



**Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
Executive Management Team
3rd March 2021, by video conference**

Present

Neil Hunter	Principal Reporter/Chief Executive (Chair)
Paul Mulvanny	Senior Operational Manager (East and Central)
Lisa Bennett	Head of Strategy and Organisational Development
Susan Deery	Head of Human Resources
Helen Etchells	Senior Operational Manager (West & North)
Alistair Hogg	Head of Practice and Policy

	Item	Time-scale	Action
1.	Apologies Lawrie McDonald, Digital Programme Director Ed Morrison, Head of Finance and Resources		
2.	Minute of Previous Meeting Agreed without amendment.		
3.	Matters Arising		
(a)	Standard Operating Model – noted the EMT workshop held earlier this week and led by PM and the progress being made in relation to harvesting the best of Locality based work as part of the transitional operational adjustments. The key aspects of the next stage and involvement and inclusion of operational teams and agreement about how these come together in a nationally agreed approach to optimise the opportunity offered by CSAS. A further follow up EMT workshop will be considered.	April 21	PM/NH
(b)	Data Reporting – LB highlighted the approach being taken by LMcD in relation to overall oversight of interface with the supplier which provided important controls and reduces risk in the commercial sphere as well as enhancing outcomes. The proposals agreed by EMT in February 2021 on data reporting, where they relate directly to CSAS will fall within this arrangement.		
(c)	Operational Plan – noted that this had been discussed at the recent SCRA/Unison Health and Wellbeing Group and its focus on staff wellbeing was welcomed. HWB Group members were asked to comment directly to HE on the plan.	Immediate	SD/NH

<p>(d)</p> <p>(e)</p>	<p>Senior Operational Manager Reviews – these are well underway across the country led by HE/PM and are really helping focus on Locality Planning, recovery and wider team activity. Due to report to SCRA Board in September 2021.</p> <p>Data Quality and Monitoring – some risks and vulnerabilities were highlighted to the February EMT, following audit work conducted the Digital PMO. The issues raised by the audit have been taken into the weekly CSAS core group meetings and a more detailed understanding of the practice and user issues has emerged, most notably in relation to use of views, recording of forms after Hearings and, in a small number of cases, the outstanding IVCSO known CSAS issue, currently under review. It was agreed that a follow up audit would be conducted and reported back to EMT and other fora.</p>	<p>Aug/ Sept</p> <p>April 21 (TBC)</p>	<p>PM/HE</p> <p>PM/LB</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Draft Budget 2021/22</p> <p>RMack attended for this item and led the discussion, noting that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost centre details at appendix 1 remain to be completed, checked and inserted into the report. • The draft budget takes into account the full application of Ministerial pay policy for 21/22, including any available flexibilities pen to SCRA • A 1.5% savings target has been applied to budget holders, reflecting the operational imperatives to which SCRA has committed to and the need to avoid the prolonged use of vacancies to generate savings • Some adjustments of capital were noted specifically to the planned work at Glenrothes • No voluntary severance scheme was proposed for 2021/22 • Consolidation of posts hold on a temporary bass and causing uncertainty and concern was possible in anticipation of this budget being agreed and moves were underway to achieve this, particularly in relation to the extensive consequential being faced in some LRM roles • The balancing of the 21/22 budget had some dependency on deployment of carry forward underspends in 20/21, reflecting the exceptional fluidity of the operational environment and required in year support over these two financial years, driven by the pandemic response. The precise year end position of the 20/21 budget was still being assessed and would not be fully bottomed out until after the March Board. Discussions with SG policy and finance teams are ongoing. • There is a high reliance on temporary staffing going into 21/22 – some of these roles may be absorbed into turnover vacancies, others we may have to return to with SG in relation to the future challenges posed by UNCRC, changes to the age of referral to the Principal Reporter and development in the Age of Criminal Responsibility. 		

	<p>Agreed The Draft 2021/22 budget was agreed for submission to the SCRA Board for its consideration and approval.</p>	<p>March 21</p>	<p>EM/ RMac K</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Property</p> <p>IA attended and spoke to a report in relation to the ongoing Ochil House feasibility study. The study has now reached a key stage and is aimed at ensuring that Ochil House meets the organisations needs for the next 10 years and provides greater flexibility as a consequence of the pandemic, a smart working feasibility and design contract was awarded to Space Solutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Space Solutions have now completed the initial Phase A of their commission which involved interviewing key members of staff and gathering information to prepare a space budget and initial options for consideration. • The report sets out their findings and the three options suggested. Before we progress to Phase B (Initial Design), EMT are now required to confirm our decisions and instructions to Space Solutions. <p>Over and above this the EMT were asked to agree and support the adoption of SMART working principles for this and future long term developments. The need for clarity in the organisations direction of travel for the use of its estate had been raised by UNISON, in the recent staff survey and increasingly in discussion with both Head Office and Locality Teams. These principles, which will influence the Ochil feasibility in the short term, and other property projects in the longer term are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That SCRA is committed to implementing a Smart Working approach to the use of Ochil House by locality and head office teams. • That increased space will be made available for hearings to accommodate social distancing and future flexibility. • Smaller and fewer workstations/ desks will be provided that are not “owned” by individuals. In line with Scottish Government guidance, we will provide fewer desks than FTE’s. • By providing fewer desks we will be able to provide a range of formal and informal work settings along with meeting and quiet areas. • Personal storage space will not be provided at workstations/ desks and a clear desk policy will be the norm. Lockers will be provided for storage. • A significant reduction in file and other storage by all teams to free up space for more beneficial use. 		

	<p>In discussion the following points were noted:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sense, that following the 2020 staff survey there is as high an appetite now, than ever before to make progress with more agile and flexible ways of working. • There is a clear need to balance individual preference, need and collective utility and improvement • Behavioural change is key – but can be regulated and delivered through local protocols and agreements. Skills and confidence of managers to develop their approach within this direction of travel will be a key element. • Redesigning the way we all work can be a morale and energy boost if delivered well and if we ensure staff are well invested in it. • Opportunities exist that must not be missed to constructively influence the way we work, adopt SMART principles and, at the same time improve the overall estate for staff and children/young people. • We are at different stage of 3 projects – Ochil House, Hamilton House and Glasgow. Ochil House is the more advanced of the three and progress is being made and a direction of travel established, Hamilton House needs further discussion on issues of space, lease and shared facilities. • Issues of ongoing environmental management, public health, wellbeing and hygiene for the foreseeable future • A further business case will be required for reducing further file storage reduction across the estate – based on adherence to our files retention policy and opportunities arising from CSAS. <p>Agreed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EMT support for the principles laid out at para 2.4. of the report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Smart Working approach., ○ Increased space for hearings where necessary to design in future social distancing requirements ○ redesign of desking/workstations arrangements and reduction in one to one ownership, and in line with Scottish Government guidance on ratio's ○ A wider functional range of formal and informal work settings along with meeting and quiet areas. ○ Redesign of storage solutions, away from workstations ○ Significant reduction in file and other storage • Support for continued progress at Ochil House, Hamilton House and Glasgow and commencement of early thinking of other aspects of the estate 		
6.	<p>HR/Workforce</p> <p>(a) Pay Policy SD spoke to an outline paper which set out SCRA's initial thinking on pay following the publication of Ministerial Policy. SCRA's approach is</p>		

	<p>to maximise the use of available flexibilities and incorporation of some our aspirations on embedding wellbeing. Nonetheless despite maximising our flexibilities, there is a real risk that SCRA will be unable to meet expectations on pay given our need to adhere to pay policy. Non cash elements are going to be of significance in attempting to bridge this gap.</p> <p>In discussion the following points were noted:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the highest relative reward directed at lowest paid grades, although recognition that offer falls below expectations in cash terms • Support for review of out of hours/standby allowances • Support for the focus on wellbeing, given the context of 2020/21 • Some risks on the existing balance of annual leave across the service • Proposals in this report will go to Remuneration Committee at its March meeting, and from there to the Board. 		
<p>(b)</p>	<p>Workforce Plan</p> <p>SD had circulated a draft report which was scheduled to be considered by the March Board. The report is recognised of more of a workforce activity report than a plan and would be presented in that way. The report covered the following key areas:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition and profile of the workforce • Work patterns and changes e.g. part time working ↓ and length of service ↓, age profile = • Recruitment activity • Sickness absence, patterns and trends • Equality statistics, including protected characteristics and progress against reporting • Workforce support and learning programmes (e.g. trauma) • Links across to the SCRA People plan <p>Noted</p> <p>The annual workforce report provides a useful insight into trends and issues for the Board and stimulates discussions on longer term planning issues. To be included in March Board agenda.</p>		
<p>(c)</p>	<p>Gender Pay Gap Report</p> <p>PS joined the meeting and spoke to this report, noting that:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the 5th SCRA Gender Pay Gap report to be published by SCRA 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst the Gender Pay gap remains high, a reduction of 2% from 2019/20 has been achieved, mainly as a result of the increased female average hourly rate • SCRA however remain 12% above the public sector average pay gap • Specific grades have seen a shift – for example the F grade has a 5% pay gap, reducing as people progress through the grade • Male employees are heavily skewed towards the manager grade F to I and significantly away from lower pay grades A to D. In age range 51 years to 60 years this phenomena is even more stark • Although numbers of employees reporting a disability or in relation to BAME are small, there is a pay gap in favour of women • Clearer linkages between our actions, impact on pay gap and wider equalities are required as part of our mainstreaming approach. These activities are:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recruitment and professional development ○ Women into Leadership activity and reduction in barriers to progression, where these exist ○ Shadowing and mentoring support – encouraging people into new roles and opportunities ○ A focus on reducing unconscious bias <p>In discussion the following areas were highlighted:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report shows modest positive change and limited levers – but we can build on that when turnover allows • Time to achieve sustained progress remains our biggest challenge, given the level of scrutiny on the gender pay gap • The Women into Leadership network is going well and attracting a lot of interest across the organisation. Current women managers can and are enthusing those around them about promotion and development opportunities and taking a ‘whole career plan’ approach, putting the foundations in place for further future progress • The need to work at both ends of the pay grade – paying attention to management grades alone will help, but not resolve the issues we face. Targeted approaches to recruitment at grades A – D are required to bring more men into our service in these roles. • The outward presentation of SCRA as a diverse and attractive organisation are key in drawing people towards us <p>Noted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SCRA Gender Pay Gap report • The small steps of progress made over the 12 month reporting period 		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The programmes of activity in place to continue this progress and lay foundations for picking up the pace of closing the gap Plans for publication of the report within the required timescales 	March 21	SD/PS
7.	Strategy and Organisational Development		
(a)	<p>2021/22 Business Plan</p> <p>ML joined the meeting for this report. LB will make the underlying strategies available to EMT. The Business Plan is nearing completion and approval will be sought at the March Board. The language is being reviewed across the plan and supporting documents to ensure it is consistent with an open, transparent and empowering organisational and service culture, with focus on rights and inclusion.</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>The Business Plan will go the Board in March for final approval and to the Minister for Children and Young People for formal noting.</p>	March 2021	ML/LB
(b)	<p>Keeping the Promise</p> <p>LB has set aside some time with CHS to examine joint aspirations/expectations on how both bodies will work together on the Promise.</p>	March 21	LB
8.	Digital Programme update		
(a)	<p>Virtual Hearings</p> <p>The RAVHI platform is now fully available and will support the pilots and tests of change. The need for up to 3wte additional staffing capacity in the VH Team was noted and SD will work with PM and HE on approaching and agreeing this with Locality Teams.</p> <p>Noted recently completed CHS survey on deferred hearings which did not identify virtual hearings as a major issue.</p>	March 21	SD
(b)	<p>CSAS</p> <p>Transitional support meetings now being scaled back and focus is on optimisation(via standards operational model), stabilisation and continuous improvement (via change log/ release programme post sprints in 20/21 and investment programme in 21/22).</p> <p>SD and LMcD are in discussion about changes to the Digital team, final shape and timing of implementation.</p> <p>Need to assess any gaps left by retiral of Product Owner in March 21.</p>	<p>PM</p> <p>TBA</p> <p>April 21</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>LMcD SD</p> <p>LMcD/SD/PM</p>

	LMcD has completed a draft outline of Change Control Board arrangements and these will be taken to Digital Delivery Board for approval.	April 21	LMcD
9.	<p>COVID 19 recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual Hearings have been the key focus of activity • The weekly CHSRG group remains constructive and positive • Agreed that a report from the CHSRG to the SWS C&F standing committee might be useful • Internal Audit of SCRA Covid response is now underway • Rerun of recovery data and model is now underway 	<p>April 21</p> <p>April 21</p>	<p>AH/NH</p> <p>LB/HE</p>
10.	<p>Practice and Policy</p> <p>(a) Information Governance</p> <p>Transitional information accuracy in CSAS is being examined to assess any ongoing risks and well as mitigate and rectify immediate issues as users become more familiar with the functionality. Some immediate operational issues in relation to deletion of referrals and lapsed order (Covid/non CSAS related) have been rectified without further risk.</p> <p>(b) Sibling Participation in Hearings/Sibling Contact</p> <p>Practice Direction being developed and finalised. Work on contact direction is being updated and LRM's will be engaged as will Local Authorities.</p> <p>(c) Age of Criminal Responsibility</p> <p>Ork is ongoing with PSOS and our own VIS on victims of harmful behaviour involving under 12's and need to connect with victims more systematically as per Practice Direction 32.</p> <p>(d) Non Disclosure</p> <p>Practice Direction 4 is being updated to reflect changes in CSAS processes and capabilities. This will be further embedded in standard operating procedure work</p> <p>(e) Policy Development</p> <p>AH is working on a communication to wider service in the wider range of policy issues SCRA is involved in and/or impact on. Will be circulated late this month.</p>		
11.	<p>New Risks</p> <p>None identified</p>		
12.	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>7th April 2021, 10 am</p>		