SCRA Board Meeting
Agenda
Wednesday 21st June 2023 at 10:30am
By Teams

	Item	Papers	Purpose	Lead
1.1	**AOB**			
1.2	**Apologies**			
2.	**Declarations of Interest**			
3.	**Board Member Updates**			
4.	**Minutes/Committees**			
4.1	**Draft Minute of the meeting held on 29 March** **Board Workplan** **Matters Arising**	Attached Attached	Approval Noting	
4.2 4.2.1 4.2.2	**Audit & Risk Committee** • **Draft Minute of Meeting held on 25 May** • **Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report**	Attached Attached	Noting Approval	KB JE
4.3	**Remuneration & Nominations Committee Update**	Verbal	Information	MM
4.4	**Committee Membership**	Attached	Approval	MM
5.	**Governance**			
5.1	**Board Objectives**	Attached	Approval	MM
5.2	**UK Government Boardroom Apprenticeship Pilot Programme**	Attached	Approval	MM
6	**Accountable Officer**			
6.1	**Chief Executive's Report**		Noting	NH
	Reports			
7.	**OPR & introduction to official statistics**		Approval	LB
8.	**Keeping The Promise Update Report**		Noting	LB
9.	**2022/23 Draft Budget Outturn**		Approval	EM
10.	**Property Strategy**		Approval	EM
11.	**Inclusion and Diversity Annual Report**		Noting	SD/IK
12.	**Communications Plan - Update**		Noting	MMcI
13.	**Annual Complaints Report**		Noting	AH
14.	**Influencing Report 01 June 2022 to 01 June 2023**		Noting	AH
15. 15.1 15.2	**Risk** **Strategic & Operational Risk Registers** **New Risks**		Approval	EM
	Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 20 September 2023			

Present:
Michelle Miller (Chair)
Jim Edgar
Martin Toye
Kay Barton
Suzie Vestri
Hazel Smith
Ying Zhang

In Attendance:
Neil Hunter (Principal Reporter/Chief Executive),
Alistair Hogg (Head of Practice and Policy),
Ed Morrison (Head of Finance & Resources),
Susan Deery (Head of Human Resources),
Lisa Bennett (Head of Strategy & OD),
Helen Etchells (Senior Operational Manager, North and West Scotland)
Paul Mulvanny (Senior Operational Manager, East and Central Scotland)
Ian Donaldson (Deputy Director, Children's Rights, Protection and Justice, Scottish Government) Item 7
Nick Rougvie (Sponsor Team Leader, Scottish Government) Item 7
Tom McNamara (Head of Youth Justice and Childrens Hearings, Scottish Government) Item 7
Morna Sands (HR Manager) Item 6
Donald Lamb (Data Manager) Item 9
Monica Sweeny (UNISON Branch Secretary)
Pamela Armstrong (Governance Officer)

		Timescale	Action
1.1	**AOB** **None**		
2.	**Apologies** Lorraine Moore - Board Member		
3.	**Declarations of Interest** None		
4.	**Minutes/Committees**		
4.1	**Minute of meeting held on 25 January 2023** Agreed as accurate.		
4.2	**Board Action log and Work plan** The action log and work plan were reviewed.		
4.3	**Matters Arising** All matters arising are covered within the agenda.		

		Timescale	Action

4.4	**Minute the Audit & Risk Committee held on Thursday 23 February 2023**
	Jim Edgar, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee and Board Member, updated the Board in the following areas:
	• Information Governance Update
	• Quality Assurance & Performance
	   o **Role of the Reporter at the hearing**
	   o **Case sampling programme 2023-24**
	• Risk Management Policy
	• External Audit
	   o External Audit Annual Plan 2022-23
	   o General Update
	• Internal Audit
	   o The Promise
	   o Board Effectiveness
	   o Progress Report 2022-23
	• Pensions Update		

	Reports		

5.	**Chief Executive's Report**
	The Principal Reporter/Chief Executive spoke to the update report which detailed a wide range of activity across the organisation.
	
	Noted:
	Updates were given in the following areas;
	• Staff Partnership
	• Strategic Partnerships
	   o Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership
	   o Youth Justice Implementation Board (YJIB)
	• Sponsor Liaison
	• Public Bodies Reform (PSR)
	• Hearing System Leadership
	• Senior Team Changes
	
	Issues arising during discussion:
	• Members thanked the PR/CE for a detailed report, reflective of the work done by SCRA.
	• Members passed on the thanks and appreciation to the Head of HR and the HR Team for the work done on the hardest round of pay negotiations to date.
	• Regarding Hearing System Leadership, our relationship with CHS remains positive and constructive, with both organisations working towards a common goal.
	• The benchmarking exercise will principally focus on the Reporter role and will broadly cover all roles within the organisation.		

			Timescale	Action
5.1		**SCRA Staff Survey Report** The Principal Reporter/Chief Executive introduced the report providing further analysis of the 2022 staff survey results. **Noted:** 51% of all SCRA staff responded to the survey. - By far the biggest issues people reported on were in relation to morale, pay and workload. These 3 big issues have been by far the most constant of themes for some time and are the most difficult for SCRA to address systematically and comprehensively. - The staff survey also told us that many people are concerned about the level and pace of change now and in the future, have concerns about SCRA's future and lack confidence in the organisations leadership to steer the organisation through the next phase and effectively manage the required level of change. - There was a significant sense of improvement and progress in relation to frequency and sufficiency of organisational communication and in general most staff felt well supported by managers and colleagues. - High numbers of staff felt they were given the right levels of autonomy to do their job, were sufficiently challenged and had the right equipment to do their job. - SCRA and its staff group are experiencing some of the most difficult times for many years. The current limitations placed on our resources, the pressure being experienced by all our staff in responding to the cost of living, the protracted nature of our pay discussions and the scale of potential future change and expectations placed on the Hearings system are having a cumulative impact. And of course, we have asked many people to change their roles and widen their responsibilities at an already difficult time. Workload is not a new pressure but remains a very significant challenge to us and we continue to review our equalisation approaches. We have programmes of work in place to respond to the issues identified by many staff as we work towards the most optimal ways of working and making use of efficient, effective resources, skills, and capacity. - We are working hard to ensure the role of the Childrens Reporter will be a prominent part of future change within the Promise. A series of proposals will be made in April of this year by the Hearing System Working Group, which is chaired by Sheriff Mackie. The insights and expertise of SCRA staff has been and will be very influential in determining the way ahead and helping with the uncertainty that has been playing on people's minds about future arrangements. We fully anticipate significant changes to the role (both in practice and in statutory terms) of the Childrens Reporter. - In addition, we have seen the 1st draft of the Childrens Care and Justice Bill introduced to Parliament. The work		

which has been done by SCRA staff in assessing the necessary investment to raise the age of referral has been recognised and forms a substantive part of the Financial Memorandum.

- There are some areas where the staff survey shows improvement – in areas such as communication, support, and supervision, support that people feel from their line manager and within their teams, our approach to health and wellbeing and uptake and impact of our learning and development programmes. Despite all the many challenges and frustrations that people currently feel, they overall reported enjoying their job.
- There is continued work to do in enhancing communication, openness and trust between the wider service and the senior team which the PR/CE will be continuing to seek to find ways of progressing.

Issues arising during discussion:
- The Board noted some positive results given the challenges everyone working in.
- The Board were encouraged by progress since last year in the areas of staff supervision, learning and development, and inclusion and diversity.

6. Internal Review Update

Helen Etchells, Senior Operational Manager and Morna Sands, HR Manager, introduced the report, focusing on the internal review into the circumstances which led to the criminal conviction of a former SCRA Manager in June 2022 and the draft action plan. The HR Manager also provided input.

Noted:
- The review has been undertaken with support and guidance from the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (enei) . It has focused on taking learning from the experience of the individuals involved in the case, in consultation with them, in line with the Terms of Reference.
- The internal review Terms of Reference have been shared within the organisation on Connect (SCRA to ensure awareness of the review and to enable participation by anyone with a contribution to make within the scope of the review.
- The findings and recommendations are grouped under 3 headings :
  - Support
  - Openness and Connection
  - Culture

Issues arising during discussion:
- The Board expressed its thanks to the report authors and victims.
- The action plan will be reviewed by the Executive

			Timescale	Action
		Management Team. • Further consideration will be given to the inclusion of a policy around social activities.		

7.		**Draft Budget 2023/24**
		The Head of Finance introduced the report which is seeking approval of the draft 2023/24 revenue and capital budgets, the staffing establishment, the delegation of the minor works capital budget to the Executive Management Team (EMT) and approval of the 2022/23 Efficiency Plan.
		
		Noted:
		• The report provides updates in the following:
		   o Budget 2023/24
		   o Draft Budget 2023/24
		      ▪ Revenue
		      ▪ Staff Costs
		      ▪ Non-Staff Costs
		      ▪ Income
		      ▪ Challenge & Review
		      ▪ Operational Development
		      ▪ Capital
		   o Efficiency Plan
		   o Financial Plan
		   o Alignment with the business plan
		• At this stage it is assumed SCRA will receive standstill funding of £25.16m plus temporary contract funding of £0.830m plus budget pressures funding of £5.059m. The Board and senior management are working with Sponsor Team to ensure sufficient assurance is contained in the March 2023 Grant in Aid letter to allow a revenue budget of £31.049m to be approved.
		• The continuing one-year nature of funding settlements creates risks in setting the revenue budget for 2023/24 due to the uncertainty of funding in future years. This is of particular concern given the increased expectations on SCRA and the hearing system in 2024/25. An updated five-year Financial Plan will be presented to the Board in September 2023.
		
		Issues arising during discussion:
		• The Grant in Aid letter has been issued and was approved by senior levels of Government.
		• The Board appreciate the support given by Scottish Government.
		• The Budget pressure is a shared risk between SCRA and Scottish Government
		
		Agreed:
		• To approve the draft 2023/24 revenue and capital budgets.
		• To approve the staffing establishment of 411.38 FTEs.
		• To approve the Efficiency Plan 2023/24.		

			Timescale	Action
	• To delegate approval of the minor works capital budget to the Executive Management Team.			
8.	**Budget Monitoring Report** The Head of Finance introduced the report which provides a summary of SCRA's financial position for the year to January 2023 and forecast (based on January results) for the full year 2022/23. **Noted:** • The Scottish Government (SG) has allocated revenue funding of £25.16m for 2022/23, with acknowledgement that up to £3.1m further resource may be required, giving a total of £28.26m. SG, however, asked that SCRA identify savings to mitigate this pressure due to the difficult wider context of public finance. EMT identified £0.26m of savings, and the Board therefore approved a revenue budget of £28.0m in March. • In September the Board agreed to a request for the £0.26m grant to support the pay offer bringing the total back to £28.26m. After that, in response to further pay pressures, SG has agreed a further £0.208m resource. • The Scottish Government has allocated capital funding of £1.95m for 2022/23 and the Board approved a £1.95m capital budget in March. • From 1/4/22 there is a change to the accounting treatment of long-term lease obligations within NDPBs. This has no impact on decision-making or operations, and no impact on SCRA's available capital or revenue resource: SCRA must merely report the spend to SG and in its statutory accounts differently, and draw down working capital cash, rather than Resource GIA cash, to make payments to landlords. SCRA is in frequent dialogue with Sponsor Team and SG Finance to ensure this is correctly managed. • The overall accruals-based revenue underspend is £315k (1.1%), which will be required to cover the revenue elements of the digital and property programmes and additional Facilities Management costs. Additional funding up to £208k agreed with Sponsor Team is likely to be required to settle the 2022/23 pay award. If capital slippage results in a capital underspend as currently forecast, EMT will work with Sponsor Team to ensure funding is available to cover this work in 2023/24. **Agreed:** • To approve a request to Sponsor Team for additional revenue grant-in-aid up to £208k to achieve a balanced revenue position for 2022/23.			

		Timescale	Action
9.	**OPR** The Data Manager introduced the Third Quarter Organisational Performance Report 2022/23: (1 October to 31 December 2022). **Noted:** - This report uses a balanced scorecard approach which attributes measures within the organisation into four quadrants; three aligned to the aims within our business plan: Care, Connect, and Protect and another quadrant around recovery or exceptions. This provides a concise report which enables a fuller focus on the key areas of performance throughout SCRA. Continuing feedback from the Board will be used to inform future development. - There are no targets applied to operational indicators (decision making and Hearing scheduling) currently in 2022/23 due to the recovery work required post pandemic. This position will continue to be reviewed in conjunction with the Board. - From 1 October 2022 and the repeal of the relevant Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 provisions, children (and relevant persons) have a statutory duty to attend their Children's Hearing. The impact of this can be seen in attendance data. Pre-Hearing Panels (PHP) have increased significantly as once again, PHPs must be convened to decide whether to excuse a child from the obligation to attend the Hearing. Hearings are also becoming more face-to-face. - Positive improvements are occurring in decision making on referrals and Hearing scheduling. Referrals over 100 working days are showing a negative trend though significant work has been undertaken since the start of January to reduce this figure. The rate of deferrals has increased and is now showing an upward trend with some localities seeing high levels of deferrals. - SCRA has seen an increase in both long- and short-term absence, however short term does remain within the target that we have set as an organisation. - The forecast variance in annual revenue spends is out with the 1% target, this is caused by staff and ICT savings but may drop below 1% depending on pay award. The forecast variance in annual capital spends is significantly out with target due to elements of the property programme slipping into 2023/24 and some spends within both Property and Digital programmes being met from revenue budget.		

		Timescale	Action
	Agreed: • To approve the Q3 Organisational Performance Report 2022/23, covering the period 1 October to 31 December 2022.		
10.	**Draft SCRA Business Plan 2023/24** The Head of Strategy & OD introduced the draft Business Plan, providing the Board with a final draft of the Business Plan for 2023-24. **Noted:** • The 2023-24 Business Plan has been reviewed by the Scottish Government, EMT and the Board, the feedback received has been incorporated as appropriate. • The objectives set show progression from previous year's and have been refined to be smarter, have clearer deliverables and a clear mechanism for delivery, monitoring, and reporting. • The Business Plan objectives and actions are monitored and updated through Zoho (an online project management system). This system enables the organisation to track and monitor progress and identify any issues and delays. • Progress made across the Programme Projects (Care, Connect, Protect) which are linked to the Business plan objectives will be updated in Zoho and reported to EMT accordingly. **Issues arising during discussion:** • The plan should make clear the activities the organisation requires to do and that it has the resource to do them. **Agreed:** • To approve the final version of the 2023 Business Plan.		

11.	**Keeping The Promise Update Report**
	The Head of Strategy & OD introduced the report, which seeks to provide the Board with a high-level update on the work being undertaken to address the Promise in SCRA in the previous period.
	
	Noted:
	• **Internal Audit of Keeping the Promise Programme .** The outcome of the audit was positive and concluded with substantial assurance over the design and operational effectiveness of the controls in place in relation to SCRA's work in delivering The Promise.
	• Improvement projects including
	   o Child Friendly Scheduling
	   o Customise My Hearing
	   o Good Practice Guide for Solicitors
	   o Programme Protect
	• Reform/HSWG		

			Timescale	Action
		o The HSWG recommendations are due to be completed and published by 10 May 2023.		
		o The final HSWG recommendations are likely to be relatively high level in nature, rather than offering a detailed plan for redesign. The recommendations will require significant consultation, financial modelling and impact assessments before decisions are made about which recommendations to proceed with.		
		o The Principal Reporters position is supportive of strengthening the functioning and competence of the decision-making within children's hearings and are open to considering how duties and functions may be realigned. However, the role of the Reporter is valuable throughout the hearings system journey and proposed changes to the system need to be based on solid evidence of the need for change and any unintended consequences.		
		o SCRA's Communications team has linked in with the Promise Scotland Communications team to plan and prepare for the publication of the recommendations.		
12.	**Annual Workforce Planning Report** The Head of HR introduced the Annual Workforce report, providing an overview of initiatives and strategies that have been put in place to support our people over the last year. The format follows the employee lifecycle as outlined in our 20/24 People Strategy. **Noted** • The Annual workforce report for 2023/24 provides the reader with an overview of our workforce and achievements for the year 2022/23. The report also aims to meet the fourth year of the 20/24 People Strategy, highlighting some focused areas of work which will progressed alongside the people objectives which are included in our Business Plan for the same period. • SCRA and its workforce have served the most vulnerable of Scotland's children well over the past years, particularly during the challenging and complex period of the COVID-19 pandemic. Whilst we got through that period, making some significant organisational changes as we did, our workforce is now starting to show the signs of the challenge that they faced. The 2022 staff survey provided a rich vein of how our staff felt across many areas, with some positive results about how they felt about working in SCRA and committed to its vision, values, and objectives. However, there were three main themes that have proved difficult for staff and to which SCRA		

			Timescale	Action

should focus on – ***reward – workload – morale***.

- The investment in our workforce over the next 12 months will focus on ensuring we have a skilled and confident workforce, through learning and development, resilience, and wellbeing, releasing their digital capabilities, reviewing what roles and responsibilities we need now, and in the future, as well as supporting our managers and our people to be able to manage change.
- The Business Plan highlights the detail of the People Investment and alongside this the Human Resources Team plan will align with the ambitions in this report and will focus on:-
  - o Development of e-recruitment
  - o Increasing workforce diversity
  - o Recording and promoting individual and team learning
  - o Better use of our e-hr system
  - o Management development and empowerment
  - o Regular communications directly from the Human Resources Team
  - o Pay benchmarking exercise in partnership with UNISON.
  - o Development of a holistic wellbeing strategy
  - o Improving onboarding experience
  - o Roll out of inclusive behaviours standard framework.
  - o Review of Performance Appraisal Procedure, Staff Code of Conduct and Standby Policies.
- This workforce plan and its implementation will be discussed and delivered in partnership with UNISON.

Agreed:
- To approve the workforce for 2023/24

13. **Environmental Annual Report**

The Head of Finance introduced the report, providing the Board with an update on recent progress and set out the key points contained within our annual Climate Change report to Scottish Government.

Noted:
- The Scottish Government declared a Climate Emergency in 2019. Climate change and sustainability are pressing strategic issues for SCRA to incorporate into our organisational planning. The government has set the target of achieving Net Zero by 2045 and all public bodies are required to work towards this target.
- Following changes introduced in 2020, the mandatory annual climate change reporting requirements have been strengthened and require each public sector body to state how it will use its resources to reduce emissions and to provide a date for reaching Net Zero. SCRA has

			Timescale	**Action**
		committed to achieve Net Zero by 2045 and has set new targets for reducing its emissions. • Progress is being made in several areas to contribute towards these targets and overall, our GHG emissions have fallen by 3.5% from last year. There are signs that our emissions reductions are plateauing and there is a risk of them increasing, particularly as currently "out of boundary" emissions are added over time. The risk identified by internal audit remains that SCRA are not fully supporting the Scotland wide emission reduction targets and climate change policies. • The challenge of achieving Net Zero goes beyond the buildings we use and will affect the services we deliver and the resources we use/procure to deliver those services. The legislative and policy position from Scottish Government envisages transformational change to deliver a Net Zero economy by 2045. **Issues arising during discussion:** • Emissions from home working are estimated and included in reporting.		

14.	**Health & Safety Annual Report**
	The Head of HR introduced the report which covers the period from 1st April 2022 -1st March 2023 during which time SCRA has continued to manage and respond to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
	
	Noted:
	The report covers the following:
	• COVID-19
	• Accident and Incident Reporting
	   o RIDDOR
	   o Injuries and Ill-Health
	   o Assaults/aggression
	   o Other Incidents
	• Policy Development
	• **Locality Support Manager Refresher Training**
	• **Healthy Working Lives**
	• Mental Health & Wellbeing
	   o Financial Wellbeing
	   o ADHD & Dyslexia
	   o **Mental Health Week 2022 and Time to Talk**
	   o The Big Team Walking Challenge
	   o Grief Awareness Day
	   o Menopause Awareness
	   o Andy Man's Club
	• Flu Vaccination
	• Right to Disconnect Policy
	
	Issues arising during discussion:
	• Flu vaccination update was down on previous years. Consideration will be given to the offering type next year.		

			Timescale	Action
		• The Board were advised SCRA hold data on trends.		

15.	**Review of Risk Policy**
	 The Head of Finance introduced the report, recommending the Board;
	 • Approve proposed changes to the attached Risk Management Policy.
	
	 Noted:
	 • Following risk training for Board members in January 2022 facilitated by the Internal Auditors, the current Risk Management Policy was updated and presented to the Audit & Risk Committee at its meeting in February 2022 and approved by the Board in March 2022.
	 • The Head of Finance and Resources has carried out a light touch review and consulted on proposed changes to the Policy with Audit & Risk Committee members.
	 • Training in risk management will be provided as required to new Board members drawing on the Internal Auditors materials supplemented by relevant materials from the Board Member Induction Pack and Scottish Government material.
	 • The main terms of the policy document remain unchanged since March 2022 and changes proposed for approval include;
	     o A change to the standard template which has been set up in the risk register tool Decision Time.
	     o Risks can be escalated for review to the appropriate management group/network, including the recently formed Programme Board.
	     o Risk assurance is built into the risk management tool with the ability to report on sources of assurance, gaps in assurance and improvement actions.
	     o The use of Decision Time by the organisation.
	
	 Agreed:
	 • To approve proposed changes to the attached Risk Management Policy.		

16.	**New Risks** None		
	Date of Next Meeting: Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 21 June 2023, by TEAMS		

SCRA Board Meeting Workplan June 2023

Business Item	Wed 29/03/23	Wed 21/06/23	Wed 20/09/23	Wed 13/12/23	Wed TBC
Strategic/Corporate					
Policy & Influencing Report		✓			
Research Programme				✓	
Risk Register		✓		✓	
Governance					
Audit Committee Minutes	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Committee Annual Reports		✓			
Remuneration & Nominations Committee Minutes					
SCRA Standing Orders Review (Next due March 2025)	✓				
Finance					
Budget Monitoring Report	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Draft Budget	✓			✓	✓
Annual Report & Accounts			✓		
Financial Strategy			✓		
Planning					
Draft Corporate, Corporate Parenting & Business Plan	✓ (BP)		✓	✓	✓
Draft Annual Report			✓		
Annual Workforce Planning Report	✓				
Communications Plan		✓			
Performance					
Organisational Performance Report	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Operational					
Locality Performance Reviews				✓	
Chief Executive's Report	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Complaints Review		✓			
Inclusion Annual Report		✓			
Environmental Annual Report	✓				

Business Item	Wed 29/03/23	Wed 21/06/23	Wed 20/09/23	Wed 13/12/23	Wed TBC
Overview of Policies Annual Report				✓	
Health & Safety Annual Report	✓				
Procurement Report			✓		
Property Strategy		✓			
Keeping the Promise update	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Staff Survey	✓				✓
Agile Policy (Next review Sep 2024)	✓				
SCRA Framework Document (next review 2024)					
SCRA Whistleblowing Policy (next review Dec 2024)					

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report for 2022/23

Accountable Board Member:	James Edgar Audit & Risk Committee Chair	**Date:**	21st June 2023

Report Author: Head of Finance & Resources

Recommendations:	
1. To approve the Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report for 2022/23.	

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 in May 2021.

2.2 The Board appoints non-executive Board members to the Audit and Risk Committee. The Audit and Risk Committee's membership for 2022/23 was as follows:
   - James Edgar, Chair
   - Martin Toye
   - Kay Barton
   - Tam Baillie (Last meeting August 2022)

   A fourth Committee member will be agreed by the Board at its June 23 meeting.

   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 2022, August 2022, November 2022 and February 2023 meetings.

2.4 In the third year of the pandemic the Committee met four times in 2022/23: May 2022, August 2022, November 2022 and February 2023 and provided significant support to the Board and senior management in ensuring controls operated effectively during the process of recovery.

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 2022/23 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 2021/22 Annual Accounts and the External Auditor's report in August 2022. The Financial Accounts showed SCRA's net expenditure of £34,198k exceeded revenue Grant in Aid of £26,260k by £7,938k. This position reflects inclusion of non-cash items such as depreciation (£1,422k), International Accounting Standards (IAS) adjustment to pension scheme contributions (£5,121k) and pension scheme finance cost (£1,268k). The Auditor expressed an unqualified opinion on the 2021/22 financial statements.

The Pension Reserve had a deficit of £16,131k as at March 2022. Due to the pension deficit, SCRA's reserves have been in deficit since 2009. SCRA has received letters from Scottish Government to address concerns in this area, the latest in April 2023.

In the year to 31 March 2022 the Management Accounts showed SCRA revenue expenditure (excluding depreciation and unfunded pensions) of £26,591k which was £190k less than the approved revenue budget. Capital spend of £1,819k was £323k less than budget. The revenue and capital underspends were carried forward to support the 2022/23 budget plans.

3.3   The external and internal auditors have delivered to plans and timelines throughout 2022/23. 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 2022/23. Progress against delivery of these recommendations is reported 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 Audit Committee at its meeting in February 2023 and by the Board at its meeting in March 2023. 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 2024 with any changes taken to the March 2024 Board for approval.

3.6   A new risk management tool, Decision Time, has been rolled out. The tool is very intuitive and following training from the provider all risk leads are using the tool with support from the Head of Finance & Resources and Governance Officer.

3.7   The Planning and Performance Network (PPN) oversee Locality risk management. The network is chaired by the Senior Operational Manager and co-ordinates 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.

4.   Impact

4.1   Throughout the year as well as the routine business for the Audit & Risk Committee there was a continuing focus on information governance .

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 2022/23.
- Tracking and influencing progress on non-disclosure and case information breaches.
- Scrutinising the organisation's risk profile, providing input and scrutiny on its application, review of SCRA's risk management approach to embed risk management arrangements at locality level and detailed scrutiny of the Risk Management Policy.
- 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 and 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).
- 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" and also "recommending for approval the annual accounts to the Board

5.   Audit and Risk Committee Self-Assessment

5.1   In August 2022, 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. A few minor procedural improvements for the Committee's meetings were suggested and agreed.

5.2   Audit and Risk Committee members will undertake its next annual self-assessment exercise in August 2023.

6.   Plans for 2023/24

6.1   The Audit and Risk Committee will meet in May 2023, August 2023, November 2023 and February 2024. The focus of the meetings will be as follows:

May 2023
Internal Audit - Annual Report 2022/23
Internal Audit – Quality Management
Internal Audit – Follow Up
External Audit – Annual Audit Plan
External Audit – Annual Accounts 2022/23, including Accounting Policies
External Audit – General Updates
Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report 2022/23
Case Sampling Reviews – per Annual Plan
Case Sampling Programme Update
Digital Strategy benefits realisation
Strategic & Operational Risk Registers
Review of standing items including topical/regulatory/governance issues.

August 2023
External Audit Report on the Annual Accounts
Annual Accounts 2022/23
External Audit – General Updates
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.
Audit & Risk Committee Self-Assessment
Private Meetings with Internal/External Auditors (Audit and Risk Committee Members only)

November 2023
External Audit – General Updates
Internal Audit Reviews (per Annual Plan)
Case Sampling Reviews – per Annual Plan
Strategic & Operational Risk Registers
Annual Fraud Report
Review of standing items including topical/regulatory/governance issues.

February 2024
Information Governance Interim Report
Annual Audit Plan (External Audit)
Internal Audit – Annual Plan 2024/25
Internal Audit Reviews (per Annual Plan)
Quality Assurance – Annual Progress Report
Case Sampling Programme 2024/25
Case Sampling Reviews – per Annual Plan
Pensions Update
Review of standing items including topical/regulatory/governance issues.

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 Audit & Risk Committee Annual Report for 2022/23.

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: June 2022

Appendix 2

Agenda items in 2022/23

Lead	May 22	August 22	November 22	February 23
External Audit	➢ Annual Plan 21/22 ➢ General Update	➢ 2021/22 Annual Audit Report, Covering Letter, and ISA 580 Letter of Representation ➢ General update	➢ Performance Report	➢ External Audit Plan 22/23 ➢ General Update
Internal Audit	➢ Culture ➢ Learning & Development ➢ Locality Strategic Planning ➢ Recommendations Follow Up Review ➢ Annual Report 21/22	➢ Progress Report 22/23	➢ Core Financial Controls ➢ Cyber Review ➢ Estates Management ➢ Progress Report 22/23	➢ The Promise ➢ Board Effectiveness ➢ Progress Report 23/22
Head of Finance & Resources	➢ Annual Accounts 21/22 ➢ Strategic & Operational Risk Registers	➢ Pensions Update ➢ Draft 2021/22 Annual Accounts and Management Representation Letter	➢ Strategic & Operational Risk Registers ➢ Annual Fraud Report	➢ Risk Management Policy ➢ Pensions Update
Head of Strategy/OD	➢ Report on voluntary measures decisions ➢ Programme Update	➢ Decision making and drafting of grounds in cases involving domestic abuse ➢ Data Quality Exercise Follow Up ➢ Annual Report 2021/22	➢ Promise Programme - a look at deferred decisions in Children's Hearings ➢ Case sampling annual progress report ➢ Annual Report on Joint Inspections of Children's Services	➢ Role of the Reporter at the hearing ➢ 23/24 Case Sampling Programme

Lead	May 22	August 22	November 22	February 23
Head of Practice & Policy	➢ Information Governance Interim Report	➢ Information Governance Six-monthly Report		➢ Information Governance Six-monthly Report
Audit and Risk Committee Chair	➢ Committee Annual Report 21/22 ➢ Review of Topical, Regulatory & Governance Issues	➢ Review of Topical, Regulatory & Governance Issues ➢ Private Meetings with Internal/External Auditors (Committee Members only) ➢ Committee Self Evaluation	➢ Review of Topical, Regulatory, & Governance Issues	➢ Review of Topical, Regulatory, & Governance Issues

Delivery of 2022/23 Audit plans   **APPENDIX 3**

Report Type	Date Delivered
Quality Assurance Planned Outputs	
Annual Progress Report	Nov 22
SCRA's Quality Assurance Work Programme	Feb 23
Outcomes of Case Sampling	May, Aug, Nov 22 & Feb 23
Internal Audit Planned Outputs	
Internal Audit Recommendations Follow Up Review	May 22
Annual Report 20/21	May 22
Culture	May 22
Learning & Development	May 22
Locality Strategic Planning	May 22
Core Financial Controls	Nov 22
Cyber Review	Nov 22
Estates Management	Nov 22
The Promise	Feb 23
Board Effectiveness	Feb 23
Progress Report	Aug, Nov 22 & Feb 23
External Audit Planned Outputs	
Progress Reports	May, Nov 22
Report to those Charged with Governance on the 2021/22 Accounts and Management Representation Letter	Aug 22
Annual Plan 22/23	Feb 23

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

SCRA COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Accountable   Board Chair   **Date:**   21st June 2023

Report Author: Board Chair

Recommendations:
1. To consider and agree SCRA Committee membership.

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

SCRA COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Audit & Risk Committee

Jim Edgar (Chair)
Martin Toye
Kay Barton
Vacancy

The quorum required at any meeting of the Committee shall be two members.

Appeals Committee

- The Appeals Committee shall consist of three members of the Board.
- Membership of the Committee will be agreed taking into account the nature of the appeal
- The quorum required at any meeting of the Committee shall be three members.

Nominations and Remuneration Committee

Michelle Miller (Chair)
Martin Toye
Suzanne Vestri
Vacancy
Vacancy

The quorum required at any meeting of the Committee shall be three members.

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

SCRA BOARD OBJECTIVES 2023/24

Accountable   Board Chair   **Date:**   21st June 2023

Report Author: Board Chair

Recommendations:
1. To approve the SCRA Board objectives for 2023/24.

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

Board Objectives 2023-2024

Renewal – Strategy, Transformation and Continuous Improvement

The Board will steer strategic development of SCRA's work to reflect Ministerial commitments in relation to Scotland's children and young people. Examples of key areas include:
- responding to the expectations of The Promise, UNCRC incorporation and other system-wide legislative, policy and practice change
- support, training and development of the workforce.

The Board will promote and support SCRA to embed new ways of working, exploiting available digital technology and ensuring the application of new learning.

Delivery – Efficiency and Effectiveness

The Board will oversee SCRA's performance against strategic ambitions, standards of practice and operational targets. To meet this objective, the Board will be provided with regular updates and reviews by officers to inform decision-making, scrutiny, oversight of risk management, challenge and support.

Resources – Budget Management, People and Culture

The Board will agree organisation-wide review of existing strategies and deployment of resources to ensure effective management of those resources in pursuance of SCRA's strategic objectives.

The Board will oversee SCRA's work to ensure services and practice that focus on inclusiveness and equality, and a diverse workforce, reflective of the range of communities the organisation serves.

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The Board will oversee SCRA's work to ensure services and practice that focus on inclusiveness and equality, and a diverse workforce, reflective of the range of communities the organisation serves.

Board Member Responsibilities

Provide strategic, effective non-executive leadership of SCRA. Working effectively as a team, the Board will work with SCRA's Executive Leadership Team to provide both support and challenge to ensure a forward-looking strategy and effective and efficient delivery, promoting best practice, research and debate around the future of SCRA within the wider children's hearings system in Scotland and championing the development and use of evidence and data.

Demonstrate and promote transparent governance of SCRA that is effective, proportionate, reflective of the values of the organisation, consistent with SCRA's statutory duties and sufficiently adaptable to respond to changing circumstances.

Promote and communicate SCRA's role clearly and confidently, fostering collaboration and good relations with stakeholders.

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

SCRA BOARD OBJECTIVES 2023/24

Accountable   Board Chair   **Date:**   21st June 2023

Report Author: Board Chair

Recommendations:
1. To note the UK Boardroom Apprentice Board Host programme
2. To consider SCRA's enrolment in the programme

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

UK Boardroom Apprentice Interested in being a Host Board? Information to consider

#GetOnBoard

Integrity | Responsibility | Honesty | Commitment | Passion | Motivation

A note from Eileen Mullan

Thank you for your interest in being a host board for the Boardroom Apprentice Programme. Recruitment for recent cohorts has seen a significant level of demand for the programme which far outstrips the supply of host boards. We are keen to increase the offering from across the public and third sectors to enable more aspiring board members to avail of this opportunity.

Being a host board requires being open to having someone join your board team for a year, to learn about life on a board. Their 12-month placement with you is one of three key pillars that makes the Boardroom Apprentice Programme. This is about providing a very practical hands on placement which means they are at the board table and involved in the discussions, but not a decision maker. It is important that your board meets frequently enough along with its committees to provide plenty of opportunity for learning and development.

A further pillar is the provision of a board buddy from within your team. This is someone who will act as a mentor and provide additional support beyond the board meetings to help the Boardroom Apprentice develop in their role.

This document will give you a flavour of the programme and what being a

- Host Board involves
- Board Buddy involves
- Boardroom Apprentice involves

If you would like to join the Host Board line up, then please complete the attached form and return on or before 30 June 2023 to Kerry Broomfield boardroomapprentice@levellingup.gov.uk.

Look forward to hearing from you,

Eileen Mullan
Founder, Boardroom Apprentice

Our programme

The Boardroom Apprentice is a twelve-month board learning and placement programme. Its vision is to move the board member role from aspiration to reality. And in doing so its aim is to deliver the following:

• To create a diverse pool of capable board ready Board Members

• To provide a sustainable pool of capable board ready Board Members

• To enable practical boardroom experience for aspiring Board Members

• To provide the transfer of knowledge, skills and experience to aspiring Board Members

• To increase the knowledge and awareness of the role of Board Members

Three Pillars

The programme is built on three key pillars

Experience

01

12 Month Practical hands on placement

Knowledge & Understanding

02

Transfer of knowledge and under-standing through learning

Support

03

Support through a dedicated board buddy from within the Host Board

The Boardroom Apprentice operates with boards across the public and third sector

Key facts

- Boardroom Apprentice is open to all ages (18+), all backgrounds and all abilities
- Boardroom Apprentices must not have held a public board position
- Boardroom Apprentices must have no (or little) third sector board experience
- The Boardroom Apprentice role is unpaid
- Boardroom Apprentice is a UK based initiative

Our Learning

Commitment

Governance

Communication

Partnerships

Questioning

Numbers

Our Values

Integrity

Passion

Motivation

Commitment

Honesty

Responsibility

"This has a sense of equal opportunity for all at its heart. No matter what gender, age, culture, or race, if you possess the drive and commitment, a place on any board is within your grasp"

Boardroom Apprentice

What being a Host Board involves?

- A practical hands on 12-month Board placement which provides a safe seat at the table for an aspiring board member to learn. They will not play a role in the decision taking and will have no legal responsibility or accountability.

- Evidence shows clearly where boards enabled the Boardroom Apprentice to engage fully in a supportive way at the table, unsurprisingly the learning was much richer, than where there was less support provided.

- There is a detailed memorandum of understanding which will be signed between the Host Board and the Boardroom Apprentice. It includes an information sharing agreement, confidentiality and reflects directly back to the host board's code of practice and standard operating procedures.

- Providing a Board Buddy (from within the board team) that will hand-hold and support them through the 12 months whilst with their board. Where you have a large complex organisation, it has been evidenced that by providing a Non-Executive and Executive Board Buddy has proved very beneficial for the Boardroom Apprentice.

Reflections from current Host Boards

- Commence security checks (if required) as soon as a Boardroom Apprentice is confirmed

- Early identification of a board buddy and engagement with the Boardroom Apprentice

- Undertake a detailed induction, including introductions with all board members

- Provide an opportunity and encourage Boardroom Apprentices to speak at board and committee meetings

What being a Board Buddy involves?

Similar to that of a mentor role where the Board Buddy will meet the Boardroom Apprentice regularly which involves

- Meeting in advance of board/committee meetings to review papers together
- Meeting after board/committee to reflect on their participation and experience
- Review meetings during the year to ensure the placement is working for both parties

What being a Boardroom Apprentice involves?

- Being matched to a host board of interest from 01 January 2023 – 31 December 2023
- Attendance at all Board and Committee meetings during the placement
- Attendance at other events and activities as required by their host board
- Undertake a suite of learning days to enhance knowledge, understanding and skills
- Meeting regularly with a Board Buddy to support learning and development – outside of the realms of board/committee meetings
- Participate in events and activities to share their Boardroom Apprentice journey with others

Things to reflect on

	YES/NO
Does your board and organisation have good governance practices in place?	
Our Board can offer a practical hands on experience providing the Boardroom Apprentice with a safe seat at the Board and Committee table to learn for the 12 month placement.	
Does your board meet at least four times per year?	
Does your board committees meet at least four times per year?	
Does your board include independent members?	
Are there opportunities beyond board and committee meetings for the Boardroom Apprentice to gain further board experience?	
Are board and committee meetings scheduled well in advance (6 /12 months)	
Do you have an individual from within your board who could be a great Board Buddy? This person needs to be engaged and want to be involved.	
Our Board will include Boardroom Apprentice as an Agenda item at a minuted meeting detailing Board agreement to be a Host Board.	

Host Boards we have worked with

AHDB

arb — Architects Registration Board

VISIT BRITAIN

BAPIO TRAINING ACADEMY

Cefas

The Coal Authority

CCW — The voice for water consumers / Llais defnyddwyr dŵr

Council for British Archaeology

Department for Education

Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities

Disclosure & Barring Service

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation

Gangmasters & Labour Abuse Authority

mencap — Heart of England

HEYWOOD FOUNDATION

HOME START East Sussex

IMA — For the Citizens' Rights Agreements

Inspire North — Catalyst for Change

JNCC

INCE

NATURAL ENGLAND

nest

Office of the Secretary of State for Wales / Swyddfa Ysgrifennydd Gwladol Cymru

Ofwat

PORT OF TYNE

Regulator of Social Housing

Rural Payments Agency

seafish

Social Work England

THE GRANVILLE SOUTH KILBURN TRUST

Animal & Plant Health Agency

Chartered Institute of Fundraising

The Community Foundation for Staffordshire

Forestry Commission

The Planning Inspectorate

theatre Royal Wakefield

Theatres Trust

UKAD — Protecting Sport

UK Statistics Authority

Veterinary Medicines Directorate

VisitEngland

SCOTTISH
CHILDREN'S REPORTER
ADMINISTRATION

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Chief Executives Report

Accountable Director:	Neil Hunter	**Date:**	21 June 2023

Recommendation:

1.   To note the Chief Executives update report

Reason for Report   At request of Board

Resource Implications   In line with revised budget

Strategy   In line with Corporate Plan

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

Equalities   Impact   Assessment Required/Completed

☐   Yes

☑   No

Issues/action points:-

Consultation

Document Classification   Open

1.   Staff Partnership

1.1.1   The National Partnership Forum met on 23 May and looked at a range of key internal and external issues including :-

- A commitment to review the SCRA UNISON partnership agreement in line with the staff survey action plan to refresh and further embed staff engagement, participation, consultation and communication as well as actively promote fair work, staff voice and representation and the role of the trade union in SCRA
- An update on programme protect – as part of our wider change, improvement, efficiency and effectiveness programme in SCRA – these are linked to two further emergent programmes – programme connect – focussing on next phase of our digital developments and programme care with a focus on workforce and developing our children and young people facing services
- Update on the Inclusion and Diversity Steering group – and a review of our annual report and mainstreaming programme
- Financial update for 22/23 and a forward look at 2023/4

2.   Strategic Partnerships

2.1   A joint Childrens Hearings Improvement Partnership and Youth Justice Improvement Board (CHIP/YJIB) was held in early June to consider the Hearing System Working Group (HSWG) report and recommendations. Given the wide range of organisational and professional interests involved, the discussion was broad with first impressions of the HSWG recommendations being largely positive and with the potential to embed significant, positive change over the medium term. A great deal of the contributions focussed on the current capacity of Local Authority Social Work to meaningfully deliver hearing decisions in every part of Scotland. This is at least in part due to pressures on recruitment and retention of children and family social workers in many Council areas.

2.2   There was some discussion on the consequences for the system of ending volunteer status of panel members – in the main offset by positive opportunities to improve relational practice, consistency of decision makers (and other key roles). Concerns about system stability during a period of unprecedented change and upheaval was also raised. Holding true to the commitments we have made to children and young people was also a strong theme.

2.3   Scottish Government future governance proposals were outlined and broadly welcomed – in particular the early focus on next steps and how voice, partnership, transparency and accountability will be planned into the next phase.

3.   Scottish Government Liaison

3.1   No formal accountability meetings have happened in this quarter. However a joint session with sponsor officials took place in late May to begin the process of developing a joint risk register between SG and SCRA. This will focus on continual horizon scanning, assessment of strategic and operational risks,

policy environment issues and ongoing monitoring of both SCRA and SG strategic risk registers. Work is still ongoing on determining appropriate level of SG strategic risks – Branch/Directorate or Portfolio level – or combinations of all 3. This welcome development arose from the Ryan Review work on Sponsor/Public Body relationships and is timely given the scale of change scheduled to take place across the Hearing System over the next period and the interdependences, reliance's and joint effort on controls and mitigations that are integral to making sufficient sustainable progress.

3.2   Introductory meetings have now taken place between the Chair, PR/CE and Andrew Watson, recently appointed Director of Children and Families as well as, separately with Natalie Don MSP, Minister for Children, Young People and Keeping the Promise. The meetings were constructive and both the Director and the Minister have been invited to visit SCRA operational sites over the summer recess, to participate in a mock hearing and to have a roundtable discussion with SCRA staff.

4.   SCRA Managers event

4.1   Our programme of managers network events continued in June. Over 50 managers attended from across the organisation – with a programme which included a live webinar on neurodiversity delivered by Mindroom. This focussed on understanding issues of neurodiversity both in relation to children, young people as well as in our role as an inclusive employer. SCRA has a neurodiversity network which looks at a range of practice, policy and professional development issues and will follow up this session with smaller scale and targeted learning and development opportunities.

4.2   The second half of the event focussed, as you might expect, on the HSWG report and recommendations. Two interactive sessions were held. A number of very strong themes emerged:-

Opportunities	Challenges
• Strengthening the quality of the chair • Improved quality of decision making • Recognition of the role and value of the Reporter • Focus on and opportunity to enhance children's rights and voices • Withdrawal of grounds hearings • Child centred, relational approaches • Consistency of Sherriff • Recognition of scale of underinvestment in the Hearing system and need to address this	• Timeline and pace of change • Period of prolonged instability and disruption • Managing the transition and risks • Likelihood of sufficient funding and investment • Resources and capacity to manage sheer scale of change • Creation of unrealistic expectations versus reality • Need to hugely upscale learning and development

4.3   There were some specific worries about job roles which were perceived to be under threat – specifically the Assistant Reporter and Locality Support Administrator. The senior team has sought quickly to provide maximum assurance possible about how these skilled and experienced roles are valued.
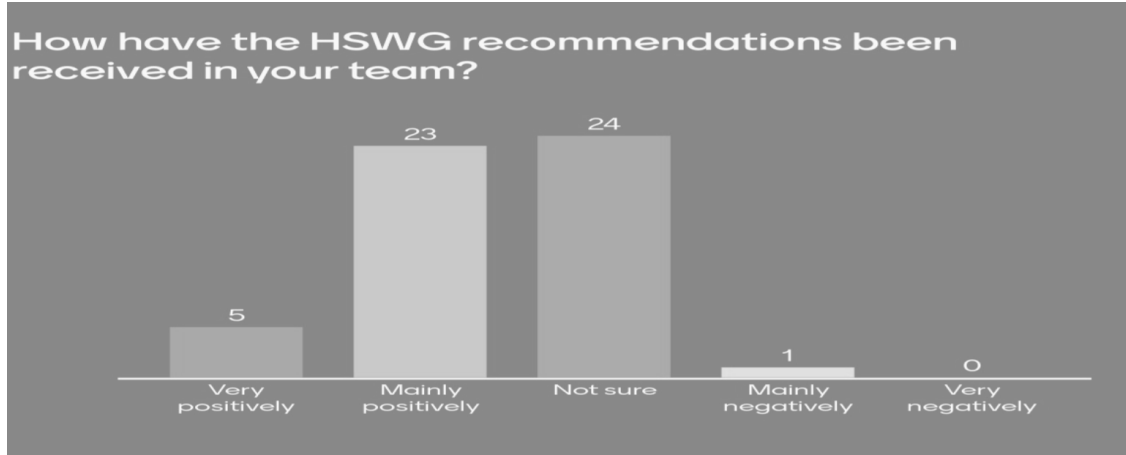
5.   CHS Board and Management Development Programme

5.1   The note of the joint session of the CHS and SCRA Boards is being prepared for issue. In the meantime the senior teams development programme continues and will reconvene on 19 June, The broad focus will be reflecting on the HSWG process, lessons learned and further work to be done to look at differences in approach. Following that the teams will focus on developing the existing work on values and principles to the next level of optimising conditions for collaboration on progressing the HSWG work.

6.   Scottish COVID Inquiry

6.1   SCRA has recently submitted our first tranche of information to support the Scottish COVID Inquiry which is being chaired by Lord Brailsford. A detailed pack of information has been complied and reviewed by out internal team and consists of the following.

- the key individuals within the organisation or body who were responsible for decision making and/or implementation of decisions in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic in Scotland
- overview of the work of the organisation or body between 1 January 2020 and 31 December 2022 as it relates to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic by the Scottish Government in the following areas
  - Human Resources
  - Communications
  - Home Working
  - Change
  - Technology
  - Operations
  - Workforce Support

- o Practice – tasks and responsibilities
- o Health & Safety tasks and responsibilities
- o Property Team tasks and responsibilities

- overview of the key issues and impacts experienced by the organisation or body as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in Scotland and the response by the Scottish Government.
- SCRA Covid Stories – 3 child focussed case studies that illustrate the degree and impact of SCRA adaptation to COVID
- list of articles or reports that the organisation or body has published or contributed to, and/or a list of any written or oral evidence it has previously given to anybody (for example to Scottish Parliamentary Select Committees) regarding the impact on the organisation or body as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in Scotland and the response by the Scottish Government.
- Whether the organisation or body was adequately considered when decisions about the response to the COVID-19 pandemic were made by the Scottish Government.
- Whether the organisation or body engaged with the Scottish Government when the Scottish Government was making decisions about its response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Provision of a list of any such correspondence or meetings with the Scottish Government, including the dates, to whom the correspondence was addressed or with whom the meetings were held, and any response received from the Scottish Government.
- A summary of the views of the organisation or body as to lessons, if any, that can be learned from the Scottish Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- an indication of the number and types of relevant documents held by the organisation or body.

6.2   Initial key points of learning

6.3   The Inquiry asked that SCRA identify key points of learning in order to submit these for consideration. I summary these to date have been:-

- We needed the ability to use MS Teams quicker than it was provided to SCRA would have made a great impact. We were required to work at the pace of our IT supplier (Scottish Government/ITECS) in this instance and had limited controls
- Staff recognised the trust placed in them from managers and responded positively to this.
- Some staff felt that as key workers we should have been able to be back working in offices at a much quicker pace.
- Key Worker Status - whilst SCRA were viewed as essential workers, the access to supports for staff did not follow in any consistent or even way
- We experienced some challenge around the need to centralise the decision making around change.
- The decision to implement a major casework system during the pandemic was a struggle and had a significant impact on the training strategy and ultimately

staff. There are some ongoing repercussions from this decision, but with the benefit of hindsight was a successful multi-million-pound project.

- Due to the covid restrictions staff were asked to transition to the new system by learning remotely. Some staff found this particularly challenging and localities responded by holding local training sessions to support staff and the OD Analysts provided additional support to localities.
- At the start of the pandemic, it felt that there was an uneven distribution of workload due to lack of technology, staff home schooling, absence etc. which has not resolved but had the potential to become divisive
- Staff welcomed high levels of trust from managers to work flexibly and adopt new ways of working. At the same time staff were pleased to get back into offices which felt safe with the guidance and protocols in place.
- Maintenance activities were affected by resourcing issues impacting our suppliers through travel restrictions, delays during manufacturing and delivery of replacement parts/equipment as well as reduced numbers of available building engineers to undertake maintenance tasks
- Cleaning arrangements/time were enhanced with a greater focus on touch points and the introduction of disinfectant spraying or misting. Increased levels of PPE use and protocols for regular local desk cleaning needed to be put in place along with the safe disposal of the waste this generated
- Where buildings had not been used for several months, water testing and disinfection works were carried out prior to reoccupation
- The enlargement of hearing rooms has been a useful spend and has been positively received. Hearing rooms now require the space to operate more flexibility to accommodate greater amounts of IT equipment to support virtual, hybrid and face to face hearings
- The cost of undertaking alteration works was factored into budgets during 20/21 and 21/22. The physical changes made to adapt to the new situation presented by Covid have been permanent rather than temporary changes

6.2   The full return to the Inquiry can be made available to Board Members on request. At this stage it has only just been submitted to the Inquiry and it will be for them to determine how it will be placed in the public domain. Nonetheless we fully expect with the passage of time all relevant documentation will be made public.

SCOTTISH
CHILDREN'S REPORTER
ADMINISTRATION

KEEPING THE PROMISE - UPDATE

Head of Service: Lisa Bennett, Head of Strategy/OD

Date: 21 June 2023

Recommendation:

1.   To note the update and content of appendices in relation to the recommendations of the Hearings System Working Group and the implementation planning.

Reason for Report: For Noting

Resource Implications: To be determined. The Promise have commissioned independent consultants to cost the HSWG recommendations. SCRA have provided all relevant data to support this and are in communication with the Promise on further inputs and clarifications.

Strategy/Service Plan Implications: Corporate Plan and all related strategies

Consultation: EMT

EHRIA Duties: Not Applicable

Document Classification: Not protectively marked

1	**Introduction**
	1.1 SCRA is committed to Keeping the Promise and to working positively and effectively with our partners to do so.
	1.2 This report seeks to provide the Board with an update on the progress being made to Keep the Promise and is focussed on the following key areas of activity • The publication of the Recommendations • Our communications to staff and • The Scottish Government's plans for implementation.

2	**Hearings System Working Group Recommendations**
	2.1 On 25th May 2023 the Hearings System Working Group (HSWG) published it's final report, setting out across 330 pages, the background, context, recommendations and supporting narrative of what the group determined needed to change, improve or stop to give full effect to the Promise for children coming into the Hearings System
	2.2 Prior to the publication, much work took place to establish cross agency communication plans, key messages, timings and approaches.
	2.3 Internally, we surveyed staff to understand how we could best communicate with them following the publication – how we could engage, get out messages, ensure that the report was accessible – ensure that there was space for conversations/asking questions.
	2.4 To that end a comprehensive plan was developed for both internal and external communications.
	2.5 One of the key learnings that came from previous events where we needed to get out complex organisational messages, was around how and when we communicate with our managers. They told us that they needed to have information in advance of staff to allow them to prepare to support staff/answer questions/be one step ahead.
	2.6 With that in mind, we agreed within EMT that all managers in the organisation would receive a briefing pack of the recommendations 24 hours in advance of staff – containing the full (embargoed) report, summarised versions, Q&A, our external messages etc.

2.7	In addition to this, on the morning of the 25th, we held an early morning session with all managers to work through any immediate reflections, questions, observations ahead of staff coming into the office.
2.8	Appendix 1 is the briefing pack that went out to Managers. This pack provides the Board with everything that was released along with the communication that we sent to provide the Board with all of the information about the recommendations, and some insight around how this was placed with managers.
2.9	Follow up meetings were held in teams by managers and webinars, open to all staff, are due to take place wc 12th June.
2.10	There is an all managers event on 8th June and the HSWG recommendations are the topic for one of the workshops – to provide an opportunity for managers to delve a bit deeper into some of these – to consider what we can take forward as an organisation and to get their thoughts on how we might do that – what their priorities would be.
2.11	This information will then be fed into the joint senior teams away day with CHS on 19th June when the two senior teams begin to undertake the same exercise.

3	**Implementation planning**	
	3.1	As part of the recommendations, Scottish Government are to lead the coordination and governance of implementation across agencies. This arrangement is something that we welcome and have been working with Scottish Government and CHS to develop structures to support this.
	3.2	Appendix 2 sets out the proposal that went to CHIP for approval and later to the joint YJIB/CHIP for discussion..
	3.3	A series of meetings will take place ahead of the summer recess to begin to map activities and prioritise work to be taken forward.
	3.4	As you will see from the timeline provided in Appendix 2, it is unlikely that we will see full feedback around Ministerial support until late Autumn.
	3.5	Whilst much will be determined by this, we will be undertaking to develop plans for work that can be taken forward internally and with partners where there is consensus, where no legislative change is required, where tests can be undertaken without additional resource requirements.
	3.6	Internally work is taking place to develop a programme of work under the Corporate Plan aim – Care, to take this work forward.

4	Recommendation	
	4.1	1. To note the update and content of appendices in relation to the recommendations of the Hearings System Working Group and the implementation planning.

Appendix 1

SCRA Manager's Briefing Pack – HSWG Recommendations

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Confidentiality
3. Manager's Briefing Meeting
4. Summary of HSWG Recommendations
   a) *At a Glance Summary*
   b) *Full Summary with most relevant to SCRA highlighted*
   c) *SCRA Staff Engagement Alignment to HSWG Report*
5. Q&A for SCRA Staff
6. Details of SCRA's external / public response
7. Next Steps for SCRA
8. Manager's Event
9. Details of All Staff Webinars
10. Partner Response / Links

1. Introduction

Welcome to the Manager's Briefing Pack on the HSWG Recommendations. We hope that you will find all of the information you need here to help you navigate the report and to prepare for its publication. If you have any questions that are not answered within this pack please contact our [Keeping The Promise mailbox](#) or [Roma Bruce Davies](#), KTP Programme Manager.

2. Confidentiality

Please note that, as the HSWG report will not be published until early morning on Thursday 25 May, it is absolutely crucial to maintain confidentiality as to content of the report beyond the manager group until the formal publication. This manager briefing pack is being shared in order to support managers to prepare for the publication and this is done on the clear understanding that the material is not to be shared wider than the manager group at this stage.

3. Manager's Briefing Meeting

A briefing meeting for Locality Reporter Managers and Head Office Managers will take place early on the day of the HSWG report publication. The report itself is due to be published on the Promise Scotland's website in the early morning on Thursday 25 May 2023. SCRA's Manager's briefing meeting will take place on Thursday 25 May at 08:30am - [Click here to join the meeting](#).

This will be an opportunity for managers to come together after considering the briefing pack and to ask questions, share views and prepare for the wider publication before it happens.

4. Summary of the HSWG Recommendations

There are a total of 97 recommendations in the report. This is a considerable number and, as the report itself points out, it is important that they are all considered together and not in isolation.

The recommendations in the report and are broken down into headings as follows:-

One:	The success of the redesign of the Children's Hearings System
Two:	The Scaffolding around the Children's Hearings System
Three:	The pathway to the Reporter
Four:	The introduction of advocacy, legal advice and the Reporter
Five:	The reasons the Children's Hearings System has become involved in a child and family's life
Six:	The decision making model
Seven:	The people making decisions
Eight:	The participation and preparation before a Children's Hearing
Nine:	The voices and involvement of children and their families in the Hearing
Ten:	The people working alongside children and their families
Eleven:	The decisions available to the Panel and the support for children and their families
Twelve:	The oversight, enforcement, accountability and overview of a child's order
Thirteen:	The accountability of the Children's Hearings System
Fourteen:	The implementation of the recommendations

In order to help you consider the recommendations and digest them, we are presenting the recommendations in this briefing in a number of different ways. You can, of course, read the report in full with the recommendations and full context. Even if you do not have time or capacity to do this straight away we would strongly encourage you to do so and also to encourage and create protected time for people in your team to do so.

HSWG report for
web 2.pdf

a)   At a Glance Summary

You can look at our "At a Glance" summary which gives the key headlines in a very brief and visual way.

At a Glance.pptx

b)   Full Summary with most relevant to SCRA highlighted

You can access our document which contains all of the recommendations in full, as they have been extracted from the report itself. The recommendations contained in this report all relate to the children's hearings system and therefore all are relevant and of interest to SCRA. To support early understanding of the recommendations and to allow SCRA staff to focus in on those most directly relevant to SCRA, in this document you can consider which recommendations are likely to have most impact on SCRA by looking at those highlighted in blue.

Summary of
Recommendations.1

c)   SCRA Staff Engagement Alignment to HSWG Report

It is a real positive of the overall process that SCRA staff engaged so well and shared their views and ideas, which were then fed into the HSWG deliberations via the SCRA Staff Engagement report and by the SCRA HSWG representatives. Therefore, we have included a reference guide / table to show which of the HSWG recommendations align most well with the SCRA staff report. This will help with identifying the extent to which SCRA staff were directly able to influence some of the recommendations.

Key
Recommendations A

5. Q&A for SCRA Staff (at end of document)

We have anticipated some of the questions likely to arise on publication of the HSWG report and have prepared some responses to these questions. We will continue to add to this document in time as we hear from managers and staff about the questions that are arising.

If you have any questions not covered in this Q&A document please let us know either via our [Keeping The Promise mailbox](#) or [Roma Bruce Davies](#), KTP Programme Manager.

6. Details of SCRA's External / Public Response

On the day of the HSWG report's publication SCRA will release a statement welcoming the publication of the report and the collaborative work to produce it. There are some particular messages that SCRA wants to give along with the general position of welcoming the report's publication.

You can see details of SCRA's external response to the publication of the report [will be sent to managers as a separate document].

If you are due to be in a partnership meeting over the next few days and would like to discuss SCRA's position in relation to the report or would like to clarify anything about SCRA's response please contact SCRA's Communications team or [Roma](#)

[Bruce Davies](), KTP Programme Manager or [Alistair Hogg](), SCRA's Head of Practice & Policy.

7. Next Steps for SCRA

The next steps for SCRA, now that the HSWG report has been published, are to continue in partnership work with the Scottish Government and others to establish whether and which of the recommendations will be implemented.

In the event that there is a Promise Bill and legislative changes recommended in the HSWG report feature in that Bill, we will work through the normal legislative consultation processes.

We are working with the Scottish Government and partners towards establishing a framework for implementation of the recommendations. It is likely that there will be a programme management framework to oversee the improvement work and transformational changes. We will ensure that we continue to influence the process and outcomes as this work proceeds. A key area for us will be the review of hearing functions and how they lie between SCRA and CHS. We will continue to engage with our wider staff group to seek views, ideas and solutions as well as to plan for some of the unintended consequences that may arise.

We are clear as an organisation that the implementation of these changes needs significant investment and a robust implementation framework that prioritises and sequences the work that needs to happen into a realistic timeline that takes account of the operational pressures we are under in order to ensure that we are able to positively implement these changes children and young people want to see in a way that is sustainable. We are ensuring that these messages are reiterated and focussed on in the work that is now happening to establish implementation frameworks. We will continue to work with managers and staff to feed operational views into this overall process.

8. Manager's Event

The Manager's Event takes place in Glasgow on Thursday 8 June. At the Manager's Event we will have a session on the HSWG report which will provide a further opportunity, after a period of initial consideration, to come together and reflect on the recommendations and to ask questions. During the session we will cover:-

1. The work of the HSWG - how did we get here? SCRA's influence – how have we shaped the recommendations?
2. Overview of the HSWG recommendations
3. Key recommendations for SCRA, role of Reporter and other roles
4. The next steps – frameworks for implementation, sequencing and timelines, SCRA's approach, working in collaboration with partners

9. Details of All Staff Webinars

We will follow up the written comms on the day of publication with all Staff Webinars where people can come along to ask questions and give feedback. These have been

planned for a suitable period of time after publication to allow staff to read and consider the recommendations. Join Roma Bruce Davies, KTP Programme Manager and members of EMT to discuss the recommendations and what they mean for SCRA. Please encourage your teams to join these sessions too.

The dates are available below and you can register for the webinars now.

Webinar 1	Tuesday 13 June 2023	13:30 – 15:00	[Click here to register 13](#)
Webinar 2	Thursday 15 June 2023	09:30 – 11:00	[Click here to register 15](#)
Webinar 3	Friday 23 June 2023	09:30 – 11:00	[Click here to register 23](#)

10. Partner Response / Links

You can access a blog about the process of producing the HSWG report here

[Hearings System Working Group Redesign Report: Children and families have talked. The 'system' has listened. - The Promise](#)

You can access an information video about the production of the HSWG report here

[Hearings for Children: Creating the Redesign Report for Scotland's Children's Hearings System - YouTube](#)

You can access a podcast with Our Hearings Our Voice and Sheriff David Mackie here

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=37n9rnutJWc

Sheriff Mackie has prepared a video directly for SCRA staff thanking us for our input and contribution to the process and setting out his vision for these recommendations.

Here is an infographic about the metrics of the HSWG report which shows the number of recommendations, engagement sessions and work that has gone into the production of the report.

Scotland's Hearings System Working Group

made

97

recommendations

on how redesigning the Children's Hearings System will help

keep the promise

reached after over

500

hours of discussion and deliberation

12

sessions with care experienced young people

11

sessions with parents and carers

built on the five foundations of the promise

voice   care   family   people   scaffolding

based on over

5,500 voices

of those with experience of care.

Hearings System Working Group recommendations
Q&A for SCRA Staff (links have been removed as link to internal site)

Q. **What are the main recommendations in the report?**

A. There are a total of 97 recommendations in the report. Here is a list of the key recommendations:
- Need for investment in wider support for children and families
- Need for investment and resourcing the Hearings System
- Inquisitorial system
- Specialist sheriffs
- Training for all in the system
- Review of referral to the Reporter criteria
- Pre-birth referrals
- Enhanced role for Reporter pre-referral and referral – more direct engagement with children and families
- Grounds to be established in separate process outwith Hearings
- Decision-making model - Salaried, consistent highly qualified professional Chairs with two remunerated panel members
- Review of functions between CHS and SCRA
- More robust preparation phase for children and families before a Hearing
- No obligation for a child to attend their Hearing
- Standardised national pro forma for reports for Hearings
- Greater specification of the support needed
- Greater accountability and review
- Reporter continues to have a right to attend Hearings and continues to deal with appeals
- Programme framework for delivery and implementation of the recommendations

We would encourage you to read the whole report which will allow you to understand the context behind each of the recommendations.

We have also presented some summaries of the recommendations broken down in different ways so that you can quickly access the key recommendations.

To access the full report click here.

To access the At a Glance <mark>click here</mark>.
To access the full summary of recommendations with those most relevant to SCRA highlighted in blue <mark>click here.</mark>
To access the recommendations most aligned to the SCRA Staff report <mark>click here.</mark>

Q. **How well do these recommendations align with the views presented in the SCRA Staff Engagement Report?**

A. There is a really good alignment between the changes SCRA staff were seeking and supporting to the Children's Hearings System and the final recommendations of the HSWG. This demonstrates the influence we have had and the contribution we have made to the process to date. The HSWG has really valued the knowledge and experience of SCRA staff in the process of arriving at these recommendations. The criteria for change developed after the staff sessions, in particular, have really supported us to influence the process and hold the process to account to ensure that recommendations are proportionate, well evidenced and will actually result in a better system for children and families. To find out more detail about how the recommendations align with the SCRA staff engagement report, <mark>click here</mark>.

Q. **Now that these recommendations have been published, what are the next steps?**

A. The report will go to the Scottish Government along with some cost modelling. Government will consider the recommendations and decide whether to accept them in whole or in part. If accepted, the next step will be planning and sequencing the work required to implement the changes. For those changes that require legislative change, the intention is for it to be included in a Promise Bill which will be laid before the Scottish Parliament in 2025. This proposed Bill will follow the same consultation and parliamentary scrutiny process as any other Bill. For those changes that do not require legislative change, Scottish Government is planning a programme management approach in conjunction with children's hearings system partners to plan, sequence, drive and deliver the improvements and changes identified. Both the sequencing and the cost modelling considerations will be very important so that the change can be delivered in a realistic and sustainable manner.

Q. **What do these recommendations mean to children and young people and Hearings-experienced people?**

A. The work of the HSWG to develop these recommendations has included co-design and engagement with Children's Hearings experienced young people. Being part of the redesign has been rewarding and given a sense of being listened to. The young people support the recommendations and the vision for the future system that will deliver support and consistency, listen to children and support them to understand the process. They said "**To those responsible for making these changes happen, we ask that you don't miss this opportunity to change lives.**" You can read more about the views of Hearings-experienced young people in the Foreword to the report by Our Hearings, Our Voice.

Q.   When will changes be implemented?

A.   The recommendations are just that at this stage. The next step is that the Scottish Government will consider the recommendations and decide which will be implemented. If accepted, the changes will be taken forward by a mixture of legislative change (which will go through the usual parliamentary processes including consultation) and through a programme management approach collaboratively with hearings system partners. This approach will allow the delivery of changes to be well planned, sequenced and staged so that they can be realistically delivered. There will be joint planning to develop a timeline for implementation and, if the recommendations are accepted by the Scottish Government, they will be delivered as part of the wider commitment to keeping the promise by 2030. You can access a reminder about the overall planned timelines for delivery of the Promise here **Plan 21-24 - The Promise.** Where we can build on our existing improvement work, we will continue to do that so that we are not waiting until legislation is enacted where we do not need to. Anything that requires legislative change is likely to be included in the planned Promise Bill which is due to be laid before the Scottish Parliament in 2025.

Q.   What will this mean for SCRA?

A.   SCRA welcomes the publication of the report and the continued support for the Children's Hearings System alongside the recommendations which seek to strengthen and enhance the system for children and young people. In particular, we welcome the focus on children's rights, participation and voice, the strengthening of the decision-making model and the proposed enhancement of the role of the Reporter. We also recognise and support the need for significant investment in the wider support for children and families as well as in the Children's Hearings System to deliver the recommendations. We welcome the proposed approach to implementation of the recommendations which will see careful and collaborative planning as to the sequencing and priorities for delivery.

It is too early to tell what this will mean on a day to day operational basis as the focus in the HSWG report is on higher level recommendations. A lot of the detailed implications for Hearings procedure and functions of different organisations will be determined in time in collaboration with partners and led by the Scottish Government. We are committed to taking a continued open and collaborative engagement approach with staff as we proceed with this work.

Q.   What is SCRA doing to prepare for implementation of the changes?

A.   SCRA has already introduced a programme management framework to deliver our business plan and corporate plan under the 3 programmes of Care (Keeping The Promise), Connect (Digital) and Protect (Effective and Efficient Service Delivery). We are already progressing improvement work and testing change ideas in different localities as part of our Keeping The Promise improvement programme, for example around child friendly scheduling. The learning from this improvement work will

inform how best we scale up and spread improvement across the organisation to ensure a consistent approach. The structures set up in Programme Protect are also supporting our work to prepare for implementation of the HSWG recommendations. The Steady stage is focussed on steadying current processes by making them as efficient as possible with the Ready stage focussed on moving towards and aligning with the HSWG recommendations. The Go stage will include our work to deliver the changes. We will work closely with the Scottish Government and other partners and their programme management structures to prepare for the next steps including stratifying and sequencing the changes to come.

Q.   **How will we be able to deliver these changes with current resources and capacity**?

A.   The HSWG recommendations themselves recognise the need for significant investment in the system, resources and capacity to deliver the changes. They also provide for staging and sequencing of the implementation of change to ensure that there is a realistic and sustainable approach to implementation. An independent company have been engaged by The Promise Scotland to carry out cost modelling on what these proposed changes will mean for organisations who make up the children's hearings system, which includes SCRA and CHS. The work of Programme Protect, which aims to create efficiencies in the way we work, will also support us here as any capacity created by the Programme will be used to allow us to focus on delivery of the things that will help us to Keep The Promise.

Q.   **What does this mean for roles in SCRA?**

A.   It is too early to tell exactly what this will mean for individual roles in SCRA. The report is clearly supportive of the role of the Reporter and seeks to enhance that in the redesigned Hearings System, especially at the pre-referral and pre-birth stages. What this means in practice for Reporters will have to be carefully planned out and considered and will have to move in line with capacity and resource to achieve the aims in a positive way that does not have unintended consequences. The introduction of salaried, consistent, highly qualified professional Chairs and the new decision-making model for Hearings means that there is also recommended a review of the current functions, including administrative functions, around Hearings between CHS and SCRA. This might mean changes to who does what but the level of detail will come through that review in time. In the SCRA Staff engagement sessions and report, staff recognised that the introduction of a professional chair might lead to other changes in the system: "Changes to the decision-making model may result in changes to other roles but it should not be automatic and careful consideration of ECHR compliance and unintended consequences is required." In carrying out the forthcoming review of functions between CHS and SCRA, we will continue to apply the same rigorous approach to ensure that any proposed changes are well evidenced about how they will make the experience better for children and families; that the proposed change is a proportionate way to achieve the benefit and that it will ensure ongoing ECHR compliance and fairness of process.

The report recommends that Reporters continue to have a right to attend Hearings and continue to deal with appeals. SCRA has already committed to reviewing the role of the Reporter as part of our business plan this year and we want to ensure that we can align that review with the HSWG recommendations as well as consulting widely with staff and in partnership with UNISON. This is a real opportunity, the first time in many years, to ensure that our core role truly reflects the value it has within the Children's Hearings System. Whilst this review will focus on the role of the Reporter, we can't do that without looking at the roles which support and surround the Reporter and assessing the broader impact on them. Reporters will be able to focus on enhancements to their role at pre-referral, referral and grounds stages only with the support from other roles in the organisation.

Q. How will the introduction of salaried Chairs impact on the role of the Reporter in Hearings?

A. Paid Chairs and a strengthened decision-making model with increased competency and consistency is one of the key recommendations in the HSWG report. The first step is that we need to know whether the Scottish Government will implement this recommendation. It is then recommended that a full review of the functions connected to hearings between SCRA and CHS is carried out, which will inform any changes to what SCRA does in and around Hearings. We will engage in this collaborative process with partners and in doing so we will continue to engage with staff to bring detailed knowledge of the system, wider views, ideas and thinking about unintended consequences into the process. The HSWG report recommends that Reporters will continue to have the right to attend Hearings.

Q. How can I find out more, ask questions and share my feedback?

A. As the report has just been published, there will be some time given for everyone to read it, digest it and to consider it. We have scheduled some drop in sessions with members of EMT and the Keeping The Promise Programme Manager to take place after this initial time to read and consider the report. Please do sign up for one of these sessions where staff in all roles and teams can come along, ask questions, raise any concerns and share positive feedback and hopes for the future.

The dates are available below and you can register for the webinars now.

Webinar 1   Tuesday 13 June 2023   13:30 – 15:00 Click here to register 13
Webinar 2   Thursday 15 June 2023   09:30 – 11:00 Click here to register 15
Webinar 3   Friday 23 June 2023   09:30 – 11:00 Click here to register 23

Q. What are the next steps for SCRA?

A. The next steps for SCRA, now that the HSWG report has been published, are to continue in partnership work with the Scottish Government and all our partners in the Children's Hearings System to establish whether and which of the recommendations will be implemented.

In the event that there is a Promise Bill and legislative changes recommended in the HSWG report feature in that Bill, we will work through the normal legislative consultation processes.

We are working with the Scottish Government and partners towards establishing a framework for implementation of the recommendations. It is likely that there will be a programme management framework to oversee the improvement work and transformational changes recommended here. We will ensure that we continue to influence the process and outcomes as this work proceeds. A key area for us will be the review of hearing functions and how they lie between SCRA and CHS. We will continue to engage with our wider staff group to seek views, ideas and solutions as well as to plan for some of the unintended consequences that may arise.

We are clear as an organisation that the implementation of these changes needs significant investment and a robust implementation framework that prioritises and sequences the work that needs to happen into a realistic timeline that takes account of the operational pressures we are under in order to ensure that we are able to positively implement these changes children and young people want to see in a way that is sustainable. We are ensuring that these messages are reiterated and focussed on in the work that is now happening to establish implementation frameworks. We will continue to work with managers and staff to feed operational views into this overall process. The good alignment between the SCRA Staff Engagement report and the recommendations shows the extent to which the HSWG and partners value the contribution of SCRA to this process. We will continue to refer to the SCRA criteria for change and support the process so that what is implemented are proportionate, well evidenced changes that will result in a better system for children and families.

Appendix 2

<u>Children's Hearings Redesign –</u>
<u>Proposed Governance and Delivery Structures</u>

The report of the independent Hearings System Working Group is due to be published on 25 May 2023. The recommendations flowing from the report are expected to cover a broad range of areas. We expect them to range in nature and impact - from those that require fundamental legislative and structural change – within and beyond the existing hearings system - through to those that would demand significant additional resource, to proposals that are more discrete and procedural, and can be progressed via practice improvements that don't demand new legal authority, extra resource or Parliamentary process. We also anticipate that there will be important narrative within the report giving a steer on how the proposals should be understood, and responded to.

All of the recommendations will require to be assessed with some care, not least with those statutory actors who have autonomy from Ministers or who currently operate largely beyond the daily core of the existing Children's Hearings system roles. Rights and legal impacts have to be screened for, and any unintended consequences picked up and resolved.

The process of analysing and responding to the report will therefore need to be comprehensive, collaborative and transparent - to ensure rigour and to accrue confidence in any planned programme of change and in each of its constituent elements. It will also need to ensure that children's rights are respected, protected and fulfilled.

Any programme to redesign the Children's Hearings System must operate in a way that ensures the effective ongoing functioning of the system (and the wider system around it) along with the respectful, supportive treatment of all current actors within it. The operational integrity of the day to day working of the system must be built into plans from the outset to minimise risks and ensure that any changes can be properly managed and supported within appropriate timeframes. A central priority must be to preserve, at the very least, levels of service and legal protections to children and families served by the current system.

This paper proposes governance and delivery structures to support the phases of work that will be required for Children's Hearings System redesign beginning with the response to the independent report.

Preparation and Inception

We think that an essential but proportionate emphasis on planning and inception activity is urgently required across June 2023. Firmer proposals on analysis, oversight, governance and delivery will be developed and circulated within a month of the HSWG report's publication.

This work will include working with partner agencies in an initial planning group to consider scope; categorise recommendations; identify potential workstreams; map

current improvement work against the report and consider priorities, resources and timeframes. Scottish Government will also undertake an initial policy analysis of the full report to support this work.

The outputs of these processes should support and inform the development of the planning, delivery and governance structures as proposed below.

Governance

The diagram below gives a simple overview of the core governance and delivery functions we are proposing for this work. Further details are set out in the paragraphs that follow.

Ministers – will make decisions with regard to the acceptance of recommendations, the overall vision for, and delivery of, the redesigned system including matters of resourcing and finance. Ministers will be regularly updated on progress by the proposed Redesign Board.

Children's Hearings Redesign Board – this board will be an executive group, representing a particular extraction of the CHIP partnership. It will be responsible for the inception and ongoing governance of, and delivery for, the workstreams - comprising the core children's hearings-specific elements of the overall programme of

work. The group should include a lead national officer from each of SCRA, CHS, COSLA, SWS and Scottish Government, with the Government official – or another agreed lead - acting as chair. The board will be regularly briefed on progress across all workstreams and will have lead responsibility for risk management, agreeing strategic priorities and cohesive sequencing and interagency communication strategy as well as decision making within the programme including sign off of key documents. This group will be responsible for setting and communicating the vision statement that will underpin the work. Reporting and accountability arrangements to the portfolio Minister to be confirmed.

Support

Programme Office – the programme office will support the Redesign Board by providing secretariat support and by producing and managing the programme documentation and plans, including but not limited to:
- Programme plans
- Risk register
- Communications and stakeholder engagement plans
- Impact Assessments
- Change management and benefits realisation plans
- Issues logs
- Reporting processes

We are exploring whether the programme office can be a shared resource managed and delivered across key partner organisations.

Delivery

Strategic Workstreams Group – This group will operate to allow programme / workstream managers to communicate and co-ordinate information across projects and programmes, including progress made against plans, and actions to be taken on dependencies, risks and issues. Acting as a filter for CHRB, the group would address cross-programme issues/shared interest and address decisions about resources, risks, issues and dependencies within both programmes and projects, raising issues to the Programme Board as necessary. A critical first task for this group would be the construction of a single repository of all change/improvement activity across CHIP bodies, examining charters and foundational documents, mapping dependencies and proposing elements of or full integration.

Workstreams and Projects
A range of workstreams or programmes of work – led by identified and agreed leads with the right essential contributors - will report into the CHRB. The majority of these will be defined by the HSWG report recommendations accepted by government. Some may be existing workstreams that are already progressing improvements relevant to the overall vision for a redesigned system. Other workstreams may be established to appraise or test report proposals before they are fully accepted. Workstreams or programmes will be made up of a number of different projects led by different agencies or multiple agencies working together. No projects should be stand alone. All

workstreams will be expected to set clear aims, establish teams and governance structures and adopt reporting procedures in line with the overall transformational change programme.

Other key bodies and groups

COSLA Leaders – next due to meet in August 2023. Local authorities will take their own views as to the best way to engage with the proposed analysis and governance plans. Arrangements and relationships to be confirmed once the initial June planning and inception activity is complete, and COSLA officers can advise their Leaders.

The Scottish Government's Promise Programme Board - will have oversight of progress towards Keeping the Promise and alignment of this work with the overall strategic approach to Promise delivery. The Programme Board will receive regular highlight reports focussed on the overall programme, and relevant members will link to the Promise Scotland's Oversight Board.

Children and Families Collective Leadership Group – jointly chaired by COSLA and the Scottish Government Director for Children and Families, and with key CHRB organisations already serving as delegates, this group will receive regular reports from theCHRB and would take the lead on the significant range of proposals that have implications beyond the Children's Hearings System.

Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership (CHIP) – the multi-agency improvement partnership will be able to request progress updates from workstreams for its quarterly meetings and will be expected to provide observations and escalate any matters of concern to the Redesign Board. In addition, the CHRB may wish to co-opt CHIP members and others for the consideration of particular topics, or to lead out identified themes and workstreams.

Hearings Delivery Group - SCRA and CHS have recently created a Hearings Delivery Group which will deal with shared and dependent operational matters between the two organisations. This group may be able to lead workstreams or projects, perhaps with a primary focus on driving improvements within the parameters of the current system, and its role must be considered in the planning phases of this work.

This list is not exhaustive and we know that there will be other bodies and groups with roles to play as the work develops.

Voice

Our Hearings Our Voice (OHOV) and other voice-led groups – it will be essential to maintain an ongoing visibility, and sense of agency, for the young people to be served by a redesigned system. It should also be acknowledged that particular elements of the change programme like workforce planning and development or legal / procedural refinements will be of less relevance for them. With specific reference to OHOV, Better Meetings, the STARR group, Youth Just-Us and the VIP group, it is suggested that the CHRB group write to these interests to discern their capacity and appetite for forward involvement. The CHRB should integrate voice in their plans for progress updates, options appraisal and in how best to communicate and provide opportunities

for participation and involvement with the care-experienced community throughout the programme.

We will also consider how to give babies and infants a voice within the programme of change.

<u>Proposed outline timeframe</u>

This is a very high level initial outline timeframe, subject to clarification and revision, for the key elements of responding to the report. We expect this timeframe to develop into a full programme plan with the input of other partners to identify and plan core elements.

Report received –   Mid May 2023
            Published   25 May 2023

Engagement with affected sectors / key interests on report and on recommendations
Impact Assessments
Costings Work
Legal Analysis
                                                                    May to October 2023

Preparation for 2024-25 budget –   June to December 2023

Scottish Government Response to HSWG report –   November 2023

Drafting Public Consultation paper for hearings proposals in Promise Bill –
                                                                    December 2023

Cabinet agreement for consultation paper / consultation launch –   January 2024

Public consultation on Promise Bill proposals –   February – May 2024

Analysis of responses and revised policy proposals –   June -August 2024

Drafting of Promise Bill policy instructions –   March – August 2024
Preparation for 2025-26 budget –   August to December 2024

Finalisation of Bill provisions and preparation of accompanying documents –
                                                                    August – December 2024

Promise Bill introduced to Scottish Parliament –   Quarter 1 2025 (tbc)

Youth Justice and Children's Hearings Unit – 22 May 2023

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Inclusion & Diversity – Annual Report

Accountable Director: Head of Human Resources **Date:** 21 June 2023

Author: Inclusion and Diversity Manager

Recommendations:

1. To consider the Inclusion and Diversity Annual Report and associated programme of work.

2. To note the publication of SCRA's Equalities Mainstreaming Report 2022-2023 in line with The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 as amended.

3. To note updates on key inclusion and diversity activity.

Reason for Report: *Board Consideration*

Resource Implications: *Within approved budgets*

Strategy: *Within approved plans*

Consultation: *To be noted at Inclusion & Diversity Steering Group*

Equalities Duties   *Equalities Impact Assessment not required*

Document Classification: *Not protectively marked*

1. Introduction

1.1 This report updates the Board on SCRA's Inclusion and Diversity programme of work since June 2022.

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 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy has been integrated within SCRA's holistic Rights, Inclusion & Corporate Parenting (RICP) Strategy 2021-2024 which recognises the intrinsic link between human rights, equalities and inclusion and SCRA's statutory corporate parenting duties and the importance of the inclusion and diversity work to SCRA's commitment to Keeping The Promise. SCRA's Inclusion and Diversity Steering Group takes a strategic overview of this work and has been running for nearly two years. It will be reviewing its progress, remit and membership at its meeting in August 2023.

2. Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 22-23

2.1 SCRA published it's mainstreaming report for 22-23 on 31st March 2023. A copy of this is attached at Appendix 1 and include significant details of the evidence of how SCRA has embedded its equalities duties and other activities.

2.2 As per the Inclusion and Diversity Board Report 2021-2022, compliance with the Equality Act 2010 has continued to be a significant focus. This is essential if SCRA is to meaningfully embed and mainstream equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in everything we do.

2.3 Essential to compliance is getting impact assessment right – both in terms of when they are conducted but also in terms of proportionality. As such, we have continued to develop and refine SCRA's Equality and Human Rights Impact

Assessment approach (EHRIA). We have listened to user feedback and now have a five-tier approach to EHRIA's to ensure proportionality and that the process is user-friendly. We continue to receive high quality completed EHRIA's and in the reporting year 22-23, the Equality Review Group received 22 completed EHRIA's covering strategic and operational, locality and national work, as well as Keeping The Promise project work. To promote awareness and understanding of importance of impact assessment, we have developed two information and training videos that are available on Connect to support staff in the completion of these, alongside all of the EHRIA materials. We are further looking to develop mandatory EHRIA e-learning which will first focus on managers as well as specific teams (e.g. Digital, Practice, Property) whose work brings about the most change to policy, process or practice. Impact assessment continues to be resource intensive, however, is a statutory responsibility for PSED compliance. We will continue our work to raise awareness and proactively manage impact assessment and associated organisational risk throughout 23-24.

2.4 As part of the annual staff survey conducted in November 2022, a number of questions specifically relating to equality, diversity and inclusion. The results were as follows:

- 96% of staff understand their individual responsibility for inclusion and diversity and how this relates to their role;
- 88% of staff believe that SCRA is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion;
- 85% of staff know how and where to report a concern about discrimination or harassment;
- 80% of staff feel included and respected in SCRA;
- 80% of staff believe that SCRA respects individual differences (e.g. cultures, working styles, backgrounds, ideas, etc);
- 80% of staff think that their line manager demonstrates a commitment to and support for inclusion and diversity; and,
- 68% of staff feel that SCRA provides an environment for free and open expression of ideas, opinions and beliefs.

The results of the staff survey are broadly positive in terms of our inclusion and diversity work, and people's understanding of their responsibilities, their managers responsibilities and SCRA's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. That said, there is always room for improvement and we acknowledge that, whilst a majority, 68% of staff feel that their working environment is conducive to free and open expression of ideas, opinions and beliefs, this is lower than we would like, and lower in comparison to the other inclusion and diversity metrics. Further equalities training for staff and the implementation of a new Inclusive Standards & Behaviours Framework throughout 2023-2024 will seek to improve on the results in the staff survey

2.5 We have been focussing on embedding and mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion in localities. This has been done through identifying an EDI Lead in every locality, in addition to our cohort of Inclusion Ambassadors. To support this group of geographically diverse colleagues, we created a Locality EDI Lead Network. This Network is hosted on MS Teams and enables all Locality EDI

Leads to share questions, good practice, ideas and get peer support or advice and guidance from SCRA's Inclusion & Diversity Manager, as well as being a mechanism to promoting inclusion and diversity opportunities and training. The Network ensures that strategic national inclusion and diversity priorities are communicated and discussed within Localities, but that Localities can identify areas of local inclusion and diversity work to 'feed up' into the national programme. This top down, bottom up approach to inclusion and diversity ensures that strategic priorities and local needs remain at the forefront of our inclusion and diversity work, in effect providing a feedback loop from Localities to ensure our inclusion and diversity work is needs-based.

2.6   A strong strategic approach to inclusion and diversity is required to fully embed and mainstream equality, diversity and inclusion. We have embedded EDI in SCRA's corporate planning process to further mainstream EDI through everything we do – whether it be national or local, strategic or operational – and all locality plans have specific EDI actions. Further ad hoc work will also be carried out within Localities as and when identified. The specific EDI objectives in all Locality Plans are: we will continue to support SCRA's inclusion and diversity aims by mainstreaming these in our culture, practice and services - ensuring that staff have a working knowledge and are implementing the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010; and we will use Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments to support our approach to locality planning. The Inclusion and Diversity Manager will support the increasing the working knowledge through local training and support.

2.7   To ensure our EDI activity and programme of work is evidence and needs-based, we have been focussing on improving our collecting and recording of equality data. Recording and monitoring equality data is important, not just for data's sake, but to aid organisational and corporate planning. Equality data helps us to better understand the needs of the people we work with and for and provides us with an evidence-base for implementing and measuring change and improvement. Without it, we would not know how or where to target our action and resource. As a public sector organisation we have a finite budget, and robust equality data helps us to spend that budget in the most fair and impactful way. Previously we have focussed on improving our workforce equality data, and we now turn to improving the equality data we hold on children on CSAS. Improving the equality data of children on CSAS has been and will continue to be a focus as this will help us identify operational and service delivery areas requiring improvement based on need and evidence. We will also continue our annual Equalities Employee Monitoring Campaign to encourage our workforce to complete their equalities data in iTrent.

2.8   Throughout 22-23, we have been developing SCRA's new Inclusive Standards & Behaviours Framework. These sit alongside our Management Standards and other existing policies, such as SCRA's Code of Conduct and Dignity at Work Policy to better illustrate and describe the values and behaviours we expect all our colleagues to uphold and demonstrate at work. The Standards & Framework outlines how we can all, through our behaviours, language, attitudes and approaches, contribute to an inclusive SCRA which recognises the value of

diversity and is consistent with SCRA's core corporate values. The six over-arching inclusive principles to inclusive standards and behaviours are:

- Working together – we will form effective, inclusive, psychologically safe, kind and respectful partnerships and relationships with people, internally and externally, from a range of diverse backgrounds, sharing information, best practice, resources and support;
- Communicating & influencing – we communicate purpose and direction with clarity, integrity and enthusiasm while respecting the varied needs, beliefs and opinions of others;
- Developing self & others – we focus on continuous learning and development for ourselves, for others and for the organisation;
- Changing & improving – we will seek out opportunities to create effective change and harness innovation and creativity to ensure continuous improvement through our ways of working, including how we seek and provide feedback;
- Leadership & decision-making – we engage inclusively and supportively with others in delivering a shared vision by valuing our differences, ensuring fairness and opportunity for all. We use evidence and knowledge to support accurate, reliable and expert decision-making and the provision of advice carefully, ensuring we consider alternative options, implications and risks; and,
- Delivering a quality customer focussed service – we deliver our services for our people and the children and families with whom we work with professional excellence, expertise and efficiency, taking account of the diverse needs of everyone we work with. We provide exceptional and inclusive customer service internally and externally, with our partners as well as children and families.

The implementation of the Inclusive Standards & Behaviours Framework will continue throughout 23-24 and will inform our review of recruitment, supervision, succession planning and talent management and learning and development.

2.9 SCRA's Race & Ethnicity Group, led by Neil Hunter, Principal Reporter/Chief Executive, continues to proactively develop its aims and reach. We have been focussing on promoting awareness of issues pertaining to race and ethnicity and, in particular, racism and racial inequality. The group recognises that there is currently a lack of data on the children involved with SCRA so a focus of the work around race and ethnicity is in the improvement of the recording of ethnicity data on CSAS. Our Race Equality Action Plan includes an ambitious multi-year approach to improving our understanding of potential racial inequality in our service delivery and decision-making, taking a mixed method approach. Improving our data is the start of this work and we will, as the data improves, conduct case-sampling exercises and research projects to explore whether there is racial inequality in our decision-making, particularly in relation to the Reporter decision-making. In terms of racial diversity of the workforce, employee monitoring data has 2.5% of our workforce as black or minority ethnic as at 31st January 2023, compared with 4% of the Scottish population. The group – alongside HR – are using the Scottish Government's Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit to help us better understand the barriers to achieving a

more ethnically diverse workforce. Further work will be done as e-recruitment is introduced. The group has also produced a Racism Guidance Note for staff, which sits alongside the Hate Crime Guidance Note, to act as guidance for staff in how to deal with, and report, racism and/or a hate crime.

2.10 SCRA's Disability Group has been in existence for some time and continues to be motivated and enthusiastic with promoting disability inclusion. The group continue to implement the BSL Action Plan and raise awareness of deafness and the impact of being deaf. Since June 2022 the group has also had a significant focus on neurodiversity and neuroinclusion. As part of this work, we have partnered with Salveson Mindroom (a charity that champions all forms of neurodiversity and supports all kinds of minds) to launch a Neurodiversity Champions Network. The Champions will help raise awareness of neurodiversity within the organisation through providing training and awareness raising to staff. It will also provide advice and guidance to colleagues who are supporting people who have neuro-differences to attend Hearings, court and participate in the Hearings process more generally. The Champions will ensure that sensory tools, visual information guides and other aids to support people with neuro-differences are available and actively promoted within all our Hearing centres. We now have 20 trained Neurodiversity Champions across SCRA. Another focus of the disability work is cancer. There are over 200 different types of cancer and, sadly, it will affect many of us during our lifetimes either directly, or supporting a family member, friend or colleague. As an ageing workforce, cancer is, unfortunately, not uncommon amongst SCRA's workforce.

2.11 Whilst SCRA is not a named public body in respect of the Fairer Scotland Duty, we have, for some time now, committed to the Duty. The Fairer Scotland Duty is included in our holistic Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment process, alongside consideration of Island and remote communities impact. To further embed our commitment to the Duty, we have convened a Fairer Scotland Group, which includes a member of SCRA's Executive Management Team. The group have agreed that they will focus on the impact of socio-economic disadvantage (of resource, opportunity and aspiration) on the children and families we work with, and on our service delivery. This work will involve strategic and operational activity to better understand the impact of poverty on children and their families and in how we make poverty-aware decisions in discharging our statutory decision-making function. This work will sit well alongside the proposed expansion of the role of the Reporter from the Hearings System Working Group report.

2.12 We are actively recruiting to our previously energetic and enthusiastic LGBT Group. SCRA achieved the LGBT Youth Charter Foundation Award in 2019 which expires at the end of 2023. We are currently assessing the steps required to retain the award beyond this date and will consider how best to make further progress. We will focus activity on transgender and non-binary issues during 22/23. Gender reassignment, gender identity and transgender issues is an area of significant political and public focus and interest. It is also an increasingly arising issue in SCRA, particularly in how we should respond to a trans child or young person. As at 31st January 2023, we have no employees who reported that they are transgender. However, 0.4% preferred not to say and 76% did not

disclose this information. As such, there could be some SCRA employees who do not identify as the sex they were assigned at birth and do not want to disclose this. We do not have data on how many children we work with who may be transgender, although we have notes on 297 children's files that suggest they may be transgender (e.g. a note to use a different name or different pronouns than those aligned to their sex assigned at birth). We are seeking to provide training around trans awareness over the coming year, as well as re-energise the LGBT Group.

2.13 SCRA has, for some time now, had a significant focus on mental health and well-being. This includes becoming a trauma informed organisation through our Trauma Training Programme which will continue to develop through working with our colleagues in NES. We recognise that any of us could go through a period where we struggle with our physical and emotional health. 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 to ensure that no one is made to feel isolated or alone for experiencing mental ill-health. We want everyone who works at SCRA to feel they can be open about their mental health and ask for support if they need it. SCRA has an active Mental Wealth Group that continues to promote mental health awareness and is working towards ensuring SCRA meets the Mental Health at Work Standards. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on individual and collective well-being of our workforce and continues to be felt, now compounded by the current cost-of-living crisis. Furthermore, as a result of national policy and legislative changes there is, and will remain for some time, significant change in SCRA and the wider policy and political landscape in which we work. Change is often uncomfortable for people and can impact their well-being and so we remain committed to ensuring the emotional well-being of all our colleagues to support them through this period of change and recovery. To further enable us to support as many of our colleagues as possible, in partnership with UNISON, we have trained an additional 17 colleagues in Scotland's Mental Health First Aid in 2022-2023; and we now have a total of 24 Mental Health First Aiders, spread across SCRA. We are committed to training even more Mental Health First Aiders in 2023-2024.

2.14 In June 2022 we participated in enei's annual TIDE (Talent Inclusion & Diversity Evaluation) benchmarking exercise – an exercise that focussed solely on the prior 12 months activity. TIDE is enei's self-assessment and benchmarking tool which measures an organisation's approach and progress on diversity and inclusion over the following areas: workforce; strategy and planning; leadership and accountability; recruitment and attraction; training and development; other employment practices; communication and engagement; and procurement. TIDE enables us to identify our inclusion and diversity strengths and areas for improvement which are then used when planning our programme of work. Organisations who participate in TIDE are benchmarked against other organisations TIDE entries in that year. SCRA achieved a Silver TIDEmark Award when benchmarked against other organisations in 2022, an improvement on our Bronze Award in 2021. We will seek to continue our good progress in this area.

2.15 Ensuring completion of mandatory inclusion and diversity training has been a focus in early 2023. SCRA now has three mandatory e-learning courses that all staff are required to complete. This includes the two previously mandatory courses 'Bullying, Harassment & Victimisation' and 'Unconscious Bias', and a new mandatory course 'Diversity, Equality & Discrimination'. Managers have been asked to ensure all staff have completed all three courses by end June 2023. These courses are also part of induction for new members of staff. We also have access to additional equality, diversity and inclusion topical e-learning courses which focus on specific equalities related issues pertaining to specific protected characteristics. We encourage managers to use these resources to address specific issues or areas of concern that may arise locally, such as age discrimination and disability discrimination. In addition, we will be developing local training using enei's bitesize modules for different protected characteristics. We will consider how best to use our Inclusion Ambassadors and Locality EDI leads in delivering this training.

3. Proposed Inclusion and Diversity Priorities 2023-2024

3.1 As with elsewhere across the business some actions from the Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan 22-23 are carried forward into 23-24. In some sense, as we emerge from the pandemic period, the period 23-24 is, a 're-set' period to enable us to achieve some of the actions that were deferred as a result of resource and operational pressure. The Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan 23-24 was agreed at the Inclusion and Diversity Steering Group meeting on 23rd May 2023.

3.2 The Inclusion and Diversity Steering Group, chaired by Susan Deery, Head of HR, will continue to meet quarterly throughout 22-23. Children's Hearings Scotland are also represented on the group in recognition of the alignment between the two organisations. In 23-24 SCRA and CHS are going to meet regularly to ensure alignment in our inclusion and diversity objectives and activity.

3.3 We believe that mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion is a journey of continuous improvement and culture change. Awareness raising and understanding inequality across and between the protected characteristics is only part of the journey; the other part is in embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in our ways of working, rather than seeing it as a specialised 'add on'. By embedding our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion in our Rights, Inclusion and Corporate Parenting Strategy, we are providing a foundation upon which all organisational strategy and plans are built, thus ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion is considered across and within everything we do. Mainstreaming is further achieved by (in addition to the topical equality, diversity and inclusion work) embedding a robust and impactful approach to Equality Impact Assessment, through delivering consistent mandatory training and embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in our localities to ensure it is a local priority, as well as a strategic one. As such, we will have a continued focus throughout 23-24 and beyond on:

- Training and awareness raising of our EHRIA process to empower colleagues to be able to identify when an EHRIA is required and complete them fully and timeously;
- The development of a risk reporting framework to manage organisational risk in relation to EHRIA;
- Ensuring colleagues have completed the mandatory e-learning, and ensuring managers are aware of its importance, and promoting the use of topical e-learning amongst managers;
- Developing and expanding our Locality EDI Lead Network; and,
- Improving the recording of equality data – both of our staff and of children we work with. Our colleagues equality data is entirely self-reported on our HR system, iTrent, and many colleagues do not wish to disclose their information. We will work to raise awareness of why it is so important for us to have this data in terms of planning and resourcing work that is as impactful as possible to our colleagues. The recording of children's equality data on our case processing system, CSAS, is more complex. Much of the information we have is provided by partner organisations (usually social work, education, police and health) and is not provided by children themselves. We will be working over the course of the coming year and beyond to ensure national consistency in the recording of this information, ensuring its accuracy and checking regularly to ensure it is up-to-date. By improving our data, we will be better able to establish whether the children we work with are reflective of the population (and where any differences may be), identify areas of inequality and also identify trends and patterns in outcomes between and within the protected characteristics.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

4.1 The period 23-24 will be a 're-set' year, yet SCRA's Inclusion and Diversity Steering Group have set another impactful programme of work for the forthcoming year, with a focus on achieving real and tangible improvements to enable us to encourage good practice and focus on actions from previous years that we had to defer.

4.2 Two main areas of significant focus will be on staff training and awareness and improving the recording of equality data – for both children coming to Hearings and our workforce – to enable us to better implement change that will have a positive impact on our staff and responds to the individual needs of the children and families we work with. To ensure highest impact and good use of resources, this will ensure that our work is evidence-driven and needs-based.

4.3 It is recommended that the Board:

1. To consider the Inclusion and Diversity Annual Report and associated programme of work.

2. To note the publication of SCRA's Equalities Mainstreaming Report 2022-2023 in line with The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 as amended.

3. To note updates on key inclusion and diversity activity.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Mainstreaming Report 2022-23

Foreword

Welcome to our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Mainstreaming Report for 2022/2023. This is our annual update reporting on our work to strengthen and embed equalities, inclusion and diversity across our organisation.

At SCRA, we are fully committed to the vision, values, and ethos of the Equality Act 2010, however, it is not just about legislation - as I hope our report will demonstrate. It is about ensuring we remain an inclusive organisation based on fairness, equality, cultural diversity, dignity and respect.

Putting the needs of children and young people is at the heart of what we do every day. SCRA firmly recognises care experience as a 'tenth' protected characteristic and we continue to review our practice, polices and processes to reflect this and we remain committed to supporting the campaign to have care experience recognised. Furthermore, we are committed to the Fairer Scotland Duty whereby we will look to identify and address socio economic disadvantage – both of resource and opportunity – to support our workforce, and also the children and families we work with and communities we serve.

Although we - as with many public sector organisations - continue to recover from the global pandemic, the past 12 months has witnessed a host of inclusion and diversity activity across the organisation. From work at national level, to the growing activity in our Localities to ensure inclusion and diversity is fully embedded in every aspect of SCRA.

In fact, a significant focus of the inclusion and diversity work in 2022/2023 has been in supporting our operational Localities to mainstream inclusion and diversity at a local level. We now have at least one specific Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead for each of our nine Localities. There has been amazing support from colleagues and we anticipate this work will develop further in the year ahead.

Over the past few years, we have certainly been on an equalities journey to become a more inclusive and diverse employer and organisation. We hope this report demonstrates our commitment to this, but we know there is more work to be done.

We have pledged to doing more to ensure we better represent the communities we serve, through more targeted and bespoke approaches to recruitment and selection, with a specific focus on increasing the number of applicants who are disabled and/or from a minority ethnic background. We are also committed to addressing our Gender Pay Gap through positive action and our Women into Leadership Network.

As we look ahead to publication of the Hearings System Working Group report later this spring, we know there will be a renewed focus – quite rightly – on inclusion and rights in the Children's Hearings System. We are excited to see what this brings and we look forward to working with our partners to Keep The Promise and further strengthen and develop our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

We hope that this Mainstreaming Report not only highlights the significant amount of work

that has happened over the past year, but also reflects our commitment, our passion and our determination. Equality and inclusion matters in SCRA.

Thank you for taking the time to read our report. If you have any questions or comments, please get in touch. We would love to hear from you.

Neil Hunter
Principal Reporter/Chief Executive

Contents

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

In addition, SCRA is committed to complying with the Public Sector Equality Duties to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

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, polices and processes to reflect this.

This report:

- Builds on our previous Mainstreaming Reports and our Rights, Inclusion & Corporate Parenting Report Card 2021-2022 to provide an overview of key achievements and mainstreaming progress made within SCRA since their publication.

- Provides detail of our progress in relation to our Equality Outcomes 2020-23 and our work to promote equality, diversity and inclusion with our staff, partners and the children, young people and their families whom we serve.

2. About SCRA

The Children's Reporter sits at the heart of Children's Hearings, 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 make critical decisions on the lives of children facing adversity and trauma such as: physical and emotional neglect; domestic abuse; parental substance misuse; mental health concerns; the physical, sexual and emotional abuse of children; children disengaged in education; and children at risk of offending.

Our core role includes:

- 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.
- 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. We are supportive, child-centred; respectful and accountable.

3. Why Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Matters

Equality, diversity and inclusion is about culture. In SCRA we are clear that this is a journey with no end, and we are continually evolving and learning. This journey is one of leadership, change and continuous quality improvement. We aspire to actively value our unique differences and grasp this to promote equality, understand equity, encourages diversity and nurtures inclusion.

What does being inclusive mean for everyone in SCRA?

- We can all be ourselves at work.
- We have the best people from a wide range of backgrounds.
- We understand, respect and value each other's differences.
- We are motivated and passionate about doing our best.
- We encourage creativity and innovation.
- We behave and lead in an inclusive way.
- We can raise ideas and challenge one another in a respectful way
- We value everybody's contribution and experiences.

Getting inclusion and diversity right not only makes SCRA a great place to work, it also means that we are delivering the best possible service to children and their families – that is accessible to all, meets their individual needs and upholds their rights.

Our Commitment

SCRA aspires to be an industry leader in our behaviours, attitudes and approach to equality, diversity and inclusion where we go beyond our legal and statutory duties. We are passionate about equality, diversity and inclusion and recognise it is our collective responsibility to achieve our aspirations.

SCRA is committed to embodying and promoting the ethos and practice of equality, diversity and inclusion in all its service delivery, operations, practices, processes and policies whether pertaining to the workforce, partner agencies or children and families. 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.

SCRA is committed to eliminating discrimination and encouraging diversity amongst our workforce and throughout all of our working practices. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination. We aspire to being an SCRA that embraces, acknowledges and is representative of all sections of society; promoting equality, tolerance and respect so that everyone is able to achieve their potential.

4. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion: Mainstreaming

Mainstreaming is a specific requirement for public bodies in implementing the Equality Duty. It means integrating equality into our day to day working and considering equality in everything we do. Mainstreaming the Equality Duty has a number of benefits including:

- Equality becomes part of the structures, behaviours and culture;
- SCRA knows, and can demonstrate, how in carrying out its functions it promotes equality; and,
- Mainstreaming equality contributes to continuous improvement, improved performance and a better experience for those attending Children's Hearings.

In Scotland, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 (and subsequent updates) ("the Regulations") impose **specific** duties.

Specific Duties: Mainstreaming Equality

In Scotland, the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 (and subsequent updates) are designed to help public authorities like SCRA meet the general Equality 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, or be published alongside, information on:

- Progress 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; and,
- Information on the gender composition of SCRA's Board of Governance, and the steps taken or planned towards ensuring diversity in relation to the protected characteristics of SCRA's Board members.

Our reporting history

SCRA reports annually on progress to achieve equality, diversity and inclusion. We have published our Equality Outcomes and a report on progress in mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion since 2013. Our current Equality Outcomes cover 2020-2023.

Equality Outcomes 2020-2023

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.
   i. Our staff will continue to treat all children, young people and their families with dignity and respect.
   ii. Our services will be procured, designed, shaped and delivered to meet the needs of children, young people and their families.
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.
   i. Our leaders will foster a culture where our people feel included, valued, respected and cared for.
   ii. Our staff will feel supported, respected and cared for.
3. We will actively tackle under-representation and create a workforce that better reflects the diversity of the communities we serve.
   i. We will make our workforce more diverse through our recruitment and selection processes.

Realigning Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Over the past three years, significant change has taken place in SCRA, not just in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, but also in response to the wider policy and legislative landscape, such as UNCRC incorporation and The Promise. This external and internal change has necessitated a different approach to how SCRA thinks about and 'does' equality, equity, diversity and inclusion; and where it 'sits' within the organisation.

In 2021, SCRA's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy was integrated within our new holistic Rights, Inclusion & Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-23. This strategy recognises the intrinsic and inextricable link between our statutory – and moral – duties for human rights, equalities and inclusion and corporate parenting. The Rights, Inclusion & Corporate Parenting Strategy is, alongside a reform work stream, the key delivery mechanism for SCRA to Keep The Promise. This approach ensures that equality, equity, diversity and inclusion sits at the very heart of the work we are doing to Keep The Promise, as well as our business-as-usual activity. Progress across SCRA's work around rights, inclusion and corporate parenting is reported annually in our accessible Rights, Inclusion & Corporate Parenting Year Report Card, which first reported in 2022 (covering the year 2021-2022).

Our Equality Outcomes (see Figure 1) are now aligned with SCRA's corporate aims of care, connect and protect, which are themselves aligned to the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework (or National Outcomes) which are Scotland's localisation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's). This Framework – like the SDG's – focus on tackling inequality to ensure a fairer Scotland for all, irrespective of background or identity. Aligning our Equality Outcomes in this way ensures that SCRA, as a public body, plays its part in contributing towards national and international goals in relation to inequality and sustainability.

Figure 1:

Scottish Government National Outcomes	Children and Young People	Fair Work and Business	Communities	Culture	Education	Environment	Health	Poverty	Human Rights

Our Vision
Children and young people will be listened to, protected and supported to have 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 possible of the Children's Hearings System.

Our 2020-24 Corporate Aims

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 and 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.

Our Equalities Outcomes

OUTCOME 1: Children and 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.

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.

OUTCOME 3: We will actively tackle under-representation and create a workforce that better reflects the diversity of the communities we serve.

Our Values
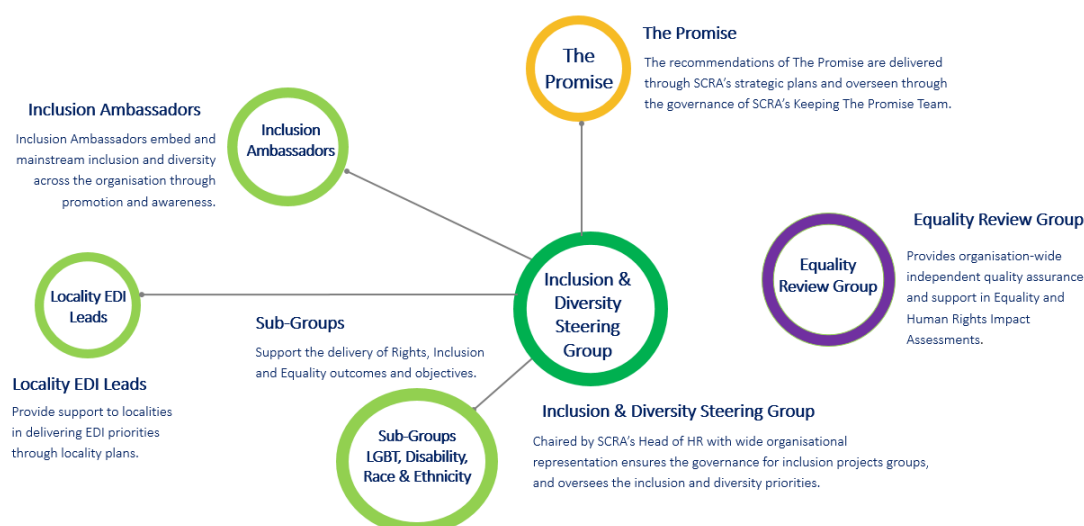Supportive   Child Centred   Respectful   Accountable

This report provides an update on our achievements and progress in relation to the equality, diversity and inclusion part of our Rights, Inclusion & Corporate Parenting Strategy 2021-2023 and our Equality Outcomes 2020-2023. It highlights how we continue to embed equality, diversity and inclusion in everything we do.

Leadership & Governance

SCRA's inclusion and diversity work is overseen by an Inclusion & Diversity Steering Group, chaired by the Head of HR, which takes a strategic overview of equality, equity, diversity and inclusion as it aligns with the Rights, Inclusion & Corporate Parenting Strategy. The programme of work is led and managed by SCRA's Inclusion & Diversity Manager, who is supported by topical inclusion and diversity groups: our LGBT Group, Disability Group, Race & Ethnicity Group and the new Locality Equality Lead Network and Fairer Scotland Group; as well as a network of 38 Inclusion Ambassadors from varying locations and roles throughout SCRA who continually champion our inclusion and diversity across the organisation.

Figure 2:

SCRA Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Structure

The Promise
The recommendations of The Promise are delivered through SCRA's strategic plans and overseen through the governance of SCRA's Keeping The Promise Team.

Inclusion Ambassadors
Inclusion Ambassadors embed and mainstream inclusion and diversity across the organisation through promotion and awareness.

Equality Review Group
Provides organisation-wide independent quality assurance and support in Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments.

Sub-Groups
Support the delivery of Rights, Inclusion and Equality outcomes and objectives.

Locality EDI Leads
Provide support to localities in delivering EDI priorities through locality plans.

Inclusion & Diversity Steering Group
Chaired by SCRA's Head of HR with wide organisational representation ensures the governance for inclusion projects groups, and oversees the inclusion and diversity priorities.

SCRA's approach to inclusion and diversity is that equality and equity is not just one person's or one group's job; it is the responsibility of all of us – it has, and should always be, a collective effort. True equality requires an equitable approach and that requires culture change and a recognition of what we do well and where we need to improve. This takes time, and it takes an army of enthusiastic, dedicated and knowledgeable people with real passion, drive and enthusiasm. Work towards achieving SCRA's Equality Outcomes takes place across many different groups, teams and plans – and the structure of the inclusion and diversity work in SCRA reflects that. To achieve our Equality Outcomes requires dedication and commitment, and SCRA acknowledges this in its support for staff from across the organisation to have the time and space to do this incredibly valuable work.

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. SCRA also works in partnership with the recognised trade union UNISON, as set in our National Partnership Agreement and, as such, involves UNISON in decision-making and respects the right of UNISON to engage in legal industrial action. SCRA also continues to employ Modern Apprentices.

As an employer we have always committed to flexible working wherever possible and our strategic well-being approach underlines our commitment to all staff achieving a positive and healthy working life. In SCRA we have approximately 120 different working patterns which evidences our flexibility and inclusivity. The response to the COVID-19 pandemic saw significant impacts on our ways of working and saw our people working from home in a much more flexible way than before. This approach to work has, and will, continue to be the norm in SCRA through our Agile Working Policy.

Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment

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 – and we welcome this as a mechanism to continually improve our service delivery, working environment and workforce diversity.

Meaningful and timely completion of impact assessment for all new/revised policies, processes and procedures ensures that we consider equalities impact when we embark on any change – and thinking in this way as we work encourages us to think broadly about the impact of what we do and how we do it. In time, this way of thinking will become the norm and not something we have to actively engage in. We are also mindful that the general duties of the Equality Act 2010 require us to continually assess the impact of everything we do in relation to the protected characteristics. Our approach to impact assessment embraces that duty.

Our Equality & Human Rights Impact Assessment (EHRIA) is a holistic approach to the development/revision of our policies, processes and procedures ensures the promotion and safeguarding of the rights of the child (UNCRC), the protection of parents' rights (ECHR) and our legislative responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty. In addition, it ensures we consider the socio-economic implications (the Fairer Scotland Duty) in all that we do, so that we do not discriminate based on socio-economic status and that the impact of poverty (financial and opportunity) is minimised in our service delivery and working policies and practices. To provide oversight, governance and quality assurance to our EHRIA process, we have an Equality Review Group. In 2023, the Equality Review Group comprises 12 staff from across the organisation. The remit of this group is to review all the EHRIAs submitted to ensure all equalities and human rights impacts have been adequately considered and negative impacts mitigated.

A significant focus throughout 2022-2023 has been on further developing and refining the EHRIA approach. We have continued to raise awareness and promote SCRA's EHRIA process to staff. Throughout the year we have worked to proactively manage impact assessment. Impact assessment continues to be resource intensive, however, it is a statutory duty and is both an effective and efficient way of mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion at both strategic and local level, with training and guidance provided to staff. SCRA's integrated and holistic approach to impact assessment has seen significant interest from a number of other public bodies.

In the reporting period, 22 EHRIA's were completed covering strategic and locality work and also our Keeping The Promise project work. The outcomes of all EHRIAs are published on SCRA's internal intranet Connect and are publicly available on our website www.scra.gov.uk.

Embedding Equality, Diversity & Inclusion in Corporate Planning

A strong strategic approach to inclusion and diversity is required to fully embed and mainstream equality, diversity and inclusion. By embedding equality, diversity and inclusion into SCRA's integrated Rights, Inclusion & Corporate Parenting Strategy – which is a foundation strategy upon which all of SCRA's organisational planning is built on – we ensure

that equality, equity, diversity and inclusion sit at the heart of *everything* we do, now and in the future.

Additionally, SCRA's Inclusion & Diversity Manager and Planning & Performance Manager continue to work together to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion is included in all corporate planning – strategic and operational, national and local.

Embedding Equality, Diversity & Inclusion in Localities

Throughout 2022-2023 a significant focus of the inclusion and diversity work has been in supporting Localities to mainstream inclusion and diversity at a local level. We now have at least one specific EDI Lead for each Locality. To support this group of geographically diverse colleagues, we created a Locality EDI Lead Network. This Network is hosted on MS Teams and enables all Locality EDI Leads to share questions, good practice, ideas and get peer support or advice and guidance from SCRA's Inclusion & Diversity Manager, as well as being a mechanism to promoting inclusion and diversity opportunities and training.

The Network ensures that strategic national inclusion and diversity priorities are communicated and discussed within Localities, but that Localities can identify areas of local inclusion and diversity work to 'feed up' into the national programme. This top down, bottom up approach to inclusion and diversity ensures that strategic priorities and local needs remain at the forefront of our inclusion and diversity work, in effect providing a feedback loop from Localities to ensure our inclusion and diversity work is needs-based.

We have revised our locality planning process to ensure that our national equality, diversity and inclusion objectives are embedded locally and that progress continues to be reported and tracked by managers across SCRA. The Locality EDI Lead Network will be further enhanced in 2023-2024 by embedding national EDI priorities around training and impact assessment in Locality Plans as well as identifying areas of local need to influence the national programme of inclusion and diversity work.   A broader programme of training will also be considered in 2023-24 ensuring that all staff have an awareness of what is expected of them working in SCRA.

5. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion: Achievements & Progress

This section will outline the progress SCRA has made on achieving its Equality Outcomes 2020-2023 and presents all activity pertaining to equality, diversity and inclusion since 1 April 2022.

Despite the challenges and pace of change over the past few years, we continue to make significant progress in embedding and mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion in all aspects of our service and our workplace. Our specific actions and achievements during 2022-2023 reflect our commitment and demonstrate the significant breadth and volume of work that has been undertaken in 2022-2023 to progress our equality, diversity and inclusion ambitions.

To ensure continuous improvement and learning and encourage the use and sharing of good practice, we remain members of the Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion (enei) and the NDPB Equalities Forum. We are also represented in the First Minister's National Advisory Council on Women and Girls, the Cross-Justice Working Group on Race Data & Evidence and the Scottish Government's BSL-led Justice Advisory Group.

Improving Equality Data

Recording and monitoring equality data is important, not just for data's sake, but to aid organisational and corporate planning. Equality data helps us to better understand the needs of the people we work with and for and provides us with an evidence-base for implementing and measuring change and improvement. Without it, we would not know how or where to target our action and resource. As a public sector organisation we have a finite budget, and robust equality data helps us to spend that budget in the most impactful way.

Equality Data: Service Delivery

SCRA rolled out a new computer system – Core Systems and Applications Solution (CSAS) – at the end of 2020. CSAS has fields to collect the protected characteristic information for children referred to SCRA to ensure that we provide a sensitive needs-based service to all. These include: age; sex; gender identity; disability; race/ethnicity; and religion/faith. The recording options are those set by the Census with the view that as recording across the protected characteristics improves, SCRA will have robust data on the children referred to the Reporter and those that attend Hearings which will be comparable to the wider Scottish population.

To improve the recording of children's equality data on CSAS a project is underway. This is still in its infancy and guidance for staff will be provided in 2023-2024 on what information to record, our responsibilities to ensure the information recorded is correct and the importance of recording this information in terms of service delivery, service improvement and data improvement. The project will be piloted in two Locality areas (Ayrshire and South East) to

establish the best approach, prior to finalising the guidance and process to embed in our Target Operational Model and roll out nationally across SCRA. It is hoped that we will have robust reportable data within five years.

Equality Data: Workforce

Our Employee Information Statistics Report 2023 shows that we have 487 employees in SCRA (as at 31st January 2023)[1].

Our annual Equalities Monitoring Campaign 'Free To Be Me' was launched on the International Day of Tolerance on 16th November 2022 and ran until International Human Rights Day on 10th December 2022. Equalities monitoring of our workforce helps us to:

- Better understand our workforce demographics and where we should concentrate action and resource to better support and respond to our colleagues' needs;
- Measure the diversity of our workforce, and how that compares to the Scottish population (and areas where we need to improve diversity);
- Explore any trends and whether actual or potential disadvantage or discrimination exist;
- Inform policy, decision-making and make improvements through our inclusion and diversity programmes and action plans;
- Provide targeted information, support and positive action initiatives (e.g. menopause awareness and resources, mental health initiatives, etc);
- Comply with the law in protecting our people from discrimination, victimisation and harassment at work; and,
- Measure and report progress in meeting our Equality Outcomes and to inform impact assessments.

Staff Survey

We conducted our annual staff survey in November 2022. Our staff survey provides a key metric of employees' views on what it is like to work for the organisation, and normally covers a range of diverse topics such as communication, learning and development, managing change, our organisational objectives and equality, diversity and inclusion.

Our 2022 staff survey found that:
- 96% of staff understand their individual responsibility for inclusion and diversity and how this relates to their role;
- 88% of staff think that SCRA is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion;
- 85% of staff know how and where to report a concern about discrimination or harassment;
- 80% of staff feel included and respected in SCRA;
- 80% of staff think that SCRA respects individual differences (e.g. cultures, working styles, backgrounds, ideas, etc);
- 80% of staff think that their line manager demonstrates a commitment to and support for inclusion and diversity; and,

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[1] Our Employee Information Statistics 2023 report is available on our website www.scra.gov.uk

- 68% of staff feel that SCRA provides an environment for free and open expression of ideas, opinions and beliefs.

The results of the staff survey are broadly positive in terms of our inclusion and diversity work, and people's understanding of their responsibilities, their managers responsibilities and SCRA's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion. That said, there is always room for improvement and we acknowledge that, whilst a majority, 68% of staff feel that their working environment is conducive to free and open expression of ideas, opinions and beliefs is lower than we would like, and lower in comparison to the other inclusion and diversity metrics in the survey. This will be an area of focus over the coming years.

Core Corporate Activity

Whilst some equality, diversity and inclusion work is specifically labelled and promoted as such, some of SCRA's core business-as-usual activity also contributes towards equality, diversity and inclusion mainstreaming. By embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in our business-as-usual activity we will, similarly to impact assessment, begin to naturally consider it and it will become part of our collective psyche and not something with which we have to actively engage.

Policies & Procedures

We have a comprehensive package of polices and guidance that promote mainstream equality and inclusion across SCRA. We have an established audit process to ensure that our polices are up to date and 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 experience or socio-economic background. Our policies and guidance support us to achieve that. In the reporting period, we reviewed the following:
- Managing Fixed Term Workers Policy;
- Career Break Policy;
- Standby Policy;
- Volunteering Policy;
- Agile Working Policy;
- Probationary Policy;
- Learning & Development Policy;
- Recognition of Prior Learning Policy;
- Inclusive Standards & Behaviours Framework (new policy); and,
- Right to Disconnect Policy (new policy).

Training

SCRA has three mandatory equality, diversity and inclusion e-learning courses for all staff. The courses 'Bullying, Harassment & Victimisation' and 'Unconscious Bias' were previously mandatory, and, in January 2023, we introduced a new mandatory e-learning 'Diversity, Equality & Discrimination'. These courses are also part of induction for new members of staff.

We also have access to additional equality, diversity and inclusion topical e-learning courses which focus on specific equalities related issues pertaining to the protected characteristics. We encourage managers to use these resources to address specific issues or areas of concern that may arise locally, such as age discrimination and disability discrimination.

Property

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 identify potential improvements to improve accessibility for staff and children and families who attend Children's Hearings. In addition, we have now have Visual Information Guides for 19 of our Hearing Centres available on our website to help people coming to Hearings.

As part of our corporate parenting duties and our ongoing commitment to improving Hearing rooms for children, we continue to roll out a Hearing Room Improvement Programme to upgrade facilities for children attending Hearings. During the reporting period and building upon our existing property portfolio improvements, the following upgrades were undertaken in 2022-2023: Stirling, Hamilton; Stranraer; Tranent; and Fraserburgh. We have also done some additional improvement works to our Alloa Hearing Centre and we have started the upgrade to our Hearing Centre in Elgin. The focus of these works are to improve the experience for children and families coming to Hearings and to better enable them to participate in a more accessible and child-friendly environment. A programme of property improvement for staff workspaces is also underway.

Fairer Scotland Duty: Socio-economic Equality

The importance of the Fairer Scotland Duty has never been more significant in light of COVID-19 and the current cost-of-living crisis. 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, 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. SCRA is not currently listed as a public authority that is required to report on the Fairer Scotland Duty, however, we consider the understanding of the impact of socio-economic disadvantage and inequality to be integral to everything we do and have been committed to the Duty since it was introduced.

The response to COVID-19 necessitated a focus on the impact of socio-economic deprivation on digital poverty and the resultant digital divide. It has become increasingly clear that the link between poverty and digital exclusion is significant and inhibitive to participation. At a time where Children's Hearings were delivered virtually and staff were working predominantly from home, our understanding of and approaches to tackling the digital divide are of paramount importance in our aim to reduce inequality and ensure inclusive and participative practices, both for children and families and our workforce. As we continue our

journey of recovery from the pandemic, SCRA continues to offer virtual, as well as hybrid, Children's Hearings, in addition to traditional face-to-face Hearings and our approach is constantly being refined as we learn. In keeping with this more flexible approach to Hearings provision, we are able to provide a range of options for Hearings attendance to best suit individual children and family's needs, for example, where they live rurally to attend Hearings virtually, or for a child to attend a Hearing from school if they do not have the technology to do so from home.

In October 2022, to mark Challenge Poverty Week, we launched our new Fairer Scotland Group which forms part of our wider inclusion and diversity programme of work. The aim of the group is to examine and consider how SCRA can tackle poverty (of resource and opportunity) for the children and families we work with, but also for our colleagues. As with all the other topical inclusion and diversity groups in SCRA, the Fairer Scotland Group will develop an annual Action Plan of activity to actively address the impact of socio-economic disadvantage.

Targeted Activity: Protected Characteristics

SCRA recognises that there are many aspects of our social and political identities that make us 'us', including things that are not covered by the Equality Act 2010, such as our upbringing, child and adulthood experiences, our education and our political beliefs. These aspects of our identity do not sit independently of one another and we understand that multiple forms of inequality often compound experiences of discrimination, and of privilege. As such, we take a rights-based intersectional and cross-sectional approach to equality, diversity and inclusion and recognise that there is overlap and interplay between the protected characteristics. Some key equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives and work in 2022-2023 cross the protected characteristics and are intersectional and, are therefore reported under the subheading of 'intersectional'. Our activities outlined in this section all serve to raise awareness, promote understanding and tolerance and foster good relations between those who have a protected characteristic and those who do not and, as such, fulfil part of our obligations under the general Equality Duty.

Age

SCRA has an ageing workforce. As at 31st January 2023, our workforce comprises of the following:
- 16-24 years: 2.5%
- 25-34 years: 13.1%
- 35-44 years: 24%
- 45-54 years: 30.6%
- 55-64 years: 28.1%
- 65+ years: 1.6%

Whilst age in and of itself has not been the focus of targeted activity during the reporting period, issues pertaining to age have been of significant focus throughout the year, such as menopause. Given SCRA work for children, much of our activity also focusses on children and

young people. Whilst age-related these activities have been reported under other protected characteristics.

Disability

In 2016, SCRA became a Disability Confident Employer, which has been further accredited until 2026. 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 Employee Information Statistics show that, as at 31st January 2023, just 5.1% of our employees reported having a disability. For comparison, around one fifth of Scotland's population considers themselves to have a disability. Given the wide variety of potential disabilities, we anticipated that this figure is under-reported as a result of a lack of awareness of what constitutes a disability under the Equality Act 2010 which is "a long-standing health condition that limits daily activity". This includes diagnoses of neurodiversity, enduring and recurring mental ill-health and critical illness, which some of our colleagues may not be aware of. We do not have accurate data on how many children we work with who have a disability or disabilities.

During Deaf Awareness Week in May 2022 we launched Deaf Awareness and BSL e-learning and our guidance 'Deaf Awareness and Communication Tips' to promote better understanding of deafness and BSL. We also shared two bitesize films made by someone who is deaf which demonstrate the importance of deaf awareness and challenged misconceptions around being deaf and what it is like being deaf in a hearing world. In September 2022, to mark the International Week of the Deaf, we offered 12 colleagues the opportunity to study a six-week BSL Taster Course, promoted our Deaf Awareness and BSL e-learning and launched a BSL version of our 'How to Complain Guide'. A further 12 colleagues began the BSL Taster Course in March 2023 during Sign Language Week.

In September 2022 – Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Awareness Month – we encouraged our colleagues to learn about FASD and the impact that it has on people's lives. FASD is a 'hidden' disability and we shared a range of resources with colleagues, including factsheets and videos co-produced with people with lived experience of FASD and their families, encouraged our colleagues to access training and launched a dedicated FASD page on our intranet. In January and February 2023, we hosted sessions with the FASD Hub Scotland team (part of Adoption UK) to raise awareness of FASD, including the basis and a Q&A with members of the team with lived experience of FASD.

The Independent Care Review told us that many of the children attending Hearings have a known speech, language and communication issues and that there is an over-representation of children with additional support needs. To ensure a child can fully participate in the Hearings process we need to ensure that they are provided with all the support they need. In October 2022, the Speech, Language and Communication Needs subgroup of the Children's Rights Implementation Group hosted a webinar on 'Upholding children's rights in the context of communication needs' which we encouraged our colleagues to attend to provide them with a starting point to improve their knowledge and skills in relation to speech, language and communication needs.

We have continued our commitment to supporting children and young people who have neuro-differences. To promote Dyslexia Awareness Week and ADHD Awareness Month in October 2022, one of our colleagues shared her experience with ADHD and dyslexia. In November 2022 we launched a pilot of our 'Autism Alert card' in two of our hearing centres which was developed following direct engagement with autistic young people. We will evaluate the findings of the pilot and consider whether this should be rolled out across our hearing centres. We have also recently partnered with Salveson Mindroom, a charity that champions all forms of neurodiversity and supports all kinds of minds, to launch a Neurodiversity Champions Network. The Champions will help raise awareness of neurodiversity within the organisation through providing training and awareness raising to staff. It will also provide advice and guidance to colleagues who are supporting people who have neuro-differences to attend Hearings, court and participate in the Hearings process more generally. The Champions will ensure that sensory tools, visual information guides and other aids to support people with neuro-differences are available and actively promoted within all our Hearing centres. In addition, the Network will provide a feedback loop to SCRA's wider Inclusion & Diversity Steering Group on matters relating to neurodiversity. As part of this work we hosted two webinars for staff in March 2023 to learn more about the 'History of Neurodiversity' and to provide them with 'An Introduction to Neurodiversity'. This will provide a basis from which the Neurodiversity Champions will work to increase awareness.

There are over 200 different types of cancer and, sadly, it will affect many of us during our lifetimes either directly, or supporting a family member, friend or colleague. As an ageing workforce, cancer is, unfortunately, not uncommon amongst our colleagues. During October, to mark Breast Cancer Awareness Month, we promoted the annual campaign run by Breast Cancer UK to raise awareness of breast cancer – which can affect women, men, transgender and non-binary people – and highlighted the main symptoms of breast cancer and encouraged our colleagues to sign up to various webinars and events being held by external organisations. November is Mouth Cancer Action Month and we launched and promoted a new information page on our intranet to help our colleagues identify the symptoms of mouth cancer and bringing together information and resources provided by experts such as the Oral Health Foundation.

The impact of disability on our workforce goes beyond just disabilities that we, ourselves, have; also important to consider is the impact of disabilities that our family members and people close to us may have in terms of any caring responsibilities our colleagues may have. In May 2022, we encouraged staff to attend a virtual webinar with the Charity for Civil Servants which talked about the challenges faced by carers and the supports available to carers, both through the Charity but also from other organisations.

Gender reassignment

Gender reassignment, gender identity and transgender issues is an area of significant political and public focus and interest. It is also an increasingly arising issue in SCRA, particularly in how we should respond to a trans child or young person. As at 31st January 2023, we have no employees who reported that they are transgender. However, 0.4% preferred not to say and 76% did not disclose this information. As such, there *could* be some employees who do not

identify as the sex they were assigned at birth and do not want to disclose this. We do not have data on how many children we work with who may be transgender, although we have notes on 297 children's files that suggest they may be transgender (e.g. a note to use a different name or different pronouns that those aligned to their sex assigned at birth).

International Non-Binary People's Day in July 2022 we promoted a video where our Inclusion & Diversity Manager talks to a trans/non-binary young adult about their journey, experiences and the importance of getting pronouns and terminology right; and what to do if we make a mistake. We also highlighted our 'LGBT+ Inclusive Language Guide' to encourage colleagues to read to better understand the importance of LGBTQI+ inclusive language in how we communicate with each other, and with the children and families we work with. Transgender issues will remain a focus of our inclusion and diversity work in future.

Pregnancy, maternity & breastfeeding

SCRA is compliant with the legislation on pregnancy, maternity and breastfeeding including the Management of Health & Safety Regulations 1999, Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992, Employment Relations Act 2004 and the Equality Act 2010. As at 31st January 2023, 1.8% of our employees were either pregnant or on maternity leave at some point in the previous 12 months.

We have longstanding generous family friendly leave policies including: antenatal care leave; maternity leave; paternity leave; adoption leave; fertility leave; dependent care leave; parental leave; and parental bereavement leave. We are also a breastfeeding friendly workplace and organisation. Our 'New & Expectant Mothers Guidance' outlines what new and expectant mothers should expect from SCRA, including a pregnancy risk assessment and how SCRA can support them to continue breastfeeding on their return to work.

Race

In October 2022, we published our first Race Equality Action Plan 2021-2022, to mark Black History Month. The plan was produced by our Race & Ethnicity Group, which is chaired by our Principal Reporter/CEO to ensure it remains a strategic priority and has authority to tackle racial inequality and progress our ambitious race equality agenda and Action Plan. The Action Plan aimed to ensure we have a better understanding of the needs and experiences of our colleagues, children and families and that all children and families can engage with our services and our colleagues can work without fear of discrimination or misunderstanding.

SCRA is a predominantly white workforce. As at 31st January 2023, 65.5% of our employees reported their ethnicity as white[2], 2.5% as from another ethnic background[3] and 32% chose not to disclose their ethnicity. In 2011, the Census showed that around 4% of the Scottish population are of a minority ethnic background. We have used the Scottish Government's Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit to review our recruitment processes and identified areas of improvement from this benchmarking exercise. Improving the diversity of our workforce will remain a continued focus.

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[2] This includes British, English, Irish, Northern Irish, Scottish, Welsh and any other white background.
[3] This includes Chinese, Pakistani, any Asian background, any other mixed background and 'other'.

We do not have reliable data to understand the ethnic diversity of the children we work with, however, we are committed to improving our recording of children's ethnicity. Our Race Equality Action Plan 2022-2023 included an ambitious multi-year approach to improving our understanding of potential racial inequality in our service delivery and decision-making, taking a mixed method approach. Improving our data is the start of this work and we will, as the data improves, conduct case-sampling exercises and research projects to explore whether there is racial inequality in our decision-making, particularly in relation to the Reporter decision-making.

In recognition that we do not necessarily know the scale or impact of racial inequality in SCRA – for our colleagues, as well as children, families and partners – we are committed to listening and learning about the experiences, in SCRA but also Scottish society more generally. We will do this through a range of mechanisms and in January 2023 we hosted a Listening Circle with colleagues in our Glenrothes office which provided valuable insight into experiences and awareness of racism and racial inequality and we will take that learning to inform our race equality work going forward.

International Migrants Day was in December 2022. This is a day set aside by the UN to recognise the significant contribution that migration can bring to our society whilst also highlighting the challenges that migrants may face. To celebrate the contribution of migration, and the diversity it brings to what we do in SCRA and Scotland more generally, two of our colleagues shared their stories and the impact of their experiences of migration on their personal and professional lives. To further raise awareness of inequality in relation to migration, and to celebrate Race Equality Week in February 2023, we hosted a virtual 'Refugee Awareness Session' which explored the reality of the refugee situation and racial inequality in refugee aid. Our Inclusion & Diversity Manager spoke about the refugee situation in northern France and we were joined by the Scottish Refugee Council who provided clarity around terminology, the asylum process and the supports available for refugees in Scotland, including unaccompanied children. To further mark race Equality Week, we launched our 'Racism Guidance Note' to support our colleagues in identifying racism and challenging any racism they experience or witness. This compliments our 'Hate Crime Guidance Note', published in 2021 and demonstrates our zero tolerance approach to racism.

Religion & belief

As at 31st January 2023, 20.3% of our workforce reported that they had a religion or belief, 7.8% reported no religion or belief and 71.9% did not disclose this information. We do not have reliable data to understand the religion or belief of the children and families we work with.

We used Interfaith Week in November 2022 as an opportunity to promote understanding between different faiths, including those who hold no religious beliefs, to help strengthen interfaith relationships. We spoke to four colleagues about their religion and/or belief and shared their testimonials on how they practice their faith and the importance of their faith/beliefs on their lives – at home and at work. We shared five fascinating testimonials from a variety of faiths/beliefs: Christianity; Roman Catholic; Islam; Judaism; and agnosticism.

We will continue to celebrate a range of religious holidays throughout the year raising awareness around different faiths/beliefs.

Sex

In common with other 'care' focussed organisations, SCRA has a predominantly female[4] workforce: as at 31st January 2023, 88.7% of our workforce were women and 75% of our Board are women[5].

SCRA has one of the highest gender pay gaps in the public sector in Scotland, sitting at 23.80% (mean)/27.52% (median) in 2022. This is, however, the lowest pay gap in six years of reporting, with an overall reduction of 4.98% (mean)/1.73% (median) since 2017. We acknowledge the reductions are small and gradual and we are focussing on reducing this in every way possible including reviewing our recruitment and selection process and materials to ensure that women continue to apply for management posts – currently 57% of all senior managers (Grade F – G) are female - and also to encourage men to apply for non-management lower grade posts. In doing this we will use the Gender Decoder tool to identify any subtle gender bias in our language to ensure our adverts and job descriptions are unbiased and explore new opportunities for partnership working.

In celebration of International Men's Day in November 2022 – which focussed on men's mental health and well-being – we promoted the testimonials that some of our male colleagues shared in 2021 on the things they do to keep and stay well. We also highlighted the support offered by Andy's Man Club. In lieu of Blue Monday (16th January 2023), SCRA hosted a webinar for all staff, facilitated by Andy's Man Club. Andy's Man Club is a men's suicide prevention charity, offering free-to-attend peer-to-peer support groups across the UK and online. They aim to end the stigma surrounding men's mental health and help men through the power of connection and conversation.

To mark International Women's Day in March 2023, we promoted and encouraged our female colleagues – and allies – to attend a webinar hosted by the Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion (enei) focussing on 'Celebrating Women Leaders'. We also re-launched our Women into Leadership Network which had taken a hiatus during COVID-19 and subsequent recovery. We are now in a position to look at providing an exciting programme of work to support the development and leadership aspirations of women in SCRA.

In our Inclusion & Diversity Action Plan for 2022-2023, we committed to launching a Menopause Toolkit, in recognition that we have an ageing female workforce. To help us understand the impact of menopause amongst SCRA staff and to help us develop the toolkit and resources, we launched a Menopause Survey in August 2022 – we got 132 responses from our female colleagues, of which 99 were experiencing menopause or perimenopause symptoms including insomnia, brain fog, confusion, memory loss, hot flushes, anxiety, fatigue and feeling emotional. We used this information to develop our Menopause Toolkit, which we launched to mark Menopause Awareness Month in October 2022. This toolkit contains

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[4] This report refers to female/male colleagues, but this includes all people who identify as female/male.
[5] Further information is available in our Gender Representation on Public Boards 2023 report, published on our website www.scra.gov.uk

general information about the menopause, information for employers and managers and links to internal and external supports. We also hosted a menopause webinar (including one that was for men only) and shared some testimonials from colleagues who spoke candidly about their experiences with menstruation, perimenopause, menopause and endometriosis to raise awareness of the impact these issues can have on our lives and our work. We also hosted two mindfulness sessions focussing on anxiety in recognition that anxiety is a common symptom of menopause. We also hosted a virtual Menopause Café in November 2022, hosted by one of our Senior Operational Managers who led a discussion to promote the use of Menopause Cafés in localities and the impact of menopause and perimenopause on our people. In November 2022, we also hosted a webinar on pelvic floor health which was aimed at women of all ages and stages and covered why pelvic floor health is critical for all women. Finally, in March 2023, we hosted a webinar for colleagues on endometriosis to promote awareness and understanding of the condition, the symptoms associated with it, how to manage it and where to seek help and support.

Sexual orientation

As at 31st January 2023, 27.3% of our workforce reported that they are heterosexual, 2.1% reported that they are lesbian/gay/bisexual/other and 70.6% did not disclose this information. As such, we are unclear whether there is potentially a higher number of lesbian, gay, bisexual or other non-heterosexual people in our workforce.

SCRA received LGBT Youth Charter Foundation Award in 2019, which is due to expire at the end of 2023. Due to the diverse geographical spread of SCRA, obtaining the Bronze Award is not possible. We are committed to LGBTQI+ inclusion – for children, parents and our workforce – and will be working towards LGBT Youth Charter Foundation accreditation in 2023 through our newly reinvigorated LGBT Group which, unfortunately, had to be paused due to operational pressures in 2022.

Marriage/civil partnership

Marriage and civil partnership is a protected characteristic only in respect of the requirement to have due regards to the need to eliminate discrimination. In SCRA, as at 31st January 2023, 45% of our workforce reported they are married or in a civil partnership, 13.6% said they were single, 14.6% fall into an 'other' category[6] and 26.9% did not disclose their marital status. All of SCRA's policies apply equally to those who are married or in a civil partnership and those who are not.

Care experience

SCRA recognises equality for staff and children who have experience of the care system as a 'tenth' protected characteristic. As at 31st January 2023, 0.8% of our workforce report having care experience, 7.4% do not, 0.4% preferred not to say whether they had experience of care as a child and 91.4% did not disclose this information.

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[6] 'Other' includes: civil partnership dissolved, declared partnership, divorced, other, partner, surviving partner – civil partnership, widow

SCRA continues to value its Modern Apprenticeship Programme, which has been running since 2011, in providing not only the organisation with valuable care lived experience input but also in providing young people with care experience employment and training opportunities. To date, we have provided 14 Modern Apprenticeships to care experienced young people. In addition, we also run work experience programmes for people with experience of Children's Hearings and/or of being in care. In the reporting period we ran one work experience programme between from May to end July 2022.

Our Voice of Experience Reference Group – comprised of colleagues from across Scotland with a wide range of experiences of care, including fostering, adoption, being in care and as kinship carers – was formed in March 2022 and met regularly throughout 2022-2023 to identify areas of improvement for children and families attending Hearings. To celebrate Care Experience Week in October 2022, we provided an update to colleagues to share the work of the group, which included their first report of recommendations for improvements to our Executive Management Team and the Keeping The Promise Programme Board and an away day to further consider improvements needed to make the Hearings System – and the work of SCRA – care-experienced person friendly.

Intersectional

SCRA recognises that protected characteristics are not independent of one another and that we all have intersectional identities. SCRA's values sit at the heart of everything we do, irrespective of our job roles. Our intersectional identities are inextricably interlinked with our values and how these influence our behaviours. How we behave and the language we use, consciously and unconsciously, is what others see – and feel – and is an expression of our commitment to SCRA's core corporate values of being supportive, child-centred, respectful and accountable.

Throughout 2022-2023, we have been developing SCRA's new Inclusive Standards & Behaviours Framework. These sit alongside our Management Standards and other existing policies, such as the Code of Conduct and Dignity at Work Policy to better illustrate and describe the values and behaviours we expect all our colleagues to uphold and demonstrate at work. The Standards & Framework outlines how we can all, through our behaviours, language, attitudes and approaches, contribute to an inclusive SCRA which recognises the value of diversity and is consistent with SCRA's core corporate values. The six over-arching inclusive principles to inclusive standards and behaviours are:
- Working together – we will form effective, inclusive, psychologically safe and respectful partnerships and relationships with people, internally and externally, from a range of diverse backgrounds, sharing information, best practice, resources and support;
- Communicating & influencing – we communicate purpose and direction with clarity, integrity and enthusiasm while respecting the varied needs, beliefs and opinions of others;
- Developing self & others – we focus on continuous learning and development for ourselves, for others and for the organisation;

- Changing & improving – we will seek out opportunities to create effective change and harness innovation and creativity to ensure continuous improvement through our ways of working, including how we seek and provide feedback;
- Leadership & decision-making – we engage inclusively and supportively with others in delivering a shared vision by valuing our differences, ensuring fairness and opportunity for all. We use evidence and knowledge to support accurate, reliable and expert decision-making and the provision of advice carefully, ensuring we consider alternative options, implications and risks; and,
- Delivering a quality customer focussed service – we deliver our services for our people and the children and families with whom we work with professional excellence, expertise and efficiency, taking account of the diverse needs of everyone we work with. We provide exceptional and inclusive customer service internally and externally, with our partners as well as children and families.

The implementation of the Inclusive Standards & Behaviours Framework will continue throughout 2023-2024 and will inform our review of recruitment, supervision, succession planning and talent management and learning and development.

Embedding the importance of Health & Well-being

SCRA has a strategic aim to develop effective, confident and resilient staff through promoting high standards of health and well-being amongst its workforce. We recognise that any of us could go through a period where we struggle with our physical and emotional health. 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 to ensure that no one is made to feel isolated or alone for experiencing mental ill-health. We want everyone who works at SCRA to feel they can be open about their mental health and ask for support if they need it. SCRA has an active Mental Wealth Group that continues to promote mental health awareness and is working towards ensuring SCRA meets the Mental Health at Work Standards.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on individual and collective well-being of our workforce and continues to be felt, now compounded by the current cost-of-living crisis. Furthermore, as a result of national policy and legislative changes there is, and will remain for some time, significant change in SCRA and the wider policy and political landscape in which we work. Change is often uncomfortable for people and can impact their well-being and so we remain committed to ensuring the emotional well-being of all our colleagues to support them through this period of change and recovery. To further enable us to support as many of our colleagues as possible, in partnership with UNISON, we have trained an additional 17 colleagues in Scotland's Mental Health First Aid in 2022-2023; and we now have a total of 24 Mental Health First Aiders, spread across SCRA.

For Mental Health Awareness Week in May 2022 we explored loneliness, its impact on our mental health and how we can all play a part in reducing loneliness in our communities and workplace. This is particularly pertinent in the aftermath of the pandemic and resultant public health restrictions that increased social isolation for all of us, and the consequent loneliness that some of us may continue to feel. We hosted two lunchtime webinars on 'Combatting the

loneliness epidemic' which was run by Shine Workplace Wellbeing, challenging us to consider loneliness within a connected world and how we can all tackle this – as individuals, communities, and at work. We also kicked off our Big Team Challenge where we encouraged teams of up to six people to walk/run/swim/cycle/wheeling a virtual 1,557 km route (to take in 21 of SCRA's premises across Scotland). We revised and relaunched our Wellbeing Brochure which outlines all of the supports available to staff to ensure good mental health and promote their well-being. In recognition that contribution and connection are two of the five pillars of well-being, we promoted SCRA's Volunteering Policy to staff, encouraging them to use the policy to volunteer.

To mark Grief Awareness Day in August 2022, we launched a new health and well-being resource to help support our colleagues experiencing a loss in the form of a page on our intranet providing links to internal and external resources and colleague testimonials. In our approach, we have taken holistic view of loss, recognising that loss experience is unique to each individual, and include not just bereavement of family or friends, but loss of a pet, a breakdown of a relationship, diagnosis of illness or a serious injury.

For Time to Talk Day on 2nd February 2023 we hosted a webinar with Srathcarron Hospice on 'What is grief and how do I support my staff leading up to and after bereavement'. Whilst aimed particularly at managers, the webinar was open to all colleagues across SCRA, and explained what grief can look like and what we can do to support colleagues experiencing bereavement. We also hosted two virtual mindfulness sessions on Time To Talk Day, led by one of our Mindfulness Champions.

Understanding Trauma

SCRA is committed to Trauma Informed Practice and better understanding and appreciating the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE's) on the children and families we work with, and also on our colleagues. To enhance this, our Trauma Training Programme, which is aligned to the National Trauma Training Framework – in 2022-2023 had four elements:
- Locality and Head Office based Secondary Trauma Sessions;
- Trauma informed e-learning (provided by NHS Education Scotland);
- Trauma skilled training course (provided by NHS Education Scotland); and,
- Train the Trainer Programme (provided by NHS Education Scotland).

We have taken a staged approach to becoming more trauma informed, focussing initially on the Secondary Trauma Sessions which focus on the signs and symptoms of secondary trauma, as well as emphasising the supports available for colleagues experiencing secondary vicarious trauma. These sessions encourage managers and colleagues to consider what supports they may need and how they can limit the impact of vicarious trauma as a result of the work we do with vulnerable children and families. Sessions have been delivered to our Localities in Glasgow, Highlands & Islands, Ayrshire, North Strathclyde, Tayside & Fife (Dundee), Grampian, Glenrothes and Central. Any Localities that have not had the sessions in the reporting period will be scheduled by June 2023.

We have worked with NHS Education Scotland to provide comprehensive e-learning and more focussed face-to-face trauma informed training. The e-learning modules are mandatory for all

SCRA staff on our e-learning platform, and is a requirement for further trauma training. The Trauma Skilled Training aims to help colleagues translate understanding and knowledge from the following areas into their practice at work: ways that trauma affects people; what trauma skilled practice looks like; how to hear and talk about trauma; how to develop relationships that support recovering following traumatic events; and the importance of caring for our own well-being. To date, 40 colleagues have received this training and this will be further rolled out based on availability of NHS Education Scotland. The next phase of our Trauma Training Programme is Train the Trainer Programme whereby SCRA will support select colleagues to be trained to deliver the Trauma Skilled Training course which will assist us in delivering a sustainable approach to trauma training going forward.

Notable Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Achievements

In June 2022, we participated in enei's annual TIDE (Talent Inclusion & Diversity Evaluation) benchmarking exercise – an exercise that focussed solely on the prior 12 months activity. TIDE is enei's self-assessment benchmarking tool which measures an organisation's approach and progress on diversity and inclusion over the following areas: workforce; strategy and planning; leadership and accountability; recruitment and attraction; training and development; other employment practices; communication and engagement; and procurement. TIDE enables us to identify our inclusion and diversity strengths and areas for improvement which are then used when planning our programme of work. Organisations who participate in TIDE are benchmarked against other organisations TIDE entries in that year. In 2022, we achieved a Silver TIDEmark Award when benchmarked against other organisations, an improvement on our Bronze TIDEmark Award in 2021.

6. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion: Priorities for 2023-2024

This is the last year of work under our current Equality Outcomes 2020-2023; consultation and engagement will begin in summer 2023 towards identifying our Equality Outcomes 2024-2028.

Topical Activity

In 2023-2024 we are again committed to delivering an ambitious programme of equality, diversity and inclusion work. This will include a Disability Plan which will continue to focus on neuro-inclusivity, BSL and will also have a heavy focus on cancer as this is an issue which has significant impacts on our colleagues. Our Race Equality Action Plan will focus on better understanding racism and racial inequality in SCRA and in Scotland to enable us to identify activities and actions that we can take to address this.

Workforce diversity is important to us, and with relatively little turnover it is an area that will take some time to improve on. Nevertheless, there are things we can do to ensure our recruitment processes are fair, transparent, inclusive and attract diverse talent, and this will be a focus of work throughout 2023-2024, particularly how we might attract younger applicants, attract more men to the organisation (particularly to lower grades to reduce our Gender Pay Gap) and attract people from different ethnic backgrounds. We will be working to implement the Inclusive Standards & Behaviours Framework across SCRA which will promote and encourage an inclusive culture through ensuring inclusive recruitment, inclusive supervision and line management, inclusive succession planning and talent management and inclusive learning and development for all our colleagues.

Our LGBT Group took a hiatus in 2022 due to operational pressures, and this has only just been reinvigorated. The group will focus on SCRA retaining the LGBT Youth Charter foundation Bronze Award which is due to expire at the end of 2023. The group will also specifically focus on transgender awareness, through promoting awareness raising days and providing guidance for our colleagues on transgender issues. We hope to deliver some training and/or awareness raising sessions on transgender issues as these are increasingly raised issues from operational colleagues working with transgender children. We already have robust transgender guidance managers and Transgender Policy colleagues which was introduced in 2019.

Our work promoting mental health awareness and support, and our Trauma Training Programme and trauma awareness will continue to be a significant focus throughout 2023-2024 and beyond. The work we do at SCRA is often traumatic and it is imperative that our colleagues are supported in delivering their roles, but also in recognising the impact that their work can have on their own mental health. In addition to world events, including the cost-of-living crisis, SCRA is facing quite significant organisational and legislative change. We recognise change is often difficult for people, and particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, our colleagues may be needing support in staying mentally healthy.

There will be a focus on increasing training and learning opportunities for all staff in equality, diversity and inclusion. We will ensure our colleagues have completed the mandatory e-learning but will also promote the topical inclusion and diversity e-learning to broaden understanding and awareness of equality issues. Furthermore, we endeavour to host training and awareness sessions across the protected characteristics where any need arises.

Mainstreaming Activity

We believe that mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion is a journey of continuous improvement and culture change. Awareness raising and understanding inequality across and between the protected characteristics is only part of the journey; the other part is in embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in our ways of working, rather than seeing is as a specialised 'add on'. By embedding our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion in our Rights, Inclusion & Corporate Parenting Strategy, we are providing a foundation upon which all organisational strategy and plans are built, thus ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion is considered across and within everything we do.

Mainstreaming is further achieved by (in addition to the topical equality, diversity and inclusion work) embedding a robust and impactful approach to Equality Impact Assessment, through delivering consistent mandatory training and embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in our localities to ensure it is a local priority, as well as a strategic one. As such, we will have a continued focus throughout 2023-2024 and beyond on:

- Training and awareness raising of our EHRIA process to empower colleagues to be able to identify when an EHRIA is required and complete them fully and timeously;
- The development of a risk reporting framework to manage organisational risk in relation to EHRIA;
- Ensuring colleagues have completed the mandatory e-learning, and ensuring managers are aware of its importance, and promoting the use of topical e-learning amongst managers; and,
- Developing and expanding our Locality EDI Lead Network.

Finally, a significant focus of work in 2023-2024 will be in improving the recording of equality data – both of our staff and of children we work with. Our colleagues equality data is entirely self-reported on our HR system, iTrent, and many colleagues do not wish to disclose their information. We will work to raise awareness of why it is so important for us to have this data in terms of planning and resourcing work that is as impactful as possible to our colleagues. The recording of children's equality data on our case processing system, CSAS, is more complex. Much of the information we have is provided by partner organisations (usually social work, education, police and health) and is not provided by children themselves. We will be working over the course of the coming year and beyond to ensure national consistency in the recording of this information, ensuring its accuracy and checking regularly to ensure it is up-to-date. By improving our data, we will be better able to establish whether the children we work with are reflective of the population (and where any differences may be), identify areas of inequality and also identify trends and patterns in outcomes between and within the protected characteristics.

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Communications Strategy and Engagement 2020-2023 – an update

Accountable Director: Principal Reporter/Chief Executive
Date: 21 June 2023

Recommendation:

1. To note progress on actions within SCRA's Communications and Engagement
    Strategy 2020-2023 three years on.

Reason for Report: For Board noting

Resource Implications: Within approved budgets

Strategy: Within approved plans

Consultation: Principal Reporter/Chief Executive

Document Classification: Open

1. **Introduction**

   1.1.   SCRA's current three year [Communications and Engagement Strategy 2020-2023](#) was approved by the Board in June 2020. It was launched shortly afterwards and is available on Connect (our staff intranet) and our external website.

   1.2.   The Communications and Engagement Strategy aims to ensure SCRA continues to have an integrated approach to communications and engagement, and one that supports the organisation's vision and values.

   1.3.   The Communications and Engagement Strategy is supported by an action plan and this report provides Board Members with an update on actions in the last 12 months which covers the third year of the strategy.

   1.4.   To align with the Corporate Plan cycle, the Communications Strategy has been extended to spring 2024. A new strategy will be developed in the new year.

2. **Internal communications**

   2.1   Internal communications is a key part of our Communications and Engagement Strategy. In the third year of the strategy as the COVID-19 pandemic came to an end, we continued to focus our efforts on strengthening internal communications. This was reflected in our 2022 Staff Survey where which 88% of staff found that the communications from SCRA (either via all staff emails, the Team Brief or from Connect) give them sufficient, timely and accessible information. This is an increase of 8% since 2021 and the highest ever recorded rating on this question since it was introduced in 2008. In addition, 76% of staff reported making the time to read and digest communications – a 20% increase from 2021.

   2.2   We have multiple methods of communicating internally, but one of our main tools is [Connect](#), our staff intranet. The site continued to grow in the past 12 months, with a new Learning and Development section created and a Keeping The Promise section which has developed in recent months with new content. We also revamped our Disability section creating new pages for particular months/campaigns such as Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

   2.3   The Team Brief continues to be published on a regular basis. Introduced back in 2012, it aims to keep staff connected with updates from PR/CEO Neil Hunter on important topics like the Staff Survey, The Promise and Digital. In 2022, we introduced follow up Teams calls after publication of the Team Brief to enable staff to hear more detail, ask any questions and

highlight any concerns. Although things are back to normal, these sessions are continuing in 2023 as staff welcome the opportunity to talk to Neil direct/ask questions etc.

2.4   As well as the Team Brief Teams sessions, there have been many other opportunities for staff to engage and learn online. Staff had lots of opportunities to engage in our Keeping The Promise work, including consultations, webinars and training, as well as sign up for webinars on topics such as Foetal Alcohol Syndrome and Trauma training.

2.5   Our staff magazine, the National Reporter was re-launched in June 2021 following a break due to the pandemic. The e-zine has continued to develop and is a good way of keeping colleagues connected with more personal news and stories.

2.6   Throughout the year, we continued to promote key dates/campaigns including Mental Health Awareness Week, Deaf Awareness Week, InterFaith Week, International Migrants Day and Menopause Awareness Month. There was a major focus on Menopause Awareness in 2022. Beforehand an online survey was issued to all staff to gather information on the impact of the menopause on our workforce. The feedback from the survey helped develop a toolkit of awareness, resources and support which was launched in October during Menopause Awareness Month.

2.7   In June 2022, we recorded our first ever Keeping The Promise podcast. The aim was to provide information for staff in a different format. We have now recorded several podcasts which are available on Connect. Feedback has been positive.

2.8   Hearings System Working Group – in preparation for publication of the group's final report at the end of May 2023, we carried out a short feedback survey to listen to how staff would like to get the information about the report. This led to the implementation of a detailed communications plan with a variety of information tools available including: a news item on Connect, a one page visual guide to key recommendations, a Q&A for staff, a dedicated section on Connect, a video message from Sheriff David Mackie and a message from Neil Hunter. In addition, on the morning of publication an online briefing was held for managers. This was followed up with an input at the Management Development Event on 8 June and three webinars are taking place in June which are open to all staff. Further staff engagement will be planned following these sessions.

2.9   Planning is now underway for SCRA's Staff Event which will take place on Wednesday 13 September in Perth Concert Hall. This is our first event since before the pandemic. Staff have been given the opportunity to contribute

ideas through a short online survey and they are also encouraged to keep sending in suggestions for speakers etc. now planning has started.

3. **External communications**

3.1 The Communications and Engagement Strategy highlights that we have a large external audience with a variety of different information needs. It is important that we employ a variety of communication tools to meet these needs. Actions and successes over the last 12 months are outlined below.

3.2 During the pandemic, we saw an increase in traffic to our website and this has continued. We regularly monitor hits to the website for any gaps in our information and to ensure the site is up to date and user friendly. We continue to develop new content for the site with our monthly 'Spotlight on' series continuing and new pages launched about People in my Hearing and new online complaints forms. See Appendix 1 for some web site statistics from the past year.

3.5 Social media forms a key part of our Communications and Engagement Strategy. We currently use the following platforms to engage with our external audiences: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Linkedin. We utilise these various platforms to highlight key messages and information, using visuals, cartoons, animations and GIFS to give posts more prominence. We also target the content in our messages depending on the platform/audience. We did consider using TikTok in 2022, but felt we didn't have enough video footage to keep the site fresh and up to date. Some social media analytics are available at Appendix 1.

3.6 Our partner e-news continues to be published quarterly. This contains a round-up of all our latest news, such as new research reports, corporate reports and our new information materials. This is sent initially to LRMs for local distribution, and is then distributed by the Press and Communications Team to key national partners and people who have signed up to receive the bulletin via our website. It is also available on our website and is publicised via social media.

3.8 Websites and partnership working – SCRA's Press and Communications Team continues to host and maintain a number of partnership websites, including the Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership, Our Hearings, Our Voice, Hearings Advocacy, Stand Up for Siblings, My Corporate Parents and the Youth Justice Improvement Board website which was and launched in June 2022. We also built and launched a website for The Glasgow Promise in October 2022. More recently we built and launched a website for Bairns' Hoose on 1 June 2023. We have also been approached to build a Child Protection website and this is under consideration. Our

Press and Communications Team designs, builds and maintains these websites for free as part of our commitment to partnership working.

3.9   Media – as highlighted in previous updates, there isn't as much emphasis on the traditional media nowadays. However, we do engage with the media when and where appropriate and continue to provide a media monitoring and press cuttings service to members of EMT and local newspaper coverage to LRMs. Recently (May 2023) we facilitated filming for the BBC and STV in a Hearings centre. We also facilitated a request from a journalist from Holyrood magazine to observe a Hearings session. A recent Freedom of Information request from 1919 magazine (focused on justice and public affairs) about house breaking figures, led to widespread coverage of their article by the mainstream press.

4. Participation and engagement with children and young people

4.1   Engaging in a meaningful way with Hearings-experienced children and young people continues to be a cornerstone of our strategy and approach. Some of our actions and highlights in the last 12 months are detailed below:

4.2   SCRA continues to host and support Our Hearings, Our Voice (OHOV). SCRA also provides communications support to OHOV, and regularly attends Board Meetings to support the project team and the young people. SCRA also delivers specialised assistance around the OHOV website and social media. In October 2022, to mark 2 years since publication of the 40 Calls to Action, we prepared our second update for OHOV. In addition, at their board meeting in April, we provided every Board Member with a personal thank you letter. We continue to work with young people from OHOV on a number of projects, including podcasts, a new Your Rights flyer, cartoon animations, Language Leaders, window displays in our Glasgow Hearings centre and a new pilot project 'My Self Care Scrapbook'. We also design and print VOICE magazine for OHOV and assist with distribution.

4.4   Modern Apprenticeship programme – SCRA continues to role out the Modern Apprenticeship Programme exclusively for care and/or Hearings experienced young people. In July 2022 we recruited a new Modern Apprentice to our Aberdeen office. Alongside this, we continue to deliver work experience opportunities for care experienced people and the Modern Apprentice in Aberdeen had the opportunity to undertake a work experience opportunity prior to applying for the Apprenticeship.

4.5   New Hearing Room programme – The Hearing Room Improvement Programme continues to be rolled out nationally and almost all rooms are now complete. We continued to modernise and adapt rooms during the

pandemic so that we could host Hearings in child and young person friendly Hearing rooms where possible.

4.6   Voice of Experience Reference Group - As part of SCRA's commitment to Keeping The Promise, SCRA launched its first ever group for care experienced staff. Staff members with any experience of care, whether having been through the Children's Hearings System, or being foster carers or adoptive parents etc. were welcomed to join. This group is a closed group managed by the Participation Officer and the Promise Operational Development Lead, where staff members can freely share their thoughts, views and ideas on improvements within SCRA and the system, which are then reported to the Executive Management Team and Keeping The Promise Programme Manager for consideration. At a recent away day the Principal Reporter was invited to join the group to see the nature of the work being undertaken and respond to requests for improvement.

4.7   Customise My Hearing pilot – Keeping The Promise commitments include listening to children and young people's requests for a variety of ways to share their thoughts and views as well as preparatory support for Hearings. Our Hearings, Our Voice specifically requested an opportunity to customise their Hearing as part of their 40 Calls to Action. Working in partnership with the Stirling Champs Board, a Customise My Hearing form was designed and developed for testing in Grampian and Highland. This form can be submitted in paper or online and gives children and young people the opportunity to make specific requests and/or adjustments to their Hearing experience and say what would be supportive and helpful in advance. The pilot is running from May to September 2023.

4.8   Engagement with Champs Boards - Our Participation Officer and Press and Communications Manager regularly work with a variety of groups of young people, including Our Hearings, Our Voice, the Stirling Champs Board and the Falkirk Champs Board to ensure that our workstreams are inclusive and co-designed with care experienced young people. Ongoing attendance at these groups has helped to generate ideas and improve services and we continue to work regularly with them to improve and monitor services. The Stirling Champs Board also delivered training on being care experienced to multiple staff at our recent Head Office wellbeing day. Going forward, we are keen to engage with more Champs Boards and other groups of Hearings-experienced children and young people.

5. Recommendations:

5.1.   To note progress on actions within SCRA's Communications and Engagement Strategy 2020-2023.

SCRA social media and website analytics - snapshot – 01.06.22 – 31.05.23

Twitter - 90 days insights

Twitter 6k followers

Our Tweets earned **41.7K impressions** over this period

TOP TWEETS

SCRA @ChildReporter
We love this video created by care-experienced young people working with us & **@FamiliesOutside** on the Staying Connected research project! A massive thank you to Aimee, Chantelle, Chloe & Michael. The cartoon animation explains how you can get involved **#StandUpForSiblings** pic.twitter.com/9w0L9fCZbl

Impressions – 5,079

SCRA @ChildReporter
Participating in a Children's Hearing? Did you know children and young people can get vital support from an advocacy worker. Check out this helpful website to find out more ➡ http://www.hearings-advocacy.com pic.twitter.com/MW7lmJ5Izd

Impressions – 2,357

SCRA @ChildReporter
Our Principal Reporter Neil Hunter is calling the Hearings for Children publication "a landmark report". Read his full response on our website ➡ https://bit.ly/425pvTM **#KeepThePromise** pic.twitter.com/IFrXanpRsS

Impressions – 2,008

SCRA @ChildReporter
Going to a Children's Hearing for the first time? A Pre-Hearing visit can really help. Plus you will get a pack with lots of helpful info. Watch our short film to find out more. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wExw4T7pSZI …

Impressions – 1,936

SCRA @ChildReporter

We have lots of exciting improvement projects underway to #KeepThePromise. Find out what's happening on our website 👇
https://www.scra.gov.uk/2023/04/keeping-the-promise-a-round-up-of-our-recent-activity/ …@ThePromiseScot pic.twitter.com/Lmmr02zhik

Impressions – 1,580

SCRA @ChildReporter

We were excited to share our progress to meet the #40CallsToAction with @OHOV_Scotland and @CHScotland on Saturday. It was lovely to spend time at the wonderfully welcoming home of @ChampsStirling too! pic.twitter.com/9pAYF38ofo

Impressions – 1,376

Facebook - 365 days insights

Facebook 1.3K Following

Everything posted organically by SCRA (no paid posts)
Top Posts

Still time to apply - Modern Apprentice, Digital and Security Governance closing date: Wednesday 24 August. Find out more on our website - https://bit.ly/3SrMAfA

2,347 impressions

We absolutely love this partnership with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Scottish Book Trust and Scottish Government to provide free books to children age 5 and under attending Children's Hearings!

1,938 impressions

We are committed to being a menopause friendly organisation, that's why our Principal Reporter Neil Hunter has signed the #menopauseworkplacepledge

1,569 impressions

Today sees the start of #ScotAppWeek23. Here at SCRA our Modern Apprentice programme is in its 14th year. We talk to one of our latest recruits Taylor who is based in our Grampian Locality to find out how they are enjoying the role - https://bit.ly/3EZmfk7 #UnlockingPotential

1,178 impressions

 Instagram 1.2K followers

90 days insights

Top posts:

Autism alert cards – 651 **impressions**

Keeping The Promise a year on – 337 **impressions**

Neil Hunter quote HSWG Report – 217 **impressions**

Hearing About Me form Online version – 202 **impressions**

Advocacy for Young People website – 156 **impressions**

Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Scheme – 155 **impressions**

VOICE magazine **– 125 impressions**

New followers in age range 13-17 has increased by 2%

 Linkedin – 1.6K followers

Want to know what we have been doing to Keep The Promise? To mark #careday2023 we have published a progress report aimed at children and young people - http://bit.ly/3XFO7Ae The Promise Scotland

808 impressions

Staff across the country have had an informative day of learning in 3 different webinars thanks to FASD Hub Scotland /Adoption UK, Strathcarron Hospice, and Scottish Refugee Council.

A massive thank you to our guests for some powerful and thought provoking sessions ❤ #Inclusion #Diversity

775 impressions

We absolutely love this partnership with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to provide free books to children age 5 and under attending Children's Hearings

885 impressions

Looking for data on the Children's Hearings System? Check out our Official Statistics 2021/22 published today!

506 impressions

SCRA website (www.scra.gov.uk)

365 insights

Page views
237,439

https://www.scra.gov.uk/recruitment/current-vacancies/

11,890 views

https://www.scra.gov.uk/contact-us

8,256 views

https://www.scra.gov.uk/about-scra/role-of-the-reporter/

7,856 views

https://www.scra.gov.uk/contact-us/office-locations/

7,365 views

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

6,541 views

https://www.scra.gov.uk/about-scra/

6,074 views

https://www.scra.gov.uk/young_people/questions-and-answers/

5,158 views

https://www.scra.gov.uk/resources/

4,593 views

https://www.scra.gov.uk/children/

4,168 views

https://www.scra.gov.uk/parents-carers/

3,638 views

https://www.scra.gov.uk/young-people/

3,060 views

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

1,424 views

65% DESKTOP USERS
33% MOBILE PHONE USERS
 2% TABLET USERS

Direct to website - 57.77%
Organic Search - 33.89%
Via social media 8.34%

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Influencing Report: 1st June 2022 to 1st June 2023

Accountable Director:	Head of Practice and Policy	Date:	21st June 2023

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

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

1

1	Introduction
1.1	In March 2011, the Practice and Policy Team produced a report for the Board outlining the key areas where SCRA had been able to be influential and apply its professional expertise, data and research to particular issues at a national level. The Board subsequently requested that a similar report be provided on a bi-annual basis. This is the twenty third such report and covers the period 1st June 2022 to 1st June 2023. There was no Influencing Report to the SCRA Board in December 2022 as a result of staff absence so this report covers a 12 month period.
1.2	There are hyperlinks in this document - to external documents which may be of interest (including legislation and draft legislation) and to internal documents, published externally or internally. Where there are links to legislation these links are to a Bill or an Act, not to associated policy memoranda or regulations (unless these other documents are of specific interest). Some hyperlinks are to web pages where there are multiple documents of potential interest. **We hope the information contained in this report is relevant and useful. We are happy to review this report content and format, if required. Some information still requires to be published on SCRA's website and we hope to have that done before the end of the year.**
1.3	SCRA has positive working relationships with officials in the Scottish Government and continues to be engaged in informal and formal dialogue and through informal and formal consultation with them when relevant. Previously officers would spend time at Victoria Quay, but so few SG staff now work there on a daily basis following the pandemic that there is no current benefit to this.
1.4	SCRA's responses to National consultation exercises relevant to our work in the Children's Hearings System are published online, and can be found at https://www.scra.gov.uk/resources_articles_category/consultations-evidence/. Key messages from our full consultation responses are disseminated internally within SCRA to colleagues through CONNECT. The key messages can be accessed by all SCRA staff from either the news item on CONNECT or from the library of documents.

2	Pending legislation & Parliamentary Work

2.1	**United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill 2020** This Bill was unanimously passed by the Scottish Parliament on 16th March 2021. However, the UK Government challenged some aspects of the legislative competence of the Act which they believed were out with the competence of the devolution settlement. The case was heard at the [Supreme Court](#) on 28th and 29th June 2021 and a decision in respect of matters was delivered on 6th October 2021. The SC upheld the appeal and referred the matter back to SG for remedial action. Further work is now required on this legislation in order for it to become operational. The Deputy First Minister gave an [update statement](#) on this on 24th May 2022. There are four sections in the UNCRC Bill that require to be changed as a result of the devolution settlement and are areas of the Bill where the Scottish parliament has no jurisdiction: 1. Definition of public authority (Section 6) – so that it is not drafted in such broad terms. 2. Court powers (Sections 19, 20 and 21) – so that each section only applies to laws originally passed by the Scottish Parliament, rather than by the UK Parliament. A [letter](#) was provided to the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee on 16th March 2023, to mark the two year anniversary of the passing of the Bill. Since then our new Minister has been appointed. **SCRA continue to prepare for the fullest implementation of the UNCRC.**
2.2	**[The Children (Scotland) Act 2020](#)** The Bill for this Act was introduced on 2nd September 2019 It was passed by the Parliament on 25th August 2020 and received Royal Assent on 1st October 2020. Other aspects of the Act and the [Family Justice Modernisation Strategy](#) will be covered later in this report and are still to come into force.
2.3	**[The Disclosure (Scotland) Act 2020](#)** The Bill for this Act of the Scottish Parliament was passed by the Parliament on 10th June 2020 and received Royal Assent on 14th July 2020. The Act has not yet been fully implemented. Disclosure Scotland is developing new processes, engaging with stakeholders and developing training and guidance which will be available before new parts of the Act are implemented.

2.4	**Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019** **This Bill was passed on 7 May 2019 and became an Act on 11 June 2019.** The commencement of the different provisions of the Act finally took effect on **17th December 2021**. There are a number of different delivery groups for the Act where SCRA is represented and discussion is ongoing. The independent reviewer has been appointed, and Caroline Conway (who also has the same role in Northern Ireland) has taken up the post. There is information on the mygov.scot website about providing information to the independent reviewer – available here. Alistair Hogg sits on the ACR Advisory Group. We also have representatives on 2 of the working groups reporting to the Advisory Group. The main task for this group is to review the current age of criminal responsibility after 3 years of implementation, and to produce a report to the Scottish Parliament recommending whether this age should rise, and if so how far. The SCRA research in relation to offending by 12 to 15 year olds can be read online.
2.5	**National Care Service -** Board members will know that this consultation ran in late 2021. The National Care Service (Scotland) Bill is at stage 1 with the health, Social Care and Sport Committee of the Scottish Parliament. A collaborative redesign project is also underway and more detail about that can be found here. A research project is being conducted by CELCIS, with a steering group chaired by Professor Brigid Daniel. Scottish Government sent SCRA a letter explaining the ongoing approach. This legislation may still have an impact on SCRA and on children's hearings.
2.6	**Children's Care and Justice Bill** The Bill is currently proceeding through Stage 1 of the Scottish Parliamentary process. Evidence is being heard by a number of Committees, but mainly by the Education, Children and Young People Committee. Alistair Hogg appeared before that Committee on 22nd March 2023 to give evidence. The meeting can be viewed here. The Board may also be interested in other evidence taken by the Committee on 29th March 2023, from secure care providers, Sheriff David Mackie and other Third Sector representatives and on 26th April 2023 from CHS, SWS, COSLA, the ICO and the Care Inspectorate. The Bill contains a number of important provisions that will have significant impact on SCRA and the hearing system. It proposes that anyone under 18 should be considered legally as a child, and as such they may be referred to the Children's Reporter. There are also proposed changes to the decisions that hearings can make, and changes to the tests for secure care authorisation and Movement Restriction Conditions. SCRA have been right at the centre of multi-agency discussions prior to the Bill being lodged, and have been invited into the implementation group that met for the first time on 5th June 2023.

3	Consultation Responses
3.1	**Children's Care and Justice Bill – consultation on policy proposals** SCRA prepared a detailed response to this consultation following online engagement sessions with staff and detailed written consideration and review of SCRA's proposals. The consultation analysis about the proposals can be read here. SCRA's organisational response is here.
3.2	**Scottish Mental Health Law Review – Additional Questions** The Practice and Policy Team prepared a detailed response to these additional areas of interest for the review, as they are relevant to the children's hearing. SCRA's response can be read here. Our response focused on advocacy provision and access to advocacy services, based on our experience of advocacy service provision in children's hearings.
3.3	**Independent strategic review of funding and commissioning of violence against women and girls services: call for evidence** SCRA responded to this consultation and our response can be read in full here. Our response focused on the way in which high quality service provision can mean that statutory intervention is not required; that such service provision should be equitable and equivalent across the country; that Government should provide mapping of provision and setting of consistent service expectations. That Police Scotland should be considering referral to the Reporter and that there should be an established evidence base of 'what works' that forms the basis of services for women and girls.

4	Current partnership & collaborative work
4.1	**New Joint Investigative Interview Training** SCRA has been heavily involved in this work, and provides regular invaluable reports to the National Joint Investigative Interviewing Governance Group. This entry on the Social Work Scotland website gives a clear description of the work - https://socialworkscotland.org/projects/joint-investigative-interviews/.
4.2	**Online Training – developed for North Lanarkshire** The training package developed by SCRA and the CHIP Learning and Development Lead is being used in Ayrshire Locality and is being considered for North Strathclyde Locality. Discussions with partners are ongoing about how the package can be tailored to work in the best way for each local authority area and in relation to specific local concerns. Social workers | Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership (chip-partnership.co.uk)
4.3	**Child Trafficking and Exploitation** SCRA are a member of this working group which has recently got a new Chair, chaired by the Scottish Government.
4.4	**Restorative Approaches** SCRA are involved in a multi-agency group considering wider restorative approaches. South East and Central Locality Managers, Education Scotland and the CHIP Learning and Development Lead are adapting training on Restorative Approaches which was initially delivered by Education Scotland to Campus Cops. Lothian and Borders Sheriffdom looks set to be the pilot Sheriffdom for Restorative Justice Service provision in relation to sentencing so a wider, holistic approach to restorative work across children's services may be positive. We also continue to be involved in work to specifically progress the Scottish Government Restorative Justice Action Plan. SCRA are involved in discussions about the Violence in Schools Summit announced on 24/05/2023 with our restorative approaches partners. BBC Bitesize are animating Restorative Justice case studies provided by SCRA as part of their work to develop UNCRC resources. They are also using other SCRA materials as part of this work.

4.5	**Children's Rights**
	SCRA's Right Direction group is meeting again in June 2023. We are looking for a new academic supporter – as Professor Devaney has taken on a new University role. We have thanked him for his time and his help. Right Direction are helping us to develop an approach to Children's Rights mainstreaming for SCRA, which is available as a draft.
	The proposed children's rights work, previously seen by the Board has been refined following further comment and is now available for use as and when we can use the information.
	New leaflets are also available in draft and may be useful for some of SCRA's ongoing project teams to refer to or use.
	A new victims leaflet and letters are already in use.
	SCRA are developing some Article 12 training with Elaine Adams (CHIP Learning & Development lead).
	Melissa Hunt is planning some work on a Theory of Change for SCRA in relation to Children's Rights, this is currently in development and will be brought to the Board by the end of the year.
4.6	**Contextual Safeguarding Network**
	SCRA is a member of this network. This is co-chaired by Stuart Allardyce (Stop it Now) and Lorette Nicol (Social Work Scotland) and is a meeting of interested professionals from across Government, the statutory and third sector. The group keeps an eye on the pilot in North Lanarkshire but also considers how contextual safeguarding can be mainstreamed across more areas of child protection and safeguarding in Scotland.
	SCRA are also closely involved in the North Lanarkshire pilot work.
	There is training developed in North Lanarkshire which SCRA thinks will compliment training that has been developed by Melissa Hunt. Once this package has been completed we will include a link in this report, for information / interest.
4.7	**Secure Care Group**
	Chaired by the Scottish Government. SCRA attends this group and is involved in working groups in relation to siblings and secure care, and secure care transport. SCRA are also involved in the Secure Care Practitioner Forum and the Secure Care Standards and Pathways Champions group.
4.8	**Victims Task Force**
	SCRA sits on the Victims Taskforce, and also the group set up to implement the recommendations from the Lady Dorrian review into the management of sexual offences. The Victim Information Leaflet has been re-drafted (and is available in the 'Your Rights' Schema above) and the letters we send to victims are being reviewed.

4.9	**COPFS and Children's Hearings Scotland** SCRA contributed to the modelling of the impact of the care and justice bill. This included working with COPFS to understand the volumes and types of cases which would be more likely to be investigated by SCRA following the implementation of the legislation. This allowed a profile to be built of how many additional referrals/hearings/court/appeals that SCRA could expect, to allow costings for the Hearings system to be estimated. The impact on non-offence cases was also profiled to provide an overall system wide analysis. This was also shared with CHS to allow an assessment on the impact for Panel Members. SCRA has regular liaison with COPFS, and also has a bi-monthly tripartite meeting with COPFS and Police Scotland.
4.10	**Bairns Hoose** SCRA's Communications Team designed the website for Bairns Hoose and we are involved at all levels of the discussions and developments. A significant range of documents have recently been published, including the Bairnshoose standards, and these are all available on the website. We are members of the national Bairnshoose Governance Group, and also chair a working group looking at whether children who cause harm may also have access to the Bairnshoose.
4.11	**Youth Justice Improvement Board** SCRA are members of the YJIB, and have representatives on both of the sub groups of the YJIB.

5	Research
5.2	**Main areas of influence:** **Staying Connected – care experienced children and young people with a sibling in prison, or secure accommodation research (January 2022 – December 2023)** A partnership research project funded by the Promise Partnership in conjunction with the third sector organisation, Families Outside. Data collection has included interviews with 18 interviews with both children and young people in prison and/or secure accommodation, and professionals. In addition to carrying out the research element of this project, the researcher, Kirsty Deacon has worked with Families Outside to employ a care-experienced Project Officer and six care-experienced Consultants who are contributing to elements of the research. Eight training sessions with this Consultant group have been conceptualised, designed and led by Kirsty since December 2022 covering topics including an introduction to the Criminal Justice and the Children's Hearings System; research design and analysis, and presentation and facilitation skills.
5.3	**Prison Visitor Centre Conference – 23rd June 2022** Kirsty presented a paper at this conference entitled "'Never mind, we can't help you': The forgotten experiences of sibling imprisonment by children and young people". This focused on the experiences of sibling imprisonment, with mention made to the **Staying Connected** project. It was attended by staff from prison visitor centres and the organisations who run them, staff from the Scottish Prison Service, third sector organisations and families affected by imprisonment.
5.4	**Strathclyde University Hidden Voices Network Conference – 20th May 2023** – Kirsty was invited to be one of the two speakers at this Conference and gave a presentation titled, **"'Never mind, we can't help you': The forgotten experiences of sibling imprisonment by children and young people".** This drew on findings around sibling imprisonment from Kirsty's PhD and initial findings from the Staying Connected project. There were 60 attendees at the Conference, mainly from the education sector.
5.5	Kirsty is a member of the Scottish Government Short-Life Group on Children or Young People Impacted by Family in Secure Care or Custody. Kirsty has attended five meetings with this group over the last year, with their report and recommendations currently being finalised.
5.6	Kirsty is a member of the Brothers and Sisters Community of Practice who have met four times since October 2022. The group is comprised of a range of people and organisations including local authorities, third sector organisations and secure accommodation providers, funded through The Promise Partnership 'Brothers and Sisters' funding stream. The group is run by STAR, Stand Up for Siblings, AFKAS and The Promise.

5.7	**Introducing new digital technologies within the Children's Hearings System:** Research officer Cat Nixon is a member of the "working group of experts on digital justice for children in conflict with the law" on behalf of SCRA. This role focusses on knowledge exchange with the group.
5.8	**Virtual Hearings Research**: SCRA Reporters and Senior Practitioners have participated in qualitative interviews about their experiences of virtual Hearings and Courts during the pandemic to inform learning in this field
5.9	Cat also sits on the **Children's Health in Care in Scotland study** being run by the MRC/CSO Social and Public Health Sciences Unit at the University of Glasgow. This study uses linked NHS, CLAS data and pupil census information to explore health outcomes of care experienced children with those of non-care experienced children.
5.10	Cat presented preliminary findings from the Virtual Hearing's focussing on the participatory research with young people at the '**Childhood, Care and Coronavirus Conference'** held at Northumbria University – 09.12.22.
5.11	**Age of Criminal Responsibility:** Presentation of findings from '**Children aged 12 to 15 years involved in offending and referred to the Children's Reporter and Procurator Fiscal in Scotland'** report to the Age of Criminal Responsibility Advisory Group (SG) attended by the then Minister for Children and Families, Clare Haughey – 09.06.22 'Children aged 12 to 15 years involved in offending and referred to the Children's Reporter and Procurator Fiscal in Scotland' report (SCRA/SG) published 23.06.22 included substantial engagement with colleagues in the Scottish Government, the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and the Data and Research Advisory sub-group and CYCJ.
5.12	Sarah was approached by the Scottish Government and CYCJ to provide input and advice around developing interview questions and vignettes for a current CYCJ cross country research study examining the ACR in three countries in Europe – October 2022.
5.13	Sarah is currently the SCRA representative for the Justice Analytical Services Research and Analysis Forum.
5.14	**#ChallengePoverty week:** SCRA's research team took part in a Twitter campaign organised by the Children and Young People's Centre for Justice (CYCJ) during Challenge Poverty week in October 2022. This campaign was highlighting the impact poverty has upon the lives of children and families involved in the criminal justice system. From this, the Research Team produced the 'Challenge Poverty' briefing which was published on Connect in October 2022.

5.16	**AFKA – Association for Fostering, Kinship and Adoption** The Research Team attend the AFKA research forum meetings on behalf of SCRA to hear about research work with AFKA attendees and provide updates from SCRA's research team on the work we are doing.

6	Additional Work
6.1	**Scoping of External Training Delivery** This scoping work was done in 2019. Post pandemic this scoping needs to be done again.
6.2	**Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership (CHIP)** The large CHIP group started meetings again in 2021. Focus has been on recovery from the pandemic, the potential increase in the age of referral, Better Hearings, OHOV and the Promise. The CHIP has determined that the Tuesday Children's Hearings COVID Recovery Group will become an Improvement Delivery Group. A working group focussed on Language in the Hearings System has also been convened and will progress multi agency work on language.
6.3	**Children's Hearing – Training for schools / information for staff and pupils** SCRA continues to work on a Primary School Resource, based around a series of short stories. This work will take some time – but it is exciting that one of the short stories is being animated by BBC Bitesize as part of their suite of materials on UNCRC. SCRA will be able to link to this resource once it is available.
6.4	**Advocacy for Children's Hearings** Locality Reporter Managers continue to engage with local advocacy service providers and positive partnership discussions are happening across the country. SCRA also attend the national providers network and the expert advisory group.

7	**Horizon Scanning**
7.1	**Other legislative Reform** There is a new session of the Scottish Parliament which will bring new legislative reform.

7.2	**Independent Care Review – The Promise**
	Keeping the Promise has become a significant piece of standalone work within SCRA. It will therefore no longer be covered in this report. Board members have been receiving regular separate updates. However, it is worth stating that this policy and influencing work has been intensive and has involved a significant number of SCRA staff. This work has consumed huge amounts of time and effort. Although it has been extremely challenging, SCRA has been able to maintain all our other essential partnership work.
7.3	**Improving the Management of Sexual Offences Cases**
	SCRA's Practice Team have convened a working group to develop specific training for Reporters on Harmful Sexual Behaviour. The impact of the pandemic has resulted in the working group being unable to make much progress. The work is now resuming but will take some time to conclude.

8	Other Influencing Work & Training
8.1	SCRA continues to be involved in the Implementation Group for the National Child Protection Guidance, the Police Scotland Child Protection group, the Youth Justice Improvement Board and the National Stop and Search Steering Group.
	We are also involved in the Monitoring and Evaluating Rights, Respect and Recovery for health and social harms advisory groups – and a baseline report has been published – which is available online here - Monitoring and Evaluating Rights, Respect and Recovery (MERRR) - Substance use - Our areas of work - Public Health Scotland..
8.2	SCRA continues to actively consider the ways in which the Digital Improvement Programme will impact on our service delivery and specifically whether legislative change will be required in order for us to deliver all of the objectives we have under this plan.
8.3	SCRA is finalising a response to the Scottish Covid 19 Inquiry. We will link the Board into our response when it is completed.

9	**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:**   21 June 2023

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, PPN

Equalities Duties: Equalities impact assessment not required

Document Classification: Not protectively marked

1.   Introduction

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

1.2   The Risk Registers were last reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee at its May 2023 meeting and the Board at its December 2022 meeting.

2.   Risk Management in SCRA

2.1   Following a light touch review SCRA's revised Risk Management Policy was approved by the Board at its meeting in March 2023. 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 2024 and any changes reported to the March 2024 Board for approval. The Board charges the Audit and Risk Committee with overseeing the operation of the system of internal control and with ensuring robust risk management arrangements within SCRA, including reviewing the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers six- monthly.

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

2.3   Locality risk registers are being updated linked to objectives in draft 2023/24 Locality Plans. Common locality risk themes will be reviewed by PPN in June 2023 with any escalated risks considered thereafter by EMT.

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

2.5   A new risk management tool, Decision Time, has been rolled out and summary strategic and operational risk reports from the tool are attached at Appendices 1 and 2. The Assurance Mapping functionality in Decision Time has been brought into use for strategic risks and a report is attached at Appendix 3. This is a work in progress and use will be extended to operational risks before the next report to the ARC In November 2023.

3.   Strategic Risk Register

3.1   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. This risk is continuously monitored, the following actions are outstanding;
- Gap analysis against Public Sector Cyber Resilience Framework;
- EMT 'exercise in a box';
- Annual review of Cyber Security Policy; and
- Regular tracking of Top Five cyber security risks.

The actions from the Internal Audit Cyber Security review have been added.

Risk 2 - The optimum model for CSAS ownership and accountability and a joint future partnership between SCRA and CHS is not adequately defined and agreed. This risk is owned by the Principal Reporter and National Convener and progress and actions are monitored at the Digital Change Advisory Board. The creation of organizational Digital Boards will strengthen controls and progress has been made in documenting the operation of CSAS as recommended by Audit Scotland.

All previous actions have been completed and a new action has been added to further develop accountability for support and maintenance and system development in SCRA and CHS.

Risk 3, SCRA do not maintain a skilled, motivated and flexible workforce which can meet current demands and future needs. No new actions have been added in the latest review and all actions are due for completion in the last quarter of 2022/23.

Risk 4, Significant policy, legislative and reform/transformation change agenda impacts on SCRA's ability to deliver core services or necessary change programmes. – Work continues on assessing the impact on different areas of the organisation of policy, legislative, reform/transformation changes. The working group chaired by the Principal Reporter produced an analysis of the impact of the Children's Care and Justice Bill which informed the Bill Financial Memorandum and the 2023/24 Budget. The Programme Board is now in operation.

Risk 5, Failure to progress Board approved Environmental plan (e.g. reduce GHG emissions by 10%-20% by March 2024) and inability to accelerate plans to meet new targets. Sustainability actions are included in 2023/24 Business and Locality Plans and strategic and ambassador groups are now up and running.

Risk 6, Inability to engage with digital inhibits realisation of full potential of new technologies resulting in significant operational disruption. Controls are generally operating effectively and all actions remain on course.

Risk 7, Inability to meet staff expectations on pay/reward resulting in operational disruption/staff engagement in change. This risk will now be closed as settlement on pay was reached in March 2023. All actions are complete. Consideration will be given to the introduction of a new risk linked to 2023/24 pay negotiations.

Risk 108, 2023/24 Scottish Government budget does not deliver required level of revenue funding with impact on ability to deliver a quality service and respond effectively to new legislative and policy pressures. This risk crystalized and will now be closed. A new risk linked to securing required resources at the Autumn and Spring Budget Reviews will be considered.

New risk 153, Inability to spend 2023/24 CCJB capital allocations due to lack of specificity of the necessary adaptations to facilities and systems for referral of 16 and 17 year olds with the result that less optimal solutions reduce the efficiency of staff and the quality of service when the legislation is implemented in 2024/25. This risk is still under development.

EMT are considering whether a new risk related to Programme Board should be identified and assessed. The draft description is 'A cautious approach to potential organizational change by the Programme Board limits the scope of the programme or project work resulting in too narrow a set of recommendations for stage 2, leading to an inability to identify consequential efficiencies.'

4.   Operational Risk Register

4.1   Changes to the register are as follows:

Risk 1, "During the early implementation of CSAS there is a heightened risk of Non-Disclosure breaches". The components of the risk are:
- Staff pressures
- Capacity for double-checks
- CSAS functionality changes
- CSAS migration

There is an extensive set of controls in place to mitigate this risk, all but one of which are assessed as operating effectively. One new action has been added (development work by Digital Team to scope possible different approach to redaction processes), all other actions have been completed.

4.2   Two new risks added during the last review (reduced system capacity and inefficient case processing/budget restrictions) have been further developed with additional controls and actions, without impacting on risk scores as yet.

4.3   One new risk has been added:
- "Wider system and partner changes have potential to destabilise operations and divert resources from service delivery and improvement work."

5.   Assurance Mapping

5.1   The Head of Finance & Resources has worked with strategic risk leads to populate the fields in Decision Time that populate the Assurance Mapping Report, principally the Risk Impact, Risk Controls and Assurance Sources columns. Further development of this element of the tool is required and members are invited to comment on the information in the report at Appendix 3. At this stage no assurance gaps are being flagged.

6.   Conclusion

6.1   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.

7.   Recommendation

7.1   To review the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers.

Previous Papers:

Risk Register Report to Audit & Risk Committee May 2023
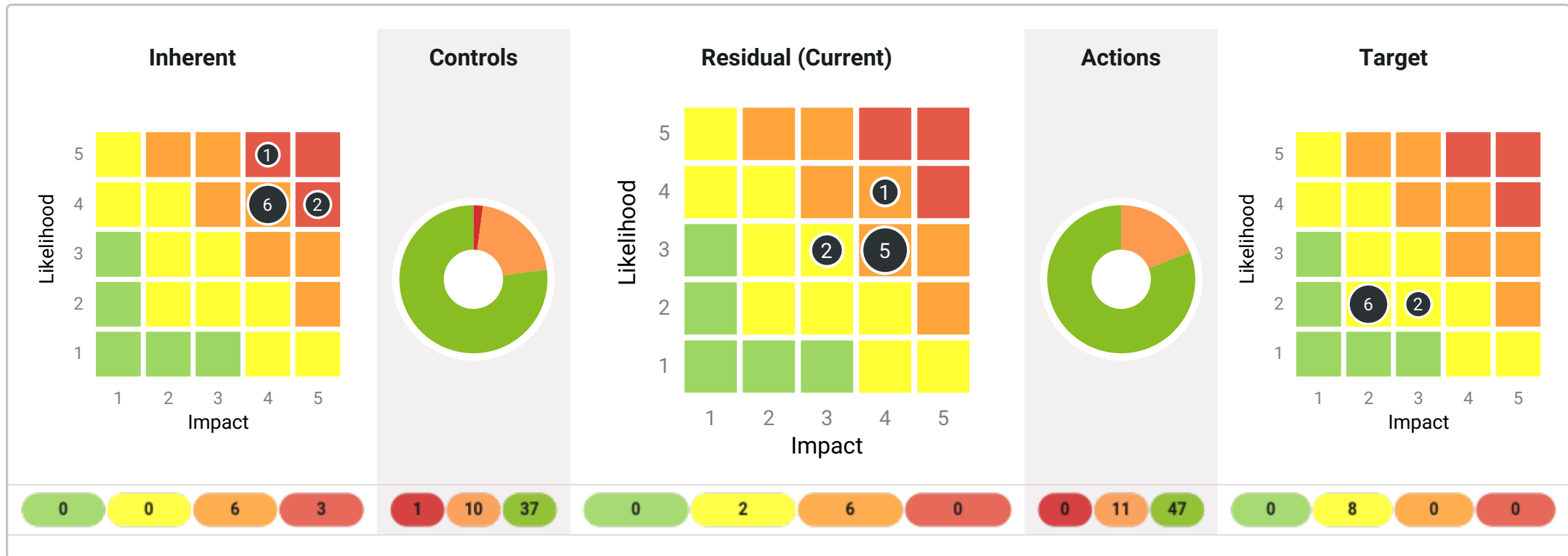
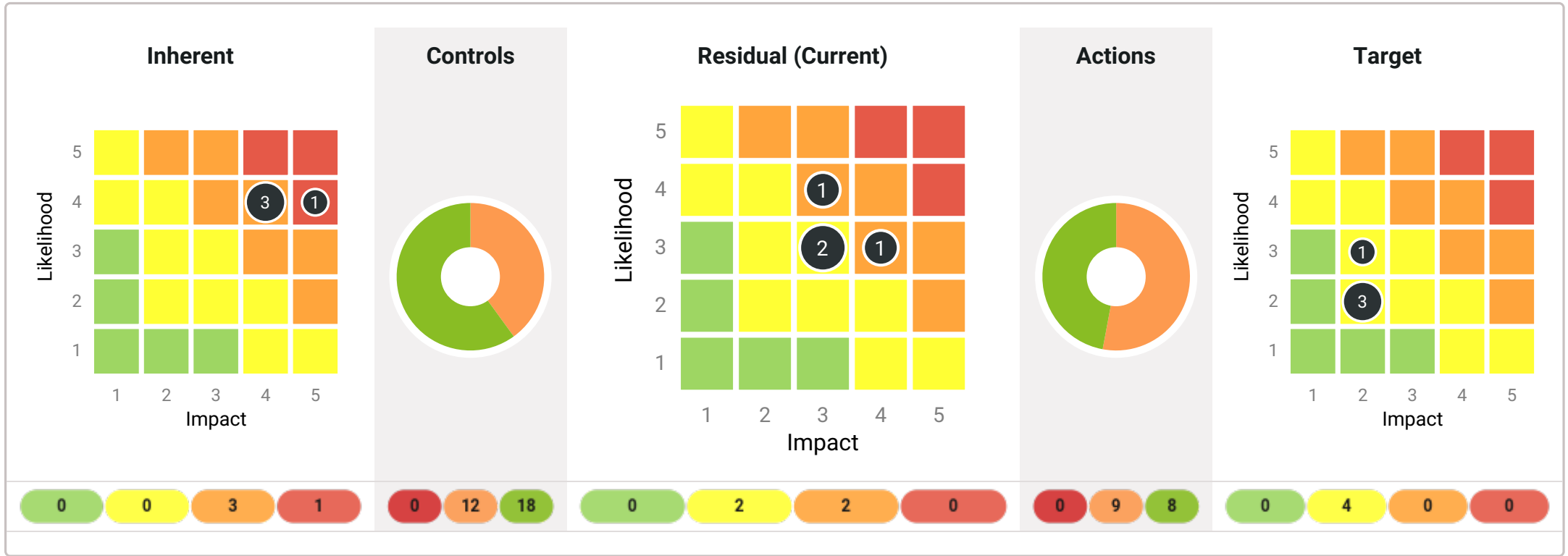Risk Register Report to Board – December 2022

Risk Summary Report

Risk Register: Strategic Risk Register

Risk Status: New/Emerging, Open, Closed

Inherent

Controls

Residual (Current)

Actions

Target

Ref	Category	Title	Controls on Track	Residual Risk Likelihood x Impact	Movement in score	Actions on Track	Target Risk Likelihood x Impact
1	Strategic	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.	● 5 Green	3 x 3 ● 9	-	● 5 Amber ● 9 Green	2 x 2 ● 4
2	Strategic	The optimum model for CSAS ownership and accountability and a joint future partnership between SCRA and CHS is not adequately defined and agreed.	● 1 Red ● 1 Amber ● 6 Green	3 x 3 ● 9	-	● 1 Amber ● 7 Green	2 x 2 ● 4
3	Strategic	SCRA do not maintain a skilled, motivated and flexible workforce which can meet current demands and future needs.	● 7 Green	3 x 4 ● 12	-	● 2 Amber ● 5 Green	2 x 2 ● 4
4	Strategic	Significant policy, legislative and reform/transformation change agenda impacts on SCRA's ability to deliver core services or necessary change programmes.	● 6 Green	3 x 4 ● 12	-	● 3 Green	2 x 2 ● 4
5	Reputation	Failure to progress Board approved Environmental plan (e.g. reduce GHG emissions by 10%-20% by March 2024) and inability to accelerate plans to meet new targets.	● 1 Amber ● 3 Green	3 x 4 ● 12	-	● 3 Amber ● 3 Green	2 x 3 ● 6
6	Operational	Inability to engage with digital inhibits realisation of full potential of new technologies resulting in significant operational disruption.	● 1 Amber ● 6 Green	3 x 4 ● 12	-	● 5 Green	2 x 2 ● 4
7	People	Inability to meet staff expectations on pay/reward resulting in operational disruption/staff engagement in change.	● 1 Amber ● 4 Green	3 x 4 ● 12	-	● 5 Green	2 x 3 ● 6
108	Strategic	2023/24 Scottish Government budget does not deliver required level of revenue funding with impact on ability to deliver a quality service and respond effectively to new legislative and policy pressures.	● 6 Amber	4 x 4 ● 16	✱ 21st Sep 2022	● 10 Green	2 x 2 ● 4
153	Strategic	Inability to spend 2023/24 CCJB capital allocations due to lack of specificity of the necessary adaptations to facilities and systems for referral of 16 and 17 year olds with the result that less optimal solutions reduce the efficiency of staff and the quality of service when the legislation is implemented in 2024/25.		0 x 0 ● 0	-		0 x 0 ● 0

📊 Risk Summary Report

Risk Register: Operational Risk Register

Risk Status: New/Emerging, Open

Inherent	Controls	Residual (Current)	Actions	Target

Inherent: 0 | 0 | 3 | 1

Controls: 0 | 12 | 18

Residual (Current): 0 | 2 | 2 | 0

Actions: 0 | 9 | 8

Target: 0 | 4 | 0 | 0

Ref	Category	Title	Controls on Track	Residual Risk Likelihood x Impact	Movement in score	Actions on Track	Target Risk Likelihood x Impact
8	Reputation	During the early implementation of CSAS there is a heightened risk of Non-Disclosure breaches. The components of the heightened risk are: 1. Staff pressures 2. Capacity for double-checks 3. CSAS functionality changes 4. CSAS migration	🟠 1 Amber 🟢 13 Green	3 x 3 🟡 9	⬇ 3 x 4 = 12 6th Apr 2023	🟢 4 Green	2 x 2 🟡 4
133	Operational	Reduced system capacity, particularly in key partners, impacts on SCRA efficiency in terms of progressing hearings and making decisions resulting in delayed outcomes for children and young people.	🟠 5 Amber 🟢 2 Green	3 x 3 🟡 9	✳ 27th Oct 2022	🟠 4 Amber	2 x 2 🟡 4
134	Operational	Inefficient case processing and budget restrictions (temporary staffing) leads to delay in establishing the optimum workforce profile resulting in ineffective use of resources and reduced quality of service.	🟠 1 Amber 🟢 3 Green	3 x 4 🟠 12	✳ 27th Oct 2022	🟠 2 Amber 🟢 4 Green	2 x 2 🟡 4
152	Operational	Wider system and partner changes have potential to destabilise operations and divert resources from service delivery and improvement work.	🟠 5 Amber	4 x 3 🟠 12	✳ 13th Apr 2023	🟠 3 Amber	3 x 2 🟡 6

Assurance Report

Risk	Risk Impact	Risk Controls	Assurance Sources	Gaps in Assurance	Improvement Actions	Due Date	Assurance Control RAG
[Ref: 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. Risk Owner: Lawrie McDonald Risk Opened: 21st Jun 2022 Reviewed:	**Implication** 1. Resources allocated to restoring data and SCRA reputation. **Cause** 1. Gaps in CSAS security arrangements. **Consequence** 1. Significant data loss.	**Operational Control** Any case information stored within the SCOTS environment is protected by ITECS. Case data is also stored in the Microsoft cloud, this data is protected via the CSAS support and maintenance contract which includes a level of service for cyber security, Microsoft built service cyber security as well as the CSAS platform being accredited by an established provider for cyber security adding additional independent assurance for the security of the CSAS platform. By having CSAS disaster recovery procedures in place and reviewing and reviewing SCRA business continuity plans annually gives assurance that SCRA is capable of recovering from a cyber-security attack. Kept up-to date with new threats by attending cyber security events and professional membership – SCRA's Digital Security & Governance Manager is a Certified Information Security Manager (CISM) and a member of the Cyber-security Information Sharing Partnership (CiSP)	**External Assurance** iTECS have achieved both their Cyber Essentials Plus certification and their Public Services Network (PSN) compliance certificate for the SCOTS network Annual Penetration testing of CSAS ensures that CSAS's vulnerability to common cyber threats is fully understood. **Internal Audit** Cyber review. Data Protection review.		Complete Gap Analysis on the target progression stage of the Public Sector Cyber Resilience Framework and develop a plan to fully meet the requirements. EMT 'exercise in a box'. Annual review of Cyber Security Policy. Regular tracking of Top Five cyber security risks. Annual refresher training. Security related performance measures. Align Cyber Security Strategy with 2023-24 Business Plan. Update security awareness training.	17th Feb 2023 31st Mar 2023 31st Jan 2023 30th Jun 2023 31st Mar 2023 31st Jan 2023 31st May 2023 31st Mar 2023	**Inherent 16** Likelihood Impact 4 x 4 **Amber** **Residual 9** Likelihood Impact 3 x 3 **Yellow** **Target 4** Likelihood Impact 2 x 2 **Yellow**

Risk	Risk Impact	Risk Controls	Assurance Sources	Gaps in Assurance	Improvement Actions	Due Date	Assurance Control RAG
[Ref: 2] The optimum model for CSAS ownership and accountability and a joint future partnership between SCRA and CHS is not adequately defined and agreed. Risk Owner: Lawrie McDonald Risk Opened: 21st Jun 2022 Reviewed:	**Implication** 1. Separate, incompatible strategies for CSAS are pursued by SCRA and CHS. **Cause** 1. Lack of clarity and purpose in pursuing a partnership approach. **Consequence** 1. Senior teams do not commit to development of a partnership model.	**Corporate Oversight** Digital Change Advisory Board Development of CHS and SCRA Digital Boards with clear links to the CHS/SCRA Authorisation Board Legal ownership agreed. **Operational Control** Licencing and software agreements. Joint Agreement of the CSAS Change Management Strategy Change Control Board. Re-introduce Internal Design Team arrangements	**External Assurance** External audit testing of key systems and recommendations. **Internal Audit** Digital Delivery Plan.		Digital Change Advisory Board to consider options for greater separation of support and maintenance arrangements and opportunities to better align services to respective organisations tenancies.	29th Sep 2023	**Inherent** 16 Likelihood 4 x Impact 4 Amber **Residual** 9 Likelihood 3 x Impact 3 Yellow **Target** 4 Likelihood 2 x Impact 2 Yellow

Risk	Risk Impact	Risk Controls	Assurance Sources	Gaps in Assurance	Improvement Actions	Due Date	Assurance Control RAG
[Ref: 3] SCRA do not maintain a skilled, motivated and flexible workforce which can meet current demands and future needs. Risk Owner: Susan Deery Risk Opened: 21st Jun 2022 Reviewed:	**Implication** 1. Additional costs incurred to deliver services. **Cause** 1. Insufficient focus on staff development and wellbeing. **Consequence** 1. Services are not responsive, objectives are not completed.	**Operational Control** L&D Strategy. Agile working policy. Agreed roles and responsibilities. Maintain focus on staff wellbeing in all plans. People Plan 22/23. Alignment to SG Fair work policy. Digital Skills Survey and post action plan.	**Internal Audit** Workforce Planning & Resource Management Review Learning & Development Review.		Review roles and responsibilities aligned to the SOM. Develop a transition plan from pandemic to endemic.	31st Dec 2022 31st Mar 2023	**Inherent** **20** Likelihood / Impact 4 x 5 **Red** **Residual** **12** Likelihood / Impact 3 x 4 **Amber** **Target** **4** Likelihood / Impact 2 x 2 **Yellow**

Risk	Risk Impact	Risk Controls	Assurance Sources	Gaps in Assurance	Improvement Actions	Due Date	Assurance Control RAG
[Ref: 4] Significant policy, legislative and reform/transformation change agenda impacts on SCRA's ability to deliver core services or necessary change programmes. Risk Owner: Alistair Hogg Risk Opened: 21st Jun 2022 Reviewed:	**Implication** 1. Requirement for business continuity/recovery/service improvement plans. **Cause** 1. Unrealistic timescales for significant change events. **Consequence** 1. Delays in service delivery/improvement projects and ineffective use of resources.	**Corporate Oversight** Unison Partnership Framework. **Operational Control** EHRI assessments. Influencing Strategy. Corporate/Business Plan priorities, and budget Staff engagement.	**External Assurance** SG dialogue, secondments to legislative programmes, HSWG.				**Inherent 16** Likelihood 4 x Impact 4 Amber **Residual 12** Likelihood 3 x Impact 4 Amber **Target 4** Likelihood 2 x Impact 2 Yellow

Risk	Risk Impact	Risk Controls	Assurance Sources	Gaps in Assurance	Improvement Actions	Due Date	Assurance Control RAG
[Ref: 5] Failure to progress Board approved Environmental plan (e.g. reduce GHG emissions by 10%-20% by March 2024) and inability to accelerate plans to meet new targets. Risk Owner: Ed Morrison Risk Opened: 21st Jun 2022 Reviewed:	**Implication** 1. SCRA does not meet statutory duties. **Cause** 1. Other business objectives take priority. **Consequence** 1. Emissions do not reduce or start to increase.	**Corporate Oversight** Annual Environment report to Board. **Operational Control** Environmental strategy group. Environmental ambassadors group.	**External Assurance** Annual Environmental performance report to Scottish Government. **Internal Audit** Sustainability review.		Engage staff in development of delivery arrangements. Engage consultant to assist with plan for property emissions reductions.	30th Jun 2023 28th Jul 2023	**Inherent** **16** Likelihood Impact 4 x 4 **Amber** **Residual** **12** Likelihood Impact 3 x 4 **Amber** **Target** **6** Likelihood Impact 2 x 3 **Yellow**

Risk	Risk Impact	Risk Controls	Assurance Sources	Gaps in Assurance	Improvement Actions	Due Date	Assurance Control RAG
[Ref: 6] Inability to engage with digital inhibits realisation of full potential of new technologies resulting in significant operational disruption. Risk Owner: Susan Deery Risk Opened: 21st Jun 2022 Reviewed:	**Implication** 1. Staff do not work as effectively as they could. **Cause** 1. No training and support offering is made to staff or lack of time/fear of technology inhibits take up of training offered. **Consequence** 1. Request for additional staffing capacity to stay on top of workload.	**Operational Control** People and Operational Plans. CAB and ongoing CSAS Development. Standard Operating Model. Digital Upskilling/ Confidence. Operational Development Team. Technology that is fit for purpose. Digital Skills Research formulating a digital skills strategy.	**Internal Audit** Virtual Hearings review.		Ongoing Development of CSAS. Implementation of Digital Training Strategy. Review of Roles and responsibilities. LSM network to assess skills gaps and align locality digital skills action plans with corporate strategy. Align support transition with locality and national skills action plans.	31st Mar 2023 31st Mar 2024 31st Mar 2024 31st Mar 2023 29th Sep 2023	**Inherent** **16** Likelihood Impact 4 x 4 **Amber** **Residual** **12** Likelihood Impact 3 x 4 **Amber** **Target** **4** Likelihood Impact 2 x 2 **Yellow**

Risk	Risk Impact	Risk Controls	Assurance Sources	Gaps in Assurance	Improvement Actions	Due Date	Assurance Control RAG
[Ref: 7] Inability to meet staff expectations on pay/reward resulting in operational disruption/staff engagement in change. Risk Owner: Susan Deery Risk Opened: 21st Jun 2022 Reviewed:	**Implication** 1. Lower morale across the staff group. **Cause** 1. Insufficient funding available or SG do not approve pay proposals. **Consequence** 1. Work to rule and/or non-engagement in new work.	**Corporate Oversight** SCRA Budget. Partnership with UNISON. Sponsor Team support. Remuneration Committee. **Operational Control** L & D Plan/Wellbeing Strategy.	**External Assurance** SG Pay Policy Guidance.				**Inherent 20** Likelihood 4 x Impact 5 **Red** **Residual 12** Likelihood 3 x Impact 4 **Amber** **Target 6** Likelihood 2 x Impact 3 **Yellow**

Risk	Risk Impact	Risk Controls	Assurance Sources	Gaps in Assurance	Improvement Actions	Due Date	Assurance Control RAG
[Ref: 108] 2023/24 Scottish Government budget does not deliver required level of revenue funding with impact on ability to deliver a quality service and respond effectively to new legislative and policy pressures. Risk Owner: Neil Hunter Risk Opened: 21st Sep 2022 Reviewed:	**Implication** 1. Insufficient revenue funding for all priorities and objectives. **Cause** 1. Inability to influence SG budget decisions. **Consequence** 1. Scale back ambition and objectives in Business Plan.	**Corporate Oversight** Five year Financial Plan. Regular reports to the Board (December 22, January 23, February 23, March 23) on development of Budget 23/24. **Operational Control** Regular officer and Board dialogue with Ministers and SG (DCAF, Sponsor Team, Finance Business Partner). Continue to demonstrate and evidence SCRA's relevance to ministerial policy outcome ambitions and core statutory duties.	**External Assurance** External audit review of financial sustainability arrangements. **Internal Audit** Annual Core Financials review.				**Inherent 20** Likelihood 5 x Impact 4 **Red** **Residual 16** Likelihood 4 x Impact 4 **Amber** **Target 4** Likelihood 2 x Impact 2 **Yellow**

Risk	Risk Impact	Risk Controls	Assurance Sources	Gaps in Assurance	Improvement Actions	Due Date	Assurance Control RAG
[Ref: 153] Inability to spend 2023/24 CCJB capital allocations due to lack of specificity of the necessary adaptations to facilities and systems for referral of 16 and 17 year olds with the result that less optimal solutions reduce the efficiency of staff and the quality of service when the legislation is implemented in 2024/25. Risk Owner: Neil Hunter Risk Opened: 24th Apr 2023 Reviewed:							Inherent 16 Likelihood 4 x Impact 4 Amber