

		<i>Papers</i>	
1.1	AOB		
1.2	Apologies		
2.	Declarations of Interest		
3.	Updates		Board Members
4.	Minutes/Committees		
4.1	Minute of Meeting held on 24 June 2020		
4.2	Board Action Log		
4.3	Workplan		
4.4	Matters Arising		
4.5	Audit & Risk Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Minute of Meeting held on 27 August 2020 		JE
	Reports		
5.	Chief Executive's Report		NH
6.	Organisational Performance Report		DL
7.	Budget Monitoring Report		EM
8.	Annual Accounts 2019-19 & Management Representation Letter		EM
9.	SCRA Annual Report		LB
10	Organisational Change Policy		SD
11.	Digital Programme Update		NH
12.	New Risks		All
13.	Proposed 2021 Board/Committee Dates		PA
	Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 16 December 2020		





Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
Minute of SCRA Board Meeting held on
Wednesday 24 June 2020
By Vscene

Present:

Michelle Miller (Chair), Catherine Robertson, Anela Anwar, Jim Edgar, Tam Baillie, Suzanne Vestri, Martin Toye

In Attendance:

Neil Hunter (Principal Reporter/Chief Executive),
 Ed Morrison (Head of Finance and Resources),
 Lisa Bennett (Head of Strategy and OD),
 Susan Deery (Head of Human Resources),
 Donald Lamb (Data Manager), Item 5,
 Alistair Hogg (Head of Practice and Policy),
 Tom Philliben (Senior Operational Manager),
 Paul Mulvanny (Senior Operational Manager),
 Helen Etchells (Senior Operational Manager),
 Pamela Armstrong (Governance Officer, Minutes)

		Timescale	Action
1.1	AOB The Board approved the amended Sub-Committee terms of reference as issued by Cathy Robertson, Board member.		
1.2	Apologies None		
2.	Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest.		
3.	Minutes/Committees		
3.1	Board Action log and Work plan The action log and work plan were reviewed. Matters Arising All matters arising are covered within the agenda.		
3.2	Draft minute of the Audit and Risk Committee		

		Timescale	Action
	<p>held on Thursday 14 May 2020</p> <p>Jim Edgar, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee and Board Member updated the Board in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality Assurance and Performance • External Audit • Internal Audit • Digital Strategy Joint Committee Update • Strategic & Operational Risk Registers 		
3.2.	<p>Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report</p> <p>Jim Edgar, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee and Board Member introduced the report, the purpose of which was to summarise the work undertaken by SCRA's Audit and Risk Committee in 2019/20 and to support preparation of the Governance Statement.</p> <p>Noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of the work undertaken by SCRA's Audit and Risk Committee in 2019/20 and to support preparation of the Governance Statement. <p>Issues arising during discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board thanked the Audit and Risk Committee to the work undertaken over the Course of the year. <p>Agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To approve the Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report for 2019/20 		
	Reports		
4.	<p>Chief Executive's Report</p> <p>The Principal Reporter/Chief Executive spoke to the update report which detailed a wide range of activity across the organisation.</p> <p>Noted:</p> <p>Updates were given in the following areas;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Partnership • Strategic Partnerships • Sponsor Team Links • Covid 19 Business Continuity • Covid 19 Recovery Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Space of Hearing rooms to support 		

		Timescale	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> regulations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use of external facilities ○ CSAS Roll out ○ Staff availability • Press and Communications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Internal communications ○ Children and young people ○ Vscene guidance ○ Parents and carers ○ Social media ○ Media ○ Partnership Communications. <p>Issues arising during discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board commented that SCRA recovery planning has been outstanding in terms of the level of work and complexity. • Longer term we need to consider how to manage a system that requires to respond to immediate need. • How can we create enough capacity to meet the needs of the children and young people of Scotland? • It is vital that partners work together building capacity to allow for more hearings to be conducted. • SCRA have created a detailed and credible plan. • Face to face hearings will commence in Glasgow from mid July 2020. • Valuable information has been obtained from asking used about their experience of virtual hearings. 		
5.	<p>Fourth Quarter/Year-end Organisational Performance Report 2019/20: 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020</p> <p>The Data Manager introduced the report and the Senior Operational Managers provided the management response.</p> <p>Noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The annual data contained within this publication is subject to Official Statistics legislation and is therefore embargoed until the Official Statistics release date of the 30th July <p>Issues arising during discussion:</p>		

		Timescale	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A spike in referral activity is thought to be possible as we emerge from lockdown. Referrals are being registered and assessed appropriately. <p>Agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To approve the Fourth Quarter /Year-end Organisational Performance Report 2019/20: (1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020) and associated management response. 		
6.	<p>2020/21 Draft Budget Outturn</p> <p>The Head of Finance and Resources introduced the report recommending the Board;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the draft revenue and capital outturn positions for the year to March 2020. Approve the draft revenue underspend of £128k of which £72k to be returned to Scottish Government in 2019/20 Approve allocation of the draft capital underspend of £140k to complete 2019/20 projects in 2020/21. Approve allocation of the draft Digital underspend of £120k to support 2020/21 Digital priorities <p>Noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The total available revenue resources for 2019/20 are £24,613k, comprising the £23,800k allocated by Scottish Government, £463k other income (shared services, rents and secondments) and £350k underspend carried forward from 2018/19. In addition SCRA has drawn down from Scottish Government £214k for the SCRA revenue costs of the Digital Delivery Plan. The total available capital resource for 2019/20 is £2.829m. This comprises Core Grant in Aid of £750k, 2018/19 underspend carried forward of £79k, and funding for the Digital Delivery Plan of £2m. The overall accruals based revenue underspend is £128k (0.5%). Agreement has been reached to return £72k of underspend to Scottish Government in 2019/20, any underspend above that amount, post audit, will be discussed with Sponsor Team in 2020/21 in light of COVID-19 impacts and 		

		Timescale	Action
	<p>other pressures. The Property capital budget is currently underspent by £139k due to slippage on Minor Works and Glasgow projects plus deferred projects in Glenrothes and Elgin. This underspend is subject to external audit review and if confirmed will be utilised to complete projects as set out in section 5 of the report.</p> <p>Issues arising during discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly finance meeting are being held during the crisis. Scottish Government have support if there is a need for extra finance around covid pressures. <p>Agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To approve the draft revenue underspend of £128k of which £72k to be returned to Scottish Government in 2019/20 To approve allocation of the draft capital underspend of £140k to complete 2019/20 projects in 2020/21. To approve allocation of the draft Digital underspend of £120k to support 2020/21 Digital priorities. 		
7.	<p>Financial Strategy</p> <p>The Head of Finance and Resources introduced the report recommending the Board approve the updated Financial Strategy 2021/22 – 2025/26 and note the updated assessment of revenue and capital funding needs.</p> <p>Noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In June 2019 the Board approved an updated Financial Strategy 2020/21-2024/25. In quarter three of 2019/20 the SCRA Chair and SCRA senior management engaged with the Minister and Sponsor Team to influence the outcome of the 2019 Scottish Government Budget process which set the funding allocation for 2020/21. In March 2020 the Board approved the 2020/21 Budget. The purpose of this report is to present an updated Financial Strategy for the period 2021/22 to 2025/26 following a light touch review by the Head of Finance & Resources. The Strategy is essentially a 5 year Financial Plan based on funding requirements and 		

		Timescale	Action
	<p>includes a number of funding scenarios with potential options to address funding gaps.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial sustainability over the term of the Financial Strategy will require continued in year support from Scottish Government for new and unforeseen budget pressures, around 3% increases in annual revenue funding, delivery of efficiencies from major programmes, clear outcomes from the work on service change and resilience, continuing capital investment in infrastructure and ongoing vigilance from budget holders, supported by Head Office business partners. Early discussions will take place with Sponsor Team in the autumn to ensure a good, shared understanding of SCRA's corporate and financial objectives for 2021/22 and the period to 2025/26. It is hoped this will build on the very productive dialogue that led to the increased revenue funding in 202/21. <p>Agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To approve the updated Financial Strategy 2021/22 – 2025/26. 		
8.	<p>Property Strategy</p> <p>The Head of Finance and Resources introduced the Property Strategy report, asking the Board to note the progress made implementing SCRA's Property Strategy and the actions being taken to maintain, repair and improve SCRA's estate.</p> <p>Noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCRA's current estate comprises of 34 core properties of which 19 are owned. In addition to the core estate SCRA uses facilities in approximately 24 locations for the provision of hearings on an ad-hoc basis. The Property Strategy was developed around five key themes that are consistent with the three strategic aims of our new Corporate Plan – to Care, Connect and Protect. The key themes of the Property Strategy are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting the Needs of Property Users Flexible Service Delivery Location and Quality of Hearing Centres Sustainability Working in Partnership. 		

		Timescale	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since our 2010 baseline, a significant number of projects have been carried out to progress the transformation of our estate. The improvements in digital infrastructure and equipment provides increased flexibility for how and where work takes place. • It is expected that the coronavirus pandemic will accelerate the development of digital solutions to provide increased resilience and flexibility in the event of a further pandemic. There are also implications for how we use our properties and how much space we require. Social distancing requirements and homeworking will both have an effect but our offices provide more than simply a place to work. • A new Corporate Plan has been developed for 2020-2023 based around three core objectives – to Care, Connect and Protect. The five themes set out in our property strategy are aligned to the three objectives of the Corporate Plan. There is now a greater emphasis in the Corporate Plan on our climate change duties and how they will be reflected in the delivery of our services. Localities will bring forward local sustainability plans to mainstream environmental considerations as a part of business as usual planning and decision making. • Our planned activity for 2020/21 is aligned to our strategic themes and the Corporate Plan objectives. A full programme of work is planned for the year ahead including further hearing room improvements, the management of upcoming lease expiries and the development of “smart working” principles. A significant part of our work over the coming year will be related to the implications emerging from the coronavirus pandemic and how we adapt our services and our buildings. <p>Issues arising during discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a result of the covid crisis and staff adapting to a different way of working, there is an opportunity to consider changes to staff accommodation and the ratio between staff to hearing facilities. 		

		Timescale	Action
9.	<p>Annual Procurement Report</p> <p>The Head of Finance and Resources introduced the Annual Procurement Report for the period 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. The Board are asked to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note Procurement activity during 2019/20 in line with SCRA's Corporate Procurement Strategy and the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014. • Note the ongoing contribution of the Procurement Strategy to SCRA's ongoing work. <p>Noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In accordance with The Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014, SCRA is required to publish an Annual Procurement Report which should include; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A summary of the regulated procurements that have been completed during the period covered by the report. ○ A review of whether those procurements complied with SCRA's Procurement Strategy. ○ The extent to which any regulated procurements did not comply, and a statement detailing how SCRA will ensure that future regulated procurements do comply. ○ A summary of any community benefit requirements imposed as part of a regulated procurement that were fulfilled during the period covered by the report. ○ A summary of any steps taken to facilitate the involvement of supported businesses in regulated procurements during the report period. ○ A summary of regulated procurements expected to commence in the next two financial years. ○ Reporting on other matters as contained within SCRA's Corporate Procurement Strategy • The report also provides an overview of SCRA procurement performance across the year as well as the range and scope of the Procurement Team work and its criticality to the smooth operation and support of many 		

		Timescale	Action
	<p>aspects of SCRA's work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to the mandatory sections, the report also provides an update on other procurement activity including work in connection with Equalities & Inclusion, Cyber Resilience and the PCIP and Audit recommendations. • A copy of the Annual Procurement Report will be published on SCRA's website and a link will be sent to the Scottish Ministers. 		
10.	<p>Communications and Engagement Strategy The Head of Strategy and Organisational Development introduced the report recommending the Board approve the contents of the report for inclusion in the SCRA Corporate Plan 2020-23</p> <p>Noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SCRA Board has previously noted that the annual communications plan has sat to the side of previous Corporate Plans although contributed significantly to their delivery and required to be re-synchronised within the agreed planning cycle. • The Communications Strategy has been developed to align with the SCRA Corporate Plan 2020-23 and details priorities in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Communications Strategy aims ○ Engaging children and young people ○ Internal and External audiences ○ Action Plan – year 1 ○ Communications methodology <p>Issues arising during discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board asked how can we measure our success? They were advised the Planning Manager is assessing each strategy to develop indicators for all actions. <p>Agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To approve the contents of the report for inclusion in the SCRA Corporate Plan 2020-23. 		
11.	<p>Equalities Network Annual Report The Head of HR introduced the Equalities Network Annual report recommending the Board;</p>		

		Timescale	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the content of the Annual Report on the work of the Equalities Network. Note the publication of SCRA's Equalities Strategy and Mainstreaming Report 2020 in line with The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 as amended. Note updates on key Network activity. <p>Noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current Equalities Strategy 2018-2021, was brought to a conclusion one year early and a new three year Equalities Strategy 2020-2023 has been developed to align with the new three year Corporate Plan and associated strategies. The Equalities Strategy has been consulted on and will shortly be available on our website. SCRA's Equalities Network has set another ambitious and detailed programme of work for the forthcoming year, with a focus on achieving real and tangible improvements that ensures we promote good practice, has a positive impact on our staff and responds to the individualised needs of the children, young people and families we work with. SCRA will closely monitor the programme of work and review it regularly given the impact of COVID 19 and the recovery plan from this period. <p>Issues arising during discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equalities is now increasingly viewed as mainstream and is embedded as part of the organisations culture 		
12.	<p>Annual Complaints Report The Head of Practice & Policy introduced the report on the review of complaints 2019-20.</p> <p>Noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCRA's Complaints Handling Procedure has been in place since 2011 and follows the model provided by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). Its main features are to allow: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More pro-active recording of issues as complaints. 		

		Timescale	Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Greater resolution at front line. ○ Greater visibility of issues of learning. • As with previous years, SCRA received no direct complaints from children and young people. In June 2019, SCRA launched new complaints materials for children and young people. That there still have been no such complaints, raises questions on whether there is a need to further review how SCRA communicates with children and young people to enable them to exercise their right to complain if they have issues with SCRA and our service. • SPSO guidance and SCRA's Complaints Procedure is that where the matter can be resolved quickly and informally this should be done at the front line and only reported where the issue might have national significance. • Where a complaint is not upheld or partly upheld, the complainant is advised that they may contact the SPSO. <p>Issues arising during discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to understand the reason for no complaints from children and young people and target improvements in the right direction. Is it because they feel disempowered or disengaged? Are we exploring how we engage with children and young people to hear their voice? 		
13.	<p>Influencing Report 01 December 2019 – 01 June 2020</p> <p>The Head of Practice & Policy introduced the Influencing Report outlining the key areas where SCRA has been able to be influential and apply its professional expertise, data and research to particular issues at a national level.</p> <p>Noted:</p> <p>Updates were provided in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pending Legislation and Parliamentary Work • Other Consultation Responses • Current partnership and collaborative work • Research • Additional Work • Horizon Scanning • Other influencing work and Training 		

		Timescale	Action
	Issues arising during discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The report highlights the breadth and influence SCRA has. 		
14.	Digital Strategy Review The PR/CE introduced the paper updating the Board in the following areas; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Background Information Governance & Assurance Programme Update Transition to live Learning, familiarisation and support CSAS and our operational recovery Issues arising during discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board agreed that protecting the progress of the digital programme has ensured it will assist with the recovery plan. 		
15.	Risk		
15.1	Strategic and Operational Risk Registers The Head of Finance and Resources introduced the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers report for review by the Board. Noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SCRA's Revised Risk Management Policy was approved by the Board at its meeting in June 2019. The Board has responsibility for the system of internal control and risk management within SCRA. The Risk Registers are kept under review by the Executive Management Team (EMT) and the Planning and Performance Network (PPN). The risk register format includes an assessment of both gross and net risk in order to demonstrate the impact of existing control mechanisms and to link the agreed organisational risk appetite. 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. 		

		Timescale	Action
	Agreed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To approve the Strategic and Operational Risk Registers. 		
15.2	New Risks Delivery of the SCRA Recovery Plan.	Nov 20	EMT
	Date of Next Meeting Wednesday 23 September by VScene		

Board Action Log as at September 2020

Meeting/ Item	Action	Timescale	Owner	Comments	Status
June 19 Equalities Network Annual Report	Action plan to be updated to show priorities set along equalities outcomes	Jun 20	SD	Equalities Network Annual Report presented to the June Board, including updated action plan.	Complete
Sep 19 SCRA Annual Report	Annual Report 20/21 to ensure that areas and scope for improvement are highlighted alongside achievements	Sep 20	LB	This has been incorporated in the annual report – Case Sampling/Practice, Better Hearings, Technical.	Complete

SCRA Board Meeting Workplan September 2020

Business Item	Wed 24/6/20	Wed 23/9/20	Wed 16/12/20	01/21	03/21	06/21
Strategic/Corporate						
Policy & Influencing Report	✓		✓			✓
Research Programme			✓			
Risk Register	✓		✓			✓
Governance						
Audit Committee Minutes	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Development Day Minutes						
Committee Annual Reports	✓					✓
Nominations Committee Minutes					✓	
Board Committee Membership			✓			
SCRA Standing Orders Review (Next due 2022)						
Finance						
Budget Monitoring Report	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Draft Budget					✓	
Annual Report & Accounts		✓		✓		
Financial Strategy	✓					✓
Planning						
Draft Corporate, Corporate Parenting & Business Plan					✓	
Draft Annual Report		✓		✓		
Annual Workforce Planning Report					✓	
Communications Plan	✓					✓
Performance				✓		
Organisational Performance Report	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Operational						
Locality Performance Reviews			✓			
Chief Executive's Report	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Complaints Review	✓					✓

Business Item	Wed 24/6/20	Wed 23/9/20	Wed 16/12/20	01/21	03/21	06/21
Equalities Annual Report	✓					✓
Environmental Annual Report					✓	
Overview of Policies Annual Report			✓			
Health & Safety Annual Report					✓	
Efficiency Report	✓					✓
Procurement Report	✓					✓
Property Strategy	✓					✓
Digital Strategy update	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Review of Risk Policy	✓					✓
Organisational Change Policy		✓				



SCOTTISH
CHILDREN'S REPORTER
ADMINISTRATION

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Chief Executives Report

**Accountable
Director:**

Neil Hunter

Date: 23 September 2020

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 The National Partnership Forum met on 8 September and focussed on the COVID recovery plan, staff wellbeing and CSAS transition to live arrangements. The UNISON Branch Secretary remains in very frequent contact with the Head of HR on all issues and this dialogue is positive and responsive.

2. Strategic Partnerships

- 2.1 The Youth Justice Improvement Board (YJIB) met in early September. The key agenda items focussed on delivering The Promise and the United Nations Convention of Rights of the Child Incorporation (Scotland) Bill which was introduced to Parliament on 2 September. A summary of key youth justice related commitments included in the Promise has been helpfully produced by the Children and Young Peoples Centre for Justice (CYCJ) and is shown at **appendix A**.
- 2.2 SCRA updated the YJIB in relation to the Childrens Hearings recovery activity as well as the work being led by SCRA on cross system planning for integrating 16/17 year olds within the welfare based hearing system. This work is joint with COPFS, Community Justice Scotland, CHS and CoSLA and seeks to estimate the impacts, improvement and investment that may be required within the Hearing system to integrate this change, currently being consulted upon by Scottish Ministers. A detailed workplan is in place and the priority focus is on assessing possible future alignment of victim information/support across the criminal/welfare systems, workforce development and sufficiency of capacity, skills and interventions.

3. Sponsor Team issues

- 3.1 An accountability meeting with our sponsor team took place on 23 July. Discussion focussed on the following:-
- COVID recovery planning and the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 provision and reporting arrangements
 - Digital Strategy and CSAS transition
 - Finance and Budget
 - Organisational Performance
 - Practice and Legislation
 - Pay policy
 - Data Protection Internal Audit
- 3.2 Under the Practice and Legislation item SCRA and SG focussed in on the Children (Scotland) Bill which passed stage 3 parliamentary proceedings on the 25 August. The specific area of discussion was in relation to what has become section 10A – ‘Duty to consider contact when making a compulsory supervision order’ – which includes measures to widen the participation of siblings in hearings proceedings and is related to the concerns which formed the background to the ABC/(XY) versus the Principal Reporter cases which were heard at the UK Supreme Court in late 2019.
- 3.3 Under the Data Protection Internal Audit item – SCRA reminded SG that our current practice is not fully compliant with Childrens Hearings Rules requiring sending of mail by recorded delivery. This was recently raised as a finding of an Internal Audit at the SCRA Audit and Risk Committee as a management recommendation. SCRA’s position, which was first formally raised with SG in 2013/14 was noted again in the subsequent minute of the Accountability meeting.

4. Delivering the Promise

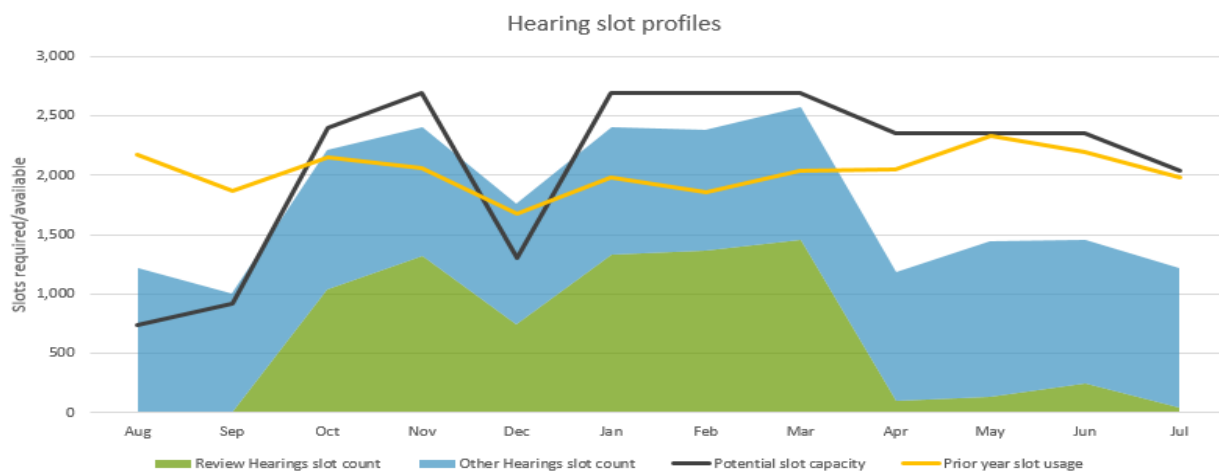
- 4.1 EMT recently approved the development of a single team to focus on the Promise and how we will deliver on its recommendations, develop new or strengthen existing partnership arrangements and the engagement of children and young people’s views and experience in our work and report on progress internally and externally – initially over the next 3 year period.

- 4.2 A small team of SCRA staff will be drawn from areas such as Practice, Policy and Public Affairs, Communications, Planning and Strategy and with input from Operations, Research and Digital as an 'SCRA – Promise Delivery Team'. This will be, where possible, delivered within existing job roles and capacity. Over time and once established this team will draw from across all of our organisations skills and experience. Some re-alignment of job roles/priorities may be required and as assessed necessary. The delivery team will report to the Head of Strategy and Organisational Development and Head of Practice and Policy and from there to EMT, and to Board on progress.
- 4.3 SCRA has strongly committed to delivering the Promise. There is a clear expectation that we make tangible progress and form strong enduring relationships with key aspects of the Promise structure – agreeing areas of immediate priority and focus and working together with a range of stakeholders in pulling together a programme of work. EMT will be supportive of future need for organisational time, support and where necessary resources. The focus over the next period for this group will be:
- Consider how the recommendations specific to the Hearing system are to be taken forward, in which order and alongside other programme aspects
 - The ongoing assessment of our current programmes (such as Better Hearings) and the extent to which they, in their current format can contribute to the recommendations of the Promise, or can be re-shaped or realigned to contribute
 - The delivery of our corporate plan commitments to keep the Promise and the phasing of this over the next period
 - Co-ordinate any necessary joint work with Hearing system partners – specifically CHS and LA Social Work on change and improvement
 - Consider the commissioning of projects and plans, tests of change or service/policy, practice of policy developments that will contribute to meeting the recommendations of the Promise
 - Develop in house capacity to develop and maintain positive professional relationships with the Promise team and clear points of reference and information flow
 - Make sure our existing work to engage and ensure the lived/living experience of children and young people is core to the work we plan, develop and deliver and that we have deep and strong relationships with groups such as OHOV and others
 - Establish a regular reporting mechanism to the EMT and SCRA Board

5. COVID 19 Recovery Planning

- 5.1 A detailed update on our recovery modelling and plan was reported to the Board on 4 August. Our recovery planning has continued to evolve and has a number of interrelated components:-
- Increasing range and types of hearings we can deliver
 - Increasing the capacity of our estate or accessing capacity outwith our estate
 - Increasing the turnaround of individual hearing rooms through enhanced cleaning
 - Increasing staff resources and operational capacity
 - Improving access to enabling technology – software and hardware
 - Getting the best out of our partnership arrangements at national and local level
 - Tracking data and workload to accurately plan our way through recovery
- 5.2 Our recovery plan has a number of underpinning assumptions:-
- That the emergency Coronavirus legislation, which allows us to, where appropriate and necessary us to extend key timelines will continue beyond the initial 6 month stage
 - That there is continued progress through the Scottish Government Routemap out of Lockdown
- 5.3 3478 hearings have been held between 4 May and 31 August. The vast majority of these continue to be virtual hearings. Hybrid and face to face hearings have been increasing in number since mid-July, although continued restrictions on our built estate required for physical distancing continue to be an inhibitor. All Localities have plans in place to increase the capacity of our estate – either by internal reconfiguration of existing buildings or by use of external premises or a combination of both.

- 5.4 Revised cleaning regimes, involving the use of electrostatic treatments will significantly increase the turnaround time for Hearing rooms and further increase capacity.
- 5.5 Recruitment for additional staffing is well advanced and we expect to be able to make appointments for 15 Assistant Reporter posts and 5 Reporter posts as part of our capacity increase.
- 5.6 Significant investment in and deployment of technology hardware has been made including new video conferencing units, conference cameras, laptops and TV screens across SCRA. This has significantly increased our ability to link various parts of our hearing centres together such as hearing rooms in order to conduct 'hybrid' hearings a blend of face to face and virtual hearings. Work has commenced in phasing out of Vscene as our primary virtual hearing platform and replacing this with MS Teams – as part of the CSAS platform – and without the restrictions we are experience as being part of the SCOT's network.
- 5.7 Our partnership work continues to be regular and strong at national and local level. Weekly calls with Social Work Scotland, CoSLA, CELCIS and CHS continue. CHS and SCRA have recently engaged with Local Authority Chief Executives via SOLACE on a number of asks (**see appendix B**) including access to external premises, broad support for recovery planning through joint workforce approaches and retention of some of the operational gains made during lockdown.
- 5.8 Whilst CSAS transition to live has commenced in the vanguard teams of Central, South East and Grampian, there have been some additional and necessary delays on assuring our data migration work, particularly the overnight 'delta' synchronisation data runs. This is likely to have some knock on consequence for the rate at which we are able to ramp up to full operational recovery. We are currently assessing what that impact will be and whether there are opportunities to make any time up over the course of the vanguard and into second deployment teams. There will be some lead in times for new staff to be supported into service and orientated to task, commencing the full range of duties. Over and above this we are in the medium term dependent on the capacity of other Hearing system delivery partners to work alongside us to deliver the range of additional capacity required. In some areas this is already becoming an emergent issue.



- 5.9 The overall hearings recovery model is shown in the figure above. The gap between hearings activity in 2019/20 (yellow line) and the required hearing capacity (black line) from Autumn 2020 is the challenge we face in the hearing system. Where the lines converge we see a gradual return to steady state, at best in late summer 2021 – but potentially, taking into account possibility of further slippage into September 2021, based on our best assessment. All of the components and variables contained within the recovery plan need to work delivery as anticipated to make the model achievable.

Appendix A – Youth Justice related calls to action from the Promise

- A new approach to youth justice is needed
- Must align with UNCRC
- Children must be able to participate in all decisions about them
- There must be more support for families
- Poverty must be addressed
- Under 18s are children!
- No 16 or 17 year olds in YOIs
- Safe & caring relationships to be prioritised
- Kyle's Story pg.106

Key Asks within 'The Promise'

p. 18	Poverty - There must be significant, ongoing and persistent commitment to ending poverty and mitigating its impacts for Scotland's children, families and communities.
p. 26	Scotland must respect, uphold, champion and defend the rights of children and recognise that their rights are most often realised through relationships with loving, attentive caregivers. Scotland must fully incorporate and uphold the UNCRC... in a way that does not reinforce a focus on policy, process and procedure but supports the ability of children and those around them to connect and develop relationships and cultures that uphold their rights as a matter of course.
p. 31	Care experienced children and young adults must have ownership over their own stories and personal data so that they can understand and influence how their stories are shared.
p. 35	Scotland must be committed to the development of digital tools that incorporate the principle of information ownership. These digital tools must operate at a scale that allows care experienced children and young adults to have control over their information and how it is shared.
p. 36	Scotland must acknowledge that it is the culture surrounding information sharing that has the biggest impact on protecting children.
p.41	Whilst working to prevent the criminalisation of children, Scotland must develop a more progressive, rights based youth justice approach that builds on the Kilbrandon principles and makes them a reality for all.
p.46	Scotland's commitment to early intervention and prevention must be realised through proper, holistic support for families. There must be a significant upscale in universal family support services.
p.52-55	Whatever issues families face, Scotland must ensure that intensive family support is available, proactive and characterised by the 10 family support principles (p57-58)
p.80	Secure care – There must be absolute clarity that the underlying principle of Secure Care is the provision of therapeutic, trauma informed support. Being placed in prison like settings is deeply inappropriate for children.
p. 81	There must be far more alternatives for community based support and monitoring.
p. 82	Use of Secure Care – The planning and provision of Secure Care must reflect the needs of children in Scotland to ensure there are sufficient places for those that need them.
p. 83	Upholding Children's Rights in Secure Care – Secure Care must uphold children's rights. Children must have access to all they need for health, education and participation. They must be supported to maintain good contact with their family if safe to do so.
p. 85	Restraint – Scotland must strive to become a nation that does not restrain its children.
p. 91	Scotland must stop the criminalisation of care experienced children by supporting the workforce to behave and treat children in a way that is relational rather than procedural and process driven. Young Offenders Institutions are not appropriate places for children and only serve to perpetuate the pain that many of them have experienced. There are times where it is right for children to have their liberty restricted, but that must only be done when other options have been fully explored and for the shortest time possible and in small, secure, safe, trauma informed environments that uphold the totality of their rights.
p.104	People and Risk – Scotland must support the workforce to contribute to a broader understanding of risk. Scotland must understand, through its people and structures, the risk of children not having loving supportive relationships and regular childhood and teenage experiences.
p.110	Scotland must stop selling care placements to Local Authorities outside of Scotland.
p.116	Legal Representation – Scotland must consider the creation of an accredited legal specialism to set standards for legal professionals representing children.

In Conflict with the Law p.41-42

For a variety of reasons care experienced children are disproportionately criminalised. Scotland must do more to **avoid that criminalisation** but, when children are before the courts on offence grounds, they **must be dealt with in a way that is appropriate, proportionate, recognises their age and is trauma informed and responsive.**

Scotland must consider **how to ensure that children have the totality of their cases dealt with in an environment that upholds their rights and allows them to effectively participate** in proceedings. Traditional criminal courts are not settings in which children's rights can be upheld and where they can be heard.

Whilst working to prevent the criminalisation of children, Scotland must develop a more progressive, **rights based youth justice approach that builds on the Kilbrandon principles** and makes them a reality for all.

Secure care p. 80-84

p.82 Scotland must recognise that **16 and 17 year olds are children in line with the UNCRC** and must be accommodated within Secure Care rather than within Young Offenders Institutes and the prison estate. This must include children who are on remand and those who have been sentenced. **Being placed in prison like settings is deeply inappropriate for children.**

Ensuring that all **16 and 17 year olds are placed in Secure Care rather than a Young Offenders Institute** will change the nature and provision of Secure Care. There must be careful planning around the type of provision required to cater to the diverse needs of the population requiring that care.

If a young person turns 18 during their time in Secure Care, **there must not be an automatic transfer to a Young Offenders Institute.** There must be more scope to remain in Secure Care for those who have turned 18. Any young person who is 'looked after' and is in Secure Care and turns 18, must retain social work support and be able to access through care and continuing care provisions upon leaving Secure Care.

Criminalisation p.89-92

Care experienced children and young adults, particularly in residential care, told the Care Review about how they had **too often had police involvement** for behaviour that other families would accommodate within the family. There is evidence that **care experienced children are over represented in the youth criminal justice system.** There are a number of things that need to happen to change that but, overall, Scotland needs to do more to prevent the criminalisation of all children.

The principles that underpin The Children's Hearing System, that **children who engage in offending need care and protection rather than punishment,** must be restated and understood across Scotland's services. The impact of early criminalisation is life long and can make it profoundly difficult for young people to access future opportunities.

To ensure that all children are diverted from the criminal justice system, Scotland must aim for **the age of minimum criminal responsibility to be brought in line with the most progressive global Governments** alongside efforts to prevent criminalisation of all children.

There is no evidence that care experienced children engage in more offending behaviour than their peers, but the consequences of their behaviour whilst in care are much more likely to result in criminalisation. It is the **settings of care and workforce responses to behaviour that drives the criminalisation of care experienced children.** Scotland must stop that criminalisation by supporting the workforce to behave and treat children in a way that is **relational rather than procedural and process driven.**

The workforce must be **safe and protected** in carrying out their work, but they must be **supported** to ensure that their responses to the children in their care mirror the tolerance and understanding of a good parent. That involves workforce **understanding of self, nurture, support and leadership that models expected behaviour.**

How Scotland responds to children who have been criminalised must also change. Scotland must stop locking up children who have often experienced the failures of the state in the provision of their care.

Briefing Paper

From : Elliot Jackson, National Convenor/CE – Childrens Hearings Scotland
Neil Hunter, Principal Reporter/CE – Scottish Childrens Reporter Administration

To: Local Authority Chief Executives /SOLACE

Subject: Childrens Hearings system recovery

Date: 28 August 2020

1. Background information

- 1.1 Childrens Hearings have continued to take place across the whole period of public health restrictions. Immediate priorities at the point of lockdown have been to preserve existing legal protections for children and young people and to convene hearings for consideration of children and young people in the most urgent and high risk situations Both CHS and SCRA have issued a series of guidance to panel member and reporters as well as joint communications in consultation with CoSLA and Social Work Scotland.
- 1.2 Since May Childrens Hearings have largely been conducted using a secure virtual video platform. We have undertaken 2 significant surveys of experience of virtual hearings which have confirmed the mixed experience of participants, mainly in relation to technological, connectivity and device problems^{1 2}. CHS and SCRA are currently transitioning to a new secure cloud based platform which will enable us to switch to more mainstream, less constrained video conferencing which we believe will contribute positively to improving user experience. Virtual hearings have allowed CHS/SCRA and Local Authority Social Work staff to undertake about a third of the hearings we would normally achieve in previous years. Investigations, assessments and initial decisions have continued between Reporters and Social Workers and urgent hearings scheduled and prioritised with local dialogue. Appeals and urgent proof hearings have also continued at Court. Nonetheless a considerable numbers of children and young people's cases remain to be worked through in a sustained recovery period which will principally need to co-ordinated activity at local level involving CHS/SCRA and Local Authorities.

2. Current situation

- 2.1 Childrens Hearings Centres re-opened in mid-July and a gradual return to face to face hearings was commenced. CHS and SCRA were fortunate to have the experiences and views of children and young people who are currently within the Hearing system to guide us in how we should re-establish these arrangements. You can view the young people's report here: [Our Hearings Our Voice](#).
- 2.2 The current Hearing Centre estate has over recent years been upgraded, but hearing rooms have been broadly made more homely, less institutional and therefore in the current context

¹ [CELCIS Virtual Hearings Survey August 2020](#)

² [SCRA Virtual Hearings Survey July 2020](#)

less able to safely host physically distanced hearings. At local level we have been redesigning hearing centres to optimise the use of the totality of space available. We have been linking rooms via enabling hardware as well as enabling linkage to virtual video rooms to create a 'hybrid' type options for children, young people, families and agencies to link together in different ways. In some Local Authorities we have been able to access other more commodious parts of the public estate to enable fully face to face hearings take place on a regular basis³. Local Authorities would seem well placed to work alongside CHS and SCRA in assessing whether there are aspects of the Council estate which can be quickly prepared or adapted to accommodate good quality, safely distanced Childrens hearings over and above the existing SCRA estate. This is something we are still keen to pursue discussions on across Scotland in order to accelerate the pace of recovery and would welcome any further discussions/offers of support from LA Chief Executives where at all possible.

- 2.3 The medium term future for Childrens Hearings recovery will likely have some reliance on a combination of fully virtual hearings, fully face to face hearings and a range of hybrid approaches. We might also wish to examine how we can add to the totality of Hearings capacity at local level, with all rational options on the table for discussion. Local Authority Social Work staff have been extremely accommodating in preparing for and participating in these hearings so far. We recognise that for Panel Members, Social Workers, Childrens Reporters and others the next phase of work will place significant demands on everyone. There is a clear need to ensure that Locality Reporter Managers, Heads of Service/Service Managers, Area Convenors/Improvement Partners and others continue to build on the strong and committed relationships developed over recent years – whether through Better Hearings groupings, Improvement Partnerships, Childrens Service Planning arrangements, CPC's or other means. These arrangements have allowed us to collectively plan together, make agreements about local priorities whilst at the same time being respectful of our individual statutory duties, roles and responsibilities as well as upholding the rights and respect for children, young people and their families.

3. Recovering better – keeping the best aspects of our response and

- 3.1 During the public health crisis so far we have seen many improvement in how, and the pace at which we can work together. One examples of this so far has been the streamlining of reports into Hearings. Whilst this has been borne out of necessity it has considerable ongoing potential to reduce the burden on compiling social workers, brings key facts to the attention of decision makers and critically importantly fulfils one of the ambitions of the Promise in relation to providing improved, accessible, resonant and relevant reports for children and young people, minimising unnecessary reliance on historical information. Similarly the additional communication with, support to and preparation for children, young people and their families attending hearings over the course of the pandemic has been hugely impressive and another gain that we would all want to maintain.
- 3.2 The use of some form of video technology is going to remain part of the Hearings landscape for some time. With the right platforms, hardware, skills and confidence across the workforce and volunteer community and with increased access to better devices, connectivity and proactive support for children, young people and their families we can make this something constructive and positive, increasing and enabling choice and contributing to more effective, quality participation. The Promise has recommended we collectively work to increase children

³ [Falkirk Herald 10 Aug 20](#)

and young people access to digital tools and we all need to be confident and responsive to this in the coming months and seize this opportunity.

4. Key asks

4.1 We are very grateful for the continued support of Local Authority colleagues at this critical time. We have strong, constructive and positive relationships with Heads of Service, Service Managers and CSWO's at local level and would welcome further discussion about how we can mutually support recovery within the Childrens Hearings system.

4.2 LA CEO's are asked to:-

- a) To note the recovery planning being put in place for the hearing system and support the need to work together locally to advance and deliver recovery
- b) We would be grateful for LA Chief Executives to consider within their own Localities whether there are high quality, child friendly accommodation options available that can host Childrens Hearings during the current physical distancing constraints and add to our overall local capacity.
- c) Consider what we can do together to recover better and mainstream improvements such as:
 - streamlined Social Work reports for Hearings,
 - more bespoke and personalised approaches to supporting children, young people and families before, during and after hearings
 - improved long term access to helpful, meaningful digital tools for children, young people and families to aid participation in decision making
- (d) Support local joint approaches to workforce learning and development to ensure that our workforce, including volunteer panel members have the required digital skills, competence and confidence to optimise the use of current and future platforms and technologies for quality hearing as well as an improved ability to directly and proactively support children, young people and their families to maximise the opportunities of wider choice and enablement
- (e) We need to have a collective appetite to working differently to enhance recovery capacity – as one example evening and weekend hearings?



SCOTTISH
CHILDREN'S REPORTER
ADMINISTRATION

Accountable Director: Head of Strategy and
Organisational
Development

Date: 23 September 2020

Report Author: Donald Lamb, Data Manager

Recommendation:

The Board is asked to:-

- a) Note the OPR
- b) Note the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on Reporter operations
- c) Agree the presentation of KPI's as described at para 1.2 in relation to operational indicators

Reason for Report: Board Approval

Resource Implications: Not applicable

Strategy: Outwith approved plans:

Consultation: EMT

Equalities Duties: EHRIA not required

Document Classification: Not protectively marked

1. Background Information

- 1.1 The Organisational Performance Report (OPR) has been a key means by which SCRA officers report to the Board on performance across over 30 domains and measures. SCRA has developed a group of key performance indicators (KPI's) set against agreed performance targets. The current KPI's in relation to Reporter operations are:-
- Decisions on referrals within 50 working days
 - Hearings scheduled to take place within 20 working days
 - Initial hearings proceeding to disposal
- 1.2 This is the first OPR to the Board which substantially covers the coronavirus pandemic emergency period. The pandemic emergency has profoundly impacted on Reporter operations across quarter 1 and is likely to do so until well into 2021. The impact on performance targets has therefore been significant. The OPR presented to the Board makes use of all the usual data that we would normally report on with the following changes
- The Executive Summary and the Management Response be merged and amended to summarise and reflect what has been happening in relation the an organisational response the pandemic – a short narrative and data items to support this.
 - That HR/Finance data is reported as normal and against agreed KPI's
 - That KPI targets have been removed and provided purely for indication and that the performance has not been RAG graded
- 1.3 Data collection continues to be a priority for SCRA. However we fully expect to see significant further fluctuations in operational activity over the coming quarters. We seek the Board approval for the continuation of the above approach which will retain agreed targets as indicative only and not RAG assessed. We will review the position each quarter and update the Board on progress . In line with our recovery plan we are aiming for operations to return to steady state in Autumn 2021.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Board is asked to:-
- a) Note the OPR
 - b) Note the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on Reporter operations
 - c) Agree the presentation of KPI's as described at para 1.2 in relation to operational indicators

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION
ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE POLICY

Accountable Director: Head of Human
Resources

Date: 23rd September
2020

Recommendations:

- 1. To approve the revised Organisational Change Policy in line with Board Governance Framework**

Reason for Report: For Board approval

Resource Implications: Within approved budgets

Consultation: Reviewed in partnership with UNISON. EMT for discussion

Equalities Duties Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment Completed and submitted to Equalities Review Group

Document Classification: Not Protectively Marked

1. Introduction

- 1.1 SCRA's Organisational Change Policy ensures that the change process in SCRA is managed through fair, consistent and transparent procedures and in accordance with relevant legislation and guidance. The Organisational Change Policy has been reviewed in line with a cycle of policy review and to reflect the revised Scottish Government Guidelines on exit and severance schemes.
- 1.2 Change can arise for any number of reasons, including Voluntary Severance/Efficiency Retiral Schemes, local and national organisational structure changes, other policy effects as well as supporting individual circumstances e.g. reasonable adjustments. This policy seeks to provide clarity on how SCRA will manage the impacts of change.
- 1.3 It is not normal practice to bring policy changes to the Board for approval. However, the organisational change policy falls within the Board's Governance framework and as such requires Board approval.

2. Main revisions to the Organisational Change Policy

- 2.1 The main aims, stages and approaches of the policy have not changed and have served SCRA well over throughout substantive and smaller, more local, organisational changes.
- 2.2 The main revisions to the policy are outlined below:-
 - Modernising language and reflecting our inclusion and equalities considerations within the Introduction, Scope and Principles of the policy
 - Clarity around UNISON consultation and representation at all stages of the process
 - Revised Appendix 1 which provides information on Voluntary Exit Schemes, including Normal Early Retirement, Business Efficiency Retirement (with redundancy), Flexible Retirement, Voluntary Redundancy and how SCRA would calculate a week's pay in any event of voluntary redundancy.
- 2.3 The policy will be reviewed again in three years, in line with policy review cycle, or where there is a legislative or SG guidance change in advance of that.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Board is asked to approve the revised Organisational Change Policy.



SCOTTISH
CHILDREN'S REPORTER
ADMINISTRATION

**CHANGE MANAGEMENT POLICY
& PROCEDURES**

April 2020

Date for Review of Policy & Procedures:

April 2023

INDEX

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Scope	3
3.	Principles of the Policy	3
4.	Organisation Change Process	4
	Definitions	4
	Stage 1 – Identifying	5
	Stage 2 - Consultation	5
	Stage 3 – Matching	5
	Stage 4 – Ring-fenced Competition	5
	Stage 5 – Suitable Alternative Employment	6
	Stage 6 – Redeployment Register	6
5.	Other Options: Voluntary Retirement/Redundancy etc.	6
6.	Support for Staff	7
7.	Personal Protection	7
8.	Appeals	8
	Appendix 1 – Voluntary Exit Schemes	9

ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) is committed to continuous improvement and development of our services to children, young people and their families always in the context of our corporate parenting and better hearings strategies, whilst being cognisant of our responsibilities to act as an efficient public body.
- 1.2 Whilst there will always be day to day improvements in work some of the challenges may require more significant 'change' for individuals, teams, and the organisation, including changes in roles, location, work patterns or even staffing structures and numbers. SCRA has a policy of no compulsory redundancies.
- 1.3 This policy aims to ensure the change process is conducted through fair and consistent procedures and in accordance with relevant legislation, that puts communication with staff, listening to staff concerns and addressing these concerns in partnership with UNISON at the heart of the process. .

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 The Policy applies to anyone within SCRA irrespective of sex, gender identity, care experience, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, faith, age, or socio-economic background who is subject to significant change on an individual or team basis. That is any member of staff, whose
 - post is *at risk* due to organisational change; or
 - is *displaced* as a result of their substantive post ceasing to exist or altering substantially
- 2.2 The Policy also outlines SCRA's approach to Voluntary Exit Schemes, recognising the fact that the components of any Voluntary Exit Schemes are subject to approvals and available resources.

3. PRINCIPLES OF THE POLICY

- 3.1 SCRA is committed to the following principles.
 - SCRA is committed to minimising uncertainty and insecurity for individuals affected by change.
 - Staff affected by organisational change and UNISON will be informed of proposed changes as soon as is reasonably practicable. The rationale for the changes will be fully explained and an appropriate consultation exercise involving affected individuals and their representatives will be undertaken.
 - The organisation will where appropriate and where available, redeploy displaced staff into 'new' or alternative roles within the organisation utilising retraining where appropriate.

- Where it is identified that organisational change will result in a reduction in staff numbers, positive management action such as vacancy management, seeking volunteers for voluntary redundancy/retirement, or other cost saving measures that preclude the need for redundancy will be implemented, to minimise negative impact.
- Whilst managers are responsible for the implementation of organisational change policy, all staff have the responsibility to participate constructively in the process.
- The principles of staff partnership working will be applied to organisational change situations.
- There is a commitment to no compulsory redundancies as a result of organisational change.
- Affected staff have the right to be accompanied by a UNISON representative or colleague at all stages of this Policy.
- An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment will assess the impact of the change proposals on those groups with protected characteristics and will be published in accordance with SCRA's EHIA framework.

4. ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE PROCESS

4.1 The management and consultation of any change scenario will be appropriate and proportionate to the particular event, but broadly speaking the handling of change will follow 6 key steps:

- Identifying and fully explaining the problem and clarifying what needs to change and why
- Establishing who could be impacted
- Communication on problem/issue
- Proposals for change intervention
- Consultation of staff (individuals or wider as appropriate)
- Implementing change

5. DEFINITIONS

5.1 The following definitions will be used to provide clarity to those staff impacted by organisational change on what stage they are in the process and what they can expect to be considered.

- **“At risk”** - Posts at risk are those likely to be substantially altered, reduced in number or disappear as a result of the organisational change.
- **“Displaced”** - A member of staff who holds a substantive permanent post (s) which is substantially altered or has disappeared (or be reduced in numbers) as a result of the organisational change.
- **“Equivalent posts”** - Posts of the same grade or fulfilling similar functions (irrespective of grade) or posts with similar job or role descriptions to the existing post held by staff at risk.

- **“Eligible staff”** - Permanent staff who are displaced and hold equivalent posts.

6. PROCESS - STAFF AFFECTED BY ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

- 6.1 The following process will be followed to identify and support employees whose post is identified at risk or they have become displaced from their substantive role as part of the organisation change process.

Stage 1: Identifying

The first stage is a process to identify what the impact of proposed changes may have on an individual or team(s). This should be included as part of any proposed changes, but it may be that the full impact is only identified following discussion and consultation with UNISON and key staff. A framework of how this will work in practice is set out in the paragraphs below.

Stage 2: Consultation

Consultation may be with an individual or a wider group. Following discussion in partnership with UNISON, consultative discussions can take place with the individual(s) affected.

Where change ‘displaces’ individuals such as the introduction of new structures etc. further stages may be required. Consultation should be proportionate and appropriate, but nevertheless real. It must be fair and ‘feel’ fair.

Stage 3: - Matching.

A matching process will apply wherever possible, that is ‘matching’ a displaced member of staff across from their substantive post to a ‘new’ post in the revised arrangements. However, it can only apply when there is only one member of staff, the roles are broadly similar and the grade is equivalent or lower. In these circumstances staff can expect to be matched into the comparable vacancy without competition (i.e. slotted into the post on a permanent basis). Decisions on matching will be undertaken by the line manager in consultation with the Human Resources Team. Criteria in each circumstances will be monitored by the Partnership Forum, or sub group thereof.

Stage 4 - ‘Ring Fenced Competition’.

Where organisational change results in a significant change in the structure and/or the nature of roles within a team, and there is more than one member of staff affected, competition for ‘new’ posts will normally be “ring fenced” to displaced staff as set out below:

- The process adopted will be fair, just and open to scrutiny and consistent with SCRA’s Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures.

- Displaced staff will be given details of all equivalent posts within the revised structure.
- In more significant changes, each person may express preferences for a defined number of equivalent posts, in priority order. Choice is limited to the individual's current/protected grade or one grade above/one grade below. Any promoted posts must be open to competition.
- Alignment of staff, based on their preferences expressed against available equivalent posts is then undertaken, by the agreed organisational management group.
- If there is more than one suitable candidate for a vacancy, a competitive selection process is used commencing with most senior level post.
- If there is a single suitable candidate, that person will be appointed to the post on a permanent basis subject to his/her ability to meet the essential criteria for the role. A development programme may be considered if required.

Stage 5 - 'Suitable Alternative Employment'

In some instances, there may be no obviously appropriate role for a member of staff within the revised arrangements. On these occasions, the organisation will seek to identify suitable alternative employment for staff within the wider organisation, with due regard to professional and personal circumstances. In the process, displaced staff will be expected to demonstrate some flexibility.

Where an individual member of staff unreasonably refuses an offer of suitable and appropriate alternative employment, the member of staff may forfeit any right to a compensation (redundancy) payment.

In making offers of suitable alternative employment the provisions of the excess travel policy will apply.

Trial Period: Where an offer of alternative employment is made, the member of staff will be entitled to a four-week trial period in the new job commencing from the start of the new contract. Where requested, the trial period can be extended, up to a maximum of 12 weeks. In such cases account will be taken of the requirement of Section 138 (3 & 6) of the Employment Rights Act 1996 that such an extension is for the purpose of retraining.

If during or at the end of the trial period, it is established that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the new arrangement is unsuitable, the individual may be considered for other redeployment opportunities within the organisation.

Stage 6 - 'Redeployment Register'

A redeployment register will be maintained by the Human Resources Team for staff who remain displaced, or are awaiting a more appropriate role, until such

times as they find suitable positions. Any member of staff who is on the register will be required to work to a post commensurate with their protected salary until a suitable alternative role is identified.

7. PERSONAL PROTECTION

- 7.1 Staff will suffer no immediate detriment to their salary or terms and conditions should they be required to change job, responsibilities, location or hours of working as a direct result of organisational change. Specific protection arrangements will be outlined for each proposed change. Protection arrangements will last for no more than 3 years.
- 7.2 Protection means that the member of staff will remain on the protected salary point for an agreed period or until the salary of the new post matches or exceeds the protected salary.
- 7.3 In the interests of the individual and all staff SCRA will, as a matter of policy, offer/bring to the attention of staff on protected earnings, suitable posts on the appropriate grade/terms and conditions of service. Protection will not be continued if such an offer is unreasonably refused.
- 7.4 In a situation where protection is not continued and the member of staff suffers a reduction in earnings, they may opt for preserved pension benefits before the reduction took place. The conditions applying to preservation of benefits are:
- they are employed on a permanent basis
 - they have at least 2 years membership
 - they have less than 2 years membership with Falkirk Council but have transferred in some membership

SCRA's Pension Provider should be contacted, in writing, within 1 month of the effective date of any change. Advice on the pension implications can be obtained from the Human Resources Team.

8. OTHER OPTIONS: VOLUNTARY EXIT SCHEMES

- 8.1 SCRA is committed to no compulsory redundancies as a result of organisational change and will manage this by taking a range of management actions which may include freezing vacancies and as outlined in 3.1.
- 8.2 In some instances voluntary redundancy, early retirement or flexible retirement options may be available. Where voluntary redundancy/early/flexible retirement options are identified, the organisation reserves the right to determine whether individual members of staff can be released on the grounds of operational requirements and/or affordability. Selection criteria for such options would be agreed in partnership with UNISON, but would be likely to include:
- Service delivery requirements
 - Skills and experience of the individual to meet current and future needs

- Availability of suitable alternative employment
- Affordability

Details of the voluntary exit schemes are attached at appendix 1

9. SUPPORT FOR STAFF

9.1 Managers will be supported by the Human Resources Team to manage change. Individual members of staff will be able to obtain support and guidance from their immediate line manager during organisational change. To supplement this, the following may be accessed as required:

- Staff concerned are entitled to be represented by UNISON or other colleagues at all stages of the change process.
- SCRA Employee Assistance Programme which offers free confidential counselling and employee assistance. Contact details are available on Connect. A Human Resources Business Partner will be available to discuss personal circumstances and redeployment options in conjunction with the line manager. The staff member will have the opportunity to include their UNISON representative or colleague in these discussions.
- In some exceptional cases staff may require support in securing employment outwith the organisation as a result of change. Where appropriate, assistance from the Human Resources Team will be provided for those who wish to develop their interview skills, require guidance in the completion of application forms, preparation of CV's and general career advice.

8. APPEALS

8.1 If the employee feels the change process procedures have not been followed appropriately or that they are unhappy with the decision they have the right to raise a grievance as set out in SCRA's Grievance Procedure.

MORE INFORMATION

Staff affected by change may wish to can obtain further advice from:

ACAS: <http://www.acas.org.uk> or
telephone 08457 47 47 47

UNISON: <http://www.unison.org.uk/help/index.asp> or
telephone on 0845 355 0845

VOLUNTARY EXIT SCHEMES

Normal Early Retirement

You can voluntarily retire at any age on or after your 55th birthday but your benefits may be reduced for early payment. You do not require SCRA's permission. There are two important conditions – to draw benefits before your normal retirement age the employee must have at least 2 years membership, or have brought in a transfer from another pension scheme

If you choose to take your pension before your Normal Pension Age it will normally be reduced, as it's being paid earlier. If you take it later than your Normal Pension Age it's increased because it's being paid later. Your Normal Pension Age is the same as your State Pension Age.

The amount of any reduction or increase will be based on how many years earlier or later than your Normal Pension Age you draw your benefits. The table below shows the reduction your pension would be impacted by per early year of retirement.

Years Early	Pension Male	Pension Female	Lump Sum (for membership to 31 March 2009)
1	6%	6%	3%
2	11%	11%	6%
3	16%	15%	8%
4	21%	20%	11%
5	25%	24%	14%
6	29%	28%	16%
7	33%	31%	19%
8	36%	35%	21%
9	39%	38%	23%
10	42%	41%	26%

Business Efficiency Retirement (with Redundancy)

If you are aged 55 (50 if you were a member of the LGPS at 6 April 2006) or over and have at least two years total membership, you will receive your pension and lump sum immediately with no reduction for early payment.

Currently if an employee retires early before age 55, the pension is normally paid at a flat rate until age 55, when it will be increased to the level it would have been, had it been increased by the rise in the cost of living every year since your early retirement.

Flexible retirement

SCRA may consider approving flexible retirement as a result of organisational change. Flexible retirement can be considered if the member of staff is aged 55 or over and requires SCRA's consent. It allows the member of staff to reduce their hours or move to a less senior position and draw their pension benefits they have built up - helping them ease into retirement.

The member of staff can still receive their salary from their job on the reduced hours or grade and continue paying into the LGPS, building up further benefits in the Scheme.

If the staff member takes flexible retirement before age 65 their pension benefits may be reduced to take account of being paid a salary for longer. How much their benefits are reduced depends on how early they draw their benefits. This information is available from the Pensions Team at Falkirk Council.

Voluntary Redundancy

The statutory redundancy payment due to each employee depends on their age and length of service (up to twenty years). This determines the number of weeks pay due, which is then subject to a limit on weekly pay.

To calculate the number of weeks pay due, you should use the following amounts:

- 0.5 week's pay for each full year of service where age during year less than 22
- 1.0 week's pay for each full year of service where age during year is 22 or above, but less than 41
- 1.5 weeks' pay for each full year of service where age during year is 41+

A Weeks Pay

Actual pay will be used in the calculation of statutory redundancy payments.

SCRA may enhance the voluntary redundancy scheme beyond the statutory calculator, dependent on organisational requirements and resources available. Each voluntary redundancy opportunity is required to comply with the Scottish Government Severance Policy which details specific criteria, including the following:-

- A maximum cost to the organisation of £95,000 severance costs which include the cost of the redundancy payment and any associated strain payments to the pension scheme as a result of the Business Efficiency Retirement.
- A maximum pay-back period of 2 years to voluntary redundancy and retirement schemes;

Calculating Continuous Service

For the purposes of redundancy payments, a period of continuous service begins on the date an employee commenced employment with an organisation as specified in the Redundancy Payments (Continuity of Employment in Local Government, etc.)

(Modification) Order 1999, provided there has not been a break in service between that date and the date on which redundancy takes effect.

Tax and NI implications

As long as it is not more than £30,000 and is only made up of the redundancy payment, redundancy pay is not taxable.

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Board Dates January 2021 to December 2021

Accountable Member: Board Chair

Date: 23 September 2020

Recommendation:

To approve SCRA's Timetable of Board and Committee Meetings from January 2021 to December 2021

Reason for Report: Board Approval

Resource Implications: Within approved plans

Strategy: Within approved plans

Consultation: Board Members
Executive Management Team

Equalities Duties: Equalities Impact Assessment not required

Document Classification: Not protectively marked

Scottish Children's Reporter Administration

Schedule of Board and Committee Meetings 2021

Board Meetings - 10.30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Board Meeting	Wednesday 20 January	Ochil
	Thursday 25 March	Ochil
	Wednesday 23 June	Ochil
	Wednesday 22 September	Ochil
	Wednesday 15 December	Ochil
Board Development Day	Wednesday 29 April	TBC
	Wednesday 11 November	TBC

Audit and Risk Committee - 10.30 to 1 p.m.

Audit & Risk Committee	Thursday 18 February	TBC
	Thursday 20 May	TBC
	Thursday 26 August	TBC
	Thursday 18 November	TBC

Remuneration and Succession Planning Committee (meets same day as Board and as required)

Remuneration & Succession Planning Committee	Wednesday 23 June	Ochil
	Wednesday 15 December	Ochil

Nominations Committee (to meet annually and as required)

Nominations Committee	TBC	TBC
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