

	Item	Purpose	Papers
1.1	AOB		
1.2	Apologies		
2.	Declarations of Interest		
3.	Updates		
4.	Minutes/Committees		
4.1	Board Action Log and Workplan Matters Arising	Approval	Attached
4.2	Audit & Risk Committee	Approval	Attached
4.2.1	• Draft Minute of Meeting held on 14 May 2020		
4.2.2	• Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report		
	Reports		
5.	Chief Executive's Report	Noting	Attached
6.	Fourth Quarter/Year-end Organisational Performance Report 2019/20 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020	Approval	Attached
7.	2019/20 Draft Budget Outturn	Approval	Attached
8.	Financial Strategy	Approval	Attached
9.	Property Strategy	Noting	Attached
10	Annual Procurement report	Noting	Attached
11.	Communications Plan - Update	Approval	Attached
12.	Equalities Network Annual Report	Noting	Attached
13.	Annual Complaints Report	Noting	Attached
14.	Influencing Report 01 December 2019 to 01 June 2020	Noting	Attached
15.	Digital Strategy Review	Noting	Verbal
16.	Risk	Approval	Attached
16.1	Strategic & Operational Risk Registers		
16.2	New Risks		
	Date of Next Meeting: Routine Board Meeting – Wednesday 23 September 2020		



Board Action Log as at June 2020

Meeting/ Item	Action	Timescale	Owner	Comments	Status
June 19 Equalities Network Annual Report	Action plan to be updated to show priorities set along equalities outcomes	Jun 20	SD	Underway	Not yet due
Sep 19 SCRA Annual Report	Annual Report 20/21 to ensure that areas and scope for improvement are highlighted alongside achievements	Sep 20	LB		Not yet due

SCRA Board Meeting Workplan June 2020

Business Item	Wed 25/3/20	Wed 24/6/20	Wed 23/9/20	Wed 16/12/20	01/21	03/21
Strategic/Corporate						
Policy & Influencing Report		✓		✓		
Research Programme				✓		
Risk Register		✓		✓		
Governance						
Audit Committee Minutes	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Development Day 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	✓		✓			✓
Draft Annual Report			✓		✓	
Annual Workforce Planning Report	✓					✓
Communications Plan		✓				
Performance					✓	
Organisational Performance Report	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Operational						
Locality Performance Reviews				✓		
Chief Executive's Report	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Complaints Review		✓				

Business Item	Wed 25/3/20	Wed 24/6/20	Wed 23/9/20	Wed 16/12/20	01/21	03/21
Equalities Annual Report		✓				
Environmental Annual Report	✓					✓
Overview of Policies Annual Report				✓		
Health & Safety Annual Report	✓					✓
Efficiency Report		✓				
Procurement Report		✓				
Property Strategy		✓				
Digital Strategy update	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Review of Risk Policy		✓				

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION**Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report for 2019/20**

Accountable James Edgar
Board Member: Audit & Risk Committee Chair

Date: 24 June 2020

Report Authors: Governance Officer

Recommendations:

1. To approve the Internal Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report for 2019/20

Reason for Report:	For approval.
Resource Implications:	Not applicable
Strategy:	Not applicable
Equalities Duties:	Equalities Impact Assessment Not Required
Document Classification	Not protectively marked

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide evidence to the Board as to how the SCRA Audit & Risk Committee has fulfilled its remit, and how effectively it has discharged its responsibilities. It also supports preparation of the annual Governance Statement.

2. Context of the Audit and Risk Committee

- 2.1 The Audit & Risk Committee's Terms of Reference are attached at Appendix 1. These were reviewed and approved by the Board at its June 2019 meeting.
- 2.2 The Board appoints non-executive Board members to the Audit and Risk Committee. The Audit and Risk Committee's membership for 2019/20 was as follows:
- James Edgar, Chair
 - Catherine Robertson
 - Martin Toye
 - Suzanne Vestri (Until November 19)
 - Tam Baillie (From February 20)

Where appropriate, the Committee augments the skills and experience of its members by seeking advice from Internal and External Auditors, and Executive Management Team.

- 2.3 The meetings of the Committee are attended by the Principal Reporter/Chief Executive, the Head of Finance & Resources and the Internal and External Auditors. Additionally, other members of the Executive Management Team attend on a regular basis with input from other officers as appropriate. The Governance Officer took minutes for the May 2019, August 2019, November 2019 and February 2020 meetings.
- 2.4 The Committee met four times in 2019/20: May 2019, August 2019, November 2019 and February 2020.
- 2.5 The agenda for each Committee meeting is drafted by the Head of Finance & Resources and approved by the Audit & Risk Committee Chair. In addition a pre-agenda briefing (if required) is made available to the Audit & Risk Chair and involves the Principal Reporter/Chief Executive and Head of Finance & Resources. An overview of the 2019/20 meeting agendas is attached at Appendix 2. Appendix 3 shows delivery against planned outputs for the year.

3. Assurance

3.1 The Audit & Risk Committee gains assurance from the reports submitted by the two audit leads and from the management response to audit recommendations and in person at Committee meetings. The audit plans, developed using SCRA's current strategic objectives and a risk based approach to identification of priority areas for audit review, between them cover a wide range of operational, financial and governance systems. Over and above this the Audit and Risk Committee approves each year a programme of Quality Assurance Audits which are undertaken by SCRA's Quality Assurance Manager. The Quality Assurance programme focusses on issues related to SCRA's compliance with its statutory duties (usually described via Practice Direction from the Principal Reporter) and other practice or organisational guidance and direction. The themes of Quality Assurance are advised by SCRA's Practice and Quality Network. The findings from each audit are linked to corresponding management responses for approval by the Committee.

3.2 The focus of financial reporting in the year was the presentation of the 2018/19 Annual Accounts and the External Auditor's report in August 2019. The Financial Accounts showed SCRA's net expenditure of £26,950k exceeded revenue Grant in Aid of £23,208k by £3,742k. This position reflects inclusion of non-cash items such as depreciation (£979k), IAS adjustment to pension scheme contributions (£2,381k) and pension scheme finance cost (£984k). The Auditor expressed an unqualified opinion on the 2018/19 financial statements.

The Pension Reserve had a deficit of £35,216k as at March 2019. Due to the pension deficit SCRA's reserves have been in deficit since 2009 and in June 2013 SCRA received a letter from Scottish Government to address concerns in this area.

In the year to 31 March 2019 the Management Accounts showed SCRA expenditure (excluding depreciation, unfunded pensions and Digital) of £22,281k which was £415k less than the approved revenue budget. Capital spend of £727k was £79k under the approved budget. The revenue and capital underspends were carried forward to support the 2019/20 budget plans.

3.3 The external and internal auditors have delivered to plans and timelines throughout 2019/20. There has been co-operation between both sets of auditors and between the auditors and SCRA staff and this has been acknowledged in audit reports. Having assessed the Internal Audit function the external auditors were able to place reliance on the work of the internal auditors in a number of areas. Management has agreed with all audit recommendations identified in 2019/20. Progress against delivery of these recommendations is reported twice annually to the Committee by Internal Audit progress reports

- 3.4 Risk management is a key priority for the Board, alongside performance and financial management. The Audit & Risk Committee oversees, on behalf of the Board, the risk management process through co-ordination and monitoring of the implementation of the Risk Management Policy. This includes reviewing Strategic and Operational Risk Registers every six months and as necessary, reviewing the work undertaken on identified high risk areas and the action plans to mitigate the effects of such risks. Risk is a standing item at Board, Committee and Management Team (including Locality Management) meetings.
- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 In 2019 The Risk Reference Group stood down and Locality risk management will now be overseen by The Planning and Performance Network (PPN). The network is chaired by the Senior Operational Manager and will co-ordinate the operational and locality approach to risk, including the development and maintenance of risks (linked and aligned to locality plans).

The PPN's role also includes:

- identifying and sharing good practice
- assessing whether risks are being adequately managed within agreed appetites and tolerances across SCRA
- ensuring that each business area and locality is regularly carrying out risk identification and assessment exercises to ensure that risk registers are accurate and up-to-date.

A risk workshop will be held at a future meeting of the network and will be facilitated by the Internal Auditor.

- 3.7 SCRA/CHS joint risks are monitored via the regular Chief Executive SCRA/CHS Liaison meetings, with any risks being escalated to Board level as appropriate.

4. Impact

- 4.1 Throughout the year as well as the routine business for the Audit & Risk Committee there was a particular focus on information governance and quality assurance, including case sampling. Significant focus was also given to the Digital Programme.
- 4.2 Feedback from the Executive Management Team is that it welcomes the rigour of the Audit & Risk Committee's scrutiny and advice which has maintained an appropriate balance between scrutiny and support.
- 4.3 The Audit and Risk Committee has achieved the following during 2019/20.
- Tracking and influencing progress on non-disclosure and case information breaches.
 - Scrutinising the organisation's risk profile, providing input and scrutiny on the application and review of SCRA's risk management approach to embed risk management arrangements at locality level.
 - Approving and overseeing Internal and External Audit programme plans.
 - Providing scrutiny and direction to SCRA Senior Managers on implementation of Internal and External Audit recommendations across the year.
 - Approving SCRA's Quality Assurance programme.
 - Reviewing case sampling reports on;
 - observation of the reporter in court proceedings
 - practice and processes in relation to Non-Disclosure provisions
 - Reporter decision making.
 - Subsequent monitoring of follow-up actions.
 - Assessing the work of the Audit and Risk Committee against relevant standards as developed by Audit Scotland and aligning practice as required.
 - Receiving and responding to reports in relation to progress and risks in relation to the SCRA Pension Fund (Falkirk LGPS).
 - Considered the report on the Internal Review of NHS Highland.

5. Audit and Risk Committee Self-Assessment

- 5.1 In May 2019, the Audit & Risk Committee undertook its annual self-assessment exercise. Individual assessments informed the Committee's discussion, following which it was agreed that the Committee's approach was largely compliant.
- 5.2 Audit and Risk Committee members will undertake its annual self-assessment exercise in August 2020.

6. Plans for 2020/21

- 6.1 The Audit and Risk Committee will meet in May 2020, August 2020, November 2020 and February 2021. The focus of the meetings will be as follows:

May 2020

Internal Audit - Annual Report 2019/20
 Internal Audit Forward Plan
 Board Effectiveness Review
 Wellbeing Audit
 External Audit – Annual Accounts 2019/20, including Accounting Policies
 External Audit – General Updates
 Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report 2019/20
 Quality Assurance & Performance – Annual Progress Report
 Case Sampling Programme 2020/22
 Review of standing items including topical/regulatory/governance issues.
 Digital Strategy Oversight Committee update

August 2020

External Audit Report on the Annual Accounts
 Annual Accounts 2019/20
 Internal Audit Reviews (per Annual Plan)
 Case Sampling Reviews – per Annual Plan
 Pensions Update
 Information Governance
 Review of standing items including topical/regulatory/governance issues.
 Digital Strategy Oversight Committee update
 Private Meetings with Internal/External Auditors (Audit and Risk Committee Members only)
 Audit & Risk Committee self-assessment

November 2020

External Audit Annual Report
 Internal Audit Reviews (per Annual Plan)
 Case sampling Reviews – per Annual Plan
 Risk Management
 Annual Fraud Report
 Review of Audit & Risk self-assessment
 Digital Strategy Oversight Committee update
 Review of standing items including topical/regulatory/governance issues.

February 2021

Annual Audit Plan (External Audit)

Internal Audit – Annual Plan 2021/22

Internal Audit Reviews (per Annual Plan)

Quality Assurance – Annual Progress Report

Case sampling Reviews – per Annual Plan

Pensions Update

Review of standing items including topical/regulatory/governance issues.

Digital Strategy Oversight Committee update

- 6.2 Regular Progress Reports will be presented throughout the year by the Internal and External Auditors. Regular reports on Information Governance, Quality Assurance & Performance and Audit Recommendations will be presented to the Audit and Risk Committee.
- 6.3 To ensure that the Audit and Risk Committee has a mechanism to keep it aware of topical, legal and regulatory issues, the External Auditors will continue to provide a regular update report detailing issues relevant to SCRA.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 To approve the Internal Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report for 2019/20.

APPENDIX 1**Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference**

The Board has established an Audit and Risk Committee to support them in their responsibilities for issues of risk, control and governance and associated assurance through a process of constructive challenge.

Constitution

1. The Audit and Risk Committee shall consist of four members of the Board. Attendance by non-members is at the discretion of the Chair of the Committee but, the Principal Reporter/Chief Executive will be in attendance and the Chair of the Board by invitation.
2. The Committee will meet four times per year with meetings scheduled in May, August, November and February.
3. The Chair of the Committee will be at the discretion of the Board and membership of the Committee will be reviewed as required by the Board annually
4. The quorum shall be two Committee members.
5. The Internal Auditor and External Auditor will attend meetings of the Committee at the request of the Chair and other officers as appropriate. The Committee will meet at least annually with the Internal Auditor and External Auditor in private.
6. The Committee will report to the Board on its deliberations and will take any directions from the Board on any course of action which it should take, either generally or on any specific matter. A copy of the Minutes will normally form the basis of the Report.
7. The Committee will review its own effectiveness and provide an overview report to the Board annually on the Committee's work and key considerations.
8. The Audit and Risk Committee may
 - (i) co-opt additional members for a period not exceeding a year to provide specialist skills, knowledge and experience , and
 - (ii) procure specialist ad-hoc advice at the expense of the organisation, subject to budgets agreed by the Principal Reporter/Chief Executive

The Remit

To promote and demonstrate high standards of corporate governance, by:

- Helping the Board address the key risks facing the SCRA in carrying out its statutory functions and working towards its strategic objectives;

Providing assurances relating to:

- corporate governance requirements for the organisation
 - strategic processes for risk, control and governance
 - the Governance statement
 - the effectiveness of the internal control environment
- Based on a needs assessment, agreeing a regular and responsive programme of audit on the management and control of work within the Administration and receiving reports on that audit;
 - Deciding on the most efficient and effective means of carrying out the agreed programme of audit;
 - Reporting on the planned activity and results of both internal and external audit, and on the adequacy of management response to issues identified by audit activity, including external audit's management letter/report,
 - Overseeing the finalisation and submission of the accounting policies, the accounts, including the process for review of the accounts and governance statement prior to submission for audit, levels of error identified, and the management's letter of representation to the external auditors
 - Alerting the Board and, where necessary, Scottish Ministers to factors which might affect the ability of the Administration to carry out its statutory functions and achieve its strategic objectives.
 - Consider any proposals for tendering for internal services or for the purchase of non-audit services from contractors who provide audit services.
 - Overseeing and alerting the Board, where appropriate on anti-fraud policies, whistle-blowing processes, and arrangements for special investigations

Date: April 2020

Appendix 2

Agenda items in 2019/20

Lead	May 19	August 19	November 19	February 20
External Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ General Update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Report to those Charged with Governance on the 18/19 Audit (ISA 260), Management Representation Letter ➤ General update 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ General Update ➤ Annual Accounts Performance and Governance Reports: alignment with best practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ External Audit Plan 19/20 ➤ General Update
Internal Audit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recommendations Follow Up Review ➤ Annual Report 18/19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Communications & Stakeholder Engagement ➤ Strategic Planning ➤ Progress Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Digital Strategy ➤ Staff Recruitment & Retention ➤ Payroll and Expenses 18/19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Draft Annual Plan 20/21 ➤ Workforce Planning/Resource Management ➤ Procurement and Contract Management ➤ Progress Report 20/21
Head of Finance & Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Annual Accounts 18/19 ➤ Strategic & Operational Risk Registers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pensions Update ➤ Draft 18/19 Accounts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strategic & Operational Risk Registers ➤ Annual Fraud Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pensions Update
Head of Strategy/OD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Annual Progress Report ➤ Observation of the reporter in court proceedings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ SCRA Annual Report 18/19 ➤ practice and processes in relation to Non-Disclosure provisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reporter decision making ➤ Annual Report – Joint Inspection of Children’s Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Practice & processes in relation to Non-Disclosure provisions ➤ 20/21 Case Sampling Programme
Head of Practice & Policy		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Data Protection Report 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Information Governance Report

Lead	May 19	August 19	November 19	February 20
Audit and Risk Committee Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Committee Annual Report 18/19 ➤ Review of Topical, Regulatory & Governance Issues ➤ Committee Self Evaluation ➤ Digital Delivery Oversight Committee Update. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review of Topical, Regulatory & Governance Issues ➤ Private Meetings with Internal/External Auditors (Committee Members only) ➤ Digital Delivery Oversight Committee Update. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Digital Delivery Oversight Committee Update. ➤ Review of Topical, Regulatory, & Governance Issues ➤ Report on the Independent Review of NHS Highland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Digital Delivery Oversight Committee Update. ➤ Review of Topical, Regulatory, & Governance Issues

Delivery of 2019/20 Audit plans

APPENDIX 3

Report Type	Date Delivered
Quality Assurance Planned Outputs	
Annual Progress Report	May 19
SCRA's Quality Assurance Framework & Work Programme	Feb 20
Outcomes of Case Sampling	May, Aug, Nov 19 & Feb 20
Internal Audit Planned Outputs	
Internal Audit Recommendations Follow Up Review	May 19
Annual Report 18/19	May 19
Communications & Stakeholder Engagement	Aug 19
Strategic Planning	Aug 19
Internal Audit Progress	Aug, Nov 19
Digital Delivery Plan	Nov 19
Payroll & Expenses	Nov 19
Workforce Audit	Feb 20
Procurement Audit	Feb 20
Progress Report	Feb 20
Annual Plan 20/21	Feb 20
External Audit Planned Outputs	
Progress Reports	May, Aug, Nov 19 & Feb 20
Report to those Charged with Governance on the 2018/19 Accounts and Management Representation Letter	Aug 19
Annual Plan 19/20	Feb 20



Accountable Director: Principal Reporter/
Chief Executive

Date: 24 June 2020

Report Author: Neil Hunter

Recommendation:

1. To note the contents of this report

Reason for Report: For information

Resource Implications: None

Strategy: Not applicable

Consultation: Not Required

Equalities Duties: Not required

Document Classification: Not protectively marked

1. Staff Partnership

- 1.1 The National Partnership forum met on 19 May and focussed on two substantive issues – SCRA's response to the COVID pandemic, reflections on the first phase of lockdown and the emerging organisational recovery plan and secondly the planning for CSAS roll out.
- 1.2 Key to the discussion was the need for clear and consistent communication with the wider SCRA staff group on the pathway for organisational recovery, the safe and secure return of staff to offices and from there the re-introduction of some elements of face to face hearings. Of key concern to UNISON is the necessary planning and resources to deal with the case backlog over the course of the remainder of 2020/21. Regular and detailed engagement with the UNISON Branch has been established and is both aimed at being proactive in terms of early sharing of SCRA's plans and approach to recovery as well as being able to react to members issues and concerns, respond to these at speed and fold any wider issues into organisational planning.
- 1.3 A briefing paper to the Partnership Forum on CSAS roll out was prepared and helped structure the discussion on the rationale behind introduction of the system (contribution to recovery/limitations of existing platform etc.) and the approach to learning/familiarisation, support for those in the office environment as well as those at home. An outline of our migration model was also introduced and has been subsequently followed up. The Branch Secretary has also recently been involved in Organisational Readiness discussions involving key SCRA operational and technical staff. Dialogue with UNISON remains open and constructive and SCRA are committed to ensuring that the needs and concerns of the membership and wider staff group will continually be reflected in evolving approach to a successful transition.
- 1.4 The Partnership Forum also reviewed the recent Internal Audit on Wellbeing which highlighted the array of work which has been undertaken across the organisation in recent years. The high level of assurance provided by our Auditors demonstrates the extent to which staff wellbeing has been brought into the core of the organisations planning, delivery and culture and provides a positive basis for further strengthening and development.

2. Strategic Partnerships

- 2.1 The formal meeting schedule of the Childrens Hearings Improvement Partnership and Youth Justice Improvement Board has been deferred during the lockdown period. However SCRA staff have continued to be involved in the
 - Early preparatory work with COPFS and others on future changes to 16/17 year old referrals to the Reporter. Board members will wish to not the Scottish Governments intention to consult on this Programme for Government commitment in late June 2020.
 - Weekly dialogue with CoSLA, Social Work Scotland, CHS and CELCIS on the hearing systems operational and strategic approach during the pandemic

- Weekly dialogue with the Independent Care Review on our approach and alignment with the overarching principles of The Promise.
- Regular dialogue with the Childrens Commissioner on upholding rights and participation in children's hearings
- SCRA has joined the Scottish Government/SOLACE led COVID leadership group and alongside CHS provided an early detailed report on our operational response. SCRA and CHS are now contributing to the monthly narrative report to the Deputy First Minister on children and family service issues.

3. Sponsor Team links

- 3.1 No formal accountability meetings have taken place over the last period. There has been a high level of turnover in our Sponsor Team as a result, in the main, of Scottish Government personnel changes and outward secondment to the COVID response hubs.
- 3.2 The majority of activity with our sponsor team has involved
- Supporting the development and passage of the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 and subsequent work developing interagency guidance, SCRA practice direction and more recently data for the purposes of reporting to the Scottish Parliament scrutiny arrangements
 - Responding to concerns lodged with Scottish Government by the Childrens Commissioner on the approach to children's rights and participation in post lockdown hearings – including correcting information that we regard as factually inaccurate or out of date
 - Communicating on SCRA's return to work and recovery planning

4. Covid 19 Business Continuity

- 4.1 From 4 May Childrens Hearings have made use of video technology, on a secure platform to ensure that critical and high priority decisions on statutory protections for children and young people can continue across Scotland. Between 4 May and 1 June 612 hearings have been conducted in this way, with the number of hearings each week steadily increasing (trebling in number between week 1 and week 5)
- 4.2 Panel Members, children, young people and family members/relevant persons, social workers, Reporters and where necessary safeguarders, legal representatives and advocates have been able to use virtual hearings to ensure as many of the core elements of a children's hearing can be retained in reaching decisions on the best interests of each child or young person. A national virtual hearings team has been put in place to support all potential participants to make the most of the virtual experience – including testing devices, advice/training and providing financial support for data for families.
- 4.3 A large amount of targeted information to hearing participants has also been provided across various social media platforms. Experience and ongoing evaluation of virtual hearings at this stage continues to be relatively mixed – and when all of the key ingredients work together they can work really well.

Key issues around consistent connectivity and access to appropriate devices continue to be at times problematic. The number of hearings being conducted as a whole, given the restrictions placed by the lockdown arrangements is somewhere around 20% - 25% of that we would expect in the normal operating environment. Whilst significant prioritisation of the most urgent hearings will continue for some time a sizeable backlog in hearings is emerging which will require to be carefully managed across the remainder of 2020/21 with significant service delivery and resource implications.

4.4 SCRA recently provided extensive data to the Scottish Government on the use of the emergency Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 powers for the Parliamentary reporting period of 8 April to 21 May. Within the reporting period there have been:-

- 462 Compulsory Supervision Orders, where orders have been extended beyond their expiry date
- of 16 interim orders authorising the use of secure accommodation, 9 used the extended timescales which are available under the provision.
- No recorded cases where a young person has been kept in secure accommodation for an additional 24 hours before coming to a children's hearing.
- 284 uses of the ICSO provisions
- 152 uses of the IVCSO provisions
- 244 uses of Court ICSO/IVCSO provisions

4.5 In line with practice direction Reporters are using these powers only to the extent necessary and are reviewing these arrangements on a case by case basis, and taking into consideration whether there would likely be a risk of detriment to the child's welfare if the Compulsory Supervision Order was not varied or terminated before the original expiry date.

4.6 Work is currently underway to identify the degree of case backlog, incorporating existing, new and deferred casework in order to provide a detailed operational recovery plan, taking into account the range of factors being faced by SCRA in the coming months and how best we deploy our resources.

5. Covid 19 Recovery planning

5.1 The Routemap out of Lockdown places Childrens Hearings in the phase 1 of the approach, alongside a number of other community and public services. Planning is well underway for a significant number of offices to be re-opened in late June/early July and for some adaptation of physical hearings (to allow for social distancing to be ensured) to take place around the middle of July and gradually increased from that point. Given the limitations in the size of hearing rooms across Scotland there will be a need to considerably change the physical hearing model and adopt a mixed methods approach. Childrens Hearings can vary widely in terms of the number of participants involved. They are by their very nature designed to be inclusive and discursive. Because of this, the actual number of hearings which will be able to take place in some adapted physical

form is currently uncertain as is their overall contribution to recovery of the hearings backlog. CHS and SCRA will continue to work over time to optimise the approach and delivery of hearings and will continue to develop virtual hearings alongside that of the developing physical hearing model. It is unlikely that the re-opening of Hearing Centres in themselves, whilst current social distancing remain in place, will contribute significantly to the recovery of the backlog situation.

5.2 The re-opening of hearing centres is being undertaken in 2 distinct phases:

Stage 1

Assessed requirement	Timeline
Preliminary environmental checks and analysis testing in conjunction with our facilities management provider and/or building owners	Underway Awaiting legionnaire's lab tests for 1 st wave reopening
Cleaning of all offices by our Facilities Management provider	Provide current negotiating release of existing cleaning staff from furlough
Spatial redesign of SCRA offices to ensure and support social distancing	Underway - Local Managers currently assessing and implementing this with SCRA property team
Ensuring all appropriate PPE is in place for staff in this first phase	Ordered and initial deliveries commence week beginning 8/6 across all core sites
Identifying all touch surfaces and putting in place safe working office protocols for use of communal areas	Underway – office protocols framework complete and in discussion with UNISON
Complete travel plans for staff – minimising public transport as per SG advice	Underway as part of individual discussions with staff members
Submission and assessment of our plans to Health Protection Scotland for assessment and advice	Week commencing 15 June
Agreement with trade unions on return to work plans	Ongoing
Welcome staff back to office base on a staggered basis, whilst other staff will remain at home (ratio's likely to be 1/3 rd in office and remainder at home)	Indicative schedule 22 June – Glasgow Central (Stirling) 29 June – Tayside and Fife (Dundee) - South East - Ayrshire (Kilmarnock)

	6 July - Lanarkshire/D&G - North Strathclyde - Ayrshire (Irvine/Ayr) - Highlands and Islands - Grampian -Tayside and Fife (Perth/Glenrothes) - Central (Falkirk/Alloa) 13 th July – Irvine - Elgin - Arbroath - Stornoway - Kirkwall - Thurso - Tranent - Lochgilphead
Begin to identify and notify hearings that may take place in SCRA Hearing Centres	SCRA currently schedule and notify hearings 2-3 weeks in advance. Schedule for resumption of small number of hearings per site approximately 3 weeks from office opening date (e.g. 22 June – scheduled for 13 July, 29th June scheduled for 20 July etc.). Subject to and dependent upon size of hearings and available accommodation to enable regulations, agreement on core model of physical hearings between CHS and SCRA
Identify alternative community venues that could host hearing rooms and supplement capacity	Partner discussions at local level on completion of hearing centre assessment and reconfiguration

Stage 2

Assessed requirement	Timeline
Spatial redesign of Hearing Rooms and waiting rooms to support social distancing	Commenced on desktop basis at this stage. Practical changes delivered point from which staff return to offices
Ensuring all PPE is in place for hearing centre users	First wave of PPE delivered. Final advice from HPS on suitability for level of inherent risk
Agree hourly/daily cleaning regimes, roles and responsibilities with staff, FM contractors and Trade Union	Discussions ongoing – will ramp up significant costs quickly.
Installation of additional enabling technologies that will allow	Discussion on going with CHS on optimum model – balance of experience with

hearing rooms to host various hybrid hearing options	efficiency of rota and scheduling and availability of hardware and software in hearing centres
Complete travel plans for children, young people and families – minimising public transport as per SG advice	As part of Reporter discussions on scheduling.
Undertake mock hearings with AST representatives to identify pinch points and adaptations to the operating model, welcome and reception arrangements and panel member facilities	TBA between AST/SCRA Locally and as required
Ongoing engagement with and advice from OHOV/ Foster Care Network and Youth JustUS	Commenced – focussing on approach/methodology/choice/voice/atmosphere/PPE use etc,
Submission of return to hearings plans to Health Protection Scotland for assessment and advice	wb 15/6
Sign off of arrangements and plans with key centre users (AST/LA etc.)	TBA

5.4 Key issues

5.5 Space of Hearing rooms to support regulations

5.6 Some parts of our estate are simply not big enough to accommodate hearings with 2m social distancing. A range of different approaches, including smaller number in different rooms across hearing centres may be required.

5.7 Cleaning regimes will make the turnaround of hearing rooms less than normal. Adding physical hearings to our repertoire will increase overall capacity – but it is highly unlikely that all hearing rooms can be used simultaneously and with the social distancing arrangements we expect initially very cumbersome and labour intensive pre-hearing preparations to be in place for some time. Our best estimate is that where you have 2 hearing rooms which can currently host 3 hearings each over 3 hours and be immediately ready for another 3 – our current limitations will be that both hearing rooms will be required to enable social distancing for one hearing and that at best 2 hearings could be achieved over a 3 hour period – so one third of capacity in this example.

5.8 Use of external facilities

- 5.9 This will be explored principally through other public sector resources such as school hubs etc. and as required at local level. However with schools themselves opening in August and also facing similar social distancing pressures any use of hubs is likely only to be short term. Over and above this schools will also be seeking to utilise other public service space and SCRA will be competing with other services for space. We would hope to gain a degree of prioritisation in most areas and Scottish Government have agreed to explore and support this where possible. Our third alternative beyond maximising our own space and other public buildings is to rent space in the private sector where this is available and feasible. This could have significant resource implications as well as the potential to be operationally disruptive.

5.10 CSAS roll out

- 5.11 CHS and SCRA commence roll out of new digital systems in July 2020. These new systems as well as providing the foundations for fulfilling our long term strategic ambitions on modernisation and improved outcomes for children and young people are also now core to our operational recovery. This is a huge and complex piece of planned work. Further pressures on scheduling of the hearings diary are inevitable and have been endorsed by the recent Technical Assurance Framework gateway review undertaken by the SG Digital Assurance Office in March 2020. Some significant thinning out of hearings activity will be necessary in different localities until completion of roll out in late August.
- 5.12 We are working closely with National colleagues in CHS as we develop our thinking and plans for the re-opening of hearings centres as well as the local teams and partners. As you would expect, we are also consulting with Children and Young People on how this might look and feel for them – to better understand their preferences, their anxieties and anything that we could do to make this better or easier for them – and in some cases that might not be coming into a physical hearing.
- 5.13 This next step has to allow two things – the return to face to face but also an improvement in the offering of participation for children, young people and their families. It is a mammoth task given the current limitations, however it is key that we work on the principal of individual need to allow rights to be met. The Better Hearings standards that we all strive to achieve talk to this principle and this is something that we have aimed to implement through our Corporate Plans – a blend of hearings solutions that meet individual needs and rights - albeit not under these constrained circumstances.

5.14 Staff availability

- 5.15 Social distancing, continued child care and caring responsibilities of our staff group and those vulnerable as a result of underlying health problems means that we are unlikely to be able to exceed around one third of staff being in offices at any one time in the foreseeable future. Planned summer leave (which SCRA are actively encouraging – from a wellbeing and resource

planning perspective), CSAS roll out (see above) will also impact considerably on our resource and productivity levels and therefore our recovery levels.

6. Press and Communications Team update – March to June 2020

- 6.1 Since the first meeting of the Business Continuity Group was held on Tuesday 3 March, the focus has been on COVID-19 internal and external communications.

6.2 Internal communications

- 6.3 The initial focus was on internal communications with new sections and pages created on Connect, regular all staff emails/Team Briefs, updated sets of FAQs on Connect, along with a special edition of Healthy Being e-zine, focusing on staff mental wellbeing during the pandemic.

6.4 Children and young people

- 6.5 There has also been a significant focus on external communications – particularly for children and young people. Since the 17th March when we posted our first latest news item on our website, supported by social media posts, there has been an increase in traffic to our website. There has also been an increase in searches to the site and we have been as proactive as we can in responding to searches.

- 6.6 Some examples of website latest news items include: Participating in virtual Hearings, virtual Hearings Q&As, top tips in virtual Hearings, getting help and support attending a virtual Hearing, your rights in virtual Hearings and giving your views in virtual Hearings. In addition, we created a cartoon animation for children and young people about the 5 top tips in virtual Hearings.

6.7 Vscene guidance

- 6.8 This was co-produced with Our Hearings, Our Voice, and supported by Practice, IT, the Participation Officer and our Corporate Parenting Lead. The instructions for the use of Vscene in virtual Hearings were prepared after testing with both young people and staff. Hearing notification letters have been adjusted to reflect options available to families, and regular updates regarding advocacy provisions, legal representation and information to support children, young people and families has been updated regularly. When contact is made with the Vscene Mailbox Team, alongside login details and information about testing, an information leaflet designed by the Press and Communications Team is sent out which contains information on advocacy provisions, legal representation and support for parents and carers.

6.9 Parents and carers

- 6.10 Alongside these provisions, SCRA has developed positive working relationships with partner organisations to promote a variety of support mechanisms to children, young people and adults involved in the Children's

Hearings System. For example, SCRA have partnered with Children 1st's 'Parentline' to offer support to parents and carers of children and young people in the Children's Hearings System. The Participation Officer drafted a training and information pack designed for use by the specialised team to offer support and information to callers. Work in this area is being built upon, and exploration for additional family support mechanisms are being considered by both parties with a view to trialling a more specialised service in the East.

6.11 Social media

- 6.12 All of our activity has been promoted on our social media outlets with a series of branded visuals to accompany them. Some of our social media highlights and website statistics from May 2020 are available in Appendix 1.

6.13 Media

- 6.14 SCRA was contacted by BBC Scotland at the start of May. The journalist, Reevel Alderson was interested in running a piece on Radio Scotland about virtual Hearings. Detailed information and some initial statistics were provided. A short item appeared on BBC Radio Scotland on the morning of Monday 4 May and there was a piece on the BBC website.
- 6.15 On Thursday 21 May, as part of speech to the Scottish Parliament on easing lockdown restrictions, the First Minister mentioned face to face Children's Hearings would be resuming in phase one. This was mentioned in passing in the media, but we were not been contacted by the media asking about it. We had an external statement published on the site later that afternoon and would direct media to it in the first instance. This was followed up with more detail in a set of Q&As which were published on the website a few days later.

6.16 Partnership communications

- 6.17 There has been ongoing communications with partners at national and local level. There has been some targeted communications, such as emails to advocacy organisations, as well as joint communications. There was an initial joint statement issued by SCRA, Children's Hearings Scotland and Social Work Scotland on 27 March. There was a further joint statement between SCRA and Children's Hearings Scotland issued on 20 April focusing on virtual Hearings. These statements are available in the dedicated Coronavirus section of SCRA's website and they are also available on the CHIP website.

Appendix 1 – Social media and website activity – May 2020



Tweets earned 37.0K impressions organically over the period

TOP TWEETS

SCRA @ChildReporter

Following the First Minister's announcement today on lifting lockdown restrictions, we have published an initial response about what it means for Children's Hearings [#coronavirus](https://coronavirus.shar.es/aHUu9I) <https://shar.es/aHUu9I>

Impressions	3,804
(how many people we reached)	

SCRA @ChildReporter

Did you know Your Rights are the same in a virtual Hearing? Find out more here <https://bit.ly/3csHfPX> [#virtualhearings](#) [#yourrights](#) [#Covid19UK](#)

Impressions	3,522
(how many people we reached)	

SCRA @ChildReporter

Want to find out our strategic aims for the next three years? Our Corporate Plan 2020-2023 has been published today <https://bit.ly/3bJim0Y> [pic.twitter.com/DTRFr2LN3J](https://twitter.com/DTRFr2LN3J)

Impressions	2,636
(how many people we reached)	

SCRA @ChildReporter

It's important you give your views and have your voice heard at your virtual Children's Hearing. Find out more <https://bit.ly/35CrQtw> [#virtualhearings](#) [#giveyourviews](#) [#haveyourvoiceheard](#) [#Covid19UK](#)

Impressions	2,478
(how many people we reached)	



Post reach

4 May - 31 May

5,268

Page Views

4 May - 31 May

211

Total Page views

Up by 64%

Page followers

4 May - 31 May

32

Top Posts

Scottish Children's Reporter Administration: Top tips for virtual hearings...

Taking part in virtual Children's Hearing? Watch our short animation for some top tips. More detailed advice on participating virtually is available on our website - <https://bit.ly/3f1b6k2> #virtualhearings #Covid19UK #toptips

2.1K views

Heard that face to face Children's Hearings are restarting? We have started to work on our plans to make this happen safely. Check out our Q&As to find out more <https://bit.ly/3c2bOed> #Covid19UK

2,659

People Reached

Want to know what the emergency legislation means for your Hearing and decisions made by Hearings? Find out more about the changes to the law here <https://bit.ly/2LImBj0> #covid19UK

1,053

People Reached

Our Corporate Parenting Plan 2020-2023 for children and young people has been published today <https://bit.ly/3dbkTTm> #care #connect #protect #keepthepromise

1,031

People Reached



641 followers

Virtual Hearings Help and Support – **122 impressions**

Corporate Parenting Plan – **197 impressions**

Write down your views beforehand – **142 impressions**

Your Rights in a virtual hearings – **135 impressions**

Audience age range of young people on Instagram:

13-17 4%

18-24 10%



**516
followers**

Following the First Minister's announcement today on lifting lockdown restrictions, we have published an initial response about what it means for Children's Hearings [#coronavirus](#)

275 impressions

Taking part in a virtual Hearing? There's lots of people who can help and support you <https://bit.ly/35ux9Ly> and remember to watch our top tips animation

210 impressions

Did you know Your Rights are the same in a virtual Hearing? Find out more here [#virtualhearings](#) [#yourrights](#) [#Covid19UK](#)

167 impressions

SCRA WEBSITE

Users in this period

11,619

Page views

16,888

Top pages viewed

<https://www.scra.gov.uk/contact-us/coronavirus-attending-childrens-hearings/>

1,023 VIEWS

<https://www.scra.gov.uk/2020/05/route-map-out-of-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

923 VIEWS

https://www.scra.gov.uk/parent_carer/compulsory-supervision-orders/

782 VIEWS

<https://www.scra.gov.uk/about-scra/information-for-professionals/>

678 VIEWS

https://www.scra.gov.uk/young_people/virtual-hearings/

468 VIEWS

<https://www.scra.gov.uk/2020/05/planning-for-face-to-face-hearings-starting/>

320 VIEWS

65% DESKTOP USERS

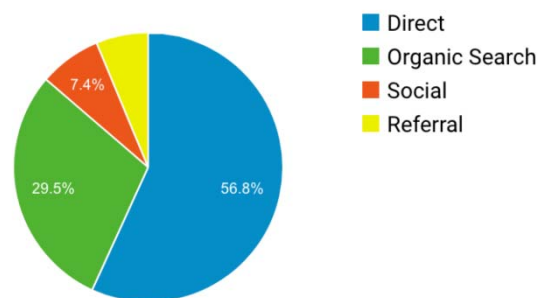
30% MOBILE PHONE USERS

5%

TABLET

USER

Top Channels



SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Annual Procurement Report 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020

Accountable Director: Head of Finance and Resources **Date:** 24 June 2020

Recommendation:

The SCRA Board is asked to:-

- a) Note Procurement activity during 2019/20 in line with SCRA's Corporate Procurement Strategy and the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014
- b) Note the ongoing contribution of the Procurement Strategy to SCRA's ongoing work

Reason for Report: *Procurement Duties requirement*

Resource Implications: *Within existing budgets*

Strategy: *Procurement Strategy 2017-20*

Equalities Duties *Indicate whether an Equalities Impact assessment 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 – annual update of
Procurement activity**

Issues/action points:-

Consultation:

Document Classification:

1. Background Information

- 1.1 In accordance with The Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014, SCRA is required to publish an Annual Procurement Report which should include:
- A summary of the regulated procurements that have been completed during the period covered by the report;
 - A review of whether those procurements complied with SCRA's Procurement Strategy;
 - The extent to which any regulated procurements did not comply, and a statement detailing how SCRA will ensure that future regulated procurements do comply;
 - A summary of any community benefit requirements imposed as part of a regulated procurement that were fulfilled during the period covered by the report;
 - A summary of any steps taken to facilitate the involvement of supported businesses in regulated procurements during the report period;
 - A summary of regulated procurements expected to commence in the next two financial years; and
 - Reporting on other matters as contained within SCRA's Corporate Procurement Strategy.
- 1.2 The report also provides an overview of SCRA procurement performance across the year as well as the range and scope of the Procurement Team work and its criticality to the smooth operation and support of many aspects of SCRA's work.
- 1.3 In addition to the mandatory sections, the report also provides an update on other procurement activity including work in connection with Equalities & Inclusion, Cyber Resilience and the PCIP and Audit recommendations.
- 1.3 A copy of the Annual Procurement Report will be published on SCRA's website and a link will be sent to the Scottish Ministers.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The SCRA Board is asked to:
- a) Note the Procurement activity during 2019/20 and the continued delivery of SCRA's procurement strategy
 - b) The ongoing contribution of the Procurement Strategy to SCRA's ongoing work



SCOTTISH

CHILDREN'S REPORTER

ADMINISTRATION

Procurement in SCRA

Annual Procurement Report

For the period
1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020

Published June 2020

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Summary of Regulated Procurements Completed
3. Review of Regulated Procurement Compliance
4. Community Benefits Summary
5. Supported Businesses Summary
6. Future Regulated Procurements
7. Non-regulated Procurements Completed
8. Procurement Performance
9. Other Procurement Activities
10. Continuous Improvement Activities
11. Annual Procurement Report Template
12. Ownership and contact details

- Appendix A: Summary of Regulated Procurements Expected to Commence in the next two financial years
- Appendix B: Summary of non-regulated procurements completed
- Appendix C: Annual Procurement Report Template
- Appendix D: Glossary

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 About SCRA

The Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) is a national body focused on children and young people most at risk. SCRA was formed under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1994 and became fully operational on 1st April 1996. Our main responsibilities as set out in the Act are:

- To facilitate the work of Children's Reporters
- To deploy and manage staff to carry out that work
- To provide suitable accommodation for Children's Hearings

The Children's Hearings System provides the operational setting in which SCRA and its partner agencies work. The aim is to provide a safety net for vulnerable children and young people, and deliver tailored solutions which meet the needs of the individuals involved, while helping to build stronger families and safer communities.

SCRA's Procurement Strategy 2017-20 was approved by the Board in December 2016 and refreshed in May 2020 for the period 2020 to 2023. The Strategy details the principal aims of SCRA Procurement as follows:

- Deliver a professional and flexible procurement service to both internal managers and external suppliers, ensuring that SCRA receives best value for money in the procurement of all goods, services and works in order to deliver an effective and efficient service to children and families.
- Contribute to SCRA carrying out its functions and the achievement of its purposes by ensuring that suitable contracts are in place, in particular to allow the dissemination of information and data and to ensure we have adequate premises for hearings to take place.
- Ensure full compliance with EU & UK Public Sector regulations giving due regard to SCRA's needs and requirements to ensure operational effectiveness is maximised.
- 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.

The Strategy set out seven priorities for the three years covered by the Strategy. The priorities and progress to date are covered in the table at section 3.2.

The Principal Reporter/Chief Executive was clear in his foreword that the solid approach to procurement, captured in the strategy, allows SCRA Localities and Teams across the country to have the kind of access to specialist support and advice they need, now and in the future, to make wise, best value decisions about goods and services, to benefit from the scale of national contracts and to vision future ways of making things ever more efficient, responsive and adaptable to our changing needs.

1.2 Procurement Vision

Our vision for the future is one where the approach to procurement and contract management is fully integrated into our business strategies and a culture of best practice is embedded which will deliver legally compliant procurement processes, ensuring value for money, sustainability, quality services and continuous improvement.

1.3 Publication of Report

This report will be published on SCRA's website at www.scra.gov.uk.

2. SUMMARY OF REGULATED PROCUREMENTS COMPLETED

The following regulated procurements were completed in the period from 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020.

Date of Award	Contract Title/ Subject Matter	Supplier	Total Est. Value (Including Extensions (Ex. VAT))	Total Est. Value (Excluding Extensions) (Ex. VAT)	Contract Start Date	Contract End Date (Excluding Extensions)
22/05/2019	Independent Accreditor for CSAS	Arcanum Information Security Ltd	£42,197	£42,197	31/05/2019	30/05/2022
10/09/2019	Postal Services	Royal Mail	£890,658	£296,886	01/10/2019	30/09/2020
25/09/2019	Enterprise Agreement Software	Softcat Ltd	£840,000	£840,000	01/10/2019	30/09/2022
08/10/2019	Supply of Gas	Total Gas & Power Ltd	£179,250	£35,850	01/04/2020	31/03/2022
29/10/2019	Winter Gritting	Idverde Ltd	£51,306	£38,480	01/11/2019	31/10/2022
10/01/2020	Dual Monitors for CSAS	HP Inc Uk Ltd	£596,400	£596,400	13/01/2020	13/02/2020
26/02/2020	Water & Waste Water	Business Stream	£232,188	£174,171	01/04/2020	31/03/2023

* The above table does not include contract extensions which were taken during 2019/20.

3. REVIEW OF REGULATED PROCUREMENT COMPLIANCE

3.1 In compliance with Section 15(5) of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 and published Statutory Guidance, SCRA is now required to set out how it will ensure its regulated procurements will:

- Contribute to the carrying out of its functions and achievement of its purposes
- Deliver value for money
- Be carried out in accordance with the General Duties and the Sustainable Procurement Duty
- Ensure payment of invoices are made no later than 30 days after the invoice relating to payment is presented

3.2 Review of compliance with Corporate Procurement Strategy

Key Priorities	Compliance in 2019/20
1. Ensure full compliance with EU and UK	Public Sector regulations
For all regulated procurements comply with statutory requirements for addressing Fair Work Practices, including payment of a Living Wage	<p>Complied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressed by SPCD in setting up Frameworks (Postal Services, Enterprise Agreement Software, Supply of Gas, Dual Monitors for CSAS, Water & Waste Water). Statements on workforce matters, CSR, Environmental performance and Sustainability included in ITTs and Evaluation criteria where applicable.
Develop a diverse range of suppliers, including SMEs, Supported Businesses and Third Sector	<p>Complied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressed by SPCD in setting up Frameworks (as above). Engaged with Supported Businesses re possible contract opportunities.
Consider Community Benefit clauses in all contracts for good and services over £50k in value	<p>Complied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considered by SPCD in setting up Frameworks (as above). One Cat C contract awarded will result in Community Benefits.
Ensure that regulated procurements are carried out in compliance with SCRA's sustainable procurement duty	<p>Complied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressed by SPCD in setting up Frameworks (as above). Sustainability Test included in Procurement Strategies and Evaluation Criteria included in tenders issued, where appropriate.
Comply with SCRA's Health & Safety Policy by ensuring that suppliers comply with relevant regulations and best practice	<p>Complied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressed by SPCD in setting up Frameworks and in SCRA tender exercises, where relevant.
Follow SCRA's established approach of consulting and engaging with those affected by its procurements	<p>Complied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where appropriate SCRA engaged with partner organisations in the Hearing System, internal stakeholders (setting up a UIG or discussion with business lead) and suppliers (market test day).

Ensuring SCRA's contracts deliver value for money	<p>Complied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement Strategies identify best route to market and ensure demand is justified. • Business Cases include whole life costing where appropriate. • Opportunities for collaboration actively considered. • All regulated procurements tendered via PCS.
Ensuring that SCRA pays its suppliers within 30 days and endeavour to make payment within 10 working days of receipt of a valid invoice	<p>Partly complied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in payment performance will be targeted again in 2020/21.
2. Promote continuous improvement	
Develop contract management practices across SCRA	<p>Partly complied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results of a baseline exercise were considered in drafting contract management guidance which will be implemented in 2020/21..
Develop and train staff involved in managing contracts and suppliers	<p>Partly complied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No formal training delivered but regular focus at Contracts Review Group. Formal training planned for 2020/21.
Embed the role of the Contracts Review Group in ensuring SCRA receives best value whilst meeting legal obligations	<p>Partly complied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued progress in 2019/20, focus of group in 2020/21 will be on effective contract management.
Develop relationships with Scottish Government Procurement and identify opportunities for collaborative working with other public bodies	<p>Complied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good relationships with Scottish Government Procurement and opportunities for collaboration actively considered.

3.3 Review of regulated procurements

SCRA's Head of Finance and Resources reviewed all regulated procurements in the period April 2019 to March 2020, as shown in the table above, for compliance with the organisation's Procurement Strategy and Policy.

In summary all seven of our regulated procurements:

- where relevant were tendered via PCS;
- complied with SCRA Procurement Policy thresholds;

- where appropriate, included statements in the ITTs on Fair Work Practices, sustainability including fair and ethically traded goods and payment performance for suppliers and sub-contractors.

Five were awarded under Scottish Government Frameworks, one was awarded following a mini competition using a Crown Commercial Services Framework and in the case of Winter Gritting Services, an award was made following a single stage competition.

4. COMMUNITY BENEFITS SUMMARY

- 4.1 Where relevant, consideration was given to the inclusion of Community Benefit Clauses (CBCs). A question on CBCs was included in the Winter Gritting contract awarded during the reporting period. These have not yet taken place. The CBCs agreed include:
- One talk and one workshop to two local schools. Their visits could cover a presentation on careers in the construction and landscaping industry as well as information that is of use to the pupils, such as safety around worksites and a basic introduction to horticulture or civil engineering.
 - An on-site workshop, where pupils could go to site to get a glimpse of how their environment is being improved.
 - Should they require to recruit to deliver our contract, they will ensure the recruitment drive is targeted locally.
- 4.2 A question on CBCs was also included in the Facilities Management contracts and the Legal Services contract which commenced during the reporting period and will be awarded during 2020/21.

5. SUPPORTED BUSINESSES SUMMARY

- 5.1 SCRA actively take steps to facilitate contract opportunities for Supported Businesses where possible. One low value contract for furniture in Greenock was awarded to RSBi during the reporting period, through the Supported Factories & Businesses Framework.
- 5.2 SCRA invited Dovetail Enterprises to quote for furniture for the Ochil House Boardroom but they were unsuccessful.
- 5.2 SCRA met with the Supported Businesses Framework Managers to discuss a possible project for the supply of furniture for the hearing room project. The Framework Managers discussed the project with the Supported Business, however, it was agreed that on this occasion use of the Framework was not an option.

The Framework Managers agreed that the meeting had been beneficial and a discussion around the best way of encouraging and incentivising use of Supported Businesses in the supply chains of main contractors was thought provoking and they would explore the opportunities around this with their colleagues.

6. FUTURE REGULATED PROCUREMENTS

- 6.1 A summary of regulated procurements expected to commence within the next two financial years is included at Appendix A. Details may be subject to change due to budget revisions/resource availability and the COVID-19 pandemic.

7. NON-REGULATED PROCUREMENTS

- 7.1 A summary of non-regulated procurements and contract extensions with an estimated value above £20k, awarded in the reporting period, is included at Appendix B.

In addition c.14 non-regulated procurements below £20k, with a total value of around £145k were awarded in the reporting period.

8.0 PROCUREMENT PERFORMANCE

8.1 Supporting national policies

SCRA and CHS are nearing the end of a joint Digital Programme which will provide a robust platform and future-proofed systems on which it will be possible to transform digital services in the Children's Hearing System. The Strategy is fully aligned with the Scottish Government's Digital ambitions for Scotland. The Procurement Team have supported the Programme Manager by providing procurement advice and leading on any tendering requirements.

SCRA's Procurement Team participate in the organisations Environmental Group which leads on environmental reporting and development of environmental initiatives. In addition the potential for environmental benefits are considered in procurement exercises and where appropriate sustainability is included as one of the criteria for tender evaluation with bidders advised that sustainability is a key feature of the Procurement Reform Bill and a focus of Scottish Government.

8.2 PCIP Healthcheck

The last Healthcheck took place in December 2019. The main recommendations were:

- Learning & Skills – although agreed as green status, it was recommended that a formalised training plan/register for DPOs is created to ensure consistent knowledge of commercial and procurement requirements . Consideration should also be given to linking the delegation of DPA to completion of training.
- Fraud – Although agreed as green statues, it was recommended that a formalised record of training in fraud prevention is created to enable visibility of DPOs having their knowledge refreshed to mitigate any risk.

- **Contract Management** – An amber status was agreed and it was recommended that a formalised process is implemented routinely to gauge the level of risk (and therefore level of contract management) that should apply. This includes the creation of a formal handover document from the Procurement Team to the Contract Manager to make the KPIs, deliverables etc. visible to enable measurement and management of the Supplier. This will also provide Contract Managers with items to include on the agenda for contract review meetings.
- **Savings & Benefits** – A green status was agreed, however, it was recommended that the Benefits Reporting Guidance document is used as a reference for all potential savings going forward. It was also recommended that the softer benefits realised from calling off SG frameworks are also recorded.

Following a self-assessment exercise being carried out in 2018/19 to establish a baseline and identify areas for improvement, revised guidance on CSM has been developed and will be communicated internally during June 2020.

8.3 2019/20 Published Spend Data

The following table was extracted from the data published by Spikes Cavell.

<p>£6,227,148</p> <p>Total Spend</p>			<p>£5,339,311</p> <p>Core Trade Spend</p>	
<p>532</p> <p>Input Suppliers</p>	<p>495</p> <p>De-duplicated Total Suppliers</p>	<p>37</p> <p>Duplicate Suppliers</p>	<p>74</p> <p>SME Suppliers</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Local Suppliers</p>
<p>2197</p> <p>Transactions</p>	<p>£12,580</p> <p>Avg. spend per supplier</p>	<p>4%</p> <p>PCard Spend</p>	<p>37%</p> <p>SME Spend</p>	<p>14%</p> <p>Local Spend</p>
<p>Key:</p> <p>Total Spend - the total amount of spend for the 19/20 year.</p> <p>Input Suppliers - The number of suppliers, before de-duplication.</p> <p>De-duplicated Total Suppliers - The number of unique suppliers.</p> <p>Duplicate Suppliers - The number of suppliers which are duplicates of another supplier.</p>				

PCard Spend - Percentage of transactions by value of spend that are identified as Purchase Card transactions in the extract.

Transactions - The total number of transactions.

Avg. spend per supplier - The average spend per unique supplier.

Core Trade Spend - Core Trade is a sub-set of your supply base that includes all **Trade Suppliers** and **Social Care Providers** with whom you have spent £1,000 or more in the financial year.

SME Suppliers - Small & Medium sized businesses where the supplier has less than 249 employees or where the annual revenue is less than £22.8m.

SME Spend - Spend with SME as a percentage of Core Trade Spend.

Local Suppliers – Spend with suppliers within the same local authority area as your organisation (based on Postcodes).

Local Spend – Spend with local suppliers as a percentage of Core Trade Spend.

8.4 Contracted Spend

Of the estimated total procurement spend of £6,227,148 in 2019/20, £5,844,046 was contracted spend (including non-regulated contracts). This represented c. 94% of all procurement spend in the year.

Procurement spend is closely monitored by the Procurement Team with support from the Contracts Review Group.

8.5 Spend with SMEs

During 2019/20 37% of SCRA's Core Trade Spend was with SMEs, however, it should be noted that Spikes do not currently have sufficient data from all suppliers on their number of employees, so the SME information is likely to be understated.

Of the seven regulated procurements completed within the reporting period, one was awarded to a SME. A further six non-regulated contracts above £20k were awarded to SMEs and c. nine contracts below £20k.

8.6 Invoices paid within 10 working days

During the year ended 31 March 2020 SCRA paid 70% of all invoices within the terms of its payment policy.

8.7 Collaborative working

SCRA utilises Scottish Government Frameworks where possible. In addition SCRA occasionally participates in UIGs (Mobile phone and Police Scotland's British Sign Language procurement) and works with Children's Hearings Scotland where possible. No collaborative contracts were awarded by SCRA during 2019/20.

8.8 Savings & Benefits

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Scottish Procurement have not yet confirmed the Q4 savings that SCRA made from SCRA's use of Scottish Government collaborative framework agreements, however savings of £343.3k had been confirmed to end of Q3 2019/20. It should be noted that these are not savings which reduce SCRA's costs or help SCRA to operate within the approved level of Grant in Aid so are not counted as efficiency savings.

The Procurement Officer has developed a Savings Tracker to capture savings from SCRA contracts (as distinct from Frameworks above). Information on these savings have been captured throughout 2019-20 for regulated and non-regulated procurements, and the accumulated savings, largely based on the difference between the average of all tenders less the winning bid and large savings over the 4 year period of the Winter Gritting contract, amount to around £156.4k across the 10 procurement exercises where savings were calculated.

Savings are now reported to SCRA's Board in the quarterly Budget Outturn reports.

9.0 OTHER PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES

9.1 Digital Strategy

The Procurement Team have supported the third year of the Digital Programme. The main procurement exercise was for the development of new core IT solutions for the Children's Hearings System and a contract was awarded in 2017/18. During 2019/20 the Procurement Team played a key role in the tender exercise for Security Accreditation which was awarded in the first quarter of 2019/20.

The Digital Strategy vision is to create a child centred hearing system, staffed with digitally capable volunteers and employees, who confidently utilise digital technologies to improve outcomes for children and young people in Scotland including through enhanced participation and engagement. The Strategy is linked to Scottish Government ambitions for digital transformation.

9.2 Facilities Management

During 2019/20, the Procurement Team worked with the Property Team to finalise the tender documents for three separate Facilities Management contracts. These were issued between September and November 2019. Following an extensive clarification period, all three contracts will be awarded early 2020/21.

9.3 Equalities & Inclusion

The Procurement Officer participated in the dry run of the Equalities & Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) training in order to feedback comments from a Procurement perspective. Following this, the Procurement Officer met with the Inclusion & Diversity Manager in March 2020 for further advice on completing an EHRIA for the updated Corporate Procurement Strategy in order to make the

Strategy more inclusive. The EHRIA was submitted to the review group in May 2020.

9.4 Policy development

In line with the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act, SCRA's Procurement Strategy was revised in May 2020 with changes approved by the senior management team.

The Procurement Policy is reviewed every two years and was updated in March 2019 and approved by the senior management team.

9.5 Cyber Resilience

In January 2020, the Scottish Government advised that the Supplier Cyber Security Guidance Note had been developed to meet the commitment to develop a proportionate, risk-based policy in respect of supply chain cyber security for Scottish public sector organisations.

The Procurement Officer has been working with the Digital Governance Lead in connection with a scoping exercise to implement the requirements. From 1st April 2020, the Procurement Officers will consider the importance of cyber security before commencing each procurement and where relevant will complete the Scottish Cyber Assessment Service decision-making support tool and include relevant wording in tender documentation and Terms & Conditions of contracts. As per the guidance, the tool will also be used on relevant existing contracts.

10.0 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITY

10.1 Competency Framework

During 2019/20 the Procurement Officers updated their Procurement Competency using the Framework template. The priority areas for development will be incorporated into Personal Development Plans for the Procurement Officers and progress tracked in 2020/21.

10.2 Contract and Supplier Management (CSM)

New CSM guidance was developed during 2019/20 which will be implemented in 2020/21.

There is a need to introduce more formality into contract management of critical suppliers in line with findings in the PCIP and Internal Audit review.

10.3 Procurement Audit

A Procurement and Contract Management Audit was carried out during December 2019 as part of the 2019/20 Internal Audit Plan and process improvement recommendations will be implemented in 2020/21.

10.4 Networks and Training

SCRA's Procurement Officers are members of a Cluster Group. In addition Procurement Officers attended the following events during the reporting period:

- Heads of Procurement Meeting
- SG 15th National Procurement Conference & Professional Procurement Skills Training Zones
- SG Contract & Supplier Management Training Modules
- Webinar on Annual Procurement Reports and the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act
- Asbestos Awareness Refresher Training

11.0 ANNUAL PROCUREMENT REPORT TEMPLATE

In accordance with Scottish Procurement Policy Note SPPN 4/2019 an Annual Procurement Report template has been completed and attached at Appendix C.

12.0 OWNERSHIP AND CONTACT DETAILS

The owner of SCRA's Annual Procurement Report is as follows:

Ed Morrison
Head of Finance & Resources
0131 244 8585
ed.morrison@scra.gsi.gov.uk

SUMMARY OF REGULATED PROCUREMENTS EXPECTED TO COMMENCE IN THE NEXT 2 FINANCIAL YEARS

Subject Matter	Type	Expected Contract Notice or Call Off Publication Date	Expected Award Date	Expected Start Date	Estimated Value of the Contract or Extension
Address Verification Software for CSAS	Re-Let	15/06/2020	27/07/2020	01/08/2020	£75,000
Confidential Shredding (Extension)	Extension	N/A	01/02/2021	11/03/2021	£11,060
Core Systems & Application Solution Extension	Extension	N/A	01/11/2020	22/12/2020	£300,000
Enterprise License Agreement - Volume Licenses for production phase of CSAS	New	10/12/019	25/09/2019	01/10/2019	£840,000
Finance System (Re-Let)	Re-Let	12/10/2020	01/03/2021	01/04/2021	£450,000
General Stationery & Office Paper - Re-Let by SG	Call Off	N/A	01/10/2020	01/11/2020	£155,000
Hearing Rooms Improvement – Furniture, consultancy, works	New	01/09/20	02/11/20	11/01/21	£400,000
Independent Accreditor for CSAS	Re-Let	22/11/2021	01/05/2022	01/06/2022	£50,000
Internal Audit Services (Re-Let) (Collaborative Contract with CHS)	Re-Let	01/02/2021	01/06/2021	01/07/2021	£125,000
Interpreting, Translation & Transcription Services	Call Off	N/A	01/10/2021	12/11/2021	£650,000
Payroll & HR Software	Re-Let	15/07/2020	15/12/2020	15/01/2021	£350,000
Postal Services	Extension	N/A	01/09/2020	01/10/2020	£300,000
Secure Mailing Bags (SCRA wide)	New	TBA	01/05/2021	01/06/2021	TBA
Supply of Electricity	Extension	N/A	02/04/2020	01/04/2021	£156,000

* Note: Contract Extensions shown above are not included in the Section 9 of the template at Appendix C. Call Off's from Frameworks are included in the template.

SUMMARY OF NON-REGULATED PROCUREMENTS & CONTRACT EXTENSIONS ABOVE £20K - AWARDED BETWEEN 01/04/19 AND 31/03/20

Contract/ File Ref.	Contract Title	Supplier Name(s)	Total Value (ex VAT)	Contract/ Extension Award Date
SCRA/2019/05	Asset Valuation Services	Ryden LLP	£20,425	18/09/2019
SCRA/2019/07	Child Development Training (2019/20)	University of Strathclyde (Celcis)	£21,200	27/02/2020
SCRA/2017/02 (PCCN 12)	CSAS – PROJECT MANAGER (NCA)	Leidos Innovations UK Ltd	£21,182	15/05/2019
SCRA/2017/02 (PCCN 10)	CSAS – SECURITY ASSURANCE (NCA)	Leidos Innovations UK Ltd	£44,800	15/05/2019
SCRA/2019/35	Dual Monitors	HP Inc UK Ltd	£49,700	12/01/2020
SCRA/2014/13	Finance System (Extension)	Advanced Business Solutions	£66,686	11/03/2020
SCRA/2019/17	Furniture - Kilmarnock	Datel Interiors Ltd	£45,660	30/10/2019
N/A	General Stationery & Office Paper (Extension)	Lyreco	£77,150	17/05/2019
SCRA/2019/16	Glasgow - Staff Area - Main Contractor	Interact Interiors Ltd	£33,888	05/02/2020
N/A	Glasgow - Staff Area - Supply of Furniture	Claremont Office Supplies	£34,232	27/01/2020
SCRA/2017/01	Interpreting, Translation & Transcription Services (Extension)	Global Connections (Scotland) Ltd	£146,950	11/11/2019
SCRA/2019/15	Kilmarnock - Staff Area - Principal Contractor	Interact Interiors Ltd	£122,025	30/10/2019
N/A	Stranraer - External Works - Priority Works	Ross & Laidlaw	£39,719	05/03/2020
SCRA/2018/15	Water Coolers - Plumbed in and Bottled	Angel Springs (t/a Waterlogic)	£20,000	13/06/2019

* Notes: Works contracts below £2m are classed as non-regulated.

Annual Procurement Report template

[NOTE: reference to contract is also to be construed as meaning a Framework Agreement]

1. Organisation and report details

a) Contracting Authority Name

Scottish Children's
Reporter
Administration

b) Period of the annual procurement report

1st April 2019 to
31st March 2020

c) Required by s18 Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 to prepare an annual procurement report? (Yes / No)

Yes

2. Summary of Regulated Procurements Completed

a) Total number of regulated contracts awarded within the report period

7

b) Total value of regulated contracts awarded within the report period

£2,831,999

c) Total number of unique suppliers awarded a place on a regulated contract awarded during the period

7

i) how many of these unique suppliers are SMEs

1

ii) how many of these unique suppliers how many are Third sector bodies

0

3. Review of Regulated Procurements Compliance

a) Number of regulated contracts awarded within the period that complied with your Procurement Strategy

7

b) Number of regulated contracts awarded within the period that did not comply with your Procurement Strategy

0

4. Community Benefit Requirements Summary**Use of Community Benefit Requirements in Procurement:**

a) Total number of regulated contracts awarded with a value of £4 million or greater.

0

b) Total number of regulated contracts awarded with a value of £4 million or greater that contain Community Benefit Requirements.

0

c) Total number of regulated contracts awarded with a value of less than £4 million that contain a Community Benefit Requirements

1

Key Contract Information on community benefit requirements imposed as part of a regulated procurement that were fulfilled during the period:d) Number of Jobs Filled by Priority Groups (*Each contracting authority sets its own priority groups*)

0

e) Number of Apprenticeships Filled by Priority Groups

0

f) Number of Work Placements for Priority Groups

0

g) Number of Qualifications Achieved Through Training by Priority Groups

0

h) Total Value of contracts sub-contracted to SMEs

Not Known

i) Total Value of contracts sub-contracted to Social Enterprises

Not Known

j) Total Value of contracts sub-contracted to Supported Businesses

£0

k) Other community benefit(s) fulfilled

0

5. Fair Work and the real Living Wage

a) Number of regulated contracts awarded during the period that have included a scored Fair Work criterion.	2
b) Number of unique suppliers who have committed to pay the real Living Wage in the delivery of a regulated contract awarded during the period.	1
c) Number of unique suppliers who are accredited Living Wage employers and were awarded a regulated contract awarded during the period.	2
d) Number of unique suppliers who have signed up to the Scottish Business Pledge and were awarded a regulated contract awarded during the period.	Not Known

6. Payment performance

a) Number of valid invoices received during the reporting period.	2161
b) Percentage of invoices paid on time during the period ("On time" means within the time period set out in the contract terms).	70%
c) Number of regulated contracts awarded during the period containing a contract term requiring the prompt payment of invoices in public contract supply chains	To be confirmed
d) Number of concerns raised by sub-contractors about the timely payment of invoices within the supply chain of public contracts	0

7. Supported Businesses Summary

a) Total number of regulated contracts awarded to supported businesses during the period	0
b) Total spend with supported businesses during the period covered by the report, including:	£210
i) spend within the reporting year on regulated contracts	£0
ii) spend within the reporting year on non-regulated contracts	£210

8. Spend and Savings Summary

a) Total procurement spend for the period covered by the annual procurement report.	£6,227,148
b) Total procurement spend with SMEs during the period covered by the annual procurement report.	£1,975,545 (%age of Core Trade Spend)
c) Total procurement spend with Third sector bodies during the period covered by the report.	Not Known
d) Percentage of total procurement spend through collaborative contracts.	To be confirmed
e) Total targeted cash savings for the period covered by the annual procurement report	Not Known
i) targeted cash savings for Cat A contracts	Not Known
ii) targeted cash savings for Cat B contracts	Not Known
iii) targeted cash savings for Cat C contracts	Not Known

f) Total delivered cash savings for the period covered by the annual procurement report	£446,829
i) delivered cash savings for Cat A contracts	£335,852 (part YTD)
ii) delivered cash savings for Cat B contracts	£40,472 (part YTD)
iii) delivered cash savings for Cat C contracts	£70,505
g) Total non-cash savings value for the period covered by the annual procurement report	Not Known
<u>9. Future regulated procurements</u>	
a) Total number of regulated procurements expected to commence in the next two financial years	10
b) Total estimated value of regulated procurements expected to commence in the next two financial years	£7,003,000

Glossary

Term	Description
Collaboration	When two or more groups of people or organisations engage in procurement work together for mutual benefit (CIPS).
Contract Management	The process of monitoring the performance of a supplier to contract.
Framework Agreement	An agreement or other arrangement between one or more contracting authorities and one or more economic operators which establishes the terms (in particular the terms as to price and, where appropriate, quantity) under which the economic operator will enter into one or more contracts with a contracting authority in the period during which the framework agreement applies.
Critical Suppliers	Those suppliers identified as business critical in terms of risk/value and business continuity.
Procurement Exercise	Full end to end procurement exercise documentation from strategy development to contract & supplier management.
Procurement function	The business management function that ensures identification, sourcing, access and management of the external resources that an organisation needs or may need to fulfil its strategic objectives.
Procurement Journey	Revised public procurement toolkit with guidance and templates on the procurement process or Construction manual when appropriate. The Procurement Journey will be enhanced on an on-going basis with feedback from users and any other identified good practice guidance and tools where appropriate to ensure a standardised approach to the supply base.
Procurement Officer	Individual who spends the majority of their time working in a role that adds value to the quality, cost and effectiveness of the procurement or acquisition of goods, works and services; impacting upon commercial relationships during one or more stages of the procurement cycle and contributing towards best practice contract and supplier management.
Procurement strategy	Strategy for procurement within an organisation (can be called policy).
Public Contracts Scotland	The national advertising portal used to advertise all Scottish Government goods, services or works contract opportunities.
Small Medium Enterprise (SME)	The category of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SME's) is made up of enterprises which employ fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover not exceeding 50 million euro and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding 43 million euro.
Supply Chain	All activities, resources, products etc. involved in creating and moving a product or service from the supplier to the procurer.
Supply Chain Management	The coordinated set of techniques to plan and execute all steps used to acquire raw materials from suppliers, transform them into finished goods, and deliver both goods and services to customers. It includes chain-wide information sharing, planning, resources and performance measurements.
Supported Business	Either the organisation's main aim should be the social and professional integration of disabled or disadvantaged persons, or the contract should be performed within a sheltered employment programme.
Value for Money	An economic assessment by the public sector as to whether a project represents value for money; the optimum combination of cost and quality to provide the required service.
Whole Life Costing	The costs of acquiring goods or services (including consultancy, design and construction costs, and equipment), the costs of operating it and the costs of maintaining it over its whole life through to its disposal – that is, the total ownership costs. These costs include internal resources and overheads.



Communications and Engagement Strategy

Accountable Director: Principal Reporter/
Chief Executive

Date: 24 June 2020

Report Author: Maryanne McIntyre
Communications Manager

Recommendation:

1. To approve the contents of this report for inclusion in the SCRA Corporate Plan 2020-23

Reason for Report: Inclusion in Corporate Plan/Business Plan

Resource Implications: Within Corporate Plan and Communications resources

Strategy: Corporate Plan

Consultation: EMT

Equalities Duties: Assessed as wider corporate plan

Document Classification: Not protectively marked

1. Background Information

- 1.1 The SCRA Board has previously noted that the annual communications plan has sat to the side of previous Corporate Plans although contributed significantly to their delivery and required to be re-synchronised within the agreed planning cycle.
- 1.2 The Communications Strategy has been developed to align with the SCRA Corporate Plan 2020-23 and details priorities in relation to:
- Communications Strategy aims
 - Engaging children and young people
 - Internal and External audiences
 - Action Plan – year 1
 - Communications methodology

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The SCRA Board is asked to:-
- (a) To approve the contents of this report for inclusion in the SCRA Corporate Plan 2020-23



Communications and Engagement Strategy 2020-2023

Care, Connect, Protect

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1. Introduction

SCRA's Communications and Engagement Strategy describes how we will deliver on the aims set out in SCRA's Corporate Plan 2020-2023.

Which are:

- To ensure that we are an organisation that puts children and young people at its centre,
- That we live our value of being child and young people centred and;
- That we recognise and learn from the experience of others as we shape, evolve and improve the service that we deliver.

2. Alignment with the Corporate Plan 2020-2023

Our new Communications and Engagement Strategy sets out what we want to achieve during 2020-2023, in line with our Corporate Plan's three aims: Care, Connect and Protect.

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

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

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

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

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

Supportive	We work with kindness to support children, young people and families, our partners and each other.
Child Centred	Children and young people are at the heart of everything we do.
Respectful	Everyone is respected and treated fairly, inclusively and lawfully.
Accountable	We are responsible for our decisions, our ethics and our learning.

3. Communication and Engagement Strategy aims

We have three key aims:

- 1. Engagement:** Our communication platforms will be varied and informed by experience, and we will work with and engage with Hearings-experienced children and young people through effective and trauma informed methods of participation, to ensure that our service is child-centred with the voice of children and young people being a visible influence and driver in terms of service provision.
- 2. Communication:** Through multiple communication platforms we will ensure that we effectively connect with others – internally, and with external partners, local communities and children, young people and families.
- 3. Accessibility:** We will ensure that the information that we provide is accessible, relevant and in a format that is appropriate to make sure that everyone in receipt of information is able to be as informed about the Children’s Hearings process and our service as possible.

Our strategy aims are supported by a number of objectives and actions (**section 8 & 9**).

4. Key audiences

SCRA has a wide and varied audience. To ensure effective communication and engagement, we must use a flexible mix of communication methods, as children, young people and families have different information and communication needs to our partners and our staff.

SCRA’s key audiences include;

- Children, young people and their parents/carers in the Hearings System
- All members of SCRA staff
- SCRA Board Members
- Children’s Hearings Scotland, AST Members and Panel Members
- Victims and vulnerable witnesses
- Scottish Government – Ministers and officials
- Partner organisations, such as Social Work Scotland, Police Scotland and Education Scotland
- Groups such as the Children’s Hearings Improvement Group and the Youth Justice Improvement Board
- The Independent Care Review Oversight Board
- Crown Office and Procurator Fiscals Service
- Health
- Elected members
- Voluntary organisations (Who Cares? Scotland, Barnardo’s etc)
- Partnerships such as Stand Up For Siblings

- UNISON
- Media – local and national
- Social media
- The general public
- Academics and researchers in the children’s services/child protection arena

5. Engagement with children and young people

Effective and meaningful engagement with the children and young people who are in contact with the Children’s Hearings System is absolutely essential in ensuring that we continue to improve, adapt and shape the way that we work to make the system the best it can be for people that experience it. It is at the heart of this new strategy and are supporting actions.

Over the course of the 2020-23 Corporate Plan, SCRA hopes to deliver to children and young people a Children’s Hearings System that feels designed for them – with options around how, where, when they attend their Hearings, how they choose to participate and what support they need to do that, what the centres look and feel like.

Children and young people will feel supported to take more control of how their Hearing is run and this will take partners and agencies to work effectively together through the avenue of Better Hearings to make this happen.

We will continue to work with and strengthen partnerships with care experienced children and young people, from groups such as Our Hearings, Our Voice, local Champions Boards and organisations like Who Cares? Scotland and the Fostering Network.

6. Internal communications

SCRA has a large staff group based in offices and Hearing Centres across the country. Staff within SCRA cover a wide spectrum of roles, from those involved in the frontline delivery of the Reporter’s service, to corporate functions such as human resources, finance and property.

SCRA continues to recognise the importance of internal communications in supporting the effective progress and development of the organisation.

In order to successfully implement an open, transparent and effective internal communications approach, it is important to understand the needs of staff and to appreciate there are differences in these needs, and plan communications to take account of them.

It is also important to recognise that internal communications are not always driven centrally and rightfully so - Localities have a crucial role to play in achieving high quality internal communications. Two-way communication is vital to the success of this strategy and every member of staff has a role to play in making this happen. Our internal communications must also be timely and appropriate to ensure maximum staff engagement and buy in. To achieve this, we will employ a number of internal methods (see Appendix 1 for a detailed list).

7. External communications

As outlined in section 4, we have a large external audience, with a variety of different information and engagement needs. Therefore, we will continue to utilise a number of communication methods to ensure maximum reach of our messages externally.

One of our most effective tools for reaching large numbers of people is our website. This routinely gets a lot of traffic, but even more so during the COVID-19 pandemic. We continue to make improvements and refresh the content and review and respond to analytics.

Social media is also a key element of our communications and engagement approach. We actively use Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, to reach a variety of different groups. We review our Social Media Handling Policy twice a year to ensure it stays up to date.

Traditional media – due to the continuing changing nature of the media landscape, we do not receive the same number of calls from the press as with previous strategies. However, we do have an active media handling policy in place and this is supplemented by a joint media handling agreement with Children’s Hearings Scotland. Both of these are reviewed annually.

More detail outlining all our external communication methods is available at Appendix 1.

8. Strategy Objectives

Our strategy will be delivered by a combination of our Press and Communications Team, Participation Group, Corporate Parenting leads, Inclusion Ambassadors, as well as Localities at local level, but seeks to bring together a full picture of the communications, participation and engagement taking place across the organisation.

Our strategy objectives highlight how we will meet our aims:

Strategy Aim 1: Engagement					
Our communication platforms will be varied and informed by experience, and we will work with and engage with Hearings-experienced children and young people through effective and trauma informed methods of participation, to ensure that our service is child-centred with the voice of children and young people being a visible influence and driver in terms of service provision.					
Objectives		Corporate Plan Objective Ref. No.	Care	Connect	Protect
1.1	Through effective, meaningful and trauma-informed participative approaches, we will work with children, young people and families to empower them to participate and engage in Children’s Hearings processes.	1.3	✓		
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.	3.4			✓

Strategy Aim 2: Communication					
Through multiple communication platforms we will ensure that we effectively connect with others – internally, and with external partners, local communities and children, young people and families.					
Objectives		Corporate Plan Objective Ref. No.	Care	Connect	Protect
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.	1.2	✓		
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.	2.4		✓	

Strategy Aim 3: Accessibility					
We will ensure that the information that we provide is accessible, relevant and in a format that is appropriate to make sure that everyone in receipt of information is able to be as informed about the Children’s Hearings process and our service objectives as possible.					
Objectives		Corporate Plan Objective Ref. No.	Care	Connect	Protect
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.	1.2	✓		
3.4	We will work to ensure full user engagement in the development of digital systems designed to support children and young people to connect to the Hearings System.	2.7		✓	
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.	1.1	✓		

9. 2020-2021 Communications and Engagement Action Plan

CEO No.	Objective	Indicators	L M H	Outcome / Impact	Lead (s)	Timeline	
						Start	End
1.1	Through effective, meaningful and trauma-informed participative approaches, we will work with children, young people and families to empower them to participate and engage in Children's Hearings processes.	1.1.1: Consultation with relevant persons and foster carers, as well as children and young people to shape and inform communications service.	H		Jennifer Orren	October 2020	March 2021
		1.1.2: We will review and update our information guides on our website for social workers, etc.	L		Maryanne McIntyre	May 2020	July 2020
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.	1.4.1: Six month work experience placement in Grampian Locality in conjunction with the Local Authority.	H		Jennifer Orren	August 2020	January 2021
		1.4.2: Recruitment and appointment of one new Modern Apprentice in 2020/2021 (funding still to be confirmed)	H		Jennifer Orren	Recruitment September 2020	Appointment November 2020
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	2.1.1: Engagement with care experienced children and young people from external partnerships, e.g. Our Hearings Our Voice, Champions Boards, Who Cares? Scotland	H		Maryanne McIntyre	August 2020	March 2021

	new methods of communication.	2.1.2: Build on existing partnerships, e.g. Parentline, and develop new ones, to inform and develop new and updated communications and information for parents and carers (including virtual Hearings information flyer)	M		Jennifer Orren	May 2020	September 2020
		2.1.3: Create a dedicated section on our website and an information guide for new advocacy workers about the Children's Hearings System.	L		Maryanne McIntyre	September 2020	December 2020
2.2	We will work with the Senior Management team and Locality Management teams to promote an open and transparent culture in SCRA aligned to organisational values.	2.2.1: Speaking to Neil about this on 11 th June	H		Maryanne McIntyre	June 2020	March 2021
3.1	Working with children and young people, including Champions Boards, Our Hearings, Our Voice and other groups, we will review and refine/improve the information that we provide.	3.1.1: Review and update content and design All About Me form for young people	M		Maryanne McIntyre	August 2020	December 2020
		3.1.2: Review and update content and design of Going to a Hearing leaflet for young people	M		Maryanne McIntyre	August 2020	December 2020
		3.1.3: Produce new film – What is a Compulsory Supervision Order	H		Jennifer Orren	September 2020	December 2020

		3.1.4: Introduce court information pack for national roll out	M		Jennifer Orren	June 2020	March 2021
3.4	We will work to ensure full user engagement in the development of digital systems designed to support children and young people to connect to the Hearings System.	3.4.1: Collate research undertaken, coupled with our learning from the current pandemic	H		Lisa Bennett	June 2020	July 2020
		3.4.2: Take research to date to young people for secondary validation.	H		Lisa Bennett	July 2020	August 2020
		3.4.3: Develop a set of requirements for digital hearings based on user research	H		Lisa Bennett	August 2020	August 2020
		3.4.4: Collate all information around interactions with the hearings system (not hearings rooms) and take to young people for consideration/thoughts/suggestions	H		Lisa Bennett	August 2020	September 2020
3.5	We will continue to provide safe communication spaces and tools led by children and young people, including new Hearing rooms, sensory gardens/areas, toolkits/information for people	3.5.1: Produce and launch Compulsory Supervision Order easy read guide	L		Maryanne McIntyre	July 2020	September 2020
		3.5.2: Create new section on SCRA website - CSOs	L		Maryanne McIntyre	May 2020	June 2020

	with autism, sensory and learning difficulties.	3.5.3: Create social stories guide for children and young people with autism and sensory difficulties	M		Maryanne McIntyre	June 2020	September 2020
		3.5.4: Latest phase of Hearing room improvements (locations and numbers of rooms still to be confirmed)	H		Jennifer Orren	May 2020	March 2021

Appendix 1 - Communications methods

The following tools are used for internal and external communications. The list is reviewed and revised on a regular basis as new tools become available.

Internal communications:

Method	When	Comments
Connect	Daily	The home page of our staff intranet is updated on a daily basis (article of the day, ticker tape, news items, vacancies etc). Other sections are updated as and when required.
National Reporter	Quarterly	The staff e-zine is issued every three months (spring, summer etc).
Team Brief	Every six weeks	This is issued every six weeks to all managers and UNISON reps. A timetable of deadline dates and publication dates is published at the start of every year.
In Touch	Fortnightly	This e-communication is issued every second Friday afternoon to staff on long term sick leave, mat leave, secondment to other organisations etc. This is an opt in communication.
Healthy Being e-zine	Approx three times a year	Staff e-zine focusing on health and wellbeing. Issued several times a year
Consultation/discussion forums/surveys on Connect	Ad hoc	As and when required.
Staff Survey	Annual	Usually every autumn (theme-based surveys are issued throughout the year such as training needs, health and wellbeing etc).

Campaigns	Ad hoc	Campaigns such as Equalities Monitoring (every November) are launched as and when required.
Team Meetings	Usually every 4-6 weeks	This is dependent on individual teams/Localities – best practice guidance is available for managers on Connect.
Staff Event	Annual	Usually every 12-18 months (next one dependent on pandemic)
Locality Development Days	Annual	Up to individual Localities, but usually annual and around the planning cycle.
Email communication	Regular basis	Emails are used to either communication and engage with a specific group, such as LRMs, Business Continuity Leads or all staff.
Networks and forums	Regular	Inputs to key groups such as the Participation Group, Practice and Quality Network etc are utilised to communicate and engage on specific topics.
Corporate Style Guide	Updated as and when required (usually twice a year)	This guide ensures staff have access to all the communication templates, briefing sheets etc to ensure consistency in our communications.
Staff Guide – Stay Connected	Updated as and when required (usually twice a year)	This is aimed at new recruits and provides an online one stop shop for where to get information on Connect. It links to the online welcome/induction tool.
The Box	Staff can submit a suggestion at any time	SCRA's Staff Suggestion Scheme which allows staff to submit ideas on a variety of topics.
Branded communications	As and when required	We develop branded communications for specific subjects, such as the Digital Strategy, Women into Leadership etc.

External communications:

SCRA's website	Updated regularly	This is one of our key tools to reach out to a wide external audience. The website is split into sections (children, young people etc). Includes online interactive statistical dashboard
Twitter	Checked several times a day	This is used to communicate quickly with partners and promote job vacancies, new research etc.
Facebook	Checked several times a day	Like Twitter, this is used to communicate quickly with partners and promote job vacancies, new research etc. A number of staff also follow us on Facebook and is an additional way of reaching them.
Instagram	Checked daily	Launched in January 2018 to mark Year of Young People and to reach out to more young people
Linked in	Updated when external jobs are advertised	Using it increasingly to promote general information
Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership website	Updated as and when required	SCRA built and maintains this website on behalf of the CHIP. The site is aimed at partners in the Hearings System.
Corporate Parenting website	Updated as and when required	SCRA built and maintains this website which is joint with Children's Hearings Scotland and is aimed at young people.
Stand up for Siblings website	Updated as and when required	SCRA built and maintains this website on behalf of the SUFS partnership. It includes an online pledge wall.

Our Hearings, Our Voice website	Updated as and when required	SCRA built and maintains the website for Our Hearings, Our Voice aimed at children, young people and partners
You Tube/Vimeo	As and when a new video becomes available	This is used to promote our films such as Going to a Children's Hearing and Going to Court, we also use it to promote films by partners
Media	Ad hoc	<p>We do receive enquiries from the traditional press, but these tend to be focused on individual children. We have a media handling policy in place to deal with these (updated March 2020).</p> <p>We also have a media handling policy in place with Children's Hearings Scotland.</p>
E-news	Quarterly	Our e-news is issued every three months to local and national partners and contains all our latest news and links to items with more detail on the working in partnership section of our website.
Emails	Regular	Emails are used to target specific groups to highlight information such as new research reports. Often branded emails with a visual are created to give an email more prominence such as the Corporate Parenting Plan.
Meetings (CHIP, Tripartite, Participation Group etc)	Regular	We utilise particular multi-agency groups to inform our partners of updates etc.

Information materials for children, young people and families	Updated/reviewed on a regular basis	<p>We have a suite of information materials, both online and in paper format (leaflets, posters, flyers and forms) to inform children, young people and families of going to a Hearing, their rights etc.</p> <p>We have several films for young people, podcasts and easy read material for parents/carers with learning difficulties (developed in conjunction with the Scottish Consortium for Learning Disabilities and People First).</p>
Information stands at events	Regular	We target specific events and conferences to promote the organisation and our information materials. We have a suite of marketing merchandise for these local and national events.
Fact sheets	Updated annually	We now have 15 fact sheets on a range of topics (child protection, youth offending etc).
Briefing sheets	As and when required	These are used to communicate with key groups, such as Panel Members, to inform them of new developments such as Hearing room improvements, particular events etc.

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Equalities Network – Annual Report

Accountable Director: Principal Reporter/Chief Executive **Date:** 24 June 2020
Author: Head of Human Resources

Recommendations:

1. To consider the content of the Annual Report on the work of the Equalities Network.
2. To note the publication of SCRA's Equalities Strategy and Mainstreaming Report 2020 in line with The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 as amended.
3. To note updates on key Network activity

Reason for Report: *Board Consideration*

Resource Implications: *Within approved budgets*

Strategy: *Within approved plans*

Consultation: *To be noted at Equalities Network*

Equalities Duties *Equalities Impact Assessment not required*

Document Classification: *Not protectively marked*

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report updates the Board on the work that the SCRA's Equalities Network has carried out since June 2019.
- 1.2 SCRA is required under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to:-
- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act
 - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
 - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 1.3 In addition to this general duty, SCRA is required by the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012, as amended to:
- Report on progress on mainstreaming the general duty
 - Publish equality outcomes and report on progress in achieving these
 - Assess and review policies and practices
 - Gather and use employee information
 - Publish gender, race and disability pay gap information
 - Publish statements on equal pay
 - Consider award criteria in relation to public procurement
 - Publish in an assessable manner
 - Publish proposals of how the above will be met
 - Report on the gender balance of the Board.
- 1.4 The current Equalities Strategy 2018-2021, was brought to a conclusion one year early and a new three year Equalities Strategy 2020-2023 has been developed to align with the new three year Corporate Plan and associated strategies. The Equalities Strategy has been consulted on and will shortly be available on our website.

2. Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2020

- 2.1 We have made significant progress in how we mainstream equalities and inclusion in all aspects of our services. The attached Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report (Appendix 1), reflects our achievements over the past year and our wider responsibilities in terms of children's rights and wellbeing, Corporate Parenting and the Better Hearings Agenda.
- 2.2 The Equalities Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report clearly identifies how we have integrated equalities and inclusion in and across, our practice, policies and procedures, raised equalities and inclusion across the organisation at the same time as promoting greater diversity in our workforce.

- 2.3 Great progress had been made by the Inclusion Ambassadors up to the point of COVID19 lockdown, when focus rightly turned to delivering our operational services to children and young people, whilst all our staff were either working from, or isolated, at home. Our quick response to providing, initially, an administrative hearings service developing into a more participative virtual hearings service, highlighted some issues in the accompanying Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment. We expected this and we are working towards moderating the issues as our experience in managing hearings grows and the easing of lockdown restrictions allows us to consider a phased approach back to some physical/hybrid hearings.

3. Proposed Network Priorities

- 3.1 The proposed network priorities have been included in SCRA's 2020/21 Business Plan and have been fully discussed and agreed within the Equalities Network. The priorities are actions being delivered through a number of SCRA's strategies, such as the People Strategy, the Operational Strategy etc. and further demonstrates how SCRA has mainstreamed equalities, inclusion and wellbeing across all SCRA plans and activities. The Equalities Action Plan for 2020/21 is included at Appendix 2.
- 3.2 Looking forward, we acknowledge there is further work to be done in relation to mainstreaming and advancing our Public Sector Equality Duty. We will continue to strive to progress and embed inclusive practice through the way we work and within our organisation.
- 3.3 Karen Wallace, Inclusion and Equalities Lead, left SCRA at the end of March 2020. Karen left SCRA in a very good place having completed and published the Equalities Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report and preparing the Equalities Action Plan for the next three years. Work is underway to consider the recruitment process to fill the vacancy, now that lockdown restrictions are starting to ease.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

- 4.1 SCRA's Equalities Network has set another ambitious and detailed programme of work for the forthcoming year, with a focus on achieving real and tangible improvements that ensures we promote good practice, has a positive impact on our staff and responds to the individualised needs of the children, young people and families we work with.
- 4.2 We will closely monitor the programme of work and review it regularly given the impact of COVID19 and the recovery plan from this period.
- 4.3 It is recommended that the Board:
1. Consider the 2019/20 Annual Equalities Report
 2. Note the publication of SCRA's Equalities Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2020 in line with The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.
 3. Note the Network priorities for 2020/21

Equality and Inclusion Mainstreaming Report 2019/2020

Foreword – Principal Reporter/Chief Executive Officer, Neil Hunter

I am delighted to introduce SCRA's Equalities Mainstreaming Report, covering 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 on how we have mainstreamed equality, diversity and inclusion across the organisation.

Our mission is to protect and support Scotland's children and young people, 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.

Our role as Corporate Parents is very important to us, and at the heart of our approach is inclusivity, transparency and participation. Our Mainstreaming Report 2019/20 reinforces our approach to putting inclusion and diversity at the heart of who we are as an organisation to create a better SCRA. Going forward, this will support SCRA's ambition to become a diverse and socially inclusive employer of choice and deliver a service that meets the individual and unique needs and rights of each child, young person and their families.

Delivering high quality decisions for Scotland's children and young people, is our core function and as an inclusive organisation, we benefit greatly from the creativity and talents of all our people. In living our values, equality, diversity and inclusion must continue to be embedded in our day to day practice, so we do not think of it in isolation, but as an integral part of what we do. We have worked hard over this past year to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is reflected as a cross cutting theme in each of our key corporate strategies and distilled into the individual locality planning process and roles.

I recognise that there is still a way to go to becoming fully inclusive in terms of our culture, practice and services. We have made significant progress over the course of the past three years towards fulfilling all our equality outcomes that were established in 2017. We recognise that we can do more to ensure we are representative of the communities we serve. Increasing representation of applicants who are disabled and from a minority ethnic background is addressed in our refreshed recruitment and selection approach.

We will also continue to improve the quality of our service by ensuring we focus on the individual needs of every child, young person and their family. We will provide information to children, young people and their families in ways which meet their needs and preferences, using a variety of participation channels offering options and choices to let people know in advance of attending Children's Hearing what is available.

We also have work to do to nurture a culture of inclusion where we can all be ourselves and where it is safe to challenge constructively. Great things happen when we work together and in collaborating with our Inclusion Ambassadors and wider staff group we are more likely to create success and fulfilment for all of us.

This report reflects our dedication to fulfilling our responsibilities to our staff and to Scotland's children, young people and their families. It details the progress we have made over the past year since we published a report in March 2019.

Neil Hunter
PR/CEO

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1. Introduction

SCRA is fully committed to the vision, values and ethos of the Equality Act 2010 and to fulfilling the three elements of the **general** equality duty as defined in the Act.

1. Elimination of unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
2. Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
3. Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The protected characteristics are:-

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy, maternity and breastfeeding
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage/civil partnership, but only in respect of the requirement to have due regards to the need to eliminate discrimination

SCRA's approach is to go beyond the compliance obligations and to develop an inclusive ethos within the organisation based on fairness, equality, cultural diversity, dignity and respect. SCRA recognises care experience as a "tenth protected characteristic" and we continue to review our practice, policies and processes to reflect this.

This report:-

- Builds on our Mainstreaming Reports of 2017, 2018 and 2019 and provides an overview of key achievements and mainstreaming progress made within the SCRA since their publication.
- Provides detail of our progress in relation to our 2017 Equality Outcomes and our work with our staff, partners and the children, young people and their families whom we serve.

2. About Us

The Children's Reporter sits at the heart of the Children's Hearings System, providing continuity as the single point of referral for all agencies with concerns about a child or young person who may be at risk of harm.

Children's Reporters routinely deal with and makes critical decisions on the lives of children and young people facing adversity and trauma such as physical and emotional neglect, domestic abuse, parental substance use, mental health concerns and the physical and sexual abuse of children and young people.

Our core role centres on:

- Receiving referrals for children/young people who may be at risk.
- Ensuring that other public agencies carry out enquiries and assessments into children/ young people's circumstances so we can make informed decisions about children/young people referred to us.
- Making decisions on whether to refer a child/young person to a Children's Hearing if they need compulsory measures of supervision.
- Drafting the grounds for the Hearing.
- Arranging for Hearings to take place when we decide that compulsory measures of supervision are warranted and where there is sufficient evidence to prove the grounds.
- Ensuring fair process takes place within the Hearing, including the rights of those in attendance being met.
- We also have a key role in establishing grounds of referral in court, where these are contested, and in defending decisions of Children's Hearings which are subject to appeal.

Our Vision: Children and young people will be listened to, protected and supported to realise a positive future where they are safe, valued and respected.

Our Mission: 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.

Our Values: Our values are the shared motivations, beliefs and behaviours that underpin all that we do.

3. Why Equality, Diversity, Inclusion Matters

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

What does being inclusive mean for everyone in SCRA?

- An environment where we can all be ourselves.
- Working with talented people from a wide range of backgrounds.
- An environment where we can all perform to the best of our abilities.
- Working in a supportive and flexible environment led by inclusive and effective leaders.
- A culture where we can raise ideas and challenge one another in a respectful way to arrive at the best decisions.
- A place where we understand and respect each other's differences.

Being inclusive not only makes SCRA a great place to work. It ensures that we are delivering the best possible service to children and their families that is equally accessible to all and meets their individual needs and rights.

3.1 Our Aspirations

SCRA aspires to be a leader in terms of our behaviours and attitudes to equality, diversity and inclusion.

3.2 Our Commitment

SCRA is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our workforce and throughout our organisation at large. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. Our aim is that SCRA embraces, acknowledges and is representative of all sections of society; promoting equality and respect for all so that everyone is able to achieve their potential. SCRA is committed to promoting the practice of equality, diversity and inclusion in all its services, operations and dealings with employees, children, young people and their families and all partner agencies. SCRA aims to ensure that it employs and deploys a workforce that is diverse and equipped with the right mix of skills and experience to deliver a quality service to children and young people.

4. Mainstreaming Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Mainstreaming is a specific requirement for public bodies in relation to implementing the Equality Duty. In simple terms, it means integrating equality into the day to day working of the organisations, considering equality as part of everything we do. Mainstreaming the equality duty has a number of benefits including:

- Equality becomes part of the structures, behaviours and culture of the organisation
- SCRA knows, and can demonstrate, how in carrying out its functions it is promoting equality
- Mainstreaming equality contributes to continuous improvement and better performance

In Scotland, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 (and subsequent updates) (“the Regulations”) impose **specific** duties to:-

4.1 Specific Duties in Relation to Mainstreaming Equality

In Scotland, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 (and subsequent updates) are designed to help public authorities like the SCRA meet the general duty.

The specific duties require SCRA to report every two years on mainstreaming the equality duty and the progress against achieving SCRA’s equality outcomes. SCRA’s Equality Mainstreaming Report must include:

- Information on our progress made to make the general equality duty integral to the exercise of SCRA’s functions.
- An annual breakdown of employment monitoring information under the duty to gather and use employee information.
- Details of the progress made in gathering and using employment monitoring information to perform the general equality duty.
- Information on the gender composition of SCRA’s Board of Management, and the steps taken or planned towards ensuring diversity in relation to the protected characteristics of SCRA’s board members.

4.2 Our reporting history under the Specific Duties

We published our first Mainstreaming Report in April 2013, which included our equality outcomes. Subsequent reports were published in 2015 and in April 2017. SCRA published a second set of equality outcomes to achieve by April 2021, and reported on our work to progress achievement of equality outcomes and mainstreaming equalities. Full information about the development of our Equality Outcomes 2017 – 2021 is in our April 2017 Equality Outcomes, Progress and Mainstreaming Report.

We published a revised Equalities and Inclusion Strategy and Outcomes 2018-2021 in May 2018 to reflect the broader scope of our work, however our equality outcomes remain unchanged. In March 2019 we reported on our work to progress achievement of the equality outcomes in our SCRA Equality Outcomes and Mainstream Report. This report provides a final update on our equality outcomes 2017-2021.

We highlight how we continue to hard wire equality into and across our day to day activities and provides an update on how we gather and use our workforce equality data.

4.3 Progress to achieve our Equality Outcomes 2017-2021

The equality outcomes we set in April 2017 were based on evidence and were finalised in consultation with our Equalities Network and our Executive Management Team and Board members. Whilst we published a revised Equalities Strategy in 2018, our equality outcomes remain unchanged and applied to all relevant protected characteristics.

Our equality outcomes 2017-2021 were:

1. We have a better understanding of the needs and experiences of children, young people and families.
2. All children, young people and families can engage with our services with ease and confidence.
3. We have a culture where staff feel more knowledgeable, engaged, supported and valued.
4. We have a workforce that is more representative of the Scottish population.

We created an action plan of 24 key milestones to be achieved by the end of March 2021. Progress against our equality outcomes to date has been good and outcomes are completed.

More detailed information about these and other activities is provided in Appendix 2.

A key challenge for the future is the ongoing reporting and embedding of completed activity so that it continues to have a positive impact on our people and to the children, young people and their families who we serve. We will do this through revisions to the locality planning process to ensure progress continues to be reported and tracked by managers.

4.4 Key achievements from 1 April 2019

We have carried out a number of activities to promote awareness of the responsibilities as outlined above to ensure SCRA is mainstreaming equality.

5. Leadership, Governance and Business Planning

The progress we have made as an organisation since 1 April 2019 through leadership, governance and business planning is noted below:-

5.1 SCRA's Equalities Network

SCRA's Equalities Network (a sub group of our Executive Management Team) is chaired by the Board Chair and during the reporting period the Equalities Network met 7 times to monitor, record progress and discuss work to mainstream equality across the organisation.

5.2 SCRA Inclusion Ambassadors

SCRA benefits from a group of Inclusion Ambassadors – dedicated front line staff from across Scotland who volunteer to support their colleagues and promote equality, diversity and inclusion across our day to day activities.

In May 2019, the Equalities Network and Inclusion Ambassadors attended a development day to reflect on progress made, identify areas of good practice and consult on the draft Equality Outcomes for 2020-2023. Following consultation with our ambassadors, their nomenclature was changed from Equalities Ambassadors to Inclusion Ambassadors to reflect our commitment to embedding inclusivity in all that we do.

5.3 Corporate Parents and Care Experience

We continue to embed equality, diversity and inclusion as a theme across our corporate parenting duties and our corporate planning process. We are developing a corporate objective for all business areas relating to delivering the public sector equality duty and specifically mainstreaming our equality outcomes.

SCRA recognises equality for children and young people who have experience of the care system as the “tenth protected characteristic.” For the second year running, we hosted a fund raising coffee morning in Glasgow to raise awareness of equality for those with experience of care and supported the Who Cares? Scotland Christmas campaign. Staff donated many gifts and vouchers all of which were made into age appropriate Christmas sacks for those attending on Christmas day. Several of our staff including our PR/CEO also attended the second Who Cares? Scotland Lifetime of Love Rally supporting the demand for love to be shown to people in care.

5.4 Policies and Procedures

We have a comprehensive package of policies and guidance that promote mainstream equality and inclusion across the organisation. An audit process ensures that policies are continuously up to date to reflect current legislation, inclusive language and best practice. We are committed to providing an inclusive workplace where our people feel valued and cared for regardless of their age, religion or belief, race, disability, marital status, pregnancy,

maternity and breastfeeding, sexual orientation, gender identity, care identity or socio economic background.

On International Transgender Day of Remembrance, we launched our Transgender policy which outlines the support available to anyone going through the process of transition, as well as information on managing the process at work. Guidance documents were also published for both managers and staff who were considering, were in the process of or had transitioned to help navigate the process at work.

To mark Anti-Bullying Week, we published our revised Dignity at Work Policy. The policy aims to support and sustain a positive working environment for all staff, free from any form of inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour, make it clear that discrimination and harassment are unacceptable and everyone in SCRA has a role to play in creating a thriving environment, free from discrimination and harassment.

Susan Deery, SCRA's Head of Human Resources said: "SCRA is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, welcoming, inclusive and diverse workplace, which nurtures a healthy environment and culture of mutual respect and consideration, enabling all staff to thrive without fear of harassment, discrimination, bullying, sexual violence, abuse, coercive behaviour, sexual harassment or related misconduct. The updated policy reflects best practice and relevant legislation."

To support the updated policy, a mandatory e-learning course on bullying and harassment was made available to be completed by all staff by the end of 2020.

During the reporting period we revised our Recruitment and Selection Policy by refreshing our approach and processes to encourage greater diversity and inclusivity.

5.5 Integrated Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments.

SCRA has a statutory duty to assess the equality impact of applying its policies, practices, systems and processes. SCRA interprets this duty widely to include the full range of SCRA's policies, provisions, criteria, functions, practices and activities, including decisions and the delivery of services - essentially everything we do.

We welcome Equality Impact Assessment as a way to meet our statutory duties, improve our service delivery and create an inclusive working environment for our staff.

During the reporting period, we integrated our equality impact assessments with the protection of human rights and the promotion and safeguarding of the rights of children and young people and launched a new impact assessment process and supporting guidance. By assessing equality and human rights impact including the consideration of children's rights and the socio economic duty, we proactively consider the needs of the children, young people and their families whom we serve, our staff and our stakeholders, identify potential steps to advance equality and foster good relations, and ensure that we do not discriminate unlawfully.

Our Executive Management Team received training on the new approach. We also established a new Equality Review Group to promote and encourage a consistent and high quality approach and provide quality assurance to the use of Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments across the work of SCRA.

5.6 Fairer Scotland Duty

The socio-economic duty” was included as provision in the Equality Act 2010 and implemented by the Scottish Government on 1 April 2018. The duty, which is now known as the “Fairer Scotland Duty”, is one of a number of duties placed on the public sector to tackle socio economic disadvantage, child poverty, equality of opportunity and equality of outcome. The duty requires relevant public authorities to do more to tackle inequalities of outcome caused by socio economic disadvantage by ensuring their strategic decision making takes account of those experiencing it.

Our new integrated Equality and Human Rights approach incorporates consideration of socio economic factors and demonstrates our commitment to tackling inequalities and protecting human rights.

5.7 Wellbeing

SCRA has a strategic aim to develop effective, confident and resilient staff through promoting high standards of health and wellbeing for all.

We recognise that any of us could go through a period where we struggle. By choosing to be open about mental health, we are encouraging our people to become part of a movement that’s changing the conversation around mental health and ensuring that no one is made to feel isolated or alone for having a mental health problem. We want everyone who works here to feel they can be open about their mental health, and ask for support if they need it. The Health and Wellbeing Group, has established a working group to achieve the Mental Health at Work Commitment and Standards. The Commitment provides a framework for employers who recognise the importance of promoting staff wellbeing. This framework sets out six clear standards based on what best practice has shown is needed to make a difference and better equip employers to create an environment where employees can thrive. The six standards are:

- Prioritise mental health in the workplace by developing and delivering a systematic programme of activity.
- Proactively ensure that work design and organisational culture drive positive mental health outcomes.
- Promote an open culture around mental health.
- Increase organisational confidence and capability.
- Provide mental health tools and support.
- Increase transparency and accountability through internal and external reporting.

SCRA’s Health and Wellbeing Group meets regularly throughout the year to plan opportunities for staff to participate in activities to improve their health and wellbeing. The group comprises staff from across a range of roles and localities to ensure that initiatives are widely promoted throughout the organisation. A quarterly e-zine has had great reviews within interesting articles and promotional materials.

Wellbeing is a standing agenda item for all locality meetings and will be embedded in our new Operational Strategy and locality planning approach. This will ensure that wellbeing becomes

part of our everyday conversation in one to one meetings, team meetings and corporate governance to create an open and supportive organisational culture.

One of the first tools to be delivered to staff, and which fall from our work on recognising and understanding secondary trauma, will be the implementation of a new individual Wellness Action Plan. These are individually agreed plans between a member of staff and their line manager that considers what both parties need to consider so that the member of staff can stay well at work. These will be reviewed in supervision and will move with the employee if they transfer to new roles within SCRA.

The implementation of trained Mindfulness Champions and Mental Health First Aiders has received positive feedback from those staff who have had the opportunity to attend sessions or use the experience and knowledge of our Mental Health First Aiders and from those who deliver these supports to our workforce. We, therefore, intend to increase the numbers of trained employees over the next twelve months to ensure that there is more ready access for staff across all offices and Localities.

Following the training of managers on secondary trauma and trauma awareness, this will be rolled out to all staff in our second tranche of trauma awareness training. This will highlight that SCRA staff involved in children or young people's casework will often be witness to, or read or hear stories of traumatic events that have happened to children, young people and their families that they work with. This may make them vicariously vulnerable to trauma. The training will provide them with information and tools to recognise and manage this.

We will develop an annual training plan for 2020/21 that will highlight the mandatory and optional training available to all staff. In 2020/21 this is likely to include Trauma Informed Training, How to Hold a Meaningful Conversation (the keystone to good supervision and support). Mindfulness and Mental Health First Aid training as well as accessing our broad range of e-learning modules that are available to all staff.

We will also encourage staff to accurately record their personal development requirements on the e-hr system which will form the basis of future learning plans that will meet the specific needs of the workforce.

5.8 The Fair work Agreement

SCRA is committed to implementing the Fair Work agreement confirming the application of Fair Work principles across Civil Service bodies in the Scottish Administration.

SCRA is recognised as an accredited living wage employer, respects the right of UNISON to engage in legal industrial action and employs Modern Apprentices. We promote flexible working wherever possible and our wellbeing approach underlines our commitment to all staff achieving a good working life.

5.9 Employee Engagement and Employee Networks

In December 2019, SCRA was awarded the LGBT Charter Accreditation. Working together with dedicated staff from LGBT Youth Scotland, the programme enabled us to proactively

include lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in every aspect of our work, protecting our staff and providing a high quality service to people accessing our services. We undertook training and reviewed our policies, practice and recourses to make sure we were being as inclusive as we could be. Being awarded the Charter enables us to send a positive message, with confidence, that SCRA is a champion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender inclusion where employees, and anyone accessing our service will be safe, supported and included.

During the reporting period, our Inclusion Ambassadors supported Purple Friday by hosting fund raising coffee mornings across several localities and showing our support on social media. National Coming Out Day was also supported and we published an information sheet on our staff intranet providing information about the day to our people.

In October 2019, SCRA backed the national campaign Show Racism the Red Card. The campaign is the UK's largest anti-racism educational charity and Friday 4 October is its national day to stamp out racism. SCRA's Executive Management signed the pledge to end racism and stand up, speak out and challenge hatred and prejudice. To mark Black History Month, staff in our South East locality created a display in the Edinburgh office and this featured in the autumn edition of our staff e-zine.

SCRA has been working with the charity Atlas (previously called Reach for Autism) to make our services, communications and facilities better for children and young people with autism. In August we launched a new short film on our external website aimed at helping young people with autism attending Children's Hearings. We created autism-friendly sensory kits for children and young people with autism and a variety of sensory difficulties which are now available in all of our hearing centres. We re-launched our guidance for staff 'Arranging a Hearing – Autism Guide' and developed sensory gardens in our Stirling and Falkirk hearing Centres.

In partnership with UNISON, SCRA staff in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen, attended an Autism Spectrum Disorders awareness course. The sessions were delivered by Love Learning Scotland and enabled our staff to have greater confidence in working with and understanding children with Autism.

SCRA has recently reviewed its suite of complaints materials for children and young people. The Participation Group, along with one of our Modern Apprentices, reviewed the current materials and today has launched a new suite of materials on our website.

5.10 Employee Experience Survey

Our annual staff survey provides a key metric of employees' views on what it is like to work for the organisation, covering such diverse topics as communication, learning and development, managing change and our organisational objectives. This year we included questions on equality, diversity and inclusion, which provided essential evidence in support of initiatives under the strategic plan as well as improvements to the support offered to staff.

In May 2019, we consulted with staff to ensure SCRA is providing the appropriate supports to LGBT staff. The results were considered by our LGBT Inclusion Ambassadors and helped inform our approach to embed a more inclusive environment within the organisation.

5.11 Carers

SCRA is committed to helping our people have a good working life. We recognise the links between home and work and the part we all play in ensuring that we create an environment where our people can do their best work whilst managing their caring responsibilities.

We supported National Carers Week in June 2019 to celebrate and recognise the vital contribution made by carers in our organisation. Our Principal Reporter/ CEO and another member of staff shared their personal experience of being carers within SCRA and our Inclusion Ambassadors published a briefing sheet and information about SCRA's policies and initiatives to support staff who have caring responsibilities.

5.12 Disability Confident Employer

In 2016, SCRA became a Disability Confident Employer, which was further reaccredited in 2019. The Disability Confident Employment Scheme is a government scheme designed to encourage employers to recruit and retain disabled people and those with health conditions. Our staff have attended Disability Confident events to promote the work undertaken to achieve the accreditation and to support and encourage other local employers to undertake the same journey. SCRA's Disability Sub Group published a briefing sheet on reasonable adjustments and case studies of two colleagues detailing their personal experience of disability and how the organisation supported them in the workplace. SCRA is now aiming to become a Disability Confident Leader to promote this work further.

5.13 Our Property Approach

Details of the Hearing centres owned or leased by us are published in our external website for children and their families to access in advance of their planned visit to our hearing centre and other SCRA buildings. We are continually looking at our estate to see where any adaptation or changes are needed in order to improve accessibility for staff and children and their families who attend children's hearings.

As part of our corporate parenting duties and our ongoing commitment to improving Hearing rooms for children and young people, we continue to roll out a Hearing room improvement programme to upgrade facilities for children and young people attending hearings. During the reporting period and with the invaluable contribution of Hearings-experienced children and young people, a variety of rooms have been upgraded to a more participative style in our hearing suites in Dundee, Arbroath and Aberdeen.

5.14 Equalities Monitoring Campaign

In November 2019, we launched our second data monitoring campaign providing information about the purpose and value of disclosing their personal and sensitive data whilst reassuring staff that it is optional and anonymous. Currently, we monitor all protected characteristics except care experience for all staff and applicants. Age, sex, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, religion/belief and ethnicity are established with data available. Robust and accurate equality evidence, properly understood and analysed, is at the root of effective compliance with the general equality duty. The campaign resulted in an increase in reporting across race (1.4%) and marriage and civil partnership (3.2%).

5.15 Learning and Development

We have continued to raise awareness of the public sector equality duty through our staff intranet, our National Reporter in-house e-zine and Team Briefs issued by our Principal Reporter/Chief Executive Officer. All staff have access to a diversity calendar and guidance and materials to promote and raise awareness around religion or faith, disability, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, gender equality and other protected characteristics.

5.16 Women into Leadership Network

Our Women into Leadership Network continues to support and encourage women across all localities and in all roles by inspiring and enabling them to take on and seek opportunities for development, maximise their potential, foster valuable connections, and facilitate success through personal and professional growth. During the reporting period the network met twice. Inspiring external speakers shared their journey into and through leadership and in December 2019, Network members participated in an interactive workshop entitled “Five tools to becoming an unstoppable resilient leader.” Feedback from the sessions has been unanimously very positive with one staff member describing an event as “life altering.”

We also provide opportunities for staff to attend Women into Leadership events across Scotland. The opportunity to network in such a positive and supportive environment is of major benefit to those attending.

5.17 Monitoring Legislation and Good Practice

We continue to monitor changes in legislation, and good practice in other organisations to ensure our processes and policies keep pace with developments.

5.18 Professional Memberships

SCRA submitted evidence as part of the Stonewall workplace equality index and will continue to work towards improving our score and ranking.

5.19 Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion

SCRA renewed membership of the Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion (Enei). Being a member has allowed us access to their many workplace guides which we have used when developing our own equality, diversity and human rights policies, and in developing the role and remit of our staff networks and equalities ambassadors. Our Inclusion and Diversity Manager participates in regular member events and has delivered presentations on SCRA’s approach to recognising equality for children, young people and adults with experience of care.

5.20 Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB) Equality Forum

We continue to participate in the NDPB Equality Forum, a collaboration of Scottish public sector bodies who each have a responsibility for responding to the Public Sector Equality Duties. The forum draws expertise and resources from a range of partners to influence and

support the development and implementation of policy and practice on equality, diversity and inclusion in Scotland.

5.21 Scottish Government British Sign Language-led Advisory Group

We were invited to join a BSL-led justice advisory group to provide expertise and guidance to justice agencies. The group will play a key role in developing and delivering a programme of improvements to help the justice agencies better meet the needs of BSL users.

6. Next steps – SCRA’s Equality Outcomes 2020-2023

Our Equality Outcomes 2020-2023 have been developed in consultation with the Executive Management Team, Equalities Network Inclusion Ambassadors, UNISON, our partners and wider staff group and equality groups. We also launched a public consultation exercise and considered and reflected all responses in our outcomes.

In discussion and agreement with the Scottish Government, we are holding off publishing our Corporate Plan for 2020/23 and all related strategies until we have assessed the impact on plans of the current pandemic. We are looking to have this work completed by end April and will be able to publish our Corporate Plan, Business Plan and Equalities Outcomes at that point. If required, to ensure compliance with legislation, we can provide the outcomes that are to be published, on request.

Equality Outcomes 2020-21

Outcome 1:		Children, young people and their families are treated fairly and with dignity and respect. They understand and are able to access our services in ways that suit their individual needs.
Objective 1:		Our staff will continue to treat all children, young people and their families with dignity and respect.
Action		
1.1.1	Our HR policies will be revised to reflect all equalities and inclusion considerations (e.g. gender-neutral language).	
1.1.3	Our new case management system (CSAS) will capture relevant protected characteristic data (e.g. gender identity, ethnicity, age, disability) to ensure services meet individual needs.	
Objective 2:		
Objective 2:		Our services will be procured, designed, shaped and delivered to meet the needs of children, young people and their families.
Action		
1.2.1	We will engage with and listen to the views and experiences of local Young People’s Champion Boards.	
1.2.2	We will engage with and listen to the views and experiences of the national Our Hearings Our Voice.	
1.2.3	We will engage with diverse groups, in particular from a care and minority ethnic background and people with disabilities to inform our understanding of their needs to ensure a positive experience and easy access to our services.	
1.2.4	We will work in partnership with other organisations who are involved with children and their families to provide new insights and make our services as accessible as possible.	
Action		
1.2.8	We will launch a new Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) toolkit and provide training to staff; and establish an Equality Review Group to oversee and provide quality assurance.	
1.2.9	We will publish our Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments.	
1.2.13	We will utilise outdoor space (where available) to establish sensory gardens.	
1.2.15	Each locality will develop a Diversity and Inclusion section within their locality plans reflecting their responsibilities.	

1.2.16	Complaints about our staff and/or services will be dealt with efficiently and respectfully and we will take action to address any equality and diversity related matters through our Equalities Network.
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Outcome 2:	We will build an inclusive 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 to maximise their potential.
Objective 1:	Our leaders will foster a culture where our people feel included, valued, respected and cared for.
Action	
2.1.3	We will develop Inclusive Leadership Standards.
2.1.7	We will introduce guidance to support a consistent approach to recruitment (e.g. interview questions).
Objective 3:	Our staff will feel supported, respected and cared for.
Action	
2.3.1	We will create a culture of support within the workplace where our people can talk about mental health and well-being without stigma and are offered appropriate support.
2.3.2	We will launch a revised supervision and appraisal framework and ensure that all staff have regular supervision.

Outcome 3:	We will actively tackle under-representation and create a workforce that better reflects the diversity of the communities we serve.
Objective 1:	We will make our workforce more diverse through our recruitment and selection processes.
Action	
3.1.4	We will further develop our Modern Apprenticeship Programme to provide opportunities to other under-represented groups.

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

REVIEW OF COMPLAINTS 2019-20

Accountable Director: Head of Practice & Policy

Date: 24 June 2020

Report Author: Information & Research Manager

Recommendation:

1. To note the report.

Reason for Report:	To provide an annual report to Board as requested in June 2014.
Resource Implications:	None.
Strategy:	SCRA Complaints Procedure
Consultation:	EMT.
Document Classification:	Sensitive.

1. Introduction

1.1 SCRA's Complaints Handling Procedure has been in place since 2011 and follows the model provided by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). Its main features are to allow:

- More pro-active recording of issues as complaints
- Greater resolution at front line
- Greater visibility of issues of learning

1.2 The Board and EMT have asked for annual reports on complaints. This is the report on complaints received by SCRA in 2019-20. Following the Board meeting, this report will be shared with Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS) via the CHS-SCRA Joint Information Governance Group, and with SCRA Locality Reporter Managers and Head Office Managers.

2. Number and sources of complaints in 2019-20

2.1 The number of complaints to SCRA over the last seven years is as follows:

Year	Complaints
13/14	72
14/15	42
15/16	54
16/17	28
17/18	39
18/19	40
19/20	61

2.2 There were 61 complaints received in 2019-20, and the majority (69%) of them were from parents:

Source of complaint	Number of complaints	%
Parents	42	69%
Other relatives	6	10%
Social work	3	5%
Solicitor	3	5%
Advocacy worker (one for a child)	3	5%
Safeguarder	2	3%
Foster carers & prospective adopters	2	3%
Total	61	

2.3 As with previous years, SCRA received no direct complaints from **children and young people**. In June 2019, SCRA launched new complaints materials for children and young people. These are available on SCRA's web site - http://www.scra.gov.uk/children_articles/complaints/ and as hard copies in Hearings Centres. That there still have been no such complaints, raises questions on whether there is a need to further review how SCRA communicates with children and young people to enable them to exercise their right to complain if they have issues with SCRA and our service.

3. Localities and number of complaints

3.1 All localities received at least one complaint:

Locality	Number of complaints	%
Ayrshire	4	7%
Central	11	18%
Glasgow	6	10%
Grampian	9	15%
Highlands & Islands	6	10%
Lanarkshire, Dumfries & Galloway	8	13%
North Strathclyde	4	7%
South East	7	11%
Tayside & Fife	5	8%
National/Head Office	1	2%
Total	61	

3.2 The complaint about Head Office related to environmental concerns about SCRA's use of plastic, secure envelopes for Hearings papers. Four complaints related to the Victim information Service (VIS).

3.3 The majority of complaints (51, 84%) were dealt with by Locality Reporter Managers (LRMs). Ten complaints (16%) were dealt with by Head Office Managers, these tended to be complaints related to data protection or when the complaint was about a LRM and it was not appropriate for them to be the investigating officer.

4. Types of complaints

4.1 Complaints are categorised into broad types. The types of complaints received in 2019-20 are shown below:

Complaint type	Number of complaints	%
Referral and reporter decision	6 (4 related to VIS)	10%
Children's Hearings process and or administration	19	31%
Communications from SCRA / environment	1	2%
Data protection related	8	13%
SCRA staff conduct/customer relations	5	8%
Health & Safety	1	2%
More than one type	21	34%
Total	61	

5. Complaint resolution

5.1 SPSO guidance and SCRA's Complaints Procedure is that where the matter can be resolved quickly and informally this should be done at the **front line** and only reported where the issue might have national significance. Seven (11%) complaints were reported to have been dealt with at the front line,

and all within the 5 day timescale. The number of complaints resolved at the front line is likely to be higher as they could be dealt with without having to be reported.

5.2 Fifty four complaints required **further investigation** (i.e. could not be resolved at the front line) – 51 have been closed, two were withdrawn by the complainants, and one is still being investigated and is currently open.

5.3 Of the 51 closed complaints that required further investigation:

- 41 (80%) received an **acknowledgement** within 3 days, nine did not, and one wasn't acknowledged.
- 43 (84%) received a **response** within the required timescale of 20 days, and eight took longer. For five of the delayed responses an extension was agreed with the complainant, for two the reasons for the delays are not recorded, and one has been delayed because of the impact of the COVID-19 restrictions.

5.4 The majority of complaints were **not upheld** (38, 74%); and this is a similar proportion to last year. Nine were partly upheld (18%) and four (8%) were upheld, and these are summarised below:

Complaint summary	Outcome
Disclosure of the complainant's address by the Reporter during a Children's hearing	Upheld
SCRA used an incorrect address which resulted in the complainant's child's Hearings papers being sent to the wrong address	Upheld
SCRA did not action a non-disclosure request which resulted in the complainant's address being disclosed to their ex-partner	Upheld
The social work report, although sent in advance to SCRA, was not included in the Hearings papers	Upheld
Safety of participants in a Children's Hearing	Partly upheld
Complainant was not invited to or sent papers for a Children's Hearing	Partly upheld
Complainant not happy about his emails not being acknowledged, timescales for early review, and how he says a member of SCRA staff spoke to him	Partly upheld
Decisions and information available to a Hearing	Partly upheld
Panel Members not having reports in time for Hearing	Partly upheld
Content of a report sent to a young person, amount of notice for the Hearing, emails not being acknowledged, school being informed of Hearing before family	Partly upheld
Error made by Reporter regarding non-disclosure, timing of Hearing, decision not to apply non-disclosure	Partly upheld
Error made by Reporter regarding non-disclosure, decision not to apply non-disclosure	Partly upheld
SCRA using single use plastic envelopes and their environmental impact	Partly upheld

5.5 Where a complaint is not upheld or partly upheld, the complainant is advised that they may contact the SPSO. There were four referrals made to the

SPSO in 2019-20 (there were six in 2018-19) on complaints that were not upheld by SCRA. In all four cases the SPSO decided not to investigate:

Complaint summary	SPSO decision
Reporter decision not to arrange a Hearing re. offence by a child where another child was the victim	'SCRA's investigation of the complaint appears reasonable'. 'SPSO is not entitled to question the merits of a decision taken without maladministration by or on behalf of a listed authority in the exercise of a discretion vested in that authority'
Conduct of a SCRA staff member, and how a referral was dealt with	Lack of evidence. 'SCRA acted reasonably in how they dealt with complaint'.
SCRA's alleged sharing of information with another agency, the exclusion of a relevant person from a Hearing, disagree with how their views were recorded in Hearing decision	SCRA's response appears reasonable. 'They have provided a clear response to your complaints, explaining the steps they took to investigate and the reasons why they do not agree with your position.'
Reporter decision not to arrange a Hearing re. offence by a child where another child was the victim; quality and lack of information from SCRA.	'An appropriate investigation has occurred.' SCRA's response is reasonable and I have not seen evidence that there is any fault or failure there'. 'SPSO is not entitled to question the merits of a decision taken without maladministration by or on behalf of a listed authority in the exercise of a discretion vested in that authority'

5.6 *Vexatious and repeated complaints*

Two complainants made two separate complaints each in 2019-20. None of these four complaints were upheld.

A third complainant made numerous complaints to SCRA. The first such complaint (received in April 2019) was investigated and responded to and was not upheld. All subsequent complaints (and there have been over 50 in 2019-20) have been deemed to be vexatious in line with SCRA's Complaints Handling Procedure, and have not been recorded in the complaints log. This individual's contact with SCRA is dealt with in accordance with SCRA's Unacceptable Behaviour and Dignity at Work Policies and is restricted to the Information Governance Team.

6. **Conclusions**

6.1 The Board is invited to note this report.

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Influencing Report: 1st December 2019 to 31st May 2020

Accountable Director:	Head of Practice and Policy	Date:	24 June 2020
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Recommendation:

1. That the Board notes the content of this report


Reason for Report:	<i>For information of Board</i>
Resource Implications:	<i>Within approved budgets</i>
Strategy:	<i>Within approved plans</i>
Consultation:	<i>Practice and Policy team</i>
Document Classification:	<i>Open</i>

1	Introduction
1.1	<p>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.</p> <p>The Board subsequently requested that a similar report be provided on a bi-annual basis.</p> <p>This is the eighteenth such report and covers the period 1st December 2019 to 31st May 2020.</p> <p>Unlike any previous reports this report covers the period of 'lockdown' as a result of UK and Scottish Government action to combat the spread of coronavirus and Covid19 and the report may not, therefore, be as extensive as previously. Melissa Hunt (Policy and Public Affairs Manager) has been temporarily re-deployed in the South East Scotland Locality Team since the week beginning 16th March and as such the focus of her work has been largely operational.</p>
1.2	<p>There are hyperlinks throughout the document - to external documents which may be of interest (including legislation and draft legislation) and to internal documents which are published externally. Internal documents which are not published externally are included as inserted file objects.</p> <p>Where there are links to legislation these links are to the Bill or the 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.</p>
1.3	<p>Melissa Hunt, SCRA Policy and Public Affairs Manager, normally works alongside Government Officials in Victoria Quay at least one day a week, and has developed a positive working relationships in order to encourage informal dialogue, increased contact through observation of hearings, involvement in team meetings and informal and formal consultation with SCRA, when relevant.</p> <p>Alistair Hogg, Head of Practice and Policy is also a presence within Victoria Quay, to encourage dialogue and to keep SCRA visible and within conversations.</p> <p>This presence has not been possible since 23rd March 2020, as a result of the UK and Scottish Government's Covid 19 response. However, regular meetings / updates / conversations with the Government Teams have continued throughout this period; with Alistair Hogg having very regular contact as a result of the fast pace of change.</p>



1.4	<p>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/ .</p> <p>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.</p> <p>In October 2019 Melissa Hunt and Alistair Hogg agreed to also circulate 'LRM Briefings' in respect of SCRA's position on national consultation exercises where we are not preparing a full response. These briefings will be circulated through the PPN network. We planned to gather feedback on this through the PPN at the beginning of 2020 and this will now happen later in 2020.</p> <p>SCRA has not yet agreed an approach to consultation responses with Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS). When complete SCRA's Key Messages are shared with interested parties. CHS are one of the parties.</p>
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2	Pending legislation & Parliamentary Work
2.1	<p>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</p> <p>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 position in relation to the proposed changes was that whilst the language of the legislation could be updated and elements of the specific section 12 offence could be improved, we continued to find the provisions useful and used them on a regular basis. We were also really clear that our focus was on using the legislative provision to protect children, not to prosecute parents, and that the suggestions we were making were about how to strengthen our abilities to protect rather than anything else. SCRA's response is still online, here.</p> <p>Melissa Hunt has still got data to consider which should give a rich evidential base for any future comments we wish to make on this area of the law.</p>
2.2	<p>Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill 2020 – a Consultation</p> <p>SCRA responded to a consultation in respect of this proposed piece of legislation.</p> <p>The response in full is on the SCRA website here.</p> <p>No summary document was prepared for Locality Reporter Managers in SCRA, as the full response is quite short.</p> <p>In summary, we support the proposals made, but feel that the focus on acquired gender is behind the curve by not taking into account gender fluidity and non-binary gender identity.</p>

2.3	<p><u>The Female Genital Mutilation (Protection and Guidance) (Scotland) Bill</u></p> <p>This Bill was introduced to the Parliament on 29th May 2019.</p> <p>Neil Hunter gave oral evidence to the Equalities and Human Rights Committee.</p> <p>The Bill is currently at Stage 2 and SCRA are keeping a watching brief on progress.</p>
2.4	<p><u>Public Petitions Committee</u> –</p> <p>Relevant Current business – Inquiry into mental health support for young people in Scotland.</p>
2.5	<p><u>Forensic Medical Services (Victims of Sexual Offences) (Scotland) Bill</u></p> <p>The Forensic Medical Services Bill was introduced in the Scottish Parliament on the 26th November 2019.</p> <p>Alistair Hogg had been due to give evidence in relation to the Bill on March 24th 2020, but the UK and Scottish Government Covid 19 response has meant that the Health and Sport Committee have now planned to take evidence virtually, through the use of technology and with one witness per session and they have written to us to indicate this. As a result, we may be asked to submit additional written evidence to the Committee, after they have taken their first round of virtual evidence.</p> <p>If we are required to do this the Committee Clerks will be in touch to let us know.</p> <p>We have already supplied written evidence to the committee, and this is on the SCRA website <u>here</u>.</p>
2.6	<p><u>The Children (Scotland) Bill</u> was introduced on 2nd September 2019.</p> <p>Alistair Hogg gave oral evidence to the Justice Committee on 21st January 2020. His evidence can be read here: <u>http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=12472&mode=pdf</u></p> <p>And viewed here (starting at 12:31pm as the morning business has to be re-arranged at the last minute): <u>https://www.scottishparliament.tv/meeting/justice-committee-january-21-2020</u></p> <p>Following the oral evidence on 21st January CELCIS submitted further written evidence on taking the views of very young children. This can be read here: <u>https://www.parliament.scot/S5_JusticeCommittee/Inquiries/JS519CH72_CELCIS_supp.pdf</u></p> <p>The Stage 1 Report of the Bill is available <u>here</u> and the Bill is still to move to Stage 2.</p>

2.7	<p><u>The Disclosure (Scotland) Bill</u> was introduced on 12th June 2019.</p> <p>Alistair Hogg gave oral evidence to the Education and Skills Committee on 13th November 2019. His oral evidence can be viewed here: https://www.scottishparliament.tv/meeting/education-and-skills-committee-november-13-2019</p> <p>read here: http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=12368&mode=pdf</p> <p>The Stage One Report from the Committee was published on 17th December 2019 and is available here. The Bill completed Stage 2 on 11th March 2020 and is now at Stage 3.</p> <p>Alistair Hogg and Melissa Hunt met with Alison Reid and two other Solicitors from CLAN Child Law on a very wet 18th February 2020 – the meeting was interesting and helped clarify where our thinking is about the Bill and about some of the things SCRA can and should do in our youth justice approach.</p> <p>This will be discussed at an SCRA Youth Justice Co-Ordination meeting (chaired by Neil Hunter and involving Neil Hunter, Alistair Hogg, Gill Short, Gordon Bell, Alison Deighan, Neill Mitchell, Melissa Hunt and Pauline Proudfoot) however, as a result of Covid 19 our thinking and planning in relation to the Disclosure Bill has been put back.</p> <p>The Bill has already had a number of significant amendments which look very promising – the language has been altered in relation to children and young people and Children’s Hearings specifically and there has been a simplification of the use of ‘lists’ in relation to the offending history of children and young people.</p> <p>The Disclosure Bill as amended at Stage 2 is included for reference:</p> <div data-bbox="368 1171 424 1234">  </div> <p>Disclosure Scotland Bill as Amended at S</p>
2.8	<p><u>Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019</u></p> <p>This Bill was passed on 7 May 2019 and became an Act on 11 June 2019.</p> <p>The commencement of the different provisions of the Act has not yet been determined. 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.</p> <p>Alistair Hogg sits on the ACR Advisory Group. The current estimated implementation date for the full provisions of the Act is Autumn 2021.</p>

2.9	<p><u>Vulnerable Witnesses (Criminal Evidence) Act 2019</u></p> <p>This Bill was passed on 9th May 2019 and received Royal Assent on 13th June 2019.</p> <p>The commencement of the Act is staged, with Higher Court proceedings using and benefiting from the changes before other Courts.</p>
2.10	<p><u>Children (Equal Protection from Assault) Act 2019</u></p> <p>The Act became law on 7th November 2019.</p> <p>Alistair Hogg is part of the implementation group for the Act and SCRA were involved in discussion around the media strategy being used to prepare for the Act commencing in November 2020. The Parent Club Building a Rewarding Relationship with your child forms part of this strategy: https://www.parentclub.scot/articles/building-a-rewarding-relationship-with-your-child.</p>
2.11	<p><u>The Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020</u></p> <p>This emergency piece of legislation has been used since coming into force on the 7th April.</p> <p>SCRA were involved in discussion with Scottish Government about the provisions in the Act and are currently involved in discussions about the statutory reporting duty under the Act.</p>

4	Other Consultation Responses
4.1	<p data-bbox="293 271 639 300">Youth Justice Standards</p> <p data-bbox="293 338 1445 403">SCRA submitted a consultation response in relation to the Youth Justice Standards.</p> <p data-bbox="293 441 943 470">The response in full is on the SCRA website here.</p> <p data-bbox="293 508 1398 537">The summary prepared for Locality Reporter Managers in SCRA is available as well:</p> <div data-bbox="371 539 424 600">  </div> <p data-bbox="293 611 501 660">Youth Justice Standards - SCRA Ke</p> <p data-bbox="293 707 1437 1039">In summary, SCRA warmly welcomed these Youth Justice Standards. We are of the view that the Standards not only capture the priorities for youth justice work in Scotland as we go forward but that they capture these priorities within the context of the child's whole experience and in the context of holistic support around the child as set out in the getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) practice framework. For children who are involved in the Children's Hearing System this is crucial – the Children's Hearing operates in the same way and has the same disposal options available regardless of the reason a child comes to their Hearing. This framework supports the holistic approach taken by the Children's Hearing. The standards are flexible and take account of local needs.</p>
4.2	<p data-bbox="293 1093 660 1122">Joint Strategy for Policing</p> <p data-bbox="293 1160 1445 1225">SCRA submitted a consultation response to Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority in response to the proposals for a Joint Strategy for Policing.</p> <p data-bbox="293 1263 943 1292">The response in full is on the SCRA website here.</p> <p data-bbox="293 1330 1398 1359">The summary prepared for Locality Reporter Managers in SCRA is available as well:</p> <div data-bbox="371 1397 424 1458">  </div> <p data-bbox="293 1469 501 1518">Joint Strategy for Policing (2020) - SCR</p> <p data-bbox="293 1565 1445 1697">In summary, SCRA are in full agreement with the approach to keep people safe; and we like that the strategy deals with both public safety and individual well-being. The approach keeps people and communities at its heart and recognises the staff of Police Scotland within communities. The workforce model is to be especially commended.</p>

Shaping SLABS's Corporate and Equalities Plans

SCRA responded to the public consultation on developing SLAB's corporate and equalities plans. Quality available legal aid is essential for many families accessing Children's Hearings and it made total sense for a full and developed consultation response to be submitted by SCRA. Thanks go also to Elaine Adams (CELCIS and CHIP Learning and Development Lead) who helped in the shaping of the response.

The response in full is on the SCRA website [here](#).

The summary prepared for Locality Reporter Managers in SCRA is available as well:




Shaping SLAB's
corporate and equa

- In summary, access to legal advice and/or representation in the Children's Hearing System needs to be simplified and widened and should be recognised as a more specialized service.
- It is imperative that there is a robust system of registration in place to ensure that children and families are only represented by legal professionals who can demonstrate both knowledge and application of the ethos of the hearing system and who place the effective participation of the child at the centre of the process. They must have knowledge of child development as well as children's rights and be able to communicate effectively with children. We think this goes beyond the current Code of Practice.
- Going forwards we would ask SLAB to consider how they could promote and encourage a problem solving approach aimed far more on communication and understanding. This is particularly relevant for a child in the Children's Hearing System when their case has to be dealt with in Court – where the adversarial approach of lawyers can at times cause unnecessary and at times significant delay.
- There should be a streamlined, clear and robust system for children and young people to complain about the service they receive and this should also be independent of the individual firms providing the legal aid service. The current complaint system is cumbersome and complex. There should also be a route for professionals to complain about the work of a legal professional.

5	Current partnership & collaborative work
5.1	<p>New Joint Investigative Interview Training</p> <p>Gordon Bell from the Practice Team has been leading for SCRA in this work. This new approach to the Joint Investigative Interview is built on the recommendations from the Evidence and Procedure Review, and is now well underway. This entry on the Social Work Scotland website gives a clear description of the work - https://socialworkscotland.org/projects/joint-investigative-interviews/.</p> <p>The first training cohort has begun. 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 first 'outing' of the course.</p>
5.2	<p>Child Trafficking and Exploitation</p> <p>Melissa Hunt continues to be a member of this working group, chaired by the Scottish Government.</p>
5.3	<p>Training on the 'Children's Hearings System and the Role of the Reporter' to Disclosure Scotland</p> <p>In October 2019 SCRA's Participation Officer Jennifer Orren delivered a comprehensive training on the 'Children's Hearings System and the Role of the Reporter' to Disclosure Scotland. This was a partnership arrangement, and Disclosure Scotland in turn delivered training on Disclosure Scotland's assessment criteria, minor crimes and employment, and unconscious bias attended by SCRA's Human Resources team, the Participation Officer, and 'Our Hearings, Our Voice' Project Lead Jacqui Dunbar.</p>
5.4	<p>Systemic Oppression and Children's Rights</p> <p>Melissa Hunt and Elaine Adams (CELCIS CHIP Learning and Development Lead) are currently working on an academic piece / essay which seeks to balance rights and protections and to consider how these things can co-exists within the Children's Hearing.</p>

6	Research
6.1	Gillian Henderson gave Cardiff University's annual adoption lecture on 9th January - 'Supporting the sibling relationships of children in care in Scotland'.
6.2	SCRA research on 'Young people under 12 in residential care' started, and the first meeting of its Research Advisory Group (RAG) was held on 6th February. The RAG members are from Stirling University, Social Work Scotland, Barnardo's Scotland, Kibble, Aberlour, Children's Hearings Scotland, CELCIS and SCRA.
6.3	SCRA and Barnardo's Scotland research on the 'Sexual Exploitation of children involved in the Children's Hearings System' was completed and the draft report sent to its RAG for comment on 19th May. The RAG members are from Scottish Government, Police Scotland, Glasgow City Council Social Work Department, CELCIS, CYCJ and Barnardo's Scotland.

7	Additional Work
7.1	External Training Delivery <p>SCRA's Practice team, supported by Senior Practitioner Reporters and other Reporters deliver regular training inputs across the country. Training about the children's hearing system and the role of the Reporter is delivered to all Police Scotland Probationers at the Police College; to Police Scotland Officers with specialist duties in relation to child protection or domestic abuse; to procurators fiscal and to those who are training to be joint investigative interviewers.</p>
7.2	Training for Staff at Kibble School <p>On 3rd March 2020 Melissa Hunt, Elaine Adams (CELCIS and CHIP Learning and Development Lead) and Jennifer Orren - Participation Officer were joined by Maria Galli from the Scottish Commissioner for Children and Young people and Donna McEwan, CYCJ for a training event for Kibble managers and secure unit staff.</p> <p>This was the training plan for the day:</p> <div data-bbox="363 1563 424 1630" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Programme for 3rd March 2020 @06022</p> <p>The training was well received and it is hoped that it can be rolled out to further staff members across the Kibble estate after the Covid 16 emergency has subsided.</p>

7.3	<p>Child Protection Policy and Training</p> <p>SCRA has recently introduced an updated child protection and safeguarding policy. Further work is ongoing to develop the safeguarding aspects of the policy in particular, and this work is being led by Jacqui Dunbar (OHOV) and Jennifer Orren (Participation Officer) and reference is included here as SCRA will likely seek information / advice and expertise from partners as we develop our child protection approach.</p>
7.4	<p>Strathclyde University Training</p> <p>Pauline Proudfoot (Operational Development Manager) gave her annual tutorials to the Legal Diploma Students at Strathclyde on 'The Role of SCRA and Children's Reporters'.</p>
7.5	<p>Edinburgh University Social Work Training</p> <p>On 3rd February 2020 Melissa Hunt was again involved in delivering a seminar for this course, alongside Carol Duncan (Edinburgh Social Work and Edinburgh University) and Patrick Lawrence (Edinburgh Panel Member).</p>
7.6	<p>Edinburgh University Rights Course</p> <p>On 24th March 2020 Melissa Hunt was involved in delivering a virtual seminar through ZOOM to Edinburgh University students studying human rights.</p>
7.7	<p>Safeguarder Court Training</p> <p>Children 1st have commissioned some online introductory court training for safeguarders. SCRA have had some discussion with one service manager about additional training which could be developed / delivered – but this is at a very early stage and will depend in part on the online programme content which is developed.</p>
7.8	<p>Children's Hearing – Training for schools / information for staff and pupils</p> <p>Work is ongoing to progress this. A package of training to be used as part of personal and social development in High School has been developed and is being trialled by Armadale Academy, West Lothian. This trial was due to start after an initial planning meeting after the school Easter break. As a result of Covid 19 this hasn't happened and will be progressed in the Autumn.</p> <p>The sample lessons are included here for information:</p> <p></p> <p>School Materials - Children's Hearing 5</p>

7.9	<p>Scoping of External Training Delivery</p> <p>This scoping work has been done and is scheduled to be discussed at a PPN meeting, although it has yet to be confirmed on the agenda.</p> <div data-bbox="363 365 424 432" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>External Training Provision - PIN Discu</p>
7.10	<p>Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership (CHIP)</p> <p>The Policy Scanning and Action Group has been reformed and met on 11th February 2020 to consider the findings of the Independent Care Review.</p> <p>It is still to work further on these findings.</p>
7.11	<p>Advocacy for Children's Hearings</p> <p>The UK and Scottish Government response to the Covid 19 emergency has had an effect on the timing of the roll out of Children's Hearing Advocacy Service provisions across Scotland. On 11th May 2020 an email was sent to SCRA Senior Operational Managers, to be cascaded to Locality Reporter Managers, so that Localities could:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) see who had been awarded the contract for the provision of services in their area(s) 2) communicated directly with service providers in cases where additional supports may be necessary for children and young people to engage effectively with the virtual children's hearing. <p>For information, this is the document describing the appointments so far:</p> <div data-bbox="368 1171 424 1234" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>Update on providers for PPN 11</p>
7.12	<p>Participation in SCRA - Care-Experienced Modern Apprentices and Work Placements in SCRA</p> <p>SCRA's Modern Apprentice, based in Edinburgh, is just over half way through their apprenticeship and completed their first year at the end of February 2020. The young person has completed their qualification and is exploring additional educational opportunities. A six-month funded work-experience placement in partnership with the Local Authority was in place to start in Aberdeen at the time of the lockdown; this will be put back in to place as soon as possible.</p>
7.13	<p>Other legislative Reform</p> <p>With the encouragement of Scottish Government we continue to manage a log of legislative changes we would like to see to the 2011 Act in case there is any opportunity to introduce them.</p> <p>We are actively sharing this log with the Government, so that opportunities to make the changes we would like are not missed.</p>

8	Horizon Scanning
8.1	<p>Barnahus in Scotland:</p> <p>Children 1st paper – summarises and sets out the Scottish landscape around the Barnahus: https://www.children1st.org.uk/media/6701/trauma-free-justice-care-and-protection-for-scotlands-children.pdf</p> <p>Children 1st have received £1.5 million from the People’s Postcode Lottery to build a Child’s House for Healing. https://www.children1st.org.uk/who-we-are/news/news/childs-house-for-healing/</p> <p>These changes will also benefit children involved in the Children’s Hearing – we need to keep up to date with the details and be alert to things which are transferable and which we can implement within the Hearing System. There has been work led by health Improvement Scotland to develop Scottish Standards for the development of Barnahus. The Practice team have been involved in this work with Gill Short (Practice Team Manager) and Gordon Bell (Practice Reporter) reviewing the standards and providing comment. Comments were submitted to the latest draft in March but progress of the standards has been affected by Covid19.</p>
8.2	<p>Independent Care Review</p> <p>Reported its findings in a series of reports at the beginning of 2020.</p> <p>The reports are a promise to the children and families of Scotland that Care will improve and change. This is a challenge for the whole sector and requires considerable investment and time to get right. The implementation phase of the review has been delayed as a result of Covid19, and it is important this phase begins and explains some of the more ambiguous findings of the review – so that the direction of travel for work becomes clearer.</p> <p>Joe Hamilton (Operational Development Manager) is beginning to work on SCRA’s official response to the review and how our work in this area will link in with ‘Better Hearings’. The two areas of work will need to progress in tandem and should support each other.</p> <p>Lisa Bennet, Head of Strategy, is meeting with representatives from the Independent Care Review on a weekly basis, to make sure that the Promise is not overlooked.</p>
8.3	<p>Child Protection Guidance 2014 - Review</p> <p>Interim guidance linked to the Covid 19 emergency response has been published and can be read here. The publication of the revised guidance is being reconsidered as the proposed public consultation has not been able to take place.</p> <p>The document is now ready for publication – subject to consultation and revision as a result of consultation responses.</p>

8.4	<p><u>Improving the Management of Sexual Offences Cases</u></p> <p>This Judicial-led Working Group is chaired by Lady Dorrian has involved Gordon Bell from the Practice Team for the last 12 months. This is helpful to keep our separate Children's Hearings proceedings on the radar. Offending by children is within the scope of the group, but the focus of the group has been on improvement across criminal justice proceedings. It is important, however, that improvements in criminal justice can be transferred into the Children's Hearing. It would not be satisfactory to have one way of dealing with witnesses in criminal proceedings and another for the Hearing (for example) – particularly if a witness required to be involved in both.</p> <p>SCRA's Practice Team are also developing specific training for Reporters on Harmful Sexual Behaviour and that work is ongoing.</p>
8.5	<p>16 & 17 Year Olds In the Children's Hearing</p> <p>The September 2019 Programme for Government – Protecting Scotland's Future was launched on 3rd September 2019 and on p115 the Government states:</p> <p>"We will also consult on enabling joint reporting to the Crown Office and the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration of all 16 and 17 year olds' offence cases."</p> <p>SCRA are pleased with this approach and we have been involved with the Scottish Government in dialogue to develop the public consultation.</p> <p>Neil Hunter continues to chair a multi-agency group to examine and prepare for the possibility of all 16 & 17 year olds coming into the children's hearing system.</p>
8.6	<p>Victims Taskforce</p> <p>The Victims Taskforce has been 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."</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Pauline Proudfoot, SCRA Operational Development Manager is sitting as part of the taskforce and SCRA's Youth Justice Co-ordination meeting are considering victims in the Children's Hearing System in some detail. Pauline also sits on the 'Trauma Informed Workforce' work stream of the Taskforce – which is hoping to circulate a self-assessment questionnaire to organisations so that a bench mark and targets for a trauma informed and sensitive workforce can be developed nationally. This will be very useful for SCRA and will inform our approach and our training plan going forward.</p>

9	Other Influencing Work & Training
9.1	SCRA continues to be involved in the National Child Protection Strategic Group, the Youth Justice Improvement Board and the National Stop and Search Steering Group.
9.2	<p>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.</p> <p>The Covid 19 response of SCRA and CHS will require feedback and review – but will add much information to the delivery of this programme.</p> <p>The Policy Manager is continuing to work with the Digital Delivery Team and the Government on this.</p>

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

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION**Strategic and Operational Risk Registers**

Accountable Director: Principal Reporter/Chief Executive **Date:** 24 June 2020

Report Authors: Head of Finance & Resources
Governance Officer

Recommendation:

1. To review 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 Audit & Risk Committee on the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers and advises the Committee of some minor changes to the Risk Management Policy.
- 1.2 The Risk Registers were last reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee at its February 2020 meeting and the Board at its meeting on 18th December 2019.

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). The work of the service wide Risk Reference Group has now been integrated into the remit of the PPN and this change has been reflected in the updated Risk Management Policy.
- 2.3 Locality Plans have linked Locality Risk Registers and the common themes will be discussed at the next meeting of the PPN.
- 2.4 The risk register format includes an assessment of both gross and net 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 Executive Management Team undertook a review of the Strategic Risk Register in April 2020 (attached at Appendix 1).
- 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. All actions are complete. Two new actions have been identified and this risk is constantly monitored by the SIRO, functional lead and the Security Information Group in relation to CSAS. CMS system accreditation has been extended to October 2020, when we plan to mitigate this risk further by the retiral of the current CMS and replacement by the CSAS platform, with significantly improved levels of security.

Risk 2 – SR2019 does not deliver level of resources required for

medium term financial sustainability. This risk will now be closed.

Risk 3 - The optimum model for CSAS ownership and accountability and a joint future partnership between SCRA and CHS is not adequately defined and agreed. The last four actions are at various stages of progress, it is assumed that once they are all complete this risk will be sufficiently mitigated and will be closed. Inheritor governance arrangements post CSAS go live are being planned by the respective CEO's.

- 3.3 No new strategic risks have been identified by EMT members in the latest review. Digital programme risks are managed by the Technical Assurance and Programme Assurance Groups and escalated to the Digital Delivery Board as necessary.

The Senior Operational Managers are developing a new, operationally focused COVID-19 risk. EMT is developing both a workforce and operational recovery plan to deal with the consequential of the COVID-19 crisis of which significant casework backlogs and pressures on the staffing resource will be significant. These recovery plans will form part of our response on the ground and a series of key controls and mitigations.

EMT are tracking the financial implications of COVID-19 across the service, including impact on the digital budget (extended costs of legacy systems) and operational costs – current and future as we prepare to manage a backlog in deferred and triaged casework (see 4.2 below)

4. Operational Risk Register Profile

- 4.1 The Operational Risk Register updated as at April 2020 is attached at Appendix 2.
- 4.2 The register has been reviewed by the Executive Management Team. The review took account of current national priorities in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was agreed that Risk 1 “Insufficient operational capacity to consistently deliver quality services.” is well managed by Locality Managers but this risk is not the focus of management attention at the moment but will be revisited in six months.

As a result of the COVID-19 crisis SCRA reporters are carefully assessing Hearings that must take place and scheduling them as usual. The Hearings that are less urgent are being subject to detailed discussions with Local Authorities, with families (where appropriate) and with young people where this makes sense. This does raise a risk that some children and young people will not receive the services they need. A second possible impact of prioritisation of effort on a COVID-19 response is that other operational priorities for 2020/21 are impacted e.g. Better Hearings, CSAS implementation. The SOM's are considering these aspects and will formulate a new operational risk, assess likelihood and impact and strength of controls before developing an action plan to mitigate the risk. The Operational Risk Register will be reviewed further at the next meeting of the PPN.

5. Conclusions

- 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 the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers.

Appendix 1 – Strategic Risk Register (April 2020)

Appendix 2 - Operational Risk Register (April 2020)

Previous Papers:

Risk Register Report to Audit & Risk Committee – February 2020

Risk Register Report to Board – December 2019

Operational Risk Register April 2020

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	<p>Use and deployment of temporary staff to meet operational pressure is reviewed routinely at LMT/with SOM's.</p> <p>A managed approach to workload measurement is in place.</p> <p>All key IT/Business systems, availability, performance and function is maintained.</p> <p>Delivery and regular review of comprehensive Locality Plan and Head Office Business plans.</p> <p>Locality Plans have clear visibility and leadership and timelines on quality improvements.</p> <p>Delivery of routine management information and data reporting prompts focussed planning and action.</p> <p>Inter Locality working protocol is initiated as part of BCP when required.</p> <p>Individual Locality Performance Reviews, led by SOM's – twice yearly to assess delivery of operational stability and quality initiatives.</p> <p>Quarterly review of Locality plans by LMTs.</p> <p>Quarterly Business Plan reviews by Head of Strategy/OD.</p> <p>Engagement of planning officers/team with LMTs.</p> <p>Creation of resilience fund within core budget at SOM level to be deployed flexibly in response to anticipated</p>	<p>Effective</p> <p>Effective</p> <p>Effective</p> <p>Effective</p> <p>Partly effective</p> <p>Effective</p> <p>Effective</p> <p>Effective</p> <p>Partly Effective</p> <p>Partly Effective</p> <p>Effective</p> <p>Assess in light of experience</p>	(2:4) 8	Cautious	(2:2) 4	<p>Complete Court review (complete) and implement relevant recommendations.</p> <p>Targeted investment/resource to improve resilience/sustainability in small number of Localities.</p> <p>Internal Audit Locality review including Locality Workforce Planning.</p> <p>As part of 2018/19 Budget Planning carry out an early review of non-establishment posts.</p> <p>Equalisation programme analysis.</p> <p>Resource redeployment.</p>	<p>Operational Development Manager/March 2020.</p> <p>SOM's/ to March 2020.</p> <p>Complete.</p> <p>Complete.</p> <p>SOMs & Head of HR. Initial analysis work complete, progress resulting resource redeployment in 2020/21 post CSAS rollout.</p>

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
						and actual need						
2	Effective Collaboration	Operational/Reputational/non-compliance with legal duty	Varying practice and lack of clarity on processing of Non Disclosure cases that may increase risk of breach and lack of operational efficiency/duplication of effort	Senior Operational Managers/ SIRO	(4:4) 16	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 Buy in from external agencies across Scotland as to their responsibility for redaction and keeping address references to minimum Inter-agency good practice guidance is delivered. Provision of 2 weekly ND data reports to assist review of appropriateness of ND measures. Regular EMT oversight of implementation of case sampling improvements. Code of Practice on Information Sharing for Hearings system.	Effective Partly Effective Effective Partly Effective Effective Partly Effective	(2:3) 6	Minimalist	(2:2) 4	All managers consulted re recording issues (incl N/D) with associated actions to be implemented Revision of ND Process and Procedures Implement ICO actions	SOM's/LRM's Dec 19. Complete. Head of Practice & Policy – Post CSAS On-going