



Agenda Item 6, CHS-1718-38

National Convener / Chief Executive update

1. This note provides updates since my report for the Board meeting on 30 January 2018. I regret that the combination of the fallout from Beast from the East and personal circumstances have meant that this report has been delayed. I will be happy to expand on areas at the Board meeting as required.

1. OVERVIEW

2. Starting with the snow I have to thank all volunteers and staff who went above and beyond what might be expected to make sure that emergency hearings could proceed and that we continued to operate as best we could. I have heard some stories of individual actions which have been hugely impressive, displaying yet again the commitment of our volunteers. I look forward to getting a fuller picture from across the country: meantime, through the Board, a huge thank you to everyone.

3. Our Business Continuity Plan was activated as the national team office at Ladywell House was closed by the operators at short notice. Given the weather it was the right decision and many staff, including myself, took hours to travel short distances home. But very quickly systems were up and running and thanks to technology we kept in touch. As ever, we learned some lessons about what worked and what could be improved and we will look to refine the BCP in the light of our experiences.

4. Various meetings – some of them important with deadlines – had to be rescheduled and we are still working through them but key work is being progressed. As we approach the end of the financial year there is a lot of pressure to:

- ensure that we finalise projects and incur necessary expenditure by the year end
- finalise the Corporate and Business plan
- Progress the invitation to tender for the training contract, working with the Scottish Government procurement team
- plan the budget for next year

The papers for the Board report on progress on these and other areas.

5. A key event for the team early last week was a visit to the offices by the Minister of Childcare and Early Years, Maree Todd MSP. Maree had been able to observe hearings in Inverness the other week and was keen to discuss her experiences both with us and some of the new Area Conveners (ACs) who were present in Ladywell House for their induction, supported by a couple of experienced ACs. There was lots of discussion about issues facing panel and AST members and Maree wishes to build up her understanding of the system and the volunteering role played by our communities. She hopes, diary permitting, to undertake events/ meetings and work with us on how we can best support volunteers. We also spoke

about matters such as the feedback loop, agreements with local authorities, the capacity of the team and the CHS Community at large to respond positively the forthcoming review of care, participation of children and young people. I cover most of these below,

6. This was the first of a series of quarterly meetings with me. The Minister intends to meet the Board in the middle of May.

2. RECRUIT.

Recruitment Campaign

7. As reported in the Board papers, the new recruitment creatives have been agreed for the annual campaign and form the basis of future campaigns over the coming years. As ever our aim is to ensure we secure high quality applications with a view to securing sufficient men to meet the statutory obligation to have a gender mix on each hearing and to seek to lower the average age of the national Children's Panel. To this end, and picking up on a suggestion from the Board Chair, I attended the annual gathering of the Robertson Trust scholars last Monday evening in Glasgow. There was a very good turnout in the hall and a further 127 reportedly watched the live stream. There were some inspirational stories of what some of these scholars had been doing either in their studies or in volunteering. I was delighted to be joined by 2 younger panel members – Liam Redpath (Fife) and Natalie Wilson (West Dunbartonshire) who conveyed to the audience their experiences and what they saw as the value of panel membership. The Robertson Trust will promote the national campaign nearer the time. Meantime we encourage them and anyone else who may be thinking of applying to be a panel member to register expressions of interest at childrenspanelscotland.org

3. TRAIN

Training Contract and Procurement

8. We are on track to go live with our ITT (Invitation to Tender) shortly. The technical specification takes into account wide ranging feedback from the CHS Community. Our aim is to acquire a training provider with the ability to demonstrate high calibre training, delivery and assessment as well as innovative blended learning approaches including online and face to face learning. Also to secure a provider able to mobilise appropriately for delivery of large scale training to a volunteer community with diverse training and development needs. We continue to be supported by Scottish Government Procurement Services in this work.

Training activity

9. Pre service training delivery is half way through with the number of trainees working towards completion standing at 465 as of end February 2018 46 people withdrew prior to pre service starting with a total of 9 people leaving by the end of day 2. Reasons for withdrawal are primarily health or employment related.

4. SUPPORT

Area Convener Liaison Group (ACLG)/ ASTs

10. The ACLG met on 21 February. In addition to the discussions highlighted in my previous update we discussed some detailed operational issues over the requirement to chair and the need to complete IG training. I have since issued advice to all ACs.

Feedback loop

11. The third feedback loop collection is still running and will close in early April. A representative group of data collectors from local authorities met with Sara Crawford, the Quality and Performance Officer in February to discuss the difficulties with the current feedback loop collection and options for the future. I will write to all Chief Executives of local authorities in March to confirm their ability to deliver the data set required to meet the feedback loop provision as set out in the 2011 Act and seek make progress from there. My letter to the Education and Skills Committee is being deferred meantime pending further progress on these discussions and to coincide with the Minister's anticipated letter. The online tool for the Youth Justice Improvement Board intended to report on the wellbeing of children and young people in a smaller population of children is being progressed.

Community Survey 2017

12. CHS will produce a 'You said, we did' report on the community survey in quarter one of 2018/19.

Staff

13. Our new IG assistant – Katie Barber starts today and we welcome her to the team. We have been unable to fill the vacancy for the Practice and Partnership post and will re-advertise. This recruitment is running alongside that for the IG lead post which will need to be filled by June. Both Community Support Leads are currently absent and we are looking to ensure we maintain contact with the ACs and AST through the deployment of other staff members. Christine Mullen continues to be the main contact on operational matters.

Digital Programme

14. Subject to final agreement our ICT support contract for the CHS Community will launch in April with a view to transition to agreed support from Leidos going fully live from June 1st. This will enable CHS to offer a more robust and efficient ICT support capability in readiness for Digital implementation.

15. A programme of activity from now until March to assist the Community with the use of PanelPal will be undertaken by West Lothian College. National Training Lead (Meggan), the CHS Database Administrator (Dougie) and Communications and Engagement Lead (Louise) have worked with CHSTU on a programme of online learning. The online learning modules will be available to the community after the end of March 2018 and up until the end of March there are face to face training sessions for ASTs that do not currently use PanelPal.

Agreements with Local Authorities

16. The rearranged meeting with SOLACE took place at the end of February to examine the proposed Support Agreements. The new agreements to replace the Partnership Agreements have been drawn up on the basis of CHS' experiences in working with local authorities since go-live in 2013. The original agreements were drawn up at a time when much of the debate was about the geographical boundaries of ASTs and the newly established arrangements for operating in ASTs which covered more than one local authority had yet to bed in. That landscape has now changed and, in addition to the better understanding of what support the CHS Community requires, there are also the new powers available to me as National Convener under the 2104 Act to specify appropriate administrative arrangements.

17. Over the months we have been working with Glasgow Council on behalf of SOLACE - the association of Scottish local authorities' CEOs – to draw up what we would expect to see provided by local authorities as part of their contribution and involvement with supporting the system and the volunteers from their communities who help make the system function. We are seeking though SOLACE to secure a national framework within which local services can be tailored to meet the needs of volunteers locally and to reflect that different levels of engagement by our volunteers in the system.

18. The initial draft agreements drawn up by lawyers were very detailed and did not provide the flex we wished to see. The revised document we presented to SOLACE as a template nevertheless provided a degree of detail and set out a “core services” framework within which we expected serviced to be provided. To a significant degree they represented what local authorities are providing already to deliver effective support. In preparation for GDPR in May we also included updated Data Processing contracts to ensure that we have in place the necessary agreements to allow us to comply with GDPR.

19. The SOLACE meeting was not prepared to agree the framework of support agreements and the CEOs considered the agreement was too prescriptive. The City of Glasgow Council will work further with us to explore how we secure agreement and partnership working with all 32 local authorities. Meantime we continue to liaise with individual local authorities as issues arise.

IG training

20. As of 13th March 90% of pre-2014 panel members, 85% of 2015 panel members and 89% of AST members have completed the eLearning. CHSTU and IG are working closely to ensure the remaining volunteers complete the eLearning. Any volunteers who have not completed their training should have received 'At risk' letters setting out the importance of the training and the consequences of not completing it satisfactorily by the revised deadline of 18 May.

Communications and Engagement

21. In early February a Board workshop took place. The Workshop focused on understanding who our key stakeholders are, how we want to communicate with them and what we want to say to them. A paper is being presented to the Board reviewing key actions from the Workshop. Output from the Workshop also fed into the Communications Strategy, which is being presented to the Board for approval tomorrow.

22. The design concepts mentioned earlier have been tested with children and young people, the CHS community and general public and following approval are going into development. Q4 has also seen development of a range of infomercials which will support roll out of our eLearning modules within the CHS community.

5. PARTNERSHIP WORKING AND PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

CHIP, Youth Justice and Scottish Government

23. The round of partnership activity with the national team and I attending meetings wherever possible. Since my last report there have been meetings reviewing the progress of CHIP considering how best to progress and prioritise the work of CHIP. I was unable to attend last week's meeting and will report further at the Board. I attended the joint meeting of the Justice Board and the Youth Justice Improvement Board (of which I am a member) where the discussions about how best to address the needs of 16 and 17 years should be addressed continued. I also attended a meeting on Permanence. Penny Simpson – AC South Lanarkshire - is also a member but was unable to attend but fed in her views, with which I agree, that the children's hearings system should continue to have a role in the permanence process and not left solely to the courts. Children's Hearings provide an opportunity for the views of children and young people and families to be considered independently. There remains considerable scope for improving the relationship and understanding between the permanence process and the children's hearings with considerable scope for improvements in understanding and report sharing.

24. The SMT met Fiona Duncan who is fronting the Independent Review of Care ahead of the anticipated outcomes and recommendations following their discovery phase. Actual details were being closely guarded at this stage ahead of announcements – expected soon – on where there will be further close investigation – “deep dives”. A further meeting with Fiona Duncan jointly with Neil Hunter and myself will take place later this week.

25. Last week there was publicity about the proposed “Kilbrandon Again” as a follow up to the review of Kilbrandon last decade. This review is being co-led by Bruce Adamson the Scottish Children's Commissioner and Action for Children. We look forward to further details and how CHS might participate.

26. On the wider policy front I continue to be involved with the Secure Care Strategic Board and specifically on the vision workstream. I also took part in the first Scottish Education Leaders' Forum hosted by the Deputy First Minister, John Swinney MSP. CHS falls

within the body of organisations under the “Education “ umbrella and it was a good opportunity to private in discussions, as reported in my tweet/ blip on 5 February @CHSBoyd about how to improve outcomes for children of school age and consider the role of the children’s hearing system as part of the support process. I welcomed last week’s announcement about the Scottish Government’s Bill to amend the age of criminal responsibility

Practice and policy

27. Between 24 January and today there have been 51 children where requests for panel member continuity have been received. Of these all were approved on my behalf. There have been no requests for written advice to the National Convener and there have been no directions to the National Convener in relation to breach of implementation authority duties. Independent reports have been requested for 1 child during this period and we continue to work with CELCIS to identify providers that meet the requirements of the hearing in accordance with our Memorandum of Understanding.

28. Regular operational meetings with partners have continued, notably in the reporting period with SCRA and, last week, with the Hearings Management Group. HMG looked at activity over the coming year, heard reports on the advocacy proposals and discussions being held by the Scottish Government, the recent training undertaken by all reporters (which covered the role of the reporter in hearings) and ranged over a number of topics including the child’s attendance at hearings.

Better Hearings

29. Multi-agency work on Better Hearings continues with ASTs and panel members across the country participating. As reported to CHIP last week, all areas bar one have completed baseline assessments and action plans are being finalised or taken forward. By the end of March prioritised improvements should be identified and submitted. There are similarities across the areas but three main issues are emerging as meriting attention: written reasons for decision; quality of social work reports; participation of children and young people.

Our Hearings, Our Voice (OHOV)

30. Jacqui Dunbar has been appointed as the OHOV Development Workers and is now in post based within SCRA. Jacqui has met with the CHS Senior Management Team and will be presenting an OHOV update at the Board Development session tomorrow.

Model Hearing Rooms

31. Following SG investment through SCRA, work continues to roll out the new model hearing rooms. The new design has been co-created by young people in collaboration with a design agency and 3 design choices are available. Rooms are being upgraded in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Glenrothes, Greenock and Dumbarton by end March.

Examples of new style furniture

ROUTE 2 FURNITURE, FITTINGS & EQUIPMENT



6. CORPORATE

Complaints / FOISA / DPA

32. Following on from my last report there have been 5 complaints received in total for the fourth quarter.

33. We have received six Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act (FOISA) requests for the fourth quarter to date. In quarter four we received one Subject Access Requests (SARs). All requests were responded to within the legislative timescales.

Corporate and Business Planning

34. The Corporate and Business and Corporate Parenting Plans have been submitted to the Board alongside a sample designed version. After receiving Board approval the plans will be submitted to the Minister for approval and noting respectively and be published in April 2018. The ASTs have started their operational planning process will share their plans with CHS in May.

Finance and Resources

35. 2017/18 spend is on track with forecast predictions with a small carryover of £52k to 2018/19.

36. A balanced budget for 2018/19 will be presented for Board approval in March. In addition outline of a 5 year budget forecast has been provided to aid SG finance planning.

The forecast contains some aspirational development work including chair training and development of a young person panel, however does not factor for external policy drivers such as the Independent Care review. A requirement for a revenue budget of £5,052,000 by 2022/23 is projected.

GDPR.

37. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) replaces the current Data Protection Act on 25th May 2018. GDPR strengthens current Data protection legislation and gives more explicit rights to individuals for information about how their personal data is processed and new rights like data portability (some of these new rights do not apply to CHS).

38. CHS is starting from a strong 'Best Practice' foundation of Data Protection. (ICO feedback/previous Internal Audit) and have a robust suite of Information Governance policies and procedures in place which cover the broad range of CHS activity.

39. Due to the high quality and broad operational reach of CHS IG policies, CHS Implementation plans have been developed through an IG Lens; focussing on:

- ensuring IG policies/procedures meet the new guidelines
- Developing a communication plan for CHS communities
- Developing training for staff and volunteers
- Ensuring CHS community is aware of and has a route to breach reporting

40. Implementation is somewhat dependent on ICO/Article 29 working party Guidance becoming available. Not all guidance is yet ready and may not be until after implementation date has passed. As a small team "business as usual" will always require to be balanced against development activity and this remains challenging but is being closely monitored.

41. CHS National Team GDPR training took place w/c 12 March. This will be followed up by online knowledge assessment through Moodle. Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) training is scheduled to take place 21 March.

42. The review of IG policies and procedures is in progress. The first set of nine policies have been reviewed and sent to SIRO for sign off. The second set will be issued to SIRO for sign off by 16th March, with the third set following on from that for the end of March. This will include an update for 'Keeping Information Safe - key tips for Board members'

43. SCRA and CHS are working jointly with some of the work that crosses over, e.g. breach reporting, data protection impact assessments (DPIA). The DPIA process, templates and guidance are being developed jointly, with a view for these to be signed off by SIRO on 16th March. As the Digital work progresses and GDPR beds in, it has been agreed that the guidance and templates should be the same, so there are not instances of unnecessary duplication when DPIAs are completed for the digital work. This continues with breach reporting procedures, accuracy of information, training, privacy policies for children and young people.

44. By implementation date:

- CHS will have public facing requirements of GDPR in place (Privacy Notices).
- IG Policies, procedures and templates will be fully updated.
- Revised Data processing contracts and data sharing agreements will be in place.
- CHS staff and Community will be trained and aware of the new requirements including DPIA requirements and mandatory breach reporting requirements.
- Further work may be required on internal secondary policies.
- Further work may be required as ICO/Article 29 Working party guidance becomes available.

Boyd McAdam
NC/ CEO

19 March 2018