

# CHS Public Board Meeting

Tue 21 September 2021, 13:00 - 15:00

## Agenda

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### 13:00 - 13:00 **1. Agenda & Declarations of interests**

0 min

*Verbal*      *Garry Coutts*

To consider any declarations of interests with regard to agenda items

 1. Agenda Sept 2021.pdf (2 pages)

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### 13:00 - 13:00 **2. Minutes of previous meeting**

0 min

*Paper*      *Garry Coutts*

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting on June 22nd, 2021

 2 CHS-2122-16 Minutes of June 22 meeting DRAFT.pdf (12 pages)

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### 13:00 - 13:00 **3. Matters arising**

0 min

*Verbal*      *Garry Coutts*

Seek assurance that actions from the previous meeting have been progressed

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### 13:00 - 13:00 **4. Action log**

0 min

*Paper*      *Garry Coutts*

To monitor progress against actions due and agree action where required

 4 CHS-2122-17 Action Log.pdf (2 pages)

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### 13:00 - 13:00 **5. Chair update**

0 min

*Verbal*      *Garry Coutts*

For information and discussion

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### 13:00 - 13:00 **6. National Convener/ CEO update**

0 min

*Paper*      *Elliot Jackson*

For consideration and discussion

 06 CHS-2122-18 FINAL NC update June Board.pdf (6 pages)

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### 13:00 - 13:00 **7. 2020/21 Financial Forecast Outturn**

0 min

*Paper*      *Lynne Harrison*

For Information and approval

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**13:00 - 13:00** **8. CHS 5 Year financial Plan - DRAFT**

0 min

*Paper Lynne Harrison*

For consideration and approval

8 CHS-2122-20 5 year strategic financial plan 2122-2627.pdf (17 pages)

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**13:00 - 13:00** **9. CHS Framework Document**

0 min

*Paper Lynne Harrison*

For consideration and approval

9 CHS-2122-21a Framework Document Cover Paper.pdf (1 pages)

9 CHS-2122-21b Framework Document - 2021.pdf (19 pages)

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**13:00 - 13:00** **10. ARMC**

0 min

**10.1. Audited Annual Accounts 2020/21**

*Paper Ed Morrison*

For consideration and approval

10 CHS-2122-22a Annual Accs and Man Rep letter covering report final.pdf (6 pages)

10 CHS-2122-22b Annual Accounts 2020-21 v3.pdf (55 pages)

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**13:00 - 13:00** **11. CHS Core Projects Update**

0 min

**11.1. Children's Rights and Inclusion Participation Progress Report**

*Paper Elliot Jackson*

For consideration and discussion

11 CHS-2122-23 Participation Progress Report 2021 Children's Rights and Inclusion\_Board.pdf (9 pages)

**11.2. Improvement Project Report**

*Paper Carol Wassell*

For consideration and discussion

11 CHS-2122-24 Promise Improvement Projects Report.pdf (4 pages)

**11.3. Brand and Language Update**

*Paper Lynne Harrison*

For consideration and discussion

11 CHS-2122-25 CHS Projects Update - Brand and Language Development.pdf (7 pages)

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**13:00 - 13:00** **12. Quarter 2 Performance Report**

0 min

*Paper Lynne Harrison*

For consideration and assurance

**13:00 - 13:00** **13. Revised Business Plan 21/22**

0 min

*Paper* *Lynne Harrison*

For consideration and approval

📄 13 CHS-2122-27a Board Cover Paper - Business Planning (In-Year).pdf (3 pages)

📄 13 CHS-2122-27b Business Plan Supplementary Plan.pdf (14 pages)

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**13:00 - 13:00** **14. Promise Oversight Update**

0 min

*Verbal* *Carol Wassell*

Information and discussion

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**13:00 - 13:00** **15. CHS Impact Report 2020/2021**

0 min

*Paper* *Lynne Harrison*

For consideration and approval

📄 15 CHS-2122-28a Board Cover Paper - Impact Report 2020-21.pdf (1 pages)

📄 15 CHS-2122-28b Impact Report - 2020-21.pdf (17 pages)

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**13:00 - 13:00** **16. CHS Learning Academy Prospectus 2021/22**

0 min

*Paper* *Elliot Jackson*

For consideration and approval

📄 16 CHS-2122-29 CHSLA Prospectus 2021.pdf (14 pages)

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**13:00 - 13:00** **17. CHS Trauma Training Plan**

0 min

*Paper* *Elliot Jackson*

For consideration and approval

📄 17 CHS-2122-30 Trauma Informed Children's Hearings\_Board.pdf (8 pages)

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**13:00 - 13:00** **18. AOB**

0 min

*Verbal* *Garry Coutts*

## BOARD MEETING

### AGENDA

**2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting 2021/22**  
**21<sup>st</sup> September 2021**

The Board will meet at 1.00 pm at the Grosvenor Hotel

Item	Topic	Lead Person	Paper Number	Purpose
1	Declarations of interests	Chair	Verbal	To consider any declarations of interests with regard to agenda items
2	Minutes of previous meeting	Chair	CHS-2122-16	To approve the minutes of the previous meeting on 22 <sup>nd</sup> June 2021
3	Matters arising	Chair	Verbal	Seek assurance that actions from the previous meeting have been progressed
4	Action log	Chair	CHS-2122-17	To monitor progress against actions due and agree action where required
5	Chair update	Chair	Verbal	For information & discussion
6	National Convener/ CEO update	EJ	CHS-2122-18	For consideration and discussion
7	2020/21 Financial Forecast Outturn	EM/LH	CHS-2122-19	For consideration and approval
8	CHS 5 Year financial Plan - DRAFT	EM/LH	CHS-2122-20	For consideration and approval
9	CHS Framework Document	LH	CHS-2122-21	For consideration and approval
10	ARMC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audited Annual Accounts 2020/21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Letter of Representation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	EM	CHS-2122-22	For consideration and approval
11	CHS Core Projects Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children's Rights and Inclusion Participation Progress Report</li> <li>• Improvement Project Report</li> <li>• Brand and Language Update</li> </ul>	CM CW LH	CHS-2122-23 CHS-2122-24 CHS-2122-25	For consideration and discussion
12	Quarter 2 Performance Report	LH/MB	CHS-2122-26	For consideration and assurance
13	Revised Business Plan 21/22	LH	CHS-2122-27	For consideration and approval
14	Promise Oversight Update	CW	Verbal	Information and discussion



15	CHS Impact Report 2020/2021	LH/MB	CHS-2122-28	For consideration and approval
16	CHS Learning Academy Prospectus 2021/22	EJ	CHS-2122-29	For consideration and approval
17	CHS Trauma Training Plan	CM	CHS-2122-30	For consideration and approval
18	AOB			

**Next meeting dates: Board Development day October 12<sup>th</sup> - Grosvenor Hotel**  
**Board Strategy weekend November 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> - TBC**  
**Board Meeting – November 23<sup>rd</sup> - TBC**

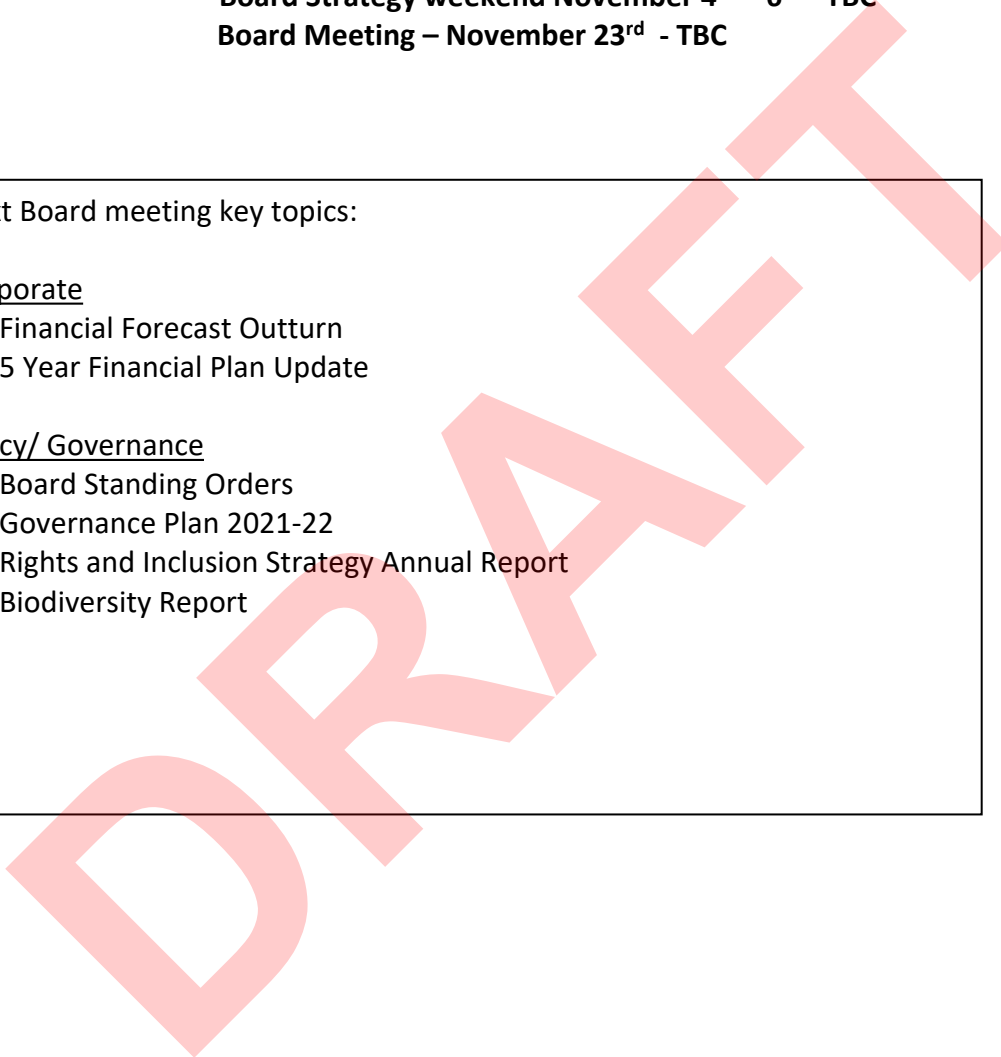
Next Board meeting key topics:

Corporate

Financial Forecast Outturn  
5 Year Financial Plan Update

Policy/ Governance

Board Standing Orders  
Governance Plan 2021-22  
Rights and Inclusion Strategy Annual Report  
Biodiversity Report



## Minutes of the Board Meeting of 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021

The meeting started at 13:00 via Teams

**Present:**

Garry Coutts (GC)	Chair
John Anderson (JA)	Board Member
Henry Robson (HR)	ARMC Chair/Board Member
Beth-Anne Logan (B-AL)	Board Member
Jo Derrick (JD)	RAC Chair/Board Member
Barbara Neil (BN)	Board Member
Katie Docherty	Board Member

**Also present:**

Elliot Jackson (EJ)	National Convener/Chief Executive (NC/CEO), CHS
Lynne Harrison	Head of Strategy/development & DCEO, CHS
Carol Wassell (CW)	Head of Area Support & Community Improvement, CHS
Christine Mullen (CM)	Head of Practice, Improvement, and Learning, CHS
Michael Beardmore (MB)	National Quality and Performance Lead, CHS
Ed Morrison (EM)	Director of Finance, CHS (SCRA shared services)
Craig Milne	Children’s Hearings Team Scottish Government
Katie Docherty	Appointed Board Member (pending completion), CHS
Rachel Kavish Wheatley (RW)	Business Support Lead, (minute taker), CHS

**Apologies:**

Susan Deery	Head of Human Resources, Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
Julie Duncan	Policy Manager, Director-General Education, Communities And Justice
Iain Fitheridge	Head of Children’s Hearings Team Scottish Government

Items	Actions / owner	Time-scales
<b>1 Declaration of interests</b>		
The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting The Chair welcomed Katie Docherty, newly appointed Board member, to the meeting There were no declarations of interest to note		
<b>2 Minutes of previous meeting</b>		
The Board agreed to approve the minutes of its meeting on 23 <sup>rd</sup> March, 2021		
<b>3 Matters arising</b>		
No matters arising to note		

4	<b>Action log</b>	RKW	June 21'
<p>The Chair confirmed that all items were on the Agenda for discussion</p> <p>The Chair noted the following actions from the log which required attention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Item 5 &amp; 6 to be removed from the action log</li> </ul>			
5	<b>Chair update</b>		
<p><b>The Chair updated the Board on the following;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment of two new Board members complete</li> <li>The Chair has attended meetings with SCRA, Sponsor team, and the Promise team around finalising papers and next steps</li> </ul> <p><b>Board decision:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To Note the update from the Chair</li> </ol>			
6	<b>National Convener/Chief Executive update</b>		
<p><b>The CEO spoke to the paper shared;</b></p> <p><b>Panel Member Pre-service training programme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 2021 Panel Member pre-service training programme completed on Saturday 12 June 2021.</li> <li>The previous in person 7 day programme was converted to an online four day training programme.</li> <li>Cohort commenced with 714 trainees. 8% of the cohort have withdrawn with 617 trainees continuing to appointment (to date).</li> <li>Retention rate of 92% is above that of the last four years.</li> <li>Report and evaluation to be shared at the next Board meeting.</li> <li>The quality of the cohort continues to be high with positive feedback from AST's.</li> </ul> <p><b>Our Hearings, Our Voice Evaluation (OHOV)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our Hearings Our Voice has been established for over two years.</li> <li>We intend to have a joint Board meeting with OHOV with plans for this in train.</li> <li>LH is leading the work on the OHOV evaluation for CHS.</li> <li>The CEO/NC offers the Board the opportunity to meet with members of OHOV.</li> </ul> <p><b>Community wellbeing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CEO/NC noted an awareness of the significant strain on our communities wellbeing with low attrition rates and strain visible.</li> <li>A report may be forthcoming to the September Board relating to this dependent on further data and observation over the summer.</li> </ul>			

<p><b>Board discussion:</b> The Chair encouraged Board members to participate in the evaluation of OHOV. It is a strong asset in driving change in the hearing system.</p> <p><b>Board decision:</b> <b>1. To note the NC/CEO update</b></p>		
<p><b>7</b></p>	<p><b>Recovery and Renewal</b></p>	
<p><b>CW spoke to the paper shared;</b> This paper looks at our current work, planning, and approach to recovery and renewal;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focused on holding the gains as a result of the pandemic which is coming through as the benefits of working virtually and the digital advancements this has offered. Looking at how to retain the element of choice around how children and their families participate in hearings. More work is needed around the risks this choice can present to infants, children, and young people.</li> <li>• RAVHI pilot using Teams as a virtual platform for hearings is now concluded with positive feedback gained and a national rollout expected.</li> <li>• Publishing a paper of guidance to AC’s and AST about the return of PPA’s and observations.</li> <li>• There is hope that the national guidance around two meter distance will reduce to one meter allowing more areas to utilise face to face hearings.</li> <li>• The HROD will be launching a survey for the National team regarding a future working model to understand staffs views.</li> <li>• Consistently monitoring the operational capacity, particularly around the number of PM available to sit on hearings and what that means for us looking forward with anticipated increase in hearing numbers and the removal of the Covid legislation [emergency legislation allowing two panel members to sit on a hearing rather than three, and removal of the necessity for a gender split]. Working with SCRA to understand capacity and need over the next six months.</li> </ul> <p><b>Board discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board questioned if there would be any guidance or criteria around how children and families are provided a choice for a virtual, blended, or face to face hearing, particularly when it comes to younger children and infants who cannot make the choice themselves. Currently, SCRA take responsibility for this by having a discussion directly with families and children, taking their view based on the circumstances of the hearing as to whether or not it is appropriate to honour the family or child’s preference. The obligation to attend hearings returns from the 1<sup>st</sup> of October when the emergency legislation ends.</li> <li>• The Chair noted how well we have fulfilled our responsibility to consistently supply PM’s for hearings and what an achievement that has been over such a difficult period of time.</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board expressed concern and unease around the drop of 30% in hearings taking place and our lack of in-depth understanding on the cause. More work will need to be done around this and gathering the data as we move forward.</li> </ul> <p><b>Board decisions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>The Board noted the report shared</b></li> <li><b>The Chair thanked the national and community team for the work, effort, and consistency to uphold our responsibilities and ensure Panel Members have been available for hearings across Scotland during the pandemic</b></li> <li><b>The Chair thanked the national and community teams and noted the effort and positive results of a the successful Recruitment campaign</b></li> </ul>		
<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>2020/21 Financial Forecast Outturn</b></p>		
	<p><b>EM spoke to the paper shared;</b> EM highlighted the following points from the final Financial Forecast Outturn report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presented are the draft outturn figures for 2020/21. The external auditors (Audit Scotland) are underway with fieldwork with final figures expected by end of July.</li> <li>Revenue outturn increased by £257k since February’s figures with a total underspend of £545. Main areas of underspend in:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Expenses</li> <li>➤ Training</li> <li>➤ Devolved funding</li> <li>➤ Recruitment</li> </ul> <p>it is likely there could be savings on these lines in 2021/22. SMT continue to carry out monthly focus on forecasts to manage this in-year.</p> </li> <li>2020/21 revenue underspend has been retained. This will be a review in the autumn with SG Sponsor team to review the need for the in-year funding of £500k.</li> <li>Small underspend on capital which will be required in 2021/22 to complete 2020/21 projects.</li> </ul> <p><b>Board discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Chair asked for assurance that the annual audit was progressing satisfactorily. EM reported that there was nothing unexpected coming out of the audit.</li> <li>The Board noted the underspend has increased since last reported in March and asked how SMT are progressing the work around a more accurate budget. SMT reported that monthly underspend tracking with budget leads underway as aware continued restrictions may impact further. Working closely with Sponsor team to make SG aware of any saving in-year and ensure core activities are prioritised.</li> </ul> <p><b>Board decision:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>The Board agreed to approve the Report</b></li> </ol>		

9	<b>Quarter 1 Performance Report</b>
	<p><b>LH spoke to the report shared;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As this is the first report of the year, most items are green indicating they are ‘on track’ or uncoloured to indicate they are not yet due.</li> <li>• Area plans are now in train with roll out restriction dependent</li> <li>• Report is fluid, particularly in relation to potential changes or updates as we progress</li> </ul> <p><b>Board discussion:</b> The Board were pleased with the report, with no additional comments.</p> <p><b>Board decision:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>The Board noted the Q1 report shared</b></li> </ol>
10	<b>ARMC Annual report</b>
	<p><b>HR spoke to the Report shared;</b> Report is fairly straight forward, however the following areas should be noted;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal audit on resilience suggested ARMC should have a session on:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ further opportunities, risks, and challenges we face through our dependence on other partners.</li> <li>➢ Whether the Board had sufficiently robust objectives and ensuring these are reviewed more regularly</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Internal audit plans were reviewed in May of 2021 and agreed focus on the following:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Contract management process around the CHSLA;</li> <li>➢ Information governance;</li> <li>➢ Governance around the AST’s.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The ARMC reviewed and approved the report at their meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> of May 2021.</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussion:</b> The Chair asked if there were dates set for the Board development sessions as agreed from the internal audit. These have not been agreed as yet however aspects of them can be worked into regular development session.</p> <p><b>Board decision:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>The Board approved the report</b></li> <li>2. <b>The Chair of ARMC thanked the Committee members for their participation throughout the year</b></li> <li>3. <b>Set dates for Board development sessions around further opportunities, risks, and challenges faced working with other partners and the review of Board objectives</b></li> </ol>
11	<b>DDOC Update</b>

<p><b>HR updated the Board on the following;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum Viable Product (MVP) now signed off. Committee content with the MVP, its roll out, and use across both organisation.</li> <li>• The Programme Closure Final Report will come to the DDOC on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August which brings the work of the Committee to an end. The report will also contain a benefit analysis. The reports will come to the Board.</li> <li>• Further digital assurance report to go forward to SG.</li> <li>• New governance procedures will be put in place around the ‘business as usual’ development of digital going forward with a Change Control Board which CHS and SCRA will feed into to ensure both organisations are realising the benefits.</li> <li>• Management information reporting remains outstanding however it is a priority piece of work to find a resolution.</li> </ul> <p><b>LH updated the Board on the following;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RAVHI pilot is in the process of evaluation with a formal report forthcoming.</li> <li>• Working with SCRA to roll out the pilot to a ‘business as usual’ model using Teams as the video conferencing tool for virtual hearings with management and assistance provided by a ‘virtual’ receptionist. Aim to roll out by August however this is dependent on resource.</li> <li>• Working on identifying what our virtual model looks like and defining what we mean across both organisations by virtual, face to face, hybrid, etc.</li> <li>• Digital team resourcing is being evaluated by both SCRA and CHS. Conversations underway with the Sponsor Team regarding additional financial resource to fulfil these recruitment needs.</li> <li>• SCRA and CHS looking at digital teams and how we work together in order to fully realise our return on investment and support our digital growth. There may be additional spend required and talks are under way with the Sponsor team around this.</li> </ul> <p><b>Board discussion:</b> The Board asked for timelines around the management reporting and were given assurance a report would be forthcoming for the September Board.</p> <p><b>Board decision:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Board noted the update shared</li> </ol>		
<p><b>12   Independent Reports Implementation</b></p>		
<p><b>CM spoke to the papers shared;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A bank of 23 independent report writers (IRW) has been established with a range of specialists including child psychologists, independent social workers, clinical psychologists and an art therapist.</li> <li>• Online induction took place in July 2020 with a development session in March and future events planned quarterly.</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An update to the Practice and Procedure Manual (PPM) with regards to Independent Reports, was made in December 2020 and issued to PM's.</li> <li>• 17 reports were requests since July 2020, all approved other than one which was not a valid requests.</li> </ul> <p><b>Board discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board questioned the cost of the reports. The costs are high due to the specialism of the report writers. In addition, if there are siblings, the reports are written per child which increases spend.</li> <li>• The Board noted the majority of reports centred around parental capacity and would be interested in continued reporting analysing the trends around independent reports and their reasons.</li> </ul> <p><b>Board decision:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>The Board agreed to approve the report</b></li> <li>2. <b>To carry out a development session around IRW for the Board for further understanding</b></li> <li>3. <b>To follow the trends and continue to report on independent report requests which come into CHS</b></li> </ol>	<p>CM</p> <p>CM</p>	<p>Sept 21'</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>13</p>	<p><b>Advocacy</b></p>		
	<p><b>CM spoke to the papers shared;</b></p> <p>The report gives an overall review of the progress made implementing the Children's Advocacy provision in children's hearings. The advocacy provision went live in November 2020. This report covers: background information, training, partnerships and feedback.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 'Advocacy' module was launched on the CHS Learning Academy in November 2020 providing PM's with the practice guidance and training needed. The training module is available to CHS partner agencies on our public website.</li> <li>• The CHS Practice and Procedure Manual was updated last year to include a section on Advocacy.</li> <li>• We have taken a multi-agency approach to ensuring the smooth delivery of the children's Advocacy provision. We actively participate in the Advocacy Expert Reference Group.</li> <li>• We know chairs are referencing Advocacy and we will ensure PPA's will look for this when carrying out observations.</li> <li>• There is some anecdotal information that children's hearings are being deferred due to the child not being aware of advocacy before they reach the hearing room. This was brought to the Advocacy Expert Reference Group, and a smaller working group has been set up to look into the issue. This group will include CHS, SCRA, advocacy providers and Scottish Government.</li> </ul>		



	<p><b>Board discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board asked if we can share the advocacy model we created for PM's with other organisations (such as social work) to increase the understanding and awareness across the sector. The model is on the CHS website however we will look to see if awareness can be raised more directly with other organisations.</li> <li>The Chair asked for more details to be included in an Advocacy report looking at trends in areas, reasons, etc. Unsure how readily available statistical data is but will look to include this in future reports.</li> </ul> <p><b>Board decision:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>The Board agreed to note the update shared</b></li> <li><b>To look for opportunities to share the Advocacy training module with partner agencies via the Advocacy Expert Reference Group</b></li> <li><b>Future Advocacy reports to include statistical data on trends analysis and fulfilment of requests</b></li> </ol>	<p>CM</p> <p>CM</p>	<p>Sept 21'</p> <p>Sept 21'</p>
<p>14</p>	<p><b>Research and Consultation Activities update</b></p>		
	<p><b>CM spoke to the papers shared;</b>                  This paper provides the Board with a summary update of work currently on-going related to research and consultations, undertaken since the last update in August 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Five research projects underway, not yet concluded. When these are complete and papers submitted a decision is made if these are shared community wide or only with relevant areas.</li> <li>Area Convener for East Dunbartonshire, Ying Zhang, completed with distinction a dissertation on the following topic: History in the Making - Conceptualisation of the Strategic Options for the Scottish Children's Hearings System, a Unique Care and Justice System in the World, in its Journey of Change and Improvement. The work is dedicated to the 3,000 Voluntary Panel Members, who were the inspiration for the work. The work set out to make practical contributions to CHS's change implementation reflecting the writer's role as a newly appointed Area Convener, with the recognition that Scotland needs an urgent and collaborative response to modernise and professionalise its legal decision making workforce, and deliver the Promise that Scotland owes to its babies, children, and young people.</li> </ul> <p><b>Board discussion:</b>                  No comments from the Board</p> <p><b>Board decision:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>The Board agreed to approve the report</b></li> </ol>		

15	<b>Recruitment Update</b>		
<p><b>CM spoke to the paper shared;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 2021 Panel Member Recruitment campaign, selection, and training was the first ever to be held entirely online and virtually.</li> <li>Approach to campaign took into account need to recruit more PM’s than in previous years, the virtual aspect, and the current landscape. Information sessions, shortlisting, selection, face to face interviews were all adapted to be held online with huge involvement from AST’s.</li> <li>The campaign attracted 74.8% identifying as women, 0.2% identifying as non-binary and 25% identifying as men. Where a response was submitted, 9% of applicants declared to have a disability. Of applicants who responded to the question regarding personal experience of the hearings system, 12.4% declared they had lived experience while 9.5% of all applicants had previous experience (as a former Panel Member or professional). Fifty four percent of applicants were in employment and 11% were students; with 25% of applicants under 30 years of age.</li> <li>Trainees have now completed all four day online Pre Service sessions.</li> <li>An overall review of the learnings and positives to retain in any future campaign and to inform future methodology for the delivery of pre service training, is ongoing and will be brought to the Board in September.</li> <li>Evaluation of process will take into account virtual training including the performance of facilitators and our level of support to trainees in a virtual environment.</li> </ul> <p><b>Board discussion:</b> The Board acknowledged what an achievement it was to have care experienced CYP sit in on all the recruitment of new Panel Members. The Board commended the television campaign and its reach.</p> <p><b>Board decision:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>The Board agreed to approve the report</b></li> <li><b>To have September’s report include graphic data comparing year on year trends in recruitment</b></li> </ol>		CM	Sept 21’
16	<b>Children’s Act (Scotland) 2020 Update</b>		
<p><b>CW spoke to the paper shared;</b></p> <p>This report provides the initial update relating to the Children (Scotland) Act 2020 Project Team, formed in April 2021 within CHS of staff across all areas. This programme is a good example of the project approach taken within CHS which will be sued for UNCRC and Trauma Informed Practice programmes as well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CSA 2020 Project is currently planned in two phases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Phase 1 is all work required before the first deadline of July 26th 2021.</li> <li>➤ Phase 2 is all work post-26th of July 2021. Phase 2 activity is still to be developed and will be proportionate to the other priorities for CHS during 2021-2022.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition of the importance and involvement of the Child’s Siblings and promotion of ongoing relations comes into effect in July.</li> <li>• New training module in development in-line with the CSA_2020 Sibling Inclusion Provision for both community and national team members.</li> <li>• Practice guidance currently being updated for distribution.</li> <li>• Looking at tools being used locally to develop toolkits which can be used nationally</li> <li>• Working within a quality improvement approach, a driver diagram has been developed to capture necessary changes.</li> <li>• Comms plan in place to support this work as well a risk register to ensure appropriate oversight and governance arrangements are in place.</li> </ul> <p><b>Board discussion:</b> The Chair of RAC advised that it be made clear to the project team the process for tackling emerging risks and how to escalate them.</p> <p><b>Board decision:</b> <b>1. To note the paper shared</b></p>		
<p><b>17</b></p>	<p><b>Social Media Strategy</b></p>		
	<p><b>LH spoke to the paper shared;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Media is a key communications growth area for CHS.</li> <li>• The strategy ensures we have a presence and harness engagement around the Promise.</li> <li>• Highlights how we use the different social media tools at our disposal to realise the greatest benefit and create influence.</li> <li>• The Vision and mission of the strategy is about influence and brand awareness.</li> <li>• We have clearly identified our goals around trust, engagement, and impact in the sector.</li> <li>• Measures and goals in place for reporting with the strategy in a 6 monthly review cycle.</li> <li>• The Comms team have offered to meet Board members individually or as a group to discuss interacting with social media.</li> </ul> <p><b>Board discussion:</b> The strategy was well received by the Board and they are looking forward to seeing how the work progresses. The Board praised B-AL for the push she has given for this work to be progressed. The Board noted the need to have editorial oversight and guidance for staff when encouraging them to interact with Social Media.</p> <p><b>Board decision:</b> <b>1. To note the paper shared</b></p>		

18	<b>Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy Update DRAFT</b>		
<p><b>CM spoke to the paper shared;</b>                  This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> iteration of this paper, which was reviewed and approved by RAC on the 18<sup>th</sup> of June, 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There has been an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) working group taking this work forward.</li> <li>• Consultations and workshops have taken place with staff, panel community, those with lived experience, young people, and experts in the field.</li> <li>• Next steps have been identified through this work, as detailed in the Next Steps paper.</li> <li>• Key areas to work on going forward are:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Communication and engagement</li> <li>➤ Training and support</li> <li>➤ Recruitment and retention</li> <li>➤ Streamline the strategy in line with other key strategies within CHS</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The Board are invited to review the Strategy and Next Steps for approval</p> <p><b>Board discussion:</b>                  The Board were impressed by this final version of the strategy and were pleased to approve it.</p> <p><b>Board decision:</b>                  1. To approve the paper shared</p>			
19	<b>CHS Promise Programme / Joint meeting with SCRA &amp; Promise Team</b>		
<p><b>CW spoke to the paper shared;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Promise team have been engaging across Scotland with agencies and stakeholders to develop their thinking on how to bring the aspirations of the Promise forward, including meetings with ourselves.</li> <li>• A meeting was held on 21<sup>st</sup> June with members of the Promise team and those involved in legal services with relation to the children’s hearing system. From a CHS perspective, this meeting was beneficial as it offered the opportunity to impress, from a legal standpoint, what is necessary in respect of legislation. It also impressed upon the Promise team, from a legal perspective, the experience of the children’s hearing system from a number of key agencies. This group have agreed to continue to working with us as we progress.</li> <li>• Meeting planned with Care Inspectorate to build a strong working foundation as when the Promise disbands in 2030, the Care Inspectorate will hold agencies to account for delivering better outcomes for children, young people, and their families.</li> </ul>			

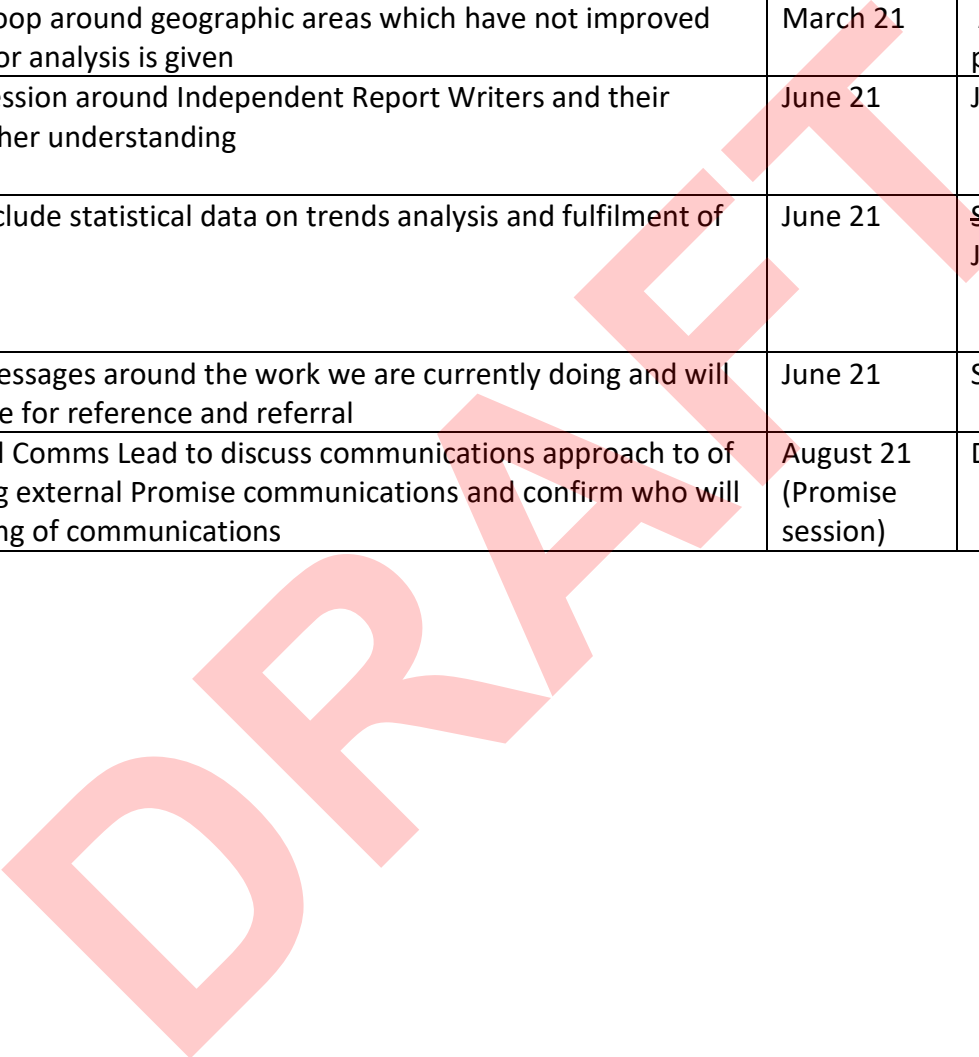
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The change plan will be produced at the end of this week. The change plan is likely to be high level focusing on creating space for multi-agencies to work together shaping the programme.</li> </ul> <p><b>GC updated the Board;</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meetings have been had with Promise team members looking at forming a working/governance group with members of SCRA and CHS on board with, chaired by an independent party.</li> <li>Long term focus seems to be on the necessary legislation however our stance is change is needed now to help deliver the Promise, not just through the legislation.</li> <li>As a Board, I would like us to ask our Executive team to begin mapping out and collect in a plan/statement with key messages all the things we are doing and will be doing to deliver the Promise.</li> </ul> <p><b>Board discussion:</b> The Board were in agreement with the points raised.</p> <p><b>Board decision:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To note the paper shared by CW</li> <li>To formally approve the paper shared at the joint board meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> of June 2021 and agree it represents the way forward</li> <li>To develop a statement of key messages around the work we are currently doing and will be doing to deliver the Promise</li> </ol>	CW	Sept 21'
20	AOB		
	<p>The Chair, CEO, and Board members took time to reflect and reminisce on John Anderson's contribution to not only the CHS Board but the childrens hearing system at large.</p> <p>The Chair thanked John for his time and contribution to the Board and wished him the best in the future.</p>		

**The meeting closed at 14:45**

**Children's Hearings Scotland Board Action Log**  
**Updated September 2021**

No.	Action(s)	Source	Target date	Owner	Status
1	To look at the creation of a child/young person friendly complaints policy once the policy has been finalised	November 19	<del>Sept 20</del> Sep 22	LH	Impacted due to Covid, will be prioritised in 22/23
2	Formally write to OHOV to acknowledge receipt and endorse the NC suggestions on implementation. Suggest in letter we would like to meet representatives from their Board to discuss	Nov 20	<del>Jan 21</del> Jan 22	GC/LH	OHOV Board meetings impacted by Covid. LH meeting OHOV Project Lead Sept '21
3	To compile and compare data around the percentage of observations across ASTs that give cause for concern to PPAs and which lead to recommendations	Jan 2020	<del>Dec 21</del> April 21	CM	Impacted by Covid – deadline moved
4	Board & SMT to focus a Development session to explore how to improve influence and partnerships – Date to be set as matter of priority	Jan 21 June 21	July 21	EJ/GC	Strategy sessions booked in Oct/Nov '21
5	The Board to consider their own objectives at future development session and date to be set for this development session	Jan 21 June 21	Aug 21	GC	Strategy sessions booked in Oct/Nov '21
6	Review the Board appraisal process with RAC	Jan 21	March 22'	JD	Initial Board development session undertaken in August '21. Strategy Sessions in Oct/Nov in place.
7	Submit paper evaluating device pilot across the community. To include costs and plans to equip all panel members with devices	Jan 21	June 22	LH	To take forward into 22/23 to enable full implementation of

					RAVHI prior to evaluation
8	Interrogate data in feedback loop around geographic areas which have not improved and for which no explanation or analysis is given	March 21	Ahead of publish	MB	Not Yet Due
9	To carry out a development session around Independent Report Writers and their function for the Board for further understanding	June 21	January 22	CM	Not Yet Due
10	Future Advocacy reports to include statistical data on trends analysis and fulfilment of requests	June 21	<del>Sept 21</del> Jan 22'	CM	National Advocacy evaluation work impacted by Covid - deadline extended
11	Develop a statement of key messages around the work we are currently doing and will be doing to deliver the Promise for reference and referral	June 21	Sept 21	CW	Not yet due
12	Meeting with B-AL, GC, EJ, and Comms Lead to discuss communications approach to of oversight committee regarding external Promise communications and confirm who will manage the flow and messaging of communications	August 21 (Promise session)	Dec 21	CW	Not yet due





## Agenda Item 6

CHS-2122-18

### National Convener / Chief Executive update

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The period between the last Board meeting in June to now, has seen the National Team and the CHS Community continue to flex our arrangements for Children's Hearings according to the latest Scottish Government Covid-19 guidance.
- 1.2 The pace has remained steady and working with the CHS Community to keep them updated with the latest guidance; seeking their views on next steps; and of course, keeping them safe, has remained our top priority.
- 1.3 This report provides an eclectic mix of updates to the Board, many of which are short bite sized briefings ahead of a number of them separately heading to the Board in their own right in November.

#### 2. Recovery and Renewal – The CHS Community / National Team

- 2.1 We have always promoted a cautious, risk based approach to the return to face to face Hearings as restrictions eased. In discussion with SCRA and in response to the Scottish Government's messaging around the increased infection numbers and the prevalence of greater community transmission, we are reconsidering our planning assumptions. Our new planning model factors in greater numbers of online Hearings, certainly to the end of 2021, but more realistically into the spring of 2022. Our local Area Conveners and Area Support and Improvement Partners continue to work in partnership with Locality Reporter Managers from SCRA around the scheduling of Hearings.
- 2.2 The virtual hearing business continuity pilot (RAVHI) is continuing. The pilot comprises using Teams as the virtual hearing conferencing tool, access to papers through a secure Teams portal and the introduction of a virtual receptionist and support team to ensure smooth operation of the hearing and provide technical support to all participants before and during the virtual hearing itself. There is currently a 4-6 week delay to the final ASTs as SCRA seeks to recruit extra resources to fulfil their internal RAVHI team. Notwithstanding this delay, feedback from across the CHS Community is incredibly positive of the platform and it's An evaluation gathering user experience feedback from children, families and professionals and technical delivery is underway. The CHS/SCRA team will be discussing evaluation results and implications for future virtual hearings operating models in October and November.



- 2.3 We are constantly scanning the CHS Community through engagement with various groups, using Teams and of course the fortnightly meeting with Area Conveners to check-in over the our colleagues well-being and energy levels. We are picking up positive feedback on the National rollout of RAVHI, the use of electronic papers; and the opportunity to attend 'some' face to face or hybrid Hearings, where it's safe to do so. Less positive are the feelings of fatigue and the level of change that, particularly our Panel Members face with new legislative requirements and the associated mandatory training. Despite much of this training moving online, we constantly need to maintain a balance and where we can, reduce the time commitment and seek innovative and creative ways in which to support our colleagues.
- 2.4 The CHS Head Office at Thistle House, Edinburgh officially re-opened on Monday 6 September. Following staff consultation, the senior team want to treat our return to the office with care, particularly in light of the rising COVID-19 cases across Scotland.
- 2.4.1 We want to ensure that we have a robust process in place to support the safe return to our office in line with the latest updates from the Scottish Government. The office return will look and feel different, and the way we access and move around our building has changed. There will be some restrictions around work spaces and changes throughout the building to help continue to suppress the transmission of COVID-19 and enable colleagues to work safely. Rigorous checks and changes have been made in our building, including conducting full building maintenance checks, health and safety inspections and workplace risk assessments. CHS will therefore adopt a careful phased approach to a return to the office at Thistle House.

### 3- Phased Approach

- **Phase 1** (6 September 2021 – 3 October 2021). We will be focusing on the development of full guidance for staff in line with feedback from our recent Back to the Future Staff Survey.
- **Phase 2** (4 October 2021 – 22 December 2021). We will use this period to trial hybrid working and use this as an opportunity to focus on having more regular face to face meetings and start to build our confidence at being back in an office environment on a more regular basis.
- **Phase 3** (5 January 2022 – 31 March 2022). We will put in place any further amendments to our future working arrangements and also link in with any feedback and suggestions from staff.

### 3. Panel Member Recruitment 2022

- 3.1 Our forecast analysis of the numbers of likely Children's Hearings into 2022, together with a detailed appraisal of the number of active Panel Members; those on leave of absence; and the number of resignations, leads me to conclude that it will be important to undertake a Panel member recruitment campaign early next year. The success of this year's campaign during January and February delivered our best ever result in terms of applications and subsequent appointments.
- 3.2 We are working with Area Conveners and other AST colleagues to secure numbers for recruitment by the end of October. Our planning assumptions at this point are:
- (1) We will seek to recruit 500 new Panel Members with a targeted minimum of 33% men;
  - (2) We will run a completely online recruitment campaign similar to last year with young people playing a key role with our AST colleagues in the selection of new Panel members; and
  - (3) We will deliver a wholly online pre-service training programme having made amendments to content and approach following the review.

We will provide the Board with a fuller update at the November Board meeting.

### 4. CHS and The Promise

- 4.1 Retired Sheriff, David Mackie has been appointed to lead the Hearings System Working Group. The Working Group, or HSWG, is a partnership between Children's Hearing Scotland the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration and The Promise Scotland, with the Scottish Government playing a critical role. The HSWG has been created to oversee the redesign process for The Children's Hearing System as set out in Plan 21-24 and Change Programme ONE. It will facilitate a process that will have the needs of children and families with lived experience of The Children's Hearing System at its heart, to ensure effective implementation of The Independent Care Review and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Beth Anne Logan, Board Member and Carol Wassell, Head of Area Support and Community Improvement will represent CHS on the HSWG. The second meeting of the group is scheduled Monday 4 October 2021. A copy of the Terms of Reference of the is attached as Appendix A.
- 4.2 I hosted an introductory meeting with David Mackie two-weeks ago. He's an impressive figure with significant knowledge, experience and understanding of the Children's Hearings System. He's committed to looking at The Promise reforms through a Kilbrandon lens. As this group moves through its forming phase into detailed planning and action phases, we are committed to delivering a comprehensive communications plan carrying key messages to the CHS Community. This plan, together with opportunities to participate in consultation and engagement events across Scotland will ensure that the CHS Community remains involved in shaping the reforms.

5. **Strategic Partnership Working**

5.1 My programme of engagement with senior leaders across the Scottish Government and the wider children and young people services sector is continuing. This quarter has seen me continue to participate and influence:

- The Scottish Government COVID-19 Children and Families Collective Leadership Group on recovery and renewal; and the consultation on the proposed National Care Service;
- The National Child Protection Leadership Group on new National Child Protection Guidance;
- The Youth Justice Improvement Board on 16/17 Year olds in the Hearings system;
- The Brothers and Sisters National Advisory Group on Practice Guidance for the Children's (Scotland) Act 2020;
- The National Child Protection Committees Scotland on new guidance for CHS to participate in Significant Case Reviews; and
- The Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership on improvement and alignment with The Promise 80 intentions.

6. **Priorities for Quarter 3 – October to December 2021**

6.1 My four key priorities for the third quarter of 2021/22 include:

1. **Recovery** - Ensure that we continue to meet the demand for Panel Members to participate in an increased Hearing schedule; retaining as many Panel Members as possible through the development of pathways for their return to service.
2. **Legislative Change** – Ensuring the implementation of the Children (Scotland) Act 2020 is fully implemented and that internal guidance and training for the adoption of UNCRC remains ready to implement once Royal Assent is secured;
3. **People Strategy** – Launch the CHS People strategy with the staff team; shape the development of a hybrid return to work; and agree new ways of working;
4. **The Promise** – To support the work of the Hearings System Working Group to develop a shared plan and clear expectations for the Children's Hearings System over the next 2-years by the end of December 2021.

Elliot Jackson

**National Convener and Chief Executive Officer**

15 September 2021

## **Hearings System Working Group - Draft Terms of Reference**

The Hearings System Working Group (“HSWG”) is a partnership between Children’s Hearing Scotland (“CHS”), the Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration (“SCRA”) and The Promise Scotland, with the Scottish Government playing a critical role.

The HSWG has been created to oversee the redesign process for The Children’s Hearing System as set out in Plan 21-24 and Change Programme ONE. It will facilitate a process that will have the needs of children and families with lived experience of The Children’s Hearing System at its heart, to ensure effective implementation of The Independent Care Review and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

### Purpose

1. The HSWG will produce clear, collective proposals that redesign The Children’s Hearings System and define the legislative changes required.

### Membership

2. The HSWG will be independently chaired with membership comprising four core partners who will undertake the bulk of the work and inquiry:
  - Children’s Hearing Scotland (CHS)
  - Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration (SCRA)
  - The Promise Scotland
  - Scottish Government

Partners will decide who will represent their organization and ensure consistency of attendance.

3. HSWG will work with other organisations throughout its lifetime. Those include but are not limited to:
  - COSLA
  - SOLACE
  - Police Scotland
  - Social Work Scotland
  - Legal services providers
  - Advocacy providers
  - Organisations providing safeguarding work.
4. HSWG will ensure that the lived experience of the Children’s Hearing System is at the centre of what a new legislative framework will look like.

### Responsibilities

5. The HSWG will prepare detailed proposals for the redesign of The Children's Hearing System. It will do so by:
  - a. Agreeing a vision for The Children's Hearings System;
  - b. Analysing the practice, legislative, budgetary and structural blocks to implementation of the vision; AND
  - c. Agreeing proposals for legislative change.
6. Core members will share data and insights with one another openly and in pursuit of the shared goal. When the HSWG identifies opportunities for change that do not require legislation and are aligned to #KeepThePromise, these will be progressed to ensure continuous improvement.
7. The Scottish Government will support CHS and SCRA Boards to fully participate in HSWG and create an authorising environment for change. The Scottish Government will work closely with HSWG to ensure work to prepare legislation is planned and sequenced in line with parliamentary cycles.

### Governance

8. Twice a year, the Chairs of the HSWG, CHS, SCRA and The Promise Scotland will meet to track progress.
9. CHS and SCRA boards will hold two exceptional meetings a year to track progress.
10. The Promise Scotland's Oversight Board will receive regular updates on progress of the HSWG.

DRAFT

**Agenda item 7**  
**CHS-2122-19**

**Finance Report: 2021/22 Forecast Outturn**

**Accountable Director:** Director of Finance  
**Report author:** Ross Mackenzie  
**Resources implications:** Within available resources  
**Equalities duties:** Equalities Impact Assessment Required  
 Yes       No

**1 Background, summary and recommendation**

- 1.1 The revenue grant in aid (GiA) allocation for CHS for 2021/22 is £4.879m. The Board approved a revenue budget of £5.129m in March 2021, with Scottish Government approval to use £0.25m of prior underspend.
- 1.2 The published capital GiA allocation for CHS for 2021/22 is £0.4m.
- 1.3 The Board is asked to note the 2021/22 funding positions and approve the strategy for underspend management.

**2 2021/22 variance Year to Date**

- 2.1 The staffing year to date (YTD) underspend has arisen from vacancies. Based on the latest staffing update and likely recruitment timescales to vacancies, the year end staffing underspend may be £125k.
- 2.2 The Training, Travel and Subsistence YTD overspend is a timing issue arising from the issue and payment of invoices. Travel and subsistence to date is £3k compared to a budget of £30k, so a £10k-£15k forecast underspend on this may be realistic.
- 2.3 The Other Operating Costs budget includes £20k provision for Tests of Change small pilots.
- 2.3 The forecast ICT underspend is primarily due to savings on the Leidos support and maintenance contract.
- 2.4 The forecast Corporate Costs overspend is a potential £50k consultancy with The Lens on digital facilitation.
- 2.5 Volunteer expenses and devolved funding are underspent in the year to date due to almost all bills received having been accrued, some year-end bills still to be received and very few Q1 bills received. Although difficult to quantify with any accuracy, an underspend on volunteer expenses is extremely likely. The 2019/20 total spend was £613k; the 2020/21 total spend was £89k; if the average spend of these two years were forecast for 2021/22 for example (£351k), that would be a year-end underspend of £113k.

## Finance Report as at 31 August 2021

	Actual YTD Period 5	Variance YTD Period 5	2021/22 Annual Budget	2021/22 Forecast	2021/22 Forecast Variance	2021/22 Forecast Variance
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	%
Staff	858	-93	2,282	2,157	-125	-5.5
Board	18	-1	55	55	+0	+0.0
Training, travel and subsistence	36	+16	60	60	+0	+0.0
Property	30	+0	121	121	+0	+0.0
Other Operating Costs	15	+8	56	56	+0	+0.0
ICT Costs	72	-100	491	435	-56	-11.4
Corporate Costs	8	+6	155	205	+50	+32.2
Panel and AST Expenses	1	-115	464	464	+0	+0.0
Panel and AST Training	384	+35	1,049	992	-57	-5.5
Support for hearings	12	-16	177	177	+0	+0.0
Volunteer recruitment	3	+1	177	177	+0	+0.0
PVGs	30	+30	30	30	+0	+0.0
AST Devolved Funding	-9	-26	66	66	+0	+0.0
Income	-14	+0	-54	-54	+0	+0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,444</b>	<b>-255</b>	<b>5,129</b>	<b>4,941</b>	<b>-188</b>	<b>-3.7</b>

- 2.6 The training forecast includes around up to £69k of venue costs, up to £73k pre-service costs arising from increased volume of trainees, up to £15k evaluation of pre-service and £15k additional PPA and RAVHI rollout training. Given many of these are top estimates, a £20k saving across these elements is also forecast.
- 2.7 The support for hearings budget includes £85k for Independent Reports, £30k Participation of Children and Young People, £25k for Connecting the Community, £5k for a Leadership 2020 follow-up event for ACs and £30k for Improvement Events/National Conference.
- 2.8 AST Devolved Funding spend last year was £75k, which included the Christmas vouchers. If there is no equivalent project this year, this line is very likely to be underspent. A repeat of the initiative to recognise ACs and DACs would cost around £1.5k.
- 2.9 The forecast underspend above is £188k, but this would rise to an underspend of £376k if, for example:
- travel and subsistence is underspend by £15k as mentioned in 2.2;
  - the Tests of Change small pilots do not take place (para 2.3);
  - The Lens consultancy is cheaper than forecast, e.g. by £10k (para 2.4);
  - volunteer expenses are only £351k (para 2.5);
  - Connecting the Community and Leadership events do not take place (para 2.7).
- 2.10 The strategy for underspend includes:
- Utilisation of underspend to carry forward in 2022/23 to support revenue

ambitions to meet CHS Promise and Digital ambitions.

- Revenue to Capital transfer (see 2.11) to support CHS Device expansion for 2022 Panel Member intake.
- Procurement of contracted resource to enable consultation and engagement with the CHS community in relation to Promise activity.
- Possible expansion of the pilot of smiley terminals in Central and West Lothian cost. (Dependant on availability of face to face hearings)

CHS will continue to effectively engage with SG Sponsor and Finance teams, and take a focussed approach to resource management, cognisant of ensuring a manageable and prioritised portfolio of work as indicated through the 2021/22 revised Business Plan.

- 2.11 CHS's capital spend to date is £57k, concluding the 2020/21 devices rollout. With 500 more devices to be purchased for 2022 trainees (£211k) and potential CSAS development costs of £246k, CHS is forecasting a capital overspend of £113k. Sponsor Team and SG Finance are open to discussions on a revenue-to-capital swap of GIA to cover this.

### **3 Conclusion**

- 3.1 The Board is asked to note the 2021/22 funding positions and approve the strategy for underspend management.

DRAFT



## Agenda item 8

CHS-2122-20

### CHS 5 Year Strategic Financial Plan 2021/22 – 2026/27

<b>Accountable Officer:</b>	Elliot Jackson, NC/CEO
<b>Report author:</b>	Lynne Harrison/Ross Mackenzie
<b>Recommendation:</b>	To approve updated 5 year strategic Financial Plan
<b>Resource Implications:</b>	Resources Required
<b>Equalities duties:</b>	Equality Impact Assessment Required /NO

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### 1. Introduction / Purpose:

In line with the Scottish Government spending review cycle, CHS has prepared an updated 5 year strategic financial plan outlining the projected resources required to support the organisations strategic vision and direction to:

1. Better Protect and Uphold the rights of children
2. Deliver consistently high quality hearings
3. Continue to build an effective, empathetic panel that is well supported
4. Be well informed and influential in our environment and communities

In addition it reflects 3 key organisational priorities:

1. Covid-19 - The ongoing impact of covid and covid recovery priorities;
2. The Promise - The requirement for transformational change and system re-design from The Promise and The Promise Plan;
3. Digital – Ensuring an appropriate return on investment of the CSAS Digital development and device investment.

All of which represent additional requirements beyond CHS' statutory duty to recruit, train and support volunteer Panel Members.

This paper identifies the forecast the resources required from 2021/22 – 2026/27, aligns CHS' strategic ambitions to resources and identifies the requirement for both capital and revenue resources over the period. The paper also reflects the continuing impact of Covid on current operations and as we continue our recovery journey.

## 2. Summary:

The paper identifies CHS' overall resource requirement as:

	<b>2021/22 Approved</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>
	<b>'000</b>	<b>'000</b>	<b>'000</b>	<b>'000</b>	<b>'000</b>	<b>'000</b>
<b>Staff</b>	2,228	2,539	2,616	2,694	2,775	2,858
<b>Vol Training</b>	1,049	1,049	1,049	1,049	1,049	1,049
<b>Vol Expenses</b>	464	619	619	619	619	619
<b>Vol Recruitment</b>	177	302	177	177	177	177
<b>Vol Support</b>	303	312	321	331	341	351
<b>Vol Support IT</b>	491	556	571	587	603	620
<b>Corporate</b>	296	265	268	271	274	277
<b>Property</b>	121	122	123	124	125	126
<b>Revenue Total</b>	<b>5,129</b>	<b>5,764</b>	<b>5,744</b>	<b>5,852</b>	<b>5,963</b>	<b>6,077</b>
<b>Capital</b>	300	450	500	450	450	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,429</b>	<b>6,214</b>	<b>6,244</b>	<b>6,302</b>	<b>6,413</b>	<b>6,577</b>

The next few years will be continue to be challenging for the Hearing System and CHS as we continue in Covid recovery but with ongoing uncertainty about the ongoing impact on referrals and hearings operations; the implementation of key legislation and implementation of our 2020-23 strategic ambitions and Promise Programme delivery.

There remains high levels of uncertainty in terms of the ongoing impact of Covid on referral levels and therefore CHS' required capacity. We continue to work closely with SCRA and wider partners to monitor and forecast activity in as much detail as we are able and it is clear that to meet anticipated activity in 2022/23 Panel Member recruitment is required in 2021/22.

With the publication of Change Programme 1 and Plan 21-24 in June '21 there is now greater clarity on the timetable for action for the hearings system in meeting transformational change requirements of The Promise. The delivery requirements articulated in Plan 21-24 will require CHS to invest in additional internal resource in 2021/22 to deliver this significant programme of activity, which requires both skills and capacity that are outwith current funded resources. In addition the impact of the implementation that the Promise may have on the structure and operation of CHS and the Hearing System, particularly for our volunteer community.

The hearings system digital journey continues to be a priority for both CHS and SCRA. Digital has been a key enabler during the pandemic and vital to offer choice for participation as we move forward. Scottish Government investment to date has enabled development of a secure and effective digital platform to support hearings operation and the provision of devices to ensure CHS capacity and capability to deliver hearings. As we transition from digital development to digital business as usual ongoing digital investment

is required to ensure internal resource to effectively manage and development CHS digital infrastructure.

We will continue to monitor and utilise our resources carefully and creatively over the course to ensure best value and the delivery of outcomes that will improve the life chances of children and young people.

## **2. Recommendation**

The Board are asked to approve CHS' 5 year strategic Financial Plan 2021/22-2026/27.

DRAFT

## CHS 5 Year Strategic Financial Plan 2021/22 – 2026/27

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 In line with the Scottish Government spending review cycle, CHS has prepared an updated 5 year strategic financial plan outlining the projected resources required to support the organisations strategic vision and direction and how this will meet the Scottish Government Programme for Government objectives of Wellbeing and Impact of Child Poverty.
- 1.2 The plan recognises 3 key organisational priorities:
  1. Covid-19 - The ongoing impact of covid and covid recovery priorities;
  2. The Promise - The requirement for transformational change and system re-design from The Promise and The Promise Plan;
  3. Digital – Ensuring an appropriate return on investment of the CSAS Digital development and device investment.
- 1.3 In 2019 the Independent Review of Care reported its findings – The Promise. This identified requirement for transformational change of Scotland’s approach to Care and will have a significant and lasting impact on the Children’s Hearings System. The scale and detail of the change is the most significant reform since Kilbrandon in the 1960’s. The Promise Change Programme 1 – Plan 21-24 has now been published articulating the expected delivery programme until 2024. CHS is required to play an active role in the delivery of Change Programme 1, which fall outwith our statutory functions of recruiting, training and supporting volunteer Panel Members to make decisions to improve outcomes for children and young people. CHS have reflected The Promise findings through our strategic planning and identified resource requirements for the anticipated change required in Change Programme 1. Whilst the ongoing impact of covid ensures affordability in 21/22, additional investment will be required to enable CHS to deliver against Change Programme 1 through to 2024 and future Change Programmes as they are published.
- 1.4 CHS is in year 2 of an ambitious strategic outlook and Corporate and Business Plan for 2021 – 24. This plan is based on a reform agenda and scaffolded around 4 key themes which the Board has discussed and evolved during strategic workshops and development sessions in 2019:
  1. Better Protect and Uphold the rights of children
  2. Deliver consistently high quality hearings
  3. Continue to build an effective, empathetic panel that is well supported
  4. Be well informed and influential in our environment and communities
- 1.5 CHS believe the only way to ensure we achieve the ambitions for transformational change in the hearings system is to create and implement a high performing Improvement culture throughout CHS. We will adopt new ways of working

alongside our volunteer community, embrace tests of change and utilise data and evidence to inform our decision making, influence partners and deliver improvement. This will require investment in new skills and expertise alongside training of our current staff and community to enable an expert National Team with a stable staffing complement to deliver reform. This detail is linked directly to our strategic outlook 2020-23.

- 1.6 It has been agreed with Scottish Government and the Promise team that CHS and SCRA will be accountable for their Promise delivery to an independent Promise Oversight Board for the Hearings System. Foundational activity to ensure appropriate management and reporting capacity and capability for this non statutory workstream has begun in 2021/22 through investment in a Promise Programme Manager, project management software and training to ensure effective delivery and management of the CHS Promise Programme.
- 1.7 The 5 year strategic financial plan identifies the resource requirements required to support delivery against the agreed 4 strategic themes and our ambitions that in doing so CHS:
  1. Occupies an influential leadership space that drives transformational change that meets the ambition of The Promise; promotes Children’s Rights, the Hearings system and shapes National policy and practice with partners
  2. Embraces technology to deliver a modern participative approach to hearings
  3. Supports a diverse volunteer community, with substantial representation from those with lived experience of care
  4. Provides sector leading support to volunteers to enable them to make life changing decisions that ensures Scotland is the best place to grow up .

## **2. Challenging Operating Context**

- 2.1 The impact of Covid-19 to the hearings system continues to be significant. Activities required for resilience response and recovery planning included the implementation and ongoing improvement of virtual hearings, undertaking our largest Panel Member recruitment campaign and pivoting pre-service training to a fully online/virtual offer.
- 2.2 This has inevitably delayed some of the reform and resource requirements previously identified for action in 2020 - 2022. These have also necessitated the rapid procurement of technology to support Panel Members digital participation.
- 2.3 The impact on current operations is significant and challenging;
  - Panel Member engagement and capacity has improved but remains challenging with approx. 83% of panel members being currently active, this includes the latest 2021 intake of approx. 600 new Panel Members. Our volunteers impacted by Covid through family circumstance; childcare; employment, poor virtual hearings experience or access to digital infrastructure.
  - Virtual hearings were adopted in early 2020, however the ongoing impact of restrictions, the instability of VScene and the administrative burden of Objective Connect have resulted in the model to be reviewed and alternative platform (Remote Attendance Virtual Hearings Interface (RAVHI)) developed. This has

been piloted in early 2021 and is now being rolled out throughout Q2, requiring over 150 training sessions to take place to support community take up.

- The quality assurance remit of our Panel Practice Advisers was paused in March 2020, due to the limitations of the virtual tools on offer. A phased return to observations has now begun from July '21, supported by the roll out of RAVHI.
- Panel and AST Members are continuing to suffer fatigue as virtual hearings can be challenging and intense, ensuring rota capacity and alongside the significant local resilience and recovery activity e.g digital engagement and training/Panel Member recruitment and implementation of legislation and mandatory training that has been required throughout the pandemic.
- Area Conveners and AST volunteers, working alongside Area Support and Improvement Partners continue to undertake significant intense activity to resource hearings, liaise with local partners to support system activity; influence CHS resilience response and support their local volunteer communities. This has represented a significant uplift in their hours of volunteering which show no sign of reducing through 21/22.
- Driving an organisational response to a global pandemic through volunteers is unsustainable. The potential impact of this is discussed in Section 6.

2.4 The financial impact of Covid-19 on CHS' operations continues to be closely monitored including through ongoing monthly meetings with the SG sponsor team. Whilst in year savings in 2021/22 are anticipated through e.g. reduction in volunteer expense claims or cost of face to face training, it is anticipated that these will be recycled to support CHS recovery and Promise activity..

2.5 In year savings in areas such as volunteer expenses may in fact be pushed as increased costs into 2022/23 as we expect to see an uplift in hearing activity both due to recovery planning but also from a potential uplift in referrals due to the impact of lockdown on children and families across Scotland. The economic impact of Covid on our volunteer community cannot be underestimated, this is likely to result in increased claims from those who in the past have chosen not to claim as part of their volunteer contribution.

2.6 Virtual hearings and online digital systems remain a necessity for recovery and future hearings operation. Significant gains have been made due to covid in the CHS Communities digital engagement and generic skills. Engagement with CHS CSAS digital systems has been slower due to the impact of covid on wider hearings operations (expenses/observations etc), however holding these gains and driving interaction with CHS digital services will be a focus as we move out of recovery.

2.7 The hearings system digital journey continues to be a priority for both CHS and SCRA. Scottish Government investment to date has enabled development of a secure and effective digital platform to support hearings operation and the provision of devices to ensure CHS capacity and capability to deliver hearings. As we transition from digital development to digital business as usual ongoing digital investment is required to ensure internal resource to effectively manage and development CHS digital infrastructure and ensure return on investment for this project.

- 2.8 Ensuring participation will continue to require sustained Capital investment to enable ongoing infrastructure improvement and management and enable a wider pool of virtual panel members equipped with appropriate skills and technology to support effective participation.
- 2.9 Despite the current easing of restrictions and vaccination programme, as we move into the second phase of winter months in this pandemic, there remains ongoing uncertainty surrounding the continued impact of Covid-19 on societal norms and Hearings System operational requirements. CHS recognise that this coupled with uncertainties around the impact of Scottish Government Covid-19 support packages on their broader financial envelope will require close monitoring and flexibility in financial and strategic planning as we move forward.

### **3. Summary**

- 3.1 Our 5-year financial strategy has been written through the identified reform lens and in cognisance of the ongoing impact of Covid-19 and seeks support and ongoing funding to shape our service to meet the likely changes required.
- 3.2 In addition to the identified strategic priorities there remain 3 organisational priorities which are outwith CHS' identified statutory functions and which require additional investment to deliver:
  - 1. Covid-19 - The ongoing impact of covid and covid recovery priorities;
  - 2. The Promise - The requirement for transformational change and system re-design from The Promise and The Promise Plan;
  - 3. Digital – Ensuring an appropriate return on investment of the CSAS Digital development and device investment.
- 3.3 In cognisance of these factors and the current GIA allocation levels, identified additional resource needs have been where feasible articulated as fixed term resources. It must be recognised that although this promotes financial flexibility, this is significantly challenging for recruitment and retention. Resource decisions will continue to be achieved through internal governance arrangements of budget challenge and review and through establishment business cases approved by Senior Management.

#### 4. Projected Resource Requirements:

- 4.1 The following table shows the approved budget for 2021/22 and the projected budget requirements for the following 5 years. The 5 year plan forecasts consolidation of 2020/21 additional in year funding in future years baseline GIA to be allocated between revenue and capital dependent on requirements.

	<b>2021/22 Approved</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>
	<b>'000</b>	<b>'000</b>	<b>'000</b>	<b>'000</b>	<b>'000</b>	<b>'000</b>
<b>Staff</b>	2,228	2,539	2,616	2,694	2,775	2,858
<b>Vol Training</b>	1,049	1,049	1,049	1,049	1,049	1,049
<b>Vol Expenses</b>	464	619	619	619	619	619
<b>Vol Recruitment</b>	177	302	177	177	177	177
<b>Vol Support</b>	303	312	321	331	341	351
<b>Vol Support IT</b>	491	506	521	537	553	570
<b>Corporate</b>	296	265	268	271	274	277
<b>Property</b>	121	122	123	124	125	126
<b>Revenue Total</b>	<b>5,129</b>	<b>5,714</b>	<b>5,744</b>	<b>5,852</b>	<b>5,963</b>	<b>6,077</b>
<b>Capital</b>	300	400	400	400	400	400
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,429</b>	<b>6,114</b>	<b>6,244</b>	<b>6,302</b>	<b>6,413</b>	<b>6,577</b>

#### 5. Better protect and Uphold the Rights of Children and be well informed and influential in our environment and communities

- 5.1 The next 5-years are an important time for CHS and the Children's Hearings system as a whole. Through working with The Independent Review of Care and now The Promise team, we are well placed to play a key driving role in some of the likely reforms that the 'whole system' in general will undergo. Covid-19 response and recovery planning enables a unique opportunity to work with partners and The Promise team to look to bring forward possible tests of change in line with CHS' reform ambitions. CHS will actively reach out to partners to drive and pursue these opportunities.
- 5.2 The impact of Covid-19 has required significant and expedient changes to the operation of the hearings system. These changes would not have been possible without the strategic and operational influence of the Area Support and Improvement Partner (ASIP) roles working alongside Area Conveners locally. This has demonstrated that when appropriate resources are in place there is a capacity and appetite for significant change within the CHS community.
- 5.3 CHS are embracing improvement methodology to inform, implement and evaluate change in our work. The implementation of the ASIP roles and the Senior Management role of Head of Area Support and Community Improvement embeds improvement principles across the organisation.. CHS are also working with the SG Leading Improvement Team with Area Support and Improvement Partners to undertake SCiL development, engaging in local improvement projects focussed



against exploring improvements such as reducing deferrals. Covid has impact the progression of some of these improvement projects.

- 5.4 Successful improvement requires programme planning, data and evidence. The successful launch in 2020/21 of the new CHS Digital System will for the first time enable CHS to capture robust internal management information to support our improvement journey. There is currently limited organisational capacity and expertise to support improvement programme planning and data analysis and this is an identified resource need moving forward articulated in Section 9 - The Promise.
- 5.5 CHS makes an invaluable and appropriate contribution to the National Performance Framework where Scotland is the best place to grow up. CHS wants to be in the best position to satisfy the step change expectations voiced by care experienced children and young people of what they need from their hearing; embrace the lessons of evidence-based practice; and be informed by societal and scientific developments - now and in the future.
- 5.6 The UNCRC will now be fully incorporated into Scots law. The Hearings System, founded upon Kilbrandon principles, is an inherently rights based system, however we must ensure these rights are enacted fairly and consistently in hearings and across the wider system. CHS has launched an ambitious Rights and Inclusion Strategy to embed this work internally and established a Rights and Inclusion Officer (fixed term) role to drive this work forward, but more broadly we want to use our organisational capacity to further amplify the voices of those with lived experience and influence reform.
- 5.7 CHS therefore requires an organisational structure and skill base that can:
  1. Consistently lead and implement change and improvement across the CHS community.
  2. Influence and collaborate with partners to support change and drive improvements in the wider system.
  3. Implement organisational and technical investments in children's hearings provision including implementing enhanced local resources.
  4. Shift organisational culture to that of a rights based, learning organisation who are recognised externally as experts in our field.
  5. Are digitally and technologically enabled
- 5.8 Staffing costs to deliver ambition include an increase of 4FTE staffing to widen expertise and capacity to deliver CHS' ambitions (see Section 9); increases to cover pay award, progression and superannuation costs over the 5 year period. Detail articulated in Section 9.

**6. CHS Embraces technology to deliver a modern participative approach to deliver consistent high quality hearings**

- 6.1 Scottish Government have invested in the digital future of the hearings system by enabling development of a joint digital platform for CHS and SCRA which CHS has launched in 2020/21. This system will improve outcomes through enabling capture of national and local management information that can be used to measure quality, inform policy and drive improvement.
- 6.2 The impact of Covid-19 has confirmed the importance of access to secure, robust digital systems for the ongoing operation of the hearings system.
- 6.3 The system has already proved invaluable to CHS' Covid-19 resilience and recovery; in supporting and improving the volunteer experience during lockdown through the use of Microsoft Teams enabling simple and effective virtual connectivity and engagement and providing proof of concept for the stability of Teams as a platform for virtual hearings. As take up of the functional services increases, the system will aid sustainability by enabling volunteers across all our volunteering roles, to carry out their roles more effectively and efficiently.
- 6.4 The hearings system digital journey continues to be a priority for both CHS and SCRA. Following CSAS development, as we transition from digital development to digital business as usual ongoing digital investment is required to ensure internal resource to effectively manage and develop CHS digital infrastructure and ensure return on investment for this project.
- 6.5 A key tenet of the CHS/SCRA Digital strategy was provision of digital papers to Panel Members. This provides benefits of security and speed of access and moving away from print enables significant cost savings to hearings system overheads (SCRA). Take up by Panel Members is key to securing this and this is only possible through provision of training and support, devices and having in place effective frontline and technical support to ensure the efficient operation and timely access to support for Panel Members, all costs incurred by CHS.
- 6.6 Provision of devices to enable CHS community to deliver virtual hearings and engage with digital services was bought significantly forward due to the impact of the pandemic. This has been a key enabler on CHS' digital journey with 1600 devices now deployed across all volunteering roles. Investment includes provision for management of the device estate, including re-deployment of devices as necessary.
- 6.7 To deliver against objectives, this platform cannot remain static. CHS will require ongoing financial support to ensure future development of the digital programme for the hearing system to continue to build on and enhance current development. Further, new development will be required to support wellbeing and enable children and young people and families voices to be better and more consistently heard through engaging in more innovative ways with the hearing system.

- 6.8 To continue to build on this investment, resource of £250k/pa has been identified to support the ongoing support, maintenance and development of the new CSAS platform and CHS Community Hub. This programmes of work will continue to operate through the successful model that has delivered the platform; joint working relationships with SCRA, leadership of the Digital Programme Director and oversight of the Digital Assurance Office.
- 6.9 Capital costs of £150k/pa have been identified to support provision of 500 fully managed devices per year to our community.
- 6.10 Provision of devices at this level of investment will result in complete resourcing of our community (at current levels) in 2024/25. This will require expectation setting to our community by the National Team. This investment actively tackles the Scottish Governments commitment to tackling digital poverty. Ensuring the provision of devices as we increase the diversity of our volunteer community to increase those younger and with lived experience.
- 6.11 Community Survey 2019 results identified a 5% drop vs 2017 (81% vs 86%) in agreement that there is an acceptable balance between volunteering and private life and a drop of 5% (78% vs 83%) that AST members have an acceptable workload. Access to devices for these key roles will fully support access to our new digital systems will reduce the time taken to undertake such roles and in addition will derive significant Management Information (observations, Training, Concerns/Complaints etc.) that will help identify and drive organisational improvement.
- 6.12 Resource requirements to deliver this ambition include:
1. £150k per annum capital from 2022/23 to support digital take up amongst volunteers. This is based on provision of 500 devices per annum (3000 total volunteer community) to initially provisioning our community and ongoing managing a replacement programme.
  2. £250k pa from 2021/22 to support ongoing investment in the CSAS platform (5% of gross expenditure).
  3. Staffing costs to deliver ambition include 2 FTE derived from restructuring current vacancies with an increase of 2 FTE :
    - a. A Digital Lead to manage the CHS Digital Programme, including CSAS, CHS Tenancy and support services which has been derived from restructuring current vacancies.
    - b. A Digital Planning and Engagement Analyst to manage CHS digital services and deliver CSAS backlog development including CHS community user engagement which has been derived from restructuring current vacancies.
    - c. A Digital Support Lead to manage CHS Community Frontline support including provision of support and training materials, the CHS device estate and contract management.

- d. Contracted resource to enable effective management of the CHS Community device estate, including deployment/re-deployment and warranty repairs.
- e. A frontline customer service support to the CHS Community which has been derived from restructuring current vacancies.

**7. CHS Continues to build a diverse, effective, empathetic panel that is well supported with substantial representation from those with lived experience of care:**

- 7.1 CHS wants to satisfy the step change expectations voiced by care experienced children and young people of what they need from their hearing; embrace the lessons of evidence-based practice; and be informed by societal and scientific developments.
- 7.2 We need a more diverse panel community who are enriched by greater presence of young people (<30) and those with lived experience. We recognise that to fulfil this ambition this will require bespoke recruitment activity and importantly that these groups will require additional consistent specialist support to safely and successfully complete pre-service training and contribute as an effective Panel Member. This has been evidenced in 2021 recruitment where a small number of trainees with hearings experience required additional bespoke support.
- 7.3 The impact of Covid-19 on Panel Member availability has been significant; impact to home or work having an impact on the ability of individuals to commit to volunteering. Resignations required the largest recruitment campaign CHS has conducted in 2021 taking on approx.. 600 new Panel Members. Currently there are approx. 83% Panel Members, including this new intake. In addition the impact of Covid-19 on businesses is and will continue to be significant which may in turn impact on willingness to release employees for the Children's Panel commitments. Longer term we are working to reduce the number of hearings however due to recovery planning this is not likely to be visible through 2022/23.
- 7.4 These combined factors may result in a need for greater recruitment again in 2022 and/or a greater number of serving Panel Members which may impact learning and development costs (pre-service) and ongoing expenses costs. As this risk has not yet been realised, this is not currently quantifiable and may be offset by the restructure of pre-service to a blended online/face to face model.
- 7.5 Resource requirements:
  - 1. Following a projected 3 year run of the current 'Values' campaign, an investment of £125k in 2022/23 to enable a planned creative refresh of the overall recruitment campaign.
  - 2. The provision of technology covered at 6.10
  - 3. Annual investment of 10k to support Panel wellbeing.

4. £50k pa Investment in provision of an extended programme of training and support for young and lived experience trainees which will be met through contract savings.

**8. CHS provides sector leading support to volunteers to enable them to make life changing decisions that ensures Scotland is the best place to grow up:**

- 8.1 As identified in 7.3, volunteer engagement due to the impact of covid has been at record low levels; building from approx. 50% non-engagement of Panel members and our Panel Practice Advisors Quality Assurance activity paused since Mid March '20.
- 8.2 Engagement has improved through significant support being undertaken at local levels to re-engage those volunteers who are able to return to volunteering. This has included re-training, pastoral/wellbeing support to re-integrate back into local AST communities.
- 8.3 We need a more diverse community to meet the expectations of our children and young people but in addition to better enable a resilient and sustainable community as we move forward. A more diverse community will require more expert (trauma responsive) and consistent levels of support to both become Panel Members and be sustained in their role. This is likely to require a mandatory training model for all 3000 members of the CHS community.
- 8.4 The CHS Learning Academy (CHSLA), which was launched in January 2019, continues to deliver with a broad prospectus offering the CHS community and our partners, high quality learning. Our core focus remains upon improving outcomes and the hearings experiences; enabling an informed Panel community delivering consistent high quality decisions; and linking with partners across the hearing system to improve knowledge and understanding of best practice across the sector. The contract for provision for Learning Academy has been extended by 1 year in 2021/22 with an option for 1 additional 1 year extension. This will also provide further opportunity for CHS together with the Scottish Government to consider the strategic direction of travel to ensure that the 'CHS Learning Academy' becomes a true resource for all partners in the sector.
- 8.5 The CHSLA will play a pivotal role in achieving the ambitions for change we have identified. To meet our ambitions, expectations of The Promise and upcoming legislative change such as 17/18 year olds within the hearings system, we need a range of expert Panel Members who have both breadth and depth of knowledge and skills in a range of topics including: Trauma, Rights, Neurodiversity, Legislation, Child and Adult development.
- 8.6 Committing the time and effort to achieving this level of expertise and skill will take not only significant organisational resource but is a significant ask of a volunteer and

it remains to be determined if this is sustainable moving forward, as identified in Section 6.

- 8.7 For young people with limited work or life experience or those that have lived experience of care wishing to become Panel Members, we propose a sustained programme of on-boarding and support to prepare them to undertake and successfully complete pre-service training. This will be developed under the umbrella of the CHS Learning Academy and encompass a breadth of training and support to enable individuals to develop the skills and abilities they will require to complete pre-service training and become effective Panel Members.
- 8.8 Individual hearings can be difficult and complex, feedback tells us particular so in the virtual environment and Panel Members can be exposed to a significant number of hearings every year. For all volunteers but particularly those with lived experience of care, access to expert and consistent support is required to ensure volunteer wellbeing and resilience. In 2020/21 and in recognition of the additional impact of Covid-19 on our community, CHS invested £10k to secure the support of Health Assured to provide an annual assistance package for all our volunteers. This will be coupled with proactive engagement with AST members who will provide ongoing operational support & advice.
- 8.9 The Community Survey in 2019 identified an increase in volunteers who feel they are 'out of pocket as a result of volunteering' (22% vs 16% 2017) with only 56% stating the process of claiming is easy and straightforward. The financial impact of Covid-19 has also been significant for some individuals, there may be an increase in volunteers claiming expenses who have previously chosen not to do so. We will be actively promoting the online expenses service to our volunteers to encourage expenses to be claimed. We have projected an increase in volunteer expense costs of 25% vs 2019/20 claimed levels which we anticipate will sustain at this level moving forward.
- 8.10 Resource requirements to deliver this ambition include:
  1. An ongoing investment of 30k pa from 2021/22 to reflect anticipated uplift in mandatory training requirements to meet delivery of The Promise. This will be delivered online wherever possible.
  2. From 2022/23, a 50k annual investment to support new young/lived experienced Panel members to take up the role and ongoing provide consistent and high quality trauma informed support to enable them to safely contribute in the long term.
  3. Annual 10k investment in a Volunteer wellbeing programme.
  4. The provision of technology covered at 6.10.
  5. Large scale change management events with CHS community and partners to enable the Promise change implementation



## 9. The Promise

- 9.1 Whilst CHS' strategic ambitions are fully aligned to both CHS' statutory responsibilities and Promise delivery, an additional investment is required to support the governance, delivery and Test of Change arrangements required by The Promise Change Programme 1 and Plan 21-24.
- 9.2 Staffing costs to deliver ambition include 5 FTE, 1 FTE derived from restructuring current vacancies with an increase of 4 FTE:
1. A **Senior Leadership role of Head of Practice** ensuring CHS can influence, shape and drive key legislative and practice changes that will drive improved experiences for children and young people in the hearing system, derived from restructuring current vacancies.
  2. Resource to support **programme management and delivery of The CHS Promise Programme** which will require to span all CHS activity including Practice/legislative change; Learning and Development; workforce development including assessment of the current volunteer model.
  3. A fixed term **CHS Data Analyst (end 23/24)** to ensure CHS to use data and evidence to influence Promise delivery, demonstrate improvement and engage with stakeholders to gain their understanding of and commitment to Promise changes.
  4. A fixed term **HR support (end 22/23) to support National Team** to enact transformational change and implement the CHS Promise Delivery Model.
  5. A fixed term **CHS community communications and engagement post (end 23/24)**. This role is vital to enable CHS to enact Promise improvements and deliver improved outcomes and experience for children and young people. The post will ensure our volunteer community understand and can engage with and influence Promise concepts, including the volunteer model (see Section 10). Current resource will be focussed on external stakeholder engagement to deliver against CHS' strategic Theme 4 influence and enable wider impact from Promise delivery.

## 10. The Volunteer Model

- 10.1 The Independent Review of Care Report – The Promise, provides a question of whether a volunteer model remains fit for purpose for the children's hearing system. CHS is committed to keeping The Promise and has identified that this will be explored as part of our journey through our 2020 – 23 Strategic Outlook. This will require a detailed research and analysis of the requirements and expectations of Children's Panel Members in the post Care Review context, significant exploration of alternative models, scenario planning, tests of change and considered decision making. This will require injection of investment at key points, likely to be in the region of 100k in 2022/23.
- 10.2 Should it be identified that the volunteer proposition or aspects of it are no longer viable this will have a significant and long term impact on the operation of the organisation, including consideration of the impact on Quality Assurance approaches, also currently conducted through a volunteer model and the overall

financial resources required for operation. It is not currently possible to determine the scale of these so they have not currently been factored into the 5 year plan, however it is important to identify this may be a significant future need which will require significant engagement with SG colleagues and of which more detail can be articulated in due course.

## **11. Risks**

11.1 Financial risks are identified as:

1. No consolidation of additional in year 2020/21 funding;
2. The continuation of one year Grant In Aid funding agreements from Scottish Government, inhibiting organisational ability to meet The Promise; and
3. Continued uncertainty on the impact of Covid-19 on hearing system operation including Panel Member retention and availability.
4. Implementation of The Promise and change requirements of the Children's Hearing System.
5. Sourcing of funding to support digital management and take up amongst our volunteer community

## **12. Savings and Efficiencies**

12.1 We will continue to actively seek opportunities for savings across the period, including:

1. Use of virtual and online tools to support engagement and learning and development where appropriate, reducing face to face interaction to focus on skills development.
2. Continuing to utilise Thistle House internal training and meeting room facilities (instead of private estate) for forums, meetings and face to face training where required.
3. Staffing costs will be closely monitored and opportunities for savings managed throughout the period to meet an annual 3.55% savings target.

## **13. Conclusion**

13.1 In recognition of the size of the planned reforms for the hearings system this 5 year plan reflects a modest average revenue growth of 2.6% per year.

13.2 As this paper identifies, the next few years will be challenging for the Hearing System and CHS as we move from Covid resilience response to hearings systems recover and implement our 2020-23 strategic ambitions and commitment to The Promise.

13.3 CHS do not view recovery and transformation as sequential; through recovery there will be opportunities to bring forward test of change to advance and inform our change journey. We will continue to both pursue these and embrace them.



- 13.4 There remains high levels of uncertainty both in terms of the ongoing impact of Covid but in addition the impact of the implementation that the Promise may have on the structure and operation of CHS and the Hearing System, particularly for our volunteer community.
- 13.5 We will continue to monitor and utilise our resources carefully and creatively over the course to ensure best value and the delivery of outcomes that will improve the life chances of children and young people.
- 13.6 There may be further requests for information, in particular to support the Government's budget planning for next year, and SMT will respond to these and keep Board members informed.

#### **14. Recommendations**

- 14.1 The Board are asked to approve the strategic 5 year financial plan.

DRAFT

## Agenda Item 9

CHS-2122-21a

### CHS Framework Document

**Accountable SMT member:** Elliot Jackson – NC/CEO  
**Report author:** Lynne Harrison, DCE  
**Resources implications:** Within available resources  
**Purpose:** For Consideration and Approval  
**Equalities duties:** Equalities Impact Assessment Required

Yes?

No

#### 1. Background

1.1 As a Non-departmental public body and under the terms of the Scottish Public Finance Manual, CHS is required to abide by the terms of a Framework Document (Appendix I) which sets out the terms of operation of CHS.

1.2 The Framework document is required to be reviewed annually. The document was fully reviewed in 2019 to ensure it met Scottish Public Finance Manual requirements and was updated to include links to external documents which are subject to change to enable links to fully up to date information.

1.3. A has been undertaken by Lynne Harrison and the Scottish Government Sponsor Team and a revised document is enclosed for approval.

1. 4 Reference to the Promise is included in the NDPB Key Objectives identified in Paragraph 8.

#### 2. Recommendation

2.1 To approve the Framework Document.

**Agenda item 9**  
**CHS-2122-21b**

**CHILDREN'S HEARINGS SCOTLAND**

**FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT**

**Introduction**

1. This framework document has been drawn up by the Scottish Government (SG) in consultation with Children's Hearings Scotland (the NDPB). It sets out the broad framework within which the NDPB will operate and defines key roles and responsibilities which underpin the relationship between the NDPB and the SG. While this document does not confer any legal powers or responsibilities, it forms a key part of the accountability and governance framework and should be reviewed and updated as necessary, and at least every 2-3 years. Any proposals to amend the framework document either by the SG or NDPB will be taken forward in consultation and in the light of SG priorities and policy aims. Any question regarding the interpretation of the document shall be determined by the SG after consultation with the NDPB. Legislative provisions shall take precedence over any part of the document.
2. References to the NDPB include any subsidiaries and joint ventures owned or controlled by the NDPB. The NDPB shall not establish subsidiaries or enter into joint ventures without the express approval of the SG.
3. Copies of the document shall be placed in the Scottish Parliament Information Centre. It shall also be published on the NDPB website.

**Purpose**

4. The NDPB is to contribute to the achievement of the Scottish Ministers' objectives and priorities by aligning its aims and objectives with the [National Performance Framework](#), [Scotland's Economic Strategy](#) and [Programme for Government](#).
5. CHS's key functions, duties and powers are set out in the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 ("the Act") (in particular sections 2, 3, 11, 12, 13, 24 and schedules 1, 2 and 4). The key statutory functions are to:

Assist the National Convener in carrying out his or her statutory functions under the Act, or any other enactment, and to facilitate the carrying out of those functions (see section 11 of the Act).

- Comply with any direction given to the NDPB by the Scottish Ministers in relation to the carrying out of its functions (section 13) and also to comply with requests from certain other persons in relation to the carrying out of their function under the Act (section 183).
- Appoint the National Convener on terms and conditions determined by the NDPB and approved by the Scottish Ministers.

- Rule 61(1)(b) of The Children’s Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 (Rules of Procedure in Children’s Hearings) Rules 2013 (‘the 2013 Rules’) enables a children’s hearing to require the Reporter to obtain any report they consider necessary for the hearing’s decision. This can include any report on a specified matter – usually referred to as an ‘independent report’, although ‘independent’ is not explicitly referred to in the Rules. The Reporter will direct any requests to CHS. CHS will put in place arrangements to respond to requests made for ‘independent reports’ including sourcing a report writer, ensuring that the submitted report is done within agreed timescales and to standards specified at the outset of the process.

6. The children’s hearings system provides the operational setting in which the NDPB and its partner agencies work. The NDPB’s purpose, strategic aims and objectives, as agreed by the Scottish Ministers, are set out in the NDPB’s Corporate and Business Plans. The NDPB’s aims are to pursue, with care and creativity, outcomes which are in the best interests of children and young people who are, or may be, referred to children’s hearings; to work collaboratively with, lead and influence partner agencies in the children’s hearings system and to improve delivery and outcomes for children.

7. The NDPB will support the National Convener in strengthening the children’s hearings system by increasing the capacity of the Children’s Panel. This will be carried out by improved and consistent recruitment, selection, training and continuing support of panel members. CHS as a statutory body will work with all children’s hearings partners to collaborate and ensure delivery of the Covid Recovery Plan.

8. The key objectives for the NDPB are:

- To inform and implement national policy initiatives to support children and young people that need our support, their families and communities;
- To work with Children’s Hearings partners and The Promise on the 21-24 Promise Plan;
- To improve outcomes for children by working more effectively with partners in an integrated hearings system;
- To optimise the quality of panel decision-making and to work with partners to realise the best possible outcomes for children in the hearings system;
- To make the hearings experience more accessible and responsive to children and their families; and
- To create and maintain organisational excellence by investing in staff and infrastructure.

9. The key performance targets relating to these objectives are to be set out in the NDPB’s corporate and operational plans.

## **Relationship between Scottish Government and the NDPB**

10. Effective strategic engagement between the SG and the NDPB is essential in order for them to work together as effectively as possible and to maintain and improve public services and deliver improved outcomes. Both the SG and CHS will take all necessary steps to ensure that their relationship is developed and supported in line with the jointly agreed principles set out in the statement on [‘Strategic Engagement between the Scottish Government and Scotland’s NDPBs’](#).

### **Governance and accountability**

#### **Legal origins of powers and duties**

11. The NDPB is established under the Children’s Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011. The NDPB does not carry out its functions on behalf of the Crown.

#### **Ministerial responsibilities**

12. The Scottish Ministers are ultimately accountable to the Scottish Parliament for the activities of the NDPB and its use of resources. They are not however responsible for day to day operational matters and founding legislation prevents them from directing or guiding the National Convener in relation to specific statutory functions. The responsibilities of the Scottish Ministers include:

- Agreeing the NDPB’s strategic aims and objectives and key targets as part of the corporate planning process
- Agreeing the budget and the associated grant in aid requirement to be paid to the NDPB, and securing the necessary Parliamentary approval
- Carrying out responsibilities specified in schedule 1 of the Act such as appointment of members to the NDPB, approving the terms and conditions of members and approving the appointment of the Chief Executive and National Convener (noting that these roles may both be held by the same person)
- other matters such as approving the NDPB’s Chief Executive and staff pay remit in line with SG [Pay Policy](#) and laying the accounts (together with the annual report) before the Parliament

#### **NDPB Member Responsibilities**

13. The NDPB members, including the chairing member, (“collectively referred to in the rest of this document as members”) normally consist of non-executives appointed by the Scottish Ministers in line with the [Code of Practice](#) for Ministerial Public Appointments to Public Bodies in Scotland. The role of members is to provide leadership, direction, support and guidance to ensure the NDPB delivers and is committed to delivering its functions effectively and efficiently and in accordance with the aims, policies and priorities of the Scottish Ministers. They have corporate responsibility, under the leadership of the chairing member, for the following:

- Taking forward the strategic aims and objectives for the body agreed by the Scottish Ministers
- Determining the steps needed to deal with changes which are likely to impact on the strategic aims and objectives of the NDPB or on the attainability of its operational targets
- Promoting the efficient, economic and effective use of staff and other resources by the NDPB consistent with the principles of [Best Value](#), including, where possible, participation in shared services arrangements.
- Ensuring that effective arrangements are in place to provide assurance on risk management (including in respect of personnel, physical and cyber risks/threats/hazards), governance and internal control. (The board must set up an [audit committee](#) chaired by a non-executive member to provide independent advice and assurance on the effectiveness of the internal control and risk management systems)
- Taking into account relevant guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers in reaching decisions
- Approving the annual accounts and ensuring Scottish Ministers are provided with the annual report and accounts to be laid before the Scottish Parliament. The chief executive as the Accountable Officer of the NDPB is responsible for signing the accounts and ultimately responsible to the Scottish Parliament for their actions
- Ensuring that the members receive and review regular financial information concerning the management and performance of the NDPB and are informed in a timely manner about any concerns regarding the activities of the NDPB
- Appointing, with the approval of the Scottish Ministers, the NDPB chief executive and National Convener (noting that these roles may both be held by the same person), following appropriate approval of the chief executive's remuneration package in line with [SG Pay Policy for Senior Appointments](#). New contracts for chief executives should include a notice period of no more than 3 months. Where a business case can be made, the notice period may be set at a maximum of 6 months. In consultation with the SG, appropriate performance objectives should be set which give due weight to the proper management and use of resources within the stewardship of the NDPB and the delivery of outcomes
- Demonstrating high standards of corporate governance at all times, including openness and transparency in its decision making.

Further guidance on how the board should discharge its duties is provided in appointment letters and in [On Board – A Guide for Members of Statutory Boards](#).

### **The chairing member's responsibilities**

14. The chairing member is accountable to the Scottish Ministers and, in common with any individual with responsibility for devolved functions, may also be held to account by the Scottish Parliament. Communications between the NDPB members and the Scottish Ministers should normally be through the chairing member. They are responsible for ensuring that the NDPB's policies and actions support the Scottish Ministers' wider strategic policies and that its affairs are conducted with probity.

15. In leading the members the chairing member must ensure that:

- the work of the members is subject to regular self-assessment and that members are working effectively.
- the members, in accordance with recognised good practice in corporate governance, are diverse both in terms of relevant skills, experience and knowledge appropriate to directing the NDPB business, and in terms of protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 and the [Gender Representation on Public Boards Act](#) and [Guidance](#), where these apply.
- the members are fully briefed on their terms of appointment, duties, rights and responsibilities.
- they together with the other members, receives appropriate induction training, including on financial management and reporting requirements, severance policy and, as appropriate, on any differences that may exist between private and public sector practice.
- succession planning takes place to ensure that the members are diverse and effective, and the Scottish Ministers are advised of the NDPB needs when member vacancies arise.
- there is a code of conduct for members in place, approved by the Scottish Ministers.

16. The chairing member assesses the performance of individual members on a continuous basis and undertakes a formal appraisal at least annually. The chairing member, in consultation with the members as a whole, is also responsible for undertaking an annual appraisal of the performance of the Chief Executive and National Convener (noting that these roles may both be held by the same person).

### **Individual members' responsibilities**

17. Individual members should act in accordance with their responsibilities and comply at all times with the code of conduct adopted by the NDPB and with the rules relating to the use of public funds and to conflicts of interest. (In this context "public funds" means not only any funds provided to the NDPB by the Scottish Ministers but also any other funds falling within the stewardship of the NDPB, including trading and investment income, gifts, bequests and donations.) General guidance on board members' responsibilities is summarised in their appointment letters and is also provided in [On Board](#).

## NDPB Chief Executive responsibilities

18. The Chief Executive of CHS is employed and appointed by the NDPB with the approval of the Scottish Ministers. They are the NDPB's principal adviser on the discharge of its functions and is accountable to the members. Their role is to provide operational leadership to the NDPB and ensure that the NDPB's aims and objectives are met and the NDPB's functions are delivered and targets met through effective and properly controlled executive action. Their general responsibilities include the performance, management and staffing of the NDPB. General guidance on the role and responsibilities of the chief executive is contained in [On Board](#). Specific responsibilities to the members include:

- Advising the members on the discharge of their responsibilities - as set out in this document, in the founding legislation and in any other relevant instructions and guidance issued by or on behalf of the Scottish Ministers - and implementing the decisions of the members
- Ensuring that financial considerations are taken fully into account by the members at all stages in reaching and executing their decisions, and that appropriate financial appraisal and evaluation techniques, consistent with the [Appraisal and Evaluation](#) section of the [Scottish Public Finance Manual](#) (SPFM), are followed
- Ensuring that the NDPB adheres, where appropriate, to the SG's [Programme and project management principles](#)
- Having robust performance and risk management arrangements - consistent with the [Risk Management](#) section of the SPFM - in place that support the achievement of the NDPB's aims and objectives and that facilitate comprehensive reporting to the members, the SG and the wider public. Risk management arrangements should include full consideration of organisational resilience to physical, personnel and cyber risks/threats/hazards.
- Ensuring that adequate systems of internal control are maintained by the NDPB, including effective measures against fraud and theft consistent with the [Fraud](#) section of the SPFM
- Establishing appropriate documented internal delegated authority arrangements consistent with the [Delegated Authority](#) section of the SPFM
- Advising the members on the performance of the NDPB compared with its aim[s] and objectives
- Preparing the NDPB's corporate and business plans, in the light of the strategic aims and objectives agreed by the Scottish Ministers
- Ensuring effective relationships with SG officials
- Ensuring that timely forecasts and monitoring information on performance and finance are provided to the SG; that the SG is notified promptly if over or under spends are likely and that corrective action is taken; and that any significant problems whether



financial or otherwise, and whether detected by internal audit or by other means, are notified to the SG in a timely fashion

- Ensuring staff pay proposals are in line with SG [Pay Policy](#) and submitted in time and the necessary approvals obtained prior to implementing any annual award.

### **NDPB Accountable Officer responsibilities**

19. The Principal Accountable Officer for the Scottish Administration (the Permanent Secretary of the SG) will designate the chief executive as the Accountable Officer for the NDPB. Accountable Officers are personally answerable to the Scottish Parliament for the exercise of their functions, as set out in the [Memorandum to Accountable Officers for Other Public Bodies](#). These include:

- Ensuring the propriety and regularity of the NDPB's finances and that there are sound and effective arrangements for internal control and risk management
- Ensuring that the resources of the public body are used economically, efficiently and effectively, and that arrangements are in place to secure Best Value and deliver Value for Money for the public sector as a whole
- Ensuring compliance with relevant guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers, in particular the SPFM and SG [Pay Policy](#)
- Signing the annual accounts and associated governance statements
- A statutory duty to obtain written authority from the members/chairing member before taking any action which they considered would be inconsistent with the proper performance of the Accountable Officer functions. The Accountable Officer should also notify the relevant Portfolio Accountable Officer.

20. It is incumbent on the chief executive to combine their Accountable Officer responsibilities to the Scottish Parliament with their wider responsibilities to the members. The members / chairing member should be fully aware of, and have regard to, the Accountable Officer responsibilities placed upon the chief executive, including the statutory duty described above in paragraph 19.

### **Portfolio Accountable Officer responsibilities**

21. The Principal Accountable Officer for the Scottish Administration will designate the Director-General for Education and Justice as the Accountable Officer for the SG portfolio budget for the NDPB. The responsibilities of a Portfolio Accountable Officer are set out in detail in the [Memorandum to Accountable Officers for Parts of the Scottish Administration](#). They are personally answerable to the Scottish Parliament for ensuring that:

- the financial and other management controls applied by the SG are appropriate and sufficient to safeguard public funds and, more generally that those being applied by the NDPB conform to the requirements both of propriety and of good financial management

- the key roles and responsibilities which underpin the relationship between the SG and the NDPB are set out in a framework document - and that this document is regularly reviewed
- effective relationships are in place at Director and Deputy Director level between the SG and the NDPB in accordance with the strategic engagement principles
- there is effective continuous assessment and appraisal of the performance of the chairing of the NDPB, in line with the requirements of the Code of Practice for Ministerial Public Appointments in Scotland.

### **Scottish Government Director and Deputy Director**

22. The Director for Children and Families (“the Director”) and the Deputy Director for Children’s Rights, Protection and Justice have responsibility for overseeing and ensuring effective relationships between the SG and the NDPB which support alignment of the NDPB’s business to the SG’s Purpose and National Outcomes and high performance by the NDPB. They will work closely with the NDPB chief executive and be answerable to the Portfolio Accountable Officer for maintaining and developing positive relationships with the NDPB characterised by openness, trust, respect and mutual support. They will be supported by a sponsor unit in discharging these functions. The Deputy Director shall be responsible for assessing the performance of the NDPB chairing member at least annually.

### **Sponsor unit responsibilities**

23. The SG sponsor unit for the NDPB is the Children’s Hearings Team (“the sponsor unit”). It is the normal point of contact for the NDPB in dealing with the SG. The sponsor unit, under the direction of the Director/Deputy Director, is the primary source of advice to the Scottish Ministers on the discharge of their responsibilities in respect of the NDPB and undertakes the responsibilities of the Portfolio Accountable Officer on their behalf.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Discharging sponsorship responsibilities in line with the principles and framework set out in the document [‘Strategic Engagement between the Scottish Government and Scotland’s NDPBs’](#) and ensuring that sponsorship is suitably flexible, proportionate and responsive to the needs of the Scottish Ministers and the NDPB
- Ensuring that appointments to the NDPB board are made timeously and, where appropriate, in accordance with the [code-practice](#) for Ministerial Appointments in Scotland
- Proportionate monitoring of the NDPB’s activities through an adequate and timely flow of appropriate information, agreed with the NDPB, on performance, budgeting, control and risk management

- Addressing in a timely manner any significant problems arising in the NDPB, alerting the Portfolio Accountable Officer and the responsible Minister(s) where considered appropriate
- Ensuring that the objectives of the NDPB and the risks to them are properly and appropriately taken into account in the SG's risk assessment and management systems
- Informing the NDPB of relevant SG policy in a timely manner.

### Internal audit

24. The NDPB shall:

- establish and maintain arrangements for internal audit in accordance with the [Public Sector Internal Audit Standards](#) and the [Internal Audit](#) section of the SPFM.
- set up an audit committee of its members, in accordance with the [Audit Committees](#) section of the SPFM, to advise both the members and the chief executive in their capacity as the NDPB Accountable Officer.
- forward timeously to the SG the audit charter, strategy, periodic audit plans and annual audit assurance report, including the NDPB Head of Internal Audit opinion on risk management, control and governance and other relevant reports as requested.
- keep records of, and prepare and forward timeously to the SG an annual report on fraud and theft suffered by the NDPB and notify the SG at the earliest opportunity of any unusual or major incidents.

25. The SG's Internal Audit Directorate has a right of access to all documents held by the NDPB internal auditor, including where the service is contracted out. The SG has a right of access to all NDPB records and personnel for any purpose.

### External audit

26. The Auditor General for Scotland (AGS) audits, or appoints auditors to audit, the NDPB's annual accounts and passes them to the Scottish Ministers who shall lay them before the Scottish Parliament, together with the auditor's report and any report prepared by the AGS. For the purpose of audit the auditors have a statutory right of access to documents and information held by relevant persons. The NDPB shall instruct its auditors to send copies of all management reports (and correspondence relating to those reports) and responses to the SG.

27. The AGS, or examiners appointed by the AGS, may carry out examinations into the economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which the NDPB has used its resources in discharging its functions. The AGS may also carry out examinations into the arrangements made by the NDPB to secure Best Value. For the purpose of these examinations the examiners have a statutory right of access to documents and information held by relevant persons. In addition, the NDPB shall provide, in contracts and any conditions to grants, for the AGS to exercise such access to documents held by contractors and sub-contractors and grant

recipients as may be required for these examinations; and shall use its best endeavours to secure access for the AGS to any other documents required by the AGS which are held by other bodies.

### **Annual report and accounts**

28. The NDPB must publish an annual report on the carrying out of its functions together with its audited accounts after the end of each financial year. The annual report must cover the activities of any corporate, subsidiary or joint ventures under the control of the NDPB. It should comply with the Government [Financial Reporting Manual](#) (FReM) and outline the NDPB's main activities and performance against agreed objectives and targets for the previous financial year.

29. The accounts must be prepared in accordance with relevant statutes and the specific accounts direction (including compliance with the FReM) and other relevant guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers. Any financial objectives or targets set by the Scottish Ministers should be reported on in the accounts and will therefore be within the scope of the audit. Any subsidiary or joint venture owned or controlled by the NDPB shall be consolidated in its accounts in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards as adapted and interpreted for the public sector context.

30. The draft Report should be submitted to the SG for comment, and the draft accounts for information, at least 6 weeks before the proposed laying date and in advance of full Board approval. The final version should be available for laying before the Scottish Parliament by the Scottish Ministers by 31 October each year. Whilst the statutory date for laying and publishing accounts audited by the AGS is by 31 December, following the close of the previous financial year, there is an expectation on the part of the Scottish Ministers that accounts will be laid and published as early as possible. The accounts must not be laid before they have been formally sent by the AGS to the Scottish Ministers and must not be published before they have been laid. The NDPB shall be responsible for the publication of the annual report and accounts.

### **Management responsibilities**

#### **Corporate and business plans**

31. The NDPB must ensure that a corporate plan, agreed with the Scottish Ministers, is in place and published on the NDPB's website. The NDPB shall agree with the SG the issues to be addressed in the plan and the timetable for its preparation and review. The finalised plan shall reflect the NDPB's strategic aims and objectives as agreed by the Scottish Ministers, indicative budgets and any priorities set by the Scottish Ministers. It shall demonstrate how the NDPB contributes to the achievement of the purpose and national outcomes set out in the SG's [National Performance Framework](#) (NPF). The corporate plan for the NDPB should include:

- The purpose and principal aims of the NDPB
- An analysis of the environment in which the NDPB operates

- Key objectives and associated key performance targets for the period of the plan, the strategy for achieving those objectives and how these will contribute towards the achievement of the SG's primary purpose and alignment with the NPF
- Indicators against which performance can be judged
- Details of planned efficiencies, describing how the NDPB proposes to achieve better value for money, including through collaboration and shared services
- Other matters as agreed between the SG and the NDPB.

32. The corporate plan should inform the development of a separate business plan for each financial year. The business plan for the NDPB should include key targets and milestones for the year immediately ahead, aligned to the NPF, and be linked to budgeting information so that, where possible, resources allocated to achieve specific objectives can be identified. A copy of the NDPB's business plan should be provided to the sponsor unit prior to the start of the relevant financial year.

### **Budget management**

33. Each year, in the light of decisions by the Scottish Ministers on the allocation of budgets for the forthcoming financial year, the SG will send to the NDPB a formal statement of its budgetary provision, and a note of any related matters and details of the budget monitoring information required by the SG. The terms of that letter, referred to as the Budget Allocation and Monitoring letter, should be viewed as complementing the content of this document. The monthly monitoring is the primary means of in-year budgetary control across the SG. As such bodies must comply with the format and timing of the monitoring together with any requests for further information. The statement of budgetary provision will set out the budget within the classifications of resource Departmental Expenditure Limits (RDEL), capital DEL (CDEL) and Ring-fenced (non-cash) (RfDEL). The NDPB will inform the sponsor unit at the earliest opportunity if a requirement for Annually Managed Expenditure (AME) budget is identified. The SG should also be advised in the event that estimated net expenditure is forecast to be lower than budget provision. Transfers of budgetary provision between the different classifications require the prior approval of the SG Finance Directorate. Any proposals for such transfers should therefore be submitted to the sponsor unit. Transfers of provision within the classifications may be undertaken without reference to the SG, subject to any constraints on specific areas of expenditure e.g. the approved pay remit.

34. If the trading and other resource income realised (including profit or loss on disposal of non-current assets) – scored as negative RDEL, or the net book value of disposals of non-current assets – scored as negative CDEL is less than included in the agreed budget the NDPB shall, unless otherwise agreed with the SG, ensure a corresponding reduction in its gross expenditure. (The extent to which the NDPB exceeds agreed budgets shall normally be met by a corresponding reduction in the budgets for the following financial year.) If income realised is more than included in the agreed budgets the NDPB must consult and obtain the prior approval of the SG before using any excess to fund additional expenditure or to meet existing pressures. Failure to obtain prior approval for the use of excess income to fund additional expenditure may result in corresponding reductions in budgets for the following financial year. The only exception is where the income is from gifts, bequests and donations but this must be spent within the same financial year as the receipt, otherwise additional

budget allocation will be required. In any event, income from all sources and all planned expenditure should be reflected in the monthly budget monitoring statement.

### **Cash management**

35. Any [grant in aid](#) (i.e. the cash provided to the NDPB by the SG to support the allocated budget) for the year in question must be authorised by the Scottish Parliament in the annual Budget Act. Grant in aid will normally be paid in monthly instalments on the basis of updated profiles and information on unrestricted cash reserves. Payment will not be made in advance of need, as determined by the level of unrestricted cash reserves and planned expenditure. Unrestricted cash reserves held during the course of the year should be kept to the minimum level consistent with the efficient operation of the NDPB - and the level of funds required to meet any relevant liabilities at the year-end. Grant in aid not drawn down by the end of the financial year shall lapse. Grant in aid shall not be paid into any restricted reserve held by the NDPB.

36. The banking arrangements adopted by the NDPB must comply with the [Banking](#) section of the SPFM.

### **Risk management**

37. The NDPB shall ensure that the risks that it faces are dealt with in an appropriate manner, in accordance with relevant aspects of generally recognised best practice in corporate governance, and develop an approach to risk management consistent with the [Risk Management](#) section of the SPFM. Reporting arrangements should ensure that the sponsor unit is made aware of relevant risks and how they are being managed. The NDPB audit committee is also required, at the earliest opportunity, to notify the relevant Director General Assurance meeting if it considers that it has identified a significant problem which may have wider implications.

### **Organisational security and resilience**

38. As part of risk management arrangements, the NDPB shall ensure that it has a clear understanding at board level of the key risks, threats and hazards it may face in the personnel, physical and cyber domains, and take action to ensure appropriate organisational resilience to those risks/threats/hazards. It should have particular regard to the following key sources of information to help guide its approach:

- [Having and Promoting Business Resilience \(part of the Preparing Scotland suite of guidance\)](#)
- [The Scottish Public Sector Action Plan on Cyber Resilience](#) and associated guidance, in particular the [Cyber Resilience Framework](#)

### **Counter fraud arrangements**

39. The NDPB should adopt and implement policies and practices to safeguard itself against fraud and theft, in accordance with the [Fraud](#) section of the SPFM. Application of these processes must be monitored actively, supported by a fraud action plan and robust reporting arrangements. This includes the establishment of avenues to report any suspicions of fraud.

### **Performance management**

40. The NDPB shall operate management information and accounting systems that enable it to review, in a timely and effective manner, its financial and non-financial performance against the strategic aims, objectives, targets and milestones set out in the corporate and business plans. The results of such reviews should be reported on a regular basis to the NDPB board and copied to the SG. The SG shall assess the NDPB's performance, proportionately, on a continuous basis and hold a formal review meeting at least twice a year. The responsible Cabinet Secretary / Scottish Minister shall meet the NDPB chairing member at least once a year.

### **NDPB staff management**

#### *Broad responsibilities for NDPB staff*

41. The NDPB will have responsibility for the recruitment, retention and motivation of its staff. The broad responsibilities toward its staff are to ensure that:

- HR policies, practices and systems comply with employment and equalities legislation, and standards expected of public sector employers
- the level and structure of its staffing, including grading and staff numbers, are appropriate to its functions and the requirements of economy, efficiency and effectiveness (subject to the SG [Pay Policy for Staff Pay Remits](#))
- the performance of its staff at all levels is satisfactorily appraised and the NDPB's performance measurement systems are reviewed from time to time
- its staff are encouraged to acquire the appropriate professional, management and other expertise necessary to achieve the NDPB's objectives
- proper consultation with staff takes place on key issues affecting them
- adequate grievance and disciplinary procedures are in place
- effective whistle-blowing policy and procedures consistent with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 are in place
- a code of conduct for staff is in place based on the Model Code for Staff of Executive NDPBs



*Pay and conditions of service*

42. The NDPB will comply with SG Pay Policy in relation to staff and the chief executive. The NDPB shall submit to the SG for approval (normally annually unless a multi-year deal has been agreed) a pay remit in line with the SG [Pay Policy for Staff Pay Remits](#) and negotiate a pay settlement within the terms of the approved remit. Payment of salaries should also comply with the [Tax Planning and Tax Avoidance](#) section of the SPFM. Proposals on non-salary rewards must comply with the guidance in the [Non-Salary Rewards](#) section of the SPFM. Where applicable, the NDPB will also seek appropriate approval under the SG [Pay Policy for Senior Appointments](#) for the chief executive's remuneration package prior to appointment, annually or when a new appointment or change to the remuneration package is being proposed.

*Pensions, redundancy and compensation*

43. Superannuation arrangements for the NDPB staff are subject to the approval of the SG. NDPB staff shall normally be eligible for a pension provided by Lothian Pension Fund. Staff may opt out of the occupational pension scheme provided by the NDPB, but the employers' contribution to any personal pension arrangement, including stakeholder pension, shall normally be limited to the national insurance rebate level.

44. Any proposal by the NDPB to move from existing pension arrangements, or to pay any redundancy or compensation for loss of office, requires the prior approval of the SG. Proposals on compensation payments must comply with the [Settlement Agreements, Severance, Early Retirement and Redundancy Terms](#) section of the SPFM. This includes referral to the SG of any proposed severance scheme (for example, a scheme for voluntary exit), business case for a settlement agreement being considered for an individual, or proposal to make any other compensation payment. In all instances, a body should engage with the SG prior to proceeding with proposed severance options, and prior to making any offer either orally or in writing.

**Asset and property management**

45. The NDPB shall maintain an accurate and up-to-date record of its current and non-current assets consistent with the [Property: Acquisition, Disposal & Management](#) section of the SPFM. 'Non-current' assets should be disposed of in accordance with the SPFM. The SG's Property Division should be consulted about relevant proposed disposals of property that the NDPB holds for operational purposes (rather than investment) at the earliest opportunity so it may be advertised internally. An [Internal Advertisement](#) form must be completed and submitted at least one month prior to property being advertised on the open market. Any proposal to acquire land, buildings or other rights in property for accommodation / operational purposes should comply with the SPFM. The NDPB is also subject to the [SG Asset Management Policy](#), including the requirement for acquisition of a new lease, continuation of an existing lease, decision not to exercise a break option in a lease or purchase of property for accommodation / operational purposes, to be approved in advance by Scottish Ministers. The Property Controls Team should be consulted as early as possible in this process. All assets (property, plant and equipment) are to be properly recorded and updated as necessary by the NDPB on the Cabinet Office [electronic Property Information Mapping System](#) (e-PIMS).



## **Specific financial provisions**

### **Delegated authorities**

46. The NDPB's specific delegated financial authorities - as agreed in consultation between the NDPB and the SG - are set out in the attached **Appendix**. The NDPB shall obtain the SG's prior written approval before entering into any undertaking to incur any expenditure that falls outside these delegations. The NDPB shall also comply with any requirements for prior SG approval included in the SPFM and/or this document, alongside spend control regimes including the utilisation of Accountable Officer templates, as applicable. Prior SG approval must always be obtained before incurring expenditure for any purpose that is or might be considered novel, contentious or repercussive or which has or could have significant future cost implications.

### **Income generation**

47. The NDPB shall seek to optimise income - grant in aid does not qualify as income - from all sources, and ensure that the SG is kept informed. Novel or contentious proposals for new sources of income or methods of fundraising must be approved by the SG. Fees or charges for any services supplied by the NDPB shall be determined in accordance with the [Fees & Charges](#) section of the SPFM.

48. Gifts, bequests or donations received by the NDPB score as income and should be provided for in the agreed resource DEL and capital DEL budgets, updated as necessary in consultation with the SG. However, the NDPB should be able to demonstrate that expenditure funded by gifts etc is additional to expenditure normally supported by grant in aid (i.e. SG core funding) or by trading and other income. Before accepting such gifts etc the NDPB shall consider if there are any associated costs in doing so or any conflicts of interests arising. The NDPB shall keep a written record of any such gifts etc and what happened to them.

### **Financial investments**

49. Unless covered by a specific delegated authority the NDPB shall not make any financial investments without the prior approval of the SG. That would include equity shares in ventures which further the objectives of the NDPB. The NDPB shall not invest in any venture of a speculative nature.

### **Borrowing**

50. Borrowing cannot be used to increase the NDPB's spending power. All borrowing by the NDPB - excluding agreed overdrafts - shall be from the Scottish Ministers in accordance with guidance in the [Borrowing, Lending & Investment](#) section of the SPFM.

### **Lease arrangements**

51. Unless covered by a specific delegated authority the NDPB shall not enter into any finance, property or accommodation related lease arrangement – including the extension of an existing lease or the non-exercise of a tenant's lease break - without the SG's prior approval. Before entering/ continuing such arrangements the NDPB must be able to

demonstrate that the lease offers better value for money than purchase and that all options of sharing existing public sector space have been explored. Non-property/ accommodation related operating leases are subject to a specific delegated authority. The NDPB must have capital DEL provision for finance leases and other transactions which are in substance borrowing.

### **Tax arrangements**

52. Non-standard tax management arrangements should always be regarded as novel and/or contentious and must therefore be approved in advance by the SG. Relevant guidance is provided in the [Tax Planning and Tax Avoidance](#) section of the SPFM. The NDPB must comply with all relevant rules on taxation, including VAT. All individuals who would qualify as employees for tax purposes should be paid through the payroll system with tax deducted at source. It is the responsibility of the NDPB to observe VAT legislation and recover input tax where it is entitled to do so. The implications of VAT in relation to procurement and shared services should be considered at an early stage to ensure that financial efficiency is achieved. The NDPB must also ensure that it accounts properly for any output tax on sales or disposals.

### **Settlement, severance, early retirement and redundancy**

53. The NDPB shall seek to deliver, and demonstrate, robust governance processes, best practice and value for money when developing and implementing a severance scheme or when developing a settlement agreement, in compliance with current policy, observing all policy limits as set out in the [Settlement, severance, early retirement, redundancy section](#) of the SPFM.

### **Lending and guarantees**

54. Any lending by the NDPB must adhere to the guidance in the [Borrowing, Lending & Investment](#) section of the SPFM on undertaking due diligence and seeking to establish a security. Unless covered by a specific delegated limit the NDPB shall not, without the SG's prior approval, lend money, charge any asset, give any guarantee or indemnity or letter of comfort, or incur any other contingent liability (as defined in the [Contingent Liabilities](#) section of the SPFM), whether or not in a legally binding form. Guarantees, indemnities and letters of comfort of a standard type given in the normal course of business are excluded from this requirement.

### **Third party grants**

55. Unless covered by a specific delegated authority the NDPB shall not, without the SG's prior agreement, provide grant funding to a third party. Such funding would be subject to the guidance in the [Subsidy Control](#) section of the SPFM. Guidance on a framework for the control of third party grants is provided as an annex to the [Grant & Grant in Aid](#) section of the SPFM.

### **Impairments, provisions and write-offs**

56. Assets should be recorded on the balance sheet at the appropriate valuation basis in accordance with the FReM. Where an asset - and that includes investments - suffers impairment it is important that the prospective impairment and background is communicated to the SG at the earliest possible point in the financial year to determine the implications for the NDPB's budget. Similarly any significant movement in existing provisions or the creation of new provisions should be discussed in advance with the SG. Write-off of bad debt and/or losses scores against the NDPB's resource DEL budget classification and is subject to a specific delegated limit.

### **Insurance**

57. The NDPB is subject to the SG policy of self-insurance. Commercial insurance must however be taken out where there is a legal requirement to do so and may also be taken out in the circumstances described in the [Insurance](#) section of the SPFM - where required with the prior approval of the SG. In the event of uninsured losses being incurred the SG shall consider, on a case by case basis, whether or not it should make any additional resources available to the NDPB. The SG will provide the NDPB with a Certificate of Exemption for Employer's Liability Insurance.

### **Procurement and payment**

58. The NDPB's procurement policies shall reflect relevant guidance in the [Procurement](#) section of the SPFM and relevant guidance issued by the SG's Procurement and Commercial Directorate. Procurement should be undertaken by appropriately trained and authorised staff and treated as a key component of achieving the NDPB's objectives consistent with the principles of [Best Value](#), the highest professional standards and any legal requirements. All external consultancy contracts over the value of £100,000 or any proposal to award a contract without competition (non-competitive action) over the value of £100,000 must be endorsed in advance by the Chief Executive.

59. Any major investment programmes or projects undertaken by the NDPB shall be subject to the guidance in the [Major Investment Projects](#) section of the SPFM [and is also subject to a specific delegated authority]. The sponsor unit must be kept informed of progress on such programmes and projects and Ministers must be alerted to any developments that could undermine their viability. ICT investment plans must be reported to the SG's Office of the Chief Information Officer.

60. The NDPB shall pay all matured and properly authorised invoices relating to transactions with suppliers in accordance with the [Expenditure and Payments](#) section of the SPFM and in doing so shall seek wherever possible and appropriate to meet the SG's target for the payment of invoices within 10 working days of their receipt.

### **Gifts made, special payments and losses**

61. Unless covered by a specific delegated authority the NDPB shall not, without the SG's prior approval, make gifts or special payments or write-off of losses. Special payments and losses are subject the guidance in the [Losses and Special Payments](#) section of the SPFM. Gifts by management to staff are subject to the guidance in the [Non-Salary Rewards](#) section of the SPFM.

## **Clawback**

62. Where the NDPB has financed expenditure on assets by a third party, the NDPB shall make appropriate arrangements to ensure that any such assets above an agreed value are not disposed of by the third party without the NDPB's prior consent. The NDPB shall put in place arrangements sufficient to secure the repayment of its due share of the proceeds - or an appropriate proportion of them if the NDPB contributed less than the whole cost of acquisition or improvement. The NDPB shall also ensure that if assets financed by the NDPB cease to be used by the third party for the intended purpose an appropriate proportion of the value of the asset shall be repaid to the NDPB.

## **Subsidy Control**

63. The EU State aid regime was effectively revoked from UK law from 1 January 2021 and subsidy control provisions are now covered by the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) and the UK's international obligations including various Free Trade Agreements and those arising as a consequence of World Trade Organisation membership. This position may be subject if the UK Government establishing its own domestic subsidies control regime: a UK wide consultation on this is set to take place in the first half of 2021. Currently any activity that the NDPB undertakes itself, or funds other bodies to undertake, that can be offered on a commercial market for goods and services is subject to the TCA subsidy rules. A full assessment is therefore required prior to disbursing any funding and would be subject to the guidance in the [subsidy regime section](#) of the SPFM.

## **Member expenses**

64. Remuneration (daily fees), allowances and expenses paid to members and any pension arrangements must comply with the SG [Pay Policy for Senior Appointments](#) and any specific guidance on such matters issued by the Scottish Ministers.

**CHILDREN’S HEARINGS SCOTLAND FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT: APPENDIX**

**SPECIFIC DELEGATED FINANCIAL AUTHORITIES**

	<b>Delegated Limit</b>
Cash Loss, but excluding overpayments of salaries, wages, pensions and allowances	£1,000 in individual circumstances, annual aggregate limit of £5,000
Cash loss arising out of theft, fraud, arson or gross carelessness; includes cash equivalents e.g. stamps	£1,000 in individual circumstances, annual aggregate limit of £5,000
Stores and equipment losses arising out of theft, fraud, arson or gross carelessness; or through events such as fire, weather or accident	£1,000 in individual circumstances, annual aggregate limit of £5,000
Compensation payment for loss or damage to personal property whilst on duty	£1,000 in individual circumstances, annual aggregate limit of £5,000
Personal injuries (employees)	Nil

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**Agenda Item 10**  
**CHS-2122-22a**

**Draft 2020/21 Annual Accounts and Management Representation Letter**

<b>Accountable Director:</b>	Head of Finance
<b>Report author:</b>	Ed Morrison, Head of Finance
<b>Recommendations:</b>	To approve: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>the 2020/21 Annual Accounts for signature by the Accountable Officer;</li><li>the Management Representation Letter for signature by the Accountable Officer.</li></ol>
<b>Resources implications:</b>	Within available resources
<b>Equalities duties:</b>	No Equalities Impact Assessment Required

**Introduction**

1. Audit Scotland has completed its external audit of CHS's 2020/21 accounts (Appendix 1), and has submitted a draft Annual Audit Report (AAR) to the Accountable Officer. The AAR, which was considered by the ARMC on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2021 along with the draft accounts, expresses unqualified opinions on the financial statements and on the regularity of transactions.

The Annual Accounts contain the following:

- The Performance Report.
- The Accountability Report.
- The Independent Auditor's Report.
- The Financial Statements.
- The notes to the Financial Statements.

**Issues arising from the audit**

2. In the year ended 31 March 2021, CHS reported an excess of Scottish Government funding over net expenditure of £0.985m (31 March 2020: a shortfall of £0.609m) with revenue grant-in-aid of £4.721m (31 March 2020: £4.839m). Excluding depreciation (£113k) and pension adjustments (£29k) CHS operated within approved 2020/21 revenue and capital budgets as set out in previous reports to the Board.

3. The General Fund has a surplus of £0.712m at 31 March 2021 (a deficit of £0.273m as at 31 March 2020). The Pension Reserve has a deficit of £1,631k as at 31 March 2021 (2020: £676k). Detailed figures and assumptions underlying the pension position can be found in notes 1.6, 1.15 and 9 to the Annual Accounts.

4. The net taxpayer deficit position does not raise going concern issues or impact on normal operations, given Scottish Government's ongoing support of CHS and the volatility and sensitivity of CHS's pension reserve deficit to changes in actuarial assumptions and other external factors.

5. Although not an issue arising from the audit CHS were advised on in August 2020 by Lothian Pension Fund that the Government announcement on the McCloud remedy consultation may have a material impact on the treatment of McCloud in 31 March 2020 accounting figures. The revised figures from the actuary show a reduction of £53k in the impact of McCloud (previously estimated figure was £80k for CHS). The accounts presented to the Board in September 2020 noted this development and the revised figure as a post-balance sheet event. The 2019/20 prior year figures have not been restated in the 2020/21 accounts.

### **Audit Scotland's Annual Audit Report (AAR)**

6. International Standards on Auditing ISA 260 requires auditors to report certain matters arising from the audit of the financial statements to "those charged with governance".

7. Audit Scotland expects to express unqualified opinions on the financial statements and on the regularity of the financial transactions reflected in the financial statements.

8. Audit Scotland are making two recommendations for 2020/21, reconciliations between key financial systems and the general ledger and the impact of Covid-19 on the Financial Strategy. Management responses were reflected in Audit Scotland's Annual Audit Report and accepted by the Audit & Risk Management Committee. The two recommendations from last year (KPI reporting format, updated 5 year Financial Plan) are complete.

### **Management Representation Letter**

9. The standard Management Representation Letter (Appendix 2) sets out the Board Members position on the key areas for consideration by the external auditor in arriving at their opinion.

### **Recommendations**

10. Committee members are asked to approve
- i. the 2020/21 Annual Accounts for submission to the CHS Board for signature by the Accountable Officer;
  - ii. the Management Representation Letter for signature by the Accountable Officer.

## Appendix 2: Letter of Representation (ISA 580)

Alasdair Craik FCCA,  
Senior Audit Manager  
Audit Scotland  
4th Floor, 102 West Port  
Edinburgh  
EH3 9DN  
Alasdair Craik FCCA

Dear Alasdair

### Children's Hearings Scotland Annual report and accounts 2020/21

1. This representation letter is provided in connection with your audit of the annual report and accounts of Children's Hearings Scotland for the year ended 31 March 2021 for the purpose of expressing an opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view in accordance with the financial reporting framework, and for expressing other opinions on the regularity of income and expenditure, remuneration and staff report, performance report and governance statement.
2. I confirm to the best of my knowledge and belief, and having made such enquiries as I considered necessary, the following representations given to you in connection with your audit of Children's Hearings Scotland's annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021.

#### General

3. I have fulfilled my responsibilities for the preparation of the 2020/21 annual report and accounts. All the accounting records, documentation and other matters which I am aware are relevant to the preparation of the annual report and accounts have been made available to you for the purposes of your audit. All transactions undertaken by Children's Hearings Scotland have been recorded in the accounting records and are properly reflected in the financial statements.
4. I confirm that the effects of uncorrected misstatements are immaterial, individually and in aggregate, to the financial statements as a whole. I am not aware of any uncorrected misstatements other than those reported by you.

#### Regularity of Expenditure and Income

5. I confirm that, in all material respects, expenditure was incurred, and income applied in accordance with applicable enactments and guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers.



## Financial Reporting Framework

6. The annual report and accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers.

7. I have ensured that the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Children's Hearings Scotland at 31 March 2021 and the transactions for 2020/21.

## Accounting Policies & Estimates

8. All significant accounting policies applied are as shown in the note included in the financial statements. The accounting policies are determined by the 2020/21 Government Financial Reporting Manual (the FReM), where applicable. Where the FReM does not specifically apply, I have used judgement in developing and applying an accounting policy that results in information that is relevant and reliable. All accounting policies applied are appropriate to Children's Hearings Scotland's circumstances and have been consistently applied.

9. The significant assumptions used in making accounting estimates are reasonable and properly reflected in the financial statements. Judgements used in making estimates have been based on the latest available, reliable information. Estimates have been revised where there are changes in the circumstances on which the original estimate was based or because of new information or experience.

## Going Concern Basis of Accounting

10. I have assessed Children's Hearings Scotland's ability to continue to use the going concern basis of accounting and have concluded that it is appropriate. I am not aware of any material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt on Children's Hearings Scotland's ability to continue as a going concern.

## Assets

11. I carried out an assessment at 31 March 2021 as to whether there is any indication that an asset may be impaired and have recognised any impairment losses identified.

12. There are no plans or intentions that are likely to affect the carrying value or classification of the assets recognised within the financial statements.

13. Owned assets are free from any lien, encumbrance or charge except as disclosed in the financial statements.

## Liabilities

14. All liabilities at 31 March 2021 of which I am aware have been recognised in the financial statements.

15. Provisions have been recognised in the financial statements for all liabilities of uncertain timing or amount at 31 March 2021 of which I am aware where the conditions specified in IAS 37 have been met. The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the expenditure likely to be required to settle the obligation at

31 March 2021. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the amount of the provision has been discounted to the present value of the expected payments.

16. Provisions recognised in previous years have been reviewed and adjusted, where appropriate, to reflect the best estimate at 31 March 2021 or to reflect material changes in the assumptions underlying the calculations of the cash flows.

17. The accrual recognised in the financial statements for holiday untaken by 31 March 2021 has been estimated on a reasonable basis.

18. There are no plans or intentions that are likely to affect the carrying value or classification of the liabilities recognised in the financial statements.

## **Fraud**

19. I have provided you with all information in relation to:

- my assessment of the risk that the financial statements may be materially misstated as a result of fraud
- any allegations of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the financial statements
- fraud or suspected fraud that I am aware of involving management, employees who have a significant role in internal control, or others that could have a material effect on the financial statements.

## **Laws and Regulations**

20. I have disclosed to you all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose effects should be considered when preparing financial statements.

## **Related Party Transactions**

21. All material transactions with related parties have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in the financial statements in accordance with IAS 24 as interpreted by the FReM. I have made available to you the identity of all the Children's Hearing Scotland's related parties and all the related party relationships and transactions of which I am aware.

## **Remuneration and Staff Report**

22. The Remuneration and Staff Report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the FReM to the extent they apply in Scotland and all required information of which I am aware has been provided to you.

## **Performance report**

23. I confirm that the Performance Report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the FReM to the extent they apply in Scotland and the information is consistent with the financial statements.

## **Corporate Governance**

24. I have fulfilled my responsibilities for Children's Hearings Scotland's corporate governance arrangements. I have disclosed to you all deficiencies in internal control identified from this review or of which I am otherwise aware.

25. I confirm that the Governance Statement has been prepared in accordance with the Scottish Public Finance Manual and the information is consistent with the financial statements. There have been no changes in the corporate governance arrangements or issues identified since 31 March 2021 which require to be reflected.

## **Events Subsequent to the Date of the Statement of Financial Position**

26. All events subsequent to 31 March 2021 for which IAS 10 as interpreted by the FReM requires adjustment or disclosure have been adjusted or disclosed.

Yours sincerely

Accountable Officer

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# Annual Report and Accounts 2020 - 21

## **Introduction:** From Our National Convener / Chief Executive

When we set our plans for 2020-21, the true scale and impact of COVID-19 was only beginning to emerge. Changes to how we were working and how children's hearings operated were made rapidly at the very end of the previous financial year but the longer-term nature of these became increasingly clear as the first half of the year progressed. We, along with the partner agencies within the children's hearing system, were required to reimagine the fundamental functioning, and legal framework, of hearings. What followed has been months of testing and improvements to that initial offer through engagement with stakeholder organisations, volunteers and professionals involved in the hearings system, and children and young people.

As has been often noted, this year of considerable challenge and loss has also generated many gains. We have established new relationships and strengthened existing ones; we have adopted new working practices that will become part of our future; and we are an organisation that is now better prepared to adapt to, and lead, change.

For CHS, it was also the first year of our new corporate plan, *Our Strategic Outlook 2020-23*. We set an ambitious work plan aligned to our four Strategic Themes that we believed helped us to deliver on our organisational purpose: to equip our volunteer community to engage positively with infants, children, young people and families, ensures children are loved, cared for, respected and feel part of decisions taken to improve their lives. And there have been some significant successes in realising the goals of our corporate plan: our first Children's Rights and Inclusion Strategy was published and we prepared our first 'Progressing Rights' report; new training was launched covering Permanence and Child Development; a new volunteer wellbeing package was rolled out; we ran a series of 'Connecting our Community' events to bring together staff and volunteers to discuss topical issues; we ran our largest ever recruitment campaign virtually, and in the new year rather than during the summer and we continued to engage with the Independent Care Review as the Promise Scotland team was created, signalling clearly our readiness and appetite to be involved in early structural change within Scotland's care system.

But responding to COVID-19 has inevitably placed a strain on the organisation, our people, and what we have been able to achieve towards our overarching strategic ambitions. We have been careful throughout the year to respond to the personal and professional capacity of our teams and we have kept our activities and expectations under frequent review. As a result, we have, through a process of Board approval, made changes to our plans to ensure that resources are sensibly and responsibly used and to safeguard the wellbeing of our people as best we can.

Throughout the unprecedented year that 2020/21 was, our focus has always been to ensure that Panel Members continue to make high-quality decisions that put the child's best interest at their heart, in a rapidly changing legal context. I am overwhelmed by the commitment and immensely grateful to the volunteer community and our staff who have worked tirelessly to enable that to happen.



- Elliot Jackson

## **Who We Are and What We Do:** Our Purpose, Activities, Structure and Values

The children's hearings system was established as Scotland's unique care and justice system for children and young people over 50 years ago. It exists to ensure the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people through a decision making lay tribunal called a children's hearing. Each hearing is made up of 3 members of the national Children's Panel which is comprised of specially trained volunteers drawn from local communities.

The Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 – commenced in June 2013 – introduced a single national Children's Panel where volunteer Panel Members receive accredited national training which enables them to make the best possible decisions for children and young people in the children's hearing system. The Act created the role of the National Convener to lead this work. Currently, the National Convener also acts as the Chief Executive of CHS. The Act strengthened hearings by ensuring Panel Members have local and national support and advice on best practice through the National Convener – supported by one organisation – Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS), which was formed in 2011 and assumed its full responsibilities in 2013.

We are one of a number of organisations who work within the children's hearings system, including the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA), local authorities, health, and Police Scotland. Our activities within this are focussed on recruiting, training and supporting the volunteer Panel Members.

**Our Vision** is of a forward looking and evolving children's hearings system, working as a community to ensure infants, children and young people are cared for, protected and their views are heard, respected and valued.

**Our Purpose** is to equip our volunteer community to engage positively with infants, children, young people and families; ensuring children are loved, cared for, respected and feel part of decisions taken to improve their lives.

CHS engages around 2,500 volunteer Panel Members in the children's hearings system, who are appointed for 3 year terms – there is no limit on multiple terms of appointment. The Panel Members are supported locally by an additional 400 volunteers as part of 22 Area Support Teams (ASTs) covering all 32 local authority areas. Each AST is led by a volunteer Area Convener.

CHS employs around 40 staff as part of our 'National Team', led by the National Convener/Chief Executive. CHS is governed by a Board of non-executive members, which meets formally at least four times a year to set and monitor the strategic direction of the organisation. CHS is financed by grant-in-aid from the Scottish Government as approved by the Scottish Parliament. The grant-in-aid value for 2020/21 was £5.27m.

**Our Values:**

- **Child centred** – making sure everything we do is in the best interests of children and young people.
- **Respectful** – treating children, young people, their families, partners and each other with care and consideration.
- **Fair** – making sure that everyone is treated with dignity and according to their individual needs; that our information and services are accessible to all; that we provide a consistent level of service to all.
- **Creative** – considering innovative and imaginative ways of approaching the issues we face in the work we do.
- **Challenging** – not being complacent, but questioning ourselves and others to help us improve.
- **Open** – listening, responding to, and learning from, feedback; acting honestly; ensuring processes are transparent; sharing information and being accountable for our actions and decisions.

**What We Want to Achieve: Our Strategic Themes and Business Objectives**

This was the first year of CHS's new corporate plan, *Our Strategic Outlook 2020-23*.<sup>1</sup> In this plan, we set four strategic themes to guide our work:

**Theme 1: Better protect and uphold the rights of children:**

Rights-based working is built in to Scotland's children's hearings system. Decisions are required to be made in the best interests of the child and it gives children and young people the right to have a say in decisions about them. But we recognise that we have a responsibility to integrate the obligations of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in to our work and this will form a major strand of our effort over the coming years.

**Theme 2: Deliver consistently high-quality hearings:**

We want the hearings experience to be the best it can be and produce sound decisions which move infants, children, young people and their families forward, positively, in their journey. We want children's hearings to be seen as an exemplar of empathetic, loving and respectful practice that promote dignity and avoid stigma.

**Theme 3: Continue to build an effective and empathetic panel, that is well-supported:**

Central to the quality of hearings is Scotland's Children's Panel. They must be knowledgeable and skilled to undertake their role and understand the range of experiences that infants, children and young people may have and the impact of those experiences. To do this, the Children's Panel must be supported with not only the technical aspect of their role, but also the personal effect of making significant decisions.

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<sup>1</sup> [CHS Corporate Plan 2020-23 \(chscotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.chscotland.gov.uk)



**Theme 4: Be well-informed and influential in our environment and communities:**

Over the coming years, we want to develop not only hearings, but also how we deliver our work and how we operate within the wider system and sector. We will look to evidence – from data, research, but also from what we are told by people with experience of hearings - to under-pin our decision making and adopt structured approaches to pilots and innovations. We will also look for opportunities to lead change within the care system and engage actively with our partners.

From these Strategic Themes, we produce an annual Business & Corporate Parenting Plan that establishes our key Business Objectives for the year.

**What Concerns Us: Our Key Issues and Risks**

The CHS Board monitors the strategic risks that have the potential to impact significantly on CHS' performance, fulfilment of statutory duties, and future prospects and developments. In 2020-21, these risks were:

1. Impact of COVID-19 on CHS activity impacts the ability to spend out on 2020/21 financial settlement and results in loss of investment to enable this in the future. After controls, this was LOW RISK.
2. Removal from the Lothian Pension Fund stability mechanism creating budget uncertainty and pressures which divert funds from strategic delivery. After controls, including making a supplementary payment to Lothian Pension Fund (see note 9 of the Financial Statements on page 50), this was LOW RISK.
3. CHS fails to meet its obligations to realise its duties under the United National Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). After controls, this was LOW RISK.
4. CHS fails to contribute to positive outcomes for babies, infants, children, young people and families due to poor quality hearings and hearings decisions. After controls, this was LOW RISK.
5. CHS fails to contribute to positive outcomes for children and young-people due to not maintaining an informed, trauma-sensitive, sustainable, resilient and motivated volunteer community. After controls, this was LOW RISK.
6. CHS fails to have an influential voice in sector policy and practice. After controls, this was LOW RISK.
7. CHS's and the hearings system's credibility is damaged because we fail to deliver and improve our functions in a data and evidence driven manner. After control, this was LOW RISK.
8. System failure due to poor cyber resilience. After controls, this was LOW RISK.



9. Business Improvements and the CHS volunteer experience is not improved as new digital systems do not meet business/user needs or there is low uptake of systems developed. After controls, this was LOW RISK.
10. Impact of COVID-19 on CHS reputation and operations, including disengagement of volunteers or inability to recruit volunteers. After controls, this was MEDIUM RISK.

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## What We Did and Achieved in 2020-21: Performance Analysis and Key Activities

### Performance Summary

In order to monitor organisational performance and the delivery of our Corporate and Business Plans, we tracked the delivery of 36 Business Objectives through the year. These Objectives were broken down into 76 milestones. Progress on the milestones and Objectives were reported to the CHS Board and Senior Management Team on a quarterly basis. As in-year performance and delivery is reviewed, Board approval is sometimes sought to remove milestones or Objectives from CHS' planned delivery for the year. This may be due to internal or external factors. This process of 'de-scoping' is documented in the quarterly performance reports and reflected in the 'RAG' status of Objectives, as detailed below. This year, the quarterly performance reports also included a log of COVID-response activities undertaken by the organisation.

A summary of our performance is provided in the table below, with Business Objectives categorised as 'Green' for completed, 'Amber' for some progress made (between 50% and 99% of the Objective) or the Objective was partially de-scoped during the year, 'Red' for little significant progress made towards completion (below 50% of the Objective) or Objective fully de-scoped during the year:

Strategic Theme	Number of Business Objective in category	Number of 'Red' Objectives due to de-scoping
Theme 1: Better protect and uphold the rights of children	Green	2
	Amber	2
	Red	0
Theme 2: Deliver consistently high quality hearings	Green	1
	Amber	4
	Red	2
Theme 3: Continue to build an effective and empathetic panel, that is well-supported	Green	10
	Amber	4
	Red	1
Theme 4: Be well-informed and influential in our environment and communities	Green	7
	Amber	0
	Red	1
<b>TOTALS</b>	Green	<b>20</b>
	Amber	<b>10</b>
	Red	<b>3</b>

**Business Activity Exception Report**

Below, those activities that are not marked 'Green' above are detailed:

Theme	Business Objective	Status at Year End	Comment
1	Provision of a new children's rights course	Amber	Planning and external engagement for this course took place, but COVID response meant training capacity was directed elsewhere. Development of this training has been carried forward to 2021/22.
1	Implementation of National Advocacy Model in hearings	Amber	Training and guidance launched as planned. Due to legislation coming in to force later than expected, any evaluation was delayed from this year.
2	Implementing a new Code of Conduct across the volunteer community	Red	Drafting and development took place, but work was put on hold due to the impact of COVID, and to enable wider review and engagement in the future.
2	Launching new operational processes for managing independent reports	Amber	Significant progress was made with this objective. The development of a new quality management framework is anticipated to take place in 2021/22.
2	Aligning and assessing CHS standards and competencies	Red	This was de-scoped in Q2, due to the impact of COVID response on capacity. This will be progressed as the Promise Scotland's work develops.
2	Carry out a review exercise of the quality of written decisions	Amber	Framework was put in place and tested, but full roll-out was de-scoped due to impact of COVID response on capacity.
2	Progress a new public complaints process	Amber	The new process was completed, approved by the SPSO and published at the end of the year. The dissemination and training was not completed in year and has been carried forward in to 2021/22.
2	Develop quality assurance processes through our Panel Practice Advisors	Amber	A pilot ran in two ASTs to trial the new digital observation framework. National PPA involvement in hearings was limited due to limitations on participant connections in hearings.
2	Participate in local projects to improve the quality of hearings experiences	Red	This objective was descoped as the projects identified require in-person hearings in hearings centres, the number of which were highly limited due to COVID restrictions.
3	Creation of new online training modules	Amber	4 new modules were launched, but new Information Governance course was still in scoping phase at year end. Completion targets were met for 2 courses (Information

			Governance and Advocacy) but missed for one course (Permanence).
3	Run a programme of engagement events across our volunteer community	Amber	8 events were held successfully involving all ASTs. Due to ongoing COVID recovery requirements, starting a second set of events did not happen before the year end.
3	Develop a trauma-sensitive plan for CHS	Amber	Discussions with external advisory agencies took place, and some initial training. Trauma-sensitive work will continue in following years.
3	Publish a new Equality, Diversity & Inclusion strategy	Amber	Good progress was made on this, although final refinement and development will be undertaken in 2021/22.
3	Carry out a review of our recruitment & reappointment policies	Red	De-scoped in Q2 in response to limitations on capacity due to COVID.
4	Improve data and management information from the new digital system	Red	Staff received training on new software, and some initial data was made available. COVID digital priorities impacted further progress. This work has been carried forward to 2021/22.
4	Use the views of specialists to create learning events for volunteers	Red	De-scoped in Q2 in response to limitations on training capacity due to COVID response and recovery.

### Key Activities and Achievements

Below we outline the key activities we undertook towards the delivery of our 2020/21 Business Objectives. Descriptions of all of our identified Objectives can be found in our 2020/21 Business and Corporate Parenting Plan.<sup>2</sup>

#### COVID-19 Response:

- With our partners, established new virtual ways of delivering hearings.
- Developed new training for Panel Members focussed on 'Hearings in Lockdown'.
- Issued practice guidance through a new 'Coronavirus Practice Guide'.
- Moved the completion of new Panel Member training online.
- Worked with the Scottish Government and core partners on the development of the Coronavirus (Scotland) Acts, and provided subsequent bi-monthly contributions to monitoring reports for the Scottish Parliament.
- Established an internal CHS Resilience Group and introduced a weekly meeting with our Area Conveners.
- Participated in a range of new strategic forums (including shared leadership of the Children's Hearings COVID Recovery Group) and groups within children's services and the hearings system.
- Provision of equipment to volunteers to enable them to take part in virtual hearings.

<sup>2</sup> [CHS Business & Corporate Parenting Plan 2020-21 \(chscotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.chscotland.gov.uk)

Theme 1: Better Protect and Uphold the Rights of Children:

- Produced our first 'Progressing Rights' report.<sup>3</sup>
- Published our Children's Rights & Inclusion Strategy.<sup>4</sup>
- Worked to implement the national Advocacy scheme throughout hearings, including providing training to Panel Members.

Theme 2: Deliver Consistently High-Quality Hearings:

- Recruited new independent report writers to support hearings with specialist assessments and issued new guidance to Panel Members on requesting reports.
- Issued new practice guidance through our online Practice & Procedure Manual on topics such as advocacy services, non-disclosure, deferring decisions, grounds for referral, and child protection responsibilities.
- Finalised a new public complaints process.

Theme 3: Continue to Build an Effective and Empathetic Panel, that is Well-Supported:

- Launched new training modules on Permanence and Child Development.
- Ran our largest ever Panel Member recruitment campaign – over 560 new panel members – which has delivered entirely online and at a different time of year than normal.
- Ran 8 online volunteer engagement events, covering all 22 ASTs across Scotland.
- Launched a new volunteer wellbeing package, including access to an external health and wellbeing provider, and subsidised flu vaccinations.

Theme 4: Be Well-Informed and Influential in our Environment and Communities:

- Engaged with The Promise Scotland through a bespoke organisational session and submission of a response to their consultation exercise.
- Helped researchers recruit volunteers in to 6 research projects.
- Ran a 2-day improvement event for our staff and Area Conveners to improve our skills and capacity to undertake and lead improvement.
- Launched a new corporate website, including a section for children and young people.

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<sup>3</sup> [Progressing Rights at Children's Hearings Scotland 2017 - 2020 \(chscotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.chscotland.gov.uk)

<sup>4</sup> [Children's Rights and Inclusion Strategy \(chscotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.chscotland.gov.uk)

### Key Performance Indicators

The table below presents the results of our Key Performance Indicators. An asterisks (\*) indicates that the KPI has a note below.

	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	20/21 Target	20/21 Result	Past Performance
1	% Panel Members who have completed Children's Rights online module	30%	n/a*	New measure
2	Training courses with partner organisation input	5/5	4/4*	New measure
3	% complaints resolved within SPSO guidelines	100%	99%*	2017/18: 100% 2018/19: 92% 2019/20: 100%
4	% employee attendance	96%	98.9%	2017/18: 96% 2018/19: 95% 2019/20: 93%
5	% invoices not in dispute paid within 10 working days	90%	88%*	2017/18: 80% 2018/19: 92% 2019/20: 85%
6	% IT helpdesk calls resolved within SLA terms	90%	n/a*	2017/18: 90% 2018/19: 90%
7	% pre-service trainees who felt that their learning objectives were met	95%	n/a*	2019/20: 95%
8	% positive staff survey feedback on opportunities for learning and development	55%	65%	2018/19: 33% 2019/20: 52%

#### Notes and Comments on KPIs:

It was anticipated that during the first half of 2020/21, CHS would set additional KPIs linked to our strategic themes during a staff and volunteer engagement event. Due to COVID, this could not take place and so, these KPIs were not set.

Key measures related to COVID were monitored, including Panel capacity, use of emergency legislation and hearings activities, but these were reported to the Board via COVID-specific papers rather than in KPI reporting in the quarterly performance reports. Many of these measures were, in partnership with Scottish Children's Reporters Administration, published in bi-monthly reports on the Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership (CHIP) website.<sup>5</sup>

Regarding the specific KPIs above:

1. This course was not launched during 2020/21, so it was not possible to report on completion rates.

<sup>5</sup> [Coronavirus – Children's Hearings data | Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership \(chip-partnership.co.uk\)](https://www.chip-partnership.co.uk)

2. The Information Governance course did not launch during the year. The other courses developed did involve partner agencies, however.
3. Target missed by 1% due to disruption caused by COVID-19 pressures.
5. Availability of some invoices was impacted by some invoices being sent by post to the CHS, access to which was not initially possible during lockdown.
6. Early in 2020/21, CHS's IT support arrangements changed, with an increase to internal assistance. The SLA referred to in this measure is therefore no longer applied.
7. Due to altered recruitment timelines, pre-service training began in April 2021. Feedback was therefore not available for reporting within 2020/21.

The KPIs which were monitored last year, but do not feature this year are detailed below, with the reason for not appearing this year. The bracketed numbers below refer to the numbering in the 2019-20 Annual Report and Accounts:

- (2), (8), (14) and (16) - Community Survey results – CHS' community survey does not run every year, and was not planned for 2020/21, meaning measurement was not possible.
- (3) - Feedback on digital system – it was intended that a Benefits Realisation exercise would be undertaken in 2020/21 and that new specific measures would be developed for digital.
- (4) and (5) - Recruitment targets – new volunteer community measures were to be developed as part of KPI work under Strategic Theme 3. A range of measures were monitored during recruitment, including % male applicants, which were reported to the CHS Board.
- (6) - Volunteer posts filled within 4 months – this measure no longer reflects how volunteers are recruited, which is now not time-limited in the same way, and is therefore no longer relevant.
- (7) - ASTs including young people in recruitment – this was monitored and reported the CHS Board as part of recruitment updates, rather than in the KPIs.
- (9), (10), (11), (12), (13) and (15) - Training completion – assessment of training KPIs was to take place as part of Theme 3 KPI development, which was disrupted by COVID. A range of measures around training performance are monitored routinely as part of normal operations.
- (18) - Information requests within statutory timescales – data on information requests handled is reported quarterly to the CHS Audit & Risk Management Committee.

## National Convener Functions

The National Convener carried out the following statutory duties set out in the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011:

- We received 181 requests for panel member continuity. 86% of these were met. Requests for continuity may not be met for a number of reasons. For example, the request may not have been authorised, the hearing to which continuity was to apply may not have taken place, or no Panel Member was available to enable continuity.

- We received and responded to 95 requests for written advice about any matter arising in connection with the functions conferred on children's hearings under section 8 of the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011.
- 0 requests to serve notice on the implementation authority of their failure to implement the terms of a Compulsory Supervision Order was made under section 146 and 147 of the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011.
- 2 applications were made to the Lord President of the Court of Sessions to remove a panel member under para 1(6) of Schedule 2 of the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011.
- 0 referrals were received about excluded pupils under section 127 of the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011.

In addition, Children's Hearings Scotland received 12 requests for independent reports. 11 requests were facilitated.

## **Environmental Impact and Biodiversity Actions**

CHS is committed to meeting the Public Bodies duties set out the Part 4 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. CHS does not have a property footprint beyond its Head Office, which, for the duration of the reporting year, was in Thistle House, Haymarket, Edinburgh. Office space in Thistle House has been rented by CHS from the Scottish Legal Aid Board (SLAB) from April 2019 and we occupy 8.5% of the building. While COVID-19 restrictions have been in place, CHS staff have been working from home, with only very occasional access to Thistle House by a small number of people under Government guidance.

In our 2019-20 Annual Report, we committed to using data made available to us from the Scottish Legal Aid Board (SLAB) to report on our environmental impact associated with premises. Owing to COVID restrictions and limitations, SLAB did not complete its 2019/20 environmental return as anticipated, meaning that we are unable to report our full impact here.



We are, however, able to report on our impact associated with Head Office (Ladywell House in 2018-19 and Thistle House from April 2019) gas and electricity use<sup>6</sup>:

	2020/21 (Thistle)		2019/20 (Thistle)		2018/19 (Ladywell)	
	Gas	Elec	Gas	Elec	Gas	Elec
<b>Usage (kwh)</b>	30,127	22,487.5	39,789	39,067.5	27,542.9	30,025.7
<b>Emission Factor (kgCO<sub>2</sub>/kwh)<sup>7</sup></b>	0.18387	0.25319	0.18385	0.2773	0.18396	0.3072
<b>Carbon Footprint (kgCO<sub>2</sub>e)</b> (usage*emission factor)	5,539.5	5,693.5	7,315.2	10,833.4	5,066.8	9,223.9
<b>Total Carbon Footprint (kgCO<sub>2</sub>e)</b>	<b>11,233.0</b>		<b>18,148.6</b>		<b>14,290.7</b>	

Our impact associated with business mileage is given below:

	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
<b>Total Travel Distance (miles)</b>	1,002	55,743	23,303
<b>Emission Factor (kgCO<sub>2</sub>/mile)<sup>8</sup></b>	0.28052	0.29103	0.29561
<b>Carbon Footprint (kgCO<sub>2</sub>e)</b> (travel distance*emission factor)	<b>281.1</b>	<b>16,222.9</b>	<b>6,888.6</b>

CHS's carbon footprint due to travel reduced considerably between 2019/20 and 2020/19. This was due to COVID-19 restrictions limiting travel and staff therefore working from home.

In December, CHS published its second Biodiversity Report, under Section 1 of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, covering 2018-2020.<sup>9</sup> In September, CHS promoted ClimateWeek2020 amongst its staff and opportunities were made available for staff to attend webinars on sustainable approaches.

Opportunities to promote biodiversity are kept under review, but these are restricted due to the limited property footprint with no outside space which could be effectively adapted to promote biodiversity. We will continue to assess the long-term impact and sustainability of home-working arrangements for the organisation.

<sup>6</sup> 8.5% of the total gas and electricity use of Thistle House.

<sup>7</sup> Emission Factors are taken from UK Government GHG Conversion Factors of Company Reporting for the relevant year. These Emission Factors have been applied retrospectively for previous years, changing some of the values reported in previous Annual Reports, which were generated using figures in the 2018 Carbon Footprint Register Tool. For Electricity, this includes the generation and 'transmission & distribution' factors.

<sup>8</sup> Emission Factor for 'average sized petrol car' is used here.

<sup>9</sup> [CHS Biodiversity Duty Report 2018 - 2020 \(chscotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.chscotland.gov.uk)

## How We Allocated Our Resources in 2020-21: Our Financial Performance

In the year ended 31 March 2021, CHS reported an excess of Scottish Government funding over net expenditure of £0.985m (31 March 2020: an excess of net expenditure over Scottish Government funding of £0.609m) with revenue grant-in-aid of £4.721m (31 March 2020: £4.839m). The General Fund has a surplus of £0.712m at 31 March 2021 (a deficit of £0.273m as at 31 March 2020).

Capital grant-in-aid was £550k which funded a significant programme of investment in technology for Panel Members and Panel Practice Advisors.

In accordance with *International Accounting Standard 19 (revised) 'Employee Benefits'*, the financial statements reflect at fair value the assets and liabilities arising from CHS' retirement benefit obligations. As a result, CHS has a deficit of £1.631m on its pension reserve at 31 March 2021 (£0.676m at 31 March 2020). Further details of pension liabilities are provided in the Remuneration Report and the Notes to the Financial Statements.

The Board of CHS has no reason to believe that the Scottish Government's future sponsorship and future Ministerial approval will not be forthcoming or will only provide a reduced support to CHS. Given the above it is considered appropriate to adopt a going concern basis for the preparation of these financial statements. This is in line with the underlying assumption in the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FRoM) that Government accounts are prepared on a going concern basis.

In line with Scottish Government guidance, CHS' policy is to pay all invoices, not in dispute, within the lesser of 10 working days and the agreed contractual terms. During the year ended 31 March 2021, CHS paid 88% (31 March 2020: 85%) of invoices within the terms of its payment policy.

CHS Senior Management Team and Board have taken steps to ensure CHS has policies in place to guard against corruption and bribery, including CHS' procurement policy, Financial Regulations and Fraud and Corruption Policy.

## Equalities, Social Responsibility and Human Rights

CHS has continued to make steady progress towards achieving equality ambitions over the past year. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) working group formed in December 2019 consisting of members from the national team, and representation from our Area Convener group has continued to meet and to expand upon their work.

CHS published its second Gender Pay Gap report in March 2020<sup>10</sup>. Since the last report the staff headcount had increased by 51% with females making up 79.5% of the staff headcount and accounting for 75% of our senior management team. When using the mean average to

<sup>10</sup> [CHS Gender Pay Gap and Equal Pay Report 2020 \(chscotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.chscotland.gov.uk/gender-pay-gap-report-2020)

calculate, our overall pay gap between male and female salaries is now 1.8% (in favour of men), compared with 23% two years ago. CHS next reports on this in 2022.

CHS continue to work to the equality outcomes set for 2020 – 2022 as developed by CHS' EDI working group in conjunction with members from the national team and representatives from our volunteer community and published in July 2020.<sup>11</sup>

CHS published its Equality Outcomes 2020 – 2022 Progress Report in May 2021<sup>12</sup>. A detailed update on how each outcome had been progressed during this time was presented to the Senior Management Team and to the CHS Board in advance of publication. Detailed within the progress report was an annual breakdown of equality monitoring for CHS staff and from all the staff recruitment campaigns covering the two year period 2020 – 2021.

They present a blend of equality ambitions that focus on both our employee group and our volunteer community. They also follow the established principle of being proportionate to an organisation of CHS' size and are therefore achievable, having staggered deadlines within which to achieve the outcomes by April 2022.

The ED&I working group have developed a draft over-arching Equality Strategy for CHS and are supported in this work by people with lived experience. The draft strategy encapsulates the ambitions that CHS has to create, promote and celebrate an equal, diverse and inclusive culture within the CHS community through a process of continual engagement, communication, training and development. The end goal of this work is to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion underpins positive outcomes for children, young people and their families.

CHS' central purpose is to ensure that children in Scotland who come to hearings have decisions made that ensure they are loved, cared for, and respected. CHS aims to contribute to social progress within Scotland through the delivery of activities to the National Performance Framework for Scotland. Specifically, we undertake work that aligns with those outcomes focussed on (1) ensuring children and young people can realise their full potential (2) respecting and protecting children's rights (3) living in empowered, inclusive safe and resilient communities (4) creating a well-educated and skilled society (5) tackling poverty by sharing opportunities. Fuller exploration of these are available on page 16 our Corporate Plan.<sup>13</sup>

This year, we significantly progressed our children's rights work through the publication of our Children's Rights & Inclusion Strategy in November 2020<sup>14</sup>, the recruitment of a Children's Rights & Inclusion Strategy, and the publication of our Progressing Rights Report, which details work undertaken 2017-2020 and lays out plans for the future<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> [CHS Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes 2020-22 \(chscotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.chscotland.gov.uk/equality-mainstreaming-and-outcomes-2020-22)

<sup>12</sup> [CHS Equality Outcomes Progress Report 2020-22 \(chscotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.chscotland.gov.uk/equality-outcomes-progress-report-2020-22)

<sup>13</sup> [CHS Corporate Plan 2020-23 \(chscotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.chscotland.gov.uk/corporate-plan-2020-23)

<sup>14</sup> [Children's Rights and Inclusion Strategy \(chscotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.chscotland.gov.uk/childrens-rights-and-inclusion-strategy)

<sup>15</sup> [Progressing Rights at Children's Hearings Scotland 2017 - 2020 \(chscotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.chscotland.gov.uk/progressing-rights-at-childrens-hearings-scotland-2017-2020)

## What We'll Do Next Year

It is anticipated that a degree of the uncertainty seen this year will continue throughout 2021/22. We have therefore identified four priorities for the coming year, from which our major Objectives have been derived. These priorities are:

- **COVID-19 recovery** – continuing to ensure children and young people are receiving the best possible hearings and decisions in ways that safe and responsible. We must make sure our volunteer community is supported to deliver on this.
- **Implementing legislative change** – we will see important legislative change on the rights of children and their brothers and sisters, and we must be ready to embrace this.
- **Establishing our 'Promise Programme'** – delivering on The Promise, we will work at both a local and national level, to implement lasting change that will improve the experiences of children, young people and their families attending hearings. We will spend this year laying the ground work for its development, including making improvements in strategy, policy and practice that arise out of implementation of legislation.
- **Embedding our digital platform** – with our new digital system now in place, we will focus on making sure it is delivering exactly what and how we need it to.

Elliot Jackson  
Accountable Officer  
21 September 2021

## Accountability Report

### Corporate Governance Report

### Directors' Report

Board members in 2020/21	Original appointment	End of appointment
Garry Coutts (chair)	8 April 2014	07 April 2022
John Anderson	11 March 2013	30 June 2021
Beth-Anne Logan	1 July 2017	30 June 2023
Henry Robson	1 March 2017	28 February 2025
Barbara Neil	1 February 2019	31 January 2025
Jo Derrick	1 February 2019	31 January 2023

All Board members have fixed term contracts and of the above three are female and three are male.

Board members are appointed by the Scottish Ministers on the basis of having knowledge or experience relevant to the general purpose and specific requirements of CHS or to the functions of the National Convener/Chief Executive.

#### Audit

The Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000 places personal responsibility on the Auditor General for Scotland to decide who is to undertake the audit of each central government body in Scotland. For the financial years 2016/17 to 2020/21 the Auditor General appointed Audit Scotland to undertake the audit of CHS. The appointment was extended to cover the 2021/22 financial year as a result of the COVID 19 public health crisis. The general duties of the auditors of central government bodies, including their statutory duties, are set out in the Code of Audit Practice issued by Audit Scotland and approved by the Auditor General.

#### Register of Interests

A Register of Interests for Board members and senior staff can be accessed on our website at <http://www.chscotland.gov.uk/about-chs/our-people/the-chs-board/meet-the-chs-board/> or by contacting the Business Support Lead.

#### Statement of disclosure of Information to Auditors

So far as the Directors are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware. Additionally, the Directors have taken all the necessary steps that they ought to have taken as Directors in order to make themselves aware of all relevant audit information and to establish that the organisation's auditors are aware of that information.

"Relevant audit information" means information needed by the organisation's auditors in connection with preparing their report.

### Statement of Accountable Officer's Responsibilities

Under section 21(1) of the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011, the Scottish Ministers have directed CHS to prepare for each financial year a statement of accounts in the form and on the basis set out in the Accounts Direction.

The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of CHS and of its net resource outturn, application of resources, changes in taxpayers' equity and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, the Accountable Officer is required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) and in particular to:

- observe the Accounts Direction issued by the Scottish Ministers, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis
- state whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the FReM have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements, and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis.

Under section 15 of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000, the Accountable Officer of the Scottish Government Directorate with responsibility for sponsorship of CHS designated the National Convener/Chief Executive of CHS as the Accountable Officer for the organisation. The responsibilities of an Accountable Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accountable Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding the organisation's assets, are set out in Managing Public Money by the HM Treasury.

As Accountable Officer, I confirm that:

- as far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware, and I have taken all the steps that I feel I ought to have taken to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.
- the annual report and accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and that I take personal responsibility for the annual report and accounts and the judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.

## Governance Statement

### Scope of Responsibility

As Accountable Officer, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of CHS' policies, aims and objectives, as set by Scottish Ministers, whilst safeguarding the public funds and assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me in the Memorandum to Accountable Officers for Other Public Bodies.

### Governance framework

CHS' governance framework accords with generally accepted best practice principles and guidance from Scottish Ministers in the Scottish Public Finance Manual and has been in place for the financial year ended 31 March 2021 and up to the date of the approval of the annual report and accounts. The impact of the pandemic throughout 2020/21 has not led to any relaxation of key aspects of the governance framework, and statutory duties continued to be fulfilled, albeit in the context of applying the full range of options in CHS' Business Continuity Plan and the Scottish Government's initial Covid19 guidance for public bodies.

CHS has a Board which meets at least every two months to consider the overall strategic direction of CHS within the policy, planning and resources framework determined by the Scottish Ministers. The Board seeks assurance that corporate objectives are being progressed through the delivery of agreed targets in the business plans and corporate plan on performance, implementation of strategic projects, effective use of resources and management of strategic risks.

The Board Committee structure comprises a Remuneration and Appointments Committee (RAC) and an Audit and Risk Management Committee (ARMC). Each Committee has developed its terms of reference which are documented, approved and reviewed on a regular basis.

The Remuneration and Appointments Committee meets as required (in this year it met three times) and reviews the arrangements for:

- the performance appraisal process for the Chief Executive, Directors and CHS staff
- the recruitment and remuneration of all CHS employees.

In 2020/21 the Committee also considered results from a number of staff surveys, Staff Forum progress, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy and Fair Work First.

The Chair of the Remuneration and Appointments Committee briefs the Board following each meeting and the latter receives an annual report on the performance of the Committee.



The Audit and Risk Management Committee meets quarterly and reviews the adequacy of the arrangements for ensuring sound internal control arrangements and provides the Board and Accountable Officer with advice and assurance with regard to the arrangements for:

- financial control and reporting
- risk management
- Information Governance
- legal and regulatory compliance
- Digital Programme

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Management Committee briefs the Board following each meeting and the Board receives an annual report on the performance of the Committee.

CHS has an internal audit service provided under contract by BDO, which operates to standards defined in the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. During 2020/21, Internal Audit undertook reviews of Budget Setting & Monitoring and Resilience & Board Effectiveness as well as providing support on risk management and reviewing progress against outstanding audit actions. The Committee scrutinises all internal audit reports and the actions taken by managers in response to audit recommendations.

In the auditor's opinion, The risk management activities and controls in the areas which they examined were found to be suitably designed to achieve the specific risk management, control and governance arrangements. Based on their verification reviews and sample testing, the risk management, control and governance arrangements were operating with sufficient effectiveness to provide reasonable, but not absolute assurance that the related risk management, control and governance objectives were achieved for the period under review.

#### Operation of the Board

The Board met five times during 2020/21, held five Board development sessions and one Strategy session.

Key issues for the Board in 2020/21 included:

- Agreeing five-year Financial Plan
- Approving quarterly performance reports
- Scrutiny of ongoing progress with Digital Programme
- Approving the Budget for 2021/22
- Approving the Business and Corporate Parenting Plans for 2021/22
- Approving the Annual Accounts and Impact Report
- Reviewing Learning Academy progress and Learning & Development Strategy
- Volunteer Recruitment
- Business Case for purchase of devices
- Equalities
- Children's Rights & Inclusion Strategy
- UNCRC



- OHOV Calls to Action
- Resilience & Recovery
- Complaints Handling
- Pensions
- Approving the accounting policies to be used for the preparation of CHS' statement of accounts for 2020/21

Strategic and operational finance support and human resources are provided through a shared services arrangement with SCRA and CHS has a dedicated HR/OD Lead. The Head of Finance & Resources and the Head of Human Resources of SCRA attend and provide strategic finance and human resources advice to the CHS Board and Committee meetings and other meetings as appropriate.

#### Assessment of corporate governance arrangements

As Accountable Officer, I have reviewed the effectiveness of corporate governance arrangements. My review is informed by:

- the executive managers within CHS who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework, including the organisation's Senior Information Risk Officer
- the work of the internal auditors who submit to the Audit and Risk Management Committee
- regular reports which include the Head of Internal Audit's independent and objective opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of CHS' system of internal control together with any recommendations for improvement
- comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports

The following internal control systems are assessed annually as part of the Scottish Government Certificates of Assurance process which must be completed by the National Convener. This process has been completed for 2020/21 and no major control gaps were identified.

- Risk Management
- Business Planning
- Major Investment
- Project Management
- Financial Management
- Fraud
- Procurement
- Human Resources
- Equality and Diversity
- Information
- Health & Safety
- Compliance

### Key issues and risks

A framework for identifying, measuring, controlling and monitoring strategic risks has been in place throughout the financial year. A regular review of the Strategic Risk Register is undertaken by the Senior Management Team and the Strategic Risk Register is reported to the Audit and Risk Management Committee on a quarterly basis. Strategic and operational risk management is embedded in CHS' corporate and business planning processes and performance management arrangements.

The key strategic risks identified and monitored during 2020/21 included:

- impact of COVID-19 on ability to spend out in 2020/21;
- digital systems do not meet user's needs or there is a low uptake of systems developed;
- systems fail due to poor cyber resilience;
- failing to have an influential voice in sector policy and practice;
- failure to meet UNCRC obligations;
- failure to contribute to positive outcomes for babies, infants, children, young people and their families due to poor quality hearings and hearings decisions;
- not maintaining an informed, trauma sensitive, sustainable, resilient and motivated volunteer community;
- removal from Lothian Pension Fund stability mechanism creating budget uncertainty and pressures which divert funds from strategic delivery; and
- CHS and hearing systems credibility is damaged due to failure to deliver and improve CHS functions in a data and evidence driven manner.

### Digital Programme

In November 2017 a joint meeting of CHS and SCRA Boards approved a joint digital delivery plan and the award of contract to an identified supplier, following a competitive tender exercise. The main focus of activity throughout 2020/21 has been on the launch of the services that comprise the main operational functions of the system (known as the Core Systems and Applications Solution (CSAS)) and engaging in the Digital Strategy Health Checks and Digital First Service Standards assessment, all of which have been completed successfully.

Following the digital developments of 2019/20 (new landing page for the services, introduction of a new e-mail system, and roll out of Microsoft Teams collaboration platform to our 3000 volunteers), CHS launched a range of digital services between July and September 2020/21:

- Rota Management (for scheduling volunteers on to hearings);
- Expenses (for submitting and approving volunteer expenses);
- Complaints and Concerns (for submitting and handling complaints and concerns);
- Observations (for recording Panel Practice Advisor observations of Panel Members);
- Learning & Events (for scheduling and recording training and volunteer events);
- Recruitment (for managing the processes involved in recruiting volunteers).

Due to the impact of COVID-19 on hearings operation, take up of the services has been at a slower pace than originally planned. For example, expenses have not been claimed as frequently as normal because hearings are virtual and therefore fewer travel expense claims have been needed.

Implementation continues to be monitored and volunteers supported to access services. CHS is represented on the joint governance and delivery groups that oversee the digital plan: Digital Oversight Committee, Digital Delivery Board, Product and Technical Assurance Groups and the Security Accreditation Group.

An Organisational Readiness team including functional 'business owners' (who act as subject specialists on specific digital services), continues to be in place to support product development and successful uptake of the new systems. Extensive digital engagement with our volunteer community has taken place this year, in particular support to access new virtual hearing technology introduced due to COVID restrictions. To enable continued hearing operation, CHS have worked with Scottish Government to provide 1,600 managed Chromebook devices for volunteers across Scotland to enable secure access to virtual hearings and CHS systems. This programme ensured volunteers who were not digitally enabled or who had outdated devices could securely engage in CHS operations. Implementation of this approach will be evaluated in 2021/22.

Volunteer Digital Champions continue to be a welcome addition within each AST, promoting and supporting digital take up locally.

#### Personal data related incidents

During 2020/21, CHS had two reportable data breaches to the Information Commission Office.

Mitigating measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of data breaches and include compulsory training for all panel and AST members, Clerks, CHS National Team and Board members. Regular newsletters and case studies are also produced to raise awareness of the importance of information security.

#### Conclusion

As Accountable Officer, I am satisfied that CHS has effective corporate governance arrangements in place.

## Remuneration and Staff Report Unaudited remuneration report Remuneration and Appointments Committee

The Remuneration and Appointments Committee, a sub-committee of the full CHS Board, oversees the remuneration and performance management arrangements of all staff.

For 2020/21, the Remuneration and Appointments Committee consisted of:

- Jo Derrick (chair)
- John Anderson
- Beth-Anne Logan

Proposals on the remuneration of the National Convener/Chief Executive are made by the Remuneration and Appointments Committee and form the basis of recommendations to the Scottish Government. Proposals in relation to remuneration of other senior managers and staff remuneration are included in a pay and grading remit, which is submitted to the Scottish Government for approval following approval by the Remuneration and Appointments Committee.

CHS' overall remuneration policy aims to:

- attract, retain and motivate competent and skilled staff at all levels of the organisation
- ensure that salaries are as competitive as possible
- reward staff for their contribution to CHS by arrangements which are simple, fair and transparent.

### Senior Managers' Service Contracts

Unless otherwise stated below, the officials covered by this report hold appointments which are open-ended. The notice period for senior managers is three months. Any payment in relation to termination of employment through retirement or redundancy is governed by CHS' relevant policies and procedures. Any discretionary payment made to any member of staff on termination is subject to approval by the Board and/or Scottish Government.

### Staff Absence

In the year to 31 March 2021, short term absence was 2.9 days (2020: 2.9 days) and long term absence was 0 days (2020: 6.8 days).

## Audited remuneration report

## Senior Management Team (SMT) members' Service Contracts

SMT member	Job title	Appointment
Elliot Jackson	National Convener/Chief Executive	07 Oct 19 – 06 Oct 24
Lynne Harrison	Head of Strategy, Development and Depute Chief Executive	07 Oct 19
Christine Mullen	Head of Practice, Improvement and Learning	07 Oct 19
Carol Wassell	Head of Area Support and Community Improvement	13 Jan 20

There are three female senior managers and one male senior manager as detailed above. All contracts have a notice period of 3 months and are permanent unless indicated otherwise by a future end date above.

Remuneration	Salary and allowances <sup>1</sup>	
	2020/21	2019/20
<b>Senior Management Team</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Elliot Jackson	90-95	85-90
Lynne Harrison	80-85	70-75
Christine Mullen	75-80	60-65
Carol Wassell	75-80	15-20
Boyd McAdam <sup>2</sup>	n/a	45-50
Lawrie McDonald <sup>3</sup>	n/a	85-90
<b>Board</b>		
Garry Coutts	15-20	15-20
John Anderson	0-5	0-5
Barbara Neil	0-5	0-5
Jo Derrick	0-5	0-5
Beth-Anne Logan <sup>4</sup>	20-25	10-15
Henry Robson	0-5	0-5

<sup>1</sup> Includes pension contributions paid by employer. In respect of any Non-Executive Board Members, CHS does not make any contribution to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) nor provide any other form of pension benefit.

<sup>2</sup> This senior management team member left office on 6 October 2019: their full year equivalent salary and allowances would be between £95,000 and £100,000.

<sup>3</sup> This senior management team member left office on 31 March 2020.

<sup>4</sup> Throughout 2019/20 and 2020/21, this Board member has been remunerated through CHS for additional duties in relation to wider Scottish Government Secure Care projects.

Reporting bodies are required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest-paid director in their organisation and the median remuneration of the organisation's workforce.

Remuneration (continued)	Salary and allowances <sup>1</sup>	
	2020/21	2019/20
Mid-point of highest-paid director's total remuneration	£80,496	£78,364
Median total remuneration	£39,892	£40,678
Ratio	2.02 : 1	1.93 : 1

<sup>1</sup> Excludes pension contributions paid by employer

The full time equivalent remuneration paid to CHS staff ranged from £24,384 to £66,578 (2019/20: £24,036 to £73,941).

In 2020/21 no employees received remuneration in excess of the highest-paid director (2019/20: none). CHS does not have a separate performance pay scheme for senior managers. The Scottish Government-wide remuneration policy is applied equally to all staff including senior management.

#### Compensation

No compensation payments were made in 2020/21 (2019/20: none).

#### Benefits in Kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the employer and treated by HMRC as a taxable emolument. No benefits in kind were received in 2020/21 (2019/20: none).

#### Senior managers' pension entitlements

Senior Management Team Members	Real increase in pension in year to 31 March 2021 £000	Real increase in lump sum in year to 31 March 2021 £000	Total accrued pension as at 31 March 2021 £000	Total accrued lump sum at 31 March 2021 £000	CETV <sup>1</sup> at 31 March 2020 £000	CETV <sup>1</sup> at 31 March 2021 £000	Real increase in CETV <sup>1</sup> during year £000
Elliot Jackson	2.5-5	2.5-5	35-40	65-70	631	688	56
Lynne Harrison	0-2.5	0	0-5	0	33	50	17
Christine Mullen	0-2.5	0	0-5	0	50	67	17
Carol Wassell <sup>2</sup>	0	0	0	0	0	21	21

<sup>1</sup> Cash-equivalent transfer value

<sup>2</sup> Member has under 2 years' service, therefore no accrued entitlements

Prior year comparatives

Senior Management Team Members	Real increase in pension in year to 31 March 2020 £000	Real increase in lump sum in year to 31 March 2020 £000	Total accrued pension as at 31 March 2020 £000	Total accrued lump sum at 31 March 2020 £000	CETV <sup>1</sup> at 31 March 2019 £000	CETV <sup>1</sup> at 31 March 2020 £000	Real increase in CETV <sup>1</sup> during year £000
Elliot Jackson	2.5-5	2.5-5	35-40	60-65	526	631	105
Lynne Harrison	2.5-5	0	0-5	0	17	33	16
Christine Mullen	0-2.5	0	0-5	0	32	50	18
Carol Wassell <sup>2</sup>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	n/a
Boyd McAdam	0-2.5	0	5-10	0	116	n/a	n/a
Lawrie McDonald	0-2.5	0-2.5	15-20	20-25	293	348	56

<sup>1</sup> Cash-equivalent transfer value

<sup>2</sup> Member has under 2 years' service, therefore no accrued entitlements

Senior managers' remuneration as a single figure

Senior Management Team Members	2020/21 Salary and Allowances £000	2020/21 Pension benefits <sup>1</sup> £000	2020/21 Compensation £000	2020/21 Total £000	2019/20 Salary and Allowances £000	2019/20 Pension benefits <sup>1</sup> £000	2019/20 Total £000
Elliot Jackson	90-95	45-50	n/a	140-145	85-90	70-75	160-165
Lynne Harrison	80-85	20-25	n/a	100-105	70-75	50-55	120-125
Christine Mullen	60-65	15-20	n/a	80-85	60-65	15-20	75-80
Carol Wassell <sup>2</sup>	75-80	(10)-(5)	n/a	70-75	15-20	(5)-0	15-20
Boyd McAdam	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	45-50	(5)-0	45-50
Lawrie McDonald	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	85-90	35-40	125-130

<sup>1</sup> The value of pension benefits accrued during the year is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) plus (real increase in lump sum) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increase excludes increases due to inflation or any increase or decrease due to a transfer of pension rights.

<sup>2</sup> Member has under 2 years' service and therefore has no entitlement yet to a transfer value or pension

Amounts payable to/from third parties for the services of a senior manager CHS paid Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) £18,751, £8,492 and £25,032 in 2020/21 in respect of senior management services from Ed Morrison Head of Finance and Resources, Susan Deery Head of Human Resources and Lawrie McDonald Head of Digital Delivery (2019/20: £18,273, £7,040 and £nil respectively). Ed Morrison joined CHS' Senior Management Team in July 2015; Susan Deery joined CHS's Senior Management Team in April 2016.

In 2020/21, SCRA paid CHS £nil in respect of senior management services (2019/20: £nil).

#### Staff numbers and related costs

<b>Staff with a permanent (UK) employment contract</b>	<b>2020/21 £000</b>	<b>2019/20 £000</b>
Wages and salaries	1,266	1,053
Social security costs	128	116
Contributions to pension scheme	390	168
IAS 19 pension charge	(8)	384
	<b>1,776</b>	<b>1,721</b>

<b>Staff without a permanent (UK) employment contract</b>	<b>2020/21 £000</b>	<b>2019/20 £000</b>
Wages and salaries	266	374
Social security costs	27	35
Contributions to pension scheme	36	49
	<b>329</b>	<b>458</b>

<b>All Staff</b>	<b>2020/21 £000</b>	<b>2019/20 £000</b>
Wages and salaries	1,532	1,427
Social security costs	155	151
Contributions to pension scheme	426	217
IAS 19 pension charge	(8)	384
	<b>2,105</b>	<b>2,179</b>

<b>Average number of employees (whole-time equivalents)</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
Staff with a permanent contract – male	4	5
Staff with a permanent contract – female	22	22
Staff without a permanent contract – male	2	4
Staff without a permanent contract – female	6	6
	<b>34</b>	<b>37</b>

#### Exit packages

No exit packages were agreed during 2020/21 (2019/20: none).

#### Expenditure on consultancy

In 2020/21, CHS spent £67,007 on consultancy (2019/20: £38,150).



## Disability

CHS is committed to equality and diversity.

- We plan for, and make reasonable adjustments to, the assessment and interview process
- During employment, we proactively offer and make reasonable adjustments as required
- We provide an environment that is inclusive and accessible for staff and volunteers
- We support employees to manage their disabilities or health concerns
- We ensure there are no barriers to the development and progression of disabled staff
- We ensure managers are aware of how they can support staff who are sick or absent from work
- We promote information and advice on wellbeing and mental health conditions and have been particularly proactive in doing this during the current COVID-19 lockdown by providing regular mental health and wellbeing updates via the Staff Forum channel on MS Teams. This included providing the daily promotion of health and wellbeing initiatives, ideas and resources featuring different themes during the course of Mental Health Awareness Week at the end of May. Line managers are encouraged to have conversations with their staff about staff mental health and wellbeing during their regular 121 'remote' meetings, at this current time.
- We provide occupational health services and an employee assistance programme (EAP) and have been promoting the EAP resources to staff, particularly during the COVID-19 Lockdown.

CHS reports against the statutory Public Sector Equality Duty and in addition has several policies relating to supporting disability in the workplace including:

- Equal Opportunities policy
- Flexible Working policy
- Recruitment and Selection policy
- Dignity at Work policy

With regards to disability, CHS included the following over-arching Equality Outcome that is specifically focussed on supporting those with caring responsibilities.

**Increasing accessibility, and promoting inclusion has removed participation barriers to all individuals who make up our CHS Community.**

Under this outcome, CHS has a sub-set of outcomes with the following outcome particularly focused on carers, who by association, can be directly or indirectly discriminated against on the grounds of disability in the general working environment, due to their caring responsibilities for those who have disabilities.

CHS is a recognised as an employer of choice by individuals with caring<sup>16</sup> responsibilities due to its positive and open recruitment approach and its flexible working and attendance

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<sup>16</sup> A carer is someone who provides unpaid care by looking after an ill, frail or disabled family member, friend or partner. (<http://www.carerpositive.org/>)

management policies and practices. Specifically, CHS has committed to becoming a Carer Positive employer by December 2021.

Our Volunteer Community continue to be fully aware of and undertake their functions with equality in mind. Our CHS Learning Academy (West Lothian College) incorporate Equality and Diversity learning and assessment into essential training for our panel members before they are appointed. All new panel members complete a qualification awarded by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) – the Professional Development Award (PDA) Children’s Hearings in Scotland – Panel Members.

The training delivered by our CHS Training Unit focuses on the 2010 Equality Act. In particular, the qualification focuses on the acquisition of skills and knowledge that demonstrate awareness of the equality and diversity needs of children and young people and how to address them.

Our Area Support Teams receive training in the recruitment and selection of new panel members. This includes input on key principles of equality and diversity and an emphasis on understanding the importance of diversity when assessing and supporting candidates.

#### Parliamentary Accountability Report

CHS is required to report on any high-value losses and special payments incurred in the financial year, any fees and charges receivable in the financial year and any remote contingent liabilities as at the date the accounts were signed by the Accountable Officer.

- No reportable losses were incurred in the financial year to 31 March 2021.
- No reportable special payments were made in the financial year to 31 March 2021.
- No reportable fees or charges were received in the financial year to 31 March 2021.
- There are no remote contingent liabilities at the date the accounts were signed.

#### Conclusion

As Accountable Officer, I am satisfied that CHS has effective corporate governance arrangements in place.

**Elliot Jackson**  
**Accountable Officer**  
**21 September 2021**

## **Independent Auditor's Report to the members of Children's Hearings Scotland, the Auditor General for Scotland and the Scottish Parliament**

Reporting on the audit of the financial statements

Opinion on financial statements

I have audited the financial statements in the annual report and accounts of Children's Hearings Scotland for the year ended 31 March 2021 under the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000. The financial statements comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Cash Flows, the Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs) as adopted by the European Union, and as interpreted and adapted by the 2020/21 Government Financial Reporting Manual (the 2020/21 FReM).

In my opinion the accompanying financial statements:

- give a true and fair view in accordance with the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers of the state of the body's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of its net expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with IFRSs as adopted by the European Union, as interpreted and adapted by the 2020/21 FReM; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers.

Basis for opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with applicable law and International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)), as required by the Code of Audit Practice approved by the Auditor General for Scotland. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of my report. I was appointed by the Auditor General on 26 January 2018. The period of total uninterrupted appointment is 4 years. I am independent of the body in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, and I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. Non-audit services prohibited by the Ethical Standard were not provided to the body. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

## Conclusions relating to going concern basis of accounting

I have concluded that the use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the body's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

## Risks of material misstatement

I report in a separate Annual Audit Report, available from the [Audit Scotland website](#), the most significant assessed risks of material misstatement that I identified and my judgements thereon.

## Responsibilities of the Accountable Officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accountable Officer's Responsibilities, the Accountable Officer is responsible for the preparation of financial statements that give a true and fair view in accordance with the financial reporting framework, and for such internal control as the Accountable Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Accountable Officer is responsible for assessing the body's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless deemed inappropriate.

## Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. I design procedures in line with my responsibilities outlined above to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. Procedures include:

- obtaining an understanding of the applicable legal and regulatory framework and how the body is complying with that framework;
- identifying which laws and regulations are significant in the context of the body;
- assessing the susceptibility of the financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur; and
- considering whether the audit team collectively has the appropriate competence and capabilities to identify or recognise non-compliance with laws and regulations.

The extent to which my procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is affected by the inherent difficulty in detecting irregularities, the effectiveness of the body's controls, and the nature, timing and extent of the audit procedures performed.

Irregularities that result from fraud are inherently more difficult to detect than irregularities that result from error as fraud may involve collusion, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. The capability of the audit to detect fraud and other irregularities depends on factors such as the skilfulness of the perpetrator, the frequency and extent of manipulation, the degree of collusion involved, the relative size of individual amounts manipulated, and the seniority of those individuals involved.

A further description of the auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of my auditor's report.

## Reporting on regularity of expenditure and income

### Opinion on regularity

In my opinion in all material respects the expenditure and income in the financial statements were incurred or applied in accordance with any applicable enactments and guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers.

### Responsibilities for regularity

The Accountable Officer is responsible for ensuring the regularity of expenditure and income. In addition to my responsibilities to detect material misstatements in the financial statements in respect of irregularities, I am responsible for expressing an opinion on the regularity of expenditure and income in accordance with the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000.

## Reporting on other requirements

### Opinion prescribed by the Auditor General for Scotland on audited part of the Remuneration Report

I have audited the parts of the Remuneration Report described as audited. In my opinion, the audited part of the Remuneration Report has been properly prepared in accordance with the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers.

### Statutory other information

The Accountable Officer is responsible for the statutory other information in the annual report and accounts. The statutory other information comprises the Performance Report and the Accountability Report excluding the audited part of the Remuneration Report.

My responsibility is to read all the statutory other information and, in doing so, consider whether the statutory other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am/ required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this statutory other information, I am required to report that fact. I have nothing to report in this regard.

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the statutory other information and I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon except on the Performance Report and Governance Statement to the extent explicitly stated in the following opinions prescribed by the Auditor General for Scotland.

### Opinions prescribed by the Auditor General for Scotland on Performance Report and Governance Statement

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Performance Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and that report has been prepared in accordance with the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers; and
- the information given in the Governance Statement for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and that report has been prepared in accordance with the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 and directions made thereunder by the Scottish Ministers.

## Matters on which I am required to report by exception

I am required by the Auditor General for Scotland to report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements and the audited part of the Remuneration and Staff Report are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit.

I have nothing to report in respect of these matters.

## Conclusions on wider scope responsibilities

In addition to my responsibilities for the annual report and accounts, my conclusions on the wider scope responsibilities specified in the Code of Audit Practice are set out in my Annual Audit Report.

## Use of my report

This report is made solely to the parties to whom it is addressed in accordance with the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000 and for no other purpose. In accordance with paragraph 120 of the Code of Audit Practice, I do not undertake to have responsibilities to members or officers, in their individual capacities, or to third parties.

**Alasdair Craik FCCA  
Senior Audit Manager  
Audit Scotland  
4th Floor  
102 West Port  
Edinburgh  
EH3 9DN**

**September 2021**

## Children's Hearings Scotland

### Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2021

	Note	Year to 31 March 2021 £000	Year to 31 March 2020 £000
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Staff costs	2	2,105	2,179
Other administration costs	3	2,064	2,934
Depreciation	4 & 5	113	299
<i>Expenditure</i>		4,282	5,412
<b>Income</b>	1.8	(33)	(5)
<b>Net expenditure</b>		4,249	5,407
Pension scheme finance cost	9	37	41
<b>Net expenditure before Scottish Government funding</b>		4,286	5,448
<b>Other comprehensive net expenditure</b>			
Items which will not be reclassified to net expenditure:			
Actuarial loss/(gain) on pensions		955	(364)
<b>Comprehensive net expenditure for the year</b>		5,241	5,084

The notes following the financial statements form part of these accounts.



## Children's Hearings Scotland

Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2021

	Note	2021 £000	2020 £000
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Property, plant & equipment	4	705	191
Intangible assets	5	6	24
<i>Total non-current assets</i>		711	215
<b>Current assets</b>			
Trade and other receivables	6	129	103
Cash and cash equivalents	7	1,167	1,048
<i>Total current assets</i>		1,296	1,151
<b>Total assets</b>		2,007	1,366
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Trade and other payables	8	(388)	(761)
<i>Total current liabilities</i>		(388)	(761)
<b>Non-current assets plus net current assets</b>		1,619	605
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>			
Net pension asset/(liability)	9	(2,538)	(1,554)
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>(919)</b>	<b>(949)</b>
<b>Taxpayers' equity</b>			
General fund		712	(273)
Pension reserve		(1,631)	(676)
<b>Total taxpayers' equity</b>		<b>(919)</b>	<b>(949)</b>

The Accountable Officer authorised these financial statements for issue on 21 September 2021.

**Elliot Jackson**  
**Accountable Officer**  
**21 September 2021**

## Children's Hearings Scotland

### Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 31 March 2021

	Note	2021 £000	2020 £000
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Net expenditure before Scottish Government funding		(4,286)	(5,448)
<i>Adjustments for non-cash items</i>			
Increase/(Decrease) in pension fund liability	9	984	61
(Decrease)/Increase in pension reserve	9	(955)	364
Depreciation charges	4 & 5	113	299
Loss on disposal of assets		0	2
<i>Movements in working capital</i>			
Decrease/(Increase) in trade and other receivables	6	(26)	53
(Decrease)/Increase in trade and other payables	8	(373)	(76)
<b>Net cash outflow from operating activities</b>		<b>(4,543)</b>	<b>(4,745)</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Purchase of property, plant & equipment	4	(609)	(47)
Leasehold improvement expenditure	4	-	(192)
Purchase of intangible assets	5	-	(18)
(Increase)/decrease in assets under construction	4,5	-	236
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>			
Scottish Government funding for year		5,271	4,839
<b>Net increase in cash and cash equivalents</b>		<b>119</b>	<b>73</b>
Opening cash balance		1,048	975
<b>Closing cash balance</b>		<b>1,167</b>	<b>1,048</b>

## Children's Hearings Scotland

Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for the year ended 31 March 2021

	Note	General Fund £000	Pension Reserve £000	Total Reserves £000
<b>Balance at 1 April 2019</b>		336	(1,040)	(704)
Actuarial gain on pension reserve	9	0	364	364
Net expenditure for the year		(5,448)	0	(5,448)
<b>Total recognised income and expense for 2019/20</b>		<b>(5,112)</b>	<b>(676)</b>	<b>(5,788)</b>
Funding from Scottish Government		4,839	0	4,839
<b>Balance at 31 March 2020</b>		<b>(273)</b>	<b>(676)</b>	<b>(949)</b>
	Note	General Fund £000	Pension Reserve £000	Total Reserves £000
<b>Balance at 1 April 2020</b>		(273)	(676)	(949)
Actuarial gain/(loss) on pension reserve	9	0	(955)	(955)
Net expenditure for the year		(4,286)	0	(4,286)
<b>Total recognised income and expense for 2020/21</b>		<b>(4,559)</b>	<b>(1,631)</b>	<b>(6,190)</b>
Funding from Scottish Government		5,271	0	5,271
<b>Balance at 31 March 2021</b>		<b>712</b>	<b>(1,631)</b>	<b>(919)</b>

## Notes to the Accounts

### 1. Accounting policies

#### 1.1 Basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting principles and disclosure requirements of the 2020/21 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FRM). The accounting policies contained in the manual follow International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adopted by the European Union and the Companies Act 2006 to the extent that it is meaningful and appropriate in the public sector context and in accordance with the Accounts Direction given by the Scottish Ministers. Where the manual permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of CHS for the purposes of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The accounting policies selected have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material in relation to the accounts.

#### 1.2 Accounting convention

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention modified to account for the revaluation of property, plant and equipment and intangible assets to fair value as determined by the relevant accounting standard.

#### 1.3 Property, plant and equipment

The threshold for capitalisation of property, plant and equipment is £5,000, including non-recoverable VAT. Individual items of plant and equipment whose cost falls below the threshold, but are of a similar nature, are grouped and capitalised.

Expenditure on furniture, fixtures and fittings is charged to the statement of net expenditure in the year the cost is incurred and is not capitalised.

Given the short useful economic lives and low values of property, plant and equipment and intangible assets, these assets are disclosed on a depreciated historical cost basis, which is used as a proxy for fair value.

Depreciation is provided on all property, plant and equipment on a straight line basis, at rates calculated to write-off the cost, less estimated residual value, of each asset over its expected useful life as follows:

- ICT equipment – three years
- Office equipment – five years
- Leasehold improvements – five years (expected length of lease term)

Depreciation is ordinarily charged from when the asset was ready for use, rounded to the nearest whole month, up to point of disposal.

### **1.4 Intangible assets**

Intangible assets are stated at historic purchase cost less accumulated amortisation. Acquired computer software licences, developed software and developed ICT infrastructure environments are capitalised on the basis of the costs incurred to acquire and bring to use the specific software. These costs are amortised using the straight line method over the shorter term of life of licence and its estimated useful economic life.

### **1.5 Assets under construction**

Where expenditure is incurred in creating an asset (tangible or intangible), but that asset is not ready for use by the end of a financial year, it is deemed as an asset under construction. Depreciation is not ordinarily charged on such assets although they will be reviewed for potential impairment or obsolescence, with any write-down charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure if appropriate.

### **1.6 Employee benefits**

CHS has an agreement with Edinburgh City Council under which all staff are eligible to enter the Local Government Pension Scheme managed by the Council in accordance with scheme rules. It is a defined benefit scheme providing pension benefits and life assurance for all staff members.

The defined benefits pension scheme's assets are included at market value and this is compared to the present value of the scheme liabilities using a projected unit method and discounted at a rate in accordance with the FReM and consistent with IAS 19. The increase in the present value of the liabilities of the scheme expected to arise from employee service in the period is charged to net expenditure. The expected return on the scheme's assets and the increase during the period in the present value of the scheme's liabilities arising from the passage of time are included in other finance income. Actuarial gains and losses arising from experience adjustments and changes in actuarial assumptions are charged or credited to reserves and are recognised in the Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity.

The contributions are determined by a qualified actuary on the basis of triennial valuations using the projected accrued benefit method. The valuation used was at 31 March 2017. Details of this valuation were included in a report published by Lothian Pension Fund.

### **1.7 Short-term employee benefits**

Salaries, wages and employment-related payments are recognised in the year in which the service is received from employees. The cost of annual leave and flexible working time entitlement earned but not taken by employees at the end of the year is recognised in the financial statements.

### **1.8 Income**

CHS recognises income in the year to which it relates.

## 1.9 Leases

CHS occupies office space within a Scottish Government owned building under a Memorandum of Terms of Occupation (MOTO). This arrangement is treated as an operating lease and the rental is charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure on a straight line basis over the term of the MOTO. IFRS 16 Leases is not yet implemented: it is expected the standard will impact the non-current assets, liabilities and net expenditure of the organisation from 1 April 2022.

## 1.10 Government grants

It is CHS' policy to credit all government grants and grant-in-aid to the General Reserve in line with the FReM.

## 1.11 Financial Instruments

Cash requirements for CHS are met through the Scottish Government and therefore financial instruments play a more limited role in creating and managing risk than would apply within a non-public sector body. The majority of financial instruments relate to receivables and payables incurred through the normal operational activities of CHS. CHS is therefore exposed to little credit, liquidity or market risk.

## 1.12 Value Added Tax

CHS has no chargeable activities within the scope of VAT. Irrecoverable VAT is charged to the relevant expenditure category or included in the capitalised purchase cost of fixed assets.

## 1.13 Provisions

Provision is recognised in the statement of financial position when there is a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of a past event and it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation.

## 1.14 Related Party Transactions

Material related party transactions are disclosed in line with the requirements of IAS 24.

## 1.15 Review of accounting policies and estimation techniques

These financial statements have been prepared under IFRS.

Areas of judgement in how CHS's accounting policies are applied include:

- the fair values of properties; and
- pension estimation technique.

The most significant financial impact arises from assumptions used to calculate the pension deficit. The sensitivities regarding the principal assumptions used to measure the scheme liabilities are set out below:

Change in assumptions at 31 March 2021	Approximate increase to Defined Benefit Obligation	Approximate monetary amount £000
0.5% decrease in Real discount Rate	14%	881
0.5% increase in the Salary Increase Rate	1%	69
0.5% increase in the Pension Increase Rate (CPI)	13%	796

The principal demographic assumption is the longevity assumption (i.e. member life expectancy). For sensitivity purposes, the actuary estimates that a one year increase in life expectancy would approximately increase the Employer's Defined Benefit Obligation by around 3-5%. In practice the actual cost of a one year increase in life expectancy will depend on the structure of the revised assumption (i.e. if improvements to survival rates predominantly apply at younger or older ages).

In order to quantify the impact of a change in the financial assumptions used, the actuary has calculated and compared the value of the scheme liabilities at the accounting date on varying bases. The approach taken is consistent with that adopted to derive the accounting figures provided in the actuary's report.

The above figures have been derived based on the membership profile of the Employer as at the date of the most recent actuarial valuation. The approach taken in preparing the sensitivity analysis shown is consistent with that adopted in the previous year.

### 1.16 Accounting standards not yet adopted

As at the date of authorisation of these financial statements, the following key standards were not yet adopted.

- IFRS 16 - Leases

The FReM, issued by HM Treasury, interprets and adapts IFRS 16 for the public sector in several years. In light of COVID-19 pressures, HM Treasury and the Financial Reporting Advisory Board (FRAB) decided that IFRS 16 implementation will be deferred until 1 April 2022. The impact on the financial statements has yet to be fully determined: lease obligations (£156k, without discounting at 31 March 2021 and as disclosed in note 10) will be recognised as right of use assets at 1 April 2022.

## 2. Staff numbers and related costs

### Staff costs – all staff

	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Salaries	1,532	1,427
Social security costs	155	151
Contributions to pension scheme	427	217
IAS 19 Pension Charge	(8)	384
Provision for unfunded pensions	0	0
	<b>2,106</b>	<b>2,179</b>

A detailed breakdown of Staff Costs and Numbers is contained within the Remuneration and Staff Report section of the Accountability Report.

## 3. Other administration costs

	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2019/20</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Board fees and expenses	44	53
Shared services	67	42
Legal fees	4	2
Running costs	517	681
Compensation Costs	0	0
Direct support for panel	40	2
Training, recruitment and other staff costs	71	127
Auditor remuneration	11	11
Internal auditors' remuneration	7	15
Recruitment of Panel Members	282	175
Training of Panel and AST Members	876	1,189
Panel and AST Member Expenses	145	637
	<b>2,064</b>	<b>2,934</b>



## 4. Property, Plant and Equipment

<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Leasehold Improvements</b>	<b>Computer equipment</b>	<b>Assets under construction</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Cost/Valuation</b>				
Opening Balance	192	71	0	263
Additions	0	609	0	609
Transfers	0	0	0	0
Disposals	0	0	0	0
Closing Balance	192	680	0	872
<b>Accumulated depreciation</b>				
Opening Balance	38	34	0	72
Provided in year	38	57	0	95
Withdrawn on disposal	0	0	0	0
Closing Balance	76	91	0	167
<b>Net Book Value</b>				
At 31 March 2021	116	589	0	705
At 31 March 2020	154	37	0	191
<b>2019/20</b>				
	<b>Leasehold Improvements</b>	<b>Computer equipment</b>	<b>Assets under construction</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Cost/Valuation</b>				
Opening Balance	0	57	218	275
Additions	6	15	0	21
Transfers	186	32	(218)	0
Disposals	0	(33)	0	(33)
Closing Balance	192	71	0	263
<b>Accumulated depreciation</b>				
Opening Balance	0	53	0	53
Provided in year	38	12	0	50
Withdrawn on disposal	0	(31)	0	(31)
Closing Balance	38	34	0	72
<b>Net Book Value</b>				
At 31 March 2019	154	37	0	191
At 31 March 2018	0	4	218	222

## 5. Intangible Assets

<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Developed Software</b>	<b>Website</b>	<b>Assets under construction</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Cost/Valuation</b>				
Opening Balance	517	18	0	535
Additions	0	0	0	0
Transfers	0	0	0	0
Disposals	0	0	0	0
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>535</b>
<b>Accumulated amortisation</b>				
Opening Balance	505	6	0	511
Provided in year	12	6	0	18
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>529</b>
<b>Net Book Value</b>				
<b>At 31 March 2021</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>
At 31 March 2020	12	12	0	24
<b>2019/20</b>				
<b>Cost/Valuation</b>				
Opening Balance	517	0	18	535
Additions	0	0	0	0
Transfers	0	18	-18	0
Disposals	0	0	0	0
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>535</b>
<b>Accumulated amortisation</b>				
Opening Balance	262	0	0	262
Provided in year	243	6	0	249
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>511</b>
<b>Net Book Value</b>				
At 31 March 2020	12	12	0	24
At 31 March 2019	255	0	18	273

## 6. Trade and other receivables

### 6.1 Amounts falling due within one year

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Other receivables	32	0
Prepayments	97	103
	<b>129</b>	<b>103</b>

### 6.2 Intra governmental balances

	Receivables: amounts due within one year	Receivables: amounts due within one year
	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Balances with other central government bodies	0	0
Balances with local government bodies	0	0
<b>Intra governmental balances</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Balances with bodies external to government	129	103
<b>at 31 March</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>103</b>

## 7. Cash and cash equivalents

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Balance at 1 April	1,048	975
Net change in cash and cash equivalents	119	73
Balance at 31 March	1,167	1,048
Bank accounts	1,167	1,048
at 31 March	<b>1,167</b>	<b>1,048</b>

All bank balances at 31 March 2021 are held with commercial banks.

## 8. Trade and other payables

### 8.1 Amounts falling due within one year

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Trade payables	211	357
Tax and social security	43	43
Other payables	0	45
Accruals	134	316
	<b>388</b>	<b>761</b>

### 8.2 Intra governmental balances

	Payables: amounts due within one year	Payables: amounts due within one year
	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Balances with other central government bodies	52	114
Balances with Local Authorities	93	527
<b>Intra governmental balances</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>641</b>
Balances with bodies external to government	243	120
<b>at 31 March</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>761</b>

## 9. Pensions

Information about the assumptions underlying the figures in this note can be found in Note 1.6 Employee benefits.

### Change in the Fair Value of Plan Assets, Defined Benefit Obligations and Net Liability for year ended 31 March 2021

	Assets	Obligations	Net (liability)
	£000	£000	£000
Fair value of plan assets	2,264	0	2,264
Present value of funded liabilities	0	3,765	(3,765)
<b>Opening Position as at 31 March 2020</b>	<b>2,264</b>	<b>3,765</b>	<b>(1,501)</b>
Current Service Cost	0	470	(470)
Past Service Cost	0	0	0
<b>Total Service cost</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>(470)</b>
Interest income on plan assets	56	0	56
Interest cost on defined benefit obligation	0	93	(93)
<b>Total Net Interest</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>(37)</b>
<b>Total defined benefit cost recognised in profit or (loss)</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>563</b>	<b>(507)</b>
Plan participants' contributions	96	96	0
Employer contributions	425	0	425
Benefits paid	(17)	(17)	0
<b>Expected closing position</b>	<b>2,824</b>	<b>4,407</b>	<b>(1,583)</b>
<b>Remeasurements</b>			
Change in demographic assumptions	0	(247)	247
Change in financial assumptions	0	1,625	(1,625)
Other experience	539	455	84
Return on assets excluding net interest	339	0	339
<b>Total remeasurements recognised in Other Comprehensive Income (OCI)</b>	<b>878</b>	<b>1,833</b>	<b>(955)</b>
Fair value of plan assets	3,702	0	3,702
Present value of funded liabilities	0	6,240	(6,240)
<b>Closing position as at 31 March 2021</b>	<b>3,702</b>	<b>6,240</b>	<b>(2,538)</b>

Employer contributions during 2020/21 totalled £425k (2019/20: £213k). This includes supplementary contributions totalling £200k (2019/20: £nil) to the Lothian Pension Fund.

**Change in the Fair Value of Plan Assets, Defined Benefit Obligations and Net Liability for year ended 31 March 2020**

	Assets £000	Obligations £000	Net (liability) £000
Fair value of plan assets	2,059	0	2,059
Present value of funded liabilities	0	3,552	(3,552)
<b>Opening Position as at 31 March 2019</b>	<b>2,059</b>	<b>3,552</b>	<b>(1,493)</b>
Current Service Cost	0	517	(517)
Past Service Cost	0	27	(27)
<b>Total Service cost</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>(544)</b>
Interest income on plan assets	55	0	55
Interest cost on defined benefit obligation	0	96	(96)
<b>Total Net Interest</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>(41)</b>
<b>Total defined benefit cost recognised in profit or (loss)</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>(585)</b>
Plan participants' contributions	90	90	0
Employer contributions	213	0	213
Benefits paid	(6)	(6)	0
<b>Expected closing position</b>	<b>2,411</b>	<b>4,276</b>	<b>(1,865)</b>
<b>Remeasurements</b>			
Change in demographic assumptions	0	0	0
Change in financial assumptions	0	(495)	495
Other experience	0	(16)	16
Return on assets excluding net interest	(147)	0	(147)
<b>Total remeasurements recognised in Other Comprehensive Income (OCI)</b>	<b>(147)</b>	<b>(511)</b>	<b>364</b>
Fair value of plan assets	2,264	0	2,264
Present value of funded liabilities	0	3,765	(3,765)
<b>Closing position as at 31 March 2020</b>	<b>2,264</b>	<b>3,765</b>	<b>(1,501)</b>

It was noted in the 2019/20 Accounts that as a result of the Government's announcement on the McCloud remedy consultation a revised actuarial report was obtained in autumn 2020 which reduced total past service costs by £53k. The 2019/20 Accounts were not restated and therefore the closing position as at 31 March 2020 of £1,501k shown above is £53k different to the pension liability of £1,554k in the Statement of Financial Position on page 38.

**Fair value of employer assets**

The below asset values are at bid value as required under IAS19.

**Fair value of employer assets**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>Quoted</b>	<b>Unquoted</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Quoted</b>	<b>Unquoted</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Equity Securities	2181	0	2181	1254	0	1254
Debt Securities	223	2	225	177	84	261
Private Equity	0	580	580	0	20	20
Real Estate	0	195	195	26	124	150
Investment Funds and Unit Trusts	136	3	139	37	318	355
Derivatives	0	0	0	5	0	5
Cash and Cash equivalents	382	0	382	219	0	219
	<b>2922</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>3702</b>	<b>1718</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>2264</b>

**Analysis of projected amount to be charged to operating profit for year to 31 March 2022**

<b>Year ended:</b>	<b>31 March 2022</b>	<b>% of pay</b>
	<b>£000</b>	
Projected current service cost*	(695)	(50.0%)
Interest income on plan assets	80	5.8%
Interest cost on defined benefit obligation	(136)	(9.8%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>(751)</b>	<b>(54.0%)</b>

\* The current service cost includes an allowance for administration expenses of 0.3% of payroll. The monetary value is based on a projected payroll of £1.391m.

<b>Year ended:</b>	<b>31 March 2021</b>	<b>31 March 2020</b>
	<b>% p.a.</b>	<b>% p.a.</b>
Pension increase rate (CPI)	2.80	1.80
Salary increase rate	3.30	3.40
Discount Rate	2.05	2.30

## 10. Operating Leases

Total commitments under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2019-20</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Buildings</b>		
Not later than one year	52	52
Later than one year and not later than five years	104	157
Later than five years	0	0
	156	209

CHS signed a Memorandum of Terms of Occupation (MOTO) with Scottish Legal Aid Board (SLAB) for occupancy of office space at 91 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh. The MOTO is a 1 year rolling agreement envisaged to end 31 March 2024.

## 11. Financial Instruments

As the cash requirements of CHS are met through grant-in-aid, financial instruments play a more limited role in creating and managing risk than would apply in a non-public sector body of a similar size.

## 12. Related party transactions

CHS is a Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by the Care and Justice Division in the Children and Families Directorate. CHS receives funding from the Care and Justice Division in the Children and Families Directorate which is regarded as a related party. During the year, CHS received grant-in-aid of £5,271,000 (2019/20 £4,839,000).

No Board Member, key manager or other related party has undertaken any material transactions with CHS during the year (2019/20: £nil).





**CHILDREN'S HEARINGS SCOTLAND**  
**DIRECTION BY THE SCOTTISH MINISTERS**

1. The Scottish Ministers, in pursuance of Schedule 3 of the Children's Hearing Scotland Act (2011), hereby give the following direction.
2. The statement of accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2021, and subsequent years, shall comply with the accounting principles and disclosure requirements of the edition of the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) which is in force for the year for which the statement of accounts are prepared.
3. The accounts shall be prepared so as to give a true and fair view of the income and expenditure and cash flows for the financial year, and of the state of affairs as at the end of the financial year.
4. This direction shall be reproduced as an appendix to the statement of accounts. The direction given on 30 April 2020 is hereby revoked.



Lesley Sheppard

A member of the staff of the Scottish Ministers

Dated: 12 May 2021

DRAFT



children's  
hearings  
scotland

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## Agenda item 11

CHS-2122-23

### Children's Rights and Inclusion Progress Report

**Accountable SMT member:** Head of Practice, Improvement and Learning  
**Report author:** Laura Beveridge / Christine Mullen  
**Resources implications:** Within available resources  
**Purpose:** For consideration and Discussion  
**Equalities duties:** Equalities Impact Assessment Required

Yes No

#### 1. Introduction/Purpose:

The attached report outlines progress made on delivering our Children's Rights and Inclusion Strategy as well as an outline of proposed next steps.

#### 2. Recommendation

- The Board are asked to note the Report

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## CHILDREN'S RIGHTS AND INCLUSION UPDATE REPORT

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# 1 Introduction:

A reminder of CHS VISION: CHILDREN'S RIGHTS & INCLUSION:

In our CHS Children's Rights and Inclusion strategy, we stated that we want a children's hearings system that listens, acts and places real value and weight to the views of infants, children and young people. At Children's Hearings Scotland inclusion is central to our core values as an organisation. Expression and inclusion of views will be evident in all that we do and will influence how we work internally and with partners. Infants, children and young people will feel respected, valued, heard and included across all aspects of the children's hearings system.

The three key areas CHS can work on to see our vision for Scotland's children realised are:

- **Children's Hearings:** Children must feel that it is *their* hearing, where they can choose how to share their views about their lives. Panel Members' interaction and communication with children will be as inclusive as possible, recognising and understanding trauma and its impact, as well as being open to the ways that children may choose to share their views.
- **Area Support Teams:** CHS Area Support Teams support the delivery of the National Convenor's functions through providing local support to Panel Members. The working group considered the current ways that the views of people with lived experience of the hearings system contribute to the recruiting and supporting of local volunteers, two vital areas of work.
- **Children's Hearings Scotland:** this relates to the successful functioning operations of CHS as an organisation. CHS will role model and demonstrate the ways in which the methods of consultation, engagement, participation, co-design and co-production can be used to improve our everyday work and practice.<sup>1</sup>

## 2 PROGRESS REPORT

A chronology of work undertaken can be found below:

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<sup>1</sup> CHS Children's rights and inclusion strategy

**STRATEGY LAUNCH November 2020** This month marked the launch of the Children’s Rights and Inclusion Strategy and the start of the new Children’s Rights and Inclusion Co-ordinator (CRIC). In the context of the global pandemic it was always going to be a challenge to embed change. With this in mind the post holders focus was on finding out exactly where **Children’s Hearings Scotland** was at on that change journey by working alongside the CHS National Team and a group of Hearings experienced young people. The commitment and determination of the organisation and the young people to realise the ambitions of the strategy and got to work on a plan with some proposals quickly became clear.

**FAMILIARISATION November 2020 – January 2021**

Between **November 2020 and January 2021** the CRIC took time with **CHS Area Support Improvement Partners** to understand what participation looked like in each area. This work revealed that some areas had lots of engagement with existing groups and Champions Boards whereas other areas were at an earlier stage of engagement with young people in their community. All Area Support and Improvement Partners were welcoming and committed to improvement and had lots of ideas about how we could improve engagement. Some suggestions included; involving more young people and adults with care experience in all aspects of our work (*with particular focus on The Promise and The CHS Change Programme*), some Top Tips for Participation so that all team members within Area Support Teams would have a good understanding of meaningful participation and engagement, there was also the extended offer to young people from Health Assured which was at the time on offer to CHS volunteers (*this was warmly welcomed by young people already engaged in the work of CHS*).

This work also revealed some of the challenges faced by Area Support Teams in supporting meaningful engagement of Hearings experienced people. Some felt anxious about not being able to offer young people the support they may need whilst volunteering their time to CHS. (*Local buddy systems and the Health Assured offer really helped ease some of the concern here*).

**CHILDREN’S RIGHTS AND WELLBEING IMPACT ASSESSMENTS March 2021**

In March 2021 we identified the need for a Children’s Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment on the use of audio only **Children’s Hearings**. Working alongside Claire Gibson, Area Support and Improvement Partner in Tayside and Fife we explored their use and impact of them on the rights and wellbeing of children and young people. The conclusion of this piece of work was that audio only hearings must only be carried out where absolutely necessary. This was our first foray into Children’s Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments and future pieces of work will adopt this approach.

**PANEL MEMBER RECRUITMENT February – April 2021**

The involvement of young people with lived experience in the recruitment and selection of new Panel Members was prioritised and was a great success. Every Area Support Team had

young people supporting them with recruitment through interviews and further supported them with developing some of pre-service training. Prior to participating in recruitment and selection all of our lived experience participants received training and support alongside AST members.

Device support and internet access proved challenging for some young people – another aspect affecting participation. CHS provided a library of devices to enable people to have suitable digital access on a short term basis. Each area support team worked hard to learn what was available in each area and used local support organisations such as Who Cares? Scotland to support the engagement of young people. We also explored remuneration options to say thank you to young people for their time and expertise and decided that remuneration in gift vouchers would be a good option for now. This is an area that has been identified as something we need to improve on as we go forward. Spend can be found at **Appendix 1**

### **CHILDREN’S RIGHTS AND INCLUSION HUB December 2020 – Present**

Whilst the panel member recruitment was ongoing, there was the introduction of the **Children’s Rights and Inclusion HUB** where those volunteers with lived experience of the Hearings system could connect, reflect and plan within regular **Digital Drop Ins**. The Drop Ins were well attended and gave the young people a chance to connect with other young people across the country who were involved in recruitment of panel members. It worked really well because some had been involved in the work of CHS for many years, whereas others were very new to the experience. This also gave the group a chance to reflect on their own experience of the Hearings system as children, young people and now as volunteers. Given the nature of the discussion we offered support from Health Assured throughout and many reflected that having an Area Support Buddy was really helpful. This group has become our go to group / sounding board over the last few months.

The Children’s Rights and Inclusion HUB offered the existing group the opportunity to influence and guide the development of;

- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy**
- **CHS Participation Standards**

### **SUPPORT DURING PRE SERVICE TRAINING April – July+**

Whilst individuals do not always tell us that they have lived experience we were aware of a number of people, with lived experience of hearings or of the care system, coming forward as trainee panel members this year. CHSLA working virtually provided additional drop in sessions outside of training, sharing information on support levels including Health Assured where helpful. Members of the CHS team and CHSLA worked with independent consultant Gayle Rice (this was offered free through Kinharvie <https://www.kinharvie.org.uk/> to map out support pathways for volunteers at various stages of their journey with CHS including during training. These pathways are being now being built into our activity.

**LIVED EXPERIENCE ADULTS GROUP November 2020 – Present**

This group has lived experience of the hearings system as well as work and / or voluntary experience connected to hearings. They contribute views and ideas on the development of the Children's Rights and Inclusion hub.

**EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT**

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy was participation in the form of consultation with the Hearings experienced group of young people it was welcomed because the young people's feedback would directly impact the strategy and they were able to not only sense check what had already been developed but added new suggestions and improved the strategy. We adopted JamBoard, an interactive online idea collection tool to capture views on the strategy and how it could link directly to improving the experience of people going to children's hearings. The big message was that inclusion was paramount.

**CHS PARTICIPATION STANDARDS July – present (with a proposed launch in October)**

Since starting the Children's Rights and Inclusion role in November 2020 our CIRC identified some key themes that need to be addressed;

- Support for involving people with lived experience in the work of CHS
- The need for more co-design opportunities
- The need for more planning and notice when involving lived experience
- The lack of momentum and de-brief following a period of involvement

Having explored the possibility of an advisory board and a modern apprentice it was decided that both would be too soon in terms of the levels of support required. First the foundations need to be in place. With all the CHS Community having a comprehensive understanding of the role, purpose and support required when involving people with lived experience there was a clear need for Participation Standards.

In July 2021 we brought together 4 young people with not only lived experience of the Hearings system but also campaigning experience and experience of volunteering with CHS. This group have been meeting regularly and now have a draft of 6 Participation Standards that will influence, advise and guide the way that CHS involve people with lived experience.

At the end of September the draft standards will be taken to a group of 7 Hearings experienced adults who also have professional and volunteer experience of the Hearings system. This group will be welcomed to review and improve the Standards. The hope is to then connect with the panel member community who will also be welcomed to give their feedback on the standards. Once all feedback has been captured we will return to the group of young people for final approval and hope to launch the standards in early October 2021.



With the Participation Standards in place we can build an implementation plan and move on to building new opportunities for Hearings experienced people to get involved in the work of CHS.

## **NETWORKING – November 2020 – Present**

**Working relationships have been established with the following organisations:**

- WhoCares? Scotland
- Children’s Parliament
- Children 1<sup>st</sup>
- Talking Mats
- The HUB for SUCCESS
- Project Change
- CELCIS
- The Promise
- CYCJ
- STARR group Secure Care Standards implementation
- Our Hearings, Our Voice
- SCRA

## **3 CIRC REFLECTIONS**

In the context of working remotely with Hearings experienced people during the pandemic this has had some challenges, however with a focus on building relationships with 2 core groups of care experienced young people and adults we are building strong foundations for meaningful and purposeful participation and engagement across CHS.

With the new Children’s Hearings working group now established and the CHS Change Programme underway we are now at an exciting time of opportunity and continued support and commitment across CHS and the Senior Management Team we will put the voice of lived experience at the heart of what we do.

Our hopes for the Children’s Rights and Inclusion HUB remain, bringing the Children’s Rights and Inclusion Strategy to life in three ways. Building a menu of options for care experienced people to get involved in change and improvements across CHS is the first step. The second is to continue our commitment to partnership working with the Our Hearings, Our Voice group to embed the 40 calls to action and keeping the promise. The third is to contribute to the co-design of Children’s Hearings. This has a direct link to the work of the Childrens Hearings system working group.

#### 4 FORWARD PLANS - HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR NEXT PHASE

- **September 2021 - Dedicate webpage for the Children’s Rights and Inclusion HUB;**
  - An update from the group
  - An update from Board Member Beth-Ann Logan on the Children’s Hearings Working Group
  - An update from Amy on practice developments
  - A “get involved” option
- **September 2021 – November 2021** Children (Scotland) Act Project Working Group Phase 2
- **October 2021 Focus on 2021 Recruitment** (Reflections from the group, some consultation and planning for the next recruitment campaign in 2022)
- **November 2021 An update to the Children’s Rights and Inclusion Strategy**

#### NEXT STEPS FOR THE CHILDREN’S RIGHTS AND INCLUSION HUB

- A focus on Hearings and The Change Programme: more links with Area Support Teams
- Trauma Informed Project Working Group
- UNCRC Project Working Group
- Children’s Rights Training Module
- Advisory Board Concept Revisited: ensuring that the Participation Standards are implemented
- Reporting Back to Our Hearings Our Voice: regular communication/feedback to be established
- Capacity Building: New Modern Apprentice, more team members for the Children’s Rights and Inclusion HUB

DRAFT

**Agenda item 11**  
**CHS-2122-24**

**Promise Improvement Projects Report**

**Accountable Director:** Carol Wassell  
**Report author:** James Allan  
**Purpose:** For consideration and Discussion  
**Resources implications:** James Allan & Michael Beardmore in process of designing reporting function on ASIP work going forward  
**Equalities duties:** Equalities Impact Assessment Required

**Yes**                      **No**

**1. Introduction**

1.1 CHS have invested in building the capacity in the ASIP team to be able to deliver improvement across Scotland using a Quality Improvement framework, and allowing for personal and professional development. This is being achieved by :

- Individual monthly coaching sessions with an SG Improvement Lead
- Monthly project surgeries to share learning and get feedback
- Delivery of ‘on the job’ improvement projects

1.2 We are working with the Leading Improvement Team at the Scottish Government to support the team understanding how to set aims, engage improvement teams, create the conditions for change, develop clear plans, and provide measurement plans that evidence change for improvement. While the first phase of this work (March 2021 to Feb 2022) is focused on the team taking on projects that while delivering improvement in a real world environment, the priority is to allow for opportunities to use the taught framework and methodologies which can then be used on a more cohesive range of national projects across Scotland. This will support us in the redesign of the children’s hearing system and bring clarity and fidelity to our expected outcomes supported by evidence and data that demonstrates success. The current projects are taking place across a number of ASTs that were felt to be our early adopters and willing volunteers, and drives improvement in the here and now for children who are already in the hearing system. Some of our aspirations for the pace of this change have had to be managed in light of the other pressures on people at the moment : covid, digital role out, capacity issues in some ASTs. However people continue to engage in the learning which will stand us in good stead as we go forward into 2022.

**2. Reporting statistics (the numbers)**

2.1 Overall status across our **22** ASTs

- Number of ASTs with LIVE QI projects: **11**
- How many LIVE QI projects have a local risk register: **0**

- How many LIVE QI projects have an end date with measureable outcomes: **3**

2.2 Breakdown of LIVE QI project themes

- 3 x Deferred hearings
- 2 x Sibling inclusion (CSA\_2020)
- 2 x CYP friendly language in hearings
- 2 x CYP voice & participation in hearings
- 1 x Advocacy in hearings
- 1 x Social work reports

2.3 Breakdown of current LIVE project stages (LIT stage key – appendix 1.0)

- 2 x stage 1
- 4 x stage 2
- 3 x stage 3
- 1 x stage 4
- 1 x stage 5

Appendix 1.0

Score	Stage of Project	Description
1	Project area identified and agreed	Project has been identified and agreed with senior supporters
2	Project Plan and team in place	Project Planning documentation (rationale, aims, scope, resources, timescales, measures, expected outcomes) completed and project team formed.
3	Understanding system	Current state - applying tools to understand processes and people, including readiness for change and analysis of baseline data
4	Aim and change theory developed	Knowledge of the system and other evidence of what could work have been brought together into a theory of change
5	Change ideas and project measures	Range of specific change ideas developed, measurement plans established and initial pdsa's being planned
6	Testing underway	Testing strategy developed, and is being deployed. Data being gathered and charted.
7	Initial indications of improvement	Anecdotal evidence or feedback that changes are resulting in improvement.
8	Improvements achieved	Evidence of improvements shows in project measures. Implementation plans are being developed and deployed.
9	Sustainable improvement	Implementation plans have been deployed for key changes. Data indicates sustainability of impact of changes implemented in system.
10	Project complete	The aim was met or exceeded and improvement sustained. Changes are

3. QI Project Narratives

<p><b>Central &amp; West Lothian</b> (stage 4 - Sibling Inclusion_CSA-2020)</p>	<p>Title; <u>Stand Up For Siblings / CSA 2020</u> - By Dec 2021, 90% of children and young children attending Hearings, who are not currently living with their brothers/sisters, will have contact discussed at their Hearings with the aim of ensuring that brother/sister relationships have been maintained. We have a well established project team which has representation from SCRA and members of the local community. Although we do not have someone with lived experience within the team, we regularly engage with the Champs Boards and advocacy providers to ensure that the work we are undertaking is aligned to the ask of young people within our communities. The project has also enabled us to bring together social work team leaders across the four local authorities to provide a consistent approach to reporting and are working with SCRA on the collection of data to ensure the success of the project can be evidenced.</p>
<p><b>Aberdeen &amp; Aberdeenshire</b> (stage 2 - Child friendly language in hearings)</p>	<p>Title; <u>Write Right About Me</u> - This project is currently linked to a much bigger multi-agency project in Aberdeen, Write Right About Me. The Each and Every Child (toolkit) team are engaged and involved with the project and a workshop on appropriate language is being arranged. A baseline assessment is being developed by our project group to enable us to identify and evidence the outcomes we are seeking. We are aiming to start gathering this data in October. We hope to see and hear age and stage appropriate language being used in hearings, challenging the adult legal jargon and phrases that are rolled out in every hearing.</p>
<p><b>Highland &amp; Moray</b> (stage 2 - CYP voice &amp; participation in hearings)</p>	<p>Title; <u>Voice and Participation of CYP</u> - We are currently calling our project group the Better Meetings Implementation Group. The project is a partnership with Who Cares Scotland, SCRA and the Highland and Moray Social Work teams. It has come from the strong messages that were presented at our Spring forum by the care experienced young people included in the Who Cares Scotland Better Meetings group. The emphasis is to give the local children and young people a greater say in how their hearings are run, by listening to their concerns and giving them choices about how they participate, in the hope that they will feel more comfortable, well prepared and supported before, during and after their hearings.</p>
<p><b>Glasgow</b> (stage 3 - Sibling Inclusion_CSA-2020)</p>	<p>Title - <u>Children's Scotland Act 2020, Maintaining brother / sister relationships</u> - Aim - 90% of children/young people who attend a children's hearing will have contact with brothers/sisters discussed, by end of Dec 2021. We have a working group set up within Glasgow with the initial focus on preparing the Panel Community for the implementation of CSA on the 26th of July, encouraging uptake of training, organising a briefing session for panel members and our partners etc. Now the focus has shifted to reviewing the impact of the legislation.</p>
<p><b>Argyle &amp; Bute</b> (stage 2 - CYP voice &amp; participation in hearings)</p>	<p>Title: <u>Reducing Attendance barriers for Children and Young people</u> - Aim: To increase the number of C &amp; YP attending their hearings in Argyll &amp; Bute by **% through identification and reduction of barriers. (Baseline data still to be collated). After initial introduction of identified area for improvement, the Project Team has increased in numbers and now consists of 14 members from the Panel Community, Advocacy, Participation Officer, Children and Families Services &amp; CE Young person. The Project Proposal will be shared at the Argyll &amp; Bute Corporate Parenting Board meeting on 13th August to ensure wider awareness across all relevant sectors and local elected members. The first Project Team meeting will take place on 25th August where our Driver Diagram will be created and shared.</p>

<p><b>East Renfrewshire</b> (stage 1- Advocacy in hearings )</p>	<p>Title; <u>Efficiency of Advocacy in the Hearings System</u> - This project has been identified and actioned by tripartite working between myself, LRM and the advocacy agency involved. A short time limited survey of all hearing discussions within a time frame 990 session) will be subject to a qualitative and and quantitative survey to establish base line measure of LA SW's and C&amp;F's referred awareness of, and referral to advocacy services, as well as the impact this has had upon the CYP feeling that their views are being represented and considered by panel members.</p>
<p><b>West Dunbartonshire</b> (stage 5 - Social work reports)</p>	<p>Title; <u>Improving Quality of Social Work Reports</u> - Reports to hearings in West Dunbartonshire. Project came out of PM comments on report quality. Agreed to take improvement approach to it. Multi agency group has been set up, including Champions Board. Surveys conducted with PMs, SCRA and Social Workers to get views on current format. Examples of reports gathered from elsewhere. Draft format now compiled, starting to look at testing. Found the need to balance/juggle improvement methodology with desire of partners to push on and get results.</p>
<p><b>Inverclyde</b> (stage 1 - Deferred hearings)</p>	<p>Title; <u>Deferred hearings in Inverclyde</u> - Limited progress so far, for mix of reasons. Mainly because it has been impossible to get Social Work to the table because of their own internal pressures, including lack of staff, at operational and management level. Also because of other pressures on AST members. Data collection has started but some difficulty in getting consistent returns from panel members. National data suggests that deferral levels in Inverclyde are variable but can be high. There have been discussions with AC on how to take this forward but it needs decisions made on the project viability at this time.</p>
<p><b>Fife</b> (stage 3 - Deferred hearings)</p>	<p>Title; <u>Addressing Drift and Delay</u> - In Fife we have chosen to establish a Fife Promise Programme Team who will coordinate all the local promise activity in Fife. This Promise team will also be the link to other promise focused improvements in partner organisations, the core link between the AST, the community and all promise work. Central to this will be the involvement of people with lived experience and we are working on establishing this from the very beginning of the creation of the group. In Fife we want to reduce the time that children and young people spend in Childrens Hearings, removing unnecessary drift and delay to the legal decisions needed for their care and protection. We know that the longer a child is part of the hearing system, the poorer their outcomes. We've started with the data that told us Fife had a higher than average deferment rate, we've started to track that data from Jan 2019. To gather panel member insight and inform our conversations about change ideas, we've released a survey to the community that will gather data every time a hearing is deferred. We have also engaged our local partners, including SCRA, social work, advocacy and safeguarder to our improvement project. We look forward to reporting progress in the future.</p>
<p><b>Ayrshire</b> (stage 3 - Deferred hearings)</p>	<p>Title; <u>Reduction in Deferred Hearings</u> - Deferrals across Ayrshire as a whole are currently running at 25% overall. However within one LA area, the deferral level is nearer 30%. The improvement project will focus within this council initially as a "test site" and the impact and results will be monitored and shared within the AST and strategic discussions at LA level to influence planning and decision making. This will link into Theme 1 - Better protect &amp; Uphold the rights of children and Theme 4 - Be well informed and influential of the AST area plan and crosses the CHS QI project themes of CSA, UNCRC.</p>

**Agenda item 11**  
**CHS-2122-25**

**Brand and Language Development – Project Update**

**Accountable Director:** Lynne Harrison, Depute CEO  
**Report author:** Louise Farmer, Communications & Engagement Lead  
**Purpose:** For consideration and Discussion  
**Resources implications:** NA  
**Equalities duties:** Equalities Impact Assessment Required

**Yes**            **No**

**1. Purpose**

1.1 This paper provides an overview of the Children’s Hearings Scotland’s (CHS) brand refresh which includes an evolution of our current brand design and a review of the language we use across the organisation, informed by our work with Frameworks Institute and people with lived experience of hearings.

**2. Background**

2.1 In 2020, the organisation undertook a brand review workshop supported by Charlotte Street Partners, that identified a refreshed brand messaging framework.

CHS has a brand identity, developed around the advent of the organisation. This has been in transition for around two years.

2.2 Having a strong brand identity is critical for the organisation as it looks to re-shape the children’s hearings system and deliver on its commitment to The Promise. A clear tone of voice and communications strategy will allow CHS to reinforce key messages both internally and externally. The organisation also requires a clearly defined brand ‘look and feel’ which will support CHS in reinforcing key messages and the delivery of communications activity.

**3. Brand design**

3.1 The refreshed brand design has been created in keeping with feedback from the above mentioned workshop which identified themes including: trustworthy, skilled, leaders of change.

3.2 Brand design has already started to evolve (see 3.3 below) using colour, icons and design to signpost our different areas of work and expertise. Our refreshed brand look and feel can also flex depending on the audience its speaking to (see 3.4 below)

3.3 Over the course of the next three to six months the Communications Team will be looking to: create a more consistent branding for video content, including developing an ‘animation’ style for the organisation, and updating key branded assets (e.g. presentation decks, templates).



3.4 The evolution of our brand:



3.5 Adapting our brand to speak to different audiences:

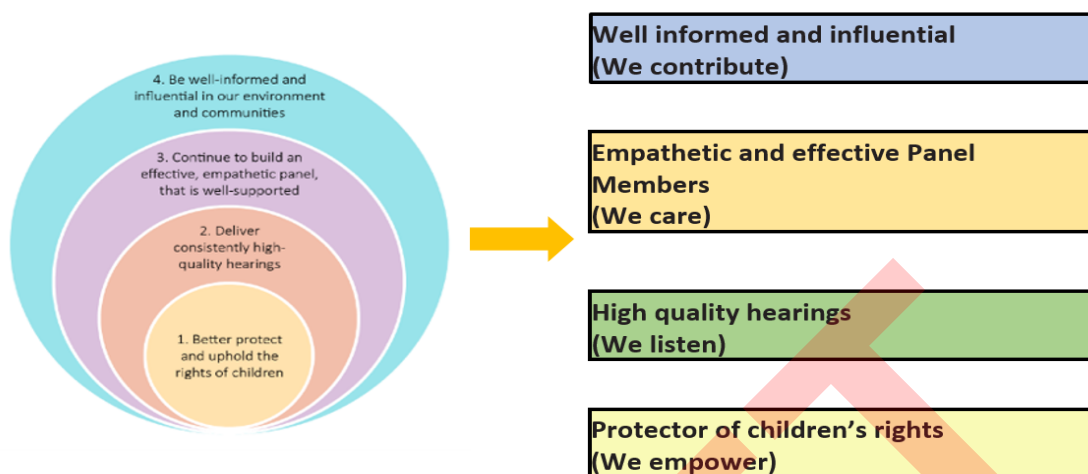
# CHS for everyone

We adapt our brand's look and feel to suit who we're talking to, and how we feel it's best to communicate with them.



4. Language

- 4.1 The CHS language framework has been designed using feedback from a range of sources: the 2019 and 2021 recruitment working groups including the work CHS did with [the Frameworks Institute](#), the [Each and Every Child toolkit](#) and the workshop undertaken in conjunction with Charlotte Street Partners. It focuses on CHS' strategic themes.



- 4.2 Our message house features key messages associated with each of the pillars and examples of where they can be found in e.g. everyday conversation, our internal and external communications.
- 4.3 The language used in the message house has been carefully chosen, informed by the learnings from Frameworks and our engagement with people with lived experience to ensure we are Trauma aware in our messaging approaches.
- 4.4 Our full framework for the 4 key 2021/22 Strategic Objectives is featured in Appendix 1.

## 5. Ongoing development work

- 5.1 It is imperative that given the changing landscape our message house can flex and adapt, and it will be subject to ongoing review and development.
- 5.2 The Communications Team will roll the message house out across the organisation to ensure a consistent approach to language and communication. It will be complemented by a suite of communications tools' and learning sessions to support its use.
- 5.3 It is imperative that we get the language and tone of our communications right, be they verbal or written, and that there is a clear understanding of the importance of this within the National Team and wider CHS community.
- 5.4 To this end, the Communications Lead, Children's Rights and Inclusion Coordinator and SMT are also working with the Each and Every Child team to explore opportunities to workshop the [Each and Every Child toolkit](#) developed by The Frameworks Institute. This Team are also working with The Promise Team on language projects. The aim of these workshops is to help embed the value of clear, consistent and trauma informed communications that will underpin how we communicate about who we are and what we do.

## Appendix 1 – CHS Message Houses

### Pillar: High quality hearings (We listen)

#### Key messages

- We listen with compassion to make sure infants, children, young people, and their families feel cared for.
- We learn from people who have hearings experience to help make things better.  
- *We learn from people who have care experience to help make hearings better.*
- We are committed to regular training so children’s hearings are always high quality.
- We work with partners to ensure we are up-to-date with important changes.

#### Where will we find them?

When we talk about improving the hearings experience, for example in current work to improve virtual and hybrid hearings, or to ensure they are trauma-responsive. Also relevant is complaints, and practice advice (including the Practice and Procedure Manual).

#### What might we say?

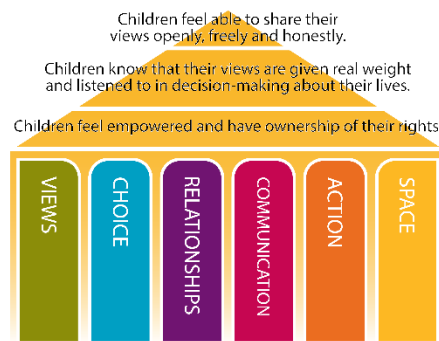
When we think about how to design virtual hearings we listen to the children and families who attend hearings to ensure their views are taken into account.

*Or*

Our new trauma-responsive training is vital to developing the skills of our Panel Members, and making sure hearings are caring spaces.

\*\*\*\*

**Pillar: Protector of children’s rights (We empower)**



**Key messages**

- We work together to make sure infants, children and young people are cared for and that their rights are protected.
- We make sure children and young people feel able to speak openly and honestly in their hearings.
- We want children and young people to feel empowered at a children’s hearing.
- We look after infants, children and young people’s wellbeing first and foremost.
- We are committed to regular training so children’s hearings are always high quality.

**Where will we find them?**

When we talk about new legislation such as UNCRC, siblings, and age of criminal responsibility, as well as existing legislation such as advocacy, and our Children’s Rights and Inclusion Strategy.

**What might we say?**

We champion a hearings system where children are heard, protected, and empowered.

*Or*

We are encouraging the use of advocates in the hearing room as they can give children the confidence to share their feelings openly.

\*\*\*\*

**Pillar: Empathetic and effective Panel Members (We care)**

**Key messages**

- Panel Members are well supported to make decisions in the best interests of children and young people.
- Panel Members are caring people, committed to making a difference in their local communities.
- We value Panel Members' skills, expertise and commitment.
- We care about Panel Members' wellbeing and do everything we can to support them.
- We are committed to regular training so children's hearings are always high quality.

**Where will we find them?**

When we talk about volunteer recruitment, recognition, and retention, as well as training and engagement activities. They are also relevant to local area plans, equality, diversity and inclusion, and wellbeing support.

**What might we say?**

We support Panel Member wellbeing as much as we possibly can, for example we have our local buddy systems, and a national support package which includes a 24-hour helpline and counselling.

*Or*

Our training programme, provided by the Learning Academy, gives Panel Members the knowledge they need to make decisions in the best interests of infants, children and young people.

\*\*\*\*

**Pillar: Well informed and influential (We contribute)**

**Key messages**

- We work with partners to lead improvements to the hearings system.
- We are open minded and ambitious for our unique hearings system, and for the children it serves.
- We educate ourselves every day so we can build the best possible hearings system.
- We always contribute to the wider conversation about care.

**Where will we find them?**

When we talk about our digital tools, or the collaborative work we do with partners to make improvements in line with The Promise. Also relevant is our work with the research sector to develop our knowledge, as well as areas such as staff development and our People Strategy.

**What might we say?**

Currently we are working with partners such as SCRA, and care experienced people, on how designing hearings with children and families could hugely improve the experience.

Or

It's only through working with the children and communities we serve that we can build the best possible hearings system.

DRAFT

**Agenda item 12**  
**CHS-2122-26a**

**Quarter 2 Performance Report**

**Accountable SMT member:** Head of Strategy, Development & DCE  
**Report author:** National Quality & Performance Lead  
**Resources implications:** Within available resources  
**Purpose:** For Assurance  
**Equalities duties:** Equalities Impact Assessment Required  
 Yes       No

**1. Introduction / Purpose:**

This paper describes accompanies the Quarter 2 Performance Report, 2021-2, and identifies 2 Objectives for de-scoping from this year’s workload.

**2. Comment:**

The following Objectives are marked as amber or red:

- 13 – RED- Review of Advocacy experiences – propose de-scoping to focus Practice capacity. CHS will continue to contribute nationally to advocacy via Expert Reference Group.
- 22 – engagement events – AMBER - marked amber to acknowledge that the whole objective has been retimed with work not yet due for reporting on.
- 23 – Area Plans – AMBER - significant progress has been made here over the last quarter, with 19/22 ASTs having submitted a plan by end Q2. Development of the plans has been shifted to in Q3 to allow final ASTs time.
- 25 – Equality Diversity & Inclusion Strategy – AMBER – COVID has made it difficult to launch this work successfully, but progress is now planned for Q3. Marked amber to acknowledge this work has been delayed.
- 26 – Evaluation of devices pilot – RED – propose de-scoping and reintroducing in 2022/23 to allow digital focus on virtual hearings improvements.
- 30 – Digital systems improvements – AMBER- Strategy and solutions for use of digital in hearings has progressed well over Q2, but Objective flagged amber to highlight delay in management information development work. A technical sprint focussed on this work is now planned for October.
- 35 – Equalities Outcomes –AMBER – work has been delayed due to need to align with Equality Diversity & Inclusion Strategy. Progress is expected in Q3, however.

This quarterly Performance Report should be read in conjunction with the Q3-4 draft Business Plan and accompanying cover paper, as this identifies what objectives and milestones will be carried forward to the second half of the year, and what may need to change.

**3. Board Actions:**

The Board are asked to note the content of report and approve the proposed de-scoping of 2 Objectives (13 and 26).

# Children's Hearings Scotland: Quarterly Performance Report

## QUARTER 2 (July, Aug, Sept 2021)



### Quarter Summary - Objectives:

	Objectives				
	B	G	A	R	-
COVID-19 Recovery	8	1	0	0	0
Theme 1 - Rights	0	3	0	1	1
Theme 2 - Hearings	2	3	0	0	0
Theme 3 - Panel	3	2	3	1	0
Theme 4 - Evidence & Environment	0	3	1	0	0
Organisational Effectiveness and Staff Support	0	2	1	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

<b>Key:</b>
Blue = Objective completed
Green = Objective on track to be completed on time / budget
Amber = Objective at risk of not being delivered on time / budget, partially descoped, or whole objective re-timed
Red = Objective at serious risk of not being delivered on time / budget - or Objective has been descoped
Dash (-) = Not yet due for reporting / update

### Milestones:

	Number of Milestones at End Q2
Planned to Complete*	29
Completed - Actual	27
Still to Complete	33
Descoped	2 (proposed)

\* as published in the Business Plan

### Q2 Note

CHS committed to reviewing its published plans during the year. A supplementary business plan, covering Q3-4 will therefore be published at the end of Q2. Where objectives or milestones were originally scheduled for Q1 and 2 delivery initially, but now need to be included in to Q3 or 4 because recovery or need is still on-going, this is noted in the narrative update.



## COVID-19 Recovery

	Business Objective and Owner	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4				
1	Work closely with SCRA nationally and locally to monitor and manage the <b>recovery of the hearings</b> system, matching capacity with need - <i>Area Support; SMT; Resilience Group</i>					1.1 Strategic and operational collaborative activities with colleagues, locally and nationally	Progress to end Q2, initially	Q1: 50% Q2: 100%	Nationally, CHS and SCRA Senior Teams have continued to meet on a bi-weekly basis. Collaboration around recovery data continues. Objective to be renewed beyond Q2 in plan for Q3-4.
2	Keep our volunteer community updated on what the changing environment means for hearings and recovery through <b>effective communication</b> – <i>Communications; Senior Management Team (SMT)</i>					2.1 Produce and distribute “Coronavirus Updates” to the whole CHS volunteer community	Progress to end Q2, initially	Q1: 50% Q2: 100%	Updates on operations have been distributed to the community as stand-alone items and in the newsletter. Objective to be renewed beyond Q2.
						2.2 Communicate specifically to our Area Conveners, through a programme of regular calls	Progress to end Q2, initially	Q1: 50% Q2:100%	Bi-weekly ‘AST Operations’ meetings have been taking place, bringing together ACs and CHS staff. New Teams channel also introduced. Objective to be extended beyond Q2.
3	Ensure we understand the impact of COVID-19 on hearings by monitoring and reporting on our use of <b>emergency legislation</b> – <i>Quality &amp; Performance</i>					3.1 Record data on Panel Composition and supply to Scottish Government	Progress during legislation	Q1: 30% Q2:100%	Reports for March-May, and May-July completed. Legislation expires end Sept.
						3.2 Produce supplementary data reports in partnership with SCRA	Progress during legislation	Q1: 30% Q2:100%	Reports for March-May, and May-July completed. Legislation expires end Sept.
4	Improve the capacity of the hearings system to carry out any outstanding hearings and handle future need by completing the <b>recruitment and training</b> of new Panel Members – <i>Recruitment and Retention; Training</i>					4.1 Complete interviews and pre-service checks	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100%	All recommended trainees were moved to pre-service training phase in Q1.
						4.2 Deliver online pre-service training	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100%	Online pre-service training ran from early April to mid-June.

	Business Objective and Owner	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4				
5	Re-instate <b>observations by Panel Practice Advisors</b> to quality assure hearings practice and conduct – <i>Resilience Group</i>	█	█			5.1 Confirm route to return and support / guidance required	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100%	Supporting the return of our PPAs to observations, revised guidance for observation practice including virtual and face to face hearings is in production to support the start of the phased return of PPAs commencing before the end of June. Additional practical learning sessions have been added to the PPA training pathway to support return for existing PPAs and those recently appointed.
						5.2 Begin to implement the route the return	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100%	
6	In collaboration with SCRA, improve the virtual hearings experience by running <b>pilots</b> testing new platforms and way of working - <i>Digital</i>	█	█			6.1 Delivery of pilots across Scotland	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100%	RAVHI pilots ran in Fife, Glasgow, CWL, Edinburgh and South East covering approx.. 60% of hearings. Additional piloting of key elements has also taken place in Ayrshire and Highland and Moray.
						6.2 Evaluation of pilot and recommendations for future	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100%	Evaluation took place has led to the roll out of the RAVHI operational model.
7	Ensure <b>CHS staff</b> are supported to undertake their work safely and productively, while managing their wellbeing effectively during restrictions – <i>HR &amp; OD; SMT; Staff Forum</i>	█	█			7.1 Undertake relevant actions to enable a phased return to the use of office space	Progress to end Q2, initially	Q1:25% Q2: 100%	Occasional meetings have now been taking place in Thistle House. Staff survey ran in Q2. Milestone to be renewed and expanded in plan for Q3-4.
						7.2 Undertake relevant activities to promote staff wellbeing through the Staff Forum	Progress to end Q2, initially	Q1: 50% Q2:100%	Staff Forum continues to lead on this and has encouraged opportunities for activities designed to promote wellbeing. This included linking to Mental Health Awareness Week. Milestone to be renewed in plan for Q3-4.

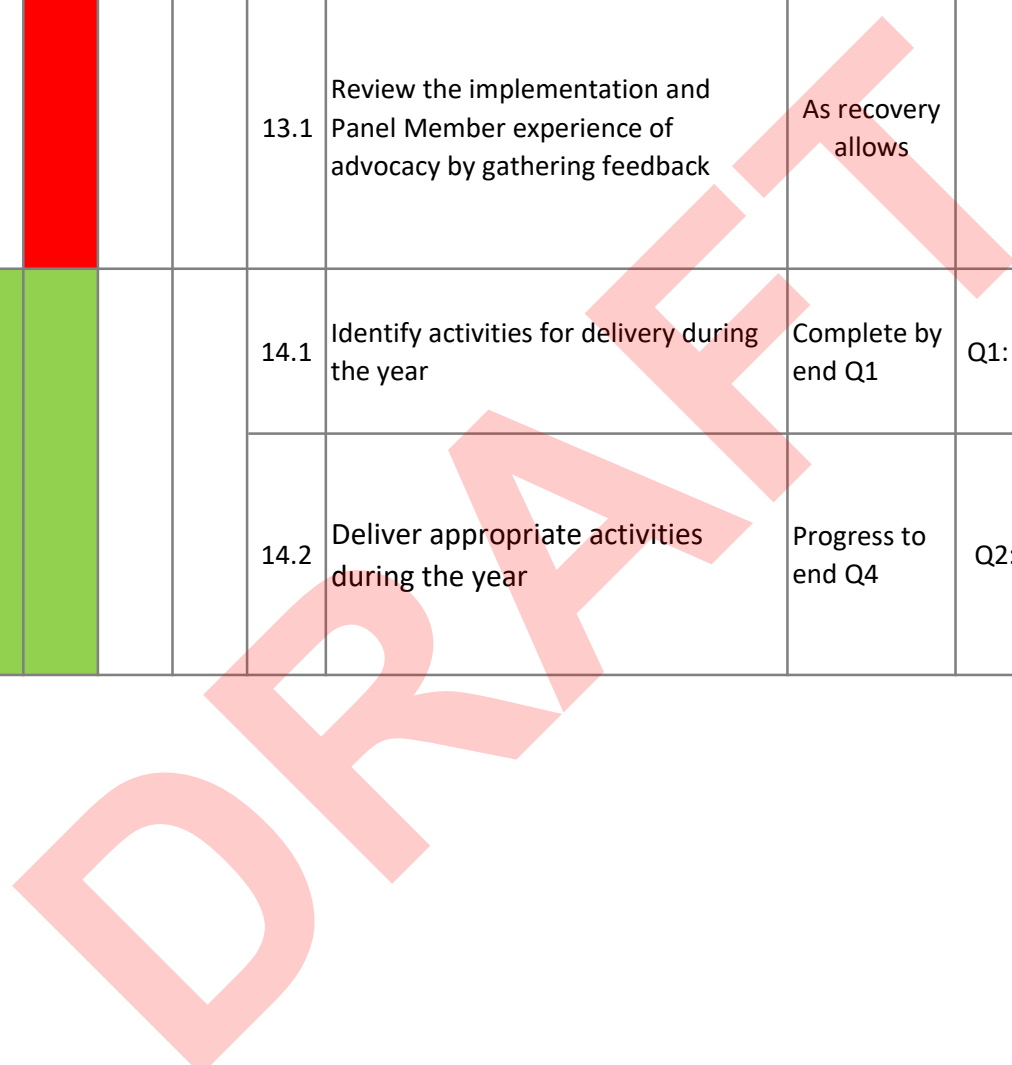
	Business Objective and Owner	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
8	<p><b>Support our volunteers</b> to continue to deliver hearings during restriction, while looking after their wellbeing – <i>Area Support; Resilience Group; Digital</i></p>	█	█			8.1	Continue to promote and develop our volunteer wellbeing package	Progress to end Q4	Q1:25% Q2:50%	Q2: Expense claims for flu jabs will again be available for volunteers.
						8.2	Continue the provision of, and support with, devices across the community	Progress to end Q4	Q1: 25% Q2:50%	Support for the 1700 chrombeooks continues as part of the overall digital support offer. This includes responding to specific enquiries made by individual volunteers.
						8.3	Work alongside ASTs to understand and manage capacity to deliver hearings	Progress to end Q4	Q1: 25% Q2: 50%	Local planning is on-going with partner agencies. Nationally, data exercises have been undertaken to assess capacity.
9	<p>Contribute to whole-system recovery by working with partners at <b>national multi-agency leadership groups and forums</b> focussed on hearings and children's services recovery - <i>SMT</i></p>	█	█			9.1	Participation in multi-agency recovery groups and meetings	Progress to end Q2, initially	Q1: 50% Q2:100%	CHS continues to participate in, and take a leadership role, the Children's Hearings Covid Recovery Group (CHCRG). This group continues to meet, so objective will be renewed beyond Q2 in plan for Q3-4.

## Theme 1: Better Protect and Uphold the Rights of Children

Business Objective and Owner	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4				
10 Under our <b>Promise Programme</b> , carry out activities to give further effect to the <b>UNCRC</b> in our work, in line with its incorporation in to law – <i>Area Support; Practice</i>	-				10.1 Implement UNCRC by delivering learning and development to all volunteers	Progress to end Q4	Q2: 10%	UNCRC Project Team being created as planned, by start of Q3. These key milestones will be incorporated into the project plan as a priority.
					10.2 Focus on ensuring the views of the child on decisions that are made in hearings are included in the Record of proceedings from a hearing	Progress to end Q4	Q2: 10%	UNCRC Project Team being created as planned, by start of Q3. These key milestones will be incorporated into the project plan as a priority.
					10.3 Engage Panel Practice Advisors (PPAs) to quality assure the voice of the child in heard in hearings (or that of their carer if they are unable to verbally express their views)	Progress to end Q4	Q2: 10%	UNCRC Project Team being created as planned, by start of Q3. These key milestones will be incorporated into the project plan as a priority.
					10.4 Area Support Improvement Partners work with multiagency partners to ensure PMs have the information they need to avoid delay in decision making	Progress to end Q4	Q2: 10%	UNCRC Project Team being created as planned, by start of Q3. These key milestones will be incorporated into the project plan as a priority.

	Business Objective and Owner	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
11	Under our <b>Promise Programme</b> , carry out activities to ensure compliance with the <b>Children (Scotland) Act</b> in our work– <i>Area Support; Practice</i>	-				11.1	Implement the principles of the Children (Scotland) 2020 Act through learning and development delivered to volunteers through the CHS Learning Academy	Complete by end Q2	Q1: 75% Q2: 100%	New learning module released as planned, with part 2 learning module due by end of Q3
						11.2	Focus on ensuring the inclusion of brothers and sisters is accurately reflected in written reasons for decision	Progress to end Q4	Q2: 10%	CSA_2020 project Phase 2 started from September 2021 - This heavily involves the measurement of outcomes and evidencing impact. On track for end Q4
						11.3	Engage PPAs to quality assure the inclusion of brothers and sisters in hearings (or that of their carer if unable to verbally express their view).	Progress to end Q4	Q2: 10%	
						11.4	Area Support Improvement Partners work with multiagency partners to ensure PMs have the information they need to avoid delay in decision making	Progress to end Q4	Q2: 10%	
12	Ensure our Panel Members understand the change in the <b>Age of Criminal Responsibility</b> – <i>Area Support; Practice</i>	-	-			12.1	Implement legislative changes through learning and development with support from the CHS Learning Academy	As required by legislation timescales	-	-

	Business Objective and Owner	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4				
13	Review how Panel Members ensure children are supported to express their views and opinions by implementing the national <b>Advocacy Scheme</b> in children's hearings - <i>Practice</i>	-				13.1 Review the implementation and Panel Member experience of advocacy by gathering feedback	As recovery allows	-	Objective descoped - expert advisory group set up by SG will lead on this work and CHS will participate to represent views of the tribunal members.
14	Improve how we deliver on our responsibilities as a rights duty holder by implementing our <b>Rights &amp; Inclusion Strategy</b> in an inclusive and co-designed way – <i>Rights &amp; Inclusion</i>					14.1 Identify activities for delivery during the year	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100%	Children's Rights and Inclusion Coordinator has been working on planning for delivery of strategy, including alignment to the Promise.
						14.2 Deliver appropriate activities during the year	Progress to end Q4	Q2: 25%	Work has begun on developing participation standards for CHS, and broadening opportunities for care experienced people to be more involved in our work.



## Theme 2: Deliver Consistently High-Quality Hearings

	Business Objective	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4				
15	With partners, continue to evaluate and improve the virtual and 'hybrid' <b>hearings experiences – Resilience Group</b>					15.1 Undertake evaluation activities and improvement actions	Complete by end Q2	Q1: 50% Q2:100%	In Q1, in response to Panel Member feedback, the character limit was raised on the Record of Proceedings and Reasons and Decisions. Throughout Q2, RAVHI was rolled out across all areas.
16	Under our <b>Promise Programme</b> , carry out activities to improve the extent to which hearings are <b>trauma-responsive – Area Support</b>	-				16.1 Development of learning opportunities for our volunteer community	Progress to end Q4	Q2:10%	Trauma Project Team being created as planned, by start of Q3. These key milestones will be incorporated into the project plan as a priority.-
						16.2 Apply improvement methodology to trauma-responsive developments	Progress to end Q4	Q2:10%	
17	Have an accountable high-quality hearings system by progressing an effective and efficient <b>complaints process – Information Governance</b>					17.1 Disseminating the process across our community	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 75% Q2:100%	Process was highlighted in CHS newsletter across the community.
						17.2 Delivering training and support	Complete by end Q2	Q1: 25% Q2:100%	Training sessions with Area Conveners and Deputy Area Conveners have taken place. Complaints operations are now undergoing review due to staff changes.
18	Keep Panel Members equipped with accurate, up-to-date information and advice to be able to make <b>effective and timely decisions - Practice</b>					18.1 Issue guidance focussed on good quality hearings and decision making	Progress to end Q4	Q1: 25% Q2:100%	Q1 and 2 - significant updates have been undertaken to the Practice & Procedure Manual to reflect new legislation. Specific practice engagement on sibling contact and powers of exclusion has also taken place.
19	Collaborate as a key partner in <b>locally-driven projects</b> to improve hearings environments and experiences– <i>Area Support</i>	-				19.1 Attendance and involvement in groups and projects as appropriate	Progress to end Q4	Q2: 30%	A number of improvement projects have begun by CHS in AST drawing on champions boards and other stakeholders. Some localities have begun to resume Better Hearings projects.

### Theme 3: Continue to Build and Effective, Empathetic Panel, that is well-supported

	Business Objective and Owner	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4				
20	Promote the contribution of our volunteers through a dedicated <b>volunteer recognition campaign - Communications</b>					20.1 Volunteer recognition campaign during Volunteers Week (1st - 7th June)	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100%	Social media campaign to run in volunteers week - features messages from staff and volunteers.
21	Continue to work with the CHS <b>Learning Academy</b> to offer innovate solutions for learning during restrictions and beyond - <i>Training</i>					21.1 Development and delivery of the CHS Learning Academy (CHSLA) contract and training provision	Progress to end Q4	Q1: 25% Q2:50%	During Q2, CHSLA has supported the return of PPAs to observations and provided RAHVI training (approx 80 sessions) to the volunteer community.
22	Connect and include our volunteer community by running a programme of <b>engagement events</b> across Scotland – <i>Communications; Area Support</i>					22.1 First wave of events	Complete by end Q3	-	Timescale moved in Q1 to allow more planning to take place
						22.2 Second wave of events	Complete by end Q4	-	-
23	Work with our community to implement <b>Area Plans</b> that identify key activities for each area based on national and local priorities – <i>Area Support; Quality &amp; Performance</i>					23.1 Support ASTs to develop local Area Plans	Complete by end Q3	Q1: 30% Q2: 90%	19 of the 22 ASTs have submitted their Area Plans by end of Q2.
						23.2 Support ASTs to monitor and review plans	Progress to end Q4	Q2: 10%	The Area Plan working group is meeting in September to evaluate the content, quality and consistency of plans and how well they align to the 4 themes of our corporate plan. Feedback will be provided to AST, and a new planning cycle for Area Plans will begin in November to improve quality and consistency for planning for 2022-2023.



	Business Objective	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4				
24	Understand <b>recruitment activities</b> needed that respond to recovery and longer-term requirements of hearings– <i>Recruitment &amp; Retention</i>	-				24.1 Review the changing volunteer situation, and take recruitment action as necessary	Progress to end Q2, initially	Q2: 100%	Initial review has now taken place, recommending recruitment happen. Further milestones will be developed for Q3-4 plan.
25	Deliver on our equality and diversity ambitions through the implementation of our <b>Equality Diversity &amp; Inclusion Strategy – HR &amp; OD; ED&amp;I</b>					25.1 Identify activities from strategy for delivery through the year	Complete by end Q3	Q1: 80% Q2: 80%	Following consultation with people with lived experience, strategy went to Board in June. Publication now anticipated in Q3.
						25.2 Undertake appropriate actions	Progress to end Q4	-	
26	Assess the <b>device support</b> needed to undertake volunteer roles and engage with digital tools effectively - <i>Digital</i>	-				26.1 Carry out evaluation of devices pilot	Complete by end Q3	-	Propose de-scoping. Device evaluation will be undertaken in 2022/3 to enable the full national implementation of the new virtual hearings platform.
27	Retain Panel Members by ensuring they are <b>reappointed</b> in an efficient and effective way – <i>Recruitment &amp; Retention</i>					27.1 Carry out necessary reappointment processes	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100%	Over 260 Panel Members were reappointed in May for a further 3 years.
28	Retain AST Members by ensuring they are <b>reappointed</b> in an efficient and effective way – <i>Recruitment &amp; Retention</i>					28.1 Carry out necessary reappointment processes	Progress to end Q4	Q1: 25% Q2:50%	All necessary process took place to re-appoint those AST members who were eligible and recommended. This will continue through the year, according to individual reappointment dates.

## Theme 4: Be Well-Informed and Influential in our Environment and Communities

	Business Objective	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
29	Active contribution to the improvement and recovery of the sector through <b>strategic and advisory groups</b> – <i>SMT; Area Support</i>	Green	Green			29.1	Involvement with key national strategic groups e.g. CHIP; YJIB	Progress to end Q4	Q1: 25% Q2: 50%	National Convener (or appointed substitute) continues to attend strategic and key partnership meetings
						29.2	Involvement with key local groups e.g. Corporate Parenting boards; GIRFEC groups	Progress to end Q4	Q1: 25% Q2:50%	ASIPs are representing CHS through attendance at local groups.
30	Embed our new <b>digital systems</b> across our community and identify on-going improvements and developments to support the needs of CHS volunteers and staff - <i>Digital</i>	Green	Yellow			30.1	Develop and improve management information reports at a variety of operational levels	Progress to end Q4	Q1: 20% Q2: 20%	Some routine data is now being received and used, including key volunteer data. Approach for technical development agreed, and expected to progress in October.
						30.2	Begin to develop future strategy for using digital in hearings, with partners	Complete by end Q2	Q2: 100%	The digital strategy for 21/22 identifies consolidation of current systems and development of future strategy. SCRA and CHS Management Teams are working together to identify short, medium and longer term hearings models to identify the role of digital as we continue our recovery and increase the opportunity for hybrid hearings.
31	Contribute to driving change in the sector through collaboration with <b>The Promise</b> , as required – <i>SMT</i>	Green	Green			31.1	Undertake engagement and collaborative work as required and appropriate	Progress to end Q4	Q1: 25% Q2: 100%	Q2 saw the launch of the cross-organisational Hearings System Working Group to drive system redesign.
32	Connect with, and influence, knowledge development in the sector by being involved in <b>research</b> – <i>Quality &amp; Performance; Practice</i>	Green	Green			32.1	Participate in external research advisory groups as appropriate	Progress to end Q4	Q1: 25% Q2:100%	Meetings on CELCIS VIP research and OHOV evaluation attended.
						32.2	Advertise research recruitment opportunities within the CHS community as they arise	Progress to end Q4	Q1: 25% Q2:50%	Q2: Project on decriminalisation advertised to community.

## Organisational Effectiveness and Staff Support

	Business Objective	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4				
33	Support and enhance our staff through a new <b>People Strategy</b> – <i>HR &amp; OD</i>					33.1 Launch strategy	Complete by end Q3	Q1: 90% Q2: 90%	People Strategy Implementation Plan approved by RAC in June. Launch expected October '21. (Correction from Q1, when launch was anticipated in June).
						33.2 Implement appropriate actions from strategy, focussing initially on wellbeing approaches	Progress up to end Q4	-	
34	Establish a system of <b>programme management</b> to effectively manage and monitor delivery of projects and programmes – <i>Area Support; Quality &amp; Performance</i>					34.1 Select software as appropriate	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100% Q2: 100%	ZOHO procured / trialled / and ready for roll out
						34.2 Implement software across the Promise Programme delivery	In line with Programme delivery	Q1: 25% Q2: 80%	User manual and systemr use policy signed off my SMT / Comms to complete final revision to keep on brand and roll out of ZOHO use scheduled to be completed by end of September 2021 - On track
						34.3 Scope use of software across the rest of the organisation, and implement as appropriate	In line with above milestone	Q1: 25% Q2: 80%	As above - currently still to be utilised for CHS Promise Programme management, but full national team use now scoped with use beyond CHS Promise Programme to be explored around Q4
35	Fulfil our equality and diversity responsibilities through the delivery of our <b>Equalities Outcomes</b> - <i>HR &amp; OD</i>					35.1 Identify activities from Equalities Outcomes for delivery through the year	Complete by end Q3	Q1: 80% Q2:80%	Publication of Equality Diversity & Inclusion Strategy was anticipated in July, enabling parallel delivery of that and our equalities outcomes. This is now expected in Q3.
						35.2 Undertake appropriate actions	Progress to end Q4	-	-

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

	KPI	Past Performance	2021/22 Target	2020/21 Performance
1	% of Panel Members successfully reappointed	17/18 - 83%; 18/19 - 68%	70%	62% (estimate)
2	% of Panel Members retained during the year	New measure	86%	-
3	% of complaints resolved within SPSO guidelines	17/18- 100%; 18/19 - 92%; 19/20 - 100% 20/21 - 99%	100%	Q1: 90%
4	% CHS employee attendance	17/18- 96%; 18/19 - 95%; 19/20 - 93% 20/21 - 99%	96%	Q1: 97.7% (Short-Term); 93.5% (Long-Term)
5	% invoices not in dispute paid within 10 working days, during normal operations	17/18- 80%; 18/19 - 92%; 19/20 - 85%	90%	Q1: 76%
6	% of applicants put forward for preservice training who complete the full training	17/18 - 89%; 18/19- 92%	92%	-
7	% of pre-service trainees who felt that the learning objectives were met	19/20 - 98%	98%	-
8	% positive staff survey feedback on opportunities for learning and development	18/19 - 33%; 19/20 - 51%; 20/21 - 65%	70%	-

**Note on KPI 3:** Complaints continue to be handled by members of the National Team

**Note on KPI 5:** Payment performance has dipped in Q1 primarily due to Local Authority expense invoices being issued without back up or appropriate information to reconcile to CSAS expense payments. CHS is working with clerks and LA Finance team to address this.

## Record of Changes to Planned Delivery

	Milestone(s) Changed	Date of Change	Details of Change	Rationale for Change
	15.1	Q1	Milestone extended from Q1 completion to Q2	To allow further improvements to be recorded in Q2.
	22.1	Q1	Engagement events moved from Q1 and Q2 to Q3 and Q4	To allow further planning to make place around engagement approach and events
	22.2	Q1	Engagement events moved from Q1 and Q2 to Q3 and Q4	
	23.1	Q2	Development of Area Support Plans moved from end Q1 to Q3	To allow ASTs to develop plans fully within available capacity
	25.1	Q2	Planning of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy moved from Q1 to Q3.	Staged launch of strategy anticipated, to ensure sufficient capacity available to support implementation.
	13.1	Q2	Descoping of objective (monitoring of advocacy experiences)	Enable practice capacity to support key legislative change. CHS wil continue to contribute to Expert Reference Group on Advocacy.
	33.1	Q2	Launch of People strategy moved from end Q1 to end Q3.	To allow for further organisational and staffing developments that will have sigfniciant bearing on strategy during Q2.
	35.1	Q2	Equalities Outcomes planning moved from Q1 to Q3.	To align with publication of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy

**Agenda item 13**  
**CHS-2122-27a**

**2021/22 Business Planning – Supplementary Plan (Sept 21)**

**Accountable SMT member:** Head of Strategy, Development & DCE  
**Report author:** National Quality & Performance Lead  
**Resources implications:** Within available resources  
**Purpose:** For Approval  
**Equalities duties:** Equalities Impact Assessment Required  
 **Yes?**                       **No**

**1. Introduction and Purpose:**

This paper accompanies the proposed 2021/22 Business and Corporate Parenting Supplementary Plan.

**2. Context**

At the beginning of the financial/operational year, we committed to publishing a revised Business Plan during 2021-22 that reassesses the on-going work in the organisation, taking stock of the impact of the pandemic, available resources, any decisions relating to work taken in-year, and any other relevant developments.

The accompanying Supplementary Plan is the result of that reassessment, and covers the second half of the year (Q3-4, October – March). It replaces the current Business Plan, and will form the basis of the quarterly performance reporting.

**3. Differences from March '21 Plan**

Documented below are changes to the plan published in March that have been incorporated in to this Supplementary Plan.

The Objective number in column A is that in the original March plan. The Objective number in column B is that in the supplementary plan.

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>Objective Summary</b>	<b>Changes / Proposals</b>
3	-	Monitor and report on the use of emergency legislation	Objective removed from this plan as it has been completed
4	-	Complete recruitment and preservice training activities	Objective removed from this plan as it has been completed
5	3	Reinstate observations by Panel Practice Advisors	Initial milestones (design pathway and begin to implement) for this objective have been completed and removed – new supplementary milestone added to reflect on-going work.
6	-	Test and evaluate new virtual hearings platforms	Objective removed from this plan as it has been completed

-	7	Implementation of new virtual hearings platform	New objective, resulting from testing and evaluation of pilot platforms (March Plan Objective 6).
7	4	Support staff working during restrictions	First milestone (return to Thistle House) reworded to capture wider exploration of working models
11	9	Ensure compliance with Children (Scotland) Act	First milestone (training) removed as it has been completed
13	-	Review Panel Member views of advocacy implementation	Descope from plan. Practice capacity is currently limited and focused on key legislative pieces of work. CHS will continue to engage with this work through the national Expert Advisory Group.
14	12	Implementation of our Children's Rights & Inclusion Strategy	Second milestone (delivery of activities) expanded to two more specific milestones
15	-	Improvements to virtual and hybrid hearings environments	Objective removed from this plan as RAVHI will be rolled out by end Sept
16	13	Enhancing trauma-responsive hearings	Second milestone reworded from using QI methodology, to monitoring the effectiveness of the use of trauma-aware approaches, to reflect updated thinking on this work.
17	-	Progressing a new complaints process	Objective removed from this plan as it has been completed
20	-	Volunteers Week campaign	Objective removed from this plan as it has been completed
24	19	Panel Member recruitment	Generic milestone expanded in to two more specific milestones
26	-	Evaluation of device pilot	Digital focus is on virtual hearings implementation. Descoped from plan, and propose roll over to 2022/23.
27	-	Panel Member reappointment	Objective removed from this plan as it has been completed
30	23	Development of our digital systems	Second milestone (development of digital in virtual hearings – now captured in Supplementary Plan Objective 7) replaced by a milestone around newly identified development sprints.
31	24	Collaboration with the Promise	Generic collaboration milestone replaced with action related to newly establishing Working Group.
33	26	People Strategy	First milestone (launch of strategy) retimed from Q2 to Q3.
34	27	Establishing a programme management system	First milestone removed from this plan as it has been completed

Where de-scoping of objectives has been proposed, Board approval for this is being sought via the Q2 Performance Report.

#### **4. Board Actions**

The Board are requested to approve the Q3-4 Supplementary Plan for implementation and publication.

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Agenda item 13  
CHS-2122-27b



Children's Hearings Scotland

Business and Corporate  
Parenting Plan

2021-2022

Supplementary Plan: September 2021

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# OUR PLANS FOR 2021-22 AT A GLANCE



Our main priorities and activities for the year will be:

## PRIORITY 1: COVID-19 recovery

- Work with our partner agencies to monitor and manage the recovery of the hearings system.
- Continue to keep our volunteer community updated through regular communications.
- Provide devices and support to volunteers for virtual hearings.
- Take care of our staff and volunteers through wellbeing packages and initiatives.

## PRIORITY 2: Implementing Legislative Change

- Deliver work to give further effect to the UNCRC in our work.
- Carry out activities to ensure hearings are compliant with incoming legislation around siblings rights.
- Ensure our Panel Members understand the change in the Age of Criminal Responsibility.

## PRIORITY 3: Establishing our 'Promise Programme'

- Engage our volunteer community to quality assure the voice the child is heard and siblings are included in hearings.
- Work with multi-agency partners to ensure Panel Members have what they need to avoid delay in decision making.
- Introduce new Programme Management methods to CHS

## PRIORITY 4: Embedding our Digital Platform

- Begin to develop our future strategy for using digital tools in hearings and for volunteer roles.
- Identify on-going improvements and developments to our digital system.
- Improve the Management Information reports available to us and how we can use our digital system to share data with SCRA.

# INTRODUCTION



In March 2021, we published our Business and Corporate Parenting Plan for the year, with a particular focus on the first six months. This was done in the knowledge that restrictions related to Covid-19 remained in place and there was still a high degree of unpredictability in many aspects of life.

Despite this unpredictability, the first six months of the year have been busy and eventful for Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS). Significant achievements have included:

- Delivering online pre-service training for over 560 new Panel Members.
- Rolling out, with our partners at the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration, a new virtual hearings operating model across all local authority areas – the Remote Attendance Virtual Hearing Interface (RAVHI).
- Celebrating our volunteers through a Volunteers Week campaign.
- Reappointing over 260 Panel Members for a further 3 years.
- Reintroducing Panel Practice Advisor observations of hearings.
- Being part of the establishment of the Hearings System Working Group, that will drive redesign of the hearings system to deliver our responsibilities to the vision articulated by The Promise.

We committed to republishing our plans, with any needed revisions, during the year. This Supplementary Plan has been created from a reassessment of those plans we made at the beginning of the year. Some pieces of work have continued as originally planned from then in to now, whereas others have been changed to better suit our improved understanding of our available capacity and the working environment.

The second half of the year looks to be as productive as the first, with work planned around participation, children's rights, trauma, as well as Panel Member recruitment and digital improvements.

I want to express my continued thanks and appreciation to everyone who contributes to the work of Children's Hearings Scotland and to helping us realise our vision of a hearings system that works as a community to ensure infants, children and young people are cared for, protected and their views are heard, respected and valued.



**Elliot Jackson**  
National Convener  
& CEO

# OUR PLANS - COVID-19 RECOVERY



	Objective and <i>Owner</i>	Milestones / Activities	Timescales / Targets
1	Work closely with SCRA nationally and locally to monitor and manage the <b>recovery of the hearings</b> system, matching capacity with need - <i>Area Support; Senior Management Team (SMT); Resilience Group</i>	Strategic and operational collaborative activities with colleagues, locally and nationally	Progress to end Q4, as required
2	Keep our volunteer community updated on what the changing environment means for hearings and recovery through effective <b>communication</b> – <i>Communications; SMT</i>	Produce and distribute “Coronavirus Updates” to the whole CHS volunteer community	Progress to end Q4, as required
		Communicate specifically to our Area Conveners, through a programme of regular calls	Progress to end Q4, as required
3	Re-instate <b>observations</b> by Panel Practice Advisors to quality assure hearings practice and conduct – <i>Area Support</i>	Continue, with the CHS Learning Academy, to support PPAs to return to observations	Progress to end Q4
4	Ensure <b>CHS staff</b> are supported to undertake their work safely and productively, while managing their wellbeing effectively during restrictions – <i>HR &amp; OD; SMT; Staff Forum</i>	Undertake relevant actions to explore and embed new models for effective staff working	Progress to end Q4
		Undertake relevant activities to promote staff wellbeing through the Staff Forum	Progress to end Q2, initially
5	<b>Support our volunteers</b> to continue to deliver hearings during restriction, while looking after their wellbeing – <i>Area Support; Digital</i>	Continue to promote and develop our volunteer wellbeing package	Progress to end Q4
		Continue the provision of, and support with, devices across the community	Progress to end Q4
		Work alongside ASTs to understand and manage capacity to deliver hearings	Progress to end Q4

6	Contribute to whole-system recovery by working with partners at <b>national multi-agency leadership groups</b> and forums focussed on hearings and children’s services recovery – <i>SMT</i>	Participation in multi-agency recovery groups and meetings	Progress to end Q2, initially
7	Continue to improve the virtual hearings experience, through the roll out of a <b>new platform</b> .	Implement new virtual hearings platform across all areas, including provision of training opportunities.	Complete by end Q3

DRAFT

# OUR PLANS - THEME 1: BETTER PROTECT AND UPHOLD THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN



	Objective and Owner	Milestones / Activities	Timescales / Targets
8	Under our <b>Promise Programme</b> , carry out activities to give further effect to the <b>UNCRC</b> in our work, in line with its incorporation in to law – <i>Area Support; Practice</i>	Implement UNCRC by delivering learning and development to all volunteers	Progress to end Q4
		Focus on ensuring the views of the child on decisions that are made in hearings are included in the Record of proceedings from a hearing	Progress to end Q4
		Engage Panel Practice Advisors (PPAs) to quality assure the voice of the child in heard in hearings (or that of their carer if they are unable to verbally express their views)	Progress to end Q4
		Area Support Improvement Partners work with multiagency partners to ensure PMs have the information they need to avoid delay in decision making	Progress to end Q4
9	Under our <b>Promise Programme</b> , carry out activities to ensure hearings are compliant with incoming legislation around <b>siblings rights</b> – <i>Area Support; Practice</i>	Focus on ensuring the inclusion of brothers and sisters is accurately reflected in written reasons for decision	Complete by end Q4
		Engage PPAs to quality assure the inclusion of brothers and sisters in hearings (or that of their carer if unable to verbally express their view).	Progress to end Q4
		Area Support Improvement Partners work with multiagency partners to ensure PMs have the information they need to avoid delay in decision making	Progress to end Q4

# OUR PLANS - THEME 1: BETTER PROTECT AND UPHOLD THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

## continued



	Objective and Owner	Milestones / Activities	Timescales / Targets
10	Ensure our Panel Members understand the change in the <b>Age of Criminal Responsibility</b> – <i>Area Support; Practice</i>	Implement legislative changes through learning and development with support from the CHS Learning Academy	As required by legislation timescales
11	Review how Panel Members ensure children are supported to express their views and opinions by implementing the national <b>Advocacy Scheme</b> in children's hearings - <i>Practice</i>	Review the implementation and Panel Member experience of advocacy by gathering feedback	As recovery allows
12	Improve how we deliver on our responsibilities as a rights duty holder by implementing our <b>Rights &amp; Inclusion Strategy</b> in an inclusive and co-designed way – <i>Rights &amp; Inclusion</i>	Develop and begin to implement new Participation Standards for CHS	Complete by end Q3
		Broaden opportunities for care experienced people to be involved in our work	Progress to end Q4



# OUR PLANS - THEME 2: DELIVER CONSISTENTLY HIGH-QUALITY HEARINGS



	Objective and <i>Owner</i>	Milestones / Activities	Timescales / Targets
13	Under our <b>Promise Programme</b> , carry out activities to improve the extent to which hearings are <b>trauma-responsive</b> – <i>Area Support</i>	Development of learning opportunities for our volunteer community	Progress up to end Q4
		Monitor the effectiveness of implementation of approaches built on an understanding of trauma	Progress up to end Q4
14	Keep Panel Members equipped with accurate, up-to-date information and advice to be able to make <b>effective and timely decisions</b> - <i>Practice</i>	Issue guidance focussed on good quality hearings and decision making	Progress up to Q4
15	Collaborate as a key partner in <b>locally-driven projects</b> to improve hearings environments and experiences– <i>Area Support</i>	Attendance and involvement in groups and projects as appropriate	Progress to end Q4

# OUR PLANS - THEME 3: CONTINUE TO BUILD AN EFFECTIVE, EMPATHETIC PANEL, THAT IS WELL-SUPPORTED



	Objective and <i>Owner</i>	Milestones / Activities	Timescales / Targets
16	Continue to work with the CHS <b>Learning Academy</b> to offer innovate solutions for learning during restrictions and beyond - <i>Training</i>	Development and delivery of the CHS Learning Academy contract and training provision	Progress to end Q4
17	Connect and include our volunteer community by running a programme of <b>engagement events</b> across Scotland – <i>Communications; Area Support</i>	First wave of events	Complete by end Q3
		Second wave of events	Complete by end Q4
18	Work with our community to implement <b>Area Plans</b> that identify key activities for each area based on national and local priorities – <i>Area Support; Quality &amp; Performance</i>	Support ASTs to develop local Area Plans	Complete by end Q3
		Support ASTs to monitor and review their plans	Progress to end Q4
19	Carry out <b>recruitment activities</b> needed to respond to recovery and longer-term requirements of hearings– <i>Recruitment &amp; Retention</i>	Plan and prepare recruitment and selection activities for 2022 campaign	Complete by end Q3
		Implement and deliver recruitment and selection activities of 2022 campaign	Complete by end Q4
20	Deliver on our equality and diversity ambitions through the implementation of our <b>Equality Diversity &amp; Inclusion Strategy</b> – <i>HR &amp; OD; ED&amp;I</i>	Identify activities for delivery through the year	Complete by end Q3
		Undertake appropriate actions to implement the strategy	Progress to end Q4
21	Retain AST Members by ensuring they are <b>reappointed</b> in an efficient and effective way - <i>Recruitment &amp; Retention</i>	Carry out necessary reappointment processes	Progress up to Q4

# OUR PLANS - THEME 4: BE WELL-INFORMED AND INFLUENTIAL IN OUR ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITIES



	Objective and <i>Owner</i>	Activities / Milestones	Timescales / Targets
22	Active contribution to the improvement and recovery of the sector through <b>strategic and advisory groups</b> – <i>SMT; Area Support</i>	Involvement with key national strategic groups e.g. CHIP; YJIB	Progress to end Q4
		Involvement with key local groups e.g. Corporate Parenting boards; GIRFEC groups	Progress to end Q4
23	Embed our new <b>digital systems</b> across our community and identify on-going improvements and developments to support the needs of CHS volunteers and staff - <i>Digital</i>	Develop and improve management information reports at a variety of operational levels	Progress to end Q4
		Undertake a series of digital sprints to continue to develop our digital system.	Progress to end Q4
24	Contribute to driving change in the sector through collaboration with <b>The Promise</b> – <i>SMT</i>	Work with partners on the Hearings System Working Group to drive system redesign	Progress up to Q4
25	Connect with, and influence, knowledge development in the sector by being involved in <b>research</b> – <i>Quality &amp; Performance; Practice</i>	Participate in external research advisory groups as appropriate	Progress up to end Q4
		Advertise research recruitment opportunities within the CHS community as they arise	Progress up to end Q4

# OUR PLANS – ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STAFF SUPPORT



	Objective and <i>Owner</i>	Activities / Milestones	Timescales / Targets
26	Support and enhance our staff through a new <b>People Strategy</b> – <i>HR &amp; OD</i>	Launch strategy	Complete by end Q3
		Implement appropriate actions from strategy	Progress up to Q4
27	Establish a system of <b>programme management</b> to effectively manage and monitor delivery of projects and programmes – <i>Area Support; Quality &amp; Performance</i>	Implement software across the Promise Programme delivery	In line with Promise Programme
		Scope use of software across the rest of the organisation, and implement as appropriate	In line with above milestone
28	Fulfil our equality and diversity responsibilities through the delivery of our <b>Equalities Outcomes</b> – <i>HR &amp; OD</i>	Identify activities in equalities outcomes for delivery through the remainder of the year	Complete by end Q3
		Undertake appropriate actions to deliver the Outcomes	Progress to end Q4

# MONITORING OUR WORK: KPIs



To monitor the performance of the organisation through the year, we have set the following Key Performance Indicators:

Performance Measure	Baseline	2021/22 Target
% of complaints resolved within SPSO guidelines, during normal operations	2017/18: 100% 2018/19: 92% 2019/20: 100% 2020/21: 100% target	100%
% CHS employee attendance	2017/18: 96% 2018/19: 95% 2019/20: 97% 2020/21: 96% target	96%
% invoices not in dispute paid within 10 working days, during normal operations	2017/18: 80% 2018/19: 92% 2019/20: 85% 2020/21: 90% target	90%
% of pre-service trainees who felt that the learning objectives were met	2019/20: 98%	98%
% of applicants put forward for preservice training who complete the full training	2017/18: 89% 2018/19: 92%	92%
% of Panel Members successfully reappointed	2017/18: 83% 2018/19: 68%	70%
% of Panel Members retained during the year	New Measure	86%
% positive staff survey feedback on opportunities for learning and development	2018/19: 33% 2019/20: 52% 2020/21: 65%	70%

DRAFT

## **Children's Hearings Scotland**

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**t: 0131 244 4743 | [www.chscotland.gov.uk](http://www.chscotland.gov.uk)**

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**Agenda item 15**  
**CHS-2122-28a**

**Draft Impact Report**

**Accountable SMT member:** Head of Strategy, Development & Depute CEO  
**Report author:** National Quality & Performance Lead  
**Resources implications:** Within available resources  
**Purpose:** For Approval  
**Equalities duties:** Equalities Impact Assessment Required

Yes?

No

**1. Introduction / Purpose:**

This cover paper accompanies the 2020-21 CHS Impact Report to gain Board approval for publication.

**2. Context**

The Impact Report is produced each year and designed to fulfil two main purposes: (1) to document key pieces of work undertaken by CHS during the year in a way that is more accessible than the Annual Report and allows more detailed description of that work and (2) to highlight Corporate Parenting activities undertaken by CHS and the National Convener.

**3. Comment**

This year's Impact Report keeps the same format as last year – the first half focussing on work undertaken with and for our volunteer community (and also work associated with COVID-19 response) and the second focussing on Corporate Parenting.

This year, the Impact Report will form the basis of a video animation for use on social media.

**3. Next Steps, following Approval:**

- Video development and design
- Publication, with Annual Report, (typically, late October).

**4. Board Action**

The Board are requested to approve the 2020-21 Impact Report for publication.

# Children's Hearings Scotland Impact Report 2020 - 21



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## Who We Are

This report mentions a few different people and groups, the most common ones are:

**Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS)** is the organisation that is responsible for recruiting, training and providing support to the Panel Members who sit on children's hearings in Scotland and Area Support Team members who support to Panel Members locally.

**The National Convener** leads and oversees the Children's Panel, at the moment this is Elliot Jackson. He is responsible for recruiting people to serve as Panel Members across Scotland, and making sure they have the right training and support to make sound decisions in the best interests of infants, children and young people.

**Panel Members** take part in children's hearings and make legal decisions about the care and protection of infants, children and young people. There are around 2,500 Panel Members in Scotland. Three Panel Members sit on each hearing.

**Area Support Teams (ASTs)** are volunteers who provide support and guidance to Panel Members at the local level. There are 22 of these across Scotland, with around 400 volunteer members.

**CHS Learning Academy** provides training to ensure our volunteer community's learning is current and relevant for the role.

# From the National Convener

It has been a year quite unlike any other. At the start of the year, the children's hearing system had to undergo some fundamental changes extremely quickly, as the scale and significance of the coronavirus pandemic started to truly emerge.

This has not been easy. It has presented challenges that have pushed our technology, systems and people in entirely new ways. But overcoming those challenges as best we could, and managing the difficulties of working in a context that has tested everyone, were always absolutely necessary things to do. The children's hearings system is here to make sure that decisions are made to support the children and young people who need them. This need has not gone away during the pandemic.

The commitment demonstrated by our volunteers has been overwhelming to witness. They have- in their thousands- adopted the use of new digital platforms, learnt how to use new devices, changed how local rotas are planned, carried out recruitment activities virtually for the first time, run hearings according to new legislation, and made countless other changes, big and small. I have been so proud to be the National Convener and they undoubtedly deserve my heartfelt thanks.

In this Impact Report, we highlight a selection of the work that has been carried out by Children's Hearings Scotland (also known as CHS) over the last year to support our volunteer community and progress our overall vision of a forward-looking children's hearings system that works as a community to ensure infants, children and young people are cared for, protected and their views are heard, respected and valued.

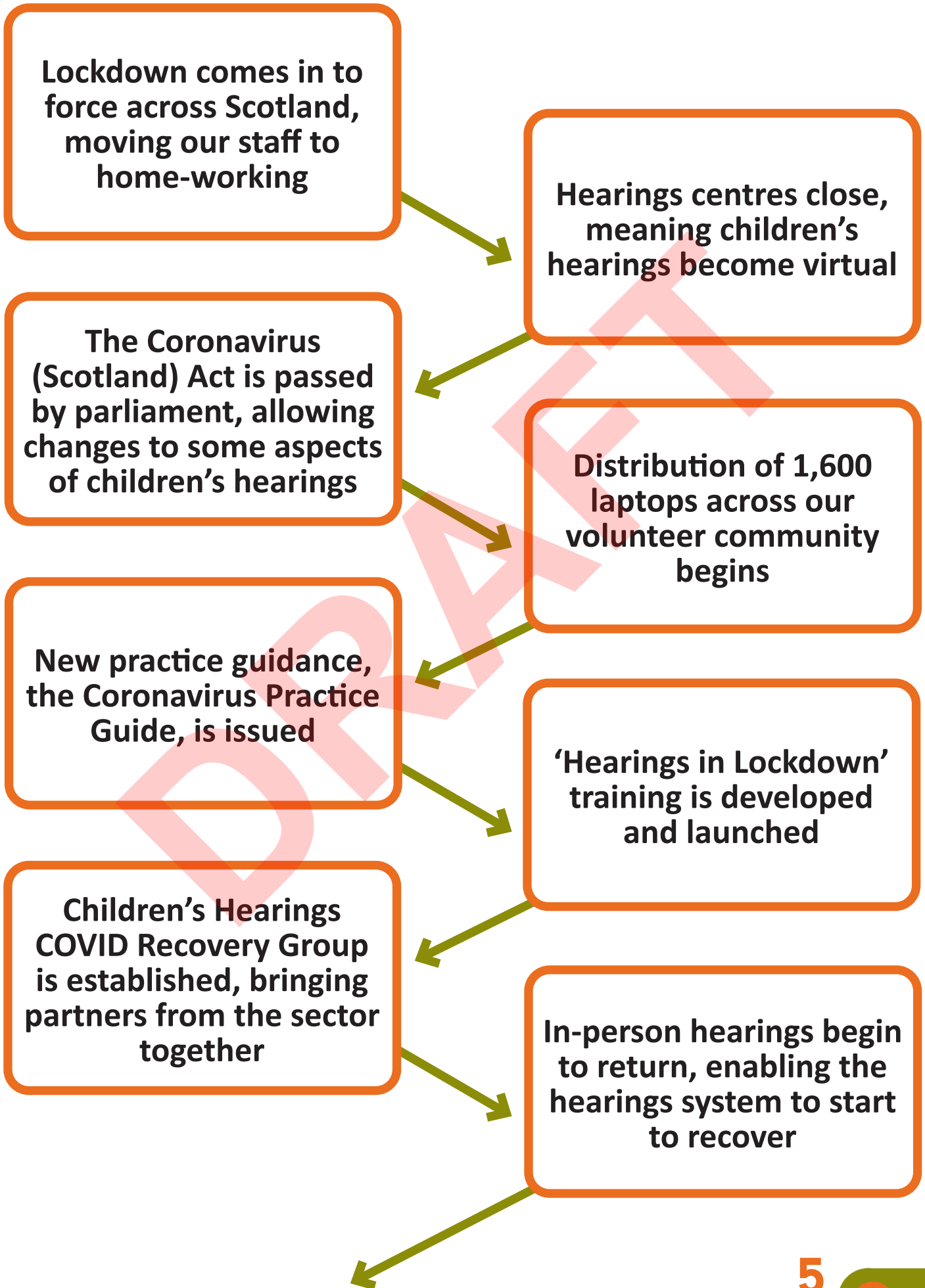
This vision will remain our guiding priority in 2021-22 too, as we look to further recover the hearings system and prepare for a range of legislation to come in to force that will progress children's rights in Scotland. We will continue to deliver our functions collaboratively and with children and young people at the centre of what we do.

I want to thank everyone who has a role within, and made a contribution to, the work of Children's Hearings Scotland over the last year. It has required monumental effort, patience, compassion, coordination and partnership. Thank you.



**- Elliot Jackson, National Convener and Chief Executive, CHS**

# Our coronavirus journey



# Focus on: Volunteering

## Celebrating our volunteers: Volunteers Week 2020

During the pandemic, the awareness of how volunteers deliver essential services across Scotland has never been higher – they are truly incredible.

This year, we used Volunteers Week 2020 to not only say a heartfelt thanks to our incredible volunteer community, but to also highlight some of the reasons that our volunteers undertake the roles they do.



I volunteer because I am passionate about children being given a voice and having it heard in the hearing room. I worked with children who were often in the children's hearing system and it gave me an insight into how difficult life could be for some children. It is good to give something back and use the knowledge I have gained over the years for the good of children and young people.



Catherine, Panel Member, Dumfries and Galloway

#volunteersweek

*"Thank you to each and every one of you for being there for Scotland's young people. You offer so many children hope and that's incredible... Every single volunteer that I have met has blown me away with their dedication, positive attitude, and true passion for the role. Thank you!"*

**- Nathalie Helene, National Team**

We also had a special thanks from Maree Todd MSP, Minister for Children and Young People:



*"I know how committed you are to making a difference to the lives of Scotland's children and this has become even more clear during this time of social isolation.*

*You give your time and you are committed because you want all children and young people attending a hearing to have the very best possible experience, and to ensure their safety and wellbeing is looked after.*

*You make a great difference within your local communities and truly keep children and young people at the heart of every decision made.*

*So to you, I'd like to say, from the bottom of my heart, a massive thank you!"*

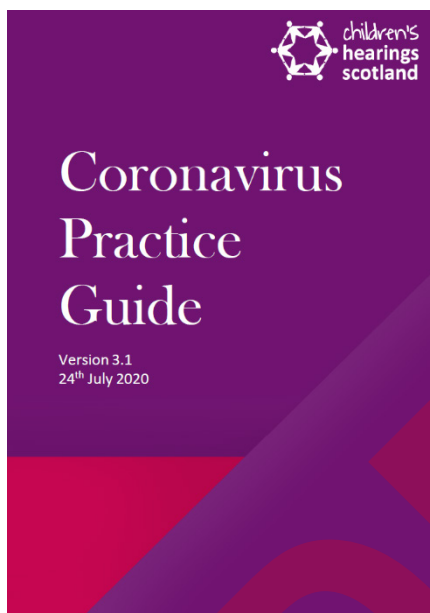
**THANK YOU!**

# Supporting decision-making: Our practice guidance

How children's hearings take place changed extremely quickly with the introduction of the lockdown. We, along with the other organisations who work in the children's hearings system, had to find ways for children's hearings to continue when they could not be held in person, or as they usually would.

This involved new technology for virtual hearings and for managing hearings papers, and new legislation that changed some aspects of how hearings take place, including who needs to be in attendance at a children's hearing to allow it to take place. Throughout 2020-21, we also learnt more and more about how virtual hearings worked and what makes them good experiences or not.

We also ensured that our Panel Members were kept up-to-date with what we learnt, and the new legislation, through a publication called the Coronavirus Practice Guide, which was updated through the year:



The Practice Guide covered topics such as:

- Key changes in legislation;
- How to use virtual hearings software;
- How to prepare for a virtual hearing;
- Tips for managing virtual discussions;
- Best practice in decision making, including guidance on contact directions;

To support these new ways of working, we also introduced an online course on 'Hearings in Lockdown'.

In addition, our main Practice and Procedure Manual (PPM) was updated to include new or amended sections on:

**Advocacy in children's hearings**

**Requesting Independent Reports**

**The 'Getting It Right For Every Child' (GIRFEC) approach**

**Deferral of hearings**

**Grounds hearings and Proof**

Want to know more? The PPM can be accessed here: [Practice and Procedure Manual \(chscotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.chscotland.gov.uk/practice-and-procedure-manual)



# Training our volunteers

Our CHS Learning Academy offers learning and development that ensures Panel Members are fully equipped to make the best decisions possible in hearings and Area Support Teams have the knowledge they need to carry out their role.

In normal years, most of the training delivered by the CHS Learning Academy is in-person, but during 2020-21, it moved to fully online.

We also launched some new courses on topics that are important for decision-making and volunteering within the children's hearings system. These included:

## Child Development

**Focus:** how children develop, what impacts their development, how Panel Members should prepare for and communicate with young people in their children's hearing, and key considerations to be taken into account during the decision-making process.

## Permanence

**Focus:** understanding the routes to permanence and why it is important, understanding research and the law to enable Panel Members to understand how they can reduce drift and delay, and making decisions and giving advice to keep the safeguarding and promotion of a child's welfare through their childhood the paramount consideration.

Throughout 2020-21, our CHS Learning Academy also ran courses aimed at supporting volunteers in becoming familiar with the new technology and digital services they needed to ensure that children's hearings could continue to take place and to enable them to carry out their roles.

A special thank you too, to those organisations and people in the sector who helped us develop training this year:

- Adoption and Fostering Alliance Scotland;
- CELCIS;
- James McTaggart, Educational Psychologist;
- Scottish Children's Reporters Administration (also known as SCRA).

**YOU ARE  
INCREDIBLE!**

# Recruiting our Panel Members

This year, the whole recruitment process took place entirely virtually for the first time. A huge thank you to everyone involved- the whole team pulled together, working at a local and national level to roll out our biggest recruitment campaign to date. This included using our new digital application form, which launched this year.

As well as social media and online advertising, this year's campaign featured our very first TV advert:



People with lived experience of children's hearings went above and beyond to support us with our recruitment process in 2021. All Area Support Teams who were recruiting Panel Members included people with lived experience of hearings in their recruitment processes.

*Young person Candice was fully involved in the selection process for new Panel Members in Renfrewshire as a member of the interview panel. A CHS volunteer worked alongside Candice to ensure support was available through the process.*

*"Being involved in the recruitment of panel members was a really good experience, it was great having a buddy who made me feel part of the team and put a good support system in place for me"*  
- Candice

Thank you! Your input in this year's campaign has helped us to ensure we take on board the best possible Panel Members for children and young people across Scotland.

**THANK  
YOU!**



# Volunteer Wellbeing

The need for everyone to have access to ways to support their wellbeing was particularly highlighted this year. To make sure this was in place across our volunteer community, we invested in a new wellbeing support service, run by Health Assured.

The services offers a 24-hour confidential helpline, counselling sessions and an online health portal to provide support through life's issues or problems, including:

- Stress and anxiety
- Financial Wellbeing
- Family Issues
- Relationship Advice
- Consumer Issues
- Medical Information

Launching the new service, National Convener Elliot Jackson said:

*"We know, probably now more than ever, that life is not always easy. We all face challenges large and small, and without support those challenges can be far harder to overcome.*

*CHS takes its responsibilities for Panel Member wellbeing seriously and we have a number of support mechanisms here at Children's Hearings Scotland, such as our buddy system for new volunteers, and of course your local area will also offer personalised support.*

*However, we are really keen to boost that provision and so we have invested in a new wellbeing support service, run by Health Assured, who will, from today, provide a package of support including a 24 hour advice line, counselling sessions and an online health portal where you'll find lots more tools to enhance your physical and emotional wellbeing."*

# Focus on: Children, young people and corporate parenting

## Corporate Parenting

As one of Scotland's corporate parents we are focused on upholding the rights, safeguarding, and promoting the wellbeing of Scotland's looked after children and care leavers.

Both Children's Hearings Scotland and the National Convener are corporate parents in their own right, but plan and report corporate parenting activities jointly.

You can find out more about our corporate parenting here:

[Corporate parenting \(chscotland.gov.uk\)](https://www.chscotland.gov.uk)

In addition, we share, with the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA), a set of corporate parenting aims for children and young people. These are:

- You are at the centre of the children's hearings system and are treated as an individual;
- The decisions that affect you are based on sound knowledge, clear evidence and with consideration of your views;
- Your corporate parents will work together to make the system work better for you;
- We will keep asking ourselves if the way we do things is the best it can be.

But, what does this look like in practice? Find out over the next few pages.

# We are committed to progressing Children's Rights

In preparation for the incorporation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in Scotland, we spent 2020-21 thinking about our work, and the role of our volunteers, in promoting and protecting children's rights, and importantly, what more we can do.

This resulted in:



A look back over 2017-2020 at the work that has taken place so far.



And a look forward- our Children's Rights and Inclusion Strategy, was co-designed with volunteers from the CHS Community and young people with lived experience of the hearings system. It sets out our vision of what we can do to embed the views of children and young people in our work, and looks at how we can promote and protect their rights.

The strategy focuses on our 'Pillars of Inclusion' that were identified by people with lived experience as essential things to focus on in reaching the main outcomes of the strategy:



Thank you to the members of our Children's Rights and Inclusion Working Group for all your hard work, knowledge and insights!

# Introducing advocacy

In 2020, an important change to the law took place putting a duty on the Chair of a children’s hearings (this person is also a Panel Member) to let the child or young person know that advocacy services are available to help them during a children’s hearing.

This is a hugely important and positive change that impacts children’s rights, helping to ensure that the views of children and young people are expressed and represented fully.

To prepare the CHS Panel Members for this change, we introduced a new Advocacy training and practice guidance:

## Children’s Hearings Advocacy

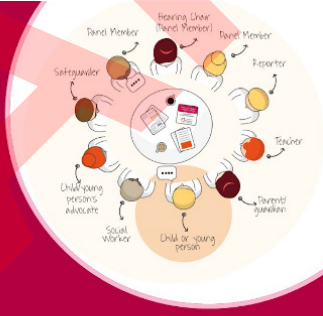
The new Children’s Hearings Advocacy Service will be live on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2020, providing a consistent independent advocacy service for children across Scotland.

- A brand new service, available for all children’s hearings and related court proceedings
- Managed and overseen by the Scottish Government
- Mandatory training on the children’s hearings system
- Different local providers
- National Practice Standards



## During the hearing

- An advocate may speak on a child’s behalf or may support them to speak for themselves.
- An advocate may attend without the child being present – remember, a child’s views are distinct from a child’s attendance
- An advocate may submit the child’s views to the Panel in advance



**Want to know more about advocacy in children’s hearings?**

Take a look here: [Hearings Advocacy \(hearings-advocacy.com\)](https://hearings-advocacy.com)

**Want to know more about Panel Member training on advocacy?**

Take a look at our training video here: [Advocacy in Children’s Hearings - YouTube](#)

**Want to know more about Panel Member guidance on advocacy?**

Take a look at page 88 of the CHS Practice & Procedure Manual: [Practice and Procedure Manual \(chscotland.gov.uk\)](https://chscotland.gov.uk)

# We are committed to #KeepingThePromise

In 2020-2021, we began to plan for how we would keep the promise to Scotland's children to ensure children's hearings are compassionate and driven by children's rights. We have been creating the CHS Promise Programme which will put child and family friendly care and justice at the heart of what we do, and which will meet our commitments to The Promise Scotland's Plan 21-24 and the calls to action of Our Hearings, Our Voice's (also known as OHOV).

## CHS Promise Programme

The CHS Promise Programme will be the place where we organise ourselves to deliver the changes we need to make, in a structured way. We have already begun some of this work. The programme will:

- set out our vision for change to the children's hearing system to #KeepThePromise
- collate, define and track all of our activity against agreed objectives and milestones
- host and create collaborative spaces for everyone one within CHS to contribute to our activity to #KeepThePromise
- host the communication strategy by which we engage with people with lived experience, the CHS volunteer community, National Team, CHS Learning Academy and stakeholders
- collect together and share data and evidence on our progress towards keeping #ThePromise

Over the next three years, we will be working closely with our partners to ensure that we have a children's hearing systems that is fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and puts children's rights at its centre.

## OHOV

We're proud to support the work of OHOV, an independent board of children and young people who have experience of children's hearings. In October, everyone in the CHS community received a copy of 'The Zine', which includes the experiences of children and young people who have attended children's hearings and 40 Calls to Action, which describe changes and improvements for the hearings system.

*"We have spent this year understanding how we can improve the hearings experience for children, young people and their families. To support this work we submitted a response to the consultation on the development of The Promise plans, have attended webinars to understand the direction of travel for The Promise Scotland, and have been working with the team there, to start our planning process. We will also continue to listen to Our Hearings, Our Voice and look at how we can incorporate their 40 Call to Action into our plans."*

- Carol Wassell, Head of Area Support and Community Improvement

# Raising Awareness

This year, we are proud to have supported and celebrated some important campaigns which raise awareness of care experience, and the rights of care experienced children and young people.

## Care Experienced Week 2020

For Care Experienced Week, an international celebration of the care experienced community, we highlighted some of the contributions that people with care experience make to our work.

A massive thank you to Liam and Dylan who talked about their involvement in the Children’s Rights and Inclusion Strategy.

*“First of all, I want to say happy Care Experienced Week everyone. This is our week to sparkle and shine. So, own it!”* – Beth-Anne Logan, CHS Board Member



Happy Care Day from everyone at Children's Hearings Scotland 🎉 Today we will share some thoughts from @laur\_beveridge, Children's Rights & Inclusion Co-ordinator, on what Care Day means to her! Until then explore here for more on #CareDay21 [ow.ly/FvFG50DErZy](https://ow.ly/FvFG50DErZy) @whocaresscot

## #CareDay2021

Care Day is the world’s largest celebration of the rights of children and young people with care experience.

Laura, our Children’s Rights & Inclusion Coordinator shared her thoughts on what Care Day means to her.

You can watch her video [here](#).





# Thank You!

One final giant thank you to every single person who has helped the work of Children's Hearings Scotland and the children's hearing system to happen during this difficult year!





children's  
hearings  
scotland

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# Agenda Item 16 CHS-2122-29



## Children's Hearings Scotland Learning Academy Autumn Prospectus

Version 1

# CHS Learning Academy

The learning academy is here to support you to improve outcomes for infants, children and young people in whatever role you perform. We do this by ensuring you are equipped with the most up to date knowledge and best practice in and around the hearing system.

## What programme and courses can I take?

There are four Learning Academy programmes each consisting of a range of courses. Programmes are either open to all community members or specifically tailored to your role:



- The Professional Development Award programme. For trainee panel members and those in their first three years of serving
- Panel Members Learning programme. For all panel members who have served for more than three years.
- Area Support Team Learning programme. For all AST members and includes specific courses for new PPAs and AST managers.
- Learning Academy E-learning programme. These online courses are open to all of the CHS community and include bespoke and general courses.

## How do I access the Learning Academy Online, the prospectus and booking system?

Open your browser and go to [www.chsacademy.org.uk](http://www.chsacademy.org.uk) and login with your Learning Academy Online (LAO) username and password. Once you have logged in, click on the prospectus button on the front page. You will be guided through the various course options.

## What is mandatory training?

Training will be designated as 'mandatory' when it relates to changes in legislation, new procedures for the running of hearings, or other changes of significant importance to CHS which are essential for members to know and / or be able to apply when undertaking their role. These courses are listed as '**Essential Learning**'. Failure to complete training designated as mandatory will:

- result in Panel Members not being on rota until completion
- be a factor for ASTs when considering re-appointment

## What happens if I don't complete mandatory training?

Members who do not complete mandatory training within the specified timescales will be removed from hearing rotas / duties.

## How have courses been identified and developed?

We want the whole community to feel supported by the learning and development we offer. With this in mind all our courses and programme topics are identified using feedback from the community, including young people, as well as emerging key areas of practice. All our course development is a partnership between CHS leads, users and the training team.

INTRODUCTION

OUR VALUES

COMPETENCIES

PROGRAMME 1

Professional Development  
Award (PDA)



PROGRAMME 2

Panel Member Learning  
Programme (PMLP)



PANEL MEMBERS

PROGRAMME 3

AST Member Learning  
Programme (ASTLP)



AST MEMBERS

PROGRAMME 4

eLearning  
Programme



CHS E-LEARNING

PROGRAMME 5

National Events

LOCAL LEARNING AND  
DEVELOPMENT

## INTRODUCTION

Our learning and development priorities are;

- Pre-service training
- Management of Hearings
- Trauma
- UNCRC
- Enhancing our Digital Capacity

Welcome to the 2021 – 2022 CHS Learning Academy Prospectus. A commitment to new and continuing learning is the basis of ensuring that we are all equipped to carry out our roles in relation to Children's Hearings. Our prospectus outlines all of the learning currently available, the commitment levels required, and highlights what is coming over the next year. Whether you are at the start of your learning journey with CHS or an established member of our Panel and AST community, thank you for your commitment to learning and developing. Learning and reflecting ensures that we all continue to demonstrate high levels of skills and knowledge in our roles. Prospectus development every year takes into account Panel and AST member feedback as well as input from many of our partner agencies. The learning and development opportunities for 2021 – 2022 underpin our commitment to delivering The Promise and to the 40 calls for Our Hearings Our Voice. Please enjoy your learning with us and thanks again for your continuing commitment.

*Christine Mullen, Head of Practice, Improvement and Learning*

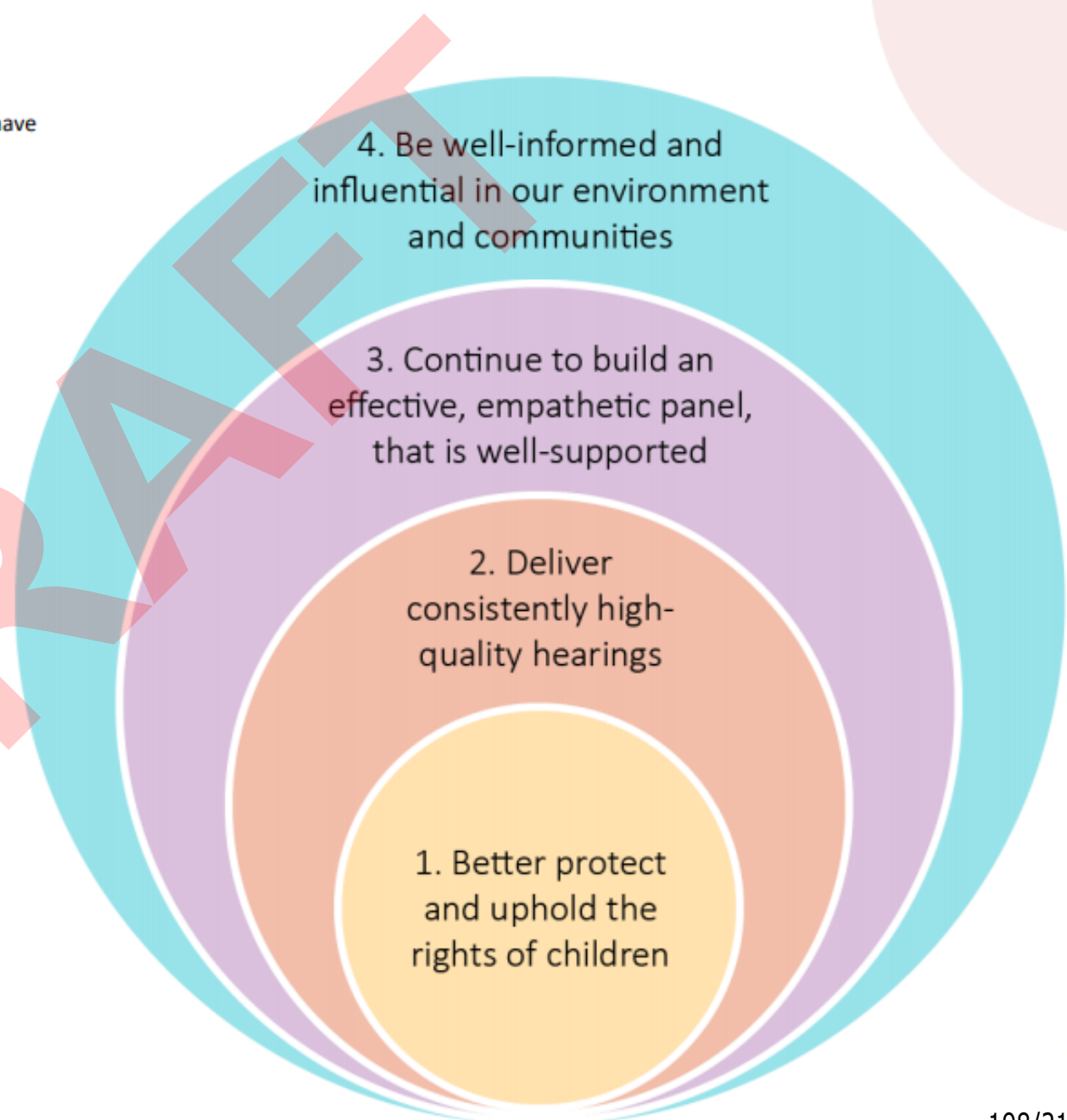
# OUR STRATEGIC THEMES FOR 2020-2023



To direct our actions and activities over the next 3 years, we have set 4 strategic themes that lay out what we want to achieve:

Learning Academy courses will equip the CHS community with the knowledge and skills to achieve the 4 strategic themes as detailed in the CHS Corporate Plan 2020 - 2023.

Access the Children's Hearings Scotland Corporate Plan [here](#)



# OUR VALUES

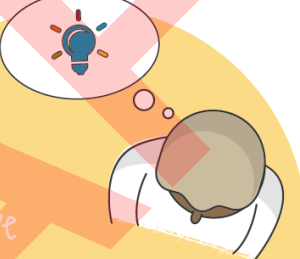
# COMPETENCIES



**Open**  
Listening, responding to and learning from feedback; acting honestly; ensuring processes are transparent; sharing information and being accountable for our actions and decisions.



**Fair**  
Making sure that everyone is treated with dignity and according to their individual needs; that our information and services are accessible to all; that we provide a consistent level of service to all.



**Creative**  
Considering innovative and imaginative ways of approaching the issues we face in the work we do.



**Respectful**  
Treating children, young people, their families, partners and each other with care and consideration.



**Child centred**  
Making sure everything we do is in the best interests of children and young people.



**Challenging**  
Not being complacent, but questioning ourselves and others to help us improve.

All of our Learning Academy programmes are linked to our values, National Standards and Panel Member competencies, to ensure that you feel supported in your role.

Our Panel Member competencies act as a framework for Panel Members, supporting best practice.

Our National Standards provide us with a set of core values, principles and expectations in relation to our behaviours and practice.

# Panel Member Training Programme

Training Course	Panel Member			
	1 <sup>st</sup> Appointment Period		2 <sup>nd</sup> + Appointment Period	
	Essential Learning	Continuous Development	Essential Learning	Continuous Development
Pre-service	✓			
Enhanced Practice	✓			
Management of Hearings	✓			
Advocacy	✓		✓	
Age of Criminal Responsibility	✓			✓
Child Development	✓			✓
Children (Scotland) Act - Siblings	✓		✓	

Training Course	Panel Member			
	1 <sup>st</sup> Appointment Period		2 <sup>nd</sup> + Appointment Period	
	Essential Learning	Continuous Development	Essential Learning	Continuous Development
Contact	✓			✓
Diversity, Equality & Inclusion	✓			
Getting to know TEAMS	✓			
Information Governance*	✓			✓
Introduction to ACEs in the Hearing Room	✓			✓
Introduction to TEAMS	✓			✓
Neglect	✓			✓

Training Course	Panel Member			
	1 <sup>st</sup> Appointment Period		2 <sup>nd</sup> + Appointment Period	
	Essential Learning	Continuous Development	Essential Learning	Continuous Development
Permanence	✓			✓
Part 1		✓		✓
Part 2		✓		✓
Part 3		✓		✓
Part 4		✓		✓
Part 5		✓		✓

\*To be repeated every 2 years

# Area Support Team Member Training Programme

Training Course	AST Members Role Specific Courses			
	Area Convener / Depute AC	Panel Practice Adviser	Rota Manager	Learning and Development Co-ordinator
Digital Handling of Concerns and Complaints	✓	✓		
Digital Learning & Events for Event Managers	✓			✓
Digital for Volunteer Managers	✓			
Digital Services for Volunteer Recruitment	✓	✓		
Getting to know TEAMS	✓	✓		
Information Governance*	✓	✓		
Introduction to TEAMS	✓	✓		
Rota for Rota Managers			✓	

Training Course	Panel Practice Adviser			
	Newly Appointed		Longer Serving	
	Essential Learning	Continuous Development	Essential Learning	Continuous Development
Introduction to CHS	✓			
Quality Assurance @ CHS	✓			✓
Recruitment and Selection	✓			✓
Advocacy		✓		✓
Age of Criminal Responsibility		✓		✓
Child Development		✓		✓
Children (Scotland) Act - Siblings		✓		✓
Contact		✓		✓

Training Course	Panel Practice Adviser			
	Newly Appointed		Longer Serving	
	Essential Learning	Continuous Development	Essential Learning	Continuous Development
Diversity, Equality & Inclusion		✓		✓
Introduction to ACEs in the Hearing Room		✓		✓
Neglect		✓		✓
Permanence		✓		✓

\*To be repeated every 2 years



**PROGRAMME 1**  
Professional Development  
Award (PDA)



Our New Panel Member Learning Programme is designed to develop skills and knowledge for trainees and those in their first three-year period of appointment. It is also available to panel members who have been off rota for a significant period of time.

During this programme participants complete the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Professional Development Award (PDA) which recognises the learning and development undertaken in the role of a volunteer panel member.

The PDA is broken into three stages:

- 1. Pre-service**
- 2. Enhanced Practice**
- 3. Management of Hearings**

While working towards this qualification participants are assessed using a variety of methods including a requirement of pre-course preparation, full attendance at national training days, observation of practice and through online submission of assessments and learning reflections.

<b>2</b>	<b>ENHANCED PRACTICE</b>									
Prior to attending a session, you should complete the advance preparation and learning on LA Online.	WED	22/09/21	1.00 pm – 3.30 pm	FRI	08/10/21	10.00am – 12.30pm				
	SAT	25/09/21	10.00am – 12.30pm	WED	13/10/21	1.00 pm – 3.30 pm				
	THU	30/09/21	6.30 pm – 9.00 pm							
	TUE	05/10/21	1.00 pm – 3.30 pm							
<b>3a</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT OF HEARINGS – SKILLS PRACTICE</b>									
Prior to attending a session, you should complete the advance preparation and learning on LA Online.  These sessions will take place on TEAMS guiding you through a hearing from hearing note preparation to writing up your reasons for decisions at the end of the hearing.	WED	15/09/21		SAT	23/10/21		SAT	13/11/21		
	SAT	18/09/21		TUE	26/10/21		TUE	16/11/21		
	THU	23/09/21		THU	28/10/21		THU	18/11/21		
	TUE	08/10/21		FRI	29/10/21		FRI	19/11/21		
	TUE	12/10/21		TUE	02/11/21		TUE	23/11/21		
	WED	13/10/21		WED	03/11/21		WED	24/11/21		
	FRI	15/10/21		FRI	05/11/21		FRI	26/11/21		
	SAT	16/10/21		SAT	06/11/21		SAT	27/11/21		
	WED	20/10/21		WED	10/11/21		WED	01/12/21		
	THU	21/10/21		THU	11/11/21		THU	02/12/21		
<b>3b</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT OF HEARINGS – SKILLS ASSESSMENT</b>									
Prior to attending a session, you should complete the advance preparation and learning on LA Online.  These sessions will take place on TEAMS where you will have the opportunity to perform the role of the Chairing Member in a mock hearing, receive support and feedback on your practice thereafter receive feedback on your written reasons for decisions.	WED	22/09/21	1.00 pm – 3.30 pm	SAT	06/11/21		SAT	27/11/21		
	SAT	25/09/21	10.00am – 12.30pm	TUE	09/11/21		TUE	30/11/21		
	THU	30/09/21	6.30 pm – 9.00 pm	THU	11/11/21		THU	02/12/21		
	TUE	05/10/21	1.00 pm – 3.30 pm	FRI	12/11/21		FRI	03/12/21		
	TUE	26/10/21		TUE	16/11/21		TUE	07/12/21		
	WED	27/10/21		WED	17/11/21		WED	08/12/21		
	FRI	29/10/21		FRI	19/11/21		FRI	10/12/21		
	SAT	30/10/21		SAT	20/11/21		SAT	11/12/21		
	WED	03/11/21		WED	24/11/21		WED	15/12/21		
	THU	04/11/21		THU	25/11/21		THU	16/12/21		

## PROGRAMME 2

Panel Member Learning  
Programme (PMLP)



PANEL MEMBERS

### Essential Training

For existing panel members in their second and subsequent appointment periods:

**Information Governance and Cyber Security** online course completed every two years.

**Advocacy** online course.

**Children (Scotland) Act 2020 – Siblings** online course

Other courses may be added as new legislation is launched and practice changes are made.

We will revisit face-to-face training sessions for the extended hearings community as soon as we have recovered from the back-log created by pause due to the pandemic. *Or words to that effect.*

### Continuous Development

Here we will guide them in how the courses will enhance their practice



	COURSE DATES		
<b>INTRODUCTION TO CHS</b>			
These sessions are organised and delivered by CHS National Team.			
<b>QUALITY ASSURANCE @ CHS</b>			
Prior to booking an observation session you should complete the advance preparation on LA Online which will equip you with the knowledge to successfully engage in the observation session.	Fri	17/09/21	10.00am – 12.30pm
	Wed	22/09/21	1.00 pm – 3.30 pm
	SAT	25/09/21	10.00am – 12.30pm
	THU	30/09/21	6.30 pm – 9.00 pm
	TUE	05/10/21	1.00 pm – 3.30 pm
	FRI	08/10/21	10.00am – 12.30pm
	WED	13/10/21	1.00 pm – 3.30 pm
<b>RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION</b>			
Will be launched as and when required.			

### Essential Training

#### All Area Support Team (AST) members:

**Information Governance and Cyber Security** online course to be completed once appointed and thereafter every two years.

Plus

#### AST members involved in recruitment, selection or reappointment:

**Recruitment, Selection and Reappointment** to be completed within each three-year reappointment period or when there are significant changes to the policy/procedure.

#### AST members involved in complaints investigation:

**Complaints, Policy and Investigation** to be completed within each three-year reappointment or when there are significant changes to policy/procedure.

#### New Panel Practice Advisors:

**CHS Induction Session** delivered by CHS National Team

**Quality Assurance at CHS** blended course

**Information Governance and Cyber Security** online course to be completed once appointed and thereafter every two years.

#### Existing Panel Practice Advisors:

**Quality Assurance at CHS** blended course completed within each three-year reappointment period.

PROGRAM

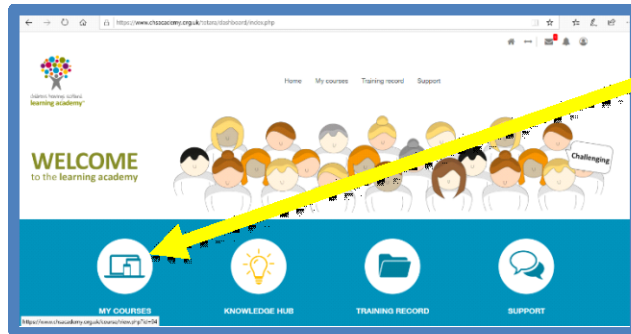
PROGRAMME 4

eLearning Programme



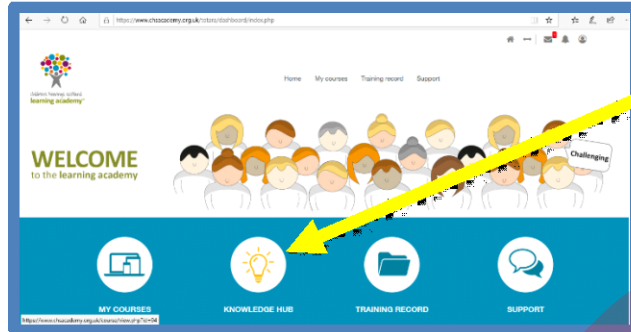
### What is the format of the on-line learning courses?

E-learning courses specific to your role



The e-learning courses within 'My courses' are designed to enhance knowledge, understanding and skills related to your volunteering. Courses usually consist of two parts: the main learning section; and a reflection and feedback section. Once both parts have been completed you are credited with the course and it moves to the 'Training record' section where you can access it again.

### General e-learning courses



The courses within the 'Knowledge Hub' are generic and offer a range of knowledge development in key areas of volunteer and personal development.

### How often are courses offered?

E-learning courses are available on an ever growing programme with relevant courses added and updated throughout the year. Keep an eye on both the 'My courses' and 'Knowledge hub' areas. Our face to face programme is also expanding each year in line with developments within practice and policy around the hearing system. You can find out about new courses from the prospectus, CHS and Academy updates and local learning & development events.

PANEL PRACTICE RELATED COURSES	
Advocacy*	NEW
Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019	
Child Development	
Contact	UPDATED
Diversity, Equality & Inclusion	
Introduction to ACEs within the Hearing Room	
Neglect	
Permanence	
Siblings*	NEW
OTHER HELPFUL COURSES	
Digital Handling of Concerns & Complaints	
Digital Learning & Events for Event Managers	
Digital for Volunteer Managers	
Digital Services for Volunteer Recruitment	
Information Governance**	
Introduction to TEAMS	
Getting to know TEAMS	
PPA Observations and Quality Assurance	
Rota for Rota Managers	

\*Essential Training for Panel Members

\*\*Essential Training for all (repeats every two years)

**PROGRAMME 5**  
National Events

CONFERENCE	Date	Time
Promoting Needs not Deeds	TBC	TBC
Promoting Supportive Relationships	TBC	TBC

**Learn from the Experts – WATCH THIS SPACE!**

In the new year we shall be hosting two large scale events at which we will hear from a range of expert speakers on a range of subjects.

Both of our events will have a maximum attendance of 250 of the hearings community.

These interactive sessions will be available on a ‘first-come, first-served’ basis.

We will record the seminars to allow the greater community to have access to the knowledge and information imparted.

Whether the member has attended the live conference or accessed the recording on LA Online, their next step will be a questionnaire to ‘test’ their knowledge, understanding and what they envisage the practical usage of their new-found knowledge will be.

We shall collate and disseminate the practical usage information in a handy guidance document.

**Learn from the Experts**

**Promoting Needs not Deeds** - to discuss why punishing children, and treating them as adults when they commit crimes, can be harmful. Hosted by a young person previously involved in the youth justice system and supported by CHSLA and CHS colleagues.

Speakers will be representatives from:

- Child psychology to explain the developing brain.
- CYCJ
- Care system and panel experienced young person
- Clan Child Law
- Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration
- Children First – Safeguarding
- Advocacy Provider

**Promoting Supportive Relationships** – to discuss having conversations in the hearing room to help families flourish. Families should be given support together to nurture love and overcome the difficulties which get in the way. Hosted by a young person who has experience of differing care environments and supported by CHSLA and CHS colleagues.

Speakers - will be representatives who can inform on ensuring good outcomes referencing the different SHANARRI indicators:

- Social Work
- Health – CAMHS, Addiction Services, General
- Education – from pre to employment
- Advocacy Provider
- Housing, Community Groups etc. there are a number of ‘hidden’ supports who interact with and impact greatly on the outcomes for children

## What's coming in 2022?

### AST Recruitment Course

To prepare us for our next recruitment campaign we will reflect on the recruitment practices for 2021 and implement any changes required to support the process.

### Pre-service training

Learning from our evaluation of the pre-service course of 2021 and any further changes to legislation and best practice we will enhance our training provision to ensure a positive experience for learners resulting in a well-trained, competent and confident panel member.

### Trauma

As well as the development of a specific course on recognising and responding to trauma in the hearing room, we will ensure that all our courses are updated to reflect best practice in trauma informed responses.

### Other courses

In response to legislation and guidance updates and further topics that will prove helpful to you in your role.

## FUTURE PLANNING

For what is happening in your area, remember to engage with your local TEAMS Channel.

For national activity please engage with the following TEAMS Channels;

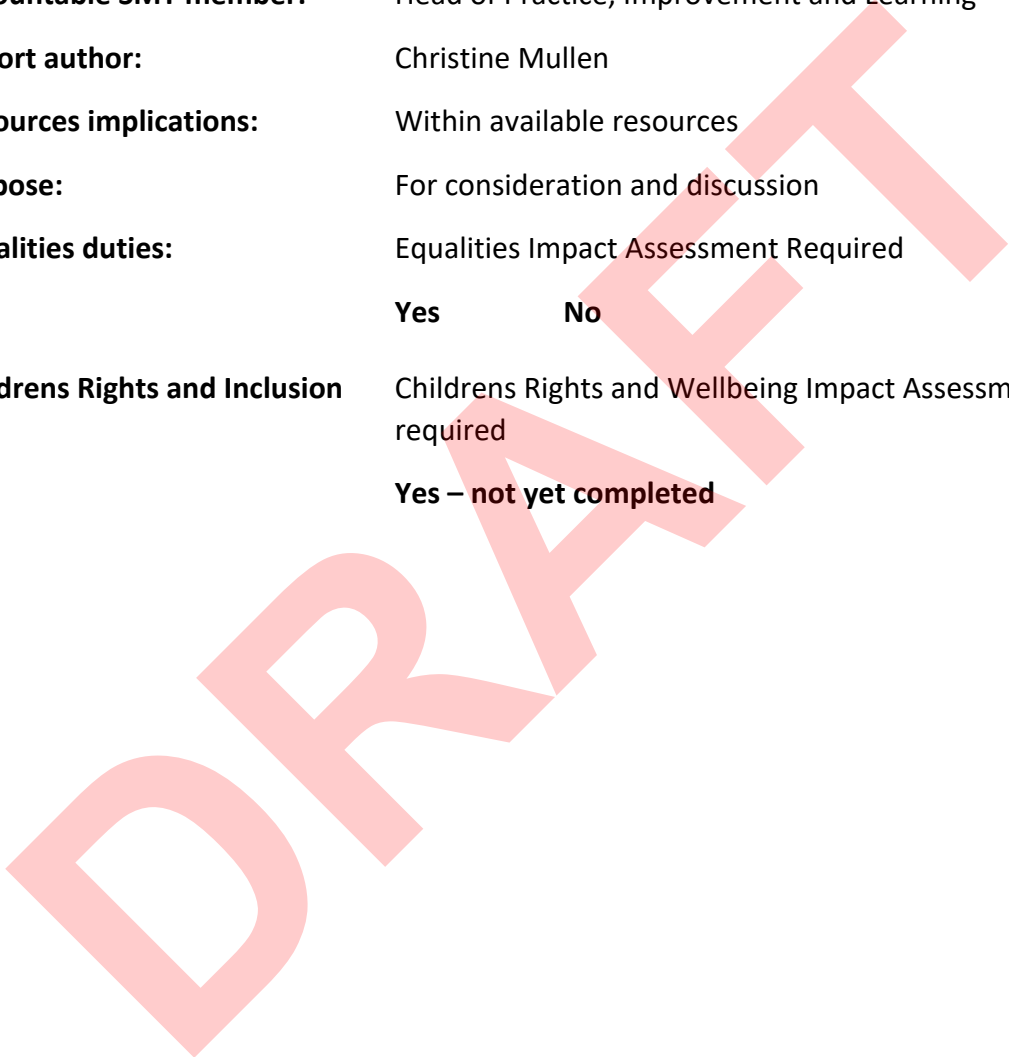
- General
- Learning and Development

**Agenda item 17**

**CHS-2122-30**

**CHS Trauma Plan**

<b>Accountable SMT member:</b>	Head of Practice, Improvement and Learning
<b>Report author:</b>	Christine Mullen
<b>Resources implications:</b>	Within available resources
<b>Purpose:</b>	For consideration and discussion
<b>Equalities duties:</b>	Equalities Impact Assessment Required
	<b>Yes            No</b>
<b>Childrens Rights and Inclusion</b>	Childrens Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment required
	<b>Yes – not yet completed</b>



## 1. Introduction/Purpose:

This paper sets out CHS' approach to trauma, capturing both what has happened to date and future plans. Our journey to being a fully trauma responsive organisation will take time so this plan sets out phase 1.

## 2. Background

In Scotland we have taken great strides to provide trauma-informed public services. Indeed, the language of trauma and adverse childhood experiences has become common place in government policy frameworks, the NHS, Police Scotland, education, social housing and most recently in the Independent Review of Care which led to The Promise.

As a society we are rightly concerned with all traumatic events which can occur across the lifespan, whether a single severe incident such as a road traffic accident, or the prolonged exposure to trauma through domestic abuse. For Children's Hearings Scotland we are committed to minimising the impact of trauma on infants, children and young people, on families and carers within the system, and on our own panel community and staff providing a service.

Understanding trauma in children and young people is one of our biggest goals, and:

- Children's Hearings: Children must feel that it is their hearing, where they can choose how to share their views about their lives. Panel Members' interaction and communication with children must be as inclusive as possible, recognising and understanding trauma and its impact, as well as being open to the ways that children may choose to share their views.
- We must ensure that Panel Members are trained in how to listen and include children, recognising the challenges some children may face with communication and in recovering from trauma. They will embed a children's rights and child-centred approach during the child's hearing

## 3. What does 'Trauma' mean in our setting?

There are a number of respected definitions of trauma and lots of resources to draw on concerning the impact of trauma, and CHS must ensure that our definition and consequent work relates directly to what happens in and around children's hearings, and reference the needs of our volunteer community. Ultimately, anything we do in the area of trauma must be trauma responsive. For us, trauma responsive should mean that we are trauma informed and where possible trauma skilled in the first phase of this work. Positive outcomes for children and young people must be our key focus.

To shape our approach to equipping our community to be trauma responsive, CHS' senior management team have attended introductory as well as bespoke workshops (along with SCRA) via the NHS Education for Scotland (NES) Scottish Trauma Informed Leaders Training (STILT) programme. This programme recognises that trauma informed and responsive practice can only happen in the context of trauma informed and responsive environments,



which include policies, systems and how organisations operate, as well as learning and development needs and reflective practice. We have considered the NES resource ‘Taking a Trauma Informed Lens’.

The Lens is bounded by the following principles:

- Safety
- Choice
- Collaboration
- Trust, and
- Empowerment

and breaks the approach down into specific service elements as at Figure 1: The embedding of lived experience of the care and hearings system in the planning, strategy, design any interventions to support trauma responsive practice must be integral to any approaches we take.

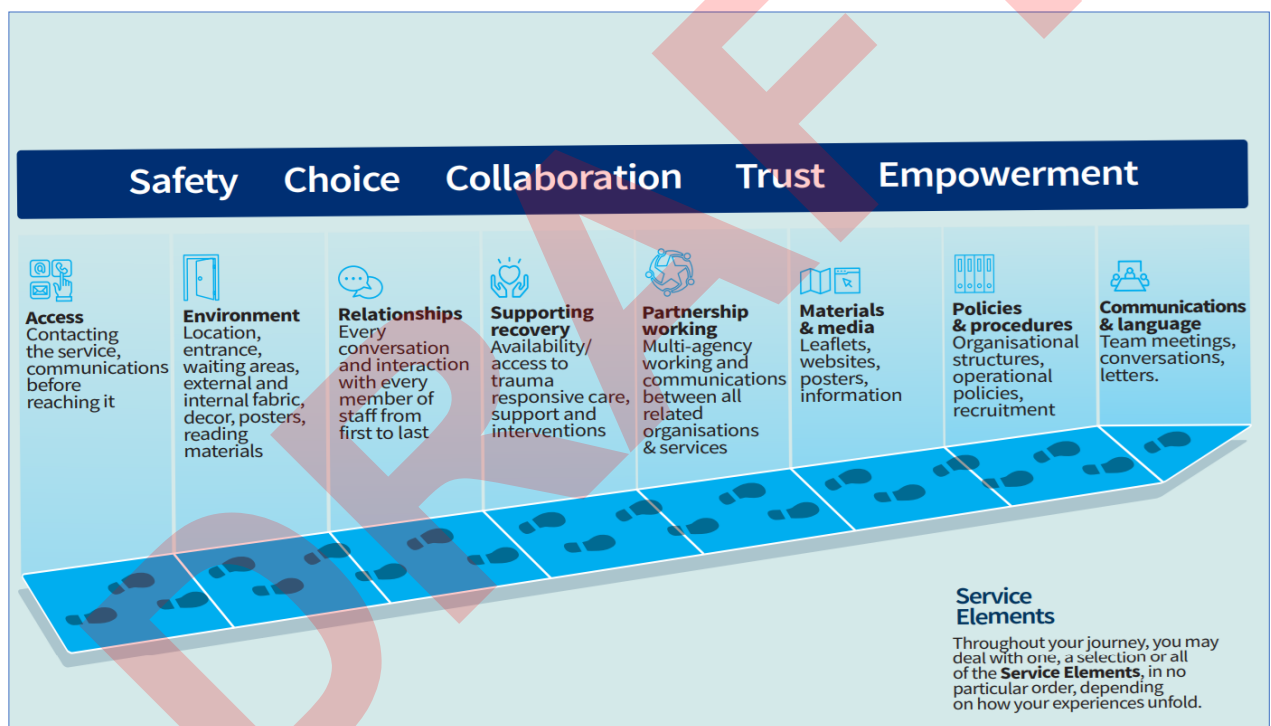


Figure 1

The approach below identifies key drivers that can support any organisation in its work on trauma:

- Leadership and Management
- Workforce Wellbeing – in our case this includes staff and volunteers
- Workforce knowledge and skills - in our case this includes staff and volunteers
- Experts by Experience – lived experience
- Data and Information

Key questions for organisations to ask can be found in the diagram below. These questions have informed CHS' approach to date and are informing our future work in the area of trauma.

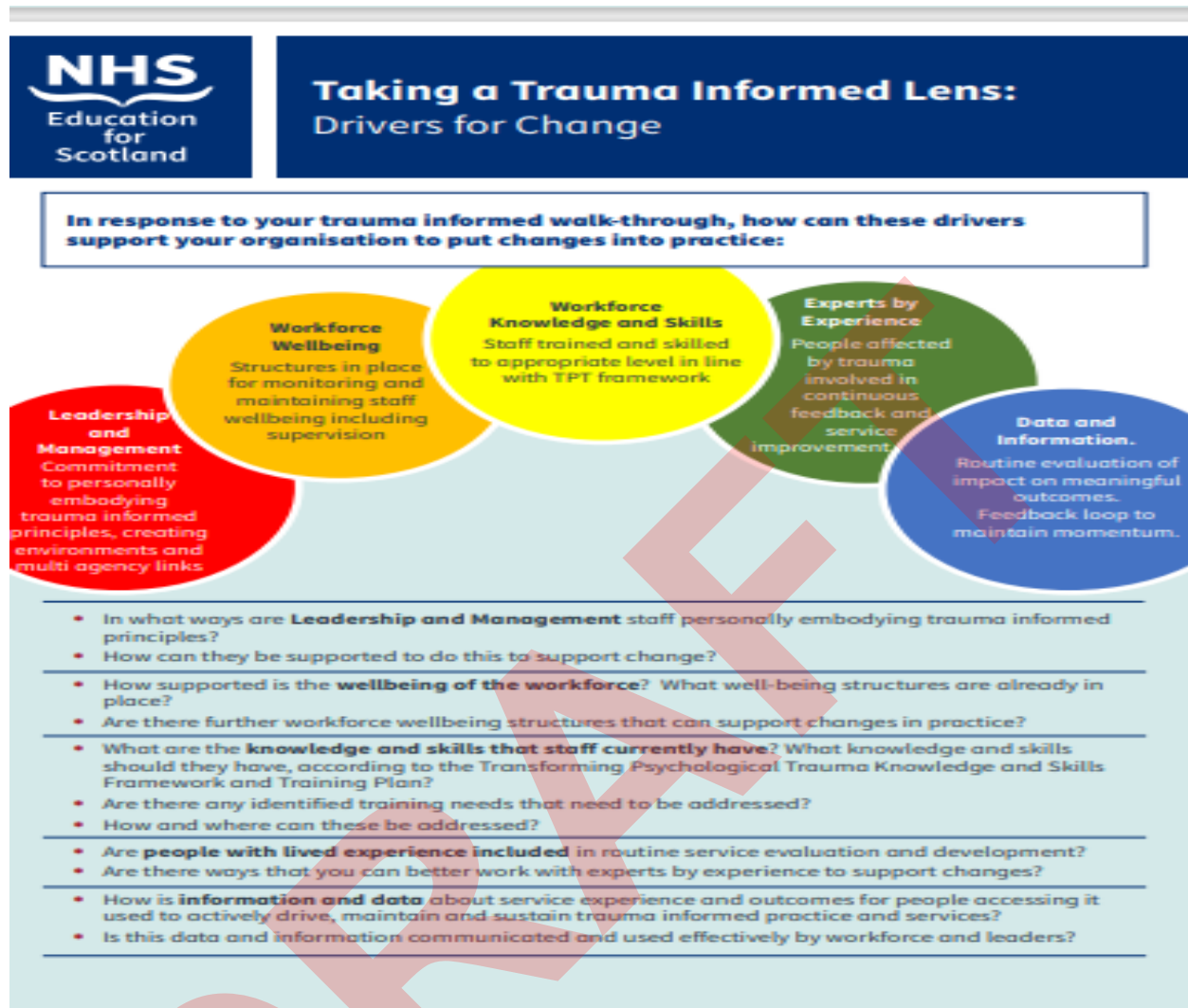


Figure 2

#### 4. Objectives and outcomes for our Trauma work:

Our Trauma Responsive Children's Hearings System should:

- Take account of trauma, especially developmental and complex trauma (**Type 2**) and its long-term *effect* on a child or young person, in a way which will *inform* all elements of the system but importantly the hearing itself: the approach adopted in the room, and the decisions made.
- Be aware of how the system itself may create trauma or re-traumatise a child or young person and reflect this understanding in both our approach and our decisions.
- Know, and reflect the knowledge that professionals specialising in child abuse and neglect have become aware of the greater significance and impact of intra-familial trauma on the brains of developing children concluding that impact relating to such

traumas create more profound long-term problems than those associated with post-traumatic stress disorder.

- Understand that children and young people who have experienced developmental trauma are at risk of failing to develop the complex social, cognitive, emotional, psychological, and even biological skills required for dealing with stress in the world and are likely to have difficulty in addressing the challenges in life which are necessary for attaining positive outcomes.
- Understand that developmental trauma can severely impact the developmental age of a child or young person and they should not be expected to be able to operate at their chronological age, and what implications that has for the hearing. Therefore, a panel will know that the patterns of developmental trauma are hard wired and difficult to rewire, and that the 13-year-old who has been exposed to trauma may behave in a manner younger than their chronological age and adapt their approach accordingly.
- Know how residual the early working model of a child remains, presenting itself as challenging behaviour in the child, adolescent and adult.
- Know that trauma creates a brain and a working model for a child which has wired not to trust, to expect something bad to happen at any moment, or have been unable to build positive attachments with a caregiver, whereby it is almost impossible to make or maintain friendships, trust your teacher, focus in class for fear something bad will happen, etc.
- Understand that as a child with developmental trauma enters nursery and school, they find it hard to concentrate because of their hypervigilance and they talk, are removed from class, excluded from activities, and their social and educational attainment is impeded, leading to a potentially severe and detrimental domino effect on life chances.
- Understand that circumstances often don't change, and they can experience multiple incidents of 'toxic stress', with a prolonged exposure to negative events or more importantly a primary care giver who does not or cannot meet the needs of the child.
- Mean (notionally) that the first question about a child will not be 'what have you done', but 'what has happened to you'?

#### **5. Ensuring our community are knowledgeable and skilled as well as supported**

To assist organisations in Taking a Trauma Informed Lens, and embedding meaningful work in the area of trauma, there is a Knowledge and Skills [framework](#), incorporating four levels of practice focusing on those who are:

1. Trauma Informed
2. Trauma Skilled
3. Trauma enhanced
4. Trauma Specialist

In phase one of our work to be trauma responsive, we will adopt elements of this framework to ensure that our CHS volunteer community and staff team are fully informed and equipped

to the level required and that our organisation practices e.g. staff and volunteer recruitment and selection, take trauma into account. At this time levels 1 and 2 are the most relevant to the roles undertaken by staff and volunteers in CHS. However, we may wish to develop into levels 3 and 4 as we go forward depending on any redesign of the Childrens Hearings System and any consequents changes of the role of CHS. NES have created a range of learning resources to support organisations and individuals to use to embed appropriate levels of learning, development and to support implementation of trauma informed and responsive services. For each of the levels there are recommended learning outcomes and associated knowledge and skills.

Table 1 – Practice Level Definitions





 <b>TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICE</b>	 <b>TRAUMA SKILLED PRACTICE</b>	 <b>TRAUMA ENHANCED PRACTICE</b>	 <b>TRAUMA SPECIALIST PRACTICE</b>
<p>All workers.</p> <hr/> <p>Examples could include shop workers, taxi drivers, recreation workers and office workers.</p>	<p>Workers who are likely to be coming into contact with people who may have been affected by trauma.</p> <hr/> <p>Examples could include some lawyers, GPs, teachers, support for learning staff, police officers, nursery staff, sports-club coaches, receptionists, dentists, judges, A&amp;E workers, lecturers, housing workers, care workers, service managers, youth development workers, health visitors and counsellors.</p>	<p>Workers who have a specific remit to respond to people known to be affected by trauma</p> <p>—AND—</p> <p>are required to provide advocacy support or interventions</p> <p>—OR—</p> <p>are required to adapt the way they work to take into account trauma reactions to do their job well and reduce risk of re-traumatisation</p> <p>—OR—</p> <p>are required to manage these services</p> <hr/> <p>Examples could include some lawyers, mental health nurses and workers, specialist domestic abuse support and advocacy workers, educational support teachers, some specialist police officers, some psychiatrists, forensic medical examiners, social workers, prison staff, secure unit workers, drug and alcohol workers and specialist counsellors.</p>	<p>Workers who have a specific remit to provide specialist interventions or therapies for people known to be affected by trauma with complex needs.</p> <hr/> <p>Examples could include social workers with specialist roles / training, major incident workers, some psychiatrists, managers of highly specialist services, psychologists and other therapists.</p>

Figure 3

**5.1 Trauma informed practice – (for all members of the workforce whether paid or unpaid).** This is our starting point for equipping our community in the area of trauma.

- **Opening Doors Animation** This animation explains why and how trauma is everyone’s business. It is designed to support anyone to become trauma informed - no matter what their job or role in society. It covers traumatic events like childhood sexual abuse and domestic abuse, and comes with a note to people so it is important to look after themselves as they watch it.
- Trauma Informed practice for anyone working with children and young people: **Sowing Seeds** This animation was developed by NHS Education for Scotland, in partnership with the Scottish Government. It is designed for everyone who works with children and young people. It aims to support people to understand the impact of trauma and to know how to adapt the way they work to make a positive difference to the lives of children and young people affected by trauma.

Both of the above resources have been used within CHS redesigned pre -service training in 2021. CHSLA have also drawn on workshop delivery material linked to these 2 resources

to enhance and embed the learning particularly focusing on five key pause points for reflection, discussion, planning and commitment.

**5.2** CHS have gained agreement from NHS Education for Scotland that the above learning modules can be hosted inside the CHS Learning Academy to enable learning to be targeted specifically at what panel members can and must do to ensure that the impact of trauma is at the forefront of their decision making as well as their own wellbeing. Hosting content within CHSLA allows for additional support materials, assessment and implementation mechanisms and practice reflections to be shared. It also enables CHS to ensure the support for Panel and AST Members who may be experiencing trauma. is profiled e.g. Health Assured.

**5.3** As part of our upcoming agreement (we will need to sign data sharing protocols) with NHS Education for Scotland, which has taken a while to negotiate, CHS will have a responsibility via CHSLA, to provide learning completion statistics to them as well as any qualitative feedback from learners.

**5.4 Trauma Skilled Practice** – this level of training is for those who are likely to be coming into contact with people who may have been affected by trauma. This is the case for our Panel and AST members and staff.

- An existing option for our purposes could be the Developing your trauma skilled practice online learning module. This module consists of five units, and takes around 1.5-3 hours to complete. It is designed to increase peoples' understanding of what psychological trauma is and how it can affect us, how to support recovery and develop trauma informed relationships that incorporate trust, safety, choice and collaboration, and control and empowerment, and how to recognise when a person may benefit from a trauma specialist intervention

However this resource is not tailored in any way for volunteers or the children's hearings system. We would be unable to release this learning without placing an enhanced support package around them and to embed learning must consider how we increase reflective practice on trauma in our community.

NHS Education for Scotland have also recently released a new learning module specifically focusing on trauma in children and young people and this will become part of our portfolio of learning for our volunteers and staff as we go forward.

## **6. NES Partnership**

NES are keen to work with CHS and SCRA (though we may differ in how) to ensure that knowledge and skills are linked directly to our respective roles. To this end, NES is currently tasked with developing a Train the Trainers model for enhancing the skills and knowledge of practitioners across Scotland. They are keen to develop and pilot that work with CHS. To date CHS have given advice on how this model might operate.

## 7. Current and Future Work

**Phase 1** of our work on Trauma is underway and aims to provide a broad and Children's Hearings related introduction to all staff, the Board, and panel community leaders on the importance of trauma, and why we need a trauma-informed hearings system. This phase includes the following strands:

- NES Partnership working
- CHS community accessing introductory learning on trauma
- CHS have invited a Third Sector consortium to pilot more intensive training on trauma and to test scale-ability
- CHS is part of the National Trauma Training Programme group focusing on Care experienced infants, children and young people

In **Phase 2** as part of our CHS Promise Programme, a Trauma Project working group will need to:

- Map the trauma-informed knowledge and practices already within the Children's Hearing System and those of other public services for full assessment, focusing on those with relevance to our work
- Consider in detail and in consultation with CHS staff, children and young people, and the panel community what a trauma-informed hearing system should and could be.
- Consider and present solutions for the implications and needs for all aspects of the CHS functions especially training and learning, practice, support and recruitment
- Link with any consultation vehicles for children and young people, panel community, and staff to consider what is in scope, views and implications –
- Complete a detailed vision of a trauma-informed hearing system over the next 5 years and identify the incremental step towards achieving our objectives.
- Ensure that the impact of relevant knowledge, skills and support in the areas of trauma is measured and can demonstrate an improvement in the experiences of those attending hearings and for our panel member decision makers.