

## **BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**8th Meeting, 2012  
Monday 17 September 2012**

**Present:**

Craig Spence, Chair

Alastair Hamilton, Deputy Chair

Andrew Thin, Board member

Linda Watt, Board member

**Also present:**

Bernadette Monaghan, National Convener/CEO, CHS

Kit Wyeth, Project Manager, CHS

Fiona Greig, Director of Finance and Corporate Services, CHS

Lesley Taylor, Communications and Engagement Officer, CHS

Franck David, Implementation Officer (minute taker), CHS

Joanne Brown, Director, PwC LLP (by phone) (item 2.2 only)

The meeting opened at 3.04 pm

**1.1 Welcome**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**1.2 Apologies**

Brian Baverstock, Board member and Alison Gough, Director of Panel and Area Support, CHS. The Chair advised the Board that Mr Baverstock had communicated his comments in advance of today's meeting.

**1.3 Declarations of Interest**

None.

**1.4 Minutes of previous meeting**

The Board agreed to approve the minutes of 20 August 2012.

**1.5 Matters arising**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services informed the Board that she had incorporated comments received from the Scottish Government on the CHS Business Plan 2012-13 and the Plan will now be finalised and issued.

## **1.6 Action log**

The Board noted that a paper had been presented to the May Board meeting updating CHS on its responsibilities under the Single Equality Act 2010. Following a discussion, the Board agreed to review after Go-live date when a workshop to progress this matter should be set up.

The Board agreed to note the action log.

## **1.7 National Convener/Chief Executive (NC/CE) Update**

The NC/CE updated the Board on the work she undertook since the last Board meeting on 20 August.

### **Area Support Teams**

Interviews for the posts of Area Convener (AC)/Depute Area Convener (DAC) took place in early September as part of Phase 1 recruitment. The targeted areas were Aberdeenshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Edinburgh (DAC), Fife, Glasgow and South East Scotland. As a result, five ACs and six DACs had been appointed with two Glasgow DACs sharing that role.

A Board member asked what the strategy was to deal with those areas where few applications had been received or where no suitable candidate had been identified. The NC explained that a targeted recruitment for those areas had been launched and advertised in the local press and media.

A similar recruitment exercise would start on 17 September and covering East Dunbartonshire, West Dunbartonshire, Central, Highland and Moray, South Lanarkshire, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde, Dundee, Angus, Perth and Kinross.

### **Advice to Hearings**

The NC informed the Board that the CHS report on Advice to Children's Hearings had been published online on 10 September. The report made a number of recommendations for the provision of advice to hearings to panel members. Further, following the advertisement for the post of Temporary Advice to Hearings Development Officer, a suitable individual had been identified and would start in late September. The NC highlighted the importance of that role to lead on the development of methods, resources and materials to provide advice to hearings in line with the 2011 Act.

### **Feedback Loop**

The NC reiterated that the Feedback Loop would be established in two phases: Phase 1 would focus on collecting profile information on children who are subject to Compulsory Supervision Orders and Phase 2 would examine outcomes for

those children and young people. The NC said that she had written to the president of the Association of Directors of Social Work to discuss the feasibility of conducting a pilot exercise in a small number of local authorities as part of Phase 1. The NC further added that she would discuss with ADSW the definition of “implementation of Compulsory Supervision Orders”.

### **National Panel**

The NC reported that the letter inviting panel members to transfer to the national Children’s Panel would be issued on 28 September 2012. The NC highlighted that the letter had the right focus and tone, including a Q&A annex. Further, the letter sought to reassure panel members about their role in the modernised system, as well as highlighting the benefits that a national Children’s Panel, underpinned by National Standards, would bring.

The Board agreed to note the National Convener/Chief Executive Update.

### **1.8 Chair update**

The Chair reported that he had met with a number of council leaders across Scotland throughout September and was pleased to report the commitment expressed by local authorities to work with CHS to improve outcomes for children and young people.

The Chair also said that he had attended a panel training event in Inverclyde which generated a good dialogue with panel members and CPACs.

Further, along with some Board members he had dedicated the morning of 17<sup>th</sup> September to visit the University of Aberdeen Training Unit in Inverness. Again, this was a worthwhile visit with the opportunity to understand the detail of the work carried out by the unit.

### **2.1 Annual Report and Accounts**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services reminded the Board that the annual report had to be laid before the Scottish Parliament by 30<sup>th</sup> September before being published onto CHS website and communicated to all panel members.

Although the Chair of CHS Audit and Remuneration Committee was unable to attend, he did communicate his feedback to the Chair for this item—

“The committee considered the accounts at its meeting on 10 September and subject to a few minor amendments (which have been made) was content to recommend their approval to the Board. The ISA 260 report was not available for the meeting, however, PwC provided feedback on their results and confirmed their intention to issue an unqualified audit opinion, that there were no significant matters to report or any adjustments to the

accounts”

The Chair of the committee added that “the Director of Finance and Corporate Services and her team had done an excellent job in preparing these first year accounts and with no management points from the auditors.”

The Board members were satisfied that the outcome was a positive one and that only minor amendments had been identified by the committee. Board members added their thanks to the corporate team.

The Board agreed to approve the annual report and accounts.

## **2.2 PWC LLP ISA 260 Annual Report**

Joanne Brown, Director at PwC LLP, joined the meeting by phone and presented the report. Ms Brown offered members the opportunity to ask questions, confirmed that the audit had been straightforward and that all staff at CHS had been very cooperative.

The Board had no comments on the report and agreed to note it.

## **2.3 Summary Annual Report**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented the report and highlighted that its main objectives was to be easily readable and accessible. Although the report summarised CHS’ history during its first year, it aligned with the details contained in the annual report.

A member welcomed the fact that the summary report highlighted that CHS was still a shadow body and that its standards, although national, did reflect a local identity.

The Board agreed to note the summary annual report.

## **2.4 National Convener Annual Report 2011-12**

The National Convener introduced the report and explained that during the reporting period, she had not yet assumed responsibility for a number of statutory functions conferred to her by the Children’s Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011. Her priority had been to agree AST structures and functions with individual local authorities through a series of meetings with CPAC Chairs and clerks and councils’ representatives.

A member put on the record that the National Convener should take the credit for building the organisation in terms of staff recruitment.

The Board agreed to note the National Convener Annual Report 2011-12.

## **2.5 Remuneration and Appointments Committee revised terms of reference**

The Implementation Officer explained the main changes introduced by the revised terms of reference—

- modernisation and ensuring best practice in line with other committees in the public sector; and
- introduction of a committee Deputy Chair and clarification of role and functions.

The Chair informed members that, at its meeting on 20 August, the Remuneration and Appointments Committee had approved its revised terms of reference as appended.

A member said that the new terms of reference were clearer and more readable. The Chair thanked the Implementation Officer.

The Board agreed to note the Remuneration and Appointments Committee revised terms of reference.

## **2.6 Changes to CHS Board Standing Orders**

The Implementation Officer explained that the proposed changes to the Standing Orders were necessary to a) ensure consistency with the revised terms of reference of the Remuneration and Appointments Committee and b) add a number of important topics such as sub judice.

A member noted that a detailed procedure regarding voting would be helpful. The Implementation Officer said that the Standing Orders had been, on purpose, kept short and easily readable. However, the intention was to develop a more detailed guidance for Board members that would deal with the technical aspects of some topics.

The Board agreed to approve the changes to CHS Board Standing Orders.

## **2.7 Remuneration and Appointments Committee Annual Report**

The Board noted that the committee had approved its annual report on 20 August.

The Board agreed to note the Remuneration and Appointments Committee Annual Report.

## **3.1 Strengthening the Children's Hearing System**

The Board discussed how it could develop its strategic thinking in three key strands around the Kilbrandon principles and that would support the changes brought by the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011. Those areas were identified as—

- Understanding children and young people;

- Emphasising the significance of personal social responsibility; and
- Harnessing the power of corporate social responsibility aspirations.

A member was strongly of the view that the Board should aspire to support and demonstrate how it will inspire people in their communities to become involved in helping young people. A greater need for action and leadership was also identified as being part of the Board's ambition. The member further queried whether CHS could have a role in bringing some children charities together.

A member reiterated the point that the Board should focus its thinking on the areas highlighted in the discussion paper and that the employer's strategy should have a predominant place.

The National Convener said that SCRA had valuable information that could be used to develop and take forward some of the themes highlighted in the paper.

The Board agreed to develop strategic thinking in the three areas summarised below and to bring individual elements forward for further consideration over the next 6 – 12 month:

- listening to children and young people, understanding their views and taking them into account;
- recognising, valuing and encouraging the important sense of personal social responsibility that underpins the children's panel;
- harnessing the power of corporate social responsibility aspirations in support of the Children's Hearing's system.

### **3.2 CHS Board stakeholder engagement 2012-13**

The Board considered a discussion paper and recognised that effective engagement with stakeholders was an essential dimension to its work. A member declared that a first step would be to identify all key stakeholders and then devise a strategy to engage with them e.g. community planning partnerships. The Chair said that he was content to take this forward. The National Convener said that CHS should ensure that the Chair or a Board member attends all national networks such as CP Chairs and CPAC Chairs group meetings.

Another member expressed the view that changes would only succeed if the panel community had confidence in the organisation's ability to hear their voices at the local level. The Board agreed that effective engagement with stakeholders was an essential dimension to the work of CHS.

The Board agreed to—

- ensure that the CHS Chair or a Board Member attends all national CP chairs and CPAC chairs group meetings;

- write through the CHS Chair and/or the National Convener to key local authority Leaders and Conveners, key Community Planning Partnership chairs, key partner organisations in government, business and the third sector and all CPAC chairs to introduce CHS and identify and address common issues;
- review the possibility of allocating Board members to local areas for stakeholder engagement purposes.

### **3.3 GO-live RAG status report & AST update**

**&**

### **3.4**

The Project Manager gave an overview of the various workstreams to the Board and was pleased to report that the vast majority of activities were “green”. The establishment of ASTs was “amber” with ongoing discussions being actively pursued. Agreement in principle on ASTs had been received from 25 local authorities. The establishment of a national panel was “amber” as well due to the dependencies between the two workstreams. The Project Manager informed the Board that a Commencement Order would be laid before the Scottish Parliament in a matter of days, allowing the National Convener to formally invite existing CPAC members to transfer to ASTs.

### **3.5 Migration of functions**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services gave an overview of the twelve workstreams and said that CHS was meeting with Scottish Government officials on a monthly basis. This would continue until Go-live.

The workstreams consisted of—

- Scottish Government circular. The circular is comprehensive and is being adapted to form the basis of the panel members and AST handbook. It will then be sent out to panel members for comments in October.
- Establishment of a national panel. A joint letter from the National Convener and the minister would be sent at the end of the month inviting panel members to transfer to the national panel.
- Transfer of CPAC to ASTs. CPAC members have an automatic right to transfer to ASTs whereas that right does not apply to Sub-CPAC.
- Disclosure/PVGs. PVGs are in place for 2/3 of the panel members. A joint exercise with the Scottish Government will be carried out to assess the situation (as recorded in Panel Pal) for the remaining 1,000 panel members.
- Information management/transfer of data. The Director said that steps had been taken to identify a temporary records manager whose first action would be to consider all aspects of information management. It was hoped that such person would start in October.
- Complaints/resignations. Any resignation is recorded on Panel Pal with the original letter from panel members retained by the Scottish

- Communicator. Three issues are due until Go-live and CHS will work with the Scottish Government to include content relevant to Go-Live.
- Appointments. This is dealt with by a detailed programme plan for the transfer to National Panel.
- Media handling. CHS will restrict comments to those areas for which it has statutory responsibility.
- Recruitment. It is unlikely that there will be a major panel members recruitment exercise prior to Go-live. Provisions will need to be made for the transfer of knowledge to CHS from the Scottish Government about managing the recruitment process.
- Contracts. The Scottish Government has provided a list of all contracts which will novate to CHS with full details. The Amor contract expires at the end of March 2013.
- Events. The Scottish Government has provided a list of events and CHS will collaborate to gain experience.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contribution. The next Board meeting will be on 20 November. Venue to be announced.

The meeting closed at 4.30 pm