SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
Agenda of Executive Management Team Meeting
Wednesday 01 July 2026
Bell Street, Glasgow

AGENDA

	Item	Purpose	Papers	Owner
1.	**Apologies**			
2.	**Any Other Business**			
3.	**Minute of the Last Meeting**	Approval	Attached	AH
4.	**Matters Arising**			
5.	**Head Office Base Location**	Approval	Attached	DC
6.	**Internal Audit Tracker Update**	Update	Attached	RMacK
7.	**Business Case: Deputy Data Protection Officer (Information Governance)** a) Job Description	Approval	Attached	RBD
8.	**Business Case: Support Administrator (Digital)**	Approval	Attached	DC
9.	**Tenancy Renewal – Falkirk**	Approval	Attached	RMacK
10.	**Business Case: Referrals Project**	To Note – Offline Approval	Attached	Katy Lang
	Standing Items			
11.	**Finance and Resource** a) General Update	Update	Verbal	RMacK
12.	**Information Governance** a) General Update	Update	Verbal	RBD
13.	**Practice and Policy** a) General Update	Update	Verbal	RBD
14.	**Human Resources** a) General Update	Update	Verbal	SD
15.	**Digital Programme**	Update	Verbal	DC
16.	**Programme Board**	Update	Verbal	LB
17.	**New Risks**	Discussion		
18.	**Forward Plan** a) Artificial Intelligence Meeting – 20/07 b) Inclusion & Diversity Steering Group – 21/07 c) Children's Hearings Redesign Board – 29/07 d) Justice Board – 30/07 e) Youth Justice Co-ordinating Group – 04/08	Info		
	Date of Next Meeting Wednesday 05 August 2026, Ochil House, Stirling			

Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
Minute of Executive Management Team Meeting
Held on Wednesday 05 June 2026
Ochil House, Stirling

In Attendance

Alistair Hogg (**AH**)	Head of Practice & Policy - CHAIR
Helen Etchells (**HE**)	Senior Operational Manager (North)
Ross Mackenzie (**RMack**)	Head of Finance & Resources
Douglas Cameron (**DC**)	Head of Digital
Lisa Bennett (**LB**)	Head of Strategy & OD
Paul Mulvanny (**PM**)	Senior Operational Manager (East & Central)
Susan Deery (**SD**)	Head of HR
Roma Bruce Davies (**RBD**)	Programme Manager
Cairistiona Dougherty	Admin Assistant
Pamela Armstrong (**PA**)	Governance Officer, Minute (TEAMS)

	Item	Timescale	Owner
1.	**Apologies** Neil Hunter (**NH**) - Principal Reporter/Chief Executive		
2.	**Any Other Business** None		
3.	**Minute of the Last Meeting** The minutes of the last meeting were approved.		
4.	**Matters Arising** • Actions relating to the research business case have been completed, with relevant actions passed on and progressed. • An EMT session on research prioritisation is being arranged, with additional attendees from sponsor teams to support the discussion. • A business continuity scenario exercise was undertaken with CHS, with feedback now received and to be used to inform further development. • Discussion highlighted both formal processes and informal working practices in responding to operational scenarios. • An update was provided on COPFS engagement regarding delays in SPR cases, with explanations including resource pressures, prioritisation of other case types, and changes to marking processes requiring more detailed evidence review. • It was noted that COPFS acknowledged the delays and their impact, with ongoing engagement planned and internal monitoring arrangements being developed.		

5.	**Internal Audit Recommendations – Follow Up** RMack provided an update on the status of outstanding internal audit recommendations. The report summarised recommendations not yet recognised as complete by internal auditors, including their status, ownership, due dates, and the evidence required to support closure. **Issues arising during discussion:** • The update reflects the position reported to the Audit and Assurance Committee, with a number of recommendations still recorded as in progress or not implemented by auditors. • It was noted that in some cases SCRA considers actions complete, however these have not yet been formally agreed as closed by auditors. • The importance of aligning internal assessment with auditor expectations and evidence requirements was highlighted. • Action owners were encouraged to engage directly with BDO where recommendations are believed to be complete in advance of the next formal follow-up. • It was noted that where recommendations are no longer appropriate, action owners should review the underlying risk and agree alternative approaches with auditors. • The discussion highlighted the need for progress ahead of the next reporting point, with an expectation that status should be advanced as far as possible. **Agreed:** To provide updated position to next EMT	July EMT	EMT
6.	**2026/2027 Forecast Outturn** RMack presented an update on the financial position to May 2026 and an early forecast for the 2026/27 financial year. The report outlined a modest revenue underspend, confirmed that current activity remains within approved budgets, and highlighted ongoing uncertainty regarding capital funding and reliance on in-year Scottish Government budget revisions. **Issues arising during discussion:** • A modest revenue underspend is currently forecast, with overall spend broadly aligned to approved budgets and plans. • Year-to-date underspend was noted as reflecting vacancies and timing differences, with some costs expected to materialise later in the year.		

	• It was highlighted that budget holders are not being encouraged to generate savings where this would impact service delivery. • There are no significant concerns at this stage regarding funding availability or delivery of planned activity. • A key issue remains the uncertainty of capital funding, with a gap between approved capital plans and confirmed Scottish Government funding. • Ongoing engagement with Scottish Government was noted, with expectation that funding pressures will be addressed through Autumn and Spring Budget Revisions. • It was noted this creates a period of ongoing financial uncertainty, requiring monitoring and potential adjustment to plans. • Staffing assumptions, including vacancy levels and recruitment activity, were identified as a key variable influencing outturn.		
7.	**Stornoway MOTO renewal** RMack introduced the paper, seeking approval to renew the MOTO agreement with the Care Inspectorate at the Stornoway premises. The paper set out the background to the shared occupancy arrangement, the current position following expiry of the existing agreement, and the proposed terms for renewal, including cost recovery arrangements for use of surplus space. **Issues arising during discussion:** • SCRA occupies the Stornoway premises and has shared part of the space with the Care Inspectorate since 2015. • The existing MOTO agreement has expired and is currently continuing on a rolling basis. • The shared occupancy arrangement was noted as working well operationally, with no issues identified by local management. • The arrangement enables recovery of costs associated with otherwise surplus accommodation within the building. • It was noted that SCRA does not currently require additional space within the premises, while the Care Inspectorate continues to have an ongoing requirement. • The proposed renewal would provide continued cost recovery through an agreed proportion of rent, running costs and rates. **Agreed:** • To approve renewal of the MOTO agreement with the Care Inspectorate.		

8.	**Fraserburgh window replacement** RMack introduced the paper, seeking approval for window replacement works at the Fraserburgh hearing centre. The proposal outlined the condition of the building following recent surveys and repair works, the requirement to replace and upgrade windows, and the associated costs of £50,250, including contingency and fees. **Issues arising during discussion:** • Fraserburgh is an SCRA-owned hearing centre, with the property refurbished in 2023 to provide a modern environment. • A condition survey and subsequent works identified further issues with the condition of the windows, with deterioration greater than initially expected. • The windows are currently single glazed, and upgrading to double glazing was identified as improving environmental performance of the building. • Due to the building's listed status and location within a conservation area, planning consent was required and has now been granted. • The proposed works include full and partial replacement of windows, aligned to the approved specification and planned maintenance activity. • Costs include a contingency allowance and are expected to be managed within the overall property capital budget despite being higher than the original estimate. **Agreed:** • To approve the proposed window replacement works.		
9.	**SCRA Board – June agenda** The agenda for the upcoming Board meeting was reviewed. Papers to be submitted to PA by the end of the week.		
10.	**Finance and Resource** RMack provided a verbal update on finance and resource matters, including audit activity and operational arrangements. **Issues arising during discussion:** • It was noted that external audit activity is due to commence, with preparations in place to support the process. • It was acknowledged that implementation of required changes and supporting activity may		

	not be straightforward in the current year, but arrangements are in place. • No significant issues or concerns were raised in relation to audit readiness. • Payroll arrangements were confirmed, with scheduling aligned to accommodate forthcoming activity and ensure continuity.		
11.	**Information Governance** AH provided a verbal update on Information Governance activity, including current reporting, team capacity, and emerging workload pressures. **Issues arising during discussion:** • Feedback from the Information Governance team highlighted increased workload pressures, with a noticeable rise in activity levels. • The increase in pressure is not solely due to volume, but also the complexity and scale of requests, including complaints, subject access requests, and other information-related activity. • It was noted that some complaints and requests are becoming more detailed and extensive, requiring significant time and resource to review and respond. • The potential role of AI tools in generating more complex submissions was discussed as a contributing factor to this increased demand. • Consideration was given to whether additional resource may be required within the team to manage this pressure, although no specific proposal has yet been developed.		
12.	**Practice and Policy** AH provided a verbal update on practice and policy developments, including staffing, ministerial changes, and legislative implementation timelines. **Issues arising during discussion:** • An appointment has been made to the role of Practice Reporter, with the individual described as highly experienced and expected to add strength to the team. • A new Children’s Minister (Siobhian Brown) has been appointed, and early consideration is being given to engagement, noting that there is not yet clarity on her priorities. • It was noted that the Cabinet Secretary is expected to have increased involvement, following changes in circumstances which previously limited engagement.		

	• This shift is expected to influence how work relating to Promise and redesign is progressed at government level. • Discussion took place on legislative implementation timelines, with expectation that sequencing of the Promise Act will follow other key developments, including the Children's Care and Justice Bill. • It was noted that full implementation of changes relating to the hearings system is likely to extend into the later part of the decade, with reference made to timelines approaching 2030. • Early indications suggest a more structured approach to implementation may be developed, including engagement with external support to shape delivery planning.		
13.	**Human Resource** SD provided a verbal update on Human Resource activity, including job description review and recruitment approach. **Issues arising during discussion:** • Work has commenced on a job description review, with initial engagement already undertaken and an approach being developed based on previous exercises, with the intention to progress this at pace. • It was noted that the review would follow an established model but without the use of external consultants, with internal leadership and input supporting delivery. • A draft timeline is being prepared, with communication to staff planned following further development. • Recruitment was discussed, specifically the remaining cohort of reporter posts, with consideration given to moving from fixed term to permanent appointments. • It was noted that current assumptions about temporary resource requirements may no longer apply, and that permanent appointments could provide greater stability and support workforce planning. • The potential benefits of this approach were discussed, including improving retention, strengthening teams, and supporting organisational capacity for ongoing change activity. • It was recognised that this approach carries a level of risk if future resource requirements change, however this was considered manageable.		

	• The approach would involve localities having greater flexibility to fill posts, including conversion of existing roles and use of additional hours. • The importance of ensuring teams remain fully resourced, and the link to broader organisational priorities including managing workload and supporting change activity, was highlighted. • Engagement with stakeholders, including trade unions, was noted as necessary before progressing.		
14.	**Digital Programme** DC provided a verbal update on progress within the Digital Programme, including programme delivery, procurement activity, and joint working with CHS. **Issues arising during discussion:** • The Digital Plan has progressed through Programme Board, with further work now focused on developing the detail and aligning activity to corporate objectives. • Procurement activity is ongoing, with the standstill period referenced and no objections recorded at this stage. • Engagement with suppliers is continuing, with discussion indicating differences in vendor approaches, including how future system capability could be developed. • Joint investment work with CHS is progressing, with continued focus on agreed areas of delivery and prioritisation of work. • Work is ongoing to define priorities within joint investment, including plans for a focused workshop to agree scope and ensure transparency of activity. • CHS engagement includes ongoing discussions on data, system capability, and the scope of shared work, with acknowledgement of evolving expectations. • It was noted that joint investment work is separately funded, with dedicated resourcing in place to support delivery. • Data-related discussions continue, including approaches to sharing information appropriately, maintaining controls over sensitive data, and supporting operational requirements. • Risks and considerations associated with joint working were discussed, including the importance of clarity on scope and maintaining alignment between organisations.		

15.	**Programme Board** LB provided a verbal update on Programme Board activity, including governance arrangements, resourcing, and upcoming work. **Issues arising during discussion:** • A joint Programme Board / SPG session is planned to consider evaluation-related items and to avoid duplication across governance groups, with Unison expected to attend. • Programme prioritisation work has progressed, with portfolio information compiled and a workshop scheduled to review outputs, test assumptions, and identify next steps. • Kelly Campbell has been appointed as Manager Change Implementation. • Recruitment activity is progressing within the programme team, with existing postholders extended to end August to ensure continuity and roles expected to be re-advertised on a longer-term basis. • The Programme Manager role has been reviewed, with agreement that the current role has evolved and no longer reflects requirements; a revised role description is being developed, and recruitment is planned with an initial focus on internal candidates. • Recognition was given to the contribution of the previous Programme Manager, with this to be acknowledged formally. • Initial work has commenced to establish an internal approach to Promise Act implementation, with an initial meeting between practice, policy and programme leads and future work planned to identify areas for discovery activity and coordination with partners.		
16.	**New Risks** • Potential workforce risks linked to future role changes noted. • Wider system workforce pressures acknowledged.		
17.	**Forward Plan** Upcoming meetings and events noted.		
	Date of Next Meeting Wednesday 01 July 2026, Bell Street, Glasgow		