

Present:

Monica Sweeny, Chair **(MS)** - Branch Secretary
Lynne Hobbs **(LH)** – Locality Reporter Manager
Neil Hunter, **(NH)** – Principal Reporter/ Chief Executive
Paul Mulvanny **(PM)** – Senior Operational Manager
Melissa Hunt **(MH)** – Policy and Public Affairs Manager
Paul Mulvanny **(PM)** – Senior Operational Manager
Susan Deery **(SD)** – Head of HR
Ross MacKenzie **(RMack)** – Finance Manager

		Action
1.	Apologies None	
2.	AOB Helen Etchells	
3.	Note of Previous Meeting – 09 November 2021 The minutes of the meeting were agreed.	
4.	Matters Arising Covered within the agenda	
5.	Staff Survey/Team Brief NH provided a verbal update. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The TEAMS Team Brief sessions have gone well. Discussion has been focused around staffing, roles and responsibilities, morale and workload, the burden of the last 2 years. It was an open and honest discussion. • NH Has committed to going back to the March board on priorities for 22-24. • There is work to be done on equalisation programme. • NH discussed morale and how this is linked to confidence about the future. There is a sense of existential threat to the hearing system – we need to continue to provide reassurance around the role of the children's reporter, SCRA and the wider hearing system. • Temporary staffing – faced with challenge of how to absorb temporary staff into core establishment during a difficult budget. • Trust and engagement – being able to connect with staff. Rebalancing the organisations design making model and devolving back down to teams. • Anxiety around change – UNISON are considering their direct approach to Scottish Government. They would like to see the recovery/vh team consolidated and temp staff being moved into permanent posts. • Encouraging feedback received for The Promise Oversight group. The acceptance language needs to change from shrink and specialise to reduce the need for compulsory measures of care. • NH will share draft proposals around the staff survey with the branch for their input. 	

6.	<p>SCRA Business Plan</p> <p>LB and ML introduced the plan highlighting the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy sessions held in January along with performance reviews have helped to inform the business plan. • The Business Plan is focused on 4 clear priorities. We have reflected over the past couple of years and realised the need to really focus on key priority areas including, corporate parenting, policy environment, people, and systems. All strategies need to work together to deliver on these priorities. • Themes that have come up through the staff survey are reflected within the plan. <p>Issues arising during discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNISON appreciate L&D and H&W are prominent areas of plan and very important areas for the staff group and are pleased to see a focus in these areas. • There are some issues around the language such as how will success be measured? Would the use of “Achieved” made a difference? Priorities refer to service & service delivery but it is not clear what is meant by those terms. MS will send comments to LB and ML. • The Promise Team are currently engaging with localities, looking to roll out any of the good work identified by better hearings. We need to have proper resourcing in place. The route plan describes the improvement work, most work being done within the KTP team. • Reform work – we want to start engagement – looking to set up opportunities across the county and start planning for future years. 	
7.	<p>COVID 19 Pandemic</p> <p>a) Update on SCRA Recovery Plan</p> <p>PM provided the following verbal update;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the omicron variant, plans have been put in place to look at 25% absence rate and a return to a virtual platform. This has gone smoothly and that is testament to the resilience and skills of teams to be able to switch back to different platforms. • We have built up a back log in some areas due to prioritisation of workload but not at levels previously seen during the course of the pandemic. • Planning for endemic management in underway and we are looking to develop 3 clear service models for delivery. • BCP is working, 3 major storms have hit and had no impact on the organisation. • The Recovery team supporting work on the backlog. • Post CSAS implementation - operationally users are showing more competence, the introduction of the SOM had helped increase skills and knowledge. 	
8.	<p>Digital Update</p> <p>NH provided a verbal update.</p> <p>Virtual Hearings Team – work on ongoing on remodelling the team, trying to ensure we can retain what’s needed at national level and gradually return capacity to localities. There is a focus on ensuring we get balance right.</p>	

	<p>Staffing and the move back to localities - what will this look like and when will this happen? There has been a delay due to the Omicron variant of the covid-19 virus. April – July will see a gradual phasing back. Those seconded to VH team will go back to localities to support and will be assisted by the central team. We need to be adaptive.</p> <p>SCRA and CHS are currently working on escalation arrangements and review of governance arrangements. This will be down through the CCB (Change Configuration Board) and the CAB (Change Control Board). The charters and Terms of reference for both Boards are currently being considered with the help of Bridgeall who have been brought in to assist with Digital Governance arrangements.</p>	
	STANDING ITEMS	
9.	Health, Wellbeing & Staff Survey Group Update (Rescheduled to 23/02. An update will be given at the next meeting)	
10.	Inclusion & Diversity Steering Group SD provided the following verbal update; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The inaugural meeting of the group was held in November. The group agreed its terms of reference, ensuring compliance with public sector equalities duties. Further updates were given from the following sub groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity group, the distribution of sunflower lanyards, the use of BSL including a real life story and the positive impact it had a young person attending a hearing. LGBT group – still working towards youth charter states. There are challenges with geographic spread of the organisation but it does provide a focus on how to take work forward. Race and Ethnicity group – will develop SCRA race equality action plan and will include external participants. Discussion around mental health and wellbeing. Update on equality outcomes and report card. 	
11.	HR Sub Group Update SD Provided the following verbal update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The agreed to proceed with an extra public holiday in recognition of the Queens Golden Jubilee. The group continue to look at the agile working policy, seeking feedback from the organisation, to keep tweaking to make sure it fits the organisation's needs. The policy continues to receive positive feedback. Work continues on the Support Administrator consolation. The group discussed the phasing of staff back into offices. The group have completed a review of discipline/grievance procedure guidelines The future of performance management and appraisal frameworks has been discussed. The policy review cycle for 22/23 was discussed, including a review of the staff code of conduct. This will require a lot of consultation across the organisation. Pay policy, the right to disconnect policy and volunteering and career break policies will be reviewed. The group will consider how agile and flexi scheme work together. 	

10.	<p>Policy update</p> <p>(a) The Promise – The HSWG has made a solid start and is looking towards wider engagement around the list of issues which includes the role of the reporter, voluntary arrangements, rights based grounds, what the composition of a hearing should be, etc. CHS are looking at different models of volunteer engagement.</p> <p>(b) Extending the Age of Referral –In relation to SCRA needs, consultation will take place before end of summer. We need to consider the degree of capacity and risk. Support cannot be taken for granted as we require stable investment from SG. There are implications in terms of resourcing and the branch will continue to focus on this.</p> <p>(c) UNCRC – introduction of Bill – A further update will be provided when available. We are awaiting information on when the bill will be reintroduced in parliament.</p>	
11.	<p>Financial Update</p> <p>RMack provided the following update,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The budget monitoring report that went to December's Board reported a forecast revenue underspend of £216k. This comprises a £118k overspend on staffing being met from savings on estates costs, travel and supplies and services. Finance are currently receiving an updated set of forecasts from budget holders for presenting to EMT and Board next month. EMT will continue to work with SG to secure any underspent resource for the next financial year. • Budget holders remain aware that this underspend is available until 31st March 2022 to minimise the disruption of temporary contracts, and address other operational pressures. • SCRA remains on track to complete the majority of its Property and Digital Capital programmes within 2021/22. A modest overspend is forecast but the large span of works and closeness to 31 March means that slippage on some fronts is likely, with any residual in-year overspend being managed within existing resources. • The 2022/23 budget-setting process is well underway. SG published a draft 2022/23 Budget in December, committing to flat cash plus £1m money to support organisational recovery, totalling £26.16m revenue and £1.9m capital. EMT has a provisional balanced capital budget that will deliver on property and IT expectations within 22/23. On revenue, SCRA will present a £28m revenue budget to the Board next month, and continue its regular dialogue with SG to secure the resource required to deliver on SCRA's objectives. 	
12.	<p>New Risks</p> <p>No new risks were identified.</p>	
	<p>Date of next meeting:</p> <p>Tuesday 24th May 2022. 10:30-13:00</p>	