

Public Board Meeting

Tue 25 March 2025, 10:00 - 12:00

Thistle House, Microsoft Teams

Agenda

10:00 - 10:00 **1. Welcome & Apologies**

0 min

verbal *Katharina Kasper*

 0. DRAFT Board Meeting Agenda MAR 25.pdf (1 pages)

10:00 - 10:05 **2. Declarations of Interest**

5 min

verbal *Katharina Kasper*

To update.

10:05 - 10:10 **3. Approval of the Minute from the Meeting on 21 January 2025**

5 min

paper *Katharina Kasper*

To approve.

 3. CHS-2425-38 CHS Board DRAFT Minute 21.01.25.pdf (7 pages)

10:10 - 10:15 **4. Action Log Update**

5 min

paper *Katharina Kasper*

To update.

 4. CHS-2425-39 Board Action Log - January 2025.pdf (1 pages)

10:15 - 10:20 **5. Chair Update**

5 min

verbal *Katharina Kasper*

To update.

10:20 - 10:25 **6. Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) Chair Update**

5 min

verbal *Sean Austin*

To update.

10:25 - 10:30 **7. People and Culture Committee (PaCC) Chair Update**

5 min

verbal *Katie Docherty*

To update.

10:30 - 10:40 8. National Convener/CEO Update

10 min

paper Elliot Jackson

To update.

 8. CHS-2425-40 National Convener CEO Update.pdf (8 pages)

ITEMS FOR NOTING

10:40 - 10:45 9. Finance Report P11

5 min

Paper Jessica MacDonald

To note.

 9. CHS-2425-41 Board Paper CHS Finance Report P11.pdf (2 pages)


10:45 - 10:50 10. Quarter 4 Performance Report

5 min

Paper Jessica MacDonald

To note.

 10a. CHS-2425-42 Q4 Performance Report.pdf (4 pages)

 10b. CHS-2425-42 Appendix 1 - Q4 Performance Report Spreadsheet.pdf (4 pages)

10:50 - 10:55 11. Digital Annual Report 2024/25

5 min

Paper Jessica MacDonald

To note.

 11a. CHS-2425-43 Digital Annual Report Cover Page.pdf (2 pages)

 11b. CHS-2425-43 Digital Annual Report 20250325 0.02.pdf (11 pages)

10:55 - 11:00 12. Refreshed Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Strategy 2025/26

5 min

Paper Joanne O'Leary

To note.

 12a. CHS- 2425-44 Refreshed EDI Strategy 2025-26 Report Cover Page.pdf (3 pages)

 12b. CHS-2425-44 Appendix 1 - EDI Strategy 2025-26 Draft 1.3.pdf (8 pages)


ITEMS FOR APPROVAL


11:00 - 11:10 13. 2025/26 Annual Business Plan

10 min

Paper Jessica MacDonald

To approve.

 13a. CHS-2425-45 2025-26 Annual Business Plan Cover Paper.pdf (2 pages)

 13b. CHS-2425-45 Appendix 1- CHS Business Plan 2025-26 FINAL.pdf (22 pages)

11:10 - 11:15 14. Budget Approval 2025/26

5 min

Paper Jessica MacDonald

To approve.

 14. CHS-2425-46 Budget Approval 2025-26.pdf (4 pages)

11:15 - 11:20 **15. Financial Regulations**

5 min

Paper Jessica MacDonald

To approve.

 15a. CHS-2425-47 Review of Financial Regulations Cover Report.pdf (2 pages)

 15b. CHS-2425-47 Appendix 1 - Financial Regulations v2.4.pdf (15 pages)

11:20 - 11:25 **16. Accounting Policies**

5 min

Paper Jessica MacDonald

To approve.

 16a. CHS-2425-48 Accounting Policies Cover Report.pdf (2 pages)

 16b. CHS-2425-48 Appendix 1 - CHS Accounting Policies 2024-25.pdf (5 pages)

11:25 - 11:30 **17. ARC Terms of Reference**

5 min

Paper Sean Austin

To approve.

 17a. CHS-2425-49 ARC Terms of Reference Cover Paper.pdf (2 pages)


 17b. CHS-2425-49 Appendix 1 - ARC ToR 2025 FINAL.pdf (5 pages)

11:30 - 11:35 **18. PaCC Terms of Reference**

5 min

Paper Katie Docherty

To approve.

 18a. CHS-2425-50 PaCC Terms of Reference Cover Paper.pdf (3 pages)

 18b. CHS-2425-50 Appendix 1 - PaCC ToR 2025-26 FINAL.pdf (5 pages)

11:35 - 11:40 **19. PaCC Workplan**

5 min

Paper Katie Docherty

To approve.

 19a. CHS-2425-51 PaCC Workplan Cover Paper.pdf (3 pages)

 19b. CHS-2025-51 Appendix 1 - PaCC Work Plan 2025-26.pdf (1 pages)

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

11:40 - 11:50 **20. Legislative Landscape and Impact on CHS**

10 min

Paper Carol Wassell

To discuss.

 20. CH-2425-52 Legislative Landscape and Impact on CHS.pdf (6 pages)

11:50 - 11:55 21. Board Governance Schedule

5 min

Paper *Elliot Jackson*

To discuss.

 21a. CHS-2425-53 Board Governance Schedule.pdf (3 pages)

 21b. CHS-2425-53 Appendix 1 - Board Governance Schedule 2025.pdf (1 pages)

11:55 - 12:00 22. AOB

5 min

Verbal *Katharina Kasper*

To update.

12:00 - 12:00 23. Date of Next Meeting

0 min

Verbal *Katharina Kasper*

25 June 2025, 10am - 12pm, Conference Room 2, Thistle House, Edinburgh

BOARD MEETING
25 March 2025
10.00am – 12.00pm, Thistle House/Teams Virtual
AGENDA

	Timings	Item	Lead	Paper Number	Purpose
1.	10:00	Welcome & Apologies	Chair	Verbal	
2.	10:00	Declarations of Interest	Chair	verbal	To update
3.	10:05	Approval of the Minute from the Meeting on 21 January 2025	Chair	CHS-2425-38	To approve
4.	10:10	Action Log Update	Chair	CHS-2425-39	To update
5.	10:15	Chair Update	Chair	verbal	To update
6.	10:20	Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) Chair Update	SA	Verbal	To update
7.	10:25	People and Culture Committee (PaCC) Chair Update	KD	verbal	To update
8.	10:30	National Convener/CEO Update	EJ	CHS-2425-40	To update
ITEMS FOR NOTING					
9.	10:40	Finance Report P11	JMac	CHS-2425-41	To note
10.	10:45	Quarter 4 Performance Report	JMac	CHS-2425-42	To note
11.	10:50	Digital Annual Report 2024/25	JMac	CHS-2425-43	To note
12.	10:55	Refreshed Equalities, Diversity and Inclusivity (EDI) Strategy 2025/26	JO	CHS2425-44	To note
ITEMS FOR APPROVAL					
13.	11:00	2025/26 Annual Business Plan	JMac	CHS-2425-45	To approve
14.	11:10	Budget Approval 2025/26	JMac	CHS-2425-46	To approve
15.	11:15	Financial Regulations	JMac	CHS-2425-47	To approve
16.	11:20	Accounting Policies	JMac	CHS-2425-48	To approve
17.	11:25	ARC Terms of Reference	SA	CHS-2425-49	To approve
18.	11:30	PaCC Terms of Reference	KD	CHS-2425-50	To approve
19.	11:35	PaCC Workplan 2025	KD	CHS-2425-51	To approve
ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION					
20.	11:40	Legislative Landscape and Impact on CHS	CW	CHS-2425-52	For discussion
21.	11:50	Board Governance Schedule	EJ	CHS-2425-53	For discussion
22.	11:55	AOB	Chair	verbal	To update
23.	12:00	Date of Next Meeting			
25 June 2025, 10am – 12pm, Conference Room 2, Thistle House, Edinburgh					

Agenda Item 3. CHS-2425-38

Board Meeting
4th Meeting 2024/25
21st January 2025 at Thistle House, Edinburgh 13:00 – 15:00

DRAFT MINUTE

Present	Katharina Kasper (KK)	Chair
	Henry Robson (HR)	Depute Chair/Board Member
	Jo Derrick (JD)	PaCC Chair/Board Member (via Teams)
	Sean Austin (SA)	ARC Chair/Board Member
	Beth-Anne McDowall (BM)	Board Member
	Katie Docherty (KD)	Board Member (via Teams)
	Barbara Neil (BN)	Board Member
In Attendance:	Elliot Jackson (EJ)	CEO/National Convener, CHS
	Jessica MacDonald (JMac)	Director of Business and Finance, CHS
	Lynne Harrison (LH)	Director of Tribunal Delivery, CHS
	Carol Wassell (CW)	Director of Positive Outcomes, CHS
	Joanne O’Leary (JO)	Director of People and Culture, CHS
	Nick Rougvie (NR)	Children’s Hearings Sponsor Team Lead, SG (via Teams)
	Taiba Ali (TA)	Children’s Hearings Sponsor Team, Legislation and Policy Leader, SG (via Teams)
	Andrew Watson (AW)	Director for Children and Families, SG (via Teams) for item 9 Finance Report.
	Karen Griffin (KG)	Governance Manager, CHS (Observer)
	Alison Jaap (AJ)	Member of Public (Via Teams) (Observer)
	Frieda Cadogan (FC)	Executive Assistant/Governance Officer – Note Taker

	Item	
1.	Welcome & Apologies	
	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. No apologies were noted, although BAM would be joining the meeting late.	
2.	Declaration of Interests	
	Nothing noted.	
3.	Approval of the Minute from the Meeting on 26 November 2024	
	Minute from the meeting on 26 November 2024 was approved as an accurate record, subject to the following update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BN to be noted in the minute as having given apologies. 	FC
4.	Action Log Update	
	All actions noted as complete.	
5.	Chair Update	
	BAM joined the meeting. KK provided the Board with an update as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus has been on CHS Financial position, since last Board meeting in November, as discussed under item 10 within this agenda. • KK has been heavily involved in the CHS Board recruitment which is being led by the Scottish Government Public Appointments Team. A recruitment panel has been identified consisting of KK, representative from the SG Sponsor Team and an independent representative. The Ethical Standards Commissioner 	

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	<p>provided input into the recruitment pack. A Young Persons Panel is also being arranged. Applications close 27 January 2025. KK asked the Board to push the advert out further within their networks. Have had good interest so far.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With JD, HR and BAM leaving the Board this year, the Committee membership will be reviewed, once the three new Board members have been appointed. • KD has agreed to accept the position of Chair of the People and Culture Committee (PaCC) and thanked KD for doing this. • SA has accepted the role of Depute Chair of the Board from HR and KK thanked SA for agreeing to this. 	
6.	Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) Chair Update	
	SA informed the Board that the Committee has not met since the last Board meeting in November, therefore no update provided.	
7.	People and Culture Committee (PaCC) Chair Update	
	<p>JD provided the Board with an update from the meeting that took place on 17 December 2024.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The finalised CHS People and Culture Strategy 2024-2027 was presented at the Committee prior to wider circulation. JD thanked JO and her team for the hard work in creating such an essential element of the CHS values and culture. The Committee noted the ambitions within the Strategy, however agreed these were measured and at the right level. • The new Car Benefit Scheme Guidance was presented as an addition to the staff benefit package. The Committee noted the forward thinking of this and the value it adds in attracting and retaining staff. • CHS approach to the EDI Strategy was presented to the Committee. The Committee noted the importance of this ongoing piece of work which will continue to be monitored through the Committee. • The Mid-Year Review of the CEO Objectives and Performance was highlighted with a full review taking place at the March 2025 meeting. • This was the last meeting with JD as Chair, due to the end of tenure, and thanked the Board for the opportunity to be involved in the Committee. JD wished KD well in her new role as Chair and all the Committee for the future. 	
8.	National Convener/CEO Update	
	<p>EJ introduced the report to the Board and highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experts by Experience – Thirty-five applicants were interviewed with nine being appointed. This includes those from secure care and residential care which is fantastic. The Board members and Senior Leadership have been eager for this to be implemented for a long time so are extremely pleased that this is coming to fruition. CHS are committed to continuing to work with those who were not successful, following interview, through mentoring for the next generation and is a huge opportunity for CHS to hear about their experiences. • Children’s Care and Justice Bill – due to go live in early 2026 and CHS continue to work with legislation managers and partners to clarify the date. CHS are continuing to recruit in readiness for this. It is crucial to clarify the date as soon as possible to recalibrate plans where necessary. • Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry – EJ and SLT met with the inquiry team in November 2024 and provided an organisational statement. The statement has now been signed off and agreed and EJ will provide verbal evidence in February 2025. EJ noted that history should reflect well on the CHS service and its ability to 	

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adapt quickly and through such a challenging time.

- **Children's Hearings Redesign Consultation** - Awaiting the SG formal response to the consultation, which is expected in February 2025. CW is liaising with the SG on policy decisions and a detailed briefing will be provided to the CHS community, following full analysis of the impact of the recommendations.
- **Scottish Public Services Awards 2024** – EJ congratulated colleagues for being awarded the Project and Programme Management Award for the Tribunal Support Model Programme. Thank you to the CHS Board for encouragement to put ourselves forward for this. KD highlighted the importance to staff and the organisation to put ourselves forward for awards and aligns with our Strategic Outlook in recruiting good people.
- EJ thanked JD and HR for their hard work and advice and guidance whilst being on the CHS Board and highlighted the immense difference they have made to the organisation.

The following comments/questions were raised by the Board members to the update:

- **Pre-Service Training** – BN asked how competencies in relation to the Chair role will be measured. There will be a package of support in place over three months to improve confidence and competencies. This will be an ongoing support and competency process. The difficulties in bringing panel members back in to chairing after eighteen months was noted, hence the support being put in place.
- **Experts by Experience** – The Board welcomes the infrastructure that has been put in place to support young people to participate. CW advised that needs are still emerging, and we are eager to work with and listen to what the young people would like by way of support and mentoring. An ideas clinic has been setup for all staff to attend, along with strategic meetings and the young people will sit within these groups. Intention is to provide an update to the Board at the next meeting on this. CW will take this forward with her team.

Remuneration was highlighted as being important and the importance of this being part of the induction process, particularly in relation to the use of social media, whilst representing the organisation. CW noted this as extremely helpful point.

- **Covid-19 Inquiry** - BAM highlighted the importance of lessons learned from this experience and how quickly we were able to adapt whilst previously being advised that some change was not possible. The key point highlighted from the Board was being able to implement change if we want this badly enough and the need to think about other areas, we can make change and to be bolder. In preparation for the Care and Justice Bill in 2026, CHS have worked with the Children and Young Peoples Centre for Justice at Strathclyde University on the development of a practice guide and training module. This will be a mandatory e-learning module and is a good example to upskill people. EJ and BAM can look at who has been invited to take part in this.
- **Children's Hearing Redesign Consultation** - KK asked, other than those recommendations from Sherrif Mackie report that requires legislative change, are there other element that can be progressed between partners in this

CW

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	<p>space and any areas of concern.</p> <p>Foundation work has been ongoing over the past fourteen months of the Redesign Board between partner agencies such as CHS, SCRA and Social Work Scotland. The Scottish Government will link into this work, and we should have a story telling piece on what the hearing system will look like in the future. There may be a role for the Experts by Experience group within this. The outcome from the redesign work is expected to be done within the first six months of 2025 whereby we will know what the target operational model and vision is. Stage one of the Promise Bill will set out that vision with implementation over two to three years.</p> <p>BAM expressed frustration at those with lived experience not being represented on the group. This will be fed back to the group.</p> <p>The Board expressed support and sympathy for the frustrations felt on pace however agreed that it is important to see the response from the SG on the recommendation in the first instance and agreed that traction is now being seen in terms of progress. It was acknowledged the Redesign Board has made huge change in terms of better partnership working and engagement. There has also been a lot of movement on recommendations since initial responses and would not have happened had this foundational work not taken place.</p>	
9.	Finance Report	
	<p>JMac introduced the paper to the Board for noting, with the following points highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew Watson joined for this agenda item that was discussed at the start of the meeting. The Board thanked AW for attending the meeting. • Despite significant pressures in the budget, we have worked effectively on the budget, however had to delay some objectives to maintain this but managed to minimise the impact from savings targets. • Established budget requirements are identifying £750k of capital and £11.5m of revenue. Capital is fully funded; however, revenue is like last year with the added pressures of increased NI and pension costs. CHS are carrying 60% of established need in pressures. This has been discussed with AW at the accountability meeting to try and understand how the SG will support this. A letter of comfort has been issued to CHS from the SG detailing their commitment to collaborate with us meet our pressures throughout the year. • AJ joined the meeting via Microsoft Teams as an observer. <p>KK thanked AW and the SG team for ongoing discussions and dialogue however would like the Board to express their concerns, prior to the budget setting meeting in March 2025. The following points/concerns were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board are disappointed to be in a similar position to last year in relation to the Gift in Aid (GiA) settlement. The organisations operational needs exceed the GiA allocated resulting in a shortfall on what is required to be able to meet our deliverables. The Board are concerned that they are expected to agree to a financial budget that is untenable. • The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee expressed disappointment at being 	

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in a worse position financially, from last year, despite discussions that took place to avoid this. The organisation has gone through significant growth, challenging agenda and inflation costs not covered by GiA. Ministers had previously given support to this agenda and Promise Bill parliamentary debate on commitment to transformation of the hearings system, to support vulnerable members of society therefore this position is extremely disappointing.

- The Board members supported this view and highlighted deep concerns on the medium to short term and level of risk the Board are expected to take in relation to action that is required now, to support the Care and Justice Bill and the Promise Bill. This is extremely challenging and concerning from a governance and risk perspective. It is difficult to be reassured that CHS will be able to meet the needs of Scottish families going forward without having a secure funding position.
- The Board highlighted the consistent political support that CHS has on the work that we deliver and described as a critical service by the First Minister and in Parliament.
- CHS has a proven record on being economical with spending whilst being able to deliver services and feel the SG should put trust in the organisation with an agreed funding position.
- The Board feel that we will be unable to deliver on what has been asked of us by children and young people without this. This will be a disservice to young people and the Board are not content to agree to this. There is a real risk of failing the children in Scotland by not being able to equip panel members sufficiently to deliver the absolute best service.
- KK thanked AW again for attending the meeting and listening to the Board's concerns. KK highlighted that this is not a reflection of the good working relationships between the SG and CHS, however the Board need to express the strength of feeling about a funding position that is unsustainable and has a substantial risk. The Board are asking how some of this risk and reputational damage can be alleviated.
- It was noted that EJ has responded to the letter of comfort from AW asking for additional comfort in terms of messaging for our young people and families.
- Clarity was given around the four asks from the Board to the SG:
 1. Letter of comfort with commitment to our agreed budget of £11.4m.
 2. Commitment to dialogue throughout the year to meet the challenge and close the gap.
 3. Commitment to discussion around how we can come up for better mechanism for 2026/27 bearing in mind election so important,
 4. Commitment for AW to attend the March Board meeting.

AW thanked the Board for their feedback and concerns and provided the following response:

- AW recognised the level of feeling and concern highlighted, and the budget position and challenges faced, and point made on assessed need. The SG are working with an expectation that funding will be available as required, the same as last year.
- Ahead of the budget being approved there are limitations on what the letter

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	<p>of comfort can cover so restrictions on the issue of a new one at this stage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the Budget Bill is through, the SG will be in a stronger position to consider additional funding throughout the year. AW acknowledged the role of the organisation and will discuss with Ministers in recognising this and how important the service is. Will consider what further reassurance can be offered. AW reiterated that the SG are fully committed to working with us. • Agreed the need to think about future spending for 2026/27 post-election as agree CHS need to get into a regularised position with funding and would like to continue to work with CHS to improve the future position, particularly to achieve key targets. • AW agreed to attend the March Board meeting and will write to CHS prior to this. <p>KK thanked AW for the promising response and for listening to the Boards concerns.</p> <p>EJ will write formally to AW outlining the Board position.</p>	<p>FC/AW</p> <p>EJ</p>
10.	Quarter 3 Data Summary Report	
	<p>JMac introduced the report to the Board for noting and highlighted the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point 4.4 – Panel member forecast being below target until May 2025 and the recognition of the global downward trend of volunteering. This, together with the increased demand for panel members in response to the Care and Justice Bill has resulted in difficulties in recruitment of sufficient numbers. <p>SA asked how realistic the target is to recruit 1000 panel members by spring 2026 and highlighted concern around our ability to achieve this given the current climate.</p> <p>The Board were provided with assurance that we should have a more accurate position on progress in the summer, following the spring campaign and that we will still have sufficient time to take any necessary action if target not met. An update on whether the Care and Justice Bill will be implemented by 2026 will also be known then which will affect recruitment activities.</p> <p>The Board agreed that it would be beneficial to have a clear timeline mapped out to highlight when, if needed, internal actions are required if recruitment targets are not met. An update will be provided at the June 2025 Board Meeting. It was also agreed to review the CHS Strategic Risk Register to reflect more accurately the risk around this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Point 5.5.6 – Chair forecast numbers and challenges around this. Mitigating actions are included in report and work is ongoing with the expectation of reform within this area. 	<p>JMac</p>
11.	Quarter 3 Performance Report	
	<p>JMac introduced the report to the Board for noting, and highlighted the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressing well despite the challenging financial climate. Achieved all 	

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	<p>commitments within the Business Plan except for a couple of objectives being moved into next year's Business Plan. These however have been marginal changes and delivery has progressed well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JMac acknowledged colleagues hard work and commitment over the past year to achieve this positive position. The Board agreed with this sentiment. • As CHS are still to fulfil the Tribunal Support Model (TSM) expectations, we are not expected to face a recruitment freeze going into next year. 	
12.	ARC Workplan 2025	
	JMac introduced the paper to the Board for approval, which was given by the Board.	
13.	AOB	
	BAM expressed her gratitude to the Board for their support over the past eight years, particularly in relation to her proposal for children to meet with Panel Chairs prior to the hearing. This was not initially welcomed by all but with the Board support and support from the community this change is now coming to fruition.	
14.	Date of Future Meetings	
	25 th March 2025, 10.00am – 12pm, Conference Room 2, Thistle House/Microsoft Teams.	

CHS Board Meeting - Action Log



Ongoing	1
Overdue	0
Delayed	0
Complete	4
Not Started	1
Closed	0
TOTAL	6

Action No	Paper Ref (not for SLT)	Action Title	Action Details	Date Added	Due Date	Owner	Lead	Update	Status	Completion Date
1	CHS-2425-31	Update to Draft Minute from 26/11/24	BN should be noted as apologies and not present.	21/01/2025	28/01/2025	FC		Updated and Approved minute saved in internal file records.	Complete	21/01/25
3	CHS-2425-34	Finance Report	AW to attend March meeting and write to CHS prior to this on GiA funding position.	21/01/2025	13/03/2025	FC/AW		FC sent calander invite for March meeting to AW. AW confirmed attendance at start of meeting.	Complete	
4	CHS-2425-34	Finance Report	EJ to write formally to AW outlining Board position and concerns.	21/01/2025	28/01/2025	EJ		Email sent from EJ to AW 23/01/25	Complete	
2	CHS-2425-33	Experts by Experience	Update to come to March Board meeting on support plans for young people.	21/01/2025	24/06/2025	CW		Verbal update and fuller report in June on progress to date.	Ongoing	
5	CHS-2425-35	Panel Member Recruitment Update	update to be given at June meeting on recruitment position and timeline of key points.	21/01/2025	12/06/2025	LH			Not Started	
6	CHS-2425-35	Review of Risk Register	Agreed to review risk around panel member recruitment to more accurately identify any key capacity risk points which may require strategic mitigations.	21/01/2025	13/03/2025	LH		LH has updated the risk register.	Complete	

Agenda Item 8. CHS-2425-40

Meeting:	CHS Board Meeting
Meeting Date:	25 March 2025
Title:	National Convener/Chief Executive Board Update
Responsible Executive:	Elliot Jackson, NC/CEO
Report Author:	Elliot Jackson, NC/CEO

1.	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to ask the Board to note the update from the CHS National Convener/CEO on a range of organisational activity between the last Board in January 2025 and now.</p> <p>The report provides bite sized updates that can be expanded upon during the Board meeting.</p>
1.2	Any member wishing additional information should contact the National Convener/CEO in advance of the meeting.
2.	Recommendations
2.1	The Board are asked to note the paper and update provided by the CHS National Convener/CEO.
3.	Key Points for Discussion
3.1	Capacity
3.1.1	<p>CHS continue to operate in an increasingly challenging capacity context related to the deployment of our panel volunteers to Children's Hearings across Scotland.</p> <p>The downward trend in volunteering is not a unique challenge to CHS. The volume of people volunteering across Scotland has fallen from 30% in 2011 to 18% in 2023 (source – Scottish Household Survey). As an organisation reliant on the contribution of volunteers to deliver tribunals in Scotland, this creates a significant challenge and risk for CHS. Additionally, the role of the Panel Member and Chairing Panel Member is increasingly complex with additional responsibilities and scope. Each year approximately 18% of volunteers resign. In a wider redesign context, 57 of the 130 recommendations in the Hearings for Children Report related to the role of the volunteer panel member.</p> <p>All of this in the context that the Children's Care & Justice (Scotland) Act is expected to generate between up to 3300 more hearings each year from early 2026, with the welcome inclusion of 1300 16/17-year-olds to the Children's Hearings system.</p>

Agenda Item 8. CHS-2425-40

	<p>In the context of this challenge and in preparation for the Children’s Care & Justice (Scotland) Act, the CHS Change Board established the Capacity Programme in February 2024 to increase capacity and reduce organisational risk. Activities within this programme include maximising recruitment, exploring learning as a capacity lever, optimising the way we manage and deploy Panel Members to the rota, increasing retention via wellbeing and working collaboratively with SCRA to deliver capacity via a review of scheduling practices.</p> <p>Historically, our most significant capacity lever is recruitment to the volunteer community. Pre covid, we recruited approximately 500 new panel members per year through one recruitment campaign. Post covid, recruitment has been challenging and has seen a reduction in volunteers applying. During 2024, to maximise applications to our campaign, refinements were made such as refreshing the website, digital improvements to the applicant journey and a fresh consideration of pre-service learning. Our aspirational target for this campaign was 800 new Panel Members, and despite its success we are predicting an appointment of c.344 Panel Members in May 2025.</p> <p>In October 2024, the CHS Change Board made the evidence-based decision to proceed with an additional Spring Recruitment campaign to boost volunteer numbers following the Autumn campaign. This decision was not made lightly, as the additional resource required to support this campaign needed to be balanced with existing operational priorities and the ask that recruitment places on our volunteer community. We delivered a targeted recruitment campaign in areas that were experiencing acute rota management challenges. We are predicting that this campaign will achieve approximately 320 appointments.</p> <p>The capacity challenge within our volunteer community remains. We will be exploring further the levers of inactive panel members, the effectiveness of our deployment of volunteer capacity and talking further with SCRA on the levers in their control to ease our acute capacity challenge and risk.</p> <p>In a redesign context, the scale and reach of any Bill proposed is still under consideration and we are actively working with our Scottish Government colleagues on this. Notwithstanding these actions, CHS has committed to two recruitment campaigns in the 2025/26 business year.</p>
<p>3.2</p>	<p>Children’s Hearings Reform Landscape</p>

Agenda Item 8. CHS-2425-40

3.2.1	<p>CHS will be impacted by the necessary changes required to transform the hearing system, and more widely the improvement to children's care in Scotland that is intended to see long lasting improvement to the outcomes for children because of how they experience, and supported by, statutory care services.</p> <p>Keeping the Promise by 2030 is a key driver for this agenda, although achieving that is not within the gift of CHS alone, we are strategically aligning ourselves to play our part.</p> <p>There are seven areas of Legislative reform that we need to be across to ensure a seamless and joined up approach to implementation is achieved whilst not overwhelming Panel Members or the sector. These are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keeping the Promise 2. Children's Hearings Redesign Consultation Response 3. Children's (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act Implementation 4. Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019 implementation 5. Universal Definition of Care Experience Consultation Response 6. Future of Foster Care Consultation Response 7. UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 <p>A separate and more detailed Board paper entitled 'Legislative Landscape and Impact on CHS' is on the agenda for further discussion.</p>
3.3	<p>Panel Member Recruitment 2025</p>
3.3.1	<p>To support our capacity challenges, a targeted booster Panel Member recruitment campaign was held in six regions of Scotland. After a four-week campaign, the online application system closed on 24 February with almost 700 applications. As a comparison, the Scotland-wide autumn campaign did see the greatest increase in applications since the pandemic with 830 applications. Proportionally the Spring campaign did generate more applications: as a crude calculation, in autumn 92 applicants per region; in spring 114 applicants per region.</p>
3.3.2	<p>The role was promoted through a series of national Information Sessions; a new 'cut' from the original film to hear from current members of the Panel Community providing genuine and inspirational testimonials; employer and partner engagement; alongside the commissioned media buying activity. This campaign brought 66k new users to our website, with over 6000 views of our application form. For this campaign we also delivered an improved user experience for applicants with a revised application process.</p>
3.3.3	<p>This was the first ever campaign held at the same time as the 2024 autumn campaign intake undertook Pre-Service.</p>
3.4	<p>Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry</p>

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3.4.1	<p>The Scottish COVID-19 Inquiry was set up in June 2022 to learn the lessons for COVID. It covers the period 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2021 and is chaired by Lord Brailsford</p> <p>In November last year, CHS submitted a statement to the Inquiry setting out our experiences set against a series of 40-pre-set questions.</p> <p>We also facilitated two roundtable discussions for Panel Members and former Area Conveners to meet the Inquiry team and submit their own statement.</p> <p>Not all statements to the Inquiry are selected to give evidence and testimony. We (National Convener/SCRA and representatives from the CHS Community) were selected to give evidence under the 'Justice' theme.</p>
3.4.2	<p>Three separate evidence sessions took place on the Children's Hearings System on Friday 28 February 2025 in Edinburgh. These were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Convener – Session 1 Impact hearing Justice 28 February 2025 (morning session) • SCRA representatives – Session 2 Impact hearing Justice 28 February 2025 (morning session) • Members of the CHS Community [Jack King; Sarah Young; Susan Christie] – Session 3 Impact hearing Justice 28 February 2025 (afternoon session)
3.4.3	<p>There were three key takeaway messages that we will share with the CHS Community. They are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CHS did an excellent job in protecting children and young people who needed us most during that time with many examples of colleagues and volunteers consistently going the extra mile. 2. We succeeded by working in partnership with other agencies and whilst our systems were a clunky to begin with, they got better; and finally 3. The CHS Community was commended at the end of session 3 by Lord Brailsford for their unique contribution as volunteers.
3.5	<p>Chair Meeting the Child</p>
3.5.1	<p>Highland and Moray began piloting the Chair Greeting the Child in January 2023 and throughout the Hearings for Children Redesign work, Sheriff Mackie met with this group several times and was impressed by their commitment and the fact that minor changes like this can make a significant impact for children.</p> <p>This led to one of the questions in the recent public consultation asking: “<i>should the chairing member of the hearing meet the child, their family or representatives</i>”</p>

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	<p><i>to welcome them to the centre and offer any appropriate explanations and reassurances before the actual children’s hearing?”</i></p> <p>It has been confirmed with the Scottish Government that no legislative change is needed to incorporate this child-centred practice into the role of the chair and there is no need to wait for children and young people to benefit from it.</p>
3.5.2	<p>In some instances, attending children’s hearings can be daunting for children and their families. CHS supports and promotes changes to practice that will enhance and promote a trauma-informed approach to hearings. The Chair greeting the child when they attend a Hearing is intuitively child-centred and aims to improve their experience and help them feel at ease; keeping this as an informal part of the process is key. Young people have consistently told CHS and SCRA that they would welcome this change. A key aim of introducing this greeting is to promote child focused practices and foster a welcoming environment for children and their families to reduce stress and anxiety.</p> <p>The feedback we have had from young people has been overwhelmingly supportive of this and that they believe this change could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be helpful to have a friendly face in the hearing. • Help the child feel safe and comfortable. • Break the ice between the Chair and the child and • Encourage the child to speak up more during the hearing if they feel more relaxed. <p>The Next Steps to Better Hearings research also reported that “Children and young people (and parents and carers) find coming into a room of three Panel Members sitting formally in a row causes them anxiety at an already stressful time.”</p>
3.5.3	<p>We are implementing this practice change across Scotland from March 2025 in a sequenced rollout. This practice change is supported by a toolkit containing practice guidance, FAQs, briefings for partners, SCRA’s guidance and a fully scripted slide pack for both Chair Greeting the Child and Supporting New Chairs.</p> <p>An evaluation framework is currently being finalised with the outcomes presented to the Board in December of this year.</p>
3.6	<p>Townhall Meetings</p>
3.6.1	<p>The next Town Hall webinar is scheduled for May. This will allow us to brief the community on the legislative landscape that is in train, or being developed for the future, including the Children’s Care and Justice Act, information we are able to share in relation to the proposed legislative vehicle for 2026, UNCRC implementation, and the Age of Criminal Responsibility changes to be approved by Ministers.</p>

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	This will be chaired by a member of the volunteer community, with Stephen Bermingham and a colleague (TBC) on panel.
3.7	Quality Update
3.7.1	Planning, design, and delivery of the Quality Strategy is progressing well. An overview of current work and a high-level outline along with detail on the why, what, how and when of implementation was presented to the Audit and Risk Committee on 25th February. Current activities for the Quality team maintain a quality focus 'in and around' hearings and around three areas: evidence and data, audit and evaluation and observation and Panel Practice Advisors.
3.7.2	At this early-stage activities are focused on building a robust foundation to offer the best chance of successful implementation of the strategy. The approach to planning allows space for learning from implementation and to ensure we can be adaptive to any broader hearing system change. A series of implementation sessions have taken place across the national team. Key messages have been shared around the approach to quality in CHS and the integral themes of design and innovation work, engagement and co-production and the need to establish base line data and data cohesion. Two Quality Partners joined the team in February and a Quality Co-ordinator will be recruited soon. A further, more detailed update will be provided to the Board in the Autumn.
3.8	New Permanent Secretary Appointment
3.8.1	<p>Joe Griffin has been appointed Permanent Secretary to the Scottish Government and will formally assume post in April 2025.</p> <p>Joe has served in the Scottish Government since 2004 and as a Director General since 2021. He has led across a range of policy and delivery priorities during his 29 years in the Civil Service.</p> <p>This appointment has been made by the UK Cabinet Secretary, Chris Wormald, with the agreement of the First Minister, John Swinney, and the First Civil Service Commissioner.</p> <p>Joe Griffin will succeed John-Paul Marks, who will assume the role of First Permanent Secretary and Chief Executive of His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) in April.</p>
3.9	Public Sector Reform
3.9.1	The Minister for Public Finance addressed over 150 leaders of public bodies, local government, the third sector, and the wider economy at a Public Service Reform (PSR) Summit, held in Glasgow on Monday 17 February at the University of Strathclyde's Technology and Innovation Centre.

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3.9.2	The summit was convened to seek views from leaders of our public services on the development of the Scottish Government's PSR Strategy, and it provided a forum for discussion around how bodies can work together to inform and develop that strategic approach, and to galvanise action that will transform how public services are delivered, for the benefit of people and communities all over the country.
3.9.3	Delegates recognised that individual examples of good practice exist in many organisations but that a more strategic approach, focused on driving systemic change, is required. It was acknowledged that Scottish Government cannot deliver effective reform alone but that it has a significant role in setting the strategic direction and for creating an enabling environment for this joint endeavour. Many delegates noted that the Summit had provided a valuable step on that journey.
3.9.4	The Minister for Public Finance will continue to lead the development of the Scottish Government's PSR strategy, which will be published in Spring 2025.
4.	Alignment to CHS Strategic Outlook
4.1	<p>This work is aligned to the CHS Strategic Outcome 2024-2027:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 1 - Delivering Positive Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 1 - Develop a 5-year learning strategy to maximise learning impact across CHS • Objective 2 - Quality will be the cornerstone of our hearings system. • Objective 3 - Upholding and promoting children's rights is at the forefront of what we do, and those rights are well understood by our people • Theme 2 - Driving Transformation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 1 - Work with partners and stakeholders to lead and influence change. • Objective 2 - We will become a data-informed and data-driven organisation. • Objective 3 - We will make effective use of technology, capitalising on its potential for enhancing performance and delivering efficiency. • Theme 3 - Valuing Our People <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 1 - Implement a three-year People Strategy that attracts and retains top talent and committed individuals and drives the success and sustainability of the organisation. • Objective 2 - The organisational design remains agile, adaptable, and responsive to support ongoing organisational transformation. • Objective 3 - To become a more inclusive and diverse organisation and create a culture where everyone feels valued, included, and engaged. • Objective 4 - to develop our people capabilities.
5.	Key Risks

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5.1	No risks identified in relation to the paper. Any risk in relation to any specific areas detailed in the paper have been considered and reflected in the CHS Strategic Risk Register.
6.	Risk Register
6.1	As above.
7.	Impact on Inequality/Rights
7.1	Not required for this specific paper, however any requirements for an impact assessment in relation to the individual areas outlined in the paper will have been considered separately.
8.	Duty to Inform, Engage and Consult People who use our Services (Internal and External)
8.1	Not required for this specific paper, however any requirements for engagement in relation to the individual areas outlined in the paper will have been considered separately.
9.	Resource Implications
9.1	None in relation to this specific paper, however any resource implication in relation to the individual areas outlined in the paper will have been considered separately.
10.	Appendices
	None

Agenda Item 9. CHS-2425-41

Meeting:	CHS Board Meeting
Meeting Date:	25 March 2025
Title:	Finance Report
Responsible Executive:	Jessica MacDonald, Director of Business and Finance
Report Author:	Klaus Berchtenbreiter, Finance Manager

1.	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to ask the Board to note the Finance Report P11.
1.2	Any member wishing additional information should contact the Executive Lead in advance of the meeting.
2.	Recommendations
2.1	The Board are asked to note the Finance Report and key points below.
3.	Key Points for Discussion
3.1	24/25 Financial & Funding Position
3.1.1	<p>The published revenue Grant in Aid (GiA) allocation for CHS for 24/25 is £4,575k, with an acknowledgement from Scottish Government (SG) that CHS is carrying an additional ongoing pressure against the board approved budget of £10,299k.</p> <p>A formal letter of assurance from SG was received which clarified SG's commitment to meet CHS pressures. Following SG announcement of significant funding pressures across SG budget, spending restrictions were issued across SG as well as to all NDPBs. In response to this savings challenge and active expenditure management CHS was able to reduce pressures by a further £199k.</p>
3.2	<p>24/25 P10 update</p> <p>CHS forecast has changed in line with the SG spending restrictions, mainly in the Staffing and ICT budget from the last report shared with the board but remains mainly stable, allowing CHS to fulfil its statutory services. We have reduced our revenue forecast at SBR from £9,800k to £9,073k and per Feb to £8,828, but increased our capital requirements from £529k to £1,100k. The increase in capital will be funded by CHS cash reserve release of £571k towards capital spend and the remaining £14k to support revenue spend. Please see table below for detail.</p>

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Children's Hearings Scotland						strategic change to Windows devices
Report as at February 2025						
	Actual YTD Period 10	2024/25 Annual Budget	budget past ABR	savings proposal against ABR agreed budget	2024/25 Budget forecast after SG restrictions and active pressure management	new forecast
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	'£000
Staff	3,998	5,878	5,378	-166	5,212	4,929
+ Board	14	66	66	0	66	66
+ Training, travel and subsistence	113	121	121	2	123	125
+ Property	45	139	139	0	139	139
+ Other Operating Costs	74	197	197	-15	182	150
+ ICT Costs	1,013	845	845	211	1,056	987
+ Corporate Costs	104	27	27	0	27	110
+ Panel and AST Expenses	134	540	540	-250	290	290
+ Panel and AST Training	980	1,222	1,222	24	1,246	1,371
+ Support for hearings	97	430	430	0	430	196
+ Volunteer recruitment	230	380	380	25	405	385
+ PVGs	16	0	0	0	0	
+ AST Devolved Funding	20	454	455	-111	344	80
Income	0				0	
Capital Financing						
= Total	6,838	10,299	9,800	-280	9,520	8,828
+ Capital		529	529	330	859	1,100
= Budget requirements		10,828	10,329	50	10,379	9,928
+ cash reserves				-585	-585	-585
= CHS generated reduction in cash requirement after ABR				-535		
GiA after SG requested spending review and cash reserve release					9,794	9,343

4. Key Risks

4.1 Risks have been well managed during the fiscal year and there is currently no risk to note.

5. Risk Register

5.1 No update to the risk register required.

6. Impact on Inequality/Rights

6.1 N/A

7. Duty to Inform, Engage and Consult People who use our Services (Internal and External)

7.1 Financial position has been discussed with Director of Business and Finance and after sign-off reported to SG.

8. Resource Implications

8.1 N/A

9. Appendices

Agenda Item 10a. CHS-2425-42

Meeting:	CHS Board Meeting
Meeting Date:	25 March 2025
Title:	Q4 Performance Report
Responsible Executive:	Director of Business and Finance
Report Author:	Corporate Governance Officer

1.	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to ask the Board to note the Q4 Performance Report that monitors the delivery of the objectives in the CHS Business and Corporate Parenting Plan 2024/25 and to inspect the overall performance of the organisation.
1.2	Any member wishing additional information should contact the Executive Lead in advance of the meeting.
2.	Recommendations
2.1	The Board are asked to note the following summary and key points.
2.1.1	This report covers Q4 and the performance of the first year of delivering the three strategic themes, as set out in the CHS Strategic Outlook 2024-2027, and detailed below under point 4.
2.1.2	For the year 2024/25 there were 63 objectives, 26 of these objectives were to be completed within the year, with 22 of the 26 successfully completed. 35 of the 63 objectives are considered ongoing under the strategic outlook and the remaining 2 objectives were descoped during the year.
2.1.3	The 4 objectives not met within the year included the implementation of the bi-annual National Convener Forum which is to be developed in 2025/26, the launch of the 2 nd phase of Trauma training modules although this expected imminently, the completion of standard operating procedures across the organisation with the due date extended to end of Q2 2025/26 and understanding the level of data maturity to use data to improve decision making which will form part of the ISO27001 accreditation process being carried out during Q1/Q2 2025/26 as per point 3.4.5
2.1.4	It should be noted that there are no KPI statistics relating to Q4 2024/25 with this report as this data is to be collated after 31 st March, the end of the financial year.
3.	Key Points for Discussion
3.1	Delivering Positive Outcomes
3.1.1	The first year of the 5-year quality strategy development work is on track with the framework being developed. Close working links have also been established with third party stakeholders.
3.1.2	All objectives set to further embed the United Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)(Scotland) Act have been successfully achieved.

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3.1.3	Codesign of the revised Children Rights and Inclusion strategy was successfully implemented throughout the year and the annual report is currently be drafted and will be reported back to the Board in Q2 of 2025/26.
3.1.4	The work set out to prepare for the implementation of the Children's Care and Justice (Scotland) Act was completed in line with all objectives set, including delivering module one of the associated learning.
3.1.5	The principles and guidance on language in the hearing room to improve young people's experience, has been developed and shared with panel members, with all objectives being met throughout the year.
3.1.6	Unified approach with SCRA on the implementation of accessible access for child friendly complaints and feedback was achieved during the year together with the collaboration with cross organisational groups on learning and feedback loops, all in line with the set objectives
3.1.7	The objective to drive panel member recruitment through national and local improvements was extremely success and all objectives were met.
3.2	Valuing Our People
3.2.1	Development of a nationally consistent approach to recognition within the community formed part of the Wellbeing and Retention strategic approach for 2024/25. This work is ongoing and will be further developed and implemented in 2025/26.
3.2.2	Regional AST meetings are now operational across all 9 regions and the communication strategy to develop panel voice events, communication toolkits and improvements to the panel member have been agreed and these objectives will continue through 2025/26.
3.2.3	Development of a 5-year Learning Strategy and related implementation plan has been produced and signed off and will be an ongoing objective.
3.2.4	The objective of the CHS ambition to become a trauma informed organisation is progressing with advisory packs published and shared with panel members together with the development of trauma training modules.
3.2.5	Implementation of the strategic approach to wellbeing, which supports and improves experience for volunteers and colleagues, is now in place and will be continuously developed in 2025/26.
3.2.6	Refresh of the people strategy promoting the key principles behind a healthy, happy organisation including Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion; Recruitment and Retention; Learning and Development; Wellbeing; and Reward and Recognition is under development and will continue throughout 2025/26.
3.3	Driving Transformation
3.3.1	Great progress has been made collaborating with partners and stakeholders across the sector on the implementation of the Hearings for Children accepted recommendations. This will continue throughout 2025/26.

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3.3.2	Continuous improvement is being made by collaborating with partners to explore the collection and use of data to inform and assist in decision making. CHS Data & Performance Analyst is also now a member of Youth Justice Improvement Board data subgroup.
3.3.3	Progress has been made on enhancing our digital designs and making effective use of technology to improve our user engagement journey. This objective is on track and will continue throughout 2025/26
3.3.4	Rota Optimisation project established to understand baseline data from rota centralisation and identify improvements in communication and attendance of hearings based on panel member preference and to reduce cancellations, and deferrals. Digital improvements have been rolled out under the project which will continue through 2025/26
3.3.5	CHS continues to lead and influence change in the sector and hearings system. NC/SLT are members of the redesign groups offering engagement and influence on the Children's Hearings Redesign Board and Implementation Group
3.4	Organisational Effectiveness and Critical Enablers
3.4.1	Multiple objectives have been met in refining our approach to managing and enhancing colleagues' performance to develop a highly skilled and effective National Team. This includes leadership and management training, the development of an organisational skills matrix and improved guidance manuals.
3.4.2	All objectives were met to develop and build on CHS's change architecture and PMO functions to support the delivery of critical programmes of improvement within the year.
3.4.3	The priority has changed for conducting an audit of our cyber security measures to inform improvement and recovery plans. This will be scheduled after the completion of the ISO27001 accreditation as referred to in 3.4.5
3.4.4	The objective to develop and modernise the CHS website was fully achieved
3.4.5	CHS is currently in the process of looking to obtain the accreditation ISO 27001 which is an international recognised standard that mandates a systematic examination of information security risks, and the establishment, implementation, and maintenance of security measures to ensure a safe and secure digital environment. The first stage in this process is a gap analysis which will assist CHS in understanding our current level of data maturity. This objective will be carried forward into 2025/26
4.	Alignment to CHS Strategic Outlook
4.1	This work is aligned to the CHS Strategic Outcome 2024-2027: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 1 - Delivering Positive Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 1 - Develop a 5-year learning strategy to maximise learning impact across CHS. • Objective 2 - Quality will be the cornerstone of our hearings system.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective 3 - Upholding and promoting children's rights is at the forefront of what we do, and those rights are well understood by our people. Theme 2 - Driving Transformation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective 1 - Work with partners and stakeholders to lead and influence change. Objective 2 - We will become a data-informed and data-driven organisation. Objective 3 - We will make effective use of technology, capitalising on its potential for enhancing performance and delivering efficiency. Theme 3 - Valuing Our People <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective 1 - Implement a three-year People Strategy that attracts and retains top talent and committed individuals and drives the success and sustainability of the organisation. Objective 2 - The organisational design remains agile, adaptable, and responsive to support ongoing organisational transformation. Objective 3 - To become a more inclusive and diverse organisation and create a culture where everyone feels valued, included, and engaged. Objective 4 - to develop our people capabilities.
5.	Key Risks
5.1	No risks identified.
6.	Risk Register
6.1	There is no requirement for anything to be added to the Risk Register at this stage.
7.	Impact on Inequality/Rights
7.1	No impact assessments are required.
8.	Duty to Inform, Engage and Consult People who use our Services (Internal and External)
8.1	There is no requirement for engagement and consultation in relation to this paper.
9.	Resource Implications
9.1	There is no specific resource implication associated with this paper.
10.	Appendices
	Appendix A – Q4 2024/25 Performance Report

QUARTER 4 (January, February, March 2025)

Quarter Summary - Milestones:

	Milestones				
	B	G	A	R	-
Theme 1 - Outcomes	1				
Theme 2 - People					
Theme 3 - Transformation					
Critical Enablers					
TOTAL	1		0	0	0

Key:

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 descope, or whole objective re-timed
Red = Objective at serious risk of not being delivered on time / budget - or Objective has been descope
Dash (-) = Not yet due for reporting / update

Milestones:

	Number of Milestones at End Q4
Planned to Complete in this	1
Completed in this quarter - Actual	1
Still to Complete during year	4
Overall number completed in year	21
Ongoing as part of the 2024-2027	35
Descope	2

* as published in the Business Plan

Theme 1: DELIVERING POSITIVE OUTCOMES

	Business Objective and Owner	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update		
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4						
1	Develop a 5-year quality strategy which informs and drives our areas for change and improvement					1.1	Develop frameworks for standards, audit, and evidence plans across our critical functions to ensure CHS has the tools it needs to deliver and measure quality improvement	Completed by end Q3	-	Development work is on track. Quality Strategy setting out ambitions and approach published on website and promoted. Work is currently underway to develop an implementation plan setting out how we will develop necessary tools, frameworks, mechanisms and associated measures, including how we will agree relevant KPI's and identify areas for improvement. Robust design work and further exploration before tools and measures can be finalised.	
						1.2	Develop KPI's which allow us to use data to evidence high quality decisions that lead to positive outcomes, and address through improvement where that is not the case	Completed by end Q3	-		
						1.3	Drive quality improvement by providing regional support to PPA's through a nationally consistent approach	Progress through Q4	-		On track. A PPA Leads Group has been created to engage PPAs at a national strategic level and to ensure PPAs are engaged, includig in planning and clear about their role.
						1.4	Utilise the TSM model to implement feedback loops between observation findings and learning and development; Policy & Practice, Learning to inform improvement planning at regional and National Level.	Progress through Q4	-		On track. Close joint working links have been established between our Tribunal Delivery teams, Learning and Practice and Standards teams to ensure the development of team working and consistent messages.
2	Continue to embed and give further effect to the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (Scotland) Act in our work and practice					2.1	Support our community to make decisions that clearly uphold children's rights through regular communication, training, and updates to the Practice and Procedure Manual (PPM) as required	Progress through Q4	100%	Complete. Resources and communications now include the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024, the Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024 and non-legislative elements of the Hearings for Children: Participation and Children's Rights strategy approved and operational.	
						2.2	Work with our partners and key stakeholders to ensure that the views of children can be expressed and shared during hearings	Progress through Q4	100%	Exceeded KPI target with alignment between complaints and participation functions.	
						2.3	Revise our Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment tools in line with new statutory guidance	Complete by end Q1	100%	Complete.	
3	Codesign a revised Children's Rights and Inclusion strategy with care experienced young people aligned to the accepted recommendations from the Hearings for Children Report and upcoming changes to legislation					3.1	Publish an updated Children's Rights and Inclusion strategy co-designed with care experienced young people	Complete by end Q1	100%	Strategy and implementation plan approved by Board. Publication by end Q2 post current final review by co-design group.	
						3.2	Produce an implementation plan for the above strategy which reflects our strategic approach to participation and increases the involvement of children and young people in operational and strategic decision making at CHS	Complete by end Q1	100%		

	and upcoming changes to legislation				3.3	Implement and operationalise the agreed plans for participation at CHS through a refresh of our participation activity aligned with the revised Children's Rights and Inclusion strategy	Progress through end Q2 initially	100%	On track. Participation implementation plan aligned to strategy drafted and new participation and children's rights strategy approved by Board in June. Annual review has commenced and will be reported back to the Board in Q2 of 25/26.
4	Fulfil our obligations and prepare our people for the implementation of the Children's Care and Justice (Scotland) Act in children's hearings				4.1	Deliver the first module of Children's Care & Justice Act Learning to better enable our Panel community to understand the specific needs and impact of trauma on older young people, and to influence the decisions they make.	Completed by end of Q3	100%	Module one on supporting the needs of older children in the hearing system and practice guidance produced in partnership with CYCJ was launched following the town hall event on 30 May. Now measuring uptake and prepared module two. Detailed practice guide for module 1 and 2 completed in partnership with Children and Young Peoples Centre for Justice.
5	Improve young people's experience of the hearing by building on the work of the Language Leaders to ensure language used in the hearing system supports children to feel safe, included and at the centre of their Children's Hearing				5.1	Collaborate with the strategic CHIP to embed the principles developed by the Language Leaders and deliver an improved and more consistent approach to language across the system	Progress through Q4	100%	Language In the Hearing practice guide published and shared with Panel Members. Worked in partnership with OHOV to improve language in the hearing room. Led a co-designed animation with young people with input and partners, showcased at national launch event. Undertook a Town Hall event for Panel Members led by young people
					5.2	Further develop and embed CHS's Language in the Hearing tools and guidance to improve consistency and understanding and remove stigma for children and young people	Progress through Q4	100%	
6	Encourage hearing experienced feedback by young people through the provision of a unified complaints and feedback processes				6.1	Implement a clearly defined national approach to joint feedback and complaints for CHS & SCRA	Complete by Q2	100%	Joint Feedback & Complaints handling approach now in place
					6.2	Promote a 'front door' for hearing related complaints which removes the need for children, young people, and their families to understand the complexity of our organisational structures	Progress through end Q3	100%	Concluded postcard pilot and agreed introduction of QR code into SCRA outcome letters. Now actively have a collaborative outreach plan with participation function. New collaborative plan developed between complaints and participation function to ensure alignment of gathering feedback from children and young people.
					6.3	Review and collaborate on complaints policies and procedures to provide cross-organisational learning and feedback loops	Progress through end Q3	100%	Continue to work closely with practice, participation and learning colleagues. Established link with quality manager, Working closely with TDM's with monthly reciprocal discussion now in place around themes and trends. Delivered a session on complaints and feedback to Delivery Managers and staff which will help to ensure that local complaints are dealt with appropriately and recorded. Follow up sessions planned in Q4
7	Drive Panel Member recruitment through national and local improvements				7.1	Improve the recruitment and application journey for applicants through aligned digital platforms and the implementation of innovative digital solutions	Complete by Q3	100%	The recruitment website and user journey has been improved with clearer communications and user journeys to application. The application process has been simplified to minimise possible digital complications. Work to transform the digital application process is being undertaken through joint development work with SCRA and will be in place for Autumn 2025 campaign.
					7.2	Improve the approach to our 2024/25 recruitment campaign building on recruitment evaluation insights and feedback from stakeholders and our Community	Complete by Q3	100%	Regional colleagues in situ to promote the national campaign and engage with local partners, agencies, employers and within communities to increase the messaging about the work of Children's Hearings Scotland and the volunteer opportunity – a key recommendation from the external evaluation. With support from media buying agency, widening our reach to attract audiences through out of home options (ie lower rear of buses, rail sheets in railway stations. Through the commissioning of an agency,) building relationships with retail, ethnically diverse communities, universities/colleges to promote the Panel Member role to employees, membership, customers and students.
					7.3	Improve the messaging of our campaign, focusing on the Panel Member journey	Complete by Q3	100%	Website project completed, refreshing content, enhancing functionality and improving the user experience. Communications colleagues produced a new promotional short film with the voice of Panel Members and influenced by lived experience of the hearings system. Increased promotion in the lead up to the upcoming campaign through social media, raising the profile of the opportunity to volunteer as a Panel Member supported by a summer series of virtual Information Sessions.
9	Continue to support our Panel community through the embedding of regional support structures that promote engagement, retention, and provide meaningful opportunities for				9.1	Implement the bi-annual National Convener Forum to enable Panel member engagement with Strategic issues	Progress through Q4 2	-	Focus for strategic engagement in year has been to contribute to the Scottish Government Hearings re-design consultation supported by Sortition. Future engagement strategies/forums to support the outcomes from SG consultation will be considered once the scale and impact of these are understood and developed in 2025/26

10	Develop a 5 year Learning Strategy which offers innovative solutions for learning, meeting the changing needs of the hearing system and our Panel community				10.1	Review and refresh the way learning is delivered at CHS by producing a 5-year Learning Strategy and implementation plan	Complete by end Q2	100%	Learning strategy & related implementation plan produced and signed off by the Board/Change Board.
11	Progress our ambition to become a Trauma Informed Organisation				11.1	Develop and launch the 2nd phase of Trauma training modules and resources through CHS Learning Academy to all volunteers and colleagues	Progress through Q4	25%	On track with deadline extended for completion and course to go live in Jan 2025
19	Refine our approach to managing and enhancing colleagues' performance to develop a highly skilled and effective National Team				19.1	Revise our appraisal process ensuring alignment of organisational goals to personal development needs	Complete by end Q4	100%	Updates to current process and templates made to align existing process with current organisation goals and ways of working. A submission has been made to CHS digital lab to review CHS HR digital infrastructure. This review will include the appraisal process and possibility of introducing a digital tool to help the process become more agile.
					19.3	Introduce a coaching/learning culture at CHS which promotes and values feedback centred on learning and continuous improvement	Progress through Q4	100%	Objectives for 24-25 met. Ongoing leadership/line manager development framework launched in January 2025 to support managers to feel confident in the basics of line manager and to offer practical tools and support to generate increased capacity to enable performance and outputs. To build on this, development opportunities in relation to coaching and learning will be delivered as a part of 25-26 learning programme. P&C partnering model also leads by example as coaching conversations for line managers and thus supports development of such culture. It is recognised that this area required long term behavioural change and thus this development will continue in 25-26.
20	Further develop and build on CHS's change architecture and PMO functions to support the delivery of critical programmes of improvement				20.1	Ensure the governance and smooth delivery of the TSM Programme	Complete by end Q3	100%	Completed; Change Board papers, minutes and actions since inceptions, provides evidence of the governance and delivery of this programme. The TSM programme formally closed at the July Change Board. Planning is underway for a TSM programme retrospective, an internal audit is underway (Update 16-12-2024 from JA: TSM programme has successfully closed) - TSM Audit now completed and full scope of objective completed as planned.
					20.2	Govern the process, delivery and approval of a Programme Business case from the Change Board	Progress through Q4	100%	Completed; Business Cases for the Capacity Programme and Collaborative Improvement Programme both presented and approved at Change Board. Ongoing governance and programme assurance can be clearly demonstrated via Change Board papers, minutes and actions. This objective completed early. There is evidence of the Change SOP for the process in place, along with the delivery of this process via the Capacity, Collaborative Improvement, Hearings for Children and Learning Programmes across 2024. PMO SOPs for governance within Change now in place, also.
					20.3	Govern the process of initiating and executing Programme Delivery with key measurable outcomes, linked to the Programme Business case	Progress through Q4	100%	Completed; PMO assurance report from ongoing Change Boards evidence the ongoing progress made for both the Capacity Programme and Collaborative Improvement Programme, displaying RAG update and progress update of all measurable outcomes linked to the signed off programme business cases. This objective completed early. There is clear evidence of the Change SOP for the process in place, along with the delivery of this process via the Capacity and Collaborative Improvement Programmes across 2024.
22	Build on our established communications channels and approaches to adequately reflect our growth and meet needs of our people and communities				22.1	Modernise and redevelop our website improving functionality and the user journey, with emphasis on recruitment and notes of interest	Complete by end Q2	100%	100% complete The website underwent a full content refresh to reflect USP, PM journey and organisation values. A new website will be considered through the digital lab as it will need to meet full digital standards.
23	Formalise and standardise the use of process maps and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) across the organisation to enable clearer understanding of processes and fulfilment of services				23.1	Create a clearly established and structured framework for decisionmaking processes across the organisation as an accessible suite of SOPs which enhances transparency, accountability, and consistency in decisionmaking at all levels	Progress through Q4	100%	Partially complete. Template in used and being used by the Business and Finance team. Process maps/lists completed by B&F Directorate and C&I team. Process map completed for Volunteer Journey, via People and Culture directorate, but cross cutting through Positive Outcomes and Tribunal Delivery directorates. B&F directorate have changed their deadline to have all SOPs completed and LIVE by July 2025. Following this, a plan will be discussed for displaying the work done within B&F across CHS and gain a better understanding for where all other teams are on their process/SOP journey and project guidance and recommendations where needed.
24	Strengthen CHS's approach, understanding, and use of data to improve decision making, monitor progress, and inform business planning				24.1	Gain a better understanding of CHS's data maturity by engaging with sector experts and the national team to assess our use, need, and understanding of data across the organisation	Progress through Q3	75%	CHS is currently in the process of looking to obtain the accreditation ISO 27001 which is a international recognised standard that mandates a systematic examination of information security risks, and the establishment, implementation, and maintenance of security measures to ensure a safe and secure digital environment. The first stage in this process is a gap analysis which will assist CHS in understanding our current level of data maturity.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Strategic Theme	Objective	Performance Measure	Baseline	2024/25 Target	2024/25 Performance
Positive Outcomes - Participation	3	% of regions involving young people in the design and delivery of the recruitment of panel members	New measure	100%	100% in 24/25
Positive Outcomes - Participation	6	# of submissions made through the child friendly feedback complaints portal	12	3 48 submissions	105%

Valuing our People	8, 9, 12, 13	% of Panel Members successfully reappointed	2020/21: 79% 2021/22: 62% 2022/23: 70% 2023/24: 80%	85%	82% to 31/12/24
Valuing our People	8, 9, 12, 13	% of Panel Members retained during the year	2021/22: 86% 2022/23: 78.5% 2023/24: 83%	85%	86% to 31/12/24 This figure includes engagement through year to clarify position of Panel Members who are within a 3 year appointment term but have been inactive (not attending hearings) which may decrease retention % but inactive Panel Members leaving does not impact Panel capacity/availability
Valuing our People - Learning	10	% of pre-service trainees who felt that the learning objectives were met	2020/21: 98% 2021/22: 99% 2022/23: 98% 2023/24: 99%	99%	N/A in Q1-Q3
Valuing our People - Learning	10	% of recommended applicants appointed as Panel Members	2020/21: 84% 2021/22: 75% 2022/23: 84% 2023/24: 85%	90%	N/A in Q1-Q4
Valuing our People - Learning	10	% of eligible PMs completed Enhanced Practice and Management of Hearings training	New measure	70%	EP = 62% to 31/12/24 (note, this is now only the 2024 cohort as other cohorts do not need to complete EP) MOH = 26% to 31/12/24 (includes those who were eligible for MOH at year-start or who became eligible through year)
Driving Transformation - Quality Assurance		% of Panel Members who wish to received their PDA having completed MOH training	New measure	100%	All existing PMs who wish to receive a PDA certification on completing their MOH will do so by September 2025. We- are no longer offering the existing PDA to new trainees as of September 2024 while we review the accreditation offer
Positive Outcomes - Learning	11	% of volunteers and colleagues completed Trauma Informed training phase 2	New measure	100%	N/A Q1-3
Critical Enablers		% CHS employee attendance keep	2020/21: 99% 2021/22: 85% 2022/23: 97% 2023/24: 97%	97%	97% to 31/12/2024
Critical Enablers		% invoices not in dispute paid within 10 working days, during normal operations keep	2020/21: 85% 2021/22: 85% 2022/23: 89.3% 2023/24: 87%	95%	87% to 31/12/24

Record of Changes to Planned Delivery

Milestone(s) Changed	Date of Change	Details of Change	Rationale for Change
22.3	Sep-24	Milestone descoped from this business plan year - to be considered in next years busienss	Priority has been given to developing and building the community intranet

Agenda Item 11a. CHS-2425-43

Meeting:	CHS Board Meeting
Meeting Date:	25 March 2025
Title:	Digital Annual Report 2024/25
Responsible Executive:	Jessica MacDonald, Director of Business and Finance
Report Author:	Martin O'Brien, Digital Strategy and Delivery Manager

1.	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to ask the Board to note the progress updates included in the Digital Annual Report 24/25 which reflects the key activities relating to digital support and delivery.
1.2	Any member wishing additional information should contact the Executive Lead in advance of the meeting.
2.	Recommendations
2.1	The Board are being asked to note each of the key 6 themes covered in the Digital Annual Report 2024-25: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devices and Licences • Support and Delivery • Security • CSAS • CRM • Digital Lab
3.	Key Points for Discussion
3.1	Paper submitted as Annual Report with 6 Key themes to note.
4.	Alignment to CHS Strategic Outlook
4.1	This work is aligned to the CHS Strategic Outcome 2024-2027: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 2 - Driving Transformation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 1 - Work with partners and stakeholders to lead and influence change. • Objective 3 - We will make effective use of technology, capitalising on its potential for enhancing performance and delivering efficiency.
5.	Key Risks
5.1	N/A
6.	Risk Register
6.1	N/A.
7.	Impact on Inequality/Rights

Agenda Item 11a. CHS-2425-43

7.1	N/A.
8.	Duty to Inform, Engage and Consult People who use our Services (Internal and External)
8.1	There is no requirement for engagement and consultation in relation to this paper.
9.	Resource Implications
9.1	There is no specific resource implication associated with this paper
10.	Appendices
	Appendix 1 – Digital Annual Report

Agenda Item 11b. CHS-2425-43



Digital Annual Report 2024-25

Author: Martin O'Brien, Digital Strategy & Delivery Manager

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1. Executive Summary

This report captures the progress made across our organisation's digital portfolio in the business year 2024/25.

CSAS development continues with investment dedicated to performance maintenance highlighting the significant costs in maintaining system stability and responsiveness.

The CHS ISO27001 certification initiative advances, which will strengthen the organisation's information security framework and demonstrate its commitment to protecting sensitive data.

The Digital Lab has been created to streamline project prioritization, drive efficiency and innovation, and improve service delivery for children, volunteers and the national team. It will deliver a strategic approach to our digital change portfolio.

The Windows device deployment program continues on schedule, modernizing our technology infrastructure and enhancing workforce productivity. This coordinated digital approach supports our organisational transformation while placing our panel members' needs and wellbeing at the centre of our technological advancement.

2. Key Themes

This update summarizes progress across seven digital transformation themes across the full digital infrastructure:

- **Device and License Procurement Strategy**
Focuses on optimizing our hardware and software acquisition approach.
- **Security and Support Model Strategy**
Covers our security framework and technical support infrastructure.
- **Security - ISO27001**
Aligns our information security with international standards.
- **CSAS Development**
Currently supports the current Hearing System and integrates key business functions carried out
- **CRM Development**
Implements our unified approach to customer interactions.
- **Digital Lab**
Will incorporate CSAS, CRM development and other initiatives based on user needs and Scottish Government digital standards in 2024/25.

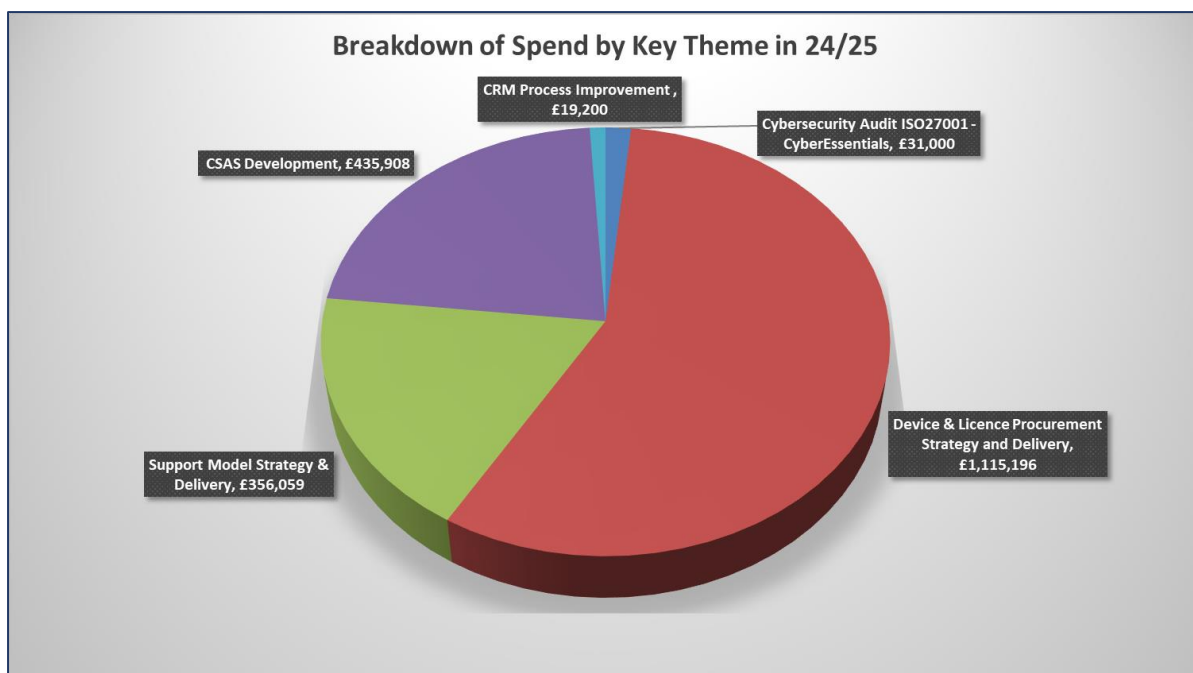


Figure 1 - Spend by Key Theme 24/25

Figure 1 shows that the majority of Digital Spend in 2024/25 has been on devices and licencing for our volunteer community at 57% of overall costs. This is followed by maintaining and improving CSAS which accounted for 22% of overall spend and supporting CHS Digital platforms accounting for a further 18%.

2.1 Device & Licence Procurement Strategy

This theme details the organisation's hardware and software acquisition in 24/25 and provides oversight into how the organisation is managing its cost efficiency objectives whilst maintaining technological currency and compliance.

2.1.1 Key Progress Highlights

Below are the 4 key Progress Highlights under the Licence and Procurement Strategy 2024/25 based on highest costs.

- **Laptops (NonScots/Chr)**
In 24/25 £520,000 has been spent on supplying laptops for our Volunteers
- **CRM Licencing**
CHS purchased 10 Microsoft Dynamics CRM licences for the Resource Allocation team to improve support of their current function and help collation of all unstructured communications within a case on CHS owned Microsoft M365 tenancy. Implementation of this is ongoing and is covered under the CRM Development stream
- **M365 ESA Licencing**
CHS has entered into its final year of its current 3-year ESA deal with Microsoft. Renewal of this contract is due in September/October 2025.

- Security Platform Licensing

CHS now has the capability to enrol devices, deploy updates and monitor usage of them remotely providing a more secure environment for our users.

CHS currently investigating Cybersecurity opportunities to enhance their security posture across the CHS tenancy in line with ISO27001 accreditation. Expected to result in additional Security licensing in 2025/26 though this will also need to be considered in line with Microsoft ESA re-negotiation in October 25.

2.1.2 Adoption Metrics

- Full assessment of impact of change to windows devices will be carried out. Currently too early in the Windows Devices deployment strategy to understand full user satisfaction but initial feedback from users in the community has been positive.
- Continued testing and engagement of all of Digital Products will continue building on the test and learn approach
- In terms of CRM licensing in 2024/25, our users are embedded in the design and configuration of these licenses for their process improvement agenda therefore adoption metrics will be measured once it goes live.

2.2 Support Model Strategy & Delivery

This section covers the CHS security framework and technical support infrastructure. Although there are a number of 3rd Party suppliers providing CHS with various SaaS solutions, there are 4 key suppliers who provide support for the organisation's platforms.

2.2.1 Financial Status

Below is the current financial snapshot of the Support Model Strategy & Delivery theme in 2024/25.

Overall budgets are expected to be a small underspend which can be attributed to budget being allocated for a second recruitment campaign in 24/25 where majority of distribution costs will land in 25/26 Fiscal Year and also variations hosting costs for CSAS due to the elastic nature of compute and storage costs on the CSAS tenancy.

Key Progress Highlights

Listed below are the key performance highlights for three of our suppliers:

- Platform Support
 - Volume of incidents: the amounts over 24/25 were low with majority of user incidents being resolved by first line support (Digital CHS).
 - The supplier provides oversight of the CSAS tenancy including monitoring of our compute capacity and other performance issues.
 - The supplier exceeded service levels in relation to Autumn 24 Recruitment Campaign when experiencing significant downtime in the Recruitment Application in CSAS

- 98% Platform Availability (includes Recruitment Application downtime in September 24 but note, the platform was not impacted only the recruitment service)
- Issues with resolving incidents involving data remediation requests (see number of incidents open over month end)
- Platform Support
 - Currently in contract re-negotiation based on switch to HP Windows devices from Chromebooks as previous contract now expired
 - The supplier effectively supported the enrolment of devices onto CHS tenancy through on the ground testing.
 - Issues with the expediency in delivery to home addresses due to internal processes was highlighted.
 - No metrics to detail
- Platform Support
 - Supported CHS in deploying new Recruitment Application form for Spring 25 campaign,
 - Providing ongoing support on CRM MVP with no issues in execution
 - No metrics to detail

2.3 Security - ISO27001

ISO27001 certification effort aims to align CHS information security management systems and practices with international standards, demonstrating the organisations commitment to data protection and security best practices. CHS has procured gap analysis and assessment services to achieve our accreditation.

2.3.1 Key Progress Highlights

Listed below are the key performance highlights of the ISO27001 initiative so far in 24/25.

- Certification status
Quick Quote procurement call-off towards obtaining an accreditation body complete and accreditor selected.
- Key security improvements
Enrolment of CHS-owned devices on CHS own tenancy as a first step towards securing our tenancy
Encryption of CHS owned devices now in-flight with 390 of the 960 devices purchased now delivered to our Panel Member community.
Digital Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Plan approved at Audit & Risk Committee meeting in February 2025
- Compliance metrics
Aim to have 20% of security controls implemented in Digital Teams day-to-day practices (Not yet fully defined – output of ISO27001 accreditation)
Digital runbook has been extensively updated over 2024/25 to ensure tasks are tracked and will feed into ISO27001
- Security incident metrics
Security Incident Metrics to be collated as preparation towards ISO accreditation (Number/Severity/Response times)

2.4 CSAS Development

CSAS is currently the main platform for supporting the Hearing System as well as providing other services to volunteer community. This theme of work will be incorporated into the Digital Lab budget in 25/26.

2.4.1 Financial Status

Below is the current financial snapshot of the CSAS Development theme in 2024/25.

- Projected year-end position: In-Line

This accounts for 17 Sprints under the CHS Continuous Improvement theme of work and 6 sprints under the CHS/SCRA Joint Investment theme of work. Please note that a sprint is a 3-week time-boxed increment of work that includes a team of development and test professionals.

56% of development work relates to Rota Management changes. This is the most heavily used service by CHS teams (Resource Allocation Managers) and this trend is expected to continue into 25/26

2.4.2 Progress Highlights

Listed below are the key performance highlights of CSAS development so far in 24/25.

- Current sprint status

Continuous Improvement: 17 Sprints (14-30) that are 100% Complete

Joint Investment: 6 Sprints (1-6) which at time of publish are 85% Complete

- Key features delivered.

Hearing times visibility improvement on Hearing Sessions

Operational performance issues on accessing Hearing Information Packs

Hearing calendar and availability improvements

- User adoption metrics

Rota Service – Heavily used by Resource Allocation Managers however key community user metrics such as swap requests, cancellations etc. difficult to quantify at this stage as requires more analysis under the Rota Optimisation workstream.

Volunteer Management – Will be used by local clerks and other administrative staff in CHS. One key metric is the number of times it has been used for End of Service actions which is 493 in total over 24/25.

Recruitment – This service was used for submitting applications in the autumn campaign in 2024 resulting in major issues. Difficult to measure actual application numbers due to duplication issues. The spring campaign used an alternative solution that delivered service improvements (Approx. 7,000 unique user applications)

Observations – In 24/25 there have been 2,233 Observations completed using this service to date.

Learning – There have been 0 events recorded in 24/25 as the service is not being used by Learning and Development to record events.

Complaints & Concerns – 87 complaints and 0 concerns were logged in this service over 24/25.

Expenses – There were 12,667 Expense claims recorded in this service in 24/25. It should be noted that there is no automation of payment associated to this feature.

2.5 CRM Development

Our Customer Relationship Management initiative focuses on implementing a unified, data-driven approach to customer interactions, enabling personalized engagement and improved service delivery across all touchpoints.

2.5.1 Financial Status

Below is the current financial snapshot of the CRM Development theme in 2024/25.

- ROI on CRM investments: Early in the development stage however key metrics on ROI will include:
 - Capacity Metrics in Resource Allocation Team
 - Case Resolution Timing

2.5.2 Progress Highlights

Listed below are the key progress highlights of CRM development so far in 24/25.

- Development progress
Sprints started on 24/2/25 finishing 23/3/25 towards completing the first stage of the Minimum Viable Product for Resource Allocation team (MVP)
- Key integrations completed.
No key integrations completed however discussion around API's between CSAS and CRM have been discussed.
Twilio & Teams Voice calling are on the roadmap for CRM development once MVP has been completed.
- User adoption metrics
To be defined though work is in progress under the Rota Optimisation workstream.
- Business impact
Expected positive impact on Resource Allocation team being able to manage processes in more controlled environment.

2.6 Digital Lab

The Digital Lab was created in 2024/25 to serve as an organisational funnel for digital initiatives and allow for rigorous prioritisation. It is in its formative stages as it builds it

practices ensuring that all proposals undergo thorough problem analysis, incorporates user-centred design principles through meaningful stakeholder engagement, and adheres to Scottish Government Digital Standards/Technology Assurance Framework.

In 25/26, the lab will also serve as an innovation hub, providing a structured environment for testing emerging technologies, developing proof-of-concepts and accelerating digital transformation initiatives.

Although not funded in 24/25 as other initiatives were in flight, it is intended that it will be funded in 25/26 and will incorporate both the CSAS and CRM funding streams under its auspices amongst other initiatives.

2.6.1 Progress Highlights

The main current focus areas under the Digital Lab are as listed:

- A tactical Learning Management System in alignment with current learning and development support model requirements.
 - In initial discovery stages of analysis and fact-finding
- Implementing a strategic recruitment application in time for Autumn 25 Recruitment Campaign
 - Ongoing CSAS work in 25/26 in alignment with a strategic roadmap for CHS architecture.
- Key stakeholders that are engaged in these initiatives are:
 - Learning Programme & Learning Team
 - Recruitment Team (Recruitment Working Group)
 - CHS and SCRA Senior Management and current CSAS Supplier
- Tactical Recruitment Application form released as part of Spring 25 Recruitment Campaign
 - Adoption rates for the application was considered better than expected with 6,993 views and 694 Applications made.
 - There has been a 'High' business impact of this initiative as it has underpinned a successful recruitment campaign.

3. Strategic Alignment

Below is a brief assessment of how the current digital and data initiatives align with and support CHS overall organizational strategy

3.1 Strategic goal 1 – Delivering Positive Outcomes

- Device and License Procurement - ensures panel members and staff have reliable, secure technology to conduct timely hearings and manage sensitive case information effectively.
- Security and Support - protects children's and Panel Member's confidential data while providing responsive assistance to users, maintaining system integrity during critical decision-making processes.

- ISO27001 Compliance - demonstrates CHS commitment to the highest standards of information security, safeguarding vulnerable children's sensitive data if necessary.
- Digital Lab - ensures new technological solutions are designed around children's actual needs, prioritizing developments that will have the most meaningful impact on their hearing experience.

3.2 Strategic goal 2 – Driving Transformation

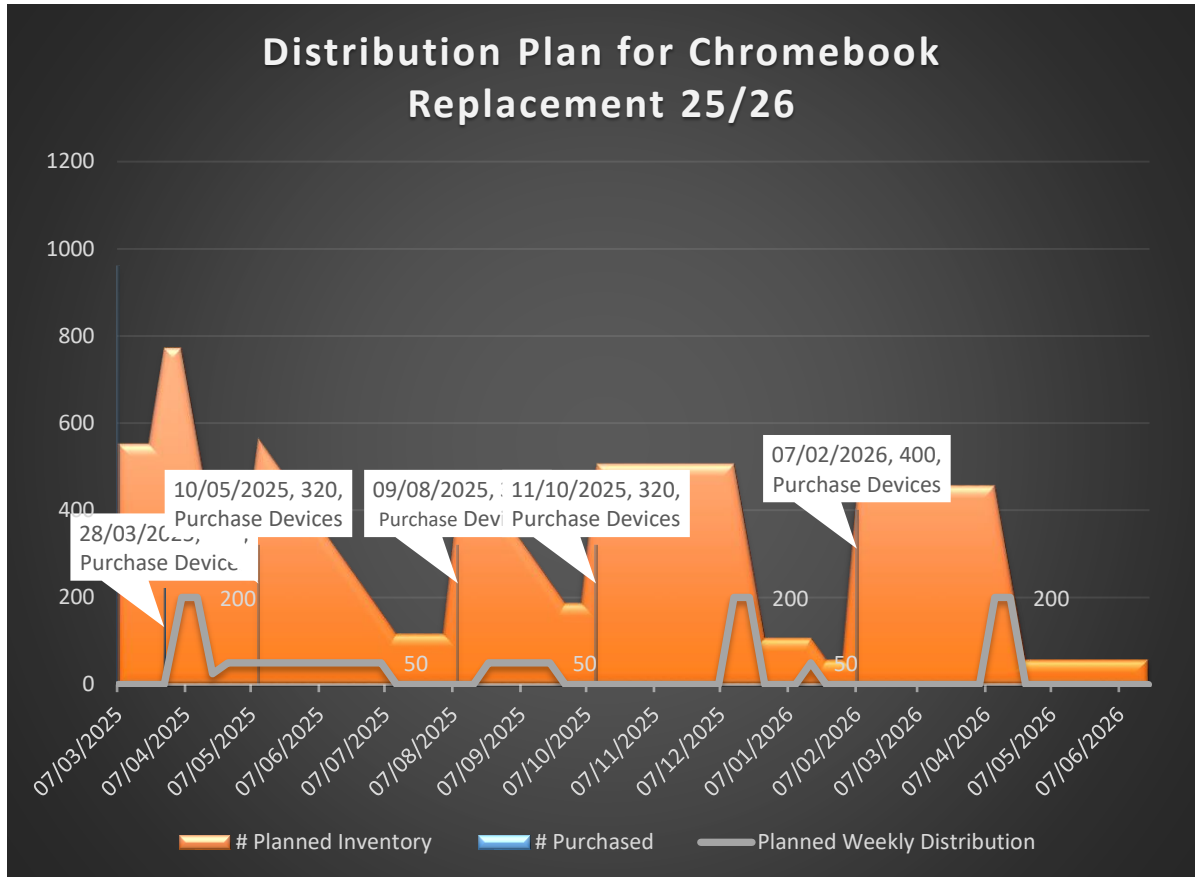
- Device and License Procurement - modernizes our technology foundation, enabling flexible working models and improved staff productivity across all functions.
- Security and Support - establishes a resilient operational framework that protects organizational assets while empowering staff to work confidently in an increasingly digital environment.
- ISO27001 Compliance - instils a culture of security awareness, systematizing best practices that strengthen organizational discipline and accountability.
- CSAS & CRM Development - shifts our organizational perspective toward a more holistic view of stakeholder relationships, promoting more responsive and coordinated engagement.
- Digital Lab - introduces user-centred design thinking across the organization, creating a structured approach to innovation that aligns technological solutions with genuine organizational needs.

3.3 Strategic goal 3 – Valuing Our People

- Device and License Procurement - equips staff with quality tools that demonstrate organizational investment in their productivity and job satisfaction.
- Security and Support - reduces technological frustration by providing responsive assistance, allowing staff to focus on meaningful work rather than technical difficulties.
- ISO27001 Compliance - gives staff confidence in handling sensitive information, reducing stress and providing clear guidelines for information management.
- CSAS & CRM Development - provides comprehensive stakeholder information at employees' fingertips, enabling more informed and confident interactions.
- Digital Lab - empowers staff to contribute improvement ideas and participate in solution design, validating their frontline expertise and promoting ownership of change.

4. Appendix

Appendix 1: Distribution of Windows Devices in 2025/26





Meeting:	CHS Board Meeting
Meeting Date:	25 March 2025
Title:	Refreshed EDI Strategy 2025-26
Responsible Executive:	Joanne O'Leary, Director of People & Culture
Report Author:	Umar Malik, People & Culture Partner

1.	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to ask the Board to note on the Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy.
2.	Recommendations
2.1	The Board are asked to note the refreshed strategy and equality outcomes. The Strategy was presented at the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) meeting on 4 March 2025 and approved at the People and Culture Committee (PaCC) meeting on 11 March 2025.
3.	Key Points for Discussion
3.1	Background
3.1.1	The existing EDI Strategy 2021-23 was developed following work by the previous EDI working group lead by Jeanne Martin which was formed in 2019. The strategy went through various drafts with each stage informed by gathering the views of volunteers, national team colleagues and board members.
3.1.2	In December 2024, a new EDI group was reconvened made up of 10 colleagues of the national team with diversity in ethnicity and gender. The group has representation from all four CHS directorates and several teams including Communications & Engagement, Regional Teams, Practice & Policy, Wellbeing and Participation.
3.1.3	The working group met in December 2024 and have been collaborating via a dedicated Teams channel since, providing feedback on the existing strategy and challenging assumptions.
3.1.4	Given the number of new strategy documents at CHS either being launched or in progress, the decision was made to refresh and update the existing strategy as opposed to a complete overhaul and redraft. Going forward there will be ongoing refinement and an approach of continuous improvement.
3.2	Strategic Priorities
3.2.1	There are three key priorities in this refreshed strategy. These build upon the previous strategic themes, parts of which feed into the priorities. The priorities are progressive and outline the key areas of focus going forward while recognising where CHS currently are as an organisation.



3.3	Equality Mainstreaming Outcomes
3.3.1	<p>Mainstreaming equality and diversity is a long-term, strategic approach to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is truly integrated and sits at the heart of organisational culture and strategic and operational delivery. It takes time and resources to develop this properly and it needs the commitment, encouragement and support of our Board and our Senior Leadership Team to make sure that all colleagues understand, accept and embrace equality across every part of our organisation and in the role and contribution CHS plays in delivering better outcomes for children and young people.</p> <p>The Equality Outcomes are the action plan that will help inform the implementation of the strategy and address areas highlighted within the strategy. These are published every 4 years with progress reports required every 2 years. The last progress report was submitted to the PacC in April 2024.</p> <p>Within the working group, there has been more questions on the actions and reporting against the outcomes as opposed to the outcomes themselves. The group will continue to drive and evolve the integration and achievement of the outcomes across the organisation in line with a continuous improvement approach.</p>
3.3.2	<p>There needs to be an honest recognition of the period covering the lifespan of the previous strategy which covered post pandemic challenges followed by the organisational change within CHS. This is likely to have impacted on the accuracy and quality of reporting in the preceding years which would not have been the intention of or within the control of the previous EDI working group.</p>
3.3.3	<p>The outcomes have been drawn from the strategic priorities and the outcomes contained in the previous strategy. Where some of the outcomes appear to be high level, the specific actions that will sit under the outcomes can be more focussed on relevant areas.</p>
4.	Key Risks
4.1	<p>Risk of exposing organisation for not delivering promises when processes and systems are not in place to support ambitions.</p>
5.	Risk Register
5.1	<p>There is no requirement for anything to be added to the Risk Register at this stage.</p>
6.	Impact on Inequality/Rights
6.1	<p>No Impact assessment required</p>
7.	Duty to Inform, Engage and Consult People who use our Services (Internal and External)

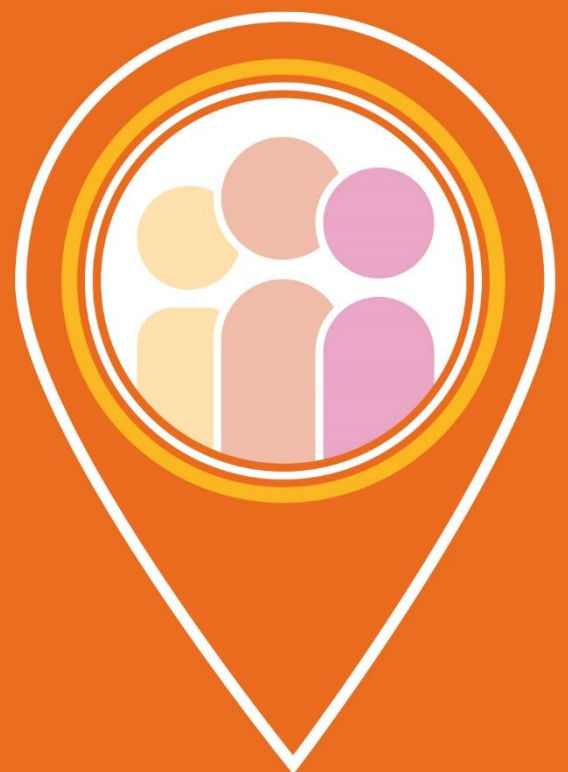


7.1	<p>Engagement with the national team has been through the EDI working group which is made up of national team colleagues. Engagement with volunteers is still in progress, initially through the Practice & Policy bank of volunteers with further engagement to take place later in the year with a focus on implementation of the strategy across the regions to effect positive change in hearing rooms across the country.</p> <p>The ongoing involvement with Children and Young People will also be crucial to the strategy evolution and the recently recruited Experts by Experience group will be a key 'critical friend' in our engagement and collaboration approach.</p>
8.	Resource Implications
8.1	<p>There is no specific resource implication associated with this paper. A separate paper on strategy implementation will be submitted for consideration at a future date noting specific resource implications which are likely to be associated with implementation.</p>
9.	Appendices
	Appendix 1 - EDI Strategy 2025/26 Draft



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy

2024-2027



Foreword



Embedding Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at the Heart of CHS

At Children’s Hearings Scotland (CHS), we are committed to fostering a culture where equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are central to everything we do.

Our strength as an organisation comes from the diverse experiences, perspectives, and contributions of our colleagues and volunteers, and we recognise that true inclusion goes beyond words, it requires meaningful action and lasting change.

This EDI strategy is an integral part of our People Strategy, ensuring that CHS is a place where everyone feels valued, supported, and empowered to thrive. It sets out our ambition to break down barriers, challenge discrimination, and create a working and volunteering environment that is welcoming, fair, and representative of the communities we serve.

By embedding EDI into our policies, leadership, and ways of working, we will:

- Build a culture of inclusion where diversity is celebrated, and everyone has a voice
- Ensure equality in opportunities, enabling people from all backgrounds to participate fully in our work
- Tackle systemic barriers that prevent fair representation and access to our organisation.
- Develop our people by equipping colleagues and volunteers with the skills and awareness to lead inclusively.

At CHS, EDI is not a separate initiative, it is fundamental to how we operate. Through this strategy, we reaffirm our commitment to making CHS a truly inclusive organisation, where everyone, children, young people, colleagues, and volunteers feels heard, valued, and able to contribute to positive change.

Introduction



This EDI Strategy builds on the EDI Strategy 2021 – 2023. An EDI Working Group was relaunched in late 2024 and this draft aims to serve as a starting point to a refreshed EDI Strategy that will be informed by feedback and input from the panel community, national team and Children’s Hearings Scotland (CHS) Board.

This strategy is a ‘live’ document that provides a framework for how EDI will be embedded across CHS. This strategy will align with our values and should be read alongside the People and Culture Strategy.

Our Values



Our Children’s Hearings Scotland values underpin our organisation and represent who we are. It informs our decision-making and serves as a guide for our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.



CHALLENGING

Not being complacent, but questioning ourselves and others to help us improve.



CREATIVE

Considering innovative and imaginative ways of approaching the issues we face in the work we do.



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.



OPEN

Listening, responding to and learning from feedback; acting honestly; ensuring processes are transparent; sharing information and being accountable for our actions and decisions.

Our Vision



CHS is made up of a diverse community of over 2,000 volunteers, supported by a dedicated national team of over 90 colleagues and as an organisation, we are committed to promoting an *open* and inclusive culture for the infants, children, young people and families we serve based on *fairness* and *respect*.

This strategy will serve as a blueprint to achieve this vision and support all EDI work within CHS and we remain committed that EDI should be clear in all that we do.

CHS strives to be a leading example of an inclusive, equitable and diverse organisation where everyone – children, volunteers, colleagues and stakeholders feel empowered, valued and represented

Purpose



The purpose of our EDI strategy and wider agenda is to:

- Ensure EDI is embedded into every aspect of the organisation, from governance to frontline practice
- Address systemic barriers and create inclusive decision-making structures
- Foster a culture of belonging and inclusion.

Context



As a Public Body, CHS is committed to adhering to the [Equality Act 2010](#) and the general equality duty contained within it:

1. Elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
2. Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
3. Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

We are guided by the protected characteristics within the Act:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Since 2020, CHS has recognised care experience as a tenth protected characteristic, and we will continue to review our practice, policies and procedures to incorporate this.

However, if our end goal is to ensure that we fully reflect the community that we serve - the infants, children, young people and their families who attend children's hearings – we must also consider other significant characteristics such as neurodiversity, socio-economic background, education level, employment status and, crucially, lived experience of both the children's hearings system and care overall.

Individual Needs

In our work around equity, diversity and inclusion, it is important that we remain mindful that people are individuals with their own backgrounds, experiences and needs. People who share a protected characteristic are not a homogenous group. People may also often have more than one protected characteristic meaning that their experiences of intersectionality will be very different to others with one of the same characteristics. Whilst we strive for a diverse community, we must continue to treat everyone as individuals, providing the support that they need when they require it, as identified by them.

Strategic Priorities



Priority 1: Transforming Leadership & Governance

- Our leadership will work to create structures that ensure our people can, regardless of their background or protected characteristics, have equal access to opportunities and resources.
- We will have leadership accountability ensuring leaders at board, national team and volunteer level undergo advanced EDI training.
- We will establish EDI networks to co-design inclusion efforts and empower these networks of volunteers and national team colleagues to educate and inform people of barriers faced by marginalised groups.
- We will ensure that our internal practices, policies and processes are accessible and inclusive by design.

Priority 2: Culture & Belonging

- We will foster an inclusive culture where all our people can thrive regardless of their background
- National team colleagues and volunteers will be trained in inclusive trauma-informed decision making to support children and young people effectively.
- We will champion flexible, hybrid and accessible ways of working to support the diverse needs of our national team.

Priority 3: Equitable Opportunities & Workforce Development

- We will ensure fair recruitment and progression opportunities by implementing anonymous hiring processes and inclusive job descriptions.
- To build skills for the future, we will invest in inclusive leadership training and mentoring and support career pathways for underrepresented groups.
- To ensure a shared understanding of unconscious bias and discrimination, online EDI training modules will be provided to volunteers and national team colleagues.
- Equalities monitoring data will be utilised to inform our recruitment processes.

Priority 4: Inclusive Decision-Making & Service Delivery

- Children and young people will be empowered to shape policies and inform decision-making through advisory groups such as Experts by Experience group.
- We will work with advocacy groups and grassroots organisations to improve access to hearings for marginalised communities.
- Real-time demographic and qualitative data will be used to identify disparities and help amend policies and processes to remove any detrimental impact on people with protected characteristics.

Equality mainstreaming outcomes



Our equality mainstreaming outcomes are essentially an action plan to address the points highlighted within this strategy. The outcomes will enable us to measure our success and help us drive forward our EDI agenda and keep it at the heart of all that we do. A modern strategy requires innovative approaches to ensure future readiness, therefore, where possible, we will seek to use real-time data in monitoring these outcomes.

Outcome 1

We will implement appropriate training and development to our people in line with their responsibilities to ensure they are able to conduct their duties to a high standard in supporting children, families and our people.

We want to ensure that everyone who engages with CHS, especially children and young people can fully engage and participate in the Children's Hearings process. Recognising that accessibility challenges exist for marginalised groups, we will promote inclusive language and provide accessible communication to meet the needs of people with protected characteristics.

Outcome 2

We will build an inclusive culture based on respect by increasing awareness of EDI across our community through engagement with youth-led advisory groups and the establishment of EDI networks.

We will continue to review internal policies and practices with the input of young people and volunteers to assess the impact on protected characteristics and ensure EDI is considered in all our work.

We will invite feedback from children, volunteers and national team colleagues to monitor our drive towards an inclusive culture in line with the CHS values.

Outcome 3

We will review our recruitment and selection processes for volunteers and national team colleagues, aligning these processes with best practice in order to tackle barriers and promote inclusivity.

We will seek to understand the barriers and challenges that are faced by people with protected characteristics from volunteering in our panel community and take steps to address these. We will be data-driven in analysing under-representation within our panel community.

We aspire to be an employer of choice and recognise that in doing so we seek to attract a diverse range of candidates for employment roles with our national team.

Agenda Item 13a. CHS-2425-45

Meeting:	CHS Board Meeting
Meeting Date:	25 th March 2025
Title:	2025/26 CHS Business and Corporate Parenting Plan
Responsible Executive:	Director of Business and Finance
Report Author:	Corporate Governance Manager

1.	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to ask the Board to approve the 2025/26 Business and Corporate Parenting Plan (" <u>2025/26 BP</u> ")
1.2	Any member wishing additional information should contact the Executive Lead in advance of the meeting.
2.	Recommendations
2.1	The Board are asked to approve the 2025/26 Business and Corporate Parenting Plan.
2.1.1	When considering the content on the document the Board should consider the following: The Board reconfirmed the strategic themes in a board development session in January 2025. As the <u>2025/26 BP</u> is delivering the second year of the overarching three-year CHS Strategic Outlook 2024-2027, the fundamental objectives within the 2025/26 plan have not changed. However there has been two important developments in the last year. In June 2024, The Children (Care and Justice) Act received Royal Assent together with the key policy development of the Scottish Governments Children's Hearings Redesign with a policy proposals consultation in July 2024, both these keys issues which will be monitored and considered in align with the CHS Strategic Outlook.
3.	Key Points for Discussion
3.1.	The <u>2025/26 BP</u> retains the same format of the 2024/25 plan and all headings remain the same. The key updates are included in the Forward, 2024-25 in Review, and the three Strategic Themes sections: Delivering Positive Outcomes, Valuing Our People, Driving Transformation, and Our Resources 2025/26. The Key Performance Indicators and budget figures have not been included in this draft version of the plan as this information will be collated and added at the end of the financial year and once the budget has been agreed.
3.2	The Forward, pages 3 & 4 have been fully updated.
3.3	The section covering 2024-25 in Review, page 5, has been updated and a section added covering the Tribunal Support Model.
3.4	Theme 1: Delivering Positive Outcomes, pages 11 & 12. The objectives, items 1-5 have been updated together with the corresponding milestones/activities and associated timescales/targets.

Agenda Item 13a. CHS-2425-45

3.5	Theme 2: Valuing Our People, page 13. The objectives, items 6-9 have been updated together with the corresponding milestones/activities and associated timescales/targets.
3.6	Theme 3: Drive Transformation, page 14. The objective, items 10-12 have been updated together with the corresponding milestones/activities and associated timescales/targets.
3.7	Organisational Effectiveness and Critical Enablers, page 15. The objectives, items 13-15 have been updated together with the corresponding milestones/activities and associated timescales/targets.
4.	Next steps
4.1	This <u>2025/26 BP</u> has also been submitted to the CHS sponsor group for review and comment. Once the plan has been finalised and CHS Board approved, the National Convener will submit the plan to the Minister of Children, Young People and Keeping the Promise for her to formally note it.
4.2	Once the minister has formally noted the <u>2025/26 BP</u> it will be published on the CHS website.
5.	Key Risks
5.1	Failure to devise and present a robust business plan would deter CHS from implementing and aligning strategic goals and outcomes, be irresponsive to change, fail to achieve objectives or engage stakeholders, inability to provide clear direction or articulate roles and responsibilities.
6.	Risk Register
6.1	This risk is fully document in the CHS strategic risk register.
7.	Impact on Inequality/Rights
7.1	No impact assessments are required.
8.	Duty to Inform, Engage and Consult People who use our Services (Internal and External)
8.1	The business plan will be shared on the website and a communications plan will be established.
9.	Resource Implications
9.1	N/A
10.	Appendices
	Appendix 1 - 2025/26 Business and Corporate Parenting Plan



Children's Hearings Scotland

Business and Corporate
Parenting Plan

2025-2026

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FOREWORD

Elliot Jackson

Chief Executive and National Convener



The Business and Corporate Parenting Plan 2025-2026 will guide our delivery of the second year of our Strategic Outlook 2024-2027, which focuses on driving improvement to the hearings system, and on keeping The Promise to Scotland's infants, children and young people. This Plan identifies the activities that Children's Hearings Scotland will achieve within the business year to progress the delivery of our vision, purpose and strategic goals.

Over the past year, CHS has continued to shape and inform what we expect to be some of the most transformational changes since the inception of the children's hearings system.

In June 2024, The Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act received Royal Assent. This landmark legislation further strengthens the rights of children in Scotland and will enable all people under 18 to access the protection and support of the hearings system. Within three months of it passing into law, we saw an end to any child being held in Young Offenders Institutions. This Act, along with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024, reinforces that the work of Panel Members is one of the strongest ways in which children's rights are protected in Scotland.

Another key policy development was the Scottish Government's Children's Hearings Redesign consultation, which ran from July to October 2024, as the next step following the Hearings for Children Report. CHS worked with our Community and wider stakeholders to develop a considered and detailed response, laying out the changes we believe are required to future-proof and build on the strengths of the hearings system to safeguard and champion the rights of children.

In the coming year we will be ready for when the Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024 will come into full effect, and we are anticipating the detail of changes that the Scottish Government may introduce in response to the Hearings Redesign consultation. CHS will continue to work with the Scottish Government, our Community and our partner organisations to ensure that the best possible outcomes for infants, children and young people remain our highest priority throughout the changes to come.

During this middle year of our three-year Strategic Outlook period, I am pleased to set out the next steps to ensure CHS and our volunteers are ready for the future in every way.

This document details our plans for the year – what we will do and when – with activities grouped according to our three strategic themes: Delivering Positive Outcomes, Valuing Our People, and Driving Transformation. It also details the measures and structures that will support our effectiveness: our improvement programmes and the change architecture supporting them; the strengthening of our digital security; and the broadening of our communications channels to continue to meet the needs of all our audiences.

By definition, change is usually unsettling, and I know that among our 2,500-strong team of volunteers and employees across Scotland, there are differing views about the future of the children's hearings system. My highest priority is to support the Panel Community to deliver the best possible outcomes for the infants, children and young people we serve.



Elliot Jackson
National Convener
& CEO

2024-25 IN REVIEW



In 2024-25 CHS continued to face a challenging fiscal environment alongside the wider public sector. We remain indebted to our Panel Community, National Team, and partners across the sector who continued to be present and strive for better outcomes for infants, children, young people and their families.

- We delivered two successful Panel Member recruitment campaigns bringing new, fresh talent and dedication into the volunteer community with the **involvement and input of lived experience recruiters**.
- We continued to deliver high-quality training for Panel Members, adopting a refreshed approach to our pre-service programme. This included integrating knowledge of the Chaining role and increasing opportunities for practical skills development to strengthen both competence and confidence.
- We worked collaboratively with our Panel Community to inform, influence and respond to the Scottish Governments Children's Hearings Redesign consultation.
- We worked alongside our **Experts by Experience** group ensuring that young people with lived experience of the hearings system play a key role in CHS decision making.
- We worked with Scottish Government colleagues and partners in the sector to advise, influence and implement the **legislative changes** that support and uphold children's rights, such as the Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024.
- We celebrated and thanked our community through local recognition events and nationally during **Volunteers' Week**.
- **We reappointed** over 373 Panel Members for a further three years.
- We refreshed our website and communications materials to make them more accessible.
- We fully **implemented a new Tribunal Support Model** to more effectively support our Panel Community. This has included local partnership roles who are developing relationships and working to create effective spaces at local level for collaborative improvement and reform where they aren't in place i.e. local Children's Hearings Improvement Partnerships. A Wellbeing offer for our community is in place, and wellbeing colleagues have been instrumental in liaising with our learning teams to support Panel Members through their journey to chaining. CHS adopted a new approach to change management to implement this important and significant programme of work which won the Public Sector Award for Project and Programme Management.

OUR CONTEXT: UPHOLDING AND PROGRESSING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS



As Corporate Parents under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, CHS and the National Convener have responsibilities to make sure our attention and resources are focused on upholding the rights and safeguarding of Scotland's looked after children and care-leavers, and promoting their wellbeing. CHS and the National Convener plan, deliver, monitor and report on these duties together, collaborating with our partner organisations when necessary to deliver these goals. Our commitments in 2025-26 will centre on:

Participation

To ensure that our work is informed by and for the infants, children and young people we serve. We are committed to elevating the participation of those with lived experience as a key tenet of our organisation. We will champion the involvement of children, so it is core to our standards, practices and organisational culture through investment in participation.

UNCRC

We welcome the incorporation of the UNCRC into law and will work closely with our partner organisations to ensure we are compliant with every aspect of new legislation. We will continue to conduct hearings and to champion children's rights with our Panel Members ensuring the rights of a child throughout their childhood are the paramount consideration when making decisions.

The Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024

At CHS, we welcome the changes proposed by the Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024 and have undertaken extensive work to prepare for the impact these will have in the hearing room. We are committed to ensuring that every child under the age of 18 who requires support and guidance benefits from the welfare-based approach of the children's hearings system to give them the best start in life.

Children's Participation and Rights Strategy

As a key priority, we have implemented a new strategy, co-designed with care experienced young people, which enshrines our obligations to put infants, children and young people with lived experience of care at the heart of what we do. We have invested in this work to ensure that the young people we work alongside are supported and have opportunities for influence.



OUR CONTEXT: DELIVERING TRANSFORMATION AND DRIVING CHANGE



CHS remains committed to keeping The Promise to Scotland’s children and delivering those reforms and improvements identified by the Hearings for Children report.

We acknowledge that change takes time, but we are committed to ensuring that what doesn’t need to wait shouldn't wait. CHS recognises the opportunities we have to make a meaningful difference to the experience of children in the hearings system now, while further system transformation is planned as part of the redesign of the children’s hearings system.



Change and innovation

We have a dedicated change function within CHS which will work with our partners on a number of innovative projects to improve children’s experiences of hearings:

- ❖ Language in Hearing Room – picking up on the principles and work of the Language Leaders, we will be working with SCRA and our Panel Community to improve the use of language in hearings to remove trauma and stigma.
- ❖ Child-friendly complaints and feedback – having launched our child friendly feedback and complaints portal, we have implemented a ‘front door’ for feedback and complaints so children and their families do not need to navigate across organisations to share their feedback.
- ❖ Chair greeting the child – we are enabling children to feel more comfortable at their hearings by being greeted by the Chair in advance.

Working with partners on the children hearings redesign

CHS will work with SCRA and key stakeholders on areas for improvement that do not require legislative change but do require a joint approach and are appropriate for early prioritisation in the delivery redesign of the children’s hearings system.

Improvement

CHS will continue to engage in and influence the development of emerging legislation that can improve outcomes for children and young people through the hearings system. Through the Tribunal Support Model, we will incorporate improvements in a responsive and consistent way across Scotland.



OUR STRATEGIC THEMES 2024-2027



Last year we launched our tri-annual *Strategic Outlook 2024-2027*. Within this Business and Corporate Parenting Plan we set out what our priorities for the next three years will be. We call these priorities our 'Strategic Themes' and together they guide and inform our ambitions to improve outcomes for children touched by the hearings system. Our Strategic Themes are:



STRATEGIC THEMES – AN OVERVIEW



Theme 1: Delivering Positive Outcomes

Infants, children, young people and their families are at the heart of what we do, and we believe in a Scotland where they are all safe, loved and supported in order that they can fulfil their potential in all areas of their life. We are committed to delivering positive outcomes for all those who enter the hearings system by adopting a trauma-responsive and rights-driven approach in all we do and equipping our people with knowledge to uphold those rights and the means to support children and young people to participate in their hearing.

Theme 2: Valuing our people

We want to make CHS the best place to work and volunteer. We are committed to fostering a culture where colleagues and volunteers feel valued and supported. We will ensure that our people are empowered to perform at their best, understand the contribution they make and have those contributions recognised and celebrated. We want everyone at CHS to thrive and flourish.

Theme 3: Driving Transformation

We believe in the power of transformation to effect meaningful change in ourselves, our partners, and the lives of the children and communities we serve. CHS is embracing a period of reform and transformation as it responds to the government-supported recommendations in the Hearings for Children report. We are committed to delivering the best possible hearings system for our children and young people and will work in partnership with them, our Panel Community and our strategic partners to drive forward our ambitious change agenda.



These Themes represent both our current programme of continuous improvement and our ambitions for the future for CHS, children's hearings and those who come in to contact with hearings. They will guide our work over the next three years and support us to deliver on national ambition to make Scotland the best place in the world to grow up.

CRITICAL ENABLERS – IMPROVING CAPABILITIES



Our strategy is built on our three Strategic Themes and our identified critical enablers. These strategic enablers are the capabilities and resources required to support our operational effectiveness and organisational excellence.

❖ We live our values

We keep children at the heart of everything we do, respecting their rights and listening to their voice. We are creative and innovative, serving others with great care and compassion.

❖ We are committed to transformation

We are committed to delivering better outcomes for children and young people by transforming how we operate, setting high expectations to achieve results while delivering our mission and purpose.

❖ We value our relationships

We are committed to working collaboratively and purposefully with all our partners recognising that we are not an island but are one part of a complex network dedicated to improving the hearings systems.

❖ We manage change well

We continuously improve how we work and manage change and we respond to change in a flexible and agile way ensuring that we remain informed and communicate what we are doing and how we are doing it.

❖ We are courageous, influential and impactful

We are not afraid to try new ways of working, to make the necessary changes to the system or to speak out when others can't but we are accountable and we take responsibility for our actions.

❖ We measure the important things

We see the value of data to drive our decisions and to measure our impact, so we source, collect and analyse our data with care and precision and use it to navigate our path, to recognise our successes and to know when to pivot.



OUR PLANS - THEME 1: DELIVERING POSITIVE OUTCOMES



	Objective	Milestones / Activities	Timescales / Targets 2025/26
1	Implement year 1 of the Quality Strategy	Deliver year 1 of the implementation plan for the Quality Strategy, identifying and progressing key milestones and priority objectives	Progress through Q4
		Develop tools and approach to evaluation and audit, reviewing the national guidance, developing cohesive approaches to evaluation, self-assessment and audit at national and regional levels	Complete by end Q3
		Develop the resourcing and retention plan for PPAs increasing understand of the role and enhancing the efficacy of deployment	Complete by end Q4
		Review and align the approach to quality-supporting data including establishment of baseline data	Complete by Q2
2	Enhance practice and standards across all areas	Implement and operationalise the agreed plans for participation at CHS through a refresh of our participation activity aligned with the revised Children’s Rights and Participation Strategy	Complete by end of Q4
		Enhance intelligence sharing, information and learning between regional and national teams and improving governance and reporting of complaints and feedback	Complete by end of Q4
		Develop the P&P team as the subject-matter experts on all aspects of practice, standards and policy, increasing communications with volunteer community and enhancing levels of engagement with the practice bank	Progress through to Q4

3	Fulfil our obligations and prepare our people for the implementation of the Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024.	Deliver the second module of Care & Justice Act Learning to ensure our Panel Community understand the specific needs and impact of trauma and legislation on older young people	Progress through Q4
4	Build on existing mechanism to capture experience of children and families in the hearings system to drive quality at all levels.	Implementation and operationalisation of the Experts by Experience group	Complete by Q2
		Appeals data used to create a feedback loop to panel members to inform practice	Complete through end Q3
		Creation of Quality Measures and improvement plans aligned to key priorities	Progress through end Q3
5	Continue to support and retain our Panel Community through the embedding of regional support structures that promote engagement and provide meaningful opportunities for our volunteers	Review recruitment application process to improve volunteer experience and attract diverse volunteers to join our Community	Complete by Q2
		Review of CHS recruitment campaign to support attraction of diverse volunteer applicants.	Complete by Q4
		Develop an internal department plan to manage Capacity across the volunteer community	Progress through Q4
		Continue to improve approaches to rota and resource allocation to improve the volunteer experience and enable more effective panel deployment processes	Progress through Q4

OUR PLANS - THEME 2: VALUING OUR PEOPLE



	Objective	Milestones / Activities	Timescales/ Targets 2025/26
6	Ensure an effective learning offer is in place to support Panel Member training for the year and support the implementation of the Children’s Care and Justice Act	Deliver an effective learning offer to support Panel Members and the wider volunteer Community	Complete by end Q2
		Design and deliver high quality learning offer aligned to the Learning Strategy	Progress through Q4
7	Progress our ambition to become a Trauma Informed Organisation	Deliver the 2 nd phase of Trauma training modules and resources to all volunteers and colleagues	Progress through Q3
		Continue to embed trauma informed language through the Language in the Hearing Room project	Progress through Q4
8	Build on our existing approach to how we support our Volunteers	Implement a nationally consistent approach to wellbeing , recognition and volunteer support.	Progress through Q4
		Implement processes to ensure expectations are communicated to volunteers in a transparent and timely manner	Progress through Q4
9	Implement Year 2 of the People Strategy	Deliver management and leadership training and development	Progress through Q4
		Continuous workforce planning to support organisational design activities	Progress through Q4
		Improve offering and promotion of CHS Total Reward package to support our approach to attract, retain and reward colleagues	Progress through Q4
		Review and publish CHS approach to EDI	Q1

OUR PLANS - THEME 3: DRIVE TRANSFORMATION



	Objective	Milestones / Activities	Timescales/ Targets 2025/26
10	Deliver year 1 of the Hearings Redesign 2030 programme	As a member of the Children’s Hearings Redesign Board, agree governance and delivery structures with partners for delivery of the agreed recommendations	Progress through Q4
		Develop productive, equitable partnership relationships with our stakeholders nationally and regionally, focused on children and young people’s outcomes that drive hearings improvement	Progress through Q4
		Develop an implementation plan for the agreed reforms for CHS incorporating the key strategic, practice and operational changes to the hearing system	Progress through Q4
11	Develop new Data Strategy 2025-30	Establish our future data needs and develop a pathway to meet those needs	Complete by end Q3
		Identify the required structure to deliver the data strategy	Complete by end Q3
		Work with partners to develop effective data-sharing practices	Progress through Q4
12	Develop new Digital Strategy 2025-30	Establish our future digital ecosystem and develop a pathway to deliver it	Complete by end Q3
		Identify the required structure in the digital team to deliver the digital strategy	Complete by end Q3
		Drive digital transformation through the Digital Lab taking a systematic approach to planning and delivering digital change initiatives	Progress through Q4

OUR PLANS – ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND CRITICAL ENABLERS



	Objective	Activities / Milestones	Timescales / Targets 2025/26
13	Further develop and build on CHS's change architecture to support the delivery of critical programmes of improvement	Continue to evaluate how change is delivered to continually improve practice and process	Progress through Q4
		Adhere to good change governance practices, recognising and understanding risks at every stage	Progress through Q4
		Review and enhance the structures around change to ensure we have the skills and knowledge to deliver successful programmes	Progress through Q4
14	Fortify and strengthen our cyber and digital security measures	Gain ISO27001 accreditation and ensure that our security practices and governance are fit for purpose	Complete by end Q4
		Formalise and standardise the use of process maps and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPS) across the organisation to enable clearer understanding of processes and fulfilment of services	Complete by end Q4
		Deliver the Business Contingency Plan and Digital Disaster Recovery Plan testing to ensure CHS is prepared to manage unforeseen critical business impacts	Complete by end Q4
15	Build on our established communications channels and approaches to adequately reflect our growth and meet needs of our people and communities	Respond to the recommendations of the internal communications audit	Complete by end Q4
		Improve and enhance the communications and engagement platforms and mechanisms.	Progress through Q4
		Deploy management information to enhance communications to improve and support the volunteer community	Progress through Q4

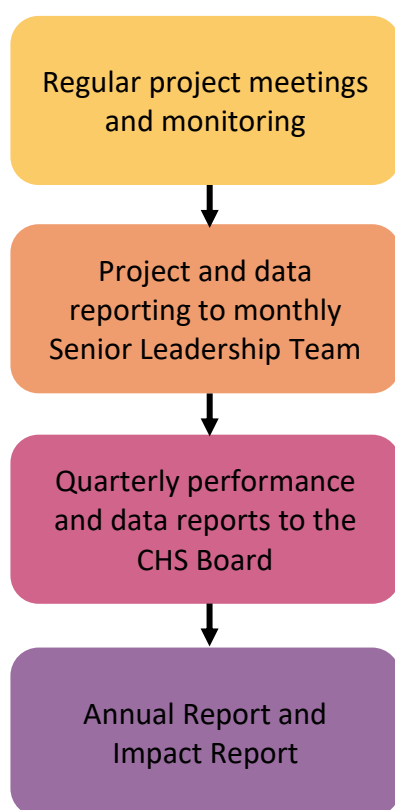
MONITORING OUR BUSINESS PLAN



To remain flexible and adaptable, we intend to review our Business and Corporate Parenting Plan mid-year to re-align our objectives and activities with the ongoing partnership working around the reform agenda.

Each of the activities, milestones and deliverables within this plan have been assigned timescales in which, to the best of our current knowledge, we anticipate they will be completed. As we monitor the delivery of our work through the year, the Business and Corporate Parenting Plan remain under regular review.

To manage this review process, CHS operates a well-established process of monitoring and reporting:



Our quarterly performance reviews to the CHS Board take into account work delivered in the past quarter and also reflect on upcoming work and whether alterations will be required (e.g. change of timescales or change of scope) in order to adapt to the environment at the time. In addition to performance monitoring and measurements against business plan objectives, CHS has a set of data driven targets which are monitored by the Board and the Senior Leadership Team which drive decision making and in year business planning.

MONITORING OUR WORK: **Key Performance Indicators**



To monitor the performance of the organisation through the year, we have set the following Key Performance Indicators. In addition to these KPIs, CHS monitors its volunteer capacity and statistics via a data summary which accompanies the quarterly performance report.

TO BE COMPLETED ONCE DATA HAS BEEN COLLATED AND ANALYSED AT THE FINANCIAL YEAR END 31ST MARCH 2025

OUR RESOURCES FOR 2025-26



We are funded through an annual grant in aid under a framework agreement with Scottish Government.

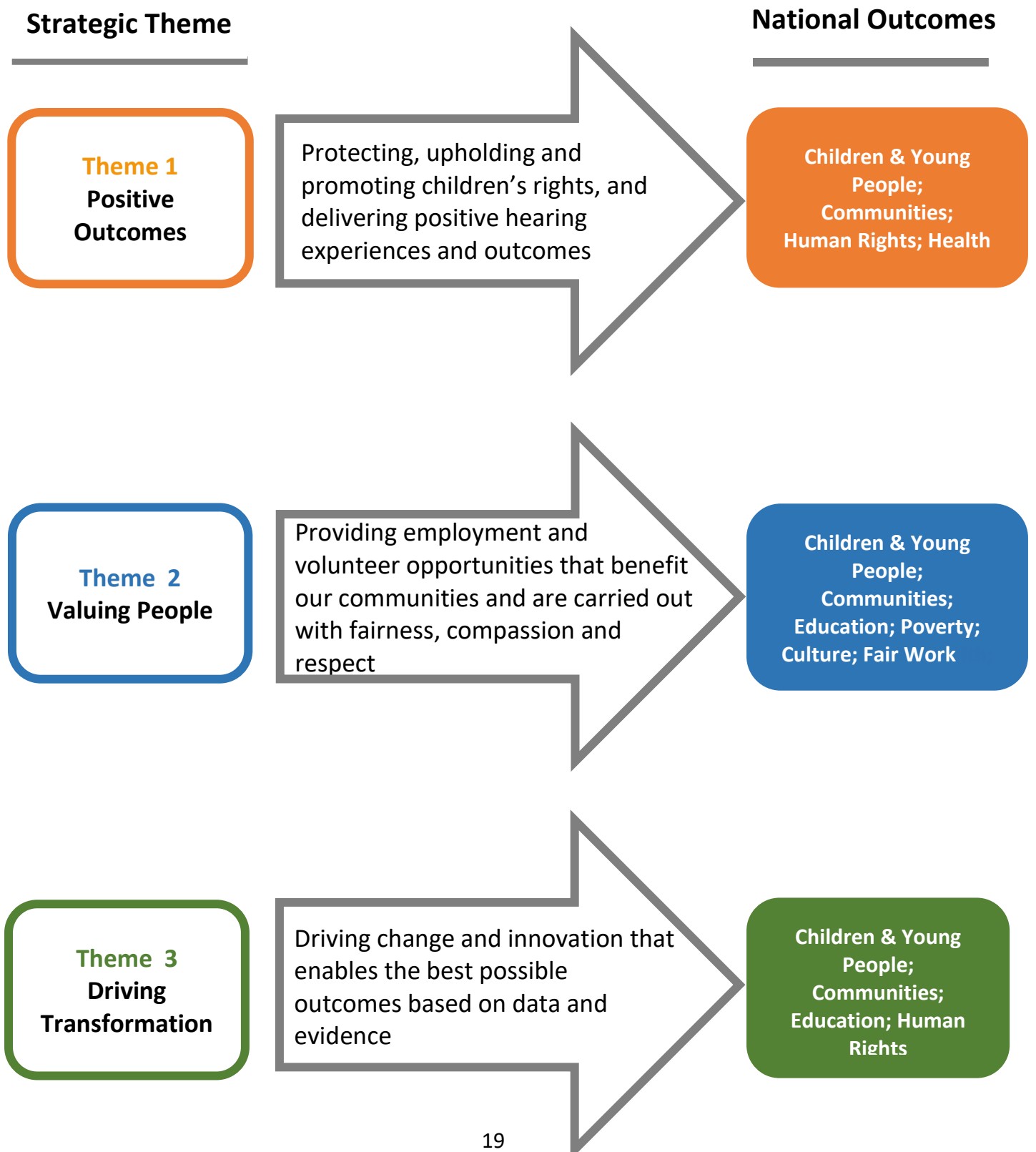
CHS has an identifiable resource need supported by Government in development of the reform ambitions outlined within our Business Plan.

TO BE COMPLETED ONCE THE BUDGET HAS BEEN AGREED

CHS AND THE NATIONAL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK



In our 2025-26 Business and Corporate Parenting Plan, we set out how our Strategic Themes are aligned to Scotland’s National Performance Framework, displaying our commitment to delivering a better Scotland for all of us.



GLOSSARY



Children’s Hearings Improvement Partnership

Group that brings together partners in the hearings system to identify and drive improvements.

Corporate Parent

An organisation or person that has specific responsibilities and duties to people with care experience and their wellbeing. These responsibilities are defined in Part 9 of the Children and Young People (Scotland Act) 2014.

GIRFEC

‘Getting it Right for Every Child’ is the way for families to work together with people who can support them such as teachers or nurses.

Grant In Aid

A payment made by a government department to finance all or part of the costs of a public body.

Hearings System Working Group (HSWG)

Group made up for partners from the hearings system established to facilitate the redesign of the hearings system. It is chaired by an independent chair.

The Hearings for Children Report (HfC)

“Hearings for Children: The report of the Hearings System Working Group” was published on 25 May 2023. It sets out an ambitious package of recommendations for improvements to the children’s hearing system.

Children’s Hearings Redesign Board

A group of leaders from organisations that have a statutory responsibility for the operation and management of the children’s hearings system responsible for providing oversight for delivering change.

Language Leaders

Language Leaders is a collaborative group made up of young adults with lived experience of hearings, and professionals from across the hearing system (including CHS, SCRA, Social Work, Advocacy and Children’s Rights)

Independent Reports

A specialist report, requested by Panel Members, answering specific questions about a child and young person’s circumstances, that is produced by someone not involved in the child’s case.

National Convener

This role leads and oversees the Children's Panel. They are 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. The current National Convener is Elliot Jackson.

National Performance Framework

The strategic framework that sets out the vision, values and outcomes for Scotland as a whole.

Our Hearings Our Voice (OHOV)

An independent board for children and young people from across Scotland who have experience of the children's hearings system. OHOV works to ensure that these children and young people have a decision-making role in the design and improvement of the hearings system.

Panel Members

People who 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.

Panel Practice Advisors (PPAs)

Specially trained volunteers responsible for observing Panel Members hearings to ensure they are following correct -practice and are providing a high-quality experience to children and families.

Participation Standards

The principles that define our approach to, and best practice for, the participation of people with lived experience across CHS's work.

The Promise

CHS's structured programme of work that delivers on the findings of the Independent Care Review.

Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA)

The Children's Reporter works for SCRA; they decide if a child might need a children's hearing, arrange children's hearing and send all the necessary papers out.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

An international convention that sets out articles defining rights that are specifically held by children.

Children's Hearings Scotland

3rd Floor Thistle House | 91 Haymarket Terrace | Edinburgh | EH12 5HE
t: 0131 244 4743 | www.chscotland.gov.uk

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



Agenda Item 14. CHS-2425-46

Meeting:	CHS Board Meeting
Meeting Date:	25 March 2025
Title:	Budget Approval 2025/26
Responsible Executive:	Jessica, MacDonald, Director of Business and Finance
Report Author:	Klaus Berchtenbreiter, Finance Manager

1.	Purpose of Report																																										
1.1	The purpose of this report is to ask the Board to approve the CHS budget for 25/26																																										
1.2	Any member wishing additional information should contact the Executive Lead in advance of the meeting.																																										
2.	Recommendations																																										
2.1	The Board are asked to approve the CHS Budget 2025/26.																																										
3.	Key Points for Discussion																																										
3.1	<p>2025/26 Budget position and SG published budget</p> <p>Following the publication of the SG budget (please see table below), we can confirm that we have been awarded budget as 'flat cash' for revenue, £4.576k (cash) and an increase to our capital budget which is now £803k (this includes cash and non-cash elements). This results in CHS having a funding gap on revenue, but capital will be fully funded, the difference between our capital need of £750k and the awarded £803k is the recognition of Thistle House rent via IFRS 16 as a non-cash element.</p> <p><u>CHS Extract of SG published budget</u></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>2025-26 Fiscal Resource £million</th> <th>2025-26 Non-cash £million</th> <th>2025-26 Capital £million</th> <th>2025-26 Financial Transaction s £million</th> <th>2025-26 UK Funded AME £million</th> <th>2025-26 Scottish Budget £million</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Education and Skills</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="7">Learning</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="7">Children's Rights, Protection and Justice</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS) - Resource</td> <td>4.576</td> <td>0.510</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>5.086</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS) - Indirect Capital</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>0.803</td> <td>-</td> <td>-</td> <td>0.803</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		2025-26 Fiscal Resource £million	2025-26 Non-cash £million	2025-26 Capital £million	2025-26 Financial Transaction s £million	2025-26 UK Funded AME £million	2025-26 Scottish Budget £million	Education and Skills							Learning							Children's Rights, Protection and Justice							Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS) - Resource	4.576	0.510	-	-	-	5.086	Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS) - Indirect Capital	-	-	0.803	-	-	0.803
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Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS) - Indirect Capital	-	-	0.803	-	-	0.803																																					

Agenda Item 14. CHS-2425-46

3.2

CHS 2025/26 budget

In a meeting with the Scottish Government (SG) sponsor team together with Andrew Watson, SG Director of Children and Families, CHS has started the conversation on the resulting pressures and the required mechanisms to obtain confirmation from SG to support the full established financial need for the budget 2025/26 of CHS. Andrew Watson gave assurances that SG would support the proposed budget with a view to resolving the funding gap earlier than in previous years.

On 20th December CHS received a letter from Andrew Watson that recognises pressures on the CHS budget and confirms SG is committed to working with us to manage the budgets in year. A defined structure of meetings between now and the new financial year are in place to ratify our financial position for the financial year 2025/26.

Due to SG budget timelines a formal BAM letter might not be received at the time of the board meeting, but SG will provide this as a priority to give the board assurances on the funding for 25/26.

Agenda Item 14. CHS-2425-46

	2025/26 established need £000
= Staff Total	6,230
+ Volunteer training	1,444
+ Volunteer expenses	540
+ Volunteer recruitment	665
+ Volunteer support (inc PVGs, DVF, Participation CYP, Staff training)	359
+ Volunteer support: IT	1,079
+ Corporate (inc staff T&S/recruit, Board)	425
+ Property	146
= CHS Core Business	10,888
+ Tribunal Support Model	288
+ Children's Care & Justice Bill	198
= Revenue total	11,374
+ Capital	750
= TOTAL	12,124

4. Key Risks	
4.1	The resulting risk of a 'flat cash' funding settlement leaves CHS with unfunded pressures amounting to 60% of established revenue budget. If not funded this would put the delivery of the statutory services that CHS delivers at risk. Assurances have been given to resolve the existing funding gap earlier than in previous years via the established process of ABR and SBR budget reviews and realignment during the year.
5. Risk Register	
5.1	No update to the risk register required, as this risk is already captured.
6. Impact on Inequality/Rights	
6.1	N/A
7. Duty to Inform, Engage and Consult People who use our Services (Internal and External)	

Agenda Item 14. CHS-2425-46

7.1	The proposed and established need that informs the presented budget for 25/26 has been discussed with the board in previous meetings and is also fully supported by the CHS SLT.
8.	Resource Implications
8.1	N/A
9.	Appendices
	None

Agenda Item 15a. CHS-2425-47

Meeting:	CHS Board Meeting
Meeting Date:	25 March 2025
Title:	Review of Financial Regulations
Responsible Executive:	Director of Business and Finance
Report Author:	Finance manager

1.	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to ask the Board to approve the changes and updates to the Financial Regulations.
1.2	Any member wishing additional information should contact the Executive Lead in advance of the meeting.
2.	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Board is asked to approve the changes and updates to the Financial Regulations. These have been actioned following findings from the internal audit.</p> <p>Following on from the last update in Feb 2022 and recognising the CHS restructure, all job titles and roles have now been updated and follow current working practice.</p> <p>The document was presented to the Audit and Risk Committee meeting on 25 February 2025 for initial approval, prior to final Board approval. The Committee approved the document with recommendation to proceed to the Board.</p>
3.	Key Points for Discussion
3.1	Financial Regulations have been updated in line with current operational practice and job titles have been brought up to date, also recognising the change in how the shared service agreement with SCRA is currently operating.
4.	Alignment to CHS Strategic Outlook
	Not aligned to specific themes within the Strategic Outlook, however compliance with all statutory requirements is essential to the running of the organisation and thus to CHS achieving its aims and outcomes.
5.	Key Risks
5.1	Financial Regulations had not been reviewed in line with operational changes for 3 years, but have now been considered and accurately reflected, so any risks of miss-aligned responsibilities have been addressed.
6.	Risk Register

Agenda Item 15a. CHS-2425-47

6.1	No additional risk has been identified by updating the Financial Regulations.
7.	Impact on Inequality/Rights
7.1	No Impact assessment is required.
8.	Duty to Inform, Engage and Consult People who use our Services (Internal and External)
8.1	Internal audit findings have been addressed via the updated version of the Financial Regulations.
9.	Resource Implications
9.1	Not Applicable
10.	Appendices
	Appendix 1 - Financial Regulations v2.4



FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Document Location	\\Scotland\dc1\DCGroup_VQ3\CHS\CHS Central Resources\CHS Policies and Procedures\Approved Policies\Financial Policies
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Version	Date	Owner	Summary of Changes
v2.0	20.03.2018	Head of Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor changes, such as updating job titles and changing references to CHS' "Director of Finance and Corporate Services" to the appropriate member of the Senior Management Team.
v2.1	19.03.2019	Head of Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corrected numbering within section 6.6.
v2.2	12.02.2020	Head of Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cosmetic change to wording 5.3.2. Added 12-month proviso to 6.3.6. Added overpayments to 6.5.6.
v2.3	07.02.2022	Head of Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated Document Location Updated Senior Management Team role titles. Corrected numbering within 6.3
v2.4	14.02.2025	Director of Business and Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updating job titles in line with new CHS structure and responsibilities across all Financial Regulations

Approvals	ARC 27.02.2018 Board 20.03.2018. ARC February 2019 Board March 2019 ARC Feb 2021 ARC Feb 2022
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1. Introduction
2. Responsibilities
 - 2.1 Financial Responsibilities
3. Planning and Authorisation
 - 3.1 Planning and Budgeting
 - 3.2 Authority
4. Monitoring and Control
 - 4.1 Budgetary Control
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 - 6.6 Travel and Subsistence
 - 6.7 Petty Cash Accounts
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 - 8.2 Internal Audit
 - 8.3 Rights of Access

1 INTRODUCTION

This document sets out Children’s Hearings Scotland (CHS)’s financial regulations. This document was reviewed by the Audit and Risk Management Committee (ARC) on 15th February 2022 and subsequently approved by CHS Board on 29th March 2022. These financial regulations are subordinate to Children’s Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 and to any restrictions within CHS’s Framework Document. The purpose of these financial regulations is to provide control over the totality of CHS’s resources. The financial regulations are a key element in CHS’s system of internal financial control. The financial regulations, which are supplemented by other documents such as the Petty Cash Guidance note, link directly to the Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM), the Schedule of Delegated Authority and Procurement Policy. The financial regulations set out the key controls which apply to each core financial process.

Compliance with the financial regulations is compulsory for all employees of CHS. Any member of staff who fails to comply with the financial regulations may be subject to disciplinary action under the CHS’s disciplinary procedures. It is the responsibility of managers to ensure that their staff members are made aware of the existence and content of the CHS’s financial regulations.

The ARC is responsible for maintaining a continuous review of the financial regulations, through the Director of Business and Finance, and for advising the Board of any additions or changes necessary.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 Financial Responsibilities

- 2.1.1 The Board will be responsible for setting the overall policies to be followed by CHS and for ensuring that all actions undertaken by officers of CHS are in accordance with procedures determined by the Board.
- 2.1.2 Under the terms of reference approved by the Board, CHS’s ARC is responsible for general oversight of audit related matters. The Internal Audit function reports to the Accountable Officer and the ARC on CHS’s system of internal control and recommends improvements to the systems, as necessary.
- 2.1.3 The National Convener/Chief Executive of CHS is formally designated as CHS’s Accountable Officer by the Principal Accountable Officer of Scottish Government’s Children and Families Directorate (sponsor Directorate). The role of the Accountable Officer is defined in the Framework Document.
- 2.1.4 In the short-term absence of the National Convener/Chief Executive, for a period not exceeding four weeks, the Depute Chief Executive may be nominated as the Deputy Accountable Officer and be responsible for providing support to the National Convener/Chief Executive in carrying out the Accountable Officer responsibilities.
- 2.1.5 The National Convener/Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive/Director of Tribunal Delivery, Director of People and Culture, Director of Positive Outcomes, and Director of Business and Finance, referred to in these Regulations as “Budget Holders”, are responsible for the resources under their control. It will be for them to ensure that such resources are managed in accordance with the provisions of

the financial regulations and any procedures or other instructions, as may be approved from time to time, by the Board and/or the National Convener/Chief Executive.

- 2.1.6 The Board may delegate certain powers to Budget Holders and other specified officers. Except for the Accountable Officer function, these officers may further delegate the powers they have been given, within the limits of the Schedule of Delegated Authority, but they retain ultimate responsibility for the exercise of the delegated authority.

3. *PLANNING AND AUTHORISATION*

3.1 Planning and Budgeting

- 3.1.1 The Board is responsible for determining, monitoring, and approving the medium / long term policy and resource framework for the future development of CHS's policies and programmes. The Board will provide guidance as may be considered appropriate on the policies to be followed in the preparation of CHS's Corporate and Business Plans and estimates of revenue and capital expenditure.
- 3.1.2 In each financial year the Board will, following receipt of advice from the National Convener/Chief Executive, determine the detailed procedural arrangements for the ensuing financial years as may be considered appropriate for the preparation of the annual revenue and capital estimates to be followed by Budget Holders.
- 3.1.3 Budget Holders will prepare detailed estimates in respect of both capital and revenue expenditure for the ensuing financial year in accordance with the procedural arrangements approved from time to time in terms of paragraph 3.1.2.
- 3.1.4 The National Convener/Chief Executive will submit draft revenue and capital estimates to the Board with such recommendations as appear to be necessary. After considering the overall estimates and any recommendations, the Board will revise the estimates as it may consider appropriate, approve them as so revised, authorise the expenditure and the delegated budgets to Budget Holders and pass such resolutions as may be required.
- 3.1.5 The final budget requirement as approved by the Board will be in line with the annual cash limit as notified by the Scottish Ministers.
- 3.1.6 The detailed form of the capital and revenue estimates will be determined by the CHS Finance Manager after consultation with the Budget Holders, the form to be consistent with statutory requirements.
- 3.1.7 New developments or initiatives which have not been included in the level of grant-in-aid agreed by the Scottish Government and which cannot be accommodated within the agreed level of funding will be considered by the National Convener/Chief Executive. A business case will be prepared which may form the basis of a bid for supplementary funding to the Scottish Government. In this event the Board should be notified.

3.2 Authority

- 3.2.1 The inclusion of items in approved revenue budgets will constitute authority to the Budget Holders to incur such expenditure subject to any reservations put in place by the Board and the Schedule of Delegated Authority.

4 MONITORING AND CONTROL

4.1 Budgetary Control

- 4.1.1 The CHS Finance Manager will inform Budget Holders of their financial allocation for the forthcoming year once the Board has approved this.
- 4.1.2 It will be the duty of each Budget Holder to monitor and control expenditure within the financial allocation provided in the Revenue and Capital Budgets.
- 4.1.3 The CHS Finance manager will provide Budget Holders with all financial information necessary to manage budgets and will provide statements of expenditure for each Budget Holder and the Board.
- 4.1.4 It will be the duty of each Budget Holder to inform the Director of Business and Finance, within agreed timescales, where it is forecast that the total expenditure within their control is likely to be out with agreed parameters. The Director of Business and Finance will, if necessary, advise the National Convener/Chief Executive and prepare a report for the Board.
- 4.1.5 The Director of Business and Finance and National Convener/Chief Executive will promptly inform the Board and the Scottish Ministers if it becomes apparent that expenditure is likely to exceed the level of grant-in-aid. The Board and the Scottish Ministers must also be informed if CHS is likely to underspend its total grant-in-aid.

4.2 Incurring Capital Expenditure

- 4.2.1 When the capital estimates for any year have been appraised and formally approved, projects included may proceed on the authority of the Budget Holder i.e. the project sponsor, provided that:
 - (a) the scope of the project is consistent with the original capital estimates.
 - (b) should the recommended tender for a project exceed the sum contained in the Capital Estimates by the lesser of 10% or £10,000, approval of the Board will be obtained before the tender is accepted. The recommended tender may be accepted up to that limit provided that sufficient budget or virement (transfer) is available. Board approval will be obtained in other cases. Notwithstanding, in an emergency the Chair and/or National Convener/Chief Executive may take such steps as are necessary to safeguard life, health or property or safeguard the interests of CHS.

(c) should a new project be substituted for an approved project, approval of the Board will be required.

4.2.2 It will be the duty of each Budget Holder to monitor and control expenditure within the financial allocation for each project under their control.

4.3 Supplementary Estimates and Virement

4.3.1 Regulation 4.1 states that the Budget Holder is responsible for ensuring that the approved expenditure under each heading is not exceeded. Where, however, an expenditure code is or is likely to be exceeded, the Budget Holder, must:

(a) attempt to make good the deficiency from other savings.

(b) where that cannot be achieved, the extent of the over/underspend should be submitted to the National Convener/Chief Executive as part of the budget monitoring process, detailing the reasons for the budget variance and outlining the corrective actions to be taken.

4.3.2 Variance from original approved budget plans including the introduction of a new policy or a variation of existing policy, which may have a significant impact upon the corporate plans of CHS, will be subject to the approval of the Board.

4.3.3 In exceptional circumstances, some virement of budget may be submitted to the Board for approval provided:

(a) the virement is greater than £5,000.

(b) the level of virement is no more than 10% of the prescribed expenses heads (i.e. Staff, Property, Travel etc.)

(c) the virement does not create an additional financial commitment into the future financial years which cannot be accommodated within existing grant-in-aid levels.

4.3.4 Transfer of budgetary provision between revenue budget and capital budget requires prior approval from the SG Finance Directorate.

4.4 Provision of Monitoring Information

4.4.1 The Director of Business and Finance will quarterly, or at intervals determined by the Board, provide the Board with a monitoring report on revenue and capital expenditure and forecasts of outturn figures.

4.4.2 The National Convener/Chief Executive shall provide the sponsor Directorate with a financial statement at agreed intervals showing for each main budget heading the payments made and receipts in the previous month, accumulated payments to date and the balance of cash remaining available to CHS for the year. The statement shall also contain an analysis of monthly outturn against forecast and details of the outturn for the year for each main budget heading.

4.5 Reports to Board and Management Groups

- 4.5.1 All reports to the Board, management group or sub-group must identify and explain the financial implications of any commitment, action or change to policy proposed.
- 4.5.2 Reports must include a comprehensive costing of financial implications, and an outline of options considered.
- 4.5.3 Financial implications should differentiate between capital expenditure and revenue expenditure.

5 ASSETS

5.1 Register of Assets

The SCRA Finance Manager with the help of the CHS finance team will maintain a comprehensive and up-to-date record of fixed assets.

5.2 Asset Security

- 5.2.1 Each Budget Holder is responsible for always maintaining proper security for all CHS assets under their respective control including buildings, stocks, furniture, equipment, cash, records, and information. The appropriate officers shall consult with the Director of Business and Finance in any case where security is thought to be defective or where it is considered, or it has been advised that security may be inadequate or that special security arrangements may be required.
- 5.2.2 Maximum limits for cash holdings shall be agreed with the Director of Business and Finance and shall not be exceeded without the prior approval of the Director of Business and Finance.

5.3 Stores and Equipment

- 5.3.1 The safe custody of stocks, furniture, fittings, plant, and equipment shall be the responsibility of the Budget Holder concerned.
- 5.3.2 Budget Holders will perform physical inventories in a form and frequency agreed by the Director of Business and Finance. The Budget Holder will supply the CHS Finance manager with such information relating thereto as may be required for the financial records of CHS.
- 5.3.3 The Budget Holder will report any physical differences to the Director of Business and Finance and CHS Finance Manager, and after consultation with the Director of Business and Finance, take the necessary action in relation to such.
- 5.3.4 The procedure for Losses and Special Payments must be adhered to for the treatment of any losses.

- 5.3.5 CHS's property will not be removed otherwise than in accordance with the ordinary course of CHS's business or used otherwise than for CHS's purposes except in accordance with specific directions issued by the Budget Holder concerned.
- 5.3.6 Where an item on an inventory is surplus to operational requirements, the appropriate Budget Holder will, before disposing of the item, consult the Director of Business and Finance who will provide disposal guidelines.

6 *INCOME AND EXPENDITURE*

6.1 Income

- 6.1.1 The Finance and Business Support Assistant will raise the appropriate invoice for all accounts for services and income upon notification by Budget Holders. The CHS Finance Manager shall issue the necessary detailed instructions regarding the issue of these accounts, the use of credit notes and the collection of the income.
- 6.1.2 All money received by an employee on behalf of CHS will, without delay, be paid intact to the Finance Manager as may be directed, to the CHS bank account. No deductions may be made from such money unless specifically authorised by the Director of Business and Finance.
- 6.1.3 Personal cheques will not be cashed out of the money held on behalf of CHS.
- 6.1.4 Every transfer of official money from one member of staff to another shall be evidenced in the records of the office concerned by the signature of the recipient.
- 6.1.5 Irrecoverable income or other debt due to CHS to be written off must be done in accordance with the Schedule of Delegated Authority.

6.2 Banking Arrangements and Control of Cheques

- 6.2.1 Subject to compliance with SPFM and agreement from Scottish Government's Treasury and Banking Branch, the National Convener/Chief Executive shall be authorised to operate such bank accounts as may be considered necessary.
- 6.2.2 Two signatories are required to authorise payments from CHS bank accounts. For this purpose, there will be a panel of signatories of not less than three persons, including the National Convener/Chief Executive.
- 6.2.3 Bank reconciliations must be performed monthly, at least. Bank reconciliations should be reviewed and approved by the SCRA Finance Team via the shared service agreement.
- 6.2.4 Payments should be made by the most economical and secure method available. For most purposes, the preferred payment method should be BACS. Where remittance advices should also be sent electronically.

- 6.2.5 All cheques and other forms enabling payment to be made from any CHS bank account will be ordered only on the authority of the Director of Business and Finance, who will ensure that proper arrangements have been made for their safe custody and that adequate controls exist over the usage and production of cheques.

6.3 Orders for Goods and Services

- 6.3.1 The Budget Holder as designated by the National Convener/Chief Executive, shall be responsible for all goods and services ordered and shall also be responsible for ensuring that the approved expenditure under each heading of the budget is not exceeded.
- 6.3.2 The purpose of procurement is to meet the user's requirements. CHS's Procurement Policy requires that all purchases of works, equipment, goods, and services are based on value for money, i.e. the optimum combination of whole-life cost and quality (or fitness for purpose) and other issues such as delivery against price, to meet the user's requirements. It would not be consistent with value for money, or the equal treatment of supplies, for procurement to be used to pursue aims unrelated to the subject of the contract. As far as possible, requirements should be expressed in terms of output and performance to provide scope for innovation solutions and avoid suggestions of favouritism.
- 6.3.3 Contracts for goods and services should be awarded following competition unless there are convincing reasons to the contrary to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in public expenditure. Contracts of an ongoing nature should be regularly reviewed and subjected to competition at appropriate intervals (usually no more than every 3 years unless economic arguments clearly justify a longer contractual relationship). The form of competition chosen should be consistent with any legal requirements and appropriate to the value and complexity of the goods or services being acquired.
- 6.3.4 Potential contractors should be assessed on grounds of suitability, for example in respect of their financial standing and ability to perform the contract (i.e. technical expertise). CHS should, wherever possible, seek opportunities to collaborate with others in respect of common requirements. This will help avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and gain the benefits of aggregation of requirements and economies of scale. If CHS wishes to enter into contracts under framework agreements put into place by others, it must seek advice as to whether the framework agreement has been awarded in accordance with the EU rules on behalf of other potential users.
- 6.3.5 Before entering any lease CHS must demonstrate that the lease offers better value for money than purchase and all agreements exceeding 12 months must be approved by the National Convener/Chief Executive.
- 6.3.6 Official orders will be issued for all work, goods, or services, including consultancy services to be supplied to the CHS except as follows: -

- (a) work, goods, or services which are covered by a prior written agreement which prescribes that payments will be made at certain intervals or under certain conditions.
- (b) the metered element of telephone, gas, water, and electricity services but not the installation, alteration, or repair of such services.
- (c) periodic payments such as rates.
- (d) purchases in cash for which reimbursement is made through a petty cash account.
- (e) where the specific written approval of the Director of Business and Finance has been obtained.

6.3.7 Except as specifically agreed in writing with the Director of Business and Finance, all orders will be given to the supplier in advance of any work, goods or service being provided to CHS. However, in an emergency arising from circumstances outside the control of CHS, a verbal order may be given which will be confirmed in writing as soon as possible thereafter.

6.3.8 All orders for goods and services must be on authorised order forms and signed by an authorised signatory. Orders for goods and services must be checked against central contracts before being issued to suppliers. Where appropriate orders shall be placed in accordance with any central purchasing arrangements but in all cases, all prospective purchases must be in accordance with the Procurement Policy.

6.3.9 The Director of Business and Finance will maintain a register of authorised signatures and additions and deletions must be notified by Budget Holders to the Director of Business and Finance.

6.3.10 The person authorising any orders will ensure that the expenditure to be incurred is not "ultra vires" and that funds have been provided in the budget to cover such expenditure. The order should clearly indicate the nature and quantity of goods etc. to be supplied, any contract or agreed price relating thereto, and the budget head (cost centre and account code) to which it is to be charged.

6.3.11 The limits for the ordering of goods and services shall be those stated in CHS's Schedule of Delegated Authority.

6.4 Payment of Accounts

6.4.1 The Budget Holder is responsible for certifying revenue and capital expenditure. This covers: -

- (a) correctness of prices, discounts, and arithmetic.
- (b) receipt of goods as in accordance with the order.
- (c) non-duplication of payments.

- (d) ensuring expenditure is within the estimates.
- (e) accurate coding in terms of cost centre, expenses, and job code where appropriate.
- (f) invoice is in the name of CHS.
- (g) the charge is a proper liability of CHS.

6.4.2 Such certification will be a signature or email by or on behalf of Budget Holders in accordance with the Schedule of Delegated Authority. Requests for amendments to the Schedule of Delegated Authority should be made to the Director of Business and Finance.

6.4.3 Certified invoices will be passed without delay to an appropriate Budget Holder for payment and may be examined to the extent that is considered necessary. For this purpose, the Budget Holder shall be entitled to make such enquiries and to receive such information and explanations as may be required.

6.4.4 The Director of Business and Finance shall issue to all Budget Holders detailed instructions for the certification and passing of accounts for payment to ensure that payments are made within contracted terms or within ten working days in line with Scottish Government policy.

6.5 Payment of Salaries, Wages and Pensions

6.5.1 The Director of People and Culture will keep records regarding salaries, wages, and other emoluments. Budget Holders will be responsible for the accuracy and authenticity of such information.

6.5.2 The Director of People and Culture is responsible for payment of all salaries, wages, pensions, compensations, and other emoluments to all employees of CHS and all other payments made to employees because of their employment by CHS. Payments will be in accordance with arrangements made by the Director of People and Culture, after consultation with Budget Holders. All payments will be made at the rates approved by CHS after making all appropriate deductions for income tax, national insurance, superannuation, agreed voluntary deductions and other statutory or contractual deductions.

6.5.3 Budget Holders are required to operate within approved establishment headcount controls. The establishment headcount can only be exceeded in accordance with an approved policy on establishment controls.

6.5.4 Any proposal by CHS to move from the existing pension arrangements, or to pay any redundancy or compensation for loss of office, requires the approval of the Scottish Government and where appropriate the agreement of the Scottish Public Pensions Agency to promote the necessary amending legislation.

6.5.5 The Scottish Government Finance Pay Policy Team should be consulted prior to the implementation of any non-salary reward scheme.

- 6.5.6 Each Budget Holder will notify the Director of People and Culture or appropriate delegate as soon as possible, and in a prescribed form, of all matters affecting the payment of such emoluments, and in particular:
- (a) appointments, including temporary and casual appointments, resignations, dismissals, suspensions, overpayments, secondments, and transfers.
 - (b) absences from duty for long term sickness or other reason, apart from approved annual leave or flexi-leave.
 - (c) information necessary to maintain records of service for superannuation, income tax, national insurance, and sick pay.
 - (d) in all cases, payments to employees must be consistent with prevailing statutes as regards tax, national insurance etc.
- 6.5.7 The Director of People and Culture is responsible for the payment to the appropriate bodies of sums deducted from salaries and wages.
- 6.5.8 The Finance Manager will keep all Budget Holders informed as to changes in conditions of service, superannuation benefits and other matters relative thereto.
- 6.5.9 Appointments of all employees will be made in accordance with the procedure approved by CHS and the approved establishments, grades, and rates of pay.
- 6.5.10 The Director of People and Culture or appropriate delegate will determine the form of flexi-time sheets and other documents which form the basis of a payment to an employee of CHS.
- 6.5.11 The Director of Business and Finance will maintain a register of authorised signatures and Budget Holders must notify the Director of Business and Finance of any additions and deletions.

6.6 Travel and Subsistence

- 6.6.1 The certification by or on behalf of the Budget Holder, shall be taken to mean that the certifying officer is satisfied that the claim is in accordance with the approved policies of CHS and the approved terms and conditions of staff. This means that journeys were authorised, the expenses properly and necessarily incurred and that the allowances are properly payable by CHS.
- 6.6.2 Employees' claims submitted more than 3 months after the expenses were incurred will not be considered for reimbursement unless there were exceptional circumstances which prevented the submission of the claim.
- 6.6.3 The Director of Business and Finance will make payments to Board Members who are entitled to claim travelling or other allowances upon receipt of the prescribed form duly completed and checked by the Corporate Governance Manager and authorised by the Director of Business and Finance. The claim must be in

accordance with Scottish Government policies and procedures and will be paid at the Scottish Government rate. Board members should submit expenses timeously to ensure payment in the correct accounting period.

6.7 Petty Cash Accounts

- 6.7.1 The CHS Finance Manager shall make appropriate Petty Cash arrangements for CHS.
- 6.7.2 The Petty Cash holder will draw from CHS's bank account subject to such control limits as the Director of Business and Finance may from time to time determine.
- 6.7.3 The Director of Business and Finance shall arrange to his/her satisfaction the proper security of money advanced in this way.
- 6.7.4 An officer responsible for Petty Cash shall account on a regular basis, as determined by the Director of Business and Finance, for the amount advanced. The Director of Business and Finance will retain a formal record of this accounting.
- 6.7.5 All Petty Cash accounts will be maintained in accordance with the Petty Cash Guidance Note.

7. SPECIAL PROVISIONS

7.1 Gifts and Hospitality

- 7.1.1 It is the duty of all Budget Holders to notify the Director of Business and Finance or appropriate delegate of all gifts given and received.
- 7.1.2 The Director of Business and Finance or appropriate delegate will maintain a register containing details of gifts given and received, along with estimates of value in each case in accordance with Scottish Public Finance Manual.
- 7.1.3 Except for modest hospitality associated with a working lunch or dinner, the presumption should be against accepting offers of hospitality. For the avoidance of doubt all cases falling out with this category should be referred to the National Convener/Chief Executive.

7.2 Losses and Special Payments

- 7.2.1 It is the duty of all Budget Holders to obtain the approval of the Director of Business and Finance for all losses and special payments. Payments may only be authorised in accordance with delegated authority levels after careful consideration of the facts. All reasonable action must have been taken to affect the recovery of losses.
- 7.2.2 The Finance Manager will maintain a record of all losses and special payments (as categorised in Scottish Public Finance Manual) notified by Budget Holders.

7.2.3 The Director of Business and Finance will report all losses to the National Convener/Chief Executive who may write off such losses up to a maximum amount specified in the framework documents and Schedule of Delegated Authority. Thereafter cases will be reported to the Board and, if necessary, sponsor Directorate permission will be sought to write off.

7.3 Fraud, Theft, Corruption, and other Irregularities

7.3.1 It is a responsibility of Budget Holders to establish and maintain internal control so that CHS's activities are conducted in an efficient manner. Internal control comprises the entire system of controls and methods, both financial and otherwise, which are established by management to:

- (a) Achieve organisational objectives.
- (b) Safeguard its assets.
- (c) Ensure reliability of records.
- (d) Promote operational efficiency.
- (e) Encourage adherence to policies and directives.

7.3.2 Any employee of CHS who believes that an irregularity may have occurred involving any property or funds of CHS, or for which CHS has responsibility, must follow the procedures set out in CHS's Fraud Prevention Policy.

7.3.3 The National Convener/Chief Executive must report any cases or suspected cases of fraud or theft to the sponsor Directorate as soon as they become known in accordance with the Schedule of Delegated Authority.

8. ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT

8.1 Accounting Procedures

8.1.1 The Director of Business and Finance will determine all accounting procedures and all accounting and related records of CHS and its Officers. The Budget Holder is responsible for the maintenance and supervision of those accounting records in their control under the accounting procedures specified by the Director of Business and Finance.

8.1.2 All accounts and accounting records of CHS will be compiled by or under the direction of the Director of Business and Finance.

8.1.3 The SCRA Finance Manager submit to the Board and the sponsor Directorate not later than 30 June of each year the draft Accounts for CHS for the previous financial year. The Accounts will comply with the requirements placed upon CHS in the Financial Memorandum, FReM, Companies Acts, and the Accounts Direction issued by the Scottish Government on behalf of Scottish Ministers.

8.1.4 The Auditor General Scotland audits, or appoints auditors to audit, CHS's annual accounts and passes them to the Scottish Ministers who shall lay them before the Scottish Parliament before 31 December, together with the annual report. The Director of Business and Finance shall instruct its auditors to send copies of all management letters and correspondence relating to those letters to Sponsor Directorate.

8.2 Internal Audit

8.2.1 The National Convener/Chief Executive shall commission an internal audit service to conduct a continuous and effective internal audit of the accounting, financial and other operations of CHS. The Internal Audit Service shall conform to the procedures and standards of the Government Internal Audit Manual.

8.2.2 The internal audit service shall be an independent appraisal function serving all levels of management. It shall not be involved in, or responsible for, normal line management activities.

8.2.3 The Internal Auditor shall have authority, on production of identification, to:

(a) enter at all reasonable times CHS premises or land.

(b) have access to all records, documents and correspondence including any data held on computer storage media, which relate to financial and other transactions of CHS.

(c) require and receive such explanations which are considered necessary concerning any matter under examination; and

(d) require any employee of CHS to produce and account for cash, stores or any other CHS asset under their control or to which they have access.

8.3 Rights of Access

8.3.1 The National Convener/Chief Executive, Director of Business and Finance, other designated staff and Internal and External Auditor shall be given access on demand, to all records, documents and correspondence including any data held on computer storage media, which relate to financial and other transactions of CHS.

8.3.2 The records, accounts, and papers of CHS shall be open to inspection by the Scottish Ministers.

Agenda Item 16a. CHS-2425-48

Meeting:	CHS Board Meeting
Meeting Date:	25 March 2025
Title:	CHS Accounting Policies
Responsible Executive:	Director of Business and Finance
Report Author:	Ross Mackenzie, SCRA Finance Manager

1.	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to ask the Board to approve the accounting policies as detailed in Appendix 1, following endorsement at the Audit and Risk Committee meeting on 25 February 2025.</p> <p>This report describes the accounting policies which will be adopted by CHS for the preparation of its financial statements for 2024/25.</p>
1.2	Any member wishing additional information should contact the Executive Lead in advance of the meeting.
2.	Recommendations
2.1	The Board is asked to approve the accounting policies as detailed in Appendix 1, following endorsement at the Audit and Risk Committee meeting on 25 February 2025.
3.	Key Points for Discussion
3.1	Board and National Convener/Chief Executive's Responsibilities
3.1.1	<p>In preparing the accounts, the Accountable Officer is required to comply with the Government Financial Reporting Manual¹ (FReM), and in particular to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 have been followed as set out in the FReM, and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements • prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that CHS will continue in operation.
3.2	Policy Changes from 2023/24
3.2.1	Section 1.6 confirms that the (triennial) pension valuation used for 2024/25 contributions was as at 31 March 2023 (previously 31 March 2020).

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	<p>As last year, the policies published in the Accounts will include the pension sensitivity data in section 1.15, to be confirmed by the actuary by the end of June 2025.</p> <p>As last year, the last paragraph of section 1.15 will be finalised once the actuary determines whether CHS has returned to having a net pension liability.</p>
4.	Alignment to CHS Strategic Outlook
4.1	Not aligned to specific themes within the Strategic Outlook, however compliance with all statutory requirements is essential to the running of the organisation and thus to CHS achieving its aims and outcomes.
5.	Key Risks
5.1	No key risks identified.
6.	Risk Register
6.1	No additional risk has been identified by updating the Financial Regulations
7.	Impact on Inequality/Rights
7.1	No Impact assessment is required.
8.	Duty to Inform, Engage and Consult People who use our Services (Internal and External)
8.1	Not Applicable.
9.	Resource Implications
9.1	Not Applicable.
10.	Appendices
	Appendix 1 – Accounting Policies

Accounting Policies

1.1 Basis of Accounting

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting principles and disclosure requirements of the 2024/25 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM). 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)
- Right of Use assets – end of the useful life (or lease term if shorter)

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 and 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 International Accounting Standard (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 2023. 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

For any new contracts entered into, CHS considers whether a contract is, or contains, a lease. A lease is defined as ‘a contract, or part of a contract, that conveys the right to use an asset (the underlying asset) for a period of time in exchange for consideration’.

To apply this definition CHS assesses whether the contract meets two key evaluations:

- whether the contract contains an identified asset, either explicitly identified in the contract or implicitly specified by being identified at the time the asset is made available to CHS;
- whether CHS has the right to obtain substantially all of the economic benefits from use of the identified asset throughout the period of use, considering its rights within the defined scope of the contract.

Measurement and recognition of leases

At lease commencement date, CHS recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability on the balance sheet. The right-of-use asset is measured at cost, which is made up of the initial measurement of the lease liability, any initial direct costs incurred by CHS, an estimate of any costs to dismantle and remove the asset at the end of the lease, and any lease payments made in advance of the lease commencement date (net of any incentives received). CHS depreciates the right-of-use assets on a straight-line basis from the lease commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right-of-use asset or the end of the lease term. CHS also assesses the right-of-use asset for impairment when such indicators exist.

At the commencement date, CHS measures the lease liability at the present value of the lease payments unpaid at that date, discounted using the HM Treasury discount rate promulgated in the PES papers (4.81% from 1 January 2025, 4.72% from 1 January 2024, 3.51% in calendar year 2023, 0.95% in 2022). Subsequent to initial measurement, the liability will be reduced for payments made and increased for interest. It is remeasured to reflect any reassessment or modification. When the lease liability is remeasured, the corresponding adjustment is reflected in the right-of-use asset.

In line with the FReM, CHS has elected to account for short-term leases and leases of low-value assets using the practical expedients. Instead of recognising a right-of-use asset and lease liability, the payments in relation to these are recognised as an expense in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure on a straight-line basis over the lease term. The costs relating to these in the year to 31 March 2025 was £[tbc] (2024: £nil).

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 non-current 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 pension estimation technique.

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

Changes in assumptions at 31 March 2025	Approximate increase to Defined Benefit Obligation %	Approximate monetary amount £000
0.1% decrease in real discount rate	[tbc by actuary]	[tbc by actuary]
1 year increase in member life expectancy	[tbc by actuary]	[tbc by actuary]
0.1% increase in the salary increase rate	[tbc by actuary]	[tbc by actuary]
0.1% increase in the pension increase rate (CPI)	[tbc by actuary]	[tbc by actuary]

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 CHS's Defined Benefit Obligation by around 3-5% [tbc by actuary]. 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 this report, based on the profile (average member ages, retirement ages etc.) of CHS as at the date of the most recent valuation.

The approach taken in preparing the sensitivity analysis shown is consistent with that adopted in the previous year. However, at 31 March 2024 [and at 31 March 2025] the fair value of plan assets exceeded the estimated present value of liabilities. In accordance with International Financial Reporting Interpretations Committee Interpretation 14 (“IFRIC 14”), CHS continues not to recognise this excess as a net asset in its Statement of Financial Position.

1.16 Accounting standards not yet adopted

As at the date of authorisation of these financial statements, no key standards were not yet adopted.

Agenda Item 17a. CHS-2425-49

Meeting:	CHS Board Meeting
Meeting Date:	25 March 2025
Title:	Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference (ToR)
Responsible Executive:	Jessica MacDonald
Report Author:	Frieda Cadogan

1.	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to ask the Board to approve the updated Terms of Reference for the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC).</p> <p>The ToR was presented to the ARC on 25 February 2025 for initial approval, prior to Board approval. The Committee approved the ToR.</p> <p>The document has been reviewed and updated in-line with CHS governance processes whereby a review is required to be carried out annually.</p>
1.2	Any member wishing additional information should contact the Executive Lead in advance of the meeting.
2.	Recommendations
2.1	The Board are asked to approve the updated ToR, following a review by the Director of Business and Finance, Governance Manager and the Governance Officer. This has been initially approved at the ARC meeting on 25 February.
3.	Key Points for Discussion
3.1	Document Changes/Updates
3.1.1	Minor changes have been made to job titles and some reconfiguration of current wording.
3.1.2	<p>A further additional change that has been made is due to an agreement at the People and Culture Committee (PaCC) meeting on 11 March for the Chairs of each committee to attend each other's committee meetings once a year.</p> <p>The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) attended the 11 March PaCC meeting and fully agreed to this. It was agreed to update each of the committees ToRs to reflect this (see point 4.7).</p>
4.	Alignment to CHS Strategic Outlook
4.1	<p>This work is aligned to the CHS Strategic Outcome 2024-2027:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 1 - Delivering Positive Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 2 - Quality will be the cornerstone of our hearings system.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective 3 - Upholding and promoting children's rights is at the forefront of what we do, and those rights are well understood by our people Theme 2 - Driving Transformation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective 1 - Work with partners and stakeholders to lead and influence change. Objective 2 - We will become a data-informed and data-driven organisation. Objective 3 - We will make effective use of technology, capitalising on its potential for enhancing performance and delivering efficiency. Theme 3 - Valuing Our People <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objective 2 - The organisational design remains agile, adaptable and responsive to support ongoing organisational transformation. Objective 4 - to develop our people capabilities.
5.	Key Risks
5.1	No risks identified in relation to the paper. Any risk in relation to any specific areas detailed in the paper have been considered and reflected in the CHS Strategic Risk Register.
6.	Risk Register
6.1	As above
7.	Impact on Inequality/Rights
7.1	Not required for this specific paper, however any requirements for an impact assessment in relation to the individual areas outlined in the paper will have been considered separately.
8.	Duty to Inform, Engage and Consult People who use our Services (Internal and External)
8.1	Not required for this specific paper, however any requirements for engagement in relation to the individual areas outlined in the paper will have been considered separately.
9.	Resource Implications
9.1	None in relation to this specific paper, however any resource implication in relation to the individual areas outlined in the paper will have been considered separately.
10.	Appendices
	Appendix 1 – PaCC Terms of Reference 2025/26

**Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)
Terms of Reference (ToR)
2025-2026**

1. Constitution

- 1.1 The Board hereby resolves to establish a committee of the Board to be known as the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC).

2. Membership

- 2.1 The ARC comprises a minimum of three non-executive members appointed by the Board, not including the Chair of the Board.
- 2.2 The Board appoints one of its members to serve as the chair of the committee. Details of the current members, including the committee Chair, are shown in Appendix 1.
- 2.3 All members are appointed for the length of their current Board appointment which may be extended in line with any Board re-appointments. The Board must approve all re-appointments.
- 2.4 The ARC may co-opt independent members who are not members of the Board for a period (not exceeding a year) to provide specialist skills, knowledge, and experience subject to budgets agreed by the Board.
- 2.5 The Committee may appoint a substitute drawn from the membership of the Board of CHS, except for the CHS Board Chair, in line with the requirements at 2.1.
- 2.6 A committee substitute may participate at a committee meeting in place of a member.
- 2.7 When a committee substitute attends a meeting (or other committee activity), he or she assumes the full rights of an ordinary member of the committee. In particular, the substitute can vote and is entitled to receive all committee papers.

3. Authority

- 3.1 The ARC is authorised by the Board to review and approve any activity within its terms of reference.

4. Meetings and Quorum

- 4.1 The ARC meets at least four times a year. The Chair of the committee may convene additional meetings as he/she deems necessary. Meetings may be held virtually if required.

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- 4.2 The Chair of the Board may also ask the ARC to convene further meetings to discuss issues on which he/she seeks the Audit and Risk Management committee's advice.
- 4.3 A minimum of two members of the ARC must be present for the meetings to be deemed quorate. In the absence of the Chairperson, one of the other non-executive members will assume that role for the duration of the meeting. To ensure that the meeting is quorate, committee substitute(s) may be required to attend.
- 4.4 The National Convener/Chief Executive Officer and the Director of Business and Finance are required to attend each meeting.
- 4.5 The Audit and Risk Management committee may ask any other officials to attend, to assist with discussions and offer expertise on a particular matter.
- 4.6 The CHS Governance team will provide the ARC with secretarial support services.
- 4.7 The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee will attend one meeting of the CHS People and Culture Committee Meetings, per year and vice versa.
- 4.8 The agenda and meeting papers are issued to members at least seven calendar days prior to the meeting, unless agreed otherwise.
- 4.9 The CHS Governance team minutes the proceedings and resolutions of all committee meetings including the names of those present and in attendance.
- 4.10 Minutes of every committee meeting are circulated to the committee for approval and approved minutes referred to the Board for noting as soon as practical.
- 4.11 The internal and external auditors attend all meetings.
- 4.12 The ARC may ask any or all of those who normally attend, but who are not members, to withdraw to facilitate open and frank discussion of matters.
- 4.13 An Action Log is maintained to monitor progress on key issues raised at meetings.

5. Reporting

- 5.1 The Chair of the committee reports back to the Board, verbally or in writing, after each meeting. The committee takes directions from the Board on general or specific actions.
- 5.2 The ARC provides an Annual Report, timed to support preparation of the Governance Statement, summarising its conclusions from the work it has done during the year.

6. Responsibilities

The Audit Committee advises the Board and the Accountable Officer on:

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- 6.1 The strategic processes for risk control and governance.
 - 6.2 Corporate and information governance arrangements.
 - 6.3 The accounting policies, the approval of the Unsigned Annual Report and Accounts following completion of the audit and Management's Letter of Representation to the external auditors.
 - 6.4 The planned activity and results of both Internal and External Audit.
 - 6.5 The adequacy of management response to issues identified by audit activity, including external audit's report to those charged with governance.
 - 6.6 The annual and longer-term operating plans for internal audit and the resourcing of the internal audit to deliver these plans.
 - 6.7 Monitoring the implementation of approved recommendations.
 - 6.8 The external audit reports and, where appropriate, reports to the Board of any issues from the external audit of CHS, and any matter that the external auditors bring to the attention of the committee.
 - 6.9 The adequacy of the arrangements for the management of CHS' compliance with legislation and regulation focusing on data security, freedom of information, health and safety and equality.
 - 6.10 Fraud and Corruption prevention policy, Whistleblowing policy, and arrangements for special investigations.
 - 6.11 Quality Strategy Monitoring.
- 7. Information Requirements**
- 7.1 Agree a work programme at the start of each financial year for the year ahead.
 - 7.2 For each meeting, the ARC is normally provided with:
 - 7.3 a report on performance relating to risk management, including a summary of any key changes to the risk register.
 - 7.4 Information Governance reports.
 - 7.5 a report from Internal Audit detailing, as appropriate:
 - 7.6 audit performed.
 - 7.7 key issues emerging from internal audit work.

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- 7.8 management responses to audit recommendations.
- 7.9 the current internal audit plan including proposed changes.
- 7.10 any issues affecting the delivery of internal audit objectives.
- 7.11 progress on the implementation of agreed recommendations.

8. As and when appropriate, the Committee:

- 8.1 Annually reviews its Terms of Reference. Proposals for amendment to the terms are submitted to the Board for formal approval.
- 8.2 Annually reviews its own effectiveness.
- 8.3 Considers the Draft Annual Report and Accounts prior to submission to the Board and reviews the compliance check list and draft Governance Statement.
- 8.4 Reviews any changes to accounting policies.
- 8.5 Reviews the Management's letter of Representation.
- 8.6 Reviews the effectiveness of CHS' financial and other control systems.
- 8.7 Monitors CHS' arrangements to secure Value for Money, whether these are made via internal or external audit or other means.
- 8.8 Monitors the effectiveness of Internal and External Audit, reviews the Internal Audit Annual Report and the ISA 260 from External Audit.
- 8.9 Alerts the Board and, where necessary, Scottish Ministers to factors which might affect the ability of CHS to conduct its statutory functions and achieve its strategic objectives.

Appendix 1 - Membership of the Audit and Risk Management Committee

Name	Term	Term	Term
	1 st Appointment	2 nd Appointment	3 rd Appointment
Sean Austin ARC Chair	06/21-06/24	07/25-06/29	
Barbara Neil	05/19-05/22	05/22 – 01/25	02/25-01/27
TBC			

Agenda Item 18a. ARC-2425-50

Meeting:	CHS Board Meeting
Meeting Date:	25 March 2025
Title:	People and Culture Committee Terms of Reference (ToR)
Responsible Executive:	Jo O'Leary
Report Author:	Frieda Cadogan

1.	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to ask the Board to approve the updated Terms of Reference for the People and Culture Committee (PaCC).</p> <p>The ToR was presented to the People and Culture Committee on 11 March 2025 for initial approval, prior to Board. The Committee approved the ToR.</p> <p>The document has been reviewed and updated in-line with CHS governance processes whereby a review is required to be carried out annually.</p>
1.2	Any member wishing additional information should contact the Executive Lead in advance of the meeting.
2.	Recommendations
2.1	The Board are asked to approve the updated ToR, following a review by the Director of People and Culture and the Governance Officer. This has been initially approved at the PaCC meeting on 11 March.
3.	Key Points for Discussion
3.1	Document Changes/Updates
3.1.1	Minor changes have been made to job titles and some reconfiguration of current wording.
3.1.2	<p>The most prominent changes are due to an action identified from the PaCC effectiveness review for 2024/25:</p> <p>ToR to be adjusted to include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversight of Learning including performance against the Learning Strategy and implementation plans (point 8.14). • Participation, including any updated to the workstreams within the Children's Participation and Rights Strategy (point 8.15). • Wellbeing including updates on the delivery and implementation of the Wellbeing and retention approach for paid colleagues, as well as volunteers, in-line with the People and Culture Strategy (point 8.16).
3.1.3	A further additional change made is due to an agreement at the PaCC meeting on 11 March for the Chairs of each committee to attend each other's committee meetings once a year.

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	The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) attended the 11 March and fully agreed to this. It was agreed to update each of the committees ToRs to reflect this (see point 4.6).
4.	Alignment to CHS Strategic Outlook
4.1	<p>This work is aligned to the CHS Strategic Outcome 2024-2027:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 1 - Delivering Positive Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 1 - Develop a 5-year learning strategy to maximise learning impact across CHS • Objective 2 - Quality will be the cornerstone of our hearings system. • Objective 3 - Upholding and promoting children's rights is at the forefront of what we do, and those rights are well understood by our people • Theme 3 - Valuing Our People <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 1 - Implement a three-year People Strategy that attracts and retains top talent and committed individuals and drives the success and sustainability of the organisation. • Objective 2 - The organisational design remains agile, adaptable and responsive to support ongoing organisational transformation. • Objective 3 - To become a more inclusive and diverse organisation and create a culture where everyone feels valued, included and engaged. • Objective 4 - to develop our people capabilities.
5.	Key Risks
5.1	No risks identified in relation to the paper. Any risk in relation to any specific areas detailed in the paper have been considered and reflected in the CHS Strategic Risk Register.
6.	Risk Register
6.1	As above.
7.	Impact on Inequality/Rights
7.1	Not required for this specific paper, however any requirements for an impact assessment in relation to the individual areas outlined in the paper will have been considered separately.
8.	Duty to Inform, Engage and Consult People who use our Services (Internal and External)
8.1	Not required for this specific paper, however any requirements for engagement in relation to the individual areas outlined in the paper will have been considered separately.
9.	Resource Implications

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9.1	None in relation to this specific paper, however any resource implication in relation to the individual areas outlined in the paper will have been considered separately.
10.	Appendices
	Appendix 1 – PaCC Terms of Reference 2025/26

People and Culture Committee (PaCC)
Terms of Reference
2025/26

1. Constitution

- 1.1 The Board of CHS hereby resolves to establish a committee of the Board to be known as the **People and Culture Committee**.

2. Membership

- 2.1 The members of the committee are appointed by the Board from its membership. There is a minimum of three members of the committee, including the Chair of the committee and the deputy Chair. Details of the current members are shown in Appendix 1.

The Board appoints one of its members to serve as the Chair of the committee. The committee determines the procedure to appoint its Deputy Chair. If the Chair of the committee is absent from the meeting, his/her Deputy chairs the meeting and assumes all the functions and authority of the Chair.

- 2.2 All members are appointed for the length of their current Board appointment which may be extended in line with any Board re-appointments. All re-appointments must be approved by the Board.
- 2.3 The Committee may appoint a substitute drawn from the membership of the Board of CHS.
- 2.4 A committee substitute may participate at a committee meeting in place of a member where a committee member:
- (a) is unavailable for a committee meeting (or any committee activity taking place other than at a meeting) because of illness, family circumstances, adverse travel conditions beyond the member's control, a requirement to attend to other urgent business; or
 - (b) has ceased to hold that office and a replacement committee member has yet to be appointed.
- 2.5 When a committee substitute attends a meeting (or other committee activity), he or she assumes the full rights of an ordinary member of the committee. In particular, the substitute can vote and is entitled to receive all committee papers.
- 2.6 The Chair of the Board is not a committee substitute.

- 2.7 The PaCC may co-opt independent members who are not members of the Board for a period (not exceeding a year) to provide specialist skills, knowledge, and experience subject to budgets agreed by the Board.

3. Authority

- 3.1 The committee is authorised by the Board to review and approve any activity within its Terms of Reference (ToR). In so doing, the committee is authorised by the Board to obtain outside legal or other independent professional advice and to secure the attendance of outsiders with relevant experience and expertise if it considers this is necessary, subject to budgets agreed by the Board.

4. Meetings and Quorum

- 4.1 The PaCC meets at least three times a year subject to the possibility of cancelling a meeting should it not be required. The Chair of the committee may convene additional meetings as he/she deems necessary. Committee meetings are held in private and may be held virtually if required.
- 4.2 The Chair of the Board may also ask the Chair of the committee to convene further meetings to discuss issues on which he/ she wants the People and Culture Committee's advice.
- 4.3 A minimum of two members of the committee must be present for the meetings to be deemed quorate. To ensure that the meeting is quorate, committee substitute(s) may be required to attend.
- 4.4 If any matter falls within the remit of more than one committee, the committees concerned may, if they wish, seek the agreement of the Board to meet jointly.
- 4.5 The People and Culture Committee may ask any other officials to attend to assist with discussions and offer expertise on a particular matter.
- 4.6 The Chair of the People and Culture Committee will attend one meeting of the CHS Audit and Risk Committee Meeting, per year and vice versa.
- 4.7 The Governance Officer will provide the PaCC with secretarial support services.
- 4.8 The agenda and meeting papers are issued to members at least seven calendar days prior to the meeting, unless agreed otherwise.
- 4.9 The Governance Officer minutes the proceedings and resolutions of all committee meetings including the names of those present and in attendance.
- 4.10 Minutes of every committee meeting are circulated to the Chair for approval and approved minutes referred to the Board for noting as soon as practical.

4.11 An Action Log is maintained to monitor progress on key issues raised at meetings.

5. Decisions and voting

5.1 Where consensus on a decision is not arrived at and a vote is necessary, members should refer to, and apply, the procedure laid out in CHS Board Standing Orders.

6. Attendance

6.1 The National Convener/Chief Executive Officer and the Director of People and Culture are required to attend each meeting.

6.2 The People and Culture Committee may require any other officials to attend to assist it with its discussions on any matter.

6.3 The committee may ask any or all of those who normally attend and who are not members of the committee, to withdraw to facilitate open and frank discussion of matters. No attendee should be present for discussion of his/her own remuneration and conditions of service

7. Reporting

7.1 The Chair of the committee reports back to the Board, verbally or in writing, after each meeting. The committee takes directions from the Board on general or specific action it should take.

7.2 The committee reports on its activities, to the extent that it can, without breaching confidentiality, in the CHS Annual Report and Accounts.

8. Responsibilities

The committee has the following responsibilities:

8.1 Approves and reviews procedures/policies and any changes in procedure/policies for CHS colleagues for:

- the setting of performance objectives for the National Convener/ CEO.
- the appraisal of performance for CHS colleagues.
- the pay and reward structure within CHS.
- the employee life cycle process.
- and any other people strategies, policies and guidance as applicable.

8.2 Approves and reviews applicable people related procedures/policies and any changes in procedure/policies for CHS community.

- 8.3 Notes and/or approves CHS' employment policies and their revision from time to time, including the Pensions Discretionary Policy.
 - 8.4 Approves the annual pay remit for submission to the Scottish Government.
 - 8.5 Approves the recruitment/reappointment process for the NC/Chief Executive when a vacancy arises.
 - 8.6 Formulates proposals for the Chief Executive's salary progression and other aspects of their remuneration for recommendation to the Scottish Government.
 - 8.7 Notes the Remuneration report in the CHS Annual Report and Accounts and seek assurance it fulfils disclosure requirements.
 - 8.8 Considers the redundancy, early retirement or severance arrangements in respect of all CHS colleagues, excluding retirement on grounds of ill-health, and approve these or refer to CHS Board as it sees fit.
 - 8.9 Considers/approves reports on progress against the People Strategy. This will include links across other organisational strategies such as the Learning and Development Strategy, EDI Strategy etc.
 - 8.10 Approves any Employment Tribunal settlement.
 - 8.11 Engages directly with representatives of the CHS Team Forum at PaCC meetings.
 - 8.12 Where a question arises about whether a matter is within the committee's Terms of Reference, it is for the Board, after consultation with CHS Senior leadership Team as appropriate, to decide.
 - 8.13 Learning, including the annual prospectus, CHSLA report and any monitoring performance against the Learning Strategy and Implementation Plan.
 - 8.14 Participation including any updates to the workstreams within the Children's Participation and Rights Strategy.
 - 8.15 Wellbeing including updates on the delivery and implementation of the Wellbeing and retention approach for paid colleagues, as well as volunteers, in-line with the People and Culture Strategy.
- 9. Review**
- 9.1 The committee reviews its Terms of Reference annually. Proposals for amendment to the terms are submitted to the Board for formal approval.

Chair

Date

1

Membership of the People and Culture Committee (PaCC) Committee

Name	Term	Term	Term
	1 st Appointment	2 nd Appointment	3 rd Appointment
Kathryn Docherty (New Chair)	06/21- 06/25	07/25-06/29	
Beth-Anne Logan (Deputy Chair)	05/17- 05/20	05/20 – 06/25	N/A
TBC			

Other Attendees

Name	Designation
Jo O’Leary	Director of People and Culture
Elliot Jackson	National Convener/CEO
Katharina Kasper	CHS Chair
Frieda Cadogan	Governance Officer (note taker)

Agenda Item 19a. CHS-2425-51

Meeting:	Board Meeting
Meeting Date:	25 March 2025
Title:	People and Culture Committee (PaCC) Work Plan 2025/26
Responsible Executive:	Jo O'Leary
Report Author:	Frieda Cadogan

1.	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to ask the Board to approve the updated Work Plan 2025/26 for the People and Culture Committee (PaCC), following an annual review, in-line with CHS governance requirements.</p> <p>This was brought forward from the December 2024 meeting.</p>
1.2	Any member wishing additional information should contact the Executive Lead in advance of the meeting.
2.	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Board is asked to approve the updated Work Plan for 2025/26, following a review by the Director of People and Culture, Governance Manager and Governance Officer.</p> <p>The work plan was updated based on the 2024/25 workplan, in-line with the Terms of Reference and the CHS reporting requirements schedule.</p> <p>It should be noted by the Board that the workplan will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, in-line with the review of the Audit and Risk Committee and the Board, therefore may be subject to change throughout the year. The ongoing review is part of a governance review being led by the new Governance Manager to streamline processes. This will be done with support from the Governance Officer.</p>
3.	Key Points for Discussion
3.1	Updates/Changes Made
3.1.1	<p>The Board should note that the following points have been added/changed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People Strategy Implementation Quarterly Report – new wording to replace 'HR Report'. • Assurance Report Strategy Implementation Plans – new wording to replace 'Strategy Implementation Plans' – the Director of People and Culture is reviewing and creating a new reporting template and process to enable higher level, streamline reporting, to provide the Committee with assurance on progression.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remuneration Report in the CHS Annual Report and Accounts for noting – newly added to workplan in-line with the Terms of Reference.
4.	Alignment to CHS Strategic Outlook
4.1	<p>This work is aligned to the CHS Strategic Outcome 2024-2027:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 1 - Delivering Positive Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 1 - Develop a 5-year learning strategy to maximise learning impact across CHS • Objective 2 - Quality will be the cornerstone of our hearings system. • Objective 3 - Upholding and promoting children's rights is at the forefront of what we do, and those rights are well understood by our people • Theme 3 - Valuing Our People <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objective 1 - Implement a three-year People Strategy that attracts and retains top talent and committed individuals and drives the success and sustainability of the organisation. • Objective 2 - The organisational design remains agile, adaptable and responsive to support ongoing organisational transformation. • Objective 3 - To become a more inclusive and diverse organisation and create a culture where everyone feels valued, included and engaged. • Objective 4 - to develop our people capabilities.
5.	Key Risks
5.1	No risks identified in relation to the paper. Any risk in relation to any specific areas detailed in the paper have been considered and reflected in the CHS Strategic Risk Register.
6.	Risk Register
6.1	As above.
7.	Impact on Inequality/Rights
7.1	Not required for this specific paper, however any requirements for an impact assessment in relation to the individual areas outlined in the paper will have been considered separately.
8.	Duty to Inform, Engage and Consult People who use our Services (Internal and External)
8.1	Not required for this specific paper, however any requirements for engagement in relation to the individual areas outlined in the paper will have been considered separately.
9.	Resource Implications

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9.1	None in relation to this specific paper, however any resource implication in relation to the individual areas outlined in the paper will have been considered separately.
10.	Appendices
	Appendix 1 – PaCC Work Plan 2025/26

PaCC Work Plan 2025/26

Winter Meeting (11th March 2025)

- People Strategy Implementation Quarterly Report
- Team Forum Update
- 2025/2026 Pay Award Guidance
- Review of Terms of Reference (ToR)
- Review of PaCC Workplan
- Equality Reporting
 - Draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan
 - Equalities Outcomes Reporting 2 Year/Annual Progress Report
- Review of own effectiveness
- Gender Pay Gap Report: April 2022 – March 2024 – *Next Review 2026*
- Review and approve HR policies as required – should this be on for every quarter

Spring/Summer Meeting (17th June 2025)

- People Strategy Implementation Quarterly Report – new template
- Team Forum Update
- CEO Appraisal and Objectives
- Annual Review of Strategy/Implementation Plans – Timescale and Details TBC
- PaCC Annual Report
- Effectiveness Review Improvement Plan – for approval (including update on actions from 24/25 plan.
- Review and approve HR policies as required – should this be on for every quarter

Summer/Autumn Meeting (9th September 2025)

- People Strategy Implementation Quarterly Report – new template
- Annual Review of Strategy/Implementation Plans – Timescale and Details TBC
- Annual Report on outcomes of staff appraisals
- Review and approve HR policies as required – should this be on for every quarter

Autumn/Winter Meeting (16th December 2025)

- People Strategy Implementation Quarterly Report – new template
- Team Forum Update
- Review and approve HR policies as required – should this be on for every quarter
- Annual Review of Strategy/Implementation Plans – Timescale and Details TBC
- Annual Work Plan
- EDI annual review
- Mid-year review of performance on objectives for the NC/CEO

Agenda Item 20. CHS-2425-52

Meeting:	Board Meeting
Meeting Date:	25 March 2025
Title:	Legislative Landscape and Impact on CHS
Responsible Executive:	Director of Positive Outcomes (DPO)
Report Author:	DPO/Practice and Standards Manager

1.	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update and inform the Boards on the CHS' approach to influencing and engaging with key legislative developments that will impact on CHS over the next 24-months and beyond.
1.2	Any member wishing additional information should contact the Executive Lead in advance of the meeting.
2.	Recommendations
2.1	To discuss the CHS position in relation to legislative developments, implementation, timescales and Scottish Government engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keeping the Promise 2. Children's Hearings Redesign Consultation Response 3. Children's (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act Implementation 4. Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019 implementation 5. Universal Definition of Care Experience Consultation Response 6. Future of Foster Care Consultation Response 7. UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024
3.	Key Points for Discussion
3.1	CHS will be impacted by the necessary changes required to transform the hearing system, and more widely the improvement to children's care in Scotland that is intended to see long lasting improvement to the outcomes for children because of how they experience, and supported by, statutory care services. <p>Keeping the Promise by 2030 is a key driver for this agenda, although achieving that is not within the gift of CHS alone, we are strategically aligning ourselves to play our part.</p>
3.2	The most impactful new development from a CHS perspective will be the proposed legislation laid before Parliament by the summer of 2025. A significant part of legislation to keep the promise will be made up of proposed changes to the redesign the children's hearing system. These changes will impact on both CHS and SCRA and were driven by the recommendations of the Hearings for Children report. The Scottish Government have considered which elements of those recommendations to take forward based on their response to the report, a public consultation that took place between June and October of 2024, and legal

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	and policy advice from within Government.
3.2.1	<p>There are significant and impactful proposals from a CHS perspective being progressed. These are published and described within the responses to the consultation. However, at this time the Scottish Government has not publicly described them and will not do so until there is further progress in the drafting of legislation.</p> <p>There are other recommendations from Hearings for Children that were supported by the Government, but do not require legislation. The chair greeting a child and family and welcoming in to a hearing, the tribunal adjourning if necessary to consider their decision before sharing it, and a feedback loop to the tribunal from appeal data are examples of changes currently being implemented or developed without the need of a change in the law. Other practice improvements such as a greater focus on the impact of trauma and domestic violence, the amplification of the voice of the child, and a better understanding of child protection issues are also being progressed at pace.</p>
3.2.2	<p>CHS activity to support this work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are in ongoing dialogue with the Government to influence and shape this work within the limitations of the legislative scope. The government are seeking legal advice about what is practicable before making any formal recommendations to the Minister. • The financial modelling that was completed by CHS in relation to proposed redesign has been commended by the Government and their economists for its robustness and is now forming the basis for ongoing discussion. • CHS are leading on multi-agency workstream to implement system wide change, this is resource intensive and challenging at times. CHS continues to demonstrate our readiness and willingness to embrace change, on the basis that the change will lead to better outcomes for children. • The National Convener is in discussion and negotiation with the Scottish Government and the Principal Reporter regarding functions key functions, and what would work best for children and their families in a redesigned children's hearings system.
3.3	<p>Children's Care and Justice Act Implementation</p> <p>Having received Royal Assent in July 2024, the likely date of implementation of Part 1 of the Act that will see new 16 and 17 years old referred to children's hearings is anticipated to go live at some point between January and April of 2026. Some parts of the act such as the provisions on removing under 18's from young offenders institutes have already been enacted.</p> <p>CHS continue to engage with the Bill Team and partners in particular in relation to capacity and the reporting requirements (Section 34) of the Act where Ministers must undertake a review of the Act and the system readiness. This review must</p>

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	<p>be laid before Parliament in July and may impact on the Commencement of Part 1 of the Act (Section 38) and other provisions that have yet to be enacted.</p> <p>We have developed a comprehensive learning offer for our people on Responding to the Needs of Older Children that was launched to the CHS Community at a town hall event in May 2025.</p> <p>The second phase will including a mandatory module which will include the additional technical requirement of the Act, which will be launched at a minimum 6-months prior to implementation of the Act. This offer will include a mandatory e-learning course, access to high quality practice materials and guide drop-in sessions, and a programme of regional reflective masterclasses that will be delivered at a local level throughout 2026 and 2027.</p> <p>All of the knowledge materials have been produced and quality assured in partnership with the Children and Young People Centre for Justice (CYCJ) and the CHS Practice and Policy Team.</p>
3.3.1	<p>Maintaining Panel Member and public confidence is key in ensuring compliance with the training requirements and the effective implementation of the Act. Practice and Policy colleagues will continue to work with the Communications Team to ensure timely and effective messaging to the volunteer community, the sector and the wider public.</p> <p>Key messages include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel Members already support 16 and 17 years olds in children's hearings, to be rights compliance all children must be afforded the care and protection of the children's hearings system. • The Act is an endorsement of the children's hearings system and a recognition that the principles the system was built on must by law be extended to all children. • CHS has developed best practice materials and a high-quality training offer that will equip all Panel Members with the skills to meet the requirements of the Act. • CHS has the resources, expertise, local supports and a strong track record in implementing new legislation that will allow us to meet the requirements of the Act. • CHS has and will continue to influence and shape the rollout and implementation of the Act.

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3.3.2 Other key areas legislative developments include:

- **Age of Criminal Responsibility Act implementation**

CHS have been active members of the Age of Criminal Responsibility (ACR) Advisory Group. The Act puts in place a duty on Scottish Ministers to review the legislation, from an operational perspective, and also with a view to considering a future age of criminal responsibility. The 3-year review period started on the day that the Act was fully commenced December 2021 and concluded in December 2024. The Scottish Ministers now have the remainder of this this calendar year to review the recommendations of operational implications, data and research, victim support and community confidence and decide whether to support the key recommendation of raising the ACR to 14 by December 2025.

- **Definition of Care Experience Response**

CHS have responded to the consultation on Developing a universal definition of care experience being led by the Promise Team in the Scottish Government. Whilst supportive of the ambition of the consultation we have highlighted some policy challenges of having to retrospectively detangle an array of previous legislation, entitlements and practices. The analysis of the consultation has not yet been published but we will keep the Board briefed on any further updates.

- **Future of Foster Care Consultation Response**

CHS have responded to the Government consultation on the Future of Foster Care. The consultation sets out the Governments vision for the future of foster care which prioritises children's experiences, and meets their many and varied needs. CHS supports the sentiment of the consultation and would like to see how the operational investment can realise the vision. The consultation was primarily aimed at people with direction operational involvement in foster care provisions, however, CHS highlighted the importance of decision makers and the need for well-resourced and supported foster carers that play a key role in supporting children to achieve positive outcomes.

- **UNCRC Incorporation Act**

The UNCRC received Royal Assent in January 2024. The Act is a landmark piece of legislation that incorporates the UNCRC into Scots law, empowers our children and young people to claim their rights and will help to make Scotland the best place in the world to grow up. The Scottish Government have published their statutory guidance, and CHS were key partners in developing this guidance. As well as complying with the guidance, the impact of the Bill will come via amendments as new legislations is introduced to parliament. The Care and Justice Act, for example, introduced an amendment to the UNCRC to adjust the remedies available to a court if it were to find that a decision to prosecute a child was incompatible with the UNCRC requirements. The other legal route where the Act will be fully realised is via case law, for example, in the [first ever UNCRC Act Case](#) in January 2025, the High Court has ruled that the Lord Advocate's power to prosecute children is within the scope of the UNCRC. CHS continue to contribute to national groups on the enactment of the Act and will keep the Board and panel community on key developments.

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4.	Alignment to CHS Strategic Outlook
4.1	<p>This work is aligned to the CHS Strategic Outcome 2024-2027:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 1 - Delivering Positive Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Objective 2 - Quality will be the cornerstone of our hearings system. ○ Objective 3 - Upholding and promoting children's rights is at the forefront of what we do, and those rights are well understood by our people. • Theme 2 - Driving Transformation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Objective 1 - Work with partners and stakeholders to lead and influence change. • Theme 3 - Valuing Our People <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Objective 2 - The organisational design remains agile, adaptable and responsive to support ongoing organisational transformation. ○ Objective 3 - To become a more inclusive and diverse organisation and create a culture where everyone feels valued, included and engaged. ○ Objective 4 - to develop our people capabilities.
5.	Key Risks
5.1	<p>The size and scope of change is large considerable and there is risk that the ability to implement all the changes within the current structure of CHS is challenging. There is a risk to organisational reputation if we are unable to fulfil expectations of new legislation.</p> <p>We are managing sequencing through our business planning processes.</p>
6.	Risk Register
6.1	Risk 6, 7 and 8 capture the above risks but they are cross cutting to the organisation.
7.	Impact on Inequality/Rights
7.1	There is no need for impact assessment in relation to this paper, but as legislation is enacted the need for assessments will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
8.	Duty to Inform, Engage and Consult People who use our Services (Internal and External)
8.1	There is no requirement for engagement and consultation in relation to this paper. The CHS community is kept up-to-speed with key legislative changes that impact on their practice.

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9.	Resource Implications
9.1	Resource implications of implementation of this work is being managed. Specifically in relation to the Children Care and Justice Act and the children's hearings redesign proposals robust capacity/financial planning has taken place.
10.	Appendices
10.1	None.

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Meeting:	CHS Board Meeting
Meeting Date:	25 March 2025
Title:	CHS Board Governance Schedule
Responsible Executive:	Elliot Jackson, NC/CEO
Report Author:	Frieda Cadogan

1.	Purpose of Report
1.1	<p>The purpose of this report is to ask the Board to note the Board Governance Schedule for the year 2025/26 and the changes to the June, September and December Board meeting dates. These have moved from a Tuesday to a Wednesday.</p> <p>The dates have been agreed offline, based on the schedule for 2024/25. The final schedule is presented to the Board formally for noting.</p> <p>The Board are also asked to consider whether to reschedule the first Board strategy session on 8/9 May 2025 considering the timescales of new proposed legislation and the commencement of new Board Members in June 2025.</p>
1.2	Any member wishing additional information should contact the Executive Lead in advance of the meeting.
2.	Recommendations
2.1	<p>The Board is asked to note the finalised Board Governance Schedule for the year 2025/26 and to note the following changes to the Board meeting dates from June onwards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24th June changed to 25th June • 23rd September changed to 24th September • 9th December changed to 10th December <p>These have changed from a Tuesday to a Wednesday due to changing work commitments.</p> <p>The Board area also asked to note that a request has been made by the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) to change the August 2025 date of that committee. The Governance Officer will liaise with Committee members to find an alternative suitable date. The Chair of ARC is unable to attend the date on 26th August and would like to be in attendance to support the new Board members who should be in post by then and who may be attending the ARC.</p>

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	The dates identified for this year, are based on last year's schedule and in line with CHS reporting requirements.
3.	Key Points for Discussion
3.1	The schedule details the Board and Committee dates for CHS for 2025/26, along with the dates of the Senior Leadership Team Meetings (SLT).
3.2	The schedule also details the deadline date for papers which will help ensure meeting papers are issued within the CHS guidelines of one week before each meeting.
3.3	Having a schedule of all Board, Committee and SLT meeting dates assists with the planning process to ensure all papers are submitted to relevant meetings, within the CHS governance requirements. This helps ensure CHS are meeting their statutory reporting requirements.
	Due to changing work commitments, the dates have been changed from a Tuesday to a Wednesday for the Board meetings. A request has also been made to change the date of the ARC from 26 th August.
4.	Alignment to CHS Strategic Outlook
4.1	Not aligned to specific themes within the Strategic Outlook, however compliance with all statutory requirements is essential to the running of the organisation and thus to CHS achieving its aims and outcomes.
5.	Key Risks
5.1	No risks identified, however if CHS do not have sufficient business planning processes in place, there is a risk that we will not fulfil statutory and legal requirements.
6.	Risk Register
6.1	There is no requirement for anything to be added to the Risk Register at this stage.
7.	Impact on Inequality/Rights
7.1	No impact assessment is required.
8.	Duty to Inform, Engage and Consult People who use our Services (Internal and External)
8.1	There is no requirement for engagement and consultation in relation to this paper.
9.	Resource Implications
9.1	Any additional resource will be absorbed into the current resources in place to support the Committee and within teams' current resources.
10.	Appendices
	Appendix 1 – SLT and Board-Comm Schedule 2025



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2025	Board		Audit & Risk Committee		People & Culture Committee		Senior Leadership Team (SLT)	
Chair	Katharina Kasper		Sean Austin		Katie Docherty		Elliot Jackson	
Exec Lead	Elliot Jackson		Jessica MacDonald		Jo O'Leary		N/A	
	Tuesdays (Wed from June)		Tuesdays (Thur in May)		Tuesdays		1st Tues of each month	
	Deadline Date for Papers	Meeting Date	Deadline Date for Papers	Meeting Date	Deadline Date for Papers	Meeting Date	Deadline Date for Papers	Meeting Date
JAN	9th Jan	21st Jan						No Jan Meeting
FEB			12th Feb	25th Feb			24th Jan	4th Feb
MAR	13th Mar	25th Mar			24th Feb	11th Mar	21st Feb	4th Mar
APRIL							21st March	1st Apr
MAY		8th & 9th May*	5th May	15th May			25th April	6th May
JUNE	12th June	25th June			3rd June	17th June	30th May	10th June
JULY								No July Meeting
AUG			14th Aug	26th Aug			25th July	5th Aug
SEPT	11th Sept	24th Sept			25th Aug	9th Sept	5th Sept	16th Sept
OCT							17th Oct	28th Oct
NOV		6th & 7th Nov*	4th Nov	18th Nov				No meeting
DEC	27th Nov	10th Dec			1st Dec	16th Dec	21st Nov	2nd Dec

All final papers to be sent to frieda.cadogan@chs.gov.scot

* Board Strategy Sessions