

Minutes of the Board meeting of 29 March 2016¹

The meeting started at 12.59 pm.

Present:

Garry Coutts, Chair
 Brian Baverstock

Alastair Hamilton, Deputy Chair

Also present:

Boyd McAdam, National Convener/Chief Executive (NC/CEO), CHS
 Elliot Jackson, Depute Chief Executive (DCE), CHS
 Ed Morrison, Director of Finance, CHS
 Sara Crawford, Strategic Planning and Performance Officer, CHS
 Franck David, Executive Assistant (minute taker), CHS
 Lesley Taylor, Communications and Engagement Officer, CHS
 Tom McNamara, Head of Youth Justice & Children’s Hearings, Scottish Government

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from John Anderson, Marian Martin and Linda Watt, Board members.

Items		Actions / owner	Time-scales
1	Declaration of interests		
	None.	N/A	N/A
2	Minutes of previous meeting		
	The Board agreed to approve the minutes of its meeting on 19 January.	N/A	N/A
3	Matters arising		
	None to report	N/A	N/A
4	Action log		
	Agreed.		

¹ Due to technical difficulties, no video recording of the meeting could be made on the day.

5	Chair update		
<p>The Chair attended a number of events across the country including the Leadership event with Area Conveners (ACs) on 18 and 19 March. An action plan will be developed in light of the feedback and evaluation form sent out to all participants. Early feedback had been very positive. Thanks were expressed to Lloyds Banking Group for their support for the event.</p>			
6	Chief Executive update		
<p>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</p> <p>The NC/CEO introduced the paper. Key elements were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance to the Leadership Event in March. The NC/ CEO also thanked and congratulated all staff, AST members and the Lloyds Banking Group for creating a very positive and focused event. The event was the first step in shaping a leadership vision for CHS to 2020 and beyond. It also recognised that, as an organisation, CHS needed and wanted to move forward with volunteers at the local level. • Business Plan 2015/ 16. Progress was being made albeit not in every area as rapidly as hoped. In some areas work was on hold pending the ICT review which the Board had agreed. • Scottish Government had confirmed on 9 March the 2016/17 budget allocation to CHS at £3.7m. This was in line with 2015/16. • Review of child protection. The review had been announced on 25 February by the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning and would encompass the operation of the 2011 Act. The Children’s Hearings Improvement Partnership (CHIP) had a significant part to play in this review and would lead on the report back to the Cabinet Secretary later in the year. • A number of CHS publications were coming up e.g. “All About Panel Members” leaflet who had been written specifically for children about the role of panel members. The children who had been consulted had direct experience of the Hearings System. CHS had also published a “Quick Guide for Children’s Panel Members” which was intended to complement the Practice and Procedure Manual on occasions where a quick reference to the most relevant legal tests and/or good practice information was required. • Information Governance (IG). As of the Easter weekend, 85% of panel members and 77% of ASTs had completed the online training. Plans were in place to support colleagues from the CHS community who were having difficulties completing the training by the deadline of 31 March. <p>2) Decision—</p> <p>The Board agreed to note the NC/ CEO update.</p>			

7	Quarter Four Performance Report
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<p>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 67% of activities had a green status whilst 33% were red. This was due to two factors, 1) long-term staff absence and 2) the pause of IT developments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Red activities due to staff absence are being actively managed. ○ Red activities due to the pause of IT developments were expected and were inevitable because of an earlier decision by the Board to halt them. Although a red status this should not be seen as underperformance but rather, good performance in light of the decision. <p>The outcomes of the current strategic review of Secure Online Portal needs would be known in April. The review will enable CHS to assess whether current systems are fit for purpose and recommend any enhancements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board agreed that activities which were not being achieved as a result of the Board’s earlier decision to pause a number of IT developments during the review should not penalise the performance of CHS and should not be reflected in the Performance Report. Moreover, there was recognition of the work being taken forward even in those areas. • CHS had submitted in February a business case to the Scottish Government for the digital strategy. The business case was a key element to unlock any investment. • Personal Development Award (PDA) for panel members with prior learning. The existing analysis on the value and take up of the PDA opportunity was mixed: the CHS Community survey had not identified this as a major issue. Despite this, CHS was evaluating the likely level of take up of this opportunity in order to establish whether committing to this model would be used and add value. A pilot would be taken forward by Group Leaders through the CHS Training Unit although tight resources might require a reprioritisation of this project. The pilot would explore the level of training time required to secure the PDA: an initial estimate was around 16 hours or so. • PDA for PPA training. The role of PPAs has changed significantly over the past few years and work was ongoing to look at their role and functions and this was being considered in the ACLG working group looking at PPA and the training needs for the future. A report was expected to go to the ACLG in June for recommendations to the National Convener. <p>2) Decisions—</p> <p>The Board agreed—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to receive a report on the PDA for panel members with prior learning in 6 months’ time. • to receive a report on the PDA for PPAs in 6 months’ time • to receive an update report on a quarterly basis re. progress on the bid for 	
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	<p>digital funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to remove from the Report the activities which were not being achieved due to its earlier decision to halt IT developments during the strategic review to thank all staff for the performance in 2015/ 16 to note the report. 	<p>NC/CEO</p> <p>NC/ CEO Joint Head of IT</p>	<p>Sept. 16</p> <p>Sept. 16</p>
8	Budget monitoring Period 11		
	<p>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The grant in aid allocation for CHS for 2015/16 had been confirmed at £3,700k on 12 March 2015. the actual year to date (YTD) spend for the 11 months to 29 February 2016 was £3,144k, which represented a £246k underspend against budget, largely due to staffing vacancies and the timing of corporate costs, PVGs, AST devolved funding and participation with CYP. As previously advised, Scottish Government had requested that CHS reduced working capital reserves to circa £70k. The forecast overspend of £42k per will reduce the working capital reserves to around £120k. This approach had been discussed with Sponsor Team who were content. The forecast includes a sum of £38k to accelerate pension deficit repayments from 2016/17 and 2017/18. External Audit was content to accrue the full amount for PAST expenses. ICT investment was significant - £472k- and, in addition to the above and following a review of IT priorities in light of a delay in a decision on Digital Strategy funding, a sum of up to £40k had been identified to engage external support to assess short to medium term options to improve the recruitment module, Panel Pal support and internal Sharepoint skills. Panel and AST Training. The forecast was unchanged, and reflected budgeted training contract costs plus £17k arising from two Change Control Notices around providing training to AST members. Devolved Funding. Although ASTs had plans to spend their allocations, the low level of spend YTD and indicative plans from ASTs indicated that a modest underspend on this was now likely. A communication had been issued to Area Conveners reiterating advice to spend their devolved funding allocation before the end of the financial year. <p>2) Decision—</p> <p>The Board agreed to note the report.</p>		

9	CHS Accounting policies	
<p>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Audit and Risk Management Committee (ARMC) had reviewed and endorsed the Accounting policy in February 2016 and had agreed to recommend its approval by the Board of CHS. • Although little change had been made to the policy since the last review in 2015, a number of areas would be discussed with External Audit for 2016/ 17 around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Liability and in particular what the minimum number of employees was to trigger the liability ○ Pensions ○ Trade payables ○ Harmonisation of capitalisation levels <p>2) Decision—</p> <p>The Board agreed to approve the CHS Accounting policies.</p>		
10	ARMC Workplan 2016/ 17	
<p>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At its meeting in February 2016, the ARMC had agreed to approve its 2016/17 workplan and submit it to the CHS Board for noting. • The workplan followed the Scottish Government Audit Committee handbook and was flexible enough to accommodate new items of business. <p>2) Decision—</p> <p>The Board agreed to note the ARMC workplan 2016/ 17.</p>		
11	Draft ARMC minutes of 23.02.2016	
<p>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At its meeting on 23 February, the ARMC had had a comprehensive discussion about Information Governance and in particular the risk of data breach attached to panel papers not being accounted for at the end of a hearing. The committee saw this as a very serious issue that must be addressed and it asked the Joint Information Governance Group to look into this matter at their next meeting. 		

<p>2) Decision—</p> <p>The Board agreed to note the draft ARMC minutes.</p>		
<p>12</p>	<p>Business Plan 2016/17</p>	
<p>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan is the second year of CHS’ three year corporate Plan (2015/ 18) and the fifth plan since CHS was set up. • The Plan was widely consulted on and high level outcomes went to the Board in January. Feedback was received from ACs through the Area Conveners Liaison Group (ACLG), CHS Community through the Community Survey and children and young people through our participation events. • The plan has been to Scottish Government for feedback and is currently with the Minister for noting. • The focus of the plan is on tightening and refining CHS’ work i.e. improvement to the core functions. However, underpinning the improvement activities and the significant day-to-day business as usual is not translated in the Plan. • There are three activities to note: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Implementation of CHS and National Convener responsibilities under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, such as publishing our first corporate parenting plan and our work around children’s rights; ○ Delivering a new rolling programme of core training for panel members across Scotland and developing associated practice materials; and ○ Working with partners to improve our collective knowledge around wellbeing, permanence, advocacy and young justice. • CHS will work locally with ACs to develop their own local plans linked to a) the national plan and b) their allocated devolved funding. • The Plan aims at delivering significant pieces of work which will have a positive impact on the CHS Community. • The current target that the annual cohort of panel members are required to attain to complete their PDA within 18 months is 90%. The Board felt that although ideal, realistically, such a high percentage would be difficult to achieve. <p>2) Decisions—</p> <p>The Board agreed—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that the 90% KPI on page 20 should be considered carefully, clarifying the target through a breakdown of the various elements • to approve the Business Plan 2016/ 17. 	<p>w/c 4.4.16</p>	<p>Strategic Planning and Performa nce Officer</p>

13	Draft 2016/ 17 Budget
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<p>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The grant in aid allocation for CHS for 2016/17 is confirmed at £3,700k and reflects the same level of funding as 2015/16. No additional resources have been provided for the joint Digital Strategy at this time. • The latest 2015/16 forecast spend is £3.742m, an overspend of £42k. This overspend has no impact on 2016/17 budget plans and will reduce working capital reserves to around £120k. The draft 2016/17 budget plans include a small overspend to reduce working capital reserves to around £100k by March 2017. • The expected adverse impact of the standstill funding on improving outcomes for children and young people has largely been avoided through efficiencies and savings generated in the current year to accelerate some activity planned for 2016/17. • At the outset of the 2016/17 budget process the SMT set an objective, supported by the Board, to identify resources in 2016/17 for IT initiatives in the absence of a firm commitment from Scottish Government to fund the joint Digital Strategy. Although some progress has been made further work is required to map out a shared digital investment programme across SCRA and CHS. Any resulting budget impacts will be reported to both Boards. • The draft budget covers the current 18.65 FTE staff in post for the full year plus 0.5 FTE HR support, 1 FTE Training Officer, 2 Modern Apprentices and £30k to provide absence cover. The budget assumes no turnover savings and reflects revised NIC rates and a pay settlement in line with pay policy guidance. • The budget has significant provision for IT spend and covers £227k of known committed costs including SCOTS, websites support, PanelPal support and Office 365 licences. A budget of £180k has been identified to fund improvement activity linked to the joint digital strategy. Further details of planned activity will be reported to a future Board meeting. • The budget for panel and AST training is a best-estimate based on previous years' spends and profiling. However, due to the demand-led nature of the costs and continued issues around prompt invoicing by Local Authorities, these remain uncertain. The previous budget included the accommodation and venue elements of the training contract (£200k) however, these have been moved to the Training line. • The budget for recruitment is subject to ongoing discussion with lead officers. At this stage it is assumed, learning from previous experience, that savings of £45K might be realised while maintaining appropriate levels of recruitment. • The devolved funding budget has been stationary although this will be kept under review as ASTs are encouraged to fund local events and some local ICT needs, previously delivered nationally. • The 2016/ 17 budget does not have provision to replicate the Leadership event that took place in March. 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was confirmed that the figure for the training contract for panel members could come down slightly in light of recent discussions with the CHS Training Unit. • A paper would be considered at the next ACLG meeting in June to discuss options over a rolling programme of recognition events e.g. year 1 could be the focus of a national recognition whilst year 2 could see a National event. <p>2) Decision—</p> <p>The Board agreed to approve the 2016/ 17 budget.</p>		
<p>14</p>	<p>Communications and Engagement Plan</p>		
	<p>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan will be supported by an annual communication and engagement action plan which will provide more detail of the activities to be carried out. It will also be refreshed annually in line with CHS’ business plan. • An early iteration of the Plan in December 2015 had received valuable feedback from the Board, ASTs and CHS Operational Management Group. The main changes made to the plan since December are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Removal of ‘corporate’ language e.g. ‘outcomes’ and ‘KPIs’. ‘Stakeholder’ remains but is now explained. ○ The introduction has been updated to make it more in line with the information published in CHS’ corporate plan and welcome pack. It now it focusses more on the different roles within the CHS Community and helps to explain who all CHS’ stakeholders are. ○ An AST stakeholder map has been added. ○ The table showing how CHS communicates has been updated. ○ The communications outcomes page is now termed as “what will successful communication and engagement look like for CHS?” The page has been updated and simplified although it still links to the corporate outcomes. ○ Addition of how we describe successful communication and engagement. <p>2) Decisions—</p> <p>The Board agreed to approve the Communications and Engagement Plan and to congratulate the Communications and Engagement Officer for producing a very good and clear document.</p>		

15	Induction pack for CHS Board members	
<p>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Induction Pack outlines activities spread across four quarters and covers ongoing elements of learning through staff meetings, training, reading and building experience. • Although the first quarter has the most activities those essentially comprise of meetings with key CHS staff, Chair, relevant training and attending Board/ Committee meetings. • Observing hearings and attending AST meetings are part of a learning cycle throughout the year. <p>2) Decision—</p> <p>The Board agreed to approve the Induction pack.</p>		
<p>The Chair thanked everyone for their contribution.</p> <p>The next Board meeting will be on 14 June 2016, Edinburgh. The meeting closed at 13.49.</p>		