Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
Agenda of Executive Management Team Meeting
Held on Wednesday 03 September 2025
At Ochil House, Stirling

AGENDA

	Item	Purpose	Papers	Owner
1.	**Apologies**			
2.	**Any Other Business**			
3.	**Minute of the Last Meeting**	Approval	Attached	
4.	**Matters Arising**			
5.	Lerwick - Lease renewal, sub-letting and building works update	Approval	Attached	RMack
6.	Branch Committee Communication	Info	Verbal	NH
7.	Learning KPIs	Info	Attached	SD
8.	Workforce Report	Info	Attached	SD
9.	PPC Agenda	Info	Attached	LB
10.	Managers Event Agenda	Review	Attached	LB
11.	September Board Agenda	Review	Attached	NH
12.	Financial Forecast for 25/26	Info	Attached	RMack
	Standing Items			
13.	**Finance and Resource**			
a.	General Update	Info	Verbal	RMack
14.	**Information Governance**			
a.	General Update	Info	Verbal	AH
15.	**Practice and Policy**			
a.	General Update	Info	Verbal	AH
16.	**Digital Programme**			
a.	General Update	Info	Verbal	DC
17.	**Programme Board**			
a.	General Update	Info	Verbal	LB
18.	**New Risks**			
19.	**Forward Plan**	Info	Verbal	PA
20.	**Date of Next Meeting** Wednesday 01 October 2026, Ochil House, Stirling			

Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
Minute of Executive Management Team Meeting
Held on Wednesday 06th August 2025
At Ochil House, Stirling

Present

Neil Hunter (**NH**)	PR/CE
Helen Etchells **(HE)**	Senior Operational Manager (North)
Alistair Hogg **(AH**)	Head of Practice & Policy
Susan Deery (**SD**)	Head of HR
Ross Mackenzie (**RMack**)	Head of Finance & Resources
Douglas Cameron **(DC)**	Head of Digital
Pamela Armstrong **(PA)**	Governance Officer, Minute

Minute

#	Item	Timescale	Owner
1.	**Apologies** Lisa Bennett (**LB**) , Head of Strategy & OD Paul Mulvanny (**PM**) , Senior Operational Manager (East & Central)		
2.	**Any Other Business** **Staff Pay –** SD advised a Renumerations and Nominations Committee has been scheduled on 21st August. An update will be provided at a future meeting.		
3.	**Minute of Last Meeting** Agreed as an accurate record.		
4.	**Matters Arising**		
5.	**EMT Resource Requirements to Support CCJA Implementation and Evolving Operational Model Jul 25** The discussion primarily focused on the implications of the CCJA implementation and the evolving operational model, highlighting concerns about resource allocation and recruitment. **Issues arising during discussion:** • The phased approach to recruitment was emphasised, aiming to achieve a 2:1 ratio for assistant reporters and a 5:1 ratio for senior practitioners. • The timeline for recruitment and the potential impact of parliamentary decisions were discussed, with an understanding that the timeline might become clearer when Parliament reconvenes. • Recruitment strategy discussions included the need for centralised recruitment and induction		

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support, with localities expressing satisfaction with this approach.
While some localities indicated potential reservations regarding the proposed ratios, the overall response was favourable. Northwest and Grampian were assessed as being marginally over-resourced, whereas areas such as Highland are demonstrating positive progress, attributable to recent redeployment activity.
Financial considerations were also discussed, with an understanding that there might be a delay in implementation, but this would not significantly impact revenue. The incremental approach to resource allocation was deemed appropriate, ensuring the organisation is not over-resourced but sufficiently prepared for future demands.
The need for a phased, planned approach to recruitment was reiterated, with an emphasis on planning ahead rather than reacting in the moment. The importance of involving localities in the recruitment process was highlighted, ensuring they have a say in the centralised recruitment efforts. The modelling around Reporter recruitment is still to be completed.
The discussion concluded with recommendations for the SOM’s to review the recruitment strategy specifically for the Care and Justice Act, with a focus on developing a workforce model based on the combined test outcomes. This would include the modelling of required reporters which were not yet factored in to this paper. The need for a cross-organisational approach involving HR, finance, operations, and other teams was emphasised, ensuring a coordinated effort in the next phase of implementation.

Agreed:

A phased approach to recruitment was agreed upon, aiming for a 2:1 ratio for assistant reporters and a 5:1 ratio for senior practitioners.
The business case will be taken to the September Board for approval, ensuring transparency and engagement with Scottish Government.
To review the recruitment strategy specifically for the Care and Justice Act.
To develop a workforce model based on the combined test outcomes.

</td><td>Sep 25</td><td>SD
HE/PM
EMT</td></tr>
<tr><td>6.</td><td>Subsistence Rates</td><td></td><td></td></tr>
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	SD introduced the paper on subsistence rates, which had previously been discussed in the HR subgroup. The paper proposed a modest increase in subsistence rates reflecting the rising cost of living. The proposed changes included maintaining the breakfast rate at £5, increasing lunch from £7 to £10, and raising the evening meal from £15 to £19. The team also recommended increasing the overnight hotel allowance from £80 to £100, in line with benchmarking. **Issues arising during discussion:** • The discussion highlighted that the majority of claims were not capped, and the proposed increases would have a minimal financial impact. **Agreed:** • To approve the proposed changes to subsistence rates, recognising the need to respond to feedback from managers about the inadequacy of current rates.		
7.	**Temporary posts within HR Team** EMT discussed the temporary Learning Officer post, which had been in place since March 2024. The post had a significant impact on improving the e-learning platform and facilitating staff development. SD proposed consolidating the post and moving it from non-core to core funding to provide stability and allow for continued progress. **Issues arising during discussion:** • The discussion highlighted the positive impact of the learning officer on KPIs, scale of learning activity across SCRA all of which were well aligned to the Corporate Plan. The need to support the professional qualification of the staff member was noted. **Agreed:** • To consolidate the temporary learning officer post and move it from non-core to core funding to provide stability and allow for continued progress. • Support the professional qualification of the learning officer.		
8.	**Programme Team – Convert temporary FTE assistant reporters to permanent contracts** **SD introduced the paper on behalf of the Business Change Manager, recommending the** remaining 3.4		

	FTE programme team assistant reporters temporary contracts are converted to permanent contracts after 12 months of continuous service in their role. **Agreed:** • To convert the remaining 3.4 FTE programme team assistant reporters temporary contracts to permanent contracts after 12 months continuous service in their role.		
9.	**Audit & Assurance Committee - Review of draft reports** Draft reports for the upcoming AAC were reviewed. Final reports to be issued to the Governance Officer by the end of this week.		
	Standing Items		
10.	**Finance and Resource (RMacK)** **General Update** RM presented on several finance and resource matters, including • ABR transfers confirmed by the Scottish Government. The transfers included £5.287 million to cover part of the structured deficit and 60% of the anticipated increase in employers' National Insurance costs. • The team also reviewed the scope of the Glasgow property project, agreeing to formally include ground floor toilet improvements it within the project scope due to the recognised need for improvement. • The pre-tender budget for Dundee was discussed, with the team noting that it was within the previous budget of £1.5 million. • The external audit close-out was also reviewed, with the team noting the unqualified opinions for both SCRA and CHS and the improvements in the performance report. The discussion highlighted the technical aspects of the audit and the recommendations for accounting treatment and cost-sharing with CHS		
11.	**Practice and Policy (AH)** • AH highlighted the busy summer with significant work on the CCJA. • There were good developments around the proposal for a single point of contact for victims, with Victim Support Scotland agreeing to expand the scope to include all victims harmed by children, not just those referred to SCRA. • Social Work Scotland raised concerns about their limited capacity to respond to the work		

	- plan, and key meetings on secure provision and social work faced attendance challenges. - The timeline for implementation remains uncertain, with potential sequencing issues due to the impending election. - Concerns were raised about the new Children Care, Care Experience and Children's Services Scotland Bill, with Social Work Scotland expressing disappointment over the lack of consultation. - Sheriff Mackay's recommendations from the In for Children report were discussed, with concerns about expanding the powers of the Chair beyond the hearing room. The committee stages of the bill are expected to be challenging, with various competing views and the need to balance government relations and the views of the human system working group.		
12.	**Information Governance (AH)** **General Update** Draft reports for the upcoming AAC were discussed ahead of the Committee meeting later this month. A further update will be provided at the next meeting.		
13.	**Digital Programme (DC)** **General Update** An update will be provided at the next meeting.		
14.	**Programme Board Update** **General Update** An update will be provided at the next meeting.		
15.	**New Risks** No new risks were identified.		
16.	**Forward Plan** The forward plan discussion included upcoming meetings and events, such as the health and wellbeing group, Children's Healing Improvement partnership, and various conferences.		
	Date of Next Meeting 03 September 2025, at Ochil House, Stirling		