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

AGENDA

	Item	Purpose	Papers	Owner
1.	**Apologies**			
2.	**Any Other Business**			
3.	**Minute of the Last Meeting**	Approval	Attached	AH
4.	**Matters Arising**			
5.	**Internal Audit Recommendations – Follow Up**	Discussion /Update	Attached	RMack
6.	**2026/2027 Forecast Outturn**	Discussion	Attached	RMack
7.	**Stornoway MOTO renewal**	Approval	Attached	RMack
8.	**Fraserburgh window replacement**	Approval	Attached	RMack
9.	**SCRA Board – June agenda**	Information	Attached	PA
	Standing Items			
10.	**Finance and Resource** a) General Update	Update	Verbal	RMacK
11.	**Information Governance** a) General Update	Update	Verbal	AH
12.	**Practice and Policy** a) General Update	Update	Verbal	AH
13.	**Human Resource** a) General Update	Update	Verbal	SD
14.	**Digital Programme**	Update	Verbal	DC
15.	**Programme Board**	Update	Verbal	LB
16.	**New Risks**	Discussion		
17.	**Forward Plan** a) Programme Board – 09/06 b) Children's Hearing Redesign Board – 16/06 c) SCRA Board Meeting – 17/06 d) DCAB – Development Workshop – 18/06 e) CELCIS Strategic Advisory Board – 19/06 f) Youth Justice Coordinating Group – 23/06 g) Youth Justice Data Sub-Group – 23/06 h) CLR Strategic Reference Group – 25/06	Info		
	Date of Next Meeting Wednesday 01 July 2026, Bell Street, Glasgow			

Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
Minute of Executive Management Team Meeting
Held on Wednesday 06 May 2026
Fountainhall Road, Edinburgh

In Attendance

Neil Hunter (**NH**)	Principal Reporter/Chief Executive - CHAIR
Helen Etchells (**HE**)	Senior Operational Manager (North) (TEAMS)
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)
Alistair Hogg (**AH**)	Head of Practice & Policy
Susan Deery (**SD**)	Head of HR
Pamela Armstrong (**PA**)	Governance Officer, Minute (TEAMS)

	Item	Timescale	Owner
1.	**Apologies** Cairistiona Dougherty		
2.	**Any Other Business** None		
3.	**Property Update** RMacK introduced the paper on the Stranraer building, including condition, utilisation, and future provision. **Issues arising during discussion:** • The building was noted to be under-utilised, oversized and in poor condition, with significant ongoing maintenance requirements. • Investment of over £100k would be required to maintain the building without delivering meaningful service improvement. • There is a clear tension between financial viability and local service need, given travel challenges for children and families in the area. • EMT recognised the limited number of hearings delivered locally and the possibility of alternative delivery models, including rented space, use of other centres, and virtual hearings. • Sensitivities were noted in relation to staffing impact and maintaining a local footprint. • EMT also highlighted the importance of not contributing to dereliction in small towns if the building were to be vacated.		

	Agreed: • Not to proceed with significant capital investment at this stage. • To maintain the building in the short term, with ongoing condition monitoring. • A direction of travel away from long-term investment, subject to further evidence. • To commission condition surveys to monitor risk. • To engage with locality teams to develop a sustainable medium-term service model. • To explore alternative provision options, including rented accommodation, partnerships, and use of other centres. • To seek market advice on potential saleability. • To ensure appropriate communication and consultation with affected staff.		
4.	**Minute of the Last Meeting** The minute of the previous meeting was approved as an accurate record.		
5.	**Matters Arising** None		
6.	**Minor Works** EMT considered the proposed Minor Works programme, including prioritisation of projects across the estate, associated risks, and alignment with available capital resources. **Key Discussion** • EMT emphasised the importance of proactive maintenance investment to prevent deterioration, avoid higher future costs and ensure buildings remain fit for purpose. • The programme is aligned to capital allocation, with prioritisation based on risk, condition, and operational need, and may require early progression of works to mitigate delays and cost pressures. • Key risks identified include cost escalation, potential new security requirements, and contractor/supply chain dependencies. • Environmental and sustainability improvements are embedded within the programme, alongside integration with wider estate strategy, including property decisions and financial planning. • EMT highlighted the need for ongoing monitoring and flexibility to allow reprioritisation as risks and operational requirements evolve.		

	Agreed • To approve the Minor Works programme as presented, including proposed prioritisation of projects.		
7.	**Research Contracts Business Case** AH presented a business case relating to the future structure and resourcing of the research function, including proposals to transition to a more stable staffing model and deliver a multi-year research programme. **Issues arising during discussion:** • EMT recognised that the research function is delivering high-quality and increasingly influential outputs, with stronger integration across policy, practice, and strategic planning. • A key concern was the reliance on temporary contracts, creating risks to workforce stability, continuity, and longer-term planning capacity. • Members supported the move to a permanent establishment model, noting benefits for organisational resilience and sustained delivery. • EMT considered a five-year research programme, emphasising the need for prioritisation, alignment with strategic priorities and a clear focus on practical impact. • The importance of effective dissemination, use of research findings and collaboration with partners was highlighted. • EMT also noted the need for clear governance and oversight to ensure delivery and alignment. **Agreed** • To approve the proposal to move the research team to a permanent establishment, reducing reliance on fixed-term contracts. • To approve to a modest increase in permanent resource to support delivery of the research programme. • To endorse the development of a prioritised, multi-year research programme, aligned to organisational priorities and delivering demonstrable impact.		CN
8.	**Business Continuity Update** PM provided an update on business continuity arrangements, including emerging risks, current preparedness, and planned resilience activity. **Issues arising during discussion:**		

	- EMT noted that business continuity remains a critical component of organisational resilience, particularly in an uncertain external environment. - A range of emerging risks were highlighted, including cyber threats, supply chain disruption, and fuel availability, with potential impacts on service delivery. - Existing arrangements were considered robust, supported by learning from previous incidents and ongoing scenario testing with partners. - The growing reliance on digital systems was emphasised, with recognition that digital resilience is central and that a significant system outage could have widespread impact. - EMT highlighted the need for clear response frameworks, recognition of organisational interdependencies, and integration with wider risk and programme activity. **Agreed** - EMT noted the update and confirmed that existing business continuity arrangements provide an appropriate level of assurance. - To deliver planned scenario-based exercises with CHS and partners, capturing learning and actions		PM
9.	**Lochgilphead Hearing Centre** HE provided an update on the position of the Lochgilphead Hearing Centre, including proposals for disposal of the building and future service delivery arrangements in the area. **Issues arising during discussion:** - EMT noted that the Lochgilphead Hearing Centre has not been operationally used for approximately two years, raising issues of cost and under-utilisation. - Members considered the opportunity to transfer the building to another public sector body, recognising the benefit of continued community use and mitigated reputational risk. - Significant local sensitivities were highlighted, particularly around perceptions of service withdrawal, requiring clear communication about continued service delivery through alternative arrangements. - EMT noted that alternative hearing arrangements are already in place, but emphasised the importance of maintaining accessible services, particularly in rural areas.		

	• A managed transition approach was supported, balancing financial, operational, and reputational considerations, with potential for flexible or short-term arrangements if required. **Agreed** • To continue progressing the proposed disposal/transfer, with a clear preference for ongoing public sector use of the building. • No re-establishment of permanent operations at the site is required at this stage, given current demand, and alternative arrangements. • To engage proactively with local stakeholders, including elected representatives, to provide clarity on proposals and reassure on continued service provision. • Monitor demand for hearings within the area and assess implications for future service delivery models.	Ongoing	HE HE
10.	**QA Report – Participation Rights in Children's Hearings 2026** LB introduced the Quality Assurance (QA) report on participation rights in Children's Hearings, including key findings, areas for improvement and the proposed action plan. **Issues arising during discussion:** • EMT noted that the report provides a comprehensive assessment of participation rights, highlighting challenges in consistently identifying participation individuals. • Where individuals were identified, practice was stronger, but issues remain around consistency and quality of recording, impacting decision-making and assurance. • A key dependency on partner agencies (particularly local authorities) was identified, creating both operational challenges and systemic risk. • EMT recognised the potential for external scrutiny, particularly in the context of the Promise. • Opportunities for improvement include stronger identification processes, enhanced guidance for staff, improved data quality and systems, and more direct engagement where needed. • EMT welcomed the findings and considered the report to provide a strong evidence base for improvement, while emphasising the importance of participation rights to effective, rights-based practice.		

	Agreed • EMT approved the QA action plan and endorsed the proposed improvement activity.		
11.	**Case Sampling Progress report** LB introduced the report inviting EMT to review progress against actions arising from the case sampling programme, including delivery status, emerging issues and areas requiring further attention. **Issues arising during discussion:** • EMT noted that progress has been made across case sampling actions, although some require revised timelines due to complexity and external dependencies. • A key concern remains delays in joint reporting with COPFS, impacting timeliness, creating operational pressures, and affecting system efficiency. • Members highlighted challenges in inter-agency coordination, noting that improvement will require sustained engagement and longer-term collaboration. • The importance of clear oversight, transparency and reporting was emphasised to maintain visibility of progress and risks. • EMT also recognised the role of case sampling in driving improvement, strengthening decision-making and informing organisational learning. **Agreed** • EMT approved the updated action status and revised timelines. • To continue engagement with COPFS to address delays in joint reporting cases and seek opportunities to improve coordination.		AH/PM
12.	**Corporate Plan Approach** LB introduced the proposed approach to development of the 2027–2030 Corporate Plan, including scope, methodology and key priorities. **Issues arising during discussion:** • The proposed approach includes structured internal and external consultation, ensuring the plan is informed by a wide range of perspectives. • Members emphasised the importance of alignment with national policy and strategic commitments, particularly delivery of the Promise and developments across the Children's Hearings System.		

	• EMT highlighted the need for the plan to provide clarity on priorities, strengthen links between strategy and delivery, and align resources effectively, while remaining ambitious but deliverable. • Integration with programme, digital, workforce and financial planning was recognised as essential. **Agreed** • To approve the proposed approach to development of the 2027–2030 Corporate Plan.		
13.	**Finance and Resource** RMack provided a verbal update on the organisation's financial position and resource management, including budget monitoring, emerging pressures, and alignment with operational priorities. **Issues arising during discussion:** • EMT noted that the overall financial position remains stable, with no immediate concerns regarding budget control. • Members emphasised the importance of ongoing financial discipline, monitoring, and flexibility, particularly in the context of potential future pressures and a changing external environment. • The need to ensure alignment between financial planning and organisational priorities was highlighted, particularly in relation to service delivery, programme activity, and policy implementation. • EMT recognised the interdependencies between finance and other key areas, including estates, programme delivery, and workforce capacity. • Potential future pressures such as cost increases, competing demands and funding uncertainty were acknowledged.		
14.	**Information Governance** AH provided a verbal update on Information Governance (IG) activity, including compliance, regulatory engagement, and organisational assurance. **Issues arising during discussion:** • EMT noted a positive outcome from recent engagement with the ICO, providing assurance on the organisation's approach to information governance and compliance.		

	• Members emphasised the importance of maintaining robust data protection and information management, given the sensitive nature of the organisation's work. • Information governance was recognised as critical to public trust, regulatory compliance and effective decision-making, supported by ongoing staff training. • EMT highlighted increasing relevance of information governance in relation to the Digital Programme, cyber security risks, and data quality issues. • A whole-organisation approach was emphasised, including clear policies, consistent processes, and ongoing assurance activity.		
15.	**Practice and Policy** AH provided a verbal update on Practice and Policy activity, including legislative developments, implementation planning, and implications for service delivery. **Issues arising during discussion:** • EMT noted that recent legislative developments will have significant implications for practice, policy, and operational delivery. • Members recognised that implementation would require substantial planning, coordination, and resource, including development of guidance, processes, and staff support. • The importance of maintaining alignment between policy and operational practice was emphasised to ensure consistency in delivery. • EMT highlighted the scale and complexity of implementation, including dependencies on partners and implications for training and systems. • The need for clear communication, prioritisation and coordination across programmes, digital and workforce activity was identified.		
16.	**Human Resource** SD provided a verbal update on Human Resources activity, including workforce development, organisational capacity, and people-related priorities. **Issues arising during discussion:** • Positive progress was highlighted in learning and development, with strong staff engagement.		

	• Members emphasised the importance of maintaining a skilled, resilient, and supported workforce, particularly in the context of operational pressures, increasing complexity and organisational change. • The need to align workforce planning with strategic priorities including programme delivery, policy implementation and frontline capacity was highlighted. • EMT also stressed the importance of staff wellbeing, leadership development, workforce stability, and succession planning.		
17.	**Digital Programme** DC provided verbal update on the Digital Programme, including progress across key systems development, delivery priorities and supporting infrastructure. **Issues arising during discussion:** • Members emphasised the importance of ensuring that digital activity remains aligned to business needs, including supporting policy, practice and decision-making. • The programme's role in addressing wider organisational issues, particularly data quality challenges and operational resilience risks was highlighted. • EMT stressed the need for clear prioritisation, visibility of progress and effective risk management, alongside ensuring sufficient resource and integration with wider programme and operational activity.		
18.	**Programme Board** LB provided a verbal update on the Programme Board on the delivery of strategic programmes and associated governance arrangements. **Issues arising during discussion:** • The importance of strong governance, oversight and coordination was emphasised, alongside ensuring continued alignment with organisational priorities. • Members highlighted the need for clear visibility of progress, including milestones, interdependencies, and emerging risks. • Effective programme oversight was seen as critical to delivery assurance, resource management, and timely risk identification, supported by integrated working and consistent reporting and escalation arrangements.		

19.	**New Risks** EMT considered emerging and evolving risks arising from discussions across agenda items and wider horizon-scanning activity. **Issues arising during discussion:** • EMT highlighted a complex and evolving external risk environment, with supply chain, fuel and cyber risks having potential cross-cutting impacts on service delivery and operational resilience. • Members emphasised that these risks are interconnected and dynamic, requiring continuous monitoring, integration within business continuity arrangements, and shared ownership across the organisation. • No new risks were identified.		
20.	**Forward Plan** EMT noted the forward plan.		
	Date of Next Meeting Wednesday 03 June 2026, Ochil House, Stirling		