Summary Annual Report 2013/14

Children’s Hearings Scotland (CHS) is a public body set up by the Children’s Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011. CHS was set up in July 2011, but did not take on all of its responsibilities until the Act came into force on 24 June 2013.

What do we do?
The National Convener of CHS makes sure that Scotland’s 2,700 volunteer panel members get the support and help they need, and represents them at a national level. CHS helps the National Convener with the recruitment, appointment, training, retention and support of panel members.

Our work in 2013/14
In our Business Plan 2013/14 we had seven objectives which said what we were going to do that year:

Getting the views of children and young people
- we did some research with SCRA to find out what children, young people and their carers thought about children’s hearings
- we joined the National Participation and Engagement Forum set up by Who Cares? Scotland, to help us hear the views of young people who have been in care. Who Cares? Scotland became a member of the CHS Training Reference Group to represent the views and experiences of children and young people

Making sure we were ready for the new Act coming in on 24 June 2013
- the national Children’s Panel was established on 24 June
- we updated guidance for panel members to make sure they knew what things had changed about children’s hearings because of the new Act
- we worked with the Scottish Government, SCRA and local authorities to make sure that we could access all the information we needed from 24 June
- we appointed West Lothian College to deliver training to panel members and AST members
- we carried out our first successful panel member recruitment campaign

Making sure that ASTs are able to support the Children’s Panel
- we held events and wrote policies to make sure that all AST members understood their roles
- we set up a process for recruiting and appointing AST members
- we started writing reports every three months so that each AST could see information about the Children’s Panel in their local area

Working with our partners
- we worked with the Scottish Government and other partners as part of the Children’s Hearings Improvement Partnership, exploring shared outcomes for children and young people
- we worked with SCRA through the Hearings Management Group to update guidance on how hearings would be managed after the new Act came in
- we asked lots of our partners about the best way to report on the implementation of compulsory supervision orders

Making sure CHS and the Area Support Teams are managed properly
- we wrote policies and guidance to help CHS staff, panel members, AST members and local authorities process our information and keep it safe
- we signed contracts with local authorities to manage the processing of information on behalf of CHS
- we made a film to train panel members and AST members on how to keep information safe
Our vision: a Children’s Hearings System where everyone works together, making sure that all children and young people are heard, respected, valued, cared for and protected.

Our mission: to improve outcomes and experiences for children and young people in Scotland who may be at risk. We will do this by supporting the children’s panel, working with partners and using our influence to drive improvements across the Children’s Hearings System.

The highlights
April 2013 to March 2014

April
Updated guidance issued to help panel members understand the changes brought about by the new Act
Final AST management team appointments made
AST induction weekends – Dundee & Edinburgh

May
AST induction weekends – Inverness & Glasgow

June
Core policies for panel and AST members published
Practice and Procedure Manual published
2187 panel members appointed to the national Children’s Panel
Training contract awarded to West Lothian College
New CHS website launched

July
Research Reference Group established
24 June Children’s Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 implemented

August
CHS responded to call for evidence for Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill
First AST National Forum held
Research summary report published ‘children and young people’s views and experiences of children’s hearings’

September
Panel member recruitment campaign launched
Feedback Loop consultation launched

October
New training contract with West Lothian College started
John Anderson appointed as Interim Chair
New qualification for panel members set up

November
Video ‘managing information – what you need to know’ published
Organisational review survey launched
First AST performance reports published

December
First meeting of Training Reference Group
Interim Director of Finance and Corporate Services appointed
First panel member practice newsletter issued
AST/SCRA Locality operating framework published

January 2014
First meeting of Recruitment Reference Group

February
AST local authority representative seminar
First National Participation and Engagement Forum with Who Cares? Scotland

March
Data processing contracts signed with all local authorities
Boyd McAdam appointed as Interim Chief Executive Designate
First meeting of Recruitment Reference Group

April 2014

THE ROAD AHEAD
Appointment of new Chair and new National Convener/Chief Executive
Publication of research on the Children’s Hearings System
Publication of Organisational Review results
Panel member recruitment
Development of the “feedback loop”
Communication
- we set up a new website that includes information and documents about CHS, the Children’s Panel and ASTs
- we set up a private website so that panel members and AST members could access all the information, documents and news they need to support them in their roles

People
- we carried out a survey of panel members, AST members and CHS staff and Board members to find out how they felt about CHS
- we worked with SQA to set up and put in place a new qualification for panel members

Board
The Board sets strategic direction and provides governance and challenge to CHS. CHS Board members are appointed by, and are accountable to, Scottish Ministers. In October 2013, Craig Spence the CHS Chair left and John Anderson was appointed as Interim Chair. At the end of March 2014, CHS had six Board members:

- **John Anderson**, Interim Chair (appointed 11.03.13)
- **Alastair Hamilton**, Deputy Chair (appointed 04.07.11)
- **Brian Baoverstock**, Board member (appointed 04.07.11)
- **Marian Martin**, Board member (appointed 11.03.13)
- **Andrew Thin**, Board member (appointed 04.07.11)
- **Linda Watt**, Board member (appointed 04.07.11)

Three of our Board members have previously served as children’s panel members. On 8 April 2014, Scottish Ministers announced the appointment of Garry Coutts as CHS Chair.

Staff
During this time, Bernadette Monaghan was the National Convener/Chief Executive of CHS. As Chief Executive, Bernadette had responsibility for the management of CHS. As National Convener, Bernadette acted as a voice for Scotland’s 2,700 volunteer panel members, and made sure they were supported in their role. Bernadette left CHS on 6 April 2014 and Boyd McAdam was appointed to carry out this role on a temporary basis.

CHS’ Senior Management Team (SMT) is responsible for leading and directing the work of CHS, making sure we deliver the objectives set out in the Corporate Plan and managing the CHS staff. During 2013/14 members of the SMT were:

- **Bernadette Monaghan**, National Convener/Chief Executive. She was replaced by **Boyd McAdam** in March 2014 on a temporary basis
- **Alison Gough**, Director of Panel and Area Support
- **Fiona Greig**, Director of Finance and Corporate Services. She was replaced by **Joe Campbell** from January 2014 on a temporary basis

Money
The total budget for the year was £3.3 million, we spent all of this on:

- **Staff**: £832,000
- **Running costs**: £863,000
- **Staff training etc.**: £6,000
- **Legal Fees**: £6,000
- **Taxes**: £25,000
- **Loyal Fees**: £5,000
- **Audit**: £29,000
- **Shared services**: £112,000

This publication has not been printed to save paper. However, if you require a printed copy or a copy in an alternative format and/or language, please contact us to discuss your needs.