

Minutes of the Board meeting of 6 February 2017

The meeting started at 14.28 pm.

Present:

Garry Coutts, Chair
 John Anderson
 Marian Martin

Alastair Hamilton, Deputy Chair
 Brian Baverstock

Also present:

Boyd McAdam, National Convener/Chief Executive (NC/CEO), CHS
 Elliot Jackson, Depute Chief Executive (DCE), CHS
 Franck David, Executive Assistant (EA)(minute taker), CHS
 Susan Deery (SD) (Shared Services Head of Human Resources), SCRA
 Tom McNamara d, Head of Youth Justice & Children’s Hearings, Scottish Government
 Ed Morrison, Director of Finance (DoF), CHS
 Anne Munro, Administrative Assistant (AA), CHS

Observing: Henry Robson

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Items	Actions / owner	Time-scales
1 Declaration of interests		
None.	N/A	N/A
2 Minutes of previous meeting		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board agreed to approve the minutes of its meeting on 30 November 2016. 		
3 Matters arising		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None to report. 		
4 Action log		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Item 1 – Corporate Plan. Business Plan to be considered in March followed by the details of the Corporate Plan. Target for reporting on equalities outcome 		

was confirmed to be autumn 2017.		
5	Chair update	
<p>1. Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair reported that Scottish Ministers had identified three candidates to be appointed as CHS Board members. A public announcement was expected in the forthcoming weeks. The Chair was delighted with the overall process and criteria that had allowed to interview, select and appoint outstanding candidates. • The Chair and the NC/ CEO met with Helen Cameron who job shared the post of Deputy Director for Care and Protection at the Scottish Government. The discussion had highlighted that CHS’ ability to improve outcomes for children and young people and to support effectively the panel community across Scotland was constrained in terms of capacity and financial resources. There was an acknowledgement by the Scottish Government that CHS’ grant-in-aid was lower than what had been set out in the initial financial memorandum. The Chair also highlighted risks around the Feedback Loop and CHS’ ability to report effectively on that. The Deputy Director had noted the messages and reiterated previous assurances to continue to engage with CHS. • The Board agreed to note the Chair update. 		
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"> • Honours recognition - two members of the CHS Community, John Sharpe and Jean Rough, had received a MBE recognition in the New Year’s honours for their outstanding contribution to the hearings system and other good causes. • Area Convener Liaison Group on 23 February – a number of Area Conveners (ACs) had signalled their intention to leave their role ahead of the end of their three years appointment. Two had confirmed their intention (dates to be confirmed) and a few others were expected to leave in 2017. The respective ASTs had been informed to allow for a smooth transition period e.g. options for some Depute ACs to step in. Recruitment is open to interested candidates outside the hearings system. • Recruitment 2016 – The final figure of successful candidates recommended for attending pre-service training in December 2016 was 512. Although a natural drop out is expected, the figure this year is at a two year low of 34 individuals (6%). Although personal reasons were put forward to explain the dropout, there is evidence that a number of employers who had previously signalled that they were willing for their employees to take time off for their 		

	<p>panel duty, had now withdrawn their approval. If there is confirmation of a trend, ASTs should initiate discussions with employers to gain and retain their support. It was confirmed that leaflets aimed at employers are available on the recruitment website however, there is merit in reviewing whether they set out clearly enough the level of commitment expected from panel members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance, with some SCRA staff, of the Care Council weekend where care experienced young people from across Scotland met to discuss corporate parenting and convey their key messages and concerns. The Better Hearings work will be a key theme throughout the year to address some of those issues e.g. improve the system, prepare children better for hearings, better feedback. That work is already being discussed at the local level with ASTs and SCRA teams, keeping in mind that some of the recommendations cannot be implemented under current law. <p>2. Decisions—</p> <p>The Board agreed to—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> continue the work on employers engagement to disseminate key messages note the Chief Executive update. 		
7	Finance Report – 2016/ 17 forecast		
	<p>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CHS Board approved the original 2016/17 budget of £3.7m at their meeting on 29 March 2016. An additional £100k of in-year resources has been secured for the ICT budget and relates to the development of volunteers records management system. After an assessment of ICT spending plans, SMT will request that Scottish Government transfer £305k of CHS’ 2016/17 revenue grant-in-aid to capital for the development of CHIRP and PanelPal. The transfer would increase the reserves by the same amount. The year-to-date underspend has been consistent over the past two months and remains largely due to the timing of ICT spend, recruitment to vacancies, AST devolved funding spend and corporate costs such as audit and shared services. The Head of IT continues to progress the agreed prioritised outcomes in the ICT Operational Plan. Significant work has been commissioned for delivery this quarter and is expected to be completed by 31 March. The bank balance at 31 December was £131k and the cumulative grant in aid drawn down from Scottish Government (SG) was £2,325k. The forecast £47k overspend on Panel and AST Training is due to the venue costs and volume of trainees being higher than originally budgeted. The Training Officer is working with the Training Unit to ensure best value is 		

	<p>delivered, to maximise efficiencies and minimise wastages such as short-notice cancellation charges through improved management information and a restructuring of contract management arrangements. Overspend comes from the fact that unexpected Q4 bills had been received from the Training Unit (£35/ 40k) in May 2016 after the 2016/ 17 budget had been set out. The bills had to be carried on into the current year and could not be accrued.</p> <p>2) Decisions—</p> <p>The Board agreed—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Director of Finance will write to the Scottish Government Sponsor Team to request the transfer of revenue grant-in-aid to capital. • That the Director of Finance will update the Board if any issues emerge once the February figures are known. • To note the report. 		
8	Draft Business Plan 2017/ 18		
	<p>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At a previous Board meeting in September 2016, members had approved the timetable and process for the production of the business plan. This process has been followed, and consultation has now taken place with the National Convener, Deputy CEO, Area Conveners, CHS Higher Officers, local authority Clerks as well as the Scottish Government. At its following meeting in November 2016 the Board advised that Corporate Parenting duties should be integrated into CHS’ primary business planning and reporting cycle and it identified three business objectives as priorities for 2017/18 based around the NC/ CEO’s statutory responsibilities. Those objectives would underpin a number of activities achievable depending on resources. • In January 2017, the provisional grant-in-aid allocation for CHS for 2017/18 was confirmed as £3.7m which represents a challenge for CHS to achieve its ambitions. • One of the areas that could be better managed is the role of Lead Panel Representatives (LPRs)/ ASTs within the local authorities who would benefit from a greater support in order to represent the children’s panel better. For example there is some evidence of LPRs not taking up opportunities to provide information and intelligence to some child protection committees, or, if the LPRs take up the invitation they may not always see their role as contributory but more passive/ receptive. There are however, sources of information about the performance of panel members which may help support AST roles e.g. significant case reviews, inspection reports which will allude to panel members’ performance. Taking the example of children service planning, the feedback from ACs, is that not all AST members have the capacity or skills to discuss or negotiate issues on behalf of the Area 		

	<p>Convener.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KPIs – the Board discussed whether KPIs should or could reflect explicitly the objectives in the Business Plan about supporting volunteers. It was confirmed that the final report will have activities along with indicators to reflect progress on objectives. • Local infrastructure (Outcome 3) – Reference Groups exist to support volunteers e.g. Area Conveners Liaison Group, Recruitment Retention Reappointment Group, Practice network, learning Development Coordinators Group, Digital Reference Group, etc. Another two groups are probably needed. However, these groups need to be resourced properly to serve their purpose. <p>2) Decisions—</p> <p>The Board agreed—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider a final Business Plan at its March meeting. • To receive an update at a future meeting on the groups that support local infrastructure to see evidence of good practice, sharing of knowledge and support. • To note the report. 		
9	Performance report, Q3		
	<p>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greyed out outcomes/ activities are completed or not being progressed to reflect a previous decision by the Board to focus on priority outcomes only. • One outcome has a red status due to limited capacity at senior level to engage with Area Conveners across Scotland in a consistent and sustainable way. • The creation of the Young Person’s Board is slightly behind the original schedule due to capacity issues. <p>2) Decision—</p> <p>The Board agreed to note the performance report.</p>		
10	Local Authority Partnership Agreements - update		
	<p>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is ongoing work with the Society of Local Authority Chief Executive Officers (SOLACE) to develop a shared approach to the renewal/ revision of the 22 Local Authority Partnership Agreements (PAs) in June 2017. Two 		

	<p>options have been envisaged, a) <i>revise</i> PAs to include a detailed Service Level Agreement specifying CHS’ minimum administrative requirements of Local Authorities to support volunteers under a national or regional/multi authority model or b) <i>renew</i> the PAs to include a detailed Service Level Agreement specifying CHS’ minimum administrative requirements of Local Authorities to support volunteers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHS carried out research on the service received from local authorities which shows that Area Conveners, overall, feel they receive a good service from the clerks. However, there was a lack of formalisation around the position of the clerk which could lead to weaknesses if left unaddressed. An option being explored is the use of allocated responsibilities formalised in the Clerks’ job description. • It was noted that although expenses sign off processes seem to vary, such processes do adhere to local authorities’ internal policies which minimises risks. The digital work may be able to alleviate clerks’ work on the time spent on invoices. • Annemarie O’Donnell, CEO of Glasgow City Council has agreed to sponsor the work on PAs on behalf of CHS. A meeting between CHS and SOLACE will take place at the end of February/ early March to agree in principle a model and for a sub-group of SOLACE members together with CHS to build an approach to implementing the new arrangements from June 2017. Ms O’Donnell raised the options of rolling the PAs forward without an end date rather than having a fixed date for review and asked whether, in the event of two nearby local authorities wanting to merge their support across ASTs, CHS would support this approach. Both suggestions are attractive depending on practicalities e.g. TUPE implications. <p>2) Decision—</p> <p>The Board agreed to—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive an update at a future meeting on the time Clerks spend processing invoices • note the update 		
11	Digital Governance arrangements		
	<p>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Scottish Government had approved for 2017/18 a one-off revenue of £500k and a £2m capital funding for the first year of the joint Children’s Hearing System Digital Strategy. A financial framework is required, and will be created, to support the Strategy as some of the joint investment will benefit CHS and SCRA in different ways. The framework will cover budgeting, reporting on spend and statutory accounts and will apply to all digital 		

	<p>programmes in excess of £5m in line with the Scottish Government’s updated ICT Assurance Framework (expected to be implemented in early 2017). An update on the SG Assurance Framework will be provided in due course.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is strongly expected that the set-up and governance structures will be completed by April 2017 to ensure that CHS and SCRA’s collaborative approach is fair, transparent and sustained over the programme duration. To this end, four pieces of work have been commissioned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop a Memorandum of Understanding between CHS and SCRA to set out the approach for joint decision making. The memorandum will include escalation protocols to help resolve any dispute issues between the two organisations b. Develop and implement a joint Programme Support Office to support and oversee the governance arrangements at a programme/project level c. Develop and implement a joint communications group responsible for coordinating the core messages of the strategy d. Scope, prioritise and plan year 1 (2017/18) activities/deliverables • The DoF proposed the creation of a Digital Strategy Joint Committee to complement the role and remit of the Digital Strategy Joint Oversight Board. The new committee stems from discussions at the joint Board meeting in November 2016 on how the Boards could usefully engage with the overall direction and monitoring of the Digital Strategy. The two Chairs of SCRA and CHS’ Audit committees were working together on the remit of the Joint Committee to reflect the needs of both organisations. A second draft will be considered by the CHS Audit and Risk management committee at the end of February. <p>2) Decisions—</p> <p>The Board agreed—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To note the planning undertaken by the Senior Teams of both CHS and SCRA • To approve the creation of a Digital Strategy Joint Committee • To delegate the final remit to the Chairs of the SCRA and CHS’ Audit Committees. 		
12	Remuneration and Appointments committee (RAC) workplan 2017/ 18		
	<p>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At its meeting on 24 January 2017, the RAC considered its workplan for 2017/18. Two meetings are currently scheduled in May and November and the committee agreed to schedule an additional meeting in January 2018 to consider the Pay award proposals 2018/19 should there be a late announcement of the Budget by the UK Government. 		

2) Decision—

The Board agreed to approve the RAC workplan 2017/ 18.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contribution.

The next Board meeting will be on 28 March 2017, Edinburgh. The meeting closed at 15.30.