

## Minutes of the Board meeting of 27 October 2015

The meeting started at 13.01

**Present:**

Garry Coutts, Chair  
John Anderson  
Marian Martin

Alastair Hamilton, Deputy Chair  
Brian Baverstock  
Linda Watt

**Also present:**

Boyd McAdam, National Convener/Chief Executive (NC/CEO), CHS  
Elliot Jackson, Depute Chief Executive (DCE), CHS  
Ed Morrison, Director of Finance, CHS  
Lewis Brown, Panel and Area Support Officer, CHS  
Franck David, Executive Assistant (minute taker), CHS  
Ross Mackenzie, Accountant, SCRA

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Items	Actions / owner	Time- scales
<b>1 Declaration of interests</b>		
None.	N/A	N/A
<b>2 Minutes of previous meeting</b>		
The Board agreed to approve the minutes of its meeting on 8 September subject to one minor amendment.	N/A	N/A
<b>3 Matters arising</b>		
Nothing to report.	N/A	N/A
<b>4 Action log</b>		
Item 1 - Board development plan for members. An update report will be presented to the Board at the next meeting on 22 December.	<b>Chair</b>	<b>22.12.15</b>

5	<b>Chair update</b>	
	<p><b>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since the last meeting, the Chair had attended numerous AST meetings and observed a number of hearings across Scotland. The Chair had a number of meetings with the Scottish Government and had had regular meeting with CHS NC/ CEO and staff.</li> </ul> <p><b>2) Decisions—</b></p> <p>The Board agreed to note the Chair’s update.</p>	
6	<b>Chief Executive update</b>	
	<p><b>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</b></p> <p>The NC/CEO introduced the paper.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children’s Hearings Improvement Partnership (CHIP) – A new Permanence workgroup had been set up to look at how decisions at hearings could be taken at the earliest opportunity in the interest of children.</li> <li>• Procurement - The Scottish Government Procurement Services had been providing CHS with an ad hoc consultancy service to support the organisation with any procurement requirements. The service was available for 5 days per year and offered excellent value for money.</li> <li>• Practice and policy – Between 26 August and 6 October there had been 27 children where requests for panel member continuity had been received, 26 of these requests have been approved on behalf of the National Convener. One request had not followed the necessary process and could not be granted. A request for an “independent report” had been made for three children, the purpose of which was to seek specialist advice. There was anecdotal evidence that some panel members did not request continuity due to the perception that the process was off-putting.</li> <li>• Networks - On 5 October John Summers had started a 2.5 day a week secondment to CHS from the West Lothian College to help progress the development of networks for Learning and Development Co-ordinators.</li> <li>• Recruitment campaign - The low percentage of male applications (28.5%) received during the 2015 panel members’ recruitment campaign was still a concern. An analysis of the figures by area would be available in mid-november which would help review the strategy to attract more male panel members.</li> <li>• Information security - Two information security incidents had been reported and investigated so far in Quarter 3. They included the sending of sensitive hearings information to an individual via a non-secure personal email account</li> </ul>	

	<p>and the circulation of an email containing personal email addresses. Recommendations had been made in relation to each incident and although actions will be taken to reduce the risk of similar incidents in future, those incidents had highlighted the extreme importance attached to doing, and complying with, the Information Governance (IG) training. The issue related to information sent via a non-secure personal email account had occurred in an area where IG training had not yet taken place. It was confirmed that fewer incidents were taking place and each of them was followed through by CHS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal representation – there are still contentious issues around the way some professionals present their decisions and the competing interests sometimes between the welfare of the child and the parents’ rights.</li> <li>• Alyson Evans will be starting some time limited work with Guernsey to assist them in refining policies and practice in their systems, closely based on the principles of Kilbrandon.</li> </ul> <p><b>2) Decisions—</b></p> <p>The Board agreed—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To receive a report showing the number of requests for continuity broken down by area.</li> <li>• To note the NC/CEO update.</li> </ul>	NC/CEO	22.12.15
<b>7</b>	<b>Finance report Q2 – 2015/16</b>		
	<p><b>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CHS management were investigating ways to use a £55k forecast underspend, bearing in mind that panel members’ expenses continued to represent a relatively unpredictable area of spend. The remit of the CHS Operational Management Group was to look for “shovel-ready” projects so that the organisation could act agilely should the forecast underspend be confirmed as the year closes. A number of such projects had been identified. reforecast would be then undertaken.</li> <li>• The SMT would be meeting with the Scottish Government Sponsor Team on 28 October to progress discussions around Working Capital i.e. £100k was seen as a more realistic figure than the £70k envisaged by the Scottish Government.</li> </ul> <p><b>2) Decision—</b></p> <p>The Board agreed to note the report.</p>		

8	<b>Organisational Performance Report Q2</b>	
<p><b>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 33 activities were listed in the report out of which 24 were complete/ on target for completion, 7 were at risk of not being achieved by the end of the year and 2 were highly unlikely to be completed.</li> <li>• Work on the design of a PDA for PPAs had started but had stalled due to current insufficient human resources. John Summers had been detached from West Lothian College on a temporary basis to help establish a network for LDCs and open up dialogue.</li> <li>• Communication would be sent on 27 October to all Area Conveners to update them on the outcome of CHS' review of the Digital Skills, together with information on how CHS would better support panel and AST members in completing the Information Governance Training.</li> <li>• It was confirmed that, although CHS had no plans for doing research at this point in time, the Strategic Planning and Performance Officer would scope out areas for research for 2016/17.</li> <li>• The Board commented that some questions on the Report would benefit from a slight rewording to generate more purposeful answers (e.g. questions 12-14 in the Annual Indicators).</li> </ul> <p><b>2) Decision—</b></p> <p>The Board agreed to approve the report.</p>		
9	<b>CHS Networks and Reference Groups structures</b>	
<p><b>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During 2015 CHS had moved from a quarterly National AST Forum to a structure of groups and networks in order to increase the effective engagement between the CHS National Team and Area Support Teams. The aim was to deliver a more flexible and responsive structure, create room for discussion and debate, devolve operational decision making and empower the community of CHS volunteers. The network structure was based on key principles i.e. empowerment, devolved responsibility, communication and national focus.</li> <li>• Central to the new approach had been the creation of the Area Conveners (AC) Liaison Group which brought together the 22 Area Conveners with the National Convener and the National Team to discuss issues affecting the national Children' Panel. A number of Reference Groups existed that acted as a forum for policy discussion, made recommendations in their area of remit and referred strategic issues to the AC Liaison Forum for consideration/ decision. Networks had been established to share practice across ASTs and</li> </ul>		

	<p>allow for members of the CHS community doing similar roles to connect and communicate. Overall, the aim of the devolved structures was to generate engagement and discussion throughout the CHS Community where issues could be addressed and escalated to the appropriate level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new structure had been operating for around 6 months and was still bedding in.</li> <li>• The Board was supportive of the general structure for managing the panel community which achieved a good balance of groups.</li> </ul> <p><b>2) Decisions—</b></p> <p>The Board agreed—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That Board members should take the opportunity to attend Reference Group and Network meetings once a year.</li> <li>• To note the report.</li> </ul>	<b>Board members</b>	
<b>10</b>	<b>Review of Standing Orders</b>		
	<p><b>1) Summary of discussion and/or issues raised—</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board discussed a number of improvements aimed at strengthening governance principles as well as CHS and the Board’s accountability and transparency. The main amendments related to the introduction of a clear and detailed description of the role and responsibilities of the Chair, Depute Chair and members. The requirement to review the Standing Orders annually was also added in.</li> <li>• Members supported the changes and noted the clarification brought to the role of the Depute Chair in particular.</li> </ul> <p><b>2) Decision—</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board agreed to approve its revised Standing Orders subject to minor amendments discussed at the meeting and to publish the Standing Orders onto the CHS’ website.</li> </ul>	<b>EA</b>	<b>w/c 26.10.15</b>
<p>The Chair thanked everyone for their contribution.</p>			
<p>The next Board meeting will be on 22 December 2015, Edinburgh. The meeting closed at 14.03.</p>			