and children's play areas for younger children. The furniture can be moved around too, so that people can sit where they feel comfortable and to make sure anyone in buggies or wheelchair users can be fully part of the room.)

Workforce learning and development

- Staff awareness raising and training on trauma – following on from the staff training pre-pandemic, this provides further understanding on trauma and its impact, vicarious trauma, what trauma informed practice is and how to become a trauma informed workforce/place.
- Staff awareness raising and training on UNCRC and in particular Article 12 through a series of workshops.

Research and Data

- Conduct a UNCRC Audit in the organisation.
- Work with the Promise team looking at data to provide the information required to support them.
- Look at our own data to make sure we are collecting and reporting on the things that matter.
- Undertake research to understand the impact of the pandemic and how we can use this to inform our improvement journey.

Relevant reading:

SCRA's Annual Report for Young People

Microsoft Word - Better Hearings Research Report 2016.docx (chip-partnership.co.uk)

Better Hearings Progress update Oct 19

Report-1-Residence-and-contact-conditions.pdf (scra.gov.uk)

Report-2-Wellbeing-outcomes.pdf (scra.gov.uk)

Report-3-Care-planning-and-interventions.pdf (scra.gov.uk)

Report-4-Trust-and-relationships.pdf (scra.gov.uk)

Report-5-Decision-making.pdf (scra.gov.uk)

Report-6-Views-and-experiences.pdf (scra.gov.uk)

Summary-Briefing-Paper.pdf (scra.gov.uk)

Research - SCRA

Appendix C

Keeping the Promise - Intro

SCRA is committed to Keeping The Promise.

This paper seeks to provide CHIP with an update on how we are addressing the asks of the Promise within SCRA.

SCRA are fully engaged and working with the Hearings System Working Group to consider redesign and reform and the activity described in this paper around improvement will seek to inform, test and interact with that work.

We are working closely with the Promise team to ensure dependencies are mapped and sequencing of activity is visible and prioritised to support this.

Keeping the Promise – Background to our work

Over the past few years, (and many more if we looked back further) we have had strong voice from: the Better Hearings research and work thereafter, from Our Hearings Our Voice's 40 Calls to Action, from SCRA's (and other's) research, our Rights, Inclusion and Corporate parenting consultations and, of course, from The Promise itself - all asking for change and improvement, and all pointing in the same direction.

In SCRA we have been working internally, with our partners and with groups of young people from around the country to begin to understand, plan and test what all of this could and should look like in practice.

Young people have been helping to make the recommendations and asks feel real and meaningful and have been helping to give us some real practical steps to make them a reality.

When Our Hearings Our Voice published the Zine in October 2020 (or the 40 calls to action as it is now better known) the Participation group within SCRA took these on and prioritised the asks. Our first annual progress report can be read here 40 Calls to Action SCRA's work 1 year on…

There has been improvement work undertaken through Better hearings - using improvement methodology – that has been evaluated and is ready to scale up, there has been improvement work and changes implemented in local areas that were in response to asks of young people – some of those involving young people in that process – in others we

were just doing 'what we were told' (☺) there has also been ongoing improvements e.g. updating our Hearings Rooms.

There is work underway and work planned for - both at national and at a local level – some will be tests for change, others will be co-designed change and improvement and others will be delivering on our planned commitments - all lined up to the asks.

We are also paying particular attention of 'getting the conditions right'. In undergoing much improvement of the past few years and in developing our plans for the Promise, it has become very clear to us the importance of the right conditions for taking forward change and improvement –some of this can be structural or physical e.g. technology, some of this can be around learning and training, and some can be around data and evidence.

This paper will provide you with a summary of how we are taking forward our improvement work to bring together these strands.

💛| Keeping the Promise – Route Plan

In order for us to demonstrate our commitment, plan our journey and detail our activity to get there, SCRA are developing a Keeping the Promise Route Plan, aligned to the Promise 21-24 plan . This will describe a number of discreet but interlinked projects to deliver on a set of agreed Aims.

The Route Plan takes into consideration the work of Better Hearings, Our Hearings Our Voice's 40 Calls to Action and the recommendations from The Promise.

Our Rights, Inclusion and Corporate Parenting Strategy will support us to take forward the work of the Promise Route Plan – as a delivery mechanism for this.

The strategy sees the broadest delivery across the organisation of Rights, Inclusion and Corporate Parenting and laces through all of our corporate strategies.

A version for young people was published earlier this year. SCRA's Rights, Inclusion and Corporate Parenting Strategy for Young People .

The draft Promise Route Plan has gone out to all staff, as well as the SCRA Keeping the Promise Board for consultation and a final version is now being developed to include timelines, leads, stakeholders etc. for monitoring progress. Once signed off by our Keeping the Promise Board, this will be sent on and published.

SCRA's Keeping the Promise Programme Board that will own and oversee the Route Map. The Promise Board is chaired by Michelle Miller (SCRA Chair) and has membership from board members, executive team, Programme manager and SCRA's representatives for Hearings System Working Group.

SCRA and CHS now have joint senior team meetings to consider the joint agenda reporting into meetings of the two Boards – the next meeting of the two Boards being in February.

Keeping the Promise – Route Plan Activity 21-24

The activity planned within the (draft) Route Plan can be seen in Appendix A below.

The planned work has been provided at a relatively high level but further detail will be developed for each project and provided to SCRA's Promise Board for sign off and ongoing monitoring.

As each project develops, communication plans, staff and stakeholder engagement plans and links to the Hearings System Working group will be considered, established and managed.

Prepared by Lisa Bennett, Head of Strategy/OD SCRA
Date: 29/11/21
Recommendation to CHIP – for noting.

Appendix A

Activity within the Draft Route Plan (change and improvement strand):

Preparation for your Hearing – Options, Choices and Participation
This is an area of work that has a lot of evidence and recommendation to build from and will form a key part of our Route Plan for next year and will see Children and Young people have a far more personal interaction with the Reporter and enable the sense of a bespoke Hearing.

There is work ongoing within some local areas currently looking at parts of this project – we are looking to work and provide direction at a national level to support driving a consistency but will be working with the local areas to undertake local testing and implementation. We will be engaging with all local areas on this and drawing on the expertise and learning that is out there to take this forward. This project will deliver across a number of workstreams and will require multi-agency buy in. (links across to the work of CHS' ASIPs)

Rights Based Grounds
An exploration of UNCRC in grounds – this piece of work takes the description of the grounds for referral and re-frames it from a rights based perspective to shift blame to an unfulfilled right. This is at an early stage and requires to be scrutinised in terms of practice and operational enablement – in partnership with CELCIS.

Your Rights
Working with a group of reporters to present creative ways to let people know and understand their rights (and various mediums for doing so). This piece of work will produce full and detailed information for people about their rights in the system and when coming to

Hearings – to include the rights of children in hearings, relevant persons in hearings, victims, brothers and sisters, rights around offending and around secure care. Working in collaboration with CYCJ, Staff, and others to ensure consistent messaging and clear links.

Safeguarding
Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to the harm or risk that can be faced by children out of the family home – at school or in the wider community. A greater understanding of this approach will be promoted in order for the exploitation of children in Scotland to be fully understood and addressed – without a child taking the blame for their 'behaviour'.

Reports for Hearings
Building on work carried out in response to COVID, and one of the clear recommendations coming through from the Promise, as well as from Better Hearings – in partnership with CELCIS and Our Hearings, Our Voice. Looking for national steer from HSWG in this area.

Child Friendly CSOs
Current/Planned work - Looking at how a CSO and its conditions can be described in a way that is family friendly - accessible and able to be explained, whilst still fulfilling statutory requirements. Working in partnership with CELSIS and Our Hearings, Our Voice.

Getting the conditions right

Communication and Language
Communication cuts across everything – from the letters we send to the information we put on websites, to the way that we talk to families, to the way that we frame our grounds…

This work will help inform many of the projects going forward - the Options, Choices and Participation work, along with work more generally about the information that we provide and how we communicate. It will seek to recognise the areas that are not about language per se, more a lack of information - making it feel inaccessible.

There is work taking place across the country to look at language – in many areas and many themes – it would be our view that this would be an area that could be helpfully supported centrally by the promise team/a working group/other, directed by the HSWG to take forward a national approach – whilst learning from local initiatives and improvement projects.

Hearings Rooms
Ongoing work - We have another set of rooms that are being re-designed this year in partnership with young people – and another set the following year, to make them feel safe, inclusive and support participation. Options, Choices and Participation work will be developing this.
(We have now redesigned over 30 rooms, in the style co-designed by Hearings-experienced young people. These rooms are much lighter and brighter – natural light where possible, neutral colours with some funky accessories. Lots of comfy seats – in all shapes and sizes,

and children's play areas for younger children. The furniture can be moved around too, so that people can sit where they feel comfortable and to make sure anyone in buggies or wheelchair users can be fully part of the room.) Large tables are removed.
Workforce learning and development planned

Learning
• Staff awareness raising and training on trauma – following on from the staff training pre-pandemic, this provides further understanding on trauma and its impact, vicarious trauma, what trauma informed practice is and how to become a trauma informed workforce/place.
• Staff awareness raising and training on UNCRC and in particular Article 12 through a series of workshops.
• Further training around neuro diverse conditions to all staff.

Research and Data
• Conduct a UNCRC Audit in the organisation.
• Work with the Promise team looking at data to provide the information required to support them.
• Look at our own data to make sure we are collecting and reporting on the things that matter.
•   Undertake research to understand the impact of the pandemic and how we can use this to inform our improvement journey.

Technology
• Develop and embed virtual hearings and the digital hearing environment
• Improvement of Digital Hearings Rooms

Appendix D - Hearings System Working Group – Issues List

Structure of the Hearing System

- What do we understand by the principles of the Kilbrandon approach today?

- What is the best structure and governance for the hearing system?

- How can children and families' lives be considered holistically with other tribunals (Additional Support for Learning, Criminal Courts etc)

- What should the legislative and operational relationship with the Sheriff Court be?

- Would a different model of delivering hearings address improvement issues?

- How can we ensue consistency and appropriateness of language across the Hearing system?

Referral

- How does the Hearing system 'shrink and specialise' and reduce the numbers of children needing a compulsory order? Is the threshold for referral at the right level?

- What should the role of the Reporter be at referral and pre referral stage?

- How should the point of referral support permanence decisions for children who cannot or are unlikely to be able to return to their family of origin?

- What is the best moment to offer family group decision making?

- What are the appropriate referral routes to a Hearing and what threshold should be applied?

- How should 16/17-year-olds be referred to the Reporter?

- Who is the hearing about?

- Who is subject to the decision of the Panel?

- Should an order attach to a child or family or those with responsibility to provide support?

- How should grounds of referral be framed and what should the process be for establishing them?

Hearing

- How are children and families' views heard? How are they supported to participate and tell their story only once (if that is what they want)?

- Should children always have an obligation to attend their hearing, do they have the right to not attend or could there be different ways to participate?

- How are children and families prepared for the Hearing and what are the roles and responsibilities to support this?

- What is the role of professionals at Hearing? Advocates, Lawyers, Safeguarders, Social Work/Local Authorities.

- What should the format of a hearing be? How do we organise to ensure children and young people have a choice?

- Can we enhance voice and participation through enabling digital tools and technology?

- How can meetings be minimised? Could one meeting attend to a number of issues?

- What is the role of the Reporter throughout and after the process?

Decision

- How can the Hearing System ensure continuity of decision making and continuity of relationships throughout?

- How can the Hearing System ensure consistency of decision making with appropriate review?

- What is the best decision-making model?

- What is the status of 'voluntary measures' decisions?

Enforcement

- To whom should compulsion be applied?

- What legislative changes are needed to support the whole family whether the child returns home or not?

- How to ensure decisions are enforced and support is achieved across multiple organisations-Local Authority, Health etc?

- What are the duties on implementation authorities and are they sufficient to ensure consistent delivery of support and protection for each child?

- Establish and define the improvements that are required to 'home supervision'?

- What rights do children, young people (and potentially families) have to services whilst on CSO?

- What aftercare arrangements should the hearing expect to see to support the recovery from trauma and impact of child removal?

- What are the duties on public authorities to support children and young people's rights?

Accountability

- How can we be sure that professional standards are upheld in the Hearings across professions?

- What role do feedback loops play in continuous improvement of hearings?

- Why is the current legislation in relation to the measurement of implementation not operating effectively?

- What data do organisations need to measure impact and improvement?

Review

- How should be Panel ensure decisions are reviewed appropriately and checked?

- What should the frequency of review be?

- What can the hearing system do to prevent drift and delay?

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Influencing Report: 1st June 2021 to 30th November 2021

Accountable Director:	Head of Practice and Policy	Date:	15 December 2021

Recommendation:
1.   **That the Board notes the content of this report**

Reason for Report:	*For information of Board*
Resource Implications:	*Within approved budgets*
Strategy:	*Within approved plans*
Consultation:	*Practice and Policy and Head Office Teams*
Document Classification:	*Open*

Report Contents:

1	Introduction
1.1	In March 2011, the Practice and Policy Team produced a report for the Board outlining the key areas where SCRA had been able to be influential and apply its professional expertise, data and research to particular issues at a national level. The Board subsequently requested that a similar report be provided on a bi-annual basis. This is the twenty first such report and covers the period 1st June to 30th November 2021.
1.2	There are hyperlinks in this document - to external documents which may be of interest (including legislation and draft legislation) and to internal documents which are published externally. There are also some hyperlinks to documents on Connect (for which Board Members may not have access). Internal documents which are not published externally are included as inserted file objects. There are documents from this six month period still waiting for publication. Where there are links to legislation these links are to a Bill or an Act, not to associated policy memoranda or regulations (unless these other documents are of specific interest). Some hyperlinks are to web pages where there are multiple documents of potential interest. **We hope the information contained in this report is relevant and useful.**

1.3	Melissa Hunt, SCRA Policy and Public Affairs Manager, normally works alongside Government Officials in Victoria Quay at least one day a week. This has not been possible during the pandemic and will not be possible until the Scottish Government buildings are back up and running 'normally'.

Melissa has positive working relationships with officials in the Scottish Government and continues to be engaged in informal and formal dialogue and through informal and formal consultation with SCRA, when relevant. Melissa has been regularly involved through working with Donald Lamb (Data Manager) and colleagues in Children's Hearings Scotland in the production of the regular report to Government on the provisions of the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020. The final Coronavirus Report – 9 was published online on 13th October 2021. Coronavirus Reporting has been a heavy operational commitment throughout the pandemic.

Alistair Hogg, Head of Practice and Policy is also in normal times a strong presence within Victoria Quay, to encourage dialogue and to keep SCRA visible and an active partner within conversations. Alistair has continued to maintain strong regular contact with Scottish Government colleagues and other partners throughout the pandemic, to keep up with the fast pace of change and to ensure that SCRA remain part of the conversation.

Melissa Hunt and Alistair Hogg have responded to a number of Government queries in the last 6 months; they have continued to be involved in the National Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) Steering Group and are both involved in ongoing discussions about Advocacy services for children in the Children's Hearing. Melissa and Children's Hearings Scotland have a standing invite to attend the National Advocacy Service Providers Network as and when that may be useful and Melissa is currently supported by the Practice Team in discussion with the Providers Network and Scottish Government over some arising operational queries.

Melissa Hunt is also a member of the Scottish Child Policy Officers Network (CPON) and is kept up to date on national views / discussions through that group. Through that group, we wrote to the newly convened Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee in support of a new legislative proposal that replaced a proposal which hadn't been progressed in the previous parliamentary session. The representations from the group appear to have been listened to. |

1.4	SCRA's responses to National consultation exercises relevant to our work in the Children's Hearings System are published online, and can be found at https://www.scra.gov.uk/resources_articles_category/consultations-evidence/ . Key messages from our full consultation responses are disseminated internally within SCRA to colleagues through CONNECT. The key messages can be accessed by all SCRA staff from either the news item on CONNECT or from the library of documents. In October 2019 Melissa Hunt and Alistair Hogg agreed to develop 'LRM Briefings' in respect of SCRA's position on national consultation exercises where we are not preparing a full response. Recent briefing notes that have perhaps not been seen by the Board are: A briefing note in relation to SCRA's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, updated following publication of the National Child Protection Guidance 2021, was circulated in September. A briefing note in relation to Terminated Orders is agreed and is being finalised across a number of SCRA teams, hopefully for circulation before the end of 2021. We have also used Connect News items to communicate other areas of interest for staff – in relation to ongoing consultation work around GIRFEC and in relation to the new Sentencing Council Guidelines on Sentencing Young People. (Hyperlinks to Connect News items). Informal feedback suggests that this approach is useful – and Melissa Hunt continues to be contacted by SCRA staff members about consultation exercises that are live in their locality area.

2	Pending legislation & Parliamentary Work
2.1	**The review of section 12 of the Children and Young Persons (Scotland) Act 1937 and section 42 of the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009 was published on 14th October 2019** This consultation from 2019 has not yet resulted in any proposed legislative change and it is seeming more likely that additional consultation will be required before any new legislation is drafted. SCRA's response is still online, here. **Melissa Hunt has gathered data which should give a rich evidential base for any future comments we wish to make on this area of the law. We would need to take time to consider this data fully in advance of using it to inform any arguments we may wish to make.**

2.2	**United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill 2020**
	This Bill was unanimously passed by the Scottish Parliament on 16th March 2021. However, the UK Government challenged some aspects of the legislative competence of the Act which they believed were out with the competence of the devolution settlement. The case was heard at the [Supreme Court](#) on 28th and 29th June 2021 and a decision in respect of matters was delivered on 6th October 2021. The SC upheld the appeal and referred the matter back to SG for remedial action.
	SCRA provided a full written response to the Equalities and Human Rights Committee call for evidence on the Bill – it has not yet been published on line on SCRA's website, but is available [here](#) from the Scottish Parliament website. The Children's Hearings Scotland full written response can be read [here](#). Alistair Hogg was invited to give evidence to the Committee on 19th November 2020. His evidence can be viewed [here](#) (after 10:18) and read [here](#) from page 33/34. The current Scottish Children's Commissioner Bruce Adamson gave evidence as part of the first session.
	Further work is now required on this legislation in order for it to become operational. We await a SG update on what route of remedial action it intends to take, and if and when the Act is likely to be implemented.
2.3	[Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee](#)
	Met on 17th November.
	Continued Petitions considered of potential relevance to SCRA (although at the moment we have not considered or commented on any of these):
	PE1837: Provide clear direction and investment for autism support; PE1838: Regulation of non-statutory child advocacy services; PE1857: Regulate the role of curator ad litem;
	There were no new Petitions considered of potential relevance to SCRA.

2.5	**The Children (Scotland) Act 2020** The Bill for this Act was introduced on 2nd September 2019. The Bill for this Act of the Scottish Parliament was passed by the Parliament on 25th August 2020 and received Royal Assent on 1st October 2020. The provisions in sections (13) and (14) and (25) and (26) of the Act came into force on 26th July 2021. Melissa Hunt and Elaine Adams worked with partners in CHS and the Advocacy Providers Network to develop a briefing / training note for partners on the new participation individuals & rights, which was cascaded through Locality Reporter Managers/ Additional information intended for a primary audience of children and families was also added to the SCRA website – Participation Rights. Other aspects of the Act and the Family Justice Modernisation Strategy were subject to further consultation which SCRA, which will be covered later in this report.
2.6	Vulnerable Witnesses (Criminal Evidence) Act 2019 This Bill was passed on 9th May 2019 and received Royal Assent on 13th June 2019. The commencement of the Act is staged, with Higher Court proceedings using and benefiting from the changes before other Courts.
2.7	Children (Equal Protection from Assault) Act 2019 The Act became law on 7th November 2019. Alistair Hogg is part of the implementation group for the Act that continues to meet. The Parent Club "Building a Rewarding Relationship with your child" forms part of the implementation strategy: https://www.parentclub.scot/articles/building-a-rewarding-relationship-with-your-child.
2.8	The Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020 The Bill for this Act was introduced on 12th June 2019. The Bill for this Act of the Scottish Parliament was passed by the Parliament on 10th June 2020 and received Royal Assent on 14th July 2020. The Act has not yet been fully implemented. Neill Mitchell from SCRA's Practice Team is developing an amended Practice Note for Reporters on the combined effects of this Act, the Management of Offenders Act and the Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act on the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1978. Melissa Hunt has been in contact with Disclosure Scotland Colleagues to look at how we can develop our statements of fact in relation to section 67 (2) (j) offence ground referrals to make any disclosure repercussions as clear as possible; we are also looking again at the information we supply to children and families in respect of offence grounds and children's rights.

2.9	**The Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020** This emergency piece of legislation remained in force until 30th September 2021. Many of the provisions were re-enacted, but the provisions that related to children's hearings were not. We are therefore operating back within the normal laws, rules and timescales. There is one exception to that, which relates to the provision that children and relevant persons are still not obliged to attend their hearing (although their right to do so remains).
2.10	**Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019** **This Bill was passed on 7 May 2019 and became an Act on 11 June 2019.** The commencement of the different provisions of the Act has not yet occurred but is now due to take place on **17th December 2021**. There are a number of different delivery groups for the Act where SCRA is represented and discussion is ongoing. The Independent Reviewer has been appointed, and Caroline Conway (who also has the same role in Northern Ireland) has taken the post. This article gives some information about Ms Conway and the post in Northern Ireland: https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/news/appointment-independent-reviewer-criminal-record-certificates. Alistair Hogg sits on the ACR Advisory Group, and Neil Hunter sits on the ACR Programme Board. We also have representatives on 2 of the working groups reporting to the Advisory Group, and our research is ongoing into offending by 12 to 15 year olds.

4	Other Consultation Responses
4.1	**As a note - the pre-legislative consultation landscape post the 2021 election to the Scottish Parliament is very crowded; which may have a knock on effect as and when consultation exercises develop into additional pieces of work. In addition, legislation which we have previously commented on extensively is scheduled to return (UNCRC) and we are awaiting the development of the Care and Justice Bill on the back of the consultation exercise in relation to changing the age of referral to the Principal Reporter. This work is all integral to the role of the Children's Reporter in the Children's Hearing and must be a priority for us.** In addition, there has not been time to format the consultation responses below for publication on SCRA's website. Melissa hopes to do this work before the end of the year.
4.2	**Register of Curator ad Litem etc Consultation** This consultation exercise follows the Children (Scotland) Act 2020 and intends to introduce regulation and governance for Child Welfare Reporters / Curator a Litem / Solicitors appointed when a person is prevented from presenting their own case. SCRA were largely in agreement with the proposed registration schemes and with intended governance and training. In our response to Q24 we highlight a loophole in the current system which can cause some issues in the Children's Hearing – we hope this is taken on board and rectified.
4.3	**Regulation of Child Contact Centres Consultation** This consultation exercise follows the Children (Scotland) Act 2020 and intends to introduce regulation and governance for Child Contact Centres where they may be in operation across the country. SCRA were largely in agreement with the proposals; basing our response on our understanding of our own estate of Children's Hearing Centres and the better hearings work we continue to do to improve them. We support the approach to standards (and in doing so perhaps raise the question of whether we should be developing similar standards for our own work).

4.4	**Covid Public Inquiry and Covid Justice Recovery Consultation** A very helpful discussion with members of EMT led to the following letter being sent to the Scottish Government Team setting up the Covid Public Inquiry in Scotland. Perhaps it is key to note the approach of the British Academy to a 'Covid Decade' and to consider the ways in which the pandemic has left a last impact on us all and on the work that we do. It also led to the tenor of the responses given in relation to the proposals from Government relating to the recovery from Covid of the Scottish Justice System, and what elements of the emergency Covid legislation needed to remain in place. Whilst this consultation does not refer specifically to the Children's Hearing there are a number of proposals in relation to the Courts which would benefit our work – and we have been keen to say in our response that we do not want to lose any of the benefits we have gained as a result of the Emergency Coronavirus legislation and the impact it had on the ways in which we work. We have stressed the transformational aspect of the shift to virtual children's hearings throughout the response – as well as the continued learning we need to do as we move on.
4.5	**National Care Service Consultation** Joanna MacDonald, Deputy Chief Social Work Advisor to the Scottish Government came and spoke to SCRA staff about the National Care Service plans and the scope of the consultation. There was also extensive helpful input from the SCRA Board Members to the development of our response – and for that, many thanks. This was a difficult consultation – not least because the questions pertaining to Children's Services were unexpected and did not reference the body of evidence in relation to the need to change which is currently available. The questions pertaining to adult services, on the other hand, were firmly rooted in the evidence of the Feeley Independent Report into Adult Social Care and in comparison appeared to be robust and well considered. As a result SCRA's Board were clear that at this time it was not possible to respond in relation to Children's Services or to Criminal Justice Services and that further work needed to be done to explain the evidential basis for the proposed change, as well as the structure and governance arrangements that would be put in place for the National Care Service.

4.6	**Community Justice Scotland – Strategy Consultation** Community Justice Scotland is a public body with a very similar mission / vision to SCRA. Like SCRA there are a number of organisational priority actions which require close partnership working if they are to be achieved / evaluated. This consultation was the first step in the organisation developing a new corporate strategy and asked people to review the previous approach. The approach is interesting and one SCRA may want to think about in advance of developing a new corporate and business strategy in advance of 2023. SCRA were largely in agreement with the strategic approach of Community Justice Scotland and we used our consultation response as an opportunity to explain many of the things we have in common.
4.7	**Consumer Duty for Public Bodies Consultation** This consultation proposes a new duty for specified public authorities (which would include SCRA and CHS). We have asked the Scottish Government to give careful consideration to each listed public authority and we have spelt out why being considered in this way may do SCRA a dis-service. At the very least a clear government definition of 'consumer' as it applies to the work that we do would be essential.
4.8	**Data – A new Direction – UK Government Consultation** This was a wide ranging and extensive UK Government consultation on plans to completely change the UK's data protection approach and regimes, including the Office of the Information Commissioner. SCRA completed the full response with support from across our Information and Research and Practice teams, Information Security and from our Data Manager. In our response we are very concerned about the consequences of relaxing or altering some of the robust approaches we currently have to data privacy and ownership and think that strengthening and simplifying the current approach is preferable to starting again. There are a number of suggestions throughout this consultation which should give us pause for thought or even concern and we will need to keep a close watching brief on the outcome of the consultation exercise and any subsequent moves towards legislation.
4.9	**Live consultation exercises on the GIRFEC refresh, the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey, a scoping consultation on the 'Bairns Hoose' and on Bail and Custody Release Arrangements are ongoing**

5	Current partnership & collaborative work
5.1	**New Joint Investigative Interview Training** Gordon Bell from the Practice Team continues to lead for SCRA in this work. This entry on the Social Work Scotland website gives a clear description of the work - https://socialworkscotland.org/projects/joint-investigative-interviews/. SCRA were heavily involved in developing parts of the training; have been recently involved in the delivery of some of the training and we will be involved in feedback and discussion with the course developers about any changes that will be required after the initial runs of the course.
5.2	**Online Training – developed for North Lanarkshire** The training package developed by Melissa Hunt and Elaine Adams is being further developed according to local need in Ayrshire Locality and in North Strathclyde Locality. Discussions with partners are ongoing about how the package can be tailored to work in the best way for each local authority area and in relation to specific local concerns. Social workers | Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership (chip-partnership.co.uk)
5.3	**Child Trafficking and Exploitation** Melissa Hunt continues to be a member of this working group which has recently got a new Chair, chaired by the Scottish Government.
5.4	**Restorative Approaches** Melissa Hunt is involved in a multi-agency group considering wider restorative approaches. SCRA commissioned work by a pair of young creatives in relation to Restorative Approaches: Melissa Hunt has been working with creative developers for BBC Bitesize to script an animation in relation to Restorative Justice which will appear on the BBC Bitesize website, as part of a suite of resources on UNCRC. Neill Mitchell continues to be involved in work to specifically progress the Scottish Government Restorative Justice Action Plan and he has provided information from the planned SCRA practice note for Reporters to align with the information contained in the above work.

5.5	**Children's Rights**
	SCRA's work on children's rights is a cornerstone to our work on Keeping the Promise. All of this work is intended to inform our approach and will develop alongside other learning from Covid19 Recovery and Better Hearings. None of this work is static – it is all intended to be dynamic and for there to be a dynamic interplay between different strands of the approach. We are very pleased that this work will be overseen by our 'Right Direction' group of external experts, who are to meet for the first time in January 2022. The final member of the group is still to be confirmed, but Maria Galli from the Office of the Children's Commissioner, Professor John Devaney from Edinburgh University, Janine McCullogh from Education Scotland and Elaine Adams, Chip Learning and Development Advisor have all agreed to help us on this journey. Draft terms of reference have been devised and will be shared with the Board once Right Direction have met, and finalised the scope and approach of their work.
	Melissa Hunt and Elaine Adams (CELCIS CHIP Learning and Development Lead) have submitted a blog piece for the Oxford Human Right Hub and are waiting to hear about whether it has been accepted. Melissa and Elaine had a co-authored journal article published in the Scottish Journal of Residential Childcare September edition 2021.
	Myrian Lazo, Indiya Kurlus and Melissa Hunt are involved in developing the reporting structure in relation to our Rights, Inclusion and Corporate Parenting Strategy - 'RICY's' Report Card - SCRA's Rights, Inclusion and Corporate Parenting Year. We plan to combine previous report formats into a single, streamlined document and to integrate reporting on rights.
	We have planned a baseline 'rights audit' to be followed up annually in subsequent years, so we can demonstrate progress and refine our approach as our knowledge, confidence and expertise develops across the service. This audit still needs to take place.
	We also have a 'Your Rights' Project underway – and we hope to have developed new and innovative content for SCRA's website by the beginning of 2022. A group of interested Children's Reporters from across the country are currently involved in this work.
	The final edition of the National Reporter SCRA's staff magazine will include an article on Article 12 and children's participation rights by Melissa Hunt and Indiya Kurlus.
5.6	**Understanding Child Exploitation in Scotland (UCES)**
	A multi-agency group of interested professionals from the statutory and third sector formed after the publication of the SCRA / Barnardo's research into Childhood Sexual Exploitation.
	A number of SCRA staff (Gillian Henderson, Collette Gallacher, Melissa Hunt, Maryanne McIntyre) are actively involved in this work.

5.7	**Contextual Safeguarding Network** This is chaired by Stuart Allardyce (Stop it Now) and is a meeting of interested professionals from across the statutory and third sector – keeping an eye on the pilot in North Lanarkshire but also considering how contextual safeguarding can be mainstreamed across more areas of child protection and safeguarding in Scotland.
5.8	**Early Intervention Working Group** Melissa Hunt sits on this working group, chaired by Andrew Horne (We Are With You, Executive Director Scotland) secretariat provided by the Scottish Government. This working group has convened in relation to The Rights, Respect and Recovery: alcohol and drug treatment strategy (RRR) published 28 November 2018; specifically Chapter 4: Prevention and Early Intervention, and to the RRR outcome: **Fewer people develop problem drug use.** SCRA have recently provided the group with some information and some data to help inform discussions and focus attention.
5.9	**Secure Care Group** Chaired by the Scottish Government. Melissa Hunt attends this group and is involved in working groups in relation to siblings and secure care and secure care transport. SCRA have recently provided the group with information in relation to appeals and representation.

6	Research
6.1	There are no updates from Information & Research as a separate report is being submitted to the Board.

7	Additional Work
7.1	**Scoping of External Training Delivery** This scoping work has been done but has yet to be confirmed on an agenda for progression.
7.2	**Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership (CHIP)** Core CHIP members have still been meeting regularly every second Tuesday afternoon in the Children's Hearings COVID Recovery Group– and Alistair Hogg alongside other senior SCRA staff members has attended these meetings. The large CHIP group started meetings again in 2021. Focus has been on recovery from the pandemic, the potential increase in the age of referral, Better Hearings, OHOV and the Promise.
7.3	**Safeguarder Court Training** Children 1st have published their online introductory court training for safeguarders. Melissa Hunt was filmed as part of this training package – which will feature 'talking heads' from key partners in the children's hearing system court process. In principle SCRA could become involved in the development of additional training but discussion about this has been preliminary and depends in part on the online programme content and how this is received / what additional training needs are subsequently identified.
7.4	**Children's Hearing – Training for schools / information for staff and pupils** Melissa Hunt has begun work on a Primary School Resource, based around a series of short stories. Midlothian Champions Board and Our Hearings, Our Voice have seen these stories and are looking to develop / illustrate them. Midlothian Champions Board were linked into the Scottish Book Trust initiative to have a workshop delivered by a children's author / illustrator by Melissa Hunt. This work will take some time – but it is exciting that one of the short stories is being animated by BBC Bitesize as part of their suite of materials on UNCRC. SCRA will be able to link to this resource once it is available.

7.5	**Advocacy for Children's Hearings**
	Locality Reporter Managers continue to engage with local advocacy service providers and positive partnership discussions are happening across the country.
	SCRA is currently looking to update the Advocacy practice note for Reporters and is in discussion with Scottish Government and providers around this and other issues that are arising.
	A 'One Year' celebration of the Advocacy in Children's Hearings Service will be announced at the end of November 2021 and will take place in January 2022. Grampian and South East Localities have agreed to present their experiences of the first year as part of the event.

8	**Horizon Scanning**
8.1	**Other legislative Reform**
	There is a new session of the Scottish Parliament which will bring new legislative reform.
	There has been some quite intensive and extensive consultation work in the last six months – from the Scottish and UK administrations.
8.2	**Independent Care Review – The Promise**
	Reported its findings in a series of reports at the beginning of 2020.
	Key members of SCRA staff have been engaging with key members of The Promise Delivery team. The Promise has an ambitious ten year delivery plan – and Plan 21-24 sets out the current focus for work.
	SCRA are fully invested in this work and keen to be able to see and plan for the short, medium and long term impact of what delivering The Promise will mean.
	Board members are directly involved in this work, and will receive separate updates on progress.
8.3	**Barnahus in Scotland:**
	Alistair Hogg is part of a steering group set up by Children 1st to deliver on the Barnahus vision. This group has met twice, and a smaller group has recently met to discuss the potential legal barriers to progress. Andrew Mobbs, Senior Practitioner in North Strathclyde is involved at local level in the development of the 'Bairns Hoose' Pilot. National standards are also in development, with SCRA Participation Officer Jennifer Orren involved.

8.4	**Improving the Management of Sexual Offences Cases** This Judicial-led Working Group was chaired by Lady Dorrian and reported in March of this year. Gordon Bell from the Practice Team represented SCRA on the Working Group. A link to the final report is here. SCRA are working towards meeting all of the recommendations. Separately, SCRA's Practice Team have convened a working group to develop specific training for Reporters on Harmful Sexual Behaviour. The impact of the pandemic has resulted in the working group being unable to make much progress but it is hoped that this work can start again soon.
8.5	**Victims Taskforce** The Victims Taskforce was established by the Scottish Government "to co-ordinate and drive action to improve the experiences of victims and witnesses within the criminal justice system, whilst ensuring a fair justice system for those accused of crime." Alistair Hogg will now be SCRA's representative on this group, which re-convened after a long gap on 24th November. The Scottish Government in the 2019 programme for Government - **Protecting Scotland's Future** stated that it wants to put victims at the heart of the justice system. This is difficult in the Children's Hearing – as the referred child is always at the centre of the system and as such victims whose cases are dealt with in the Hearing may not get the same experience as they would in a system which is focused more on them. Within SCRA a 'Victims Roadshow' has been travelling virtually around all the localities to let people know about our Victim Information Service and our Victim Information Co-Ordinators. It was felt that this service may have fallen off the radar during the pandemic and the roadshows are raising the profile of the work. The Roadshows have been well received.

9		Other Influencing Work & Training
9.1		SCRA continues to be involved in the Implementation Group for the National Child Protection Guidance, the Youth Justice Improvement Board and the National Stop and Search Steering Group. We are also involved in the Monitoring and Evaluating Rights, Respect and Recovery for health and social harms advisory groups – and a baseline report has been published – which is available online here - [Monitoring and Evaluating Rights, Respect and Recovery (MERRR) - Substance use - Our areas of work - Public Health Scotland](.)..
9.2		SCRA continues to actively consider the ways in which the Digital Improvement Programme will impact on our service delivery and specifically whether legislative change will be required in order for us to deliver all of the objectives we have under this plan. The Covid 19 response of SCRA and CHS will require feedback and review – but will add much information to the delivery of this programme.
9.3		The survey / evaluation of the **shortened Covid19 Report template** has been completed. Our hearings Our Voice are being kept updated about this work and the Midlothian Champions Board are working with us to create guidance on report writing for Children's Hearings which we hope will be published on the CHIP website. The Midlothian Champs recently fed some fascinating information back to us. We are now half way through looking at reports from all 32 local authorities and assessing the sections / headings / information they contain – in order to distil that into information about essential report requirements.

10	**Recommendation**
a)	The Board is asked to note the contents of this report.

SCOTTISH
CHILDREN'S REPORTER
ADMINISTRATION

SCRA Research Plans for 2022-23

Accountable Director: Head of Practice & Policy   **Date:** 15 December 2021

Report Author: Information & Research Manager

Recommendation:

1.   **To note SCRA's current research activities in 2021-22 and approves plans for 2022-23.**

Reason for Report: *For noting*

Resource Implications: *Within approved budgets*

Strategy: *Practice & Policy*

Consultation: *EMT*

Equalities Duties: *No Equalities Impact assessment has been carried out. Consideration of equalities is part of the research ethics approval for each project.*

Document Classification: *Not protectively marked*

1.   Introduction

1.1   This report describes the research projects planned for 2022-23, our current research activities, and research published this year.

2.   Research completed in 2021

2.1   Two reports were published in 2021.

The first was the final report from the research 'Home CSOs – effectiveness of decision making and outcomes'. This report was an analysis of outcomes for children on home CSOs in relation to their school attendance and offending [Report-7-Offending-and-Education-May-2021.pdf (scra.gov.uk)](#). It found that there was a statistically significant increase in school attendance after a year with home CSOs but no change in offending. This research was a collaboration with Robert Gordon University. It was published in May 2021.

In September 2021, SCRA published the report 'Development and piloting of a children's disability toolkit' [SCRA-Disability-Toolkit-Report-2021.pdf](#) SCRA was asked by the Disabled Children Child Protection Network to develop a tool that would assess children's functioning and identify children who are likely to have additional support needs as a result of a known or potential disability. A toolkit was developed and successfully piloted on the cases of 40 children. To the best of our knowledge this is the first toolkit in Scotland that measures a child's functioning, and is first in the world that combines measurements of functioning, vulnerability and contextual factors to identify safeguarding and support needs.

3.   Current research

3.1   **Evaluation of Our Hearings Our Voice (OHOV)**

The Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership (CHIP) asked SCRA to carry out an evaluation of OHOV. This aimed to answer:

1. What do OHOV Board Members and staff, and CHIP partner organisations see as the future strategic direction of OHOV?
2. What value has been added by OHOV and how has this been utilised by agencies involved in the Hearings System; and how does the work of OHOV fit in and influence the strategic direction of CHIP partner organisations (e.g. on participation, equalities, children's rights)?
3. What has enabled or hindered the operation of OHOV?
4. Is the current operating model of OHOV effective and resource efficient?

The evaluation was carried out between May and October 2021. It involved interviews and focus groups with the young people involved in OHOV, senior SCRA and CHS staff and Board Chairs, OHOV staff; and a survey of CHIP members. The evaluation report is being presented to the CHIP on 24th November 2021. It is hoped that it will inform the future direction of OHOV. A summary version for children and young people will also be published along with the full evaluation following the CHIP meeting.

3.2   Children aged 12 to 15 years involved in offending

This research was commissioned by the Scottish Government to inform considerations on raising the age of criminal responsibility. It started in May 2020 and has been extended to finish in March 2022. This extension was required because of delays caused by the COVID restrictions in allowing access to data held by Crown Office & Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), and to allow further analysis of serious offending by children.

The research examined in detail the cases of 400 children, including 100 who had been jointly reported to the Reporter and Procurator Fiscal, using information held in SCRA's case files and that provided by the COPFS. It looked at their backgrounds in terms of adversity and trauma, statutory intervention history, offending history, the circumstances of the child at the time of the offence referral, types of offences, statutory responses to offending, outcomes 12 months after the offence referral, and victims of offences committed by children.

The report on the main part of the research is currently being drafted and will be provided to the Scottish Government by the end of this year. A further report on serious offending, adopting a mixed method approach, including interviews with Reporters, will be produced by end March 2022.

3.3   Decision making and outcomes for children under 12 with CSOs in residential care

This research will provide evidence on a national scale on the characteristics, care experiences and outcomes of children who have CSOs with conditions of residential care prior to their 12th birthday:

1. What are the characteristics and family backgrounds of children placed into residential care before age 12?
2. How is placement into residential care before age 12 associated with health and social wellbeing, including education and offending outcomes?
3. What are the decision making processes and operational constraints that underscore the placement of children under the age of 12 into residential care?
4. Are there identifiable points for earlier intervention in the case histories of under 12s placed into residential care? And if so, what are these?

This is a mixed methods study, combining:

- A statistical analysis of data generated through a content analysis of information held in SCRA's case files in its Case Management System. This sample comprised of 135 children's cases.
- A trends analysis of the use of residential care CSOs from 2003-2019 using data held in SCRA's data warehouse.
- 58 semi-structured interviews with Foster Carers (10), Residential Care staff (19), Social Workers (9) and Children's Panel Members (20).

The research began in November 2019. A report on the statistical analysis will be produced by the end of 2021. A report on the qualitative analysis of the interviews will be published by end March 2022.

Preliminary findings from the research formed SCRA's Evidence Submission for the UN Day of General Discussion (DGD) on Children's Rights and Alternative Care (June 2021): UN-Day-of-General-Discussion-Evidence-Submission.pdf (scra.gov.uk)

A paper has been submitted to the Scottish Journal of Residential Child Care for publication: 'How is the provision of residential care to children under the age of 12 associated with changes in children's behaviour and mental wellbeing?'?'

3.4 **Born into Care: infants becoming looked after in Scotland**

This research was commissioned by the Scottish Government. It is a collaboration between the Universities of Lancashire and Stirling and SCRA.

The first part of the research is on the volumes and incidence rates of infants becoming looked after away from home in Scotland. This uses national level aggregate data from SCRA's Data Warehouse on numbers of children becoming looked after away from home via the Hearings System: by infant age category; initial legal reason; and trends over time and by local authority.

The second part: 'Recurrence in Scotland – exploring the concept of "subsequent infants" entering care' is an analysis of information extracted from the SCRA case files of 70 children aged under 12 months with CSOs with residence away from home. It examines:
- Child, parent and family characteristics and concerns
- Pathways and permanence outcomes
- Recurrent care

The research started in January 2021 and a report is currently being drafted for submission to the Scottish Government.

4. Planned research

4.1 Exploring care experienced children and young people's experiences of sibling imprisonment

A partnership of Families Outside and SCRA was successful in obtaining 2 years of funding from The Promise Partnership – Getting it Right for Brothers and Sisters Fund for this research which aims to answer:

1. What are the levels of sibling imprisonment for care-experienced children and young people?
2. Are care-experienced children and young people supported to maintain relationships with siblings who are in prison?
3. What are the barriers and facilitators for care-experienced children and young people maintaining relationships with siblings who are in prison?

The first phase of the research will explore the experiences of children and young people who are within the care system and separated from a sibling who is in prison. There is no systematic data held on numbers of children who have a sibling in prison, and neither has there been any research done on supporting the restoration and maintenance of loving and safe brother and sister relationships where one, or more, siblings are serving a prison sentence. A sample of SCRA case files where children have siblings will be analysed to ascertain the levels of sibling imprisonment within this sample. Interviews are also planned with care-experienced children and young people who have/have had a sibling in prison or sentenced or remanded in secure care, as well as children who themselves are currently in prison or sentenced or remanded in secure with siblings who are in care.

The second phase involves using the data produced by the research to consider implementation of improved processes and structures to ensure that these relationships are supported and maintained.

The research will begin in early 2022 and will conclude in January 2024.

4.2 **Exploring the impact of Virtual Hearings on participation, rights and decision making**

It was the young people in OHOV who identified the need for research on virtual Hearings, and it is their input that has formed the basis of the research questions (below) and the topic guides for interviews/focus groups with young people. OHOV's involvement will continue throughout the research including some OHOV members being involved as co-researchers.

The research aims to answer:
1. How are Virtual Hearings viewed and experienced by children, young people, their parents and caregivers?
2. How do Virtual Hearings affect the rights of children and young people?
3. How do Virtual Hearings affect decision making?

This will be a mixed methods study:

Quantitative
The case files of up to 240 children will be examined to assess how attendance at a virtual hearing is associated with participation and the decision making process. A random sample of 160 Hearings where a child attended a Hearing virtually will be compared with 80 Hearings where a child attended in person.

Survey of foster and kinship carers
A survey will be sent to foster carers and kinship carers through gatekeeper organisations. This will be targeted at those who have taken part in virtual Hearings and will explore their experiences of this and their perspectives on the participation of the children they care for.

Qualitative
Children and Young People: Up to 20 children will be recruited through residential and secure units.
Parents: semi-structured, qualitative one-to-one telephone interviews with up to 20 parents will be used to explore their experiences of taking part in a virtual Children's Hearing
Residential and secure care staff : Up to 8 focus groups will be held with residential and secure care staff who work at the same residential care providers used to recruit children and young people who take part in the research.

The research has the support of organisations across the residential, secure and foster care sectors and who have agreed to facilitate recruitment of children, parents and carers.

The research will begin in January 2022 and we aim to produce the research report by end of 2022.

4.3 **Impact of new laws to protect and support the relationships of children in care with their brothers and sisters**

This proposed research will assess: how the new laws are working in practice in the Hearings System; if they have resulted in changes to children's residence or contact with their brothers and sisters; and the impact on the lives of children in care.

It will be a mixed methods study
Quantitative: Using SCRA's case files to extract data to allow comparisons before and after implementation of the new laws: on looked after children's levels of contact and co-residence with siblings; and any changes in children's views being sought and available to Hearings.
Survey: of professionals experiences on implementing the new duties and in the lives of the children they support.
Children's views: Children in residential care (aged from 8 to 17 years) will be asked about if they are aware of their rights to give their views and participate in their siblings' Hearings. They will also be asked about their contact and relationships with their brothers and sisters.

This research is still being planned. We would be looking for additional funding to support it. If this is successful, the research will be carried out over 2022 and 2023.

5. **Conclusion & Recommendation**

5.1 To recommend that the Board notes SCRA's current and approves planned research activities.

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Whistleblowing Policy

Accountable Director: Head of Human Resources   **Date:**   15th December 2021

Recommendations:

1.   To approve the revisions to SCRA's Whistleblowing Policy

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Reason for Report: For Board approval

Resource Implications: Not Applicable

Consultation: UNISON, ACAS and HR Sub Group

Equalities Duties   Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment Completed.

The assessment did not highlight any negative impacts from the review of this policy. Positive impacts were noted as a result of the opportunity to raise concerns around mal-practice/decision making on any aspect that might affect any protected characteristics. Positive impact on our Fairer Scotland duties.

Document Classification: Not Protectively Marked

1. Background

1.1 In line with legislation, SCRA implemented its first Whistleblowing Policy in 1999 with the introduction of the Public Information Disclosure Act (PIDA). The Board adopted this policy as part of the Board's Governance Framework and as such requires the Board's approval for any subsequent changes.

1.2 The PIDA legislation has not materially changed since 1999 and the HR Sub Group as part of its annual policy review programme commissioned this first full review. The policy was however, also reviewed in 2015 to ensure compliance with the implementation of GDPR.

1.3 It is noted that we have scheduled a further review in three years as part of the policy review schedule.

2. Policy

2.1 The revised Whistleblowing Policy is attached at Appendix 1. The main changes to the Policy are as follows:-

- Changing the language from a 'new' policy to that of an established policy
- Clarity on the protections available to staff and the length of time those protections last
- Protected disclosures can also relate to the actions of any third party contractor
- Personal grievances are not covered by this policy unless in the public interest
- Clarity on making disclosures to the media

3. Recommendations

3.1 The Board are asked to approve the revised Whistleblowing Policy.

Whistleblowing Policy

December 2021

To be reviewed December 2024

Revision History

Handbook Version Number	Date	Change	Author
V1.0	1999	Approved by the Board	S Deery
V2.0	01/12/15	Updated in line with GDPR	P Stevenson
V3.0	01/12/21	General Update • Updated language • Further clarity on protected disclosures • Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment	S Deery

Contents

1. Background

1.1 Whistleblowing is the term used when an employee passes on information concerning wrong-doing. In this policy, we call that making a "disclosure" or "blowing the whistle". The wrongdoing will typically (although not necessarily) be something they have witnessed at work.

1.2 The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA) inserted various new sections into the Employment Rights Act 1996. As the name suggests, the intention of PIDA was to encourage the disclosure of information that is in the public interest such as illegal, dangerous or corrupt practices. The Act fundamentally endorses that any serious concerns disclosed should be raised in a manner that provides protection to the employee in that they are free from fear of intimidation or reprisals. It also enables staff "blowing the whistle" about wrongdoing to complain to an employment tribunal, if they suffer any form of detriment in doing so or in the case of a dismissal. We will treat all disclosures consistently, fairly and professionally.

1.3 SCRA will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation of any member of staff who raises a serious concern via this policy, at any point during the process or throughout their employment with SCRA. This will be treated as gross misconduct, which will be dealt with under SCRA's Disciplinary Procedure.

1.4 SCRA aims to operate with the utmost integrity but recognises that sometimes we may get this wrong which could damage our reputation and our services to children and young people. We want a culture, which is open, honest and transparent, in line with our vision and values as well as our commitments to our Rights, Inclusion and Corporate Parenting Strategy.

1.5 The policy is available to all employees of SCRA who have concerns relating to the delivery of SCRA's corporate and frontline services. SCRA is committed to achieving high professional and ethical standards of work in all aspects of practice.

1.6 All new staff to SCRA will be advised of this policy through their employment contracts and the formal induction process. The policy will be published on Connect.

2. Qualifying Disclosures that Provide Protection to the Employee

2.1 The PIDA does not provide protection for whistleblowers in all circumstances. A disclosure will only qualify for protection if it is reasonably believed that it tends to show that one or more of the following has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur:

- The commission of a criminal offence
- A breach of legal obligations
- A miscarriage of justice
- The endangerment of the health or safety of any individual
- Environmental damage
- The deliberate concealment of information relating to any of the above

The wrongdoing does not need to be on the part of the employer – it can also relate to any third parties such as contractors to amount to a protected disclosure.

2.2 Personal grievances are not covered by the PIDA, unless the case is in the public interest. Personal grievances should be raised under SCRA's Grievance Policy.

2.3 A whistleblower will qualify for protection under the Act if the disclosure is made in good faith:

- To SCRA following the procedure outlined or to another person who is reasonably believed to be solely or mainly responsible for the failure in question.
- To a legal adviser in the course of obtaining legal advice.
- To a person or prescribed body, e.g. the Health and Safety Executive, Equalities and Human Rights Commission It must be reasonably believed that the information and any allegation in it is substantially true and that it is reasonably believed to be a matter that falls within the description of matters for the prescribed body.

2.4 If an employee chooses to approach the media with their concerns, then in most cases they would lose their rights to protection. Only in exceptional circumstances can an employee go to the media without losing their rights.

- They must reasonably believe that the information and any allegation contained in it are substantially true and they are not acting for personal gain.
- The employee reasonably believed that they would be victimised if they had made the disclosure to SCRA or to a prescribed person.
- They reasonably believed that disclosure to SCRA would result in the destruction or concealment of evidence.

3. Procedure

3.1 It is preferable, and at the heart of the PIDA, to raise the matter internally, if appropriate, but only the employee can make the decision to proceed in this way. It is in the interests of the organisation and its workforce that issues and concerns are raised in this way. If there is any doubt about how to proceed, the employee should speak to the designated officer.

3.2 An employee should normally raise concerns in the first instance with their line manager. However, where this is not felt appropriate, the employee can approach, in confidence, the Head of Finance and Resources as the designated officer who has been entrusted by the Board with the duty of investigating staff concerns under the Whistleblowing Policy.

3.3 The Head of Finance and Resources will act impartially to give appropriate advice and support. Where concerns are raised with the Head of Finance and Resources an initial interview will be arranged to understand the area of concern. The Head of Finance and Resources will ascertain whether the employee raising the concern wishes their identity to be disclosed and will reassure the employee about protection under the Act. If the employee does not feel it appropriate to approach the Head of Finance and Resources, they should consider another member of the Executive Management Team who will proceed in accordance with this policy. Employees can seek free confidential support and counselling from SCRA's Employee Assistance provider at any point in the process or seek support from UNISON.

3.4 The Head of Finance and Resources will write a brief summary of the interview, which will be agreed by both parties. The Head of Finance and Resources has the responsibility to ensure that the concerns raised by the employee are progressed with the appropriate person within SCRA.

4.   Concerns about the Principal Reporter/Chief Executive or Board Members

4.1   If the concern is about the Principal Reporter/Chief Executive, this should be made to the Board Chair, who will consider how the investigation should proceed and the route for any subsequent appeals.

4.2   Where the concern raised is about a Board Member, the individual should raise their concern directly with the Board Chair. Where the concern is about the Board Chair, then the individual should raise their concern with the relevant Sponsor Division in the Scottish Government.

5.   The Investigation

5.1   Dependent on the nature and/or the seriousness of the concern/issue raised, the Head of Finance and Resources will appoint an appropriate manager/officer to conduct the investigation. A representative from the Human Resources Team will support the investigating officer. Neither should have previous knowledge of the concern raised. The investigation will be conducted in the strictest confidence in line with SCRA's Investigation Guidelines.

5.2   The investigation will be conducted timeously concluding with a recommendation on what action requires to be taken. Where feedback is delayed for any reason, the Head of Finance and Resources will advise the employee of this.

5.3   If at any time throughout the investigation it becomes evident that formal disciplinary action may be a possible outcome, the investigation should be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the disciplinary procedure and in line with the gravity of the offence. The investigation should be concluded as quickly as is reasonably possible. However, SCRA will allow for some flexibility in the timescales for completion given the possible complexity of the concerns raised. A date to conclude the investigation should be agreed at the outset and all parties concerned should be advised of this in writing. Should it be thought necessary to suspend an employee during the course of an investigation, this action should be taken in line with SCRA' Disciplinary Procedure.

5.4   At all stages of the process any employee interviewed as part of the investigation will have the right to be accompanied by a colleague or UNISON representative.

6.   Possible Outcomes

6.1   If the investigation shows there are grounds for further action against individuals the appropriate policies and procedures should be followed.

6.2   It may also be appropriate during the investigation to report concerns to external agencies e.g. Police, Health and Safety Executive and/or other public bodies. It may be necessary to suspend internal investigations until the outcome of any criminal proceedings are known.

6.3   Where the investigation concludes that false concerns were raised with malicious intent or for personal gain, this would constitute grounds for disciplinary action to be taken against the employee raising the concerns.

6.4   If the concerns are unfounded, the employee will receive feedback on the investigation and outcome.

6.5   A member of staff who raises concerns in good faith will not suffer adversely as a consequence of their actions, even if these concerns are unfounded.   Mediation and dispute resolution, to help rebuild trust and relationships may be considered.

6.6   The employee who raised the concerns has the right to appeal the outcome of the investigation. To appeal the employee would need to expressly state that there was a serious flaw in the investigation or the outcome of the investigation and detail what that flaw is believed to be.   Any appeal should be made to the Principal Reporter/Chief Executive within 10 workings days of the written outcome of the investigation. The Principal Reporter/Chief Executive will arrange a hearing where the employee and the manager/officer who conducted the investigation will present their cases. The appointed Chair of the hearing will make a decision based on the information presented as to whether or not to uphold the appeal.

7.   Feedback

7.1   Once the investigation has been completed the employee who raised the concerns originally should receive feedback. This should include whether the original concerns were upheld, respecting the confidentiality of all parties.

7.2   Following the conclusion of the internal process, it is possible that an employee may continue to be concerned about an issue. If this is the case there are a number of options open to them. Employees may:

- Report the matter to SCRA's Sponsor Branch in accordance with the Regulatory Framework for SCRA.
- Report the matter to the appropriate professional or regulatory body.
- Access voluntary agencies for advice.

7.3   Anonymous whistleblowers will not ordinarily be able to receive feedback and any action taken to look into a disclosure could be limited.

7.4   SCRA's Information Governance Officer (where appropriate) will:

- Record the number of whistleblowing disclosure they receive and their nature.
- Maintain records of the data and content of feedback provided to whistleblowers

8.   More Information

More information can be obtained from:

The Government: https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing

ACAS: http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1919

UNISON: https://www.unison.org.uk/get-help/knowledge/disputes-grievances/whistleblowing

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Overview of Policies

Accountable Director: Principal Reporter/Chief Executive   **Date:**   15 December 2021

Report prepared by: Governance Officer

Recommendation:

The Board is asked to:-

    a) Note the programme of policy reviews undertaken in 2021, as outlined in section 3.1.

    b) Consider and approve the core policies list and suggested additions, in line with best practice as outlined at paragraph 2.5.

    c) Review and agree the schedule planned for 2021 and the proposed delegations for approval.

Reason for Report: Board discussion/approval

Resource Implications: Within available resources

Strategy: Within agreed plans

Equalities Duties: Equalities Impact Assessment not required (individual policies are subject to EQIA on agreement and/or point of review)

Document Classification: Not protectively marked

1. Introduction

1.1 The Board agreed at its September 2013 meeting that an annual overview report on policies be presented for noting by the Board. It its December 2020 meeting an action was taken to consider a change to governance and approach to reporting format.

1.2 This report covers the period from January to December 2021.

2. Overview of Policies

2.1 All policies are available to staff via Connect (SCRA's intranet).

2.2 To comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) all new/revised policies, processes and/or practices require an EHRIA. Significant progress has been made in ensuring this compliance and strong joint work has been established with the SCRA Equalities Review Group who offer support, quality assurance and direction as well as oversight of plans and refinements to negate or reduce any assessed impacts.

2.3 The HR Sub-Group of the National Partnership Forum deals with policies that affect employment and/or that may have an impact on staff at work.

All SCRA policies are routed via the Partnership Forum for consultation.

2.4 Health and Safety policies are monitored and tracked by the Health & Safety Committee.

2.5 The Board agreed in 2013 that policies which set direction, require specific high-level scrutiny and governance arrangements or are of a novel/controversial, public interest nature will be routed via the Board . These include;
- Whistleblowing,
- Risk Management,
- Fraud Policies
- Complaints
- Media Handling
- Organisational Change,
- Voluntary Severance/Redundancy Policy
- Major revisions to SCRA terms and conditions
- Overall Health & Safety Policy Statement

In line with Best Practice the Board are asked to consider the addition of the following policies;
- Records Retention and Destruction Policy
- Anti-Harassment Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection & GDPR
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Board Code of Conduct

3.   Review of Policies

3.1   Over the reporting period (January – December 2021) work undertaken on policies and guidance is as follows:

Function	Status	Title	Review schedule
HR	New	Probationary Policy	3 years
		Agile Working Policy	2022 and then 3 yearly
	Revised	Grievance Policy	Review schedule is every 3 years – unless sooner if required by legislative or policy change
		Disciplinary Policy	
		Whistleblowing Policy	
		Recruitment and Selection Policy	
		Disability Leave Policy	
		Leave Policy	
	Guidance	Investigation Guidelines	
		Covid-19 FAQ's	As required/monthly
Health & Safety	Revised	Fire Safety Policy	As required by HSE
	Other	Flu Vaccination programme for staff	Annually
Information Governance	New	Freedom of Information Policy	3 years or as required by legislative change
	Other	Records Management Plan	3 years
		Updated guidance for providing Hearings papers to Solicitors.	In line with practice developments
		Formally advised on our website that we are not currently implementing our retention policy in respect of case files.	Under review in line with CSAS functional development (to enable compliance)
Information Technology Security	New	CSAS Security Monitoring Policy	Review schedule is every 3 years – unless sooner if required by legislative or policy change
		Digital Media Declaration Form	
		Cyber Security - Phishing Guidance	
		RAVHI Security Policy	
Practice	Practice Direction	Note on Contact Directions	As required by legislative amendments and/or subsequentials
		Receipt and Registration of Referrals	
		The Decision Making Framework	
		Drafting Statements of Grounds	
		Sexual Offences (Scotland (Act) 2009	
		Interim Position participation in hearings and ICSO applications	

		Non-disclosure	Ongoing review of PD by IG leads.
		Participation Rights and Legislative Changes July 2021	6 monthly/ as required by pandemic arrangements
		Coronavirus Practice Issues in relation to Hearings	
		Practice Issues at Court in relation to Coronavirus	
	Practice Notes*	Decision-making in Cases involving Domestic Abuse	As required by legislative amendments and/or subsequentials
		Offence Grounds, Rehabilitation of Offenders Act and Disclosures	
		Missing Children	
		Signed Witness Statements	
		Expert/Skilled Witnesses	
	Other	Note on the Test for a Hearing making a Non-disclosure Measure	
		Briefing Note on New Legislation	
		Briefing Note on Attendance Options at a Children's Hearing	
		Note on Extension/Repeal of the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020	
		Summary of Rights of Attendance at a Children's Hearing or PHP	
Finance	Revised	Schedule of Delegated Authority	Annual
		Procurement Policy	Annual
		Fraud Policy	Annual
		Risk Management Policy	Annual
		The Corporate Procurement Strategy 2020 – 2023	3 yearly and Annual progress report

* Practice Direction is issued directly by the Principal Reporters through reserved statutory powers and duties

4. Programme for 2022

Function	Status	Title
HR	Revise	Inclusion & Diversity Policy
Health & Safety	New	Domestic Abuse Policy
	Revise	Stress Policy
		Advice on Inclement Weather Driving
		Advice on driving and mobile phone use.
		Violence in the Workplace Manual
Information Governance	New	Retention of cases in CSAS
Information Technology Security	Revise	SCRA Staff Handling Visually Recorded Interviews
		CSAS Accreditation Policy

		CSAS Baseline Control Set (Evidence of ISO 27001 Compliance)
		CSAS Forensic Readiness Policy
		CSAS Password Policy
		CSAS Risk Assessment
		CSAS Risk Management and Accreditation Document Set (RMADS)
		CSAS Risk Treatment Plan
		CSAS Security Policy
		CSAS SyOps for SCRA Users of CSAS
Practice	Revise	Further update to Practice Direction 4 on Non-disclosure.
		Updating all related Practice Directions to reflect the content of Practice Direction 33 on the legislation on participation rights etc.
		Updating how certain decisions of hearings are recorded
		Updating further Practice Directions to reflect CSAS
		Updating Practice Direction to address full implementation of the Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019
		New Practice Direction on decision-making by a children's hearing
		Practice Note on appeals to the higher courts
		Extended material on Locality-based reporter induction
		Material on threshold for not opposing an appeal
		Criteria for seeking a warrant
Finance	Revise	Schedule of Delegated Authority
		Procurement Policy
		Fraud Policy
		Risk Management Policy
		The Corporate Procurement Strategy 2020 – 2023

5.   **Recommendation:**

5.1   The Board is asked to:-

     a) Note the programme of policy reviews undertaken in 2021.

     b) Consider and approve the core policies list and suggested additions, in line with best practice as outlined at paragraph 2.5.

     c) Review and agree the schedule planned for 2022 and the proposed delegations for approval.

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Strategic and Operational Risk Registers

Accountable Director: Principal Reporter/Chief Executive   **Date:**   15 December 2021

Report Authors: Head of Finance & Resources
Governance Officer

Recommendation:

1.   To review and approve proposed changes to the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers.

Reason for Report: For monitoring

Resource Implications: Not applicable

Strategy: Not applicable

Consultation: Executive Management Team

Equalities Duties: Equalities impact assessment not required

Document Classification: Not protectively marked

1. **Introduction**

    1.1   This report provides an update to the Board on the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers.

    1.2   The Risk Registers were last reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee at its November 2021 meeting and the Board at its June 2021 meeting.

2. **Risk Management in SCRA**

    2.1   SCRA's Revised Risk Management Policy was approved by the Board at its meeting in June 2019. The Board has responsibility for the system of internal control and risk management within SCRA. The Risk Management Policy will next be reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee in February 2022 and taken to the March 2022 Board for approval. The Board charges the Audit and Risk Committee with overseeing the operation of the system of internal control and with ensuring robust risk management arrangements within SCRA, including reviewing the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers six-monthly.

    2.2   The Risk Registers are kept under review by the Executive Management Team (EMT) and the Planning and Performance Network (PPN).

    2.3   2021/22 Locality Plans have linked Locality Risk Registers and the common risk themes have been reviewed by EMT.

    2.4   The risk register format includes an assessment of inherent, residual and target risk in order to demonstrate the impact of existing control mechanisms and to link the agreed organisational risk appetite.

3. **Strategic Risk Register**

    3.1   The current Strategic Risk Register is attached at Appendix 1. The register and potential new risks were considered at a Strategic Risk Register session on 21/10/21.

    3.2   Changes to the register are as follows:

    Risk 1 - IT Security measures are insufficient to prevent a successful cyber-attack on SCRA case information which results in loss of data which cannot be recovered. CMS has now been fully decommissioned, fully mitigating the potential for a major security breach. This risk will remain on the register with four new actions added relating to the potential for cyber security risks out with our control. An annual review of the Cyber Security Policy will also be added to the Board work plan.

    Risk 2 - The optimum model for CSAS ownership and accountability and a joint future partnership between SCRA and CHS is not adequately defined and agreed. A frame work for the application of the Digital budget beyond June 2021 has now been agreed. Digital Strategy 2021/22 aims and objectives have been developed and approved by the Executive

Management Team.

Risk 3, New Risk – SCRA do not maintain a skilled, motivated and flexible workforce which can meet current demands and future needs. This is a new risk developed at the EMT risk register review session. A number of actions have been identified including the implementation of the 2021/22 L&D plan, the development of a transition plan from pandemic to endemic, the development of a clear approach to change management and the review of structure, lines of accountability and decision making model at locality level.

Risk 4, New Risk - Significant policy, legislative and reform/transformation change agenda impacts on SCRA's ability to deliver core services or necessary change programmes. - This new risk was also developed at the EMT risk register review session. A number of actions have been identified which will help SCRA to assess and ensure readiness for the next set of changes which will impact over the period of the next Corporate Plan.

Risk 5, New Risk - 2022/23 Scottish Government budget does not deliver required level of revenue and capital resources with impact on ability to influence and respond effectively to new legislative and policy pressures. Temporary funding and a higher ratio of temporary to permanent staffing in 2021/22 creates uncertainty in planning for 2022/23 and beyond. The PR/CE and Head of Finance & Resources are in dialogue with Scottish Government to influence the 2022/23 funding settlement and EMT will ensure through the 2022/23 Challenge & Review process that revenue and capital funding is aligned to business priorities.

Risk 6, New Risk - Failure to progress Board approved Environmental plan (e.g. reduce GHG emissions by 10%-20% by March 2024) and inability to accelerate plans to meet new targets. Sustainability actions will be included in all 2022/23 Locality Plans and the 2022/23 Business Plan. Further actions include engaging with staff in development of leadership and delivery arrangements and engaging with a consultant to assist with a plan for property emissions reductions.

Risk 7, New Risk - Inability to engage with digital inhibits realisation of full potential of new technologies resulting in significant operational disruption. This risk is under development by the PR/CE and Digital Programme Director.

3.3   Other areas considered at the EMT risk register review session included The Promise and Management of Hearings, no risks have been identified at this stage. This will be kept under review.

4.   Operational Risk Register Profile

4.1   The current Operational Risk Register is attached at Appendix 2. The register and potential new risks were considered at the EMT risk register session on 21/10/21.

4.2 Changes to the register as follows:

Risk 1 "Insufficient operational capacity to consistently deliver quality services". It was agreed last summer that this risk would not be the focus of management attention whilst the organisation was dealing with the response to the pandemic. It was noted in May that this risk was starting to come into focus again and consideration will be given to merging risk 1 and risk 3 in the next quarterly EMT risk review. All actions are complete so it is now proposed this risk, which is linked to risk 3, is closed and replaced with a new operational risk.

Risk 2, "During the early implementation of CSAS there is a heightened risk of Non-Disclosure breaches". Actions are largely complete however three new actions have been added reflecting the creation of a Non-Disclosure Group, work on process mapping and a commitment to interim changes in November 2021.

Risk 3, New Risk, "Insufficient operational capacity (staff, technology, property) to deliver local recovery plan and CSAS implementation within an acceptable timeframe". This was a new risk developed at the six-monthly review in Autumn 2020. All actions are complete so it is now proposed this risk, which is linked to risk 1, is closed and replaced with a new operational risk.

4.3 Two new risks have been identified which are under development:

- "Absence of a roadmap to a new standard way of operating inhibits the organisations ability to manage ongoing impacts of the pandemic." There are a number of mitigating controls and actions in place which will be reflected in the capturing of this risk, these include the current work on the Standard Operating Model (SOM), the development of new roles and responsibilities for support staff and the focus on maximising the benefits of CSAS.
- Lack of synergy between SCRA and key partners transition plans negatively impacts on delivery of hearings.

4.4 The main themes from Locality Risk Registers were reviewed at the Planning and Performance Network on 2/11/21. The PPN identified three issues for potential escalation to the Operational Risk Register: (i) the stability of technology, staff roles and competency in relation to IT, level of IT service in outreach hearing centres, (ii) management capacity and (iii) the number and duration of secondments to national teams.

5. Conclusion

5.1 The risks across both registers focus on the ongoing challenges in the delivery of a safe and effective service with the focus on capacity, resources and information governance.

6. Recommendation

6.1 To review and approve proposed changes to the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers.

Appendix 1 – Strategic Risk Register (October 2021)

Appendix 2 - Operational Risk Register (October 2021)

Previous Papers:

Risk Register Report to Audit & Risk Committee – November 2021

Risk Register Report to Board – June 2021

Strategic Risk Register November 2021

Risk No	Reference to SCRA Objectives	Risk Type	Risk Description	Risk Owner	Gross Risk Score L*I	Key mitigating controls	Control Effective ness	Residual Risk Score L*I	Risk Appetite	Target Risk Score L*I	Actions and Timescales	Action Owner /Deadline
1.	Cyber Security Strategy	Service Delivery/ Information/ Reputational	IT Security measures are insufficient to prevent a successful cyber-attack on SCRA case information which results in loss of data which cannot be recovered.	Head of IT	16 (4*4)	Being part of the SCOTS/iTECS environment which is responsible for safeguarding SG IT from cyber-attack reduces CSAS's exposure as the only access to CSAS is through the SCOTS environment.	Effective	9 (3*3)	Cautious to Minimalist	6 (3*2)	Proposal to EMT to run a test exercise of a Ransomware attack, using tools from the National Cyber Security Centre.	'Exercise In a Box' completed March 2021.
						Scottish Government have achieved Cyber Essentials Plus certification for the SCOTS network.	Effective				Operational risk - full transition of teams from CMS to CSAS platform will significantly reduce risk to operations.	Complete.
						Annual Penetration testing of CSAS ensures that CSAS's vulnerability to common cyber threats is fully understood.	Effective				Security risk – potential for major security breach will only be fully mitigated following decommissioning of CMS.	Complete.
						By testing CSAS disaster recovery procedures regularly and reviewing and testing SCRA business continuity plans annually gives assurance that SCRA is capable of recovering from a cyber security attack.	Effective				EMT 'exercise in a box'.	H of P&P/Digital Security Manager. Mar 22
											Attend seminars/events to learn from other public bodies experiences.	H of P&P/Digital Security Manager. Mar 22
						Kept up-to date with new threats by attending cyber security events and professional membership – SCRA's Digital Governance Lead is a Certified Information Security Manager (CISM) and a member of the Cyber-security Information Sharing Partnership (CiSP)	Effective				Ensure all lessons captured from recent CSAS Major Threat.	H of P&P/Digital Security Manager. Dec 21
											Annual review of Cyber Security Policy.	H of P&P/Digital Security Manager. Mar 22
						Full accreditation for CSAS.	Effective				Regular tracking of Top Five cyber security risks.	Digital Security Manager. Ongoing

Risk No	Reference to SCRA Objectives	Risk Type	Risk Description	Risk Owner	Gross Risk Score L*I	Key mitigating controls	Control Effectiveness	Residual Risk Score L*I	Risk Appetite	Target Risk Score L*I	Actions and Timescales	Action Owner /Deadline
2.	Digital Programme Masterplan	Financial/ Information/ Service Delivery/ Reputational	The optimum model for CSAS ownership and accountability and a joint future partnership between SCRA and CHS is not adequately defined and agreed.	SCRA PR/CE	16 (4*4)	Senior Team Workshops Digital Programme Director/Chief Executive meetings Digital Oversight Committee DDB/Programme Assurance Group Licencing and software agreements. Legal ownership agreed. Change Control Board.	Effective Effective Effective Partly Effective Effective Effective Partly Effective	9 (3*3)	Cautious	4 (2*2)	Develop SCRA's partnership decision making model, including assessment of future SLA/MOU and KPIs. June 2021. Agree a framework for application of the Digital budget beyond 2020. June 2021. Agree governance arrangements which will inform the decision making model and to support delivery of objectives. May 2021 Joint Board discussion. Develop a Digital Strategy beyond 2020 – 2021/22 Aims and Objectives in draft. June 2021.	SCRA PR/CE & CHS NC/CE & Digital Programme Director. SCRA PR/CE & CHS NC/CE & Digital Programme Director. SCRA PR/CE & CHS NC/CE & Programme Director Underway SCRA PR/CE & CHS NC/CE Digital Programme Director/H of Strategy
New	People/ Operational Strategies	Staff wellbeing/ succession planning/ Reputational	SCRA do not maintain a skilled, motivated and flexible workforce which can meet current demands and future needs.	Head of HR	20 (4*5)	L&D Strategy. Agile working policy. Agreed roles and responsibilities. Maintain focus on staff wellbeing in all plans	Partly Effective Partly Effective Partly Effective	12 (3*4)	Minimalist	4 (2*2)	Implement 2021/22 L&D Plan with a particular focus on digital upskilling. Review roll out of Agile Working Policy. Review roles and responsibilities aligned to the SOM. Develop a transition plan from pandemic to endemic. Develop a clear approach to change management and align organisational structure in terms of accountability and autonomy. Review structure, lines of accountability and decision-making model at locality level. Wellbeing supports and development of Wellbeing Strategy	H of HR. Mar 22 H of HR. Mar 22 H of HR. Mar 22 SCRA PR/CE. Mar 22 H of HR/H of Strategy. Mar 22 SCRA PR/CE/ SOMs/H of HR. Mar 22 H of HR Jun 22

Risk No	Reference to SCRA Objectives	Risk Type	Risk Description	Risk Owner	Gross Risk Score L*I	Key mitigating controls	Control Effectiveness	Residual Risk Score L*I	Risk Appetite	Target Risk Score L*I	Actions and Timescales	Action Owner /Deadline
New	Key business strategies	Operational service delivery/ staff wellbeing	Significant policy, legislative and reform/transformation change agenda impacts on SCRA's ability to deliver core services or necessary change programmes.	Head of Practice & Policy/Head of Strategy	16 (4*4)	Unison Partnership Framework. EHRI assessments. Influencing Strategy.	Effective Partly effective Effective	12 (3*4)	Minimalist	4 (2*2)	Create forum to assess impact on different areas of the organisation of policy, legislative, reform/transformation changes and communicate to service. Develop model of engagement to secure input from workforce in influencing activity. Assess ability to successfully navigate the reform agenda in terms of leadership, cultural mindset, appetite for change and organisational structure. Ensure key business strategies reflect the new baseline position and are aligned to the policy, legislative and reform/transformation change agenda.	H of P&P/H of Strategy. Dec 21 H of P&P/H of Strategy. Dec 21 SCRA PR/CE/ H of HR. Mar 22 SCRA PR/CE/ H of Strategy. Mar 22
New	Financial Strategy	Operational service delivery/ Financial	2022/23 Scottish Government budget does not deliver required level of revenue and capital resources with impact on ability to influence and respond effectively to new legislative and policy pressures.	Head of Finance & Resources	20 (5*4)	Five year Financial Plan. Regular dialogue with Ministers and SG (DCAF, Sponsor Team, Finance Manager).	Effective Effective	12 (4*3)	Cautious	4 (2*2)	Update 5 year Financial Plan and present at September 21 Board. Submit forward budget figures to SG for 2022/23 sg Budget process. Develop and present briefing papers to Ministers/SG. Respond to SG requests for funding scenarios. Ensure through 2022/23 EMT Challenge & Review process that revenue and capital funding is aligned to business priorities.	Complete. Complete. Complete. Ongoing. H of F&R. Feb 22
New	Environment Plan	Operational/ Financial/People	Failure to progress Board approved Environmental plan (e.g. reduce GHG emissions by 10%-20% by March 2024) and inability to accelerate plans to meet new targets..	Head of Finance & Resources	16 (4*4)	Annual Environment report to Board. Annual Environmental performance report to Scottish Government. Environmental working group.	Effective Partly effective Partly effective	12 (3*4)	Minimalist	6 (2*3)	Sustainability actions to be included in all 2022/23 Locality Plans and 2022/23 Business Plan. Engage staff in development of leadership and delivery arrangements. Engage consultant to assist with plan for property emissions reductions.	SOMs/H of Property. Mar 22 H of F&R. Dec 21 H of F&R/H of Property. Mar 22

Operational Risk Register October 2021

Risk No	Reference to SCRA Objectives	Risk Type	Risk Description	Risk Owner	Gross Risk Score L*I	Key mitigating controls	Control Effectiveness	Residual Risk Score L*I	Risk Appetite	Target Risk Score L*I	Actions and Timescales	Action Owner /Deadline
1	High Quality Decisions	Operational/ Reputational	Insufficient operational capacity to consistently deliver quality services.	Senior Operational Managers Locality Management Teams	(4:4) 16	Use and deployment of temporary staff to meet operational pressure is reviewed routinely at LMT/with SOM's.	Effective	(2:4) 8	Cautious	(2:2) 4	Complete Court review (complete) and implement relevant recommendations.	Complete.
						A managed approach to workload measurement is in place.	Effective				Targeted investment/resource to improve resilience/sustainability in small number of Localities.	Complete.
						All key IT/Business systems, availability, performance and function is maintained.	Partly Effective				Internal Audit Locality review including Locality Workforce Planning.	Complete.
						Delivery and regular review of comprehensive Locality Plan and Head Office Business plans.	Effective				As part of 2018/19 Budget Planning carry out an early review of non-establishment posts.	Complete.
						Locality Plans have clear visibility and leadership and timelines on quality improvements.	Partly effective				Equalisation programme analysis.	Complete.
						Delivery of routine management information and data reporting prompts focussed planning and action.	Effective				Resource redeployment.	Complete.
						Inter Locality working protocol is initiated as part of BCP when required. Impacted by CSAS security model.	Partly Effective					
						Individual Locality Performance Reviews, led by SOM's – replaced by more regular BCP meetings in 2020/21.	Effective					
						Quarterly review of Locality plans by LMTs.	Partly Effective					
						Quarterly Business Plan reviews by Head of Strategy/OD.	Partly Effective					
						Engagement of planning officers/team with LMTs.	Effective					

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2	Effective Collaboration	Operational/ Reputational /non-compliance with legal duty	During the early implementation of CSAS there is a heightened risk of Non-Disclosure breaches. The components of the heightened risk are: • Staff pressures • Capacity for double-checks • CSAS functionality changes • CSAS migration *(I have not added the list of impacts we discussed to the risk description)*	Senior Operational Managers/ SIRO	(4:5) 20	Practice Direction on Non-Disclosure is reviewed and amended Consistency of practice across localities by complying with Practice Direction. Reduction of disclosure details to minimum possible Partnership working - engage with partners nationally and locally to seek their assistance in adhering to previously agreed principles of reduced ND info and redacting their reports. Data Manager to provide fortnightly ND lists to aid local discussions and heighten awareness. LRMs using ND data reports. Non-disclosure standing item on EMT agenda. Code of Practice on Information Sharing for Hearings system. Sharing information about non-disclosure on CSAS transition support calls (3 per week). Sharing information about non-disclosure on SOM/LRM calls (fortnightly). Regular contact between members of IG Leads group. Management of number of hearings duration transition. Monthly report on breaches to EMT and IG Leads.	Partly Effective Partly Effective Partly Effective Partly Effective Partly Effective Partly Effective Partly Effective Partly Effective Effective Effective Effective Partly Effective Effective	(3:4) 12	Minimalist	(2:2) 4	Complete review of Practice Direction. Confirm completion of CSAS non-disclosure functionality changes in MVP. Engage partner agencies on current challenges with reference to Code of Practice on Information Sharing for Hearings system. Re-iterate messages from EMT on not rushing and seeking assistance. Revisit Code of Practice on Information Sharing for Hearings system with CHIP. Seek assurance from Localities on non-disclosure process to be followed during transition. Monthly report on breaches to EMT and IG Leads. Monitor impact of new staffing on teams capacity to manage non-disclosure cases. Data Manager to develop system generated ND report. SOMs connecting local partnership discussions regarding ND information with CHIP discussions/national framework and identify any gaps/issues. • Pull together a summary of current ND issues. • Produce an analysis of ND breaches over last two years – identify common issues. • Establish sub-group of IG Leads. • Review SCTS processes. ND Group meeting monthly since 1st September. Action log being followed and constantly updated. Workstreams being formed to look at 4 areas of interest: 1. The Starting Point 2. The Handling process 3. The working	Practice Manager. Apr 21 H of P&P. Apr 21 Complete Complete Complete Complete Complete SOMs Apr-Jun 21 Complete SOMs Sep 21 Complete Complete Complete Complete H of P&P. Ongoing until work complete, likely to be March 22.

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											4. Legislative change and supporting the workforce	
											Process mapping in progress.	Data Quality & Assurance Officer. Oct 21
											Interim change to be considered to how we record and notify ND decisions.	H of P&P. Nov 21
3	Recovery Plan	Operational/ Reputational	Insufficient operational capacity (staff, technology, property) to deliver local recovery plan and CSAS implementation within an acceptable timeframe **Staffing** • Initial period of instability Oct-Dec 20 • Wellbeing/ resilience	Senior Operational Managers/ SIRO	(4:5) 20	• Phase start dates • Training delivered to ensure as quick supports to teams as possible • Budget increase	Effective Partly Effective Partly Effective	(3*4) 12	Minimalist	(2*3) 6	• Early start to recruitment of support staff.	Complete
			Hearing capacity • Delivery of sufficient hearing capacity • Optimum use of enabling technology			• Base number of hearings Oct-Dec 20. • Enabling tech plans. • Business Managers/IT Team liaison.	Effective Partly Effective				• Plan Jan-March 2021 hearing calendar. • Establish available capacity using all available technology/hearing rooms. • Delivery and deployment of CCU equipment. • Train staff in use of equipment. • Finalise 2nd order of CCU equipment.	Complete Complete Complete Complete
			New tech – CSAS • Transition support • Operating			• Support to vanguard teams • Training materials	Effective Partly Effective Partly				• Plan for phasing of 2nd wave teams. • Staff from vanguard teams released to support 2nd wave teams.	Complete Complete

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			model/staff roles				Effective				• CSAS Operational Guide.	Complete
			Business Change • Multiple business changes			• Recovery Team	Partly Effective				• Develop 2021/22 locality plans. • Monthly EMT review of plans	Complete