

CHS Board Meeting March 2023

Tue 28 March 2023, 10:00 - 12:00

Agenda

10:00 - 10:00 **1. Declarations of Interest**

0 min

Verbal *Katharina Kasper*

To consider any declarations of interests with regard to agenda items

 1 March Board Agenda.pdf (2 pages)

10:00 - 10:00 **2. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

0 min

Paper *Katharina Kasper*

To approve minutes of the previous meeting on 31st January 2023

 2 CHS-2223-51 Board minute Jan 31 2023 DRAFT.pdf (12 pages)

10:00 - 10:00 **3. Matters Arising**

0 min

Verbal *Katharina Kasper*

Seek assurance that actions from previous meeting have been progressed

10:00 - 10:00 **4. Action Log**

0 min

Paper *Katharina Kasper*

To monitor progress against actions due and agree action where required

 4 CHS-2223-52 Board Action Log 2023.pdf (1 pages)

10:00 - 10:00 **5. Chair Update**

0 min

Verbal *Katharina Kasper*

For information and discussion

10:00 - 10:00 **6. National Convener/CEO Update**

0 min

Paper *Elliot Jackson*

For consideration and discussion

 6. CHS-2223-53 NC update March 23 draft.pdf (5 pages)

10:00 - 10:00 **7. Hearing System Working Group Update**

0 min

Paper *Carol Wassell*

 7 CHS-2223-54 Board HSWG report update March FINAL.pdf (2 pages)

10:00 - 10:00 **8. 2022/23 Financial Forecast Outturn**

0 min

Paper Lynne Harrison

For consideration and approval


 8 CHS-2223-55 Forecast outturn March 2023 Board.pdf (3 pages)

10:00 - 10:00 **9. Business Plan 2023-2024**

0 min

Paper Lynne Harrison

For consideration and approval

 9 CHS-2223-56a Business Plan - Board Cover Note March 2023.pdf (2 pages)

 9 CHS-2223-56b Draft Business Plan 2023-24 FULL DRAFT.pdf (26 pages)

10:00 - 10:00 **10. CHS Budget Approval 2023/2024**

0 min

Paper Lynne Harrison

For consideration and approval

 10 CHS-2223-57 2023-24 Budget -Board March 23.pdf (5 pages)

10:00 - 10:00 **11. Panel Member and AST Member Expenses Policy**

0 min

Paper Carol Wassell

For consideration and approval

 11 CHS-2223-58a Panel Member and Area Support Team Member Expenses Policy cover note.pdf (3 pages)

 11 CHS-2223-58b Panel Member and Area Support Team member expenses policy 2023.pdf (9 pages)

10:00 - 10:00 **12. Q4 Performance Report**

0 min

Paper Lynne Harrison

For consideration and approval

 12 CHS-2223-59a Q4 Performance Report 2022-3-Board Cover Paper.pdf (4 pages)

 12 CHS-2223-59b Q4 Board data summary.pdf (1 pages)

 12 CHS-2223-59c Quarter 4 Performance Report 2022-23.pdf (16 pages)

10:00 - 10:00 **13. Review of Board Self-Assessment & Objectives**

0 min

Paper Katharina Kasper

For consideration and approval

 13 CHS-2223-60a Board self assessment 2324.pdf (5 pages)

 13-CHS-2223-60b Board Self Assessment questionnaire 2023.pdf (6 pages)

10:00 - 10:00 **14. ARMC**

0 min

For consideration and approval

14.1. Chair Update

Verbal Sean Austin

 14 ARMC-2223-61 Minute Feb 23 draft.pdf (11 pages)

14.2. ToR

Paper Sean Austin

 14 CHS-2223-62 ARMC ToR 2023.pdf (5 pages)

14.3. Financial Regulations

Paper Sean Austin

 14 CHS-2223-63 ARMC Feb23 Financial Regulations.pdf (16 pages)


14.4. ARMC Accounting Policies

Paper Sean Austin

 14 CHS-2223-64 ARMC Feb23 CHS Accounting Policies 2022-23.pdf (5 pages)

14.5. ARMC Self-Assessment

Paper Sean Austin

 14 CHS-2223-65 ARMC self assesment Feb 23.pdf (1 pages)

 14 CHS-222365b Audit Committee Self Assessment 2023.pdf (8 pages)

10:00 - 10:00
0 min

15. RAC

For consideration and approval

15.1. Chair Re-Appointment

Verbal Katharina Kasper

15.2. Chair Update

Verbal Jo Derrick

15.3. ToR

Paper Jo Derrick

 15 CHS-2223-66 RAC ToR 2023.pdf (5 pages)

15.4. RAC Self-Assessment

Paper Jo Derrick

 15 CHS-2223-67 RAC Self Assesment.pdf (7 pages)

15.5. Whistle Blowing Policy

Paper Lynne Harrison

For approval

 15 CHS-2223-68a RAC Whistle Blowing policy cover note.pdf (1 pages)

 15 CHS-2223-68b RAC Whistleblowing Policy - Final - v4.0.pdf (9 pages)

15.6. Equalities Outcome Report

Paper *Christine Mullen*

 15 CHS-2223-69a Board_Equalities_Monitoring_Progress_Update_cover_paper.pdf (2 pages)

 15 CHS-2223-69b Equality Outcomes reporting 2022 - 2023.pdf (42 pages)

10:00 - 10:00
0 min

16. Change Strategic Steering Group (CSSG)

Paper *Katharina Kasper*

For consideration and approval

 16 CHS-2223-70 Strategic Change Oversight Group proposal and ToR.pdf (3 pages)

10:00 - 10:00
0 min

17. AOB

AGENDA

CHS BOARD MEETING

March 28th 2023

The Board will meet 10:00-12:00 Virtually via Teams

Item	Topic	Lead Person	Paper Number	Purpose
1	Declarations of interests	Chair	Verbal	To consider any declarations of interests with regard to agenda items
2	Minutes of previous meeting	Chair	CHS-2223-51	To approve the minutes of the previous meeting on 31 st January, 2023
3	Matters arising	Chair	Verbal	Seek assurance that actions from the previous meeting have been progressed
4	Action log	Chair	CHS-2223-52	To monitor progress against actions due and agree action where required
5	Chair update	Chair	Verbal	For information and discussion
6	National Convener/ CEO update	EJ	CHS-2223-53	For consideration and discussion
7	Hearing System Working Group (HSWG) Update	CW	CHS-2223-54	For consideration and approval
8	2022/23 Financial Forecast Outturn	LH	CHS-2223-55	For consideration and approval
9	Business Plan 2023-2024	RKW/L H	CHS-2223-56	For consideration and approval
10	CHS Budget Approval 2023/2024	EM/LH	CHS-2223-57	For consideration and approval
11	Panel Member and Area Support Team Member expenses policy	CW	CHS-2223-58	For consideration and approval
12	Q4 Performance Report	RKW/L H	CHS-2223-59	For consideration and approval
13	Review of Board Self-assessment & Objectives	KK	CHS-2223-60	For consideration and approval
14	ARMC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair update • Minute of last meeting • ToR 	SA	Verbal CHS-2223-61 CHS-2223-62	For consideration and approval

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Regulations • ARMC Accounting Policies • ARMC Self-assessment 		CHS-2223-63 CHS-2223-64 CHS-2223-65	
15	RAC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair re-appointment • Chair update • ToR • RAC Self-assessment • Whistle blowing Policy • Equalities outcome report 	KK JD JD JD LH	Verbal Verbal CHS-2223-66 CHS-2223-67 CHS-2223-68 CHS-2223-69	For consideration and approval
16	Change Strategic Steering Group (CSSG)	KK	CHS-2223-70	For consideration and approval
17	AOB			

Next meeting: June 20th 2023

<p>Next Meeting Key Topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Q1 Performance Report 2. ARMC Annual Report 22/23 3. RAC Annual Report 22/23 4. Capital spending 23/24 5. Pre-service Report 6. Recruitment Update
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Minutes of the Board Meeting of 31st January, 2023

The meeting started at 10:00 at Thistle House / virtually

Present:

Katharina Kasper (KK)	Chair
Sean Austin (SA)	ARMC Chair/Board Member
Henry Robson (HR)	Depute Chair/Board Member
Katie Docherty	Board Member
Jo Derrick (JD)	RAC Chair/Board Member (virtual attendance)
Barbara Neil (BN)	Board Member (virtual attendance)

Also present:

Nick Rougvie (NR)	Children’s Hearings Sponsor Team Lead, SG
Elliot Jackson (EJ)	National Convener/Chief Executive (NC/CEO), CHS
Lynne Harrison	Head of Strategy/development & DCEO, CHS
Christine Mullen (CM)	Head of Learning, CHS
Stephen Bermingham (SB)	Head of Practice and Policy, CHS
Rachel Kavish Wheatley (RKW)	Business Operations and Governance Lead, (minute taker), CHS
Elaine Gray (EG)	Data and Evidence officer (CHS), agenda item XX
Chloe Renwick (CR)	Business Support Assistant (CHS), observer

Apologies:

Beth-Anne Logan	Board Member
Carol Wassell (CW)	Head of Area Support & Community Improvement, CHS

	Items	Actions / owner	Time-scales
1	Declaration of interests		
	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed apologies as above. There were no declarations of interest to note.		
2	Minutes of previous meeting		
	The Board approved the minutes of its meeting on 22 nd November, 2022 Pending the correction of the date from 21 st November to 22 nd November		
3	Matters arising		
	N/A		
4	Action log		
	The Chair noted the actions below to be updated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 22/23-14 was updated to note questionnaire in development for community, with paper brought in June 23. 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 22/23-28 was updated by CM to note the ongoing work to progress a remuneration package for participation however there has been difficulty in sourcing agencies to support with this work. The action will remain ongoing and an update brought to the Board for approval. • Action 22/23-24 – SB provided an update to the Board based on the requests for further information following the presentation of the Annual Report on Appeals presented at the September Board meeting. Specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How the appeal rate of 3% in Children’s Hearings compares with other legal tribunals in Scotland: There is very limited published information on appeal rates for other tribunals. The Mental Health Tribunal includes the rights to appeal and considers circa. 5,000 a cases a year. There was only four appeals last year. The Additional Support for Learning also has a low rate of appeals with only 11 since 2018. The Employment Appeal Tribunals has an appeal rate of about 5% but deals with very different issues to the hearing system. ○ Who is appealing and how are they supported in the hearing system: The vast majority (circa. 95% over the last four years) of appeals come from a Relevant Person (parents) circa. 3% from Children, and the remainder from others with appeals rights e.g. Safe guardians. SCRA does not record how people are supported in the appeal process, but do oversee the process and issue information to those with appeal rights. ○ Further information to understand why there is such a high rate of referral in Clackmannanshire: The authority has high levels of deprivation and historically has higher than average rates of child protection. Currently there are 4.6 per 1000 children on the Child Protection Register (the second highest in Scotland with only North Ayrshire being higher), and represents double the national average of 2.3. There is also a higher number of sibling groups being referred which impacts on the numbers. Also, the authority has experience significant staffing issues in the children and families department which impacts on the number of deferred hearings. Currently nearly 50% of hearing are deferred, and the Area Support and Improvement Partners in CHS are working with partner organisation to address this issue. • Action 22/23-4 was discussed. It was acknowledged that much of this data sits with SCRA’s . It was agreed that the requirements should be re-considered post HSWG recommendations to understand the full impacts of reform on CHS and SCRA digital systems. <p>Board decision:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note the updates to the action log. 2. The Board thanked SB for the update on appeals. 3. The Board agreed to close actions 22/23-2, 22/23-30, 22/2-34, to re-time 22/23-15, 22/23-14, and 22/23-28, and to re-scope 22/23-4 	<p>RKW</p>	<p>Jan 23</p>
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5	Chair update	
<p>The Chair updated the Board on the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chair noted that the Board have met for development sessions since the last meeting in November and feel Board members are abreast of current activities and ongoing work. The Chair noted the helpful joint session with the SCRA Board from 19th December 2022. <p>Board Decision:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To Note the update from the Chair. 		
6	National Convener/Chief Executive update	
<p>The NC/CEO spoke to the paper shared;</p> <p><u>Pre Service Training</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current cohort of 382 have entered day 2 of training. This year, training consists of 4 days of face to face and 1 day of online training. A key driver for ourselves, and the Learning Academy is the retention of the cohort for appointment. <p><u>Chairing capacity</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board will be aware improving Chairing capacity has been an operational focus for some time. We have carried out a number of improvement actions which has resulted in an increase of 54 Chair qualified Panel Members since quarter 2. Our policy which states all PM’s are required to complete Chairing training remains in place however we may review this in future. <p><u>Mixed Gender Panels</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To date, the use of single-gender Panels has been modest. All data indicates that the provision is being used appropriately when capacity is limited and gives stakeholders comfort that the legislation has not led to an unnecessary increase in single gender Panels. <p><u>Care and Justice Bill</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Bill was laid in Parliament December 2022. We will bring regular updates to the Board as the Bill develops. We may be called to give evidence at the Bill first stage of deliberations in March. <p><u>Complaints</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A long held aspiration of the Board was to have a more Child Friendly Feedback and Complaints process and policy. This is in development and will be shared with the Board. The process involves change of approach, inclusion on the website, and the involvement of children and young people in the development of the materials and procedures. <p><u>Strategic Engagement</u></p>		

- The Collective Leadership group born out of Covid has now disbanded and a new Children and Families National Leadership Group has been established. The group will provide collective leadership and strategic oversight of key areas of transformational change aimed at improving outcomes for children, young people and families across Scotland. We see this as being a hugely important strategic partnership.

Board Discussion:

- The Board noted how important it is to share the work we have put into the Child Friendly Feedback and Complaints approach.. Many organisations have expressed interest in creating their own and CHS should consider sharing our materials and processes widely once completed.
- The Board asked for more clarity on the variations in application of the mixed gender provisions in different areas across Scotland.. EJ clarified this is in reference to the effort rota managers are still putting in to establishing a mixed Panel rather than using the new provisions in the legislation. We are encouraging rota managers to continue to strive for mixed Panels however this should be balanced against time and effort to do so. Further work is ongoing with the practice and policy team to ensure rota managers are using the provisions to appropriate address capacity issues.
- The Board asked for more information on the Unacceptable Actions Policy. SB updated the Board that the policy has been in place since 2016 and applies to individuals out with the CHS community – a small number of members of the public that frustrate the system via excessive use of the feedbacks and complaints process, or other inappropriate behaviors resulting in a disproportionate amount of resources. The policy operates via monitoring and assessing the threshold. We would then write to the individual warning that they are reaching this threshold, with the next step being disengagement on all further communications, though they retain the right to go to the SPSO for an independent review. Policies of this kind are industry standard and we have engaged with experts and the SPSO to ensure the policy reflects good practice.
- The Board noted the update on Strategic Engagement and comfort that there are drivers in the sector to take this work forward in a collaborative leadership forum.
- The Board were encouraged to hear of the progress being made under the Child Friendly Feedback and Complaints work stream noting they would like to focus on how we can encourage children to provide feedback. The Board would be re-assured to see more complaints coming in, especially from children, as an endorsement of trust in the organisation by young people. SB noted that CHS is working to change the culture and be more welcoming of complaints by reframing the policy as one of ‘feedback and complaints’ to remove the connotation of formality and risk involved with the word ‘complaint’.
We will be looking to implement a web portal for routine collection of feedback, which may escalate to a complaint, but the focus is on ensuring children’s voices are valued and valid. We will be working with a number of support organisations to help encourage feedback, and use this feedback as an opportunity to improve services.

<p>Board Decision:</p> <p>1. The Board noted the update.</p>		
<p>7</p> <p>Hearing System Working Group Update</p>		
<p>EJ updated the Board;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The system redesign aspect of the HSWG work completed in December with a consolidated report provided to Sheriff Mackie from the three reference groups who looked at before, during, and after the Hearing. • The core membership of the HSWG began their deliberation phase early in January and today represents the last of day of a series of 7 full day sessions to consider the detail. The HSWG/Mackie report will likely be published during the last week in April. • In recognition for their contribution to the intensive full 5-days of the redesign work, we will host a thank you lunch for the 12 Panel Members in February. • The detail of the work of the HSWG remains confidential to the members of that group currently. The mid-year report from Sheriff Mackie (May 2023) gave some insight to his thinking around; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strengthening the role of the Chair of the Hearing; ○ Considering new powers of enforcement and accountability; ○ Case grip and engagement with the child or young person ahead of the Hearing; ○ Considering conducting ‘Grounds’ Hearings differently to reduce the impact upon children, young people and their families; ○ Considering the role of Advocacy/safeguarding/expert reports throughout the time the child is receiving the care and protection of the hearing system; ○ Considering the creation or appointment of a Quality Assurance body to oversee the work of the Children’s Hearings System; ○ The provision of legal advice around Article 6 – right to a fair trial (ECHR) - Certain parties receiving or discussing information in the absence of other parties and the Separation of powers; ○ The provision of legal advice around Article 8 – Right to family life (ECHR) - When the rights of children butt against the rights of adults fall back on the principle that the child’s wellbeing in the paramount consideration; ○ The provision of legal advice around Article 12 – the right to have views heard (UNCRC); and ○ The provision of legal advice around Article 20 – Right to special assistance if children can’t live at home (UNCRC); • The National Convener is scheduled to meet Sheriff Mackie ahead of the publication of his recommendations in April to the Scottish Government. <p>Board discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board noted excitement around the release of the HSWG report and the positive impact it will have on outcomes for children, young people, and their families. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board expressed their hope that the report is framed against the wider social issues which impact the system and the children and families within it. <p>Board decision:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Board noted the update. 		
8	2022/23 Forecast Outturn		
	<p>LH spoke to the paper shared;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The report has not changed significantly since the last Board meeting, reflecting the good work and financial management our teams are doing internally, and with the Sponsor Team on a regular basis. The report reflects the reduction of in-year pressures and the use of our reserves for the funding in year, meeting our external audit recommendation. In December we progressed the staff pay increase – with support of the Remuneration and Appointments Committee (RAC) and the Sponsor Team. A 5% pay increase was applied, as well as all staff being offered one paid wellbeing day. We continue to progress a business case to move to a 35 hour work week, as originally intended for the 22/23 pay policy. The Sponsor Team have supported us on this and the business case will go to the Deputy First Minister for approval. We intend to re-boot our current recruitment campaign creatives rather than create an entirely new campaign, which will result in some in year savings. We intend to procure via call off from the relevant Scottish Government Framework. We continue to manage capita spend in year. <p>Board Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board thanked everyone involved in the work that has gone into the financial management, and the support of the Sponsor Team and Scottish Government. <p>Board Decision:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Board approved the outturn report. 		
9	CHS 2023-24 Budget Update		
	<p>LH updated the Board;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The budget planning process is in process utilising the 5 year forecast, which includes spend profiles and salary forecasting. We plan to keep our reform projects on separate lines within the budget to help with tracking and management in-year. The full budget will be submitted to the March Board for approval. <p>Board Discussion:</p>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board noted that in the current climate we need to be mindful of any spend above our Grant in Aid and ensure we have robust business cases in place to support or expenditure. 		
10	Q3 Performance Report		
	<p>LH spoke to the Q3 performance report shared;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Q3 report is presented to the Board for oversight and assurance. It includes a data summary of key management information requested by the Board. Two milestones have been retimed since the end of Q2 due to the impact of our 2nd recruitment campaign across the team and AST. One milestone is unlikely to be realised which is the KPI/milestone of 20% of our volunteer community being part of the CHS Practice Bank. We currently have 250 individuals in the practice bank, which is sufficient for our engagement needs. Four milestones have been selected for de-scoping, pending Board approval during Q3 due to competing and changes priorities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two of these are around the Mentoring Programme and issues of capacity. 100% completion of baseline trauma training is proposed for de-scoping however it is important to note that all pre-service training includes Baseline Trauma. The Board are asked to approve these changes. <p>Board Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board agreed the changes were sensible and approved the de-scoping. The Board asked for more clarity around the de-scoping of Trauma training. LH clarified that while we set a 100% completion rate target, we did not make the training mandatory, which we will do in 23/24. CM noted that 100's of Panel Members have already completed the training voluntarily and around 90 have taken part in more advanced training on trauma. The Board would be interested to see if there is any change in practice from those who have participated in Trauma training. CM updated the Board that the Trauma Project Group currently have a survey with the Practice Bank on Trauma to establish a based rate which will inform the next phase of implementation. There will also be a small test of change on reflections in hearings where Panel Member prepare for the hearing through a Trauma Informed lens and then reflect on their practice. This will help us to better understand how people are applying their learning. There are also plans in place for PPA events on Trauma practice and how they can apply that in their observations. 		

<p>EG spoke to the data summary shared as part of the Q3 report;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A similar version of the report is provided to SMT on a monthly basis, and will be shared with the Board as part of the quarterly report going forward. • The summary has been pulled together based on work with the Board and data requested, and is very operationally focused. While we would like to see more data on outcomes for children, this data does not sit with CHS. • Generally, AST and Hearing numbers are as expected. AST demographics remain steady against past years. • We will continue to see a drop in Panel member numbers until our new cohort are appointed in April. • Our targets have been set based on the forecasting targets included in the data summary which take into account anticipated hearing numbers, as provided by SCRA. • Panel Member forecasted numbers represent our expectations of resignations and appointments based on previous years. We are losing more PM’s than forecast however we forecast hearings are higher than actual. The data shows that we will need to recruit a high number ahead of April 2024 in readiness for the Care and Justice Bill. • Chair forecasting is set at 66% which we may reach sooner than anticipated based on the improvements we are bringing forward. <p>Board discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board noted that the data is very much output focused. We need to ensure we have input and process KPI’s which can drive outcomes in order to ensure we are influencing the right areas. • The Board noted the gap in numbers we experience between recruitment campaigns – if our forecasting is correct, this indicated we may need to be open to additional recruitment campaigns in due course. <p>Board Decision:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Board approved the Q3 report. 2. The Board approved the de-scoped activities and re-timings as recommended. 		
<p>11 Remuneration and Appointment Committee Chair update Work plan</p>		
<p>JD spoke to the paper shared;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAC have included an additional date bringing the total number of annual meetings to 4 in light of the coming strategic priorities. <p>Board Decision:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Board noted the update. 2. The Board approved the RAC work plan. 		

12	Audit and Risk Management Committee Chair update Work plan
<p>SA provided an ARMC Chair update as below;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Committee approved a number of audit reports as well as their own workplan, which the Board are now asked to approve, at our last meeting. The External audit team have now been appointed via Audit Scotland, and while they are all new to auditing for CHS/SCRA we are reassured after meeting the head of the team by their experience auditing for NDPB's. External Audit fees have risen by 30.6%, approx. 3.5k more than last year. Our contract for internal audit services with BDO comes to an end this year. We are currently engaging in a procurement and tendering exercise in partnership with SCRA's procurement team. <p>Board Decision:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Board noted the update. The Board approved the ARMC work plan pending correction of date from 2022 to 2023. 	
RKW	Jan 23
13	Business and Corporate Parenting Plan DRAFT Update
<p>LH spoke to the paper shared;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As the Board will remember, we have extended our strategic business cycle for an additional year, therefore our strategic themes remain the same for this 23/24. The context of this year's plan will focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building Capacity within the Children's Hearing System (laying the foundations of the Tribunal Support Model) Readiness for the Care and Justice Bill; The Hearing System Working Group and Report; and Continued partnership and participation work. As requested by the Board, we are incorporating additional KPI's linked to our objectives and activities. We intend to carry out a mid-year review and revision of the business plan post the publishing of the HSWG report. <p>Board decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board noted the report. 	
14	Independent report writers
<p>SB spoke to the paper shared;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The report provides background to the provision of independent reports to assist panels in decision making. The service was previously provided by CELSIS and was transferred to CHS to manage in 2020. CHS have a set of quality standards in place for our independent contractors who fulfil the function. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently we have 21 report writers with high level of expertise in their areas with roughly a 50/50 split between psychology/psychiatry and social work professionals. • We have noted a slight increase for requests following PM refresher training. • The function costs circa £100k a year to run which is split between £20k for the operational management of the service within CHS and £80k for the commissioning of reports. The service is underwritten by the Sponsor Team, should fees exceed budget. • Last year most reports called for social work expertise while this year the majority have been for mental health assessments. • We are currently developing a more robust framework to assess the reports and create further quality standards around them. • The function requires a substantial amount of work within CHS operationally and thanks is given to Laura Conahan, Edward McKim, and Maeve Coney in the Practice and Policy team for ensuring the service and function is managed and administered effectively. • We would like to recommend that the function is added to our internal audit schedule. <p>Board Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board noted the substantial workload and asked if the costs allocated to the function were sufficient or if there was a need for additional resource. SB commented that the current resource is sufficient, though costs are underwritten by the Sponsor Team should we require additional funds. • The Board asked for clarity on the difference between these reports and those written by Safeguarders, and the criteria around both, and which is asked for when. SB noted that Panel Members can ask for a report into an area that requires specific expertise that can be provided by independent report writers in order to support the decision making of a Hearing. Safeguarders have a more general statutory function to produced reports on safeguarding the rights of the child. <p>Board Decision:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Board noted the report. 		
15	Advocacy in hearings		
	<p>SB spoke to the paper shared;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2011 act includes provision for advocacy and there is a legal responsibility on hearing Chairs to make children and families aware of the provision. • Discussion with Board previously around quality assurance measures and feedback from panel members on advocacy awareness of Panel Members. This paper is presented to provide assurance to the Board that advocacy is well understood and awareness is high among panel members. • The Practice and Policy team worked with Practice Bank to conduct a survey to gain understanding. The survey demonstrates a high level of awareness 		

	<p>of advocacy and the importance of it. We've shared the findings from the survey with the national Expert Reference Group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The PPM has been update to reflect the 2020 Act and training on advocacy is well embedded in the learning programme for PM's. <p>Board Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board were assured by the findings in the report however there was concern that not all children, young people and their families understood the role of advocacy. SB confirmed that significant work is ongoing from the Scottish Government and providers to ensure that the purpose and access to advocacy is understood by children and their families. There is a need have a strategic approach to advocacy nationally. Is there more that we can do to take ownership around advocacy and empowering young people. The Board noted that it is important the advocacy is consistently offered and that the provision does not cause delay to hearings unless it is necessary to safeguard the best interest of the child. The Board acknowledged that it is the Chairs duty to ensure that advocacy is offered and present in the hearing, and that the hearing is viewed as the child's hearing. It is about making sure that young people who struggle to speak for themselves have a voice in the hearing via advocacy. There is work that could be done around early intervention to ensure children and young people are made aware of advocacy before the hearing.. A challenge and opportunity for CHS to understand what we can do to promote the use of advocacy in hearings to protect the rights of children. <p>Board Decision:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Board noted the report and findings of the survey For the practice and policy team to identify specific actions to be taken to continue to promote advocacy in hearings. 	<p>SB</p>	<p>March 24</p>
<p>15</p>	<p>PEC Phase 2 completion report</p>		
	<p>EJ spoke to the paper shared;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 1st phase report was presented to the Board at a development session in September 2022. This 2nd phase was undertaken in November and December and sought our communities views in relation to the role of the tribunal member in a future state. The findings of the consultation provide important messages around the desire for increased mandatory training, diversity, and to open discussion around tenure. The report has been shared with the HSWG and is forming part of the deliberations. <p>Board Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board noted the difference between our vision and that of Panel Members. It highlights the challenges we may face when the HSWG report is released and the changes that might be within. 		

Board Decision:			
1. The Board noted the report.			
16	AOB		

A/A	Action	Initiated	Target date	Owner	Progress Update	Status	Comments
22/23-21	To put in a KPI development process with the Board for more robust KPI development for the business plan going forward.	Mar-22	Mar-23	LH		On agenda	More robust KPI's have been put in place in the business plan, directly linked to activities and milestones
22/23-28	To bring to the monthly Board development session in August the remuneration and support package for discussion and approval.	Jun-22	Aug-23	CM		Not yet due	Agreed to move from Aug 22 to Aug 23 in recognition of the challenges faced in finding a supplier to provide support for remuneration
22/23-31	KK to look at an opportunity to invite the Children's Commissioner to an upcoming Board meeting or development session.	Sep-22	Aug-23	KK		Not yet due	RKW to progress with new Commissioner
22/23-36	High level discussion at SCRA joint Board on how we work together on the operational flexibilities and specialist panels or hearings we require or may use.	Sep-22	Jun-23	KK		Not yet due	Joint Board June 23
22/23-38	To consider including the PPM in a Board development session.	Nov-22	Sep-23	SB		Not yet due	
22/23-39	To consider publishing the rights and inclusion strategy annual report to our website	Nov-22	Mar-23	CM		Not yet due	Will be published at end of March
22/23-40	To bring the new Rights and Inclusion Strategy to the Board in 2023	Nov-22	Jun-23	CM		Not yet due	
22/23-41	For CHS to explore increasing corporate recruitment reach through trade boards and bodies, such as Food and Drink Federation Scotland.	Nov-22	Sep-23	CM		Not yet due	
22/23-34	Bring more data on appeals to the Board, specifically: 1. Further interrogation of the data around CSO, how many have not been appealed and how that compares to other decisions. 2. More data on appeals, who is raising them, and are they being supported. 3. Further information to better understand why there are more	Sep-22	Jan-23	SB		Completed	Updated at board meeting 31/01/23
22/23-32	To bring to the Board in November a paper on the future plans for learning	Sep-22	Nov-22 Jan-23	CM	Agreed to move this to January	Completed	On private session agenda
22/23-37	The Board has requested a regular update using the capacity data to the Board.	Sep-22	Jan-23	RKW		Completed	This is beng incorporated into the performance report.
22/23-33	To look at the Impact Report and include more details of measurable impacts based on our efforts. Overtime, we should report on more measurable impacts within this report.	Sep-22	Oct-22	LH		Completed	
22/23-35	Chairing to be added to a development session for discussion.	Sep-22	Jan-23	RKW		Completed	Paper submitted to November 22 Board meeting for concideration and



National Convener / Chief Executive Update

Agenda Item 6 CHS-2223-53

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report captures a range of organisational activity between the last Board meeting in January 2023 to now. It provides bite sized updates that can be expanded upon during the Board meeting.

2. Panel Member pre-service training

- 2.1 The 5-day Panel Member pre-service programme has concluded. Approximately 330 new Panel Members will be joining the rota from mid-April. The team at the Learning Academy will be supporting a small number of people to completion over the next few weeks. The collation of pre-service training evaluation data and recommendations is underway. This will be the subject of a report to the Board in June.
- 2.2 We will be undertaking our next national Panel Member recruitment campaign in September 2023. The campaign will remain values based and work is underway with The Union to refresh the look and feel of the campaign. This will be co-produced with young people with lived experience and with advice and guidance around language from The Frameworks Institute. External evaluation of the campaign is being built into this recruitment round.

3. Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Bill

- 3.1 CHS have submitted evidence to the Education, Children and Young People Committee for Stage One of the Bill process. CHS is broadly supportive of the Bill, in particular the raising the age of referral. However, we have raised a number of issues in relation to implementation. In particular, the lowering of the threshold and likely increased use of Movement Restriction Conditions, which come with the potential that the introduction of GPS monitoring will infringe on young people's right to privacy unless robust safeguards are put in place. Related to this is the increased demand for intensive support packages for 16 and 17 years old's, and how this will be resourced by local authorities that are already under significant resourcing pressures. CHS continues to plan for implementation in April 2024 with the Scottish government and key partners.

4. Children's Rights

- 4.1 **Legislation:** Negotiations between Holyrood and Westminster are still ongoing in relation to the 2021 UNCRC Incorporation (Scotland) Bill. It is hoped that the amendments can be resolved so the Bill can be brought back to the Scottish Parliament for the final Reconsideration Stage. In March 2023 Clare Haughey, Minister for Children and Young People, announced that an amended Bill will be laid before Parliament in the summer. CHS will continue to closely monitor the Bill and will keep the Board updated on any developments.
- 4.2 **Evidence:** CHS has undertaken a baseline survey of 223 Panel Members about their understanding of children's rights. The survey has found that the overwhelming majority of Panel Members (99%) confirmed they were aware of the specific rights in the UNCRC and 85% either strongly agreed or agreed that they are confident that they understand the impact of UNCRC rights in the context of a children's hearing. However, when asked if children are provided enough information to gain a clear awareness and understanding of their rights before a hearing, Panel Members were not confident this was the case. CHS continues to develop children's rights resources, including child friendly feedback and complaints function, and will work with partners to increase awareness of children's rights across Scotland.
- 4.3 **Training:** CHS has been working with Children in Scotland to develop a bespoke training course "Children's Rights and the UNCRC: Bridging Policy and Practice". The first course on 28 March is now full with 250 members of the CHS Community signing up. The learning resources are also being made available on the CHS Learning Academy platform.

5. Age of Criminal Responsibility

- 5.1 The Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019 ("the Act") fully commenced on 17 December 2021, this increased the age at which a child is considered to have the capacity to commit a crime from age 8 to 12 which means that children younger than 12 cannot accrue convictions or criminal records.
- 5.2 The Act removes the ability to refer a child to a children's hearing on offence grounds, and makes it possible to only refer a child under 12 to a children's hearing on welfare and protection grounds. It provides specific investigatory powers for the police to enable incidents of seriously harmful behaviour by under 12's to be investigated.
- 5.3 The Act created the role of Child Interview Rights Practitioner (ChIRP). Under the 2019 Act, investigative interviews are intended to take place in cases where instances involving serious harmful behaviours and circumstances have occurred. The 2019 Act gives children under the age of 12 the right to have a ChIRP present at investigative interviews, even in circumstances where they are over the age of 12 by the time the interview takes place.
- 5.4 There are 18 ChIRP's successfully appointed by the Minister for Children and Young People who have received required training covering all local authorities.
- 5.5 The Act requires the Scottish Ministers to carry out a review within 3 years of the commencement of section 1 of the Act (from 17 December 2021). An Advisory Group comprising a range of different stakeholders has been established to support Ministers with

the review. The review has already commenced, and work is ongoing to determine what might be required to support a future age of criminal responsibility in Scotland.

- 5.6 I attended the ACR Learning Event on the 26 January 2023, the purpose of the event was to reflect on learning since the Act came into force on 17 December 2021. The feedback and discussions from the day will be collated into a report that will be submitted to the Advisory Group to agree the next steps going forward for ACR. Our Board Member, Beth Anne Logan was the keynote speaker.

6. Children's Hearings Advocacy

- 6.1 Initial analysis undertaken by the Scottish Government of annual reports from advocacy provider organisations shows in the year April 2021 to March 2022 there were 1,392 "new" referrals for children and young people to access advocacy via the national provision. This initial work also revealed that on a national basis the children's advocacy in children's hearings provision is achieving the 10% figure of children being supported at hearings identified in the Scottish Government's original modelling of the service. The initial findings are encouraging, and analysis of all the reported data for the full year 2021-22 is being progressed and when complete, this will be reported to the Children's Hearings Advocacy Expert Reference Group where CHS are represented.

7. Mutual Mentoring Programme

- 7.1 The Mutual Mentoring Programme in CHS aims to offer a mutually beneficial opportunity to people with lived experience of attending a Hearing and members of the National Team at CHS.
- 7.2 With training and wrap-around support provided by the Scottish Mentoring Network, the Mutual Mentors will be matched and will work together to co-design a series of welcoming and inclusive sessions to build positive, supportive relationships.
- 7.3 By engaging in planning and reflective activities to share knowledge, skills and experience, the Mutual Mentors will set out to achieve personal and joint goals over a period of 6-8 weeks.
- 7.4 For our lived experienced participants, we hope to offer a tailored opportunity for personal development, providing insights into the work we do individually and supporting them to build networks or to advise upon areas of learning or improvement specific to their needs.
- 7.5 As an organisation, it is a chance to discuss challenges. To be open, honest and to listen impartially to constructive reflections. By embracing creative approaches and implementing the advice of those with lived experienced, the Programme will ultimately strengthen the shared understanding at CHS about the value of providing space, voice, audience and influence to guide our work and to achieve better outcomes for all.

Benefits Of The Mutual Mentoring Programme

- Rewarding on a professional and personal level;
- Building a positive relationships and communication skills, where equal weight is given to both mentors (the lived experienced participant and the member of the CHS staff team);
- Co-designing the outcomes of the programme with flexibility to arrange meetings at a times which suits the participants;
- Opportunities for the both mentors to work collaboratively, developing skills, leading meetings, offering insight, seeking knowledge and building experiences for CV; and
- A Mutual Mentoring Programme certificate will be provided alongside references.

8. Strategic Engagement

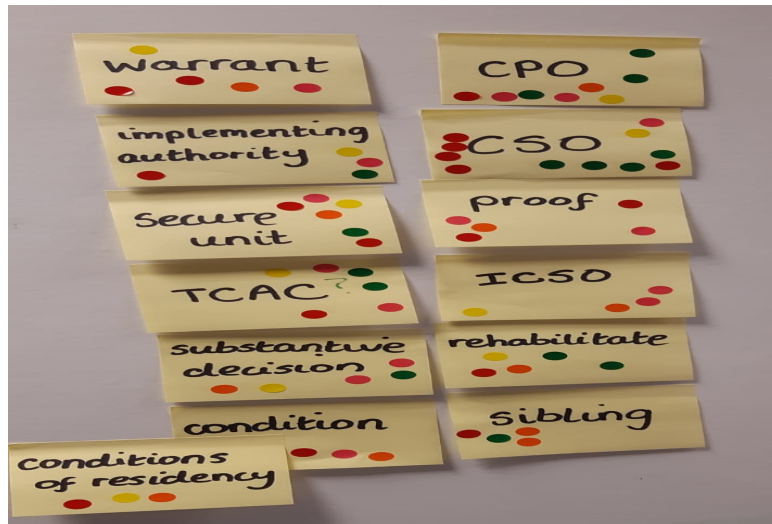
8.1 Together with other senior management team colleagues, I have participated in four key multi-agency meetings in the last quarter. These are:

8.2 **National Child Protection Leadership Group** – The role of the Group is to identify collaborative solutions in order to deliver more effective, consistent protection and support for children and families and to reduce duplication of effort. The Group also provides scrutiny and advice to Scottish Government on proposed policy changes. Specifically the group advises on national child protection policy and has oversight of implementation of the actions in the Child Protection Improvement Programme; Considers the findings of Child Protection Learning Reviews and advise on recommendations of national importance; and supports Chief Officers to strengthen delivery of their responsibilities, as set out in the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021), and to identify areas where further work is required.

8.3 **Youth Justice Improvement Programme** – This group works towards delivery of the Youth Justice Strategy published in June 2021 through two implementation groups - Advancing the Whole System Approach and Children’s Rights. The Children and Young People’s Centre for Justice (CYCJ) are leading on work around the future of secure care, and discussions with secure care providers and other partners are ongoing. Discussions have focussed on system readiness for ensuring there are no under 18s in Young Offenders Institutions in the future, as well as the wider issue of what secure care should look like.

8.4 **Children’s Hearings Improvement Partnership (CHIP)** – The CHIP is the overarching multi-agency forum that provides oversight, awareness and alignment of the significant children and families policy agenda across the Scottish Government.

In addition it takes on key pieces of work to help, inform and improve the experience of those attending Children’s Hearings. One such project has been to reset the language used by professionals. A ‘word busting’ group, (shortly to be renamed ‘Language Leaders’) made up of young people, supported by CHS and others is working on identifying language to change. The picture below contains the top 12 words voted on that often need more explanation.



8.5 **Joint CHS/SCRA Senior Team Meetings** – Earlier in March, the two senior teams participated in a facilitated workshop on considering where we can make further improvements to enhance the Hearings experience for children, young people and their families. Relationships and collaboration are key to this work.

9. Local CHS Community Engagement

9.1 Engagement with the wider CHS Community has ramped up since the turn of the year with members of the Board and Senior Team attending both face to face and online events. Most recently, I attended two weekend events in West Dunbartonshire and Argyll and Bute. The focus of the input for these events is the changes we will make to the Tribunal Support Model to better support Panel Members locally and of course the likely reforms that will be contained within the Mackie/Hearing Systems Working Group (HSWG) report. These events are always well attended and the debate vibrant and engaging. The CHS Community have contributed well to the work of the HSWG and are ready to embrace reform.

Elliot Jackson
National Convener and Chief Executive Officer
 21st March 2023

Hearing System Working Group Update March 2023

Accountable Officer:	Head of Area Support and Community Improvement
Report author:	Carol Wassell
Resources implications:	Within Available Resources
Recommendation:	For Note and Agreement

Impact Assessment Duties	Required
Equalities Impact Assessment	NO
Children's Rights Impact Assessment	NO
Data Protection Impact Assessment	NO
Islands Impact Assessment	NO

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Hearing System Working Group (HSWG) has been tasked with preparing recommendations for how the Children's Hearing system transforms to ensure the Promise is kept.
- 1.2 Meeting since October 2021, and chaired by Sheriff David Mackie, CHS, SCRA, the Scottish Government (as observers) and The Promise Scotland are all partners on the group.
- 1.3 This paper sets out the work undertaken to date and the timeline for activity up until the end of May 2023.

2. Work Completed

2.1 Between October 2021 and February 2023 the HSWG met to:

- Define the scope of change within the Hearing System
- Consult with agencies involved in the Hearing system about particular issues facing infants, children and young people and how they could be addressed.
- Discuss elements of change that were considered necessary by the partners of the hearing system and for them to influence the recommendations of the group, including children, young people and carers with lived experience of the hearing system.
- Plan for a collaborative report that would set out recommendations for change and reform.
- Ensure CHS's and SCRA's contribution to the leadership of redesign groups working collaborative with other agencies and with the Office of the Chief Designer at the Scottish Government.

2.2 Over this period HSWG has published:

- The Issues List that set out the questions that would be addressed through the process of enquiry

- The Emerging Themes Report that was a midway report capturing the findings of the group to date

2.3 In addition CHS has:

- For the HSWG, reviewed of the literature and research about how other tribunals in Scotland, the UK, and internationally, are designed and implemented.
- Engaged in wide ranging participation, engagement, and consultation events that captured the views of over 500 CHS volunteers and staff in relation to the questions on the Issues List. The outcomes of these sessions have been shared with the HSWG. SCRA have completed a similar exercise with their paid staff.
- Led and taken part in multi-agency sub-groups, which included Panel Members, and which produced over 20 proposals for the HSWG to consider in relation to the operational changes that could be made to ensure we keep the Promise
- Facilitated or engaged in Sheriff Mackie discussing proposal with Children and Young People through the Better Meetings group in Highland and Moray, OHOV and the VIP project at CELCIS.

2.4 The consideration of all of this work culminated in seven days of deliberation by the HSWG in January 2023.

3. Next Steps

3.1 The HSWG will meet again on the 27th, 29th and 31st March. The proposed date for publication of the final report is 10th May.

3.2 Engagement planning with SCRA is ongoing and will identify opportunities for joint communications about the recommendations of the HSWG to minimise the impact on the ongoing delivery of the Children's Hearing System.

3.3 CHS will consider recommendations and identify 'quick wins' that will begin to drive improvement, aligned with other CHS priorities.

4. Recommendation

4.1 The Board are asked to note and agree the content of the report.

Finance Report 2022-23 Forecast Outturn

Agenda item: 8

Paper number: CHS-2223-55

Accountable Officer:	Head of Strategy and Development
Report author:	Finance Manager
Recommendation:	To note and feedback
Resources implications:	Within available resources

Impact Assessment Duties	Required	Completed
Equalities Impact Assessment	No	
Children's Rights Impact Assessment	No	
Data Protection Impact Assessment	No	
Islands Impact Assessment	No	

1 Background, summary and recommendation

- 1.1 The published revenue grant in aid (GiA) allocation for CHS for 2022/23 is £4.629m, with an acknowledgement from Scottish Government (SG) that CHS is carrying an additional ongoing £0.5m pressure each year. CHS has £0.25m of reserves from prior years, resulting in total available resource of £5.379m. The Board thus approved a revenue budget of £5.379m in March 2022.
- 1.2 CHS' 5 year strategic financial plan identified that, to deliver CHS' statutory duties to recruit, train and support Panel Members, to embed and derive best value from previous SG Digital investment, alongside development and delivery projects to meet the requirements of The Promise Plan 21-24, the revenue resource requirement for 2022/23 was £5.764m revenue at 21/22. The current forecast outturn for 22/23 is very close at £5.742m. SG has transferred £0.721m additional in-year funding to CHS, so the total revenue GiA available is £5.35m. CHS will use its reserves and cash balance to meet the remainder of the spend pressure (£0.392m).
- 1.3 The published capital GiA allocation for CHS for 2022/23 is £0.4m.
- 1.4 Members are asked to note the forecast and its associated risks.

2 2022/23 Forecast and Year to Date

- 2.1 The year to date (YTD) overspend on staff, and forecast FY (full year) overspend, are due to the 5% award in excess of SG's original pay policy, and operational pressures that have meant that the savings target cannot be met. An income deficit is projected due to the secondees vacating their post in-year.
- 2.2 Staff training, travel and subsistence is anticipated to be underspent this year due to the ongoing impact of the pandemic with activity taking longer to reach anticipated levels. The full year forecast has been adjusted to reflect the anticipated savings.

Finance Report as at 28 February 2023

	Actual YTD Period 11 £000	Variance YTD Period 11 £000	2022/23 Annual Budget £000	2022/23 Forecast £000	2022/23 Forecast Variance £000	2022/23 Forecast Variance %
Staff	2,419	+66	2,566	2,718	+152	+5.9
Board	46	-2	59	59	+0	+0.0
Training, travel and subsistence	57	-11	86	66	-20	-22.7
Property	94	+2	123	126	+3	+2.4
Other Operating Costs	46	+7	49	35	-14	-28.6
ICT Costs	354	-30	487	621	+134	+27.8
Corporate Costs	285	+259	150	408	+258	+171.9
Panel and AST Expenses	130	-183	417	190	-227	-54.4
Panel and AST Training	555	-302	1,049	1,044	-5	-0.5
Support for hearings	93	-45	162	107	-55	-34.0
Volunteer recruitment	216	+36	180	259	+79	+43.9
PVGs	41	-1	42	42	+0	+0.0
AST Devolved Funding	23	-27	66	56	-10	-15.2
Income	-21	+22	-57	-20	+37	+64.9
Total	4,338	-209	5,379	5,711	+332	+6.2

2.3 Other Operating Costs is overspent YTD due to ICT equipment, stationery and merchandise purchases. Some YTD spend is GPC spend to be allocated before the end of the year.

2.4 The YTD underspend on ICT is due to the timing of invoices relating to licences and development. CHS entered a new 3-year licences contract, effective 1 October 2022, with costs increasing by £257k per year due to Microsoft restricting their licence cost structure.

The ICT forecast for the 2022-23 outturn remains at £621k, although a small saving of up to £50k may yet be realised.

2.5 Corporate costs includes consultancy to support participation, consultation and engagement supporting CHS's contribution to Promise redesign activity. Costs in the second half of the financial year have covered for example a review of the recruitment campaign and other activities.

2.6 Panel and AST Expenses, and AST Devolved Funding, remain underspent in the year to date due to post pandemic activities taking longer to reach anticipated levels. Recognition events were encouraged to support local work on capacity building and retention, but there is an expectation that Devolved funding may still be underspent. However, claims data up to 24 January 2023 in CSAS suggests volunteer expenses may top £200k, cancelling out this devolved funding underspend.

- 2.7 The YTD underspend on volunteer training arose due to a supplier billing delay. The overall training contract cost continues to be expected to be much in line with budget, reflecting results of the recruitment campaign and the Head of Learning's proactive management of the CHSLA's activity.
- 2.8 Support for Hearings is a YTD and projected underspend largely due to reduced activity in the first half of the year, reflecting the slow return to projected levels of activity post pandemic.
- 2.9 Recruitment is overspent YTD due to the scale of the campaign. A media budget overspend of £24k is anticipated, along with a further £55k required to refresh the campaign's creatives (collateral) before the end of March.
- 2.10 The DCE and finance manager continue to liaise closely with Sponsor Team to advise on pressures and savings, and to monitor the potential impact on CHS resource resulting from any budget announcements from Scottish Government.
- 2.11 CHS's capital spend to date is £186k (devices £83k and CSAS development £103k). CHS is forecasting to spend a further £190k on development and £37k on devices, resulting in a total forecast of £413k.

3 Conclusion

- 3.1 Members are asked to note the forecast and its associated risks.



Business Plan 2023-24

Agenda Item 9

Paper Number CHS-2223-56a

Accountable Officer:	Head of Strategy and Development, DCE
Report author:	Business Operations & Governance Lead, Programme Manager
Resources implications:	Within available
Recommendation:	To Approve
Approval(s) sought:	To approve for progress to Ministers for approval

Impact Assessment Duties	Required	Completed
Equalities Impact Assessment	No	
Children’s Rights Impact Assessment	No	
Data Protection Impact Assessment	No	
Islands Impact Assessment	No	

1. Introduction and Purpose:

- 1.1 This paper accompanies the proposed 2023/24 Business Plan.
- 1.2 As the Board will recall, our Corporate Plan has been extended through 2023/24 therefore the outcomes for the 2023/24 business plan remain the same as the previous three years.

2. Comment

- 2.1 CHS is required to produce an annual Business Plan, that describes the “key” activities and milestones for the year ahead, as derived from the Corporate Plan. For CHS “key” usually covers activities that have clear contribution to the delivery of strategy, activities that are directly related to the National Convener’s core duties, and activities that are significant in terms of the resources required to deliver them and/or their organisational impact. CHS and the National Convener also use this plan to fulfil their duty to produce a Corporate Parenting plan.
- 2.2 The plan for this year follows the same broad format as the previous year’s – with objectives and milestones contributing to the four strategic themes forming the main content. In addition, this year we have incorporated additional KPI’s and measures for outcome focused success.
- 2.3 As in previous years, a more accessible version of the plan will be delivered through a short animation, featuring activities that have been chosen by people with lived experienced as particularly worth promoting.

- 2.4 A draft plan has been reviewed by the sponsor team at Scottish Government and their suggestions taken in to account.

3. Next steps

Following Board approval, the Business Plan will be passed for Ministerial approval. Following this, it will be published to the CHS website and the animation shared via our social channels.

4. Board Actions

The Board are requested to approve the 2023/24 Business Plan.



children's
hearings
scotland

Children's Hearings Scotland

Business and Corporate
Parenting Plan

2023-2024

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INTRODUCTION



The first children's hearing was held in Scotland on 15th April 1971. As we publish this Business Plan this year, we will mark 52 years of children's hearings and in June, we will mark the 10th anniversary of the creation of Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS).

We are immensely proud of the contribution we, alongside our volunteer community, have made over the past 10 years in protecting infants, children, and young people in Scotland's communities. While reflecting upon the phenomenal impact of the work of the CHS Community, we also look forward to a new business year that will see CHS make a step change in the way that we support our volunteers across Scotland. New and inclusive support roles and structures will take the workload burden off our AST volunteer workforce.

This year will also see the publication of the Sheriff David Mackie led, Hearing System Working Group (HSWG) report. This report around the redesign of the Children's Hearings System, promises to set out a transformational future for the way that we can further support infants, children, young people, and their families.

Children's hearings continue to rise and whilst not back to pre-Covid levels, my key priority is to lead and support the CHS Community. We need to ensure that we continue to listen to children and young people and make decisions with, and for them, that result in an outcome that keeps them safe and allows them to flourish.

My four thematic priorities for 2023-24 are to:

- Better protect and uphold the rights of children;
- Deliver consistently high-quality hearings;
- Continue to build an effective and empathetic panel, that is well-supported; and
- Be well-informed and influential in our environment and communities.

My role will be to deliver on these themes while continuing to build our resilience, capacity, and agility around Children's Hearings whilst considering how we, as a CHS Community, embrace and deliver the reforms set out by the Hearings System Working Group.



Elliot Jackson
National Convener
& CEO

2022-23 IN REVIEW



Three years on from the start of the Covid pandemic we continue to face challenges and changes we never could have anticipated before. The ingenuity, flexibility, and resolve we have developed through this experience has enabled us to realise tangible improvements to the hearing system and our impact on the lives of children and young people. Some major achievements from the year included:

- Ensuring that our Area Support Teams who recruited new Panel Members did so alongside young people with lived experience, not once but twice! Both our recruitment campaigns in 2022 saw **lived experienced recruiters** conduct interviews alongside members of the Area Support Team.
- Delivering **collaborative proposals** for the redesign of the Children's Hearings System, with input from our community and lived experience, for deliberation by the **Hearings System Working Group**.
- Developed our **Child Friendly Complaints Process** to ensure that going forward children have an accessible way to provide feedback about their experiences at hearings to us.
- Responding to our changing society and the ongoing pressures of COVID by influencing **legislative changes** that help support us to deliver hearings, developing new guidance for our Panel Members, and improving our digital platforms.
- Launching our **CHS: #KeepingThePromise** webpage to report on our projects and progress under our Promise Programme of work.
- Undertaking a series of **local improvement projects** across Scotland focused on participation, preventing delays, and improving decision-making.
- Further embedding UNCRC in all our work by launching our **Children's Rights Impact Assessment** Tool to ensure all our projects and work uphold the rights of children.
- Working with The Lens to create **consultation and engagement** opportunities for all our community across Scotland on the future needs of children, families, and tribunal members to inform our support structures.
- Celebrating and thanking our community during **Volunteers Week**.
- **Reappointing** over 700 Panel Members for a further 3 years.
- Supporting Panel Member decision-making by updating our **Practice and Procedure Manual** and **Virtual Hearings Guidance** to reflect new legislation and hearings practices.
- Making available open access learning modules covering **baseline Trauma Informed practice** and hearing specific resources.

OUR CONTEXT: KEEPING THE PROMISE



CHS remain committed to keeping The Promise to Scotland’s children. Two years ago we launched our Promise Programme of work which has seen us embed the Children (Scotland) 2020 Act into our practice. Since that time, we have made great strides to incorporate UNCRC and Trauma informed practice into everything we do. We have consulted and engaged with our community on the future needs of the children’s hearing system and its Tribunal Members, and we have collaborated with partners as part of the Hearing System Working Group (HSWG).

As part of the Hearing System Working Group, we have been researching, consulting, and deliberating on the changes needed to deliver the improvements children, families and carers have told us are needed. As collaborative design partners, we have engaged widely with our stakeholders and reimagined the Children’s Hearings System. In early May 2023 the HSWG report will be published recommending for Ministerial approval reforms which have the potential to transform the Children’s Hearings System as we know it.

We recognise that the HSWG report is only part of the children’s hearing system reform journey. In order to continue implementing improvements, and ready ourselves for the potential changes to come, it is critical that we prepare ourselves. During 2023/24 we will work to fortify our community support structures by ensuring Panel Members are as equipped and supported as possible to make compassionate and fair decisions, based on legally sound advice and evidence. We will implement a new tribunal support model for our community through a forward-looking approach which will strive to bring more consistency and quality to all hearings and deliver the best outcomes and experiences for children, young people, and their families.

OUR CONTEXT: THE CARE AND JUSTICE BILL



We welcome the introduction of the Children (Care and Justice)(Scotland) Bill, which was introduced in Parliament in December 2022. This legislation will enable young people up to the age of 18 to be supported and protected by children’s hearings acknowledging the importance of safeguarding young people within the youth justice system. Our system recognises that when children and young people come into contact or conflict with the law, it is often as a result of their circumstances and environment. Extending the Children’s Hearings System will ensure that when children come into contact with the law they are given access to an age appropriate support that will help address the causes and the challenges they experience.

We see the introduction of this Bill as an endorsement of the rights-based approach that children’s hearings afford our young people and an important step in Scotland’s commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We look forward to working constructively with others to implement the legislation and continue to make decisions at the children’s hearing that have positive outcomes for children – and those who love and care for them.







Throughout 2023/24 business plan cycle we will be ensuring that Panel Members, AST members, and staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to make decisions to support all children under 18, and are able to uphold the principles of justice, fairness, compassion and the best interest of the child, always.

OUR CONTEXT: CORPORATE PARENTING



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, safeguarding, and promoting the wellbeing of Scotland's looked after children and care leavers. CHS and the National Convener plan, deliver and monitor these duties together.

The specific duties on Corporate Parents are to:

-  **Be alert** to matters which might adversely affect the wellbeing of looked after children and young people.
-  **Assess** the needs of looked after children and young people for the services and support we provide.
-  **Promote** the interests of looked after children and young people.
-  **Provide opportunities** for looked after children and young people to participate in activities designed to promote their wellbeing.
-  Take appropriate action to ensure looked after children and young people **access** these opportunities and make use of our services and support.
-  Take any other action appropriate to **improve** our functions to meet the needs of looked after children and young people.

We monitor our Corporate Parenting actions as part of our in-year performance management and report on our progress against these actions in our annual Impact Report.

OUR COMMITMENTS FOR 2023-24



Commitment 1: **Voice**

- Incorporating the voice of lived experience in our work through co-design and consultation opportunities via our Participation Hub
- Promote and grow our Participation Hub with our partners and stakeholders
- Continue to work with Our Hearings Our Voice to deliver on the 40 Calls to Action
- Continue to work with the Better Meetings project in Highland and Moray and our colleagues at Who Cares? Scotland to improve the experience of children and young people in hearings

Commitment 2: **Participation and engagement**

- Gather the critically important views of our community to inform our reform work
- Ensure our communications and engagement strategies meet the needs of our organisation and its stakeholders
- Streamline and refine our ways of communicating with our community and stakeholders

Commitment 3: **Working with Partners**

- Improve the Management Information reports available to us and how we can use our digital system to improve our knowledge sharing with the CHS Learning Academy and SCRA
- Continue to drive improvements through collaboration with our partners in the sector such as SCRA, The Promise, Social Work Scotland, COSLA, CELSIS, CYPCJ, and other partners

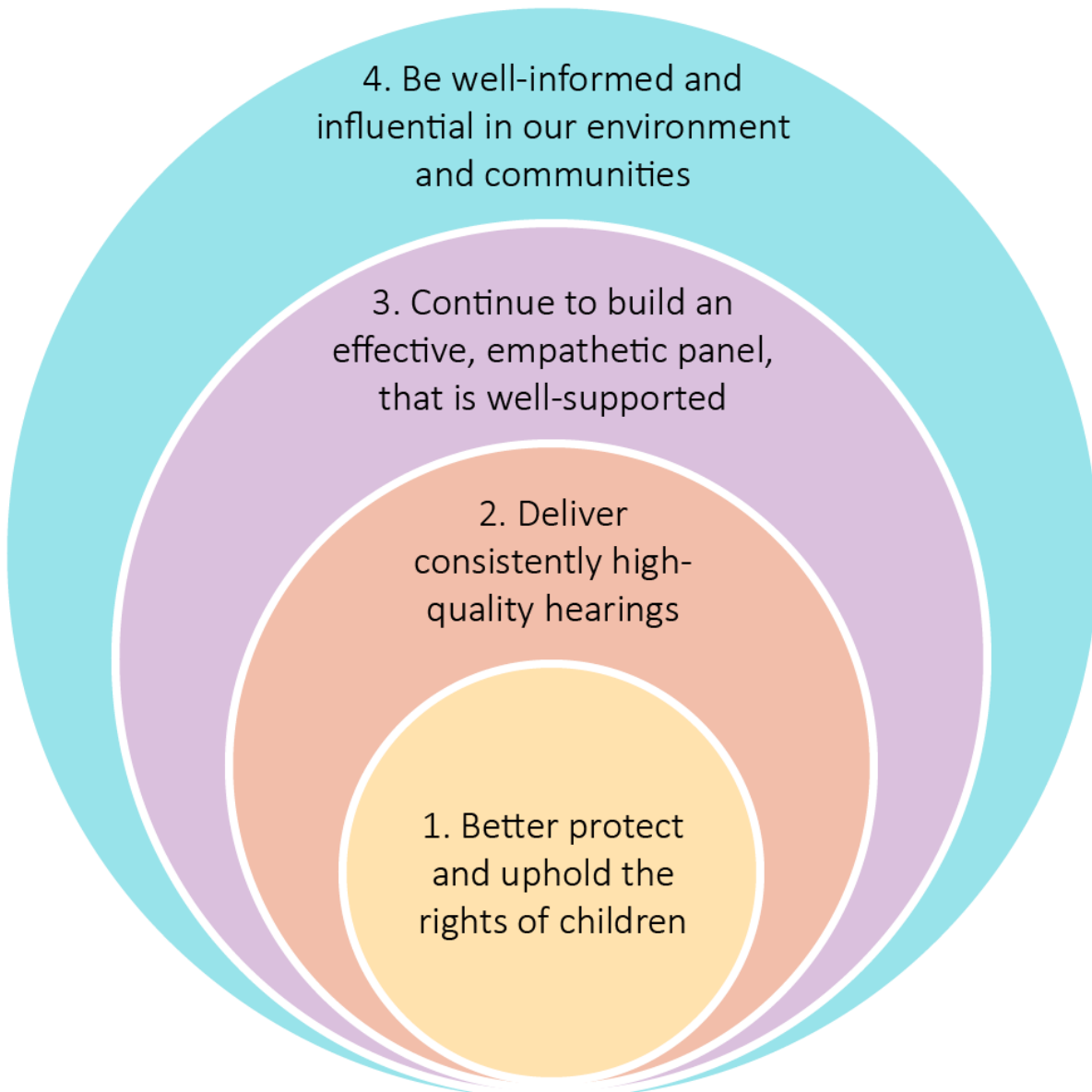
Commitment 4: **Strategic Leadership and involvement**

- Continue to provide leadership as part of the Hearing System Working Group
- Continue to provide leadership through involvement with key national strategic groups e.g. Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership; Child Protection Leadership group and other national groups

OUR STRATEGIC THEMES 2020-2024



In *Our Strategic Outlook 2020-2023*, we set out what our priorities for the next three years will be. We will continue to deliver on those same themes in 2023-24. We call these priorities our “Strategic Themes” and together, they set out an ambitious, improvement-driven direction for CHS that places children’s rights at its centre. Our Strategic Themes are:



STRATEGIC THEMES – AN OVERVIEW



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

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

Theme 2. Deliver consistently high-quality hearings:

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

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

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

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

Over the coming years, we want to develop not only hearings, but also how we deliver our work and how we operate within the wider system and sector. We want the experience of participation in hearings to be one part of seamless, targeted services that are driven by the needs and promotion of wellbeing for children and their families. We will look to evidence – from data, research, but also from what we are told by people with experience of hearings - to under-pin our decision making and adopt structured approaches to pilots and innovations. We will also look for opportunities to lead change within the care system and engage actively with our partners.

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. We are committed to working with partners, and with the Hearing System Working Group and The Promise Scotland, to realise our vision that the Children's Hearings System will be a place that upholds and promotes children's rights, provides a child and family friendly justice space and puts children's voice at it's heart.

Pages 11-19 of this Business Plan outline the actions we are taking in 2023-24 to make progress toward achieving these Themes. The milestones are planned across 4 operational quarters- Q1 =April-June; Q2 = July – September; Q3 = October – December; Q4 = January – March. We will re-view and revise our milestones at the end of quarter two, in order to better align and respond to the reform proposals in the Hearing System Working Group report.

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



	Objective, Lead Function; and (Main Support Function)	Milestones / Activities	Timescales / Targets
1	Continue to embed and give further effect to the UNCRC in our work – <i>Practice & Policy (Learning)</i>	Deliver UNCRC training to all CHS staff	Complete by end Q1
		Report on CHS’s work to incorporate UNCRC during 2020-23	Progress to end Q4
		Revise our Children’s Rights and Inclusion strategy	Progress to end Q4
2	Prepare for the implementation of the Care And Justice Bill in children’s hearings – <i>Practice & Policy (Learning)</i>	Identify, develop and secure training programme for Tribunal members	Complete by end Q3
3	Enable collaboration with people with lived experience on emerging improvements and projects through our Mutual Mentoring programme – <i>Rights & Inclusion</i>	Work with the mentors to share the programme externally	Complete by end Q3
		Evaluate the programme and consider expansion further within the CHS staff team	Complete by end Q4
4	Involve young people with lived experience in our work by creating co-design opportunities – <i>Rights & Inclusion</i>	Promote opportunities for those with lived experience through our participation hub	Complete by end Q4
		Recruit young people through the participation hub on CHS website	Complete by end Q4
5	Encourage hearing experienced feedback by young people through the provision of our child-friendly complaints and feedback processes – <i>Practice & Policy</i>	Evidence improvements in response to feedback and complaints from children and young people including the development of a feedback loop	Progress to end Q4
		Improve our feedback systems and complaints process by reflecting best practice from the SPSO Child Friendly Complaints Guidance for public bodies in Scotland	Progress to end Q4

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



	Objective, Lead Function; and (Main Support Function)	Milestones / Activities	Timescales / Targets
6	Improve the extent to which hearings and our work is trauma-informed – <i>Area Support; (Learning)</i>	Roll out Trauma training modules and resources through CHS Learning Academy to all volunteers	Complete end Q2
		All CHS volunteers and staff complete base-line training on trauma	Complete end Q4
		Develop and launch the Language in the hearing room advisory pack for PMs	Complete by end Q4
7	Develop an implementation plan for the agreed reforms arising from the Hearing System Working Group report – <i>Area Support</i>	<i>To be confirmed post the publication of the HSWG report and government response</i>	Review by end Q2
8	Keep Panel Members equipped with accurate, up-to-date information and advice to be able to make effective and timely decisions – <i>Practice & Policy</i>	Issue and update practice guidance focused on high-quality hearings and decision-making	Progress up to Q4
9	Ensure our quality management mechanisms are operating effectively– <i>Area Support</i>	Continue to support PPA's to observe, quality assure, and improve practice in hearings	Complete by end Q4
		Develop and deliver engagement work focused on quality assurance	Progress to end Q4
10	Ensure Panel Members have access to a high quality Independent Report Writers function to support effective decision making - <i>Practice & Policy</i>	Review the effectiveness of the Independent Report function through audit and identify any areas for improvement	Progress to end Q3
11	Use management information/data available to inform business planning and improvement work through operational delivery – <i>Area Support (Info & Performance)</i>	Implement access to data dashboard for AST	Complete by end Q2
		Implement a management information reporting structure to the Board, SMT, and national team	Progress through end Q4

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



	Objective, Lead Function; and (Main Support Function)	Milestones / Activities	Timescales / Targets
12	Promote the contribution of our volunteers through a dedicated volunteer recognition campaign – <i>Communications</i>	Volunteer recognition campaign during Volunteers Week (1st - 7th June)	Complete by end Q1
13	Ensure CHS has appropriate and sustainable structures in place to effectively support the people needed to deliver a re-designed hearings system through a refreshed Tribunal Support Model– <i>Strategy & Development</i>	Work with staff, Area Conveners and the CHS community to deliver the first phase implementation of our Tribunal Support Model	Complete by end Q4
		Ensure digital infrastructure is in place to support the new model	Complete by end Q4
		Ensure there are facilities in place to support new and existing panel members wellbeing	Progress through end Q4
		Work with our community to improve rota management process to support sustainability and capacity	Complete by end Q4
14	Equip new Panel Members with the skills and knowledge they need to start making effective decisions in hearings – <i>Learning</i>	Delivery of Pre-service training which provides understanding of the legislative context in which Panel Members must make decisions, the care and development needs of children, the balancing of rights in a hearings context as well as the need to adopt a trauma informed approach at all points	Complete by end Q4
15	Continue to deliver learning and development via the Learning Academy to offer innovative solutions for learning – <i>Learning, (Practice & Policy)</i>	Support chairing capacity through the promotion of Enhanced Practice, Management Of Hearings and ongoing development training	Progress to end Q4 initially

		Design and deliver a high quality training programme and resources with subject matter experts in preparation for the implementation of the new requirements of the Care and Justice Bill	Progress to end Q4
		Revise CHS Learning and Development Strategy with consideration of the impacts from the HSWG report and proposed reforms	Q2 initially
16	Work with our community to implement Area Plans that identify key activities for each area based on national and local priorities – <i>Area Support; (Info & Performance)</i>	Support ASTs to develop local Improvement Area Plans	Complete by end Q1
		Support AST's to monitor and review improvement plans	Progress to end Q4
17	Undertake recruitment activities to ensure capacity to meet hearing demand – <i>Recruitment & Retention</i>	Co-produce a refreshed recruitment creative with children and young people with lived experience	Progress to end Q2
		Undertake national Panel Member recruitment campaign with lived experience recruiters	Complete by end Q3
18	Retain Panel Members by ensuring they are reappointed in an efficient and effective way – <i>Recruitment & Retention</i>	Carry out necessary reappointment processes	Complete by end Q1
19	Retain AST Members by ensuring they are reappointed in an efficient and effective way - <i>Recruitment & Retention</i>	Carry out necessary reappointment processes	Progress up to Q4
20	Ensure we have a digitally enabled and supported volunteer community – <i>Digital; Business Support</i>	Provision of devices to trainees	Complete by end Q4
		Provide ongoing community support including frontline response, user guides, and training	Progress to end Q4

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



	Objective, Lead Function; and (Main Support Function)	Milestones / Activities	Timescales / Targets
21	Create a programme of engagement that informs and engages our community and stakeholders as we enter a period of reform and change – <i>Area Support (communication and engagement)</i>	<i>To be developed post the publication of the HSWG report and government response</i>	Q2 initially
22	Continue to lead change in the sector and hearings system through on-going collaboration with national partners – <i>Area Support</i>	Continued leadership with the Hearings System Working Group	Progress to end Q1 initially
		Involvement with key national strategic groups e.g. Children’s Hearings Improvement Partnership; Child Protection Leadership group and other national forums	Progress to end Q4
		Involvement and influence with key local groups e.g. Corporate Parenting Boards; GIRFEC groups	Progress to end Q4
23	Continue to embed our digital systems across our community and identify on-going improvements and developments to support the needs of CHS volunteers and staff - <i>Digital</i>	Transfer Learning Academy (LA) data into CSAS and ensure LA data is regularly uploaded and accessible	Progress to end Q4
		Put in place processes for data validation, cleansing, and maintenance of CHS data	Complete by end Q1
		Begin to roll out the cleansing and validation process for all CHS’s data	Progress to end Q4
		Improve our user engagement approach to digital development, that increases response of user needs	Progress to end Q4
24	Continue to work with partners to lead on the implementation of the Care and Justice Bill – <i>Practice & Policy</i>	Continue to work closely with partners to feed into the development of the Bill	Complete by end Q3

25	Influence and engage in the development of emerging legislation that can improve outcomes for children and young people through the hearings system – <i>Practice & Policy</i>	<i>To be developed post the publication of the HSWG report and government response</i>	Progress up to end Q4
26	Collaborate as a key partner in hearing system reform projects to improve hearings environments and experiences– <i>Area Support</i>	<i>To be confirmed post the publication of the HSWG report and government response</i>	Progress up to end Q4

OUR PLANS – ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND COLLEAGUE SUPPORT



	Objective, Lead Function; and (Main Support Function)	Activities / Milestones	Timescales / Targets
27	Ensure CHS has the right skills and capacity needed to implement changes to the systems and the tribunal support model– <i>HR&OD</i>	Identify critical roles needed within the organisation through a revised organisational structure	Progress to end Q2
		Introduce an organisation wide development programme to upskill and support our team to operate efficiently as part of our broader change programme	Progress to end Q4
28	Continue to build a culture of engagement and wellbeing across the organisation through a programme of structured activities – <i>HR&OD</i>	Implement a programme of pulse survey's across 2023/24 to engage with colleagues and inform staff development opportunities	Progress to end Q4
		Launch a Wellness Programme (Be Well, Work Well) focused on building resilience, helping our colleagues to feel valued, motivated and part of the wider change process	Progress to end Q4
29	Continue to deliver on our commitments to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) <i>Learning; (Area Support)</i>	Continue supporting the EDI group to shape the work of CHS including the consideration of our new strategic outlook	Progress to end Q4
30	Ensure CHS has a future focused communications strategy in place - <i>Communications</i>	Implementation of short term communication strategy and plan	Through end Q1
		Revise the CHS Communications strategy to effectively promote and support CHS through reform and change	TBC Post the HSWG report

31	Continue to ensure CHS has policies and practices in place to effectively manage our information - <i>Information Governance</i>	Review, revise, and implement a more future focused records management plan	Progress to end Q4
32	Continue to improve our feedback and complaints processes to ensure we maximise the opportunities for organisational learning – <i>Practice & Policy, Learning</i>	Continuous improvement plan based on lessons learned to be developed and operationalised	Progress through end Q2
		Feedback and complaints report to include full set of new KPI's compliant with SPSO requirements to be published quarterly	Progress through end Q4

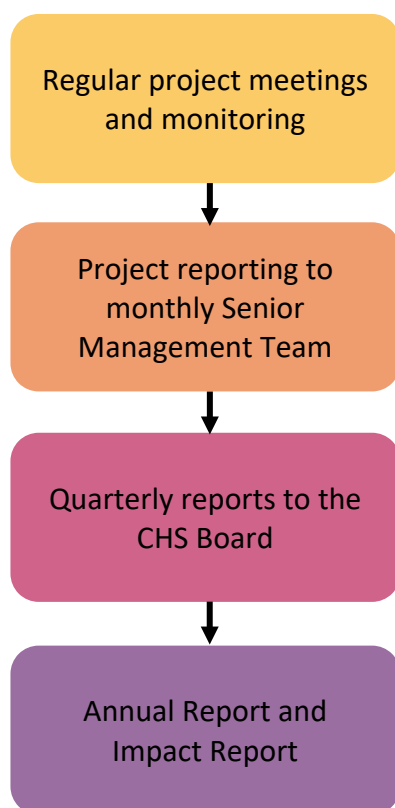
MONITORING OUR BUSINESS PLAN



The environment in which we deliver our work continues to be highly changeable and fast-moving. We anticipate 2023/24 to see recommendations of change to the hearings system not seen since Kilbrandon. In recognition of our shifting landscape, we intend to review our business plan mid-year to re-align our objectives and activities with the recommendations from the HSWG report.

Each of the activities, milestones and deliverables above have been assigned a timescale in which, to the best of our current knowledge, we anticipate they will be completed, or a target specific to that activity. As we monitor the delivery of our work through the year, the Business and Corporate Parenting Plan will remain under regular review and will adapt to our environment as necessary.

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



Our quarterly performance reviews to the CHS Board will take in to 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 of work) in order to adapt to the environment at the time.

MONITORING OUR WORK: KPI's



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

Strategic Theme	Objective	Performance Measure	Baseline	2023/24 Target
1- Rights	1	% staff complete UNCRC training	New measure	100%
1- Rights	3	# of participants actively engaged in our Mutual Mentoring Programme	New measure	4 participants
1- Rights	4	# of young people with lived experience taking part/recruited via participation hub	New measure	6 participants
1 – Rights	5	# of submissions made through the child friendly feedback complaints portal	New measure	No set target – monitor number submitted through portal to evidence use and awareness of child friendly feedback and complaints
2 – Hearings	6	% of PM and staff completed Trauma Informed training	New measure	100%
2 - Hearings	9	% of active and eligible Panel Members observed during the year	New measure (formerly % of hearing sessions observed)	100%
3 - Panel	14	% of pre-service trainees who felt that the learning objectives were met	2019/20: 98% 2020/21: 98% 2021/22: 99% 2022/23: 98%	99%
3 - Panel	14	% of applicants put forward for preservice training who complete the full training	2018/19: 92% 2019/20: 61% 2020/21: 87% 2021/22: 87% 2022/23: 83%	90%

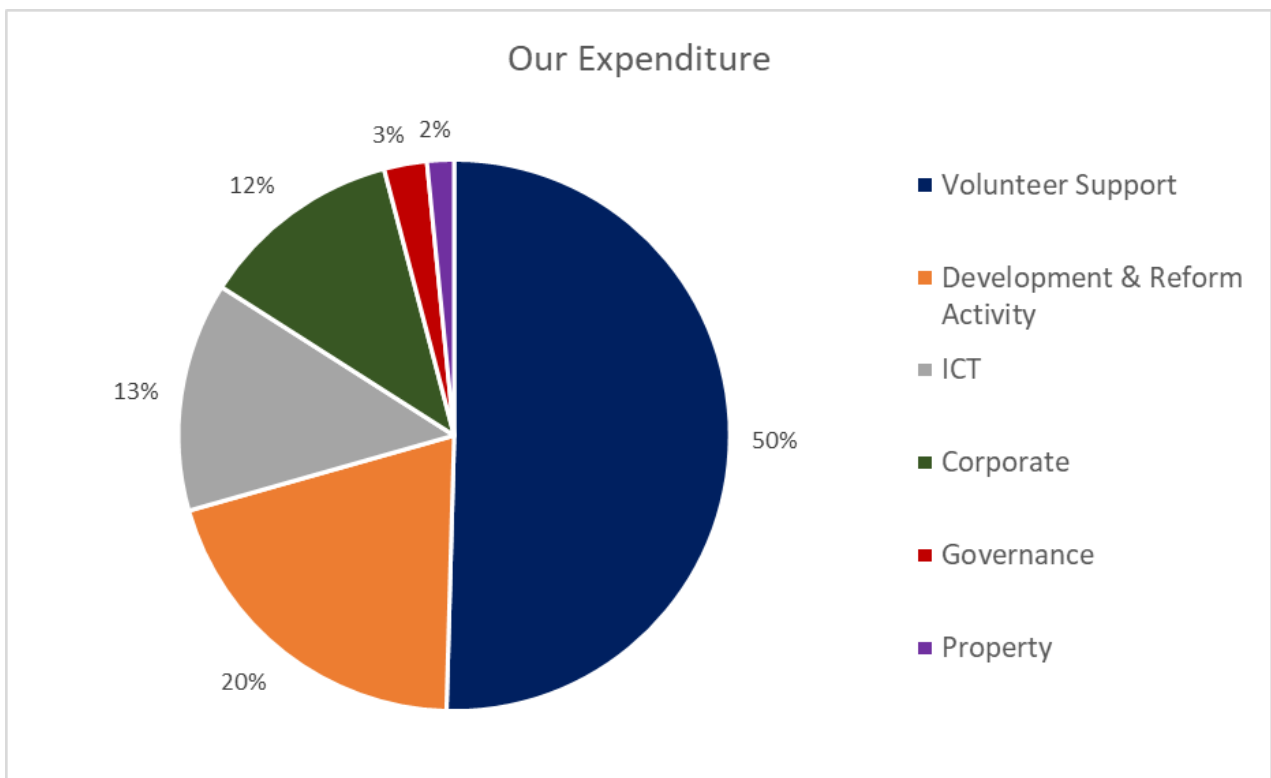
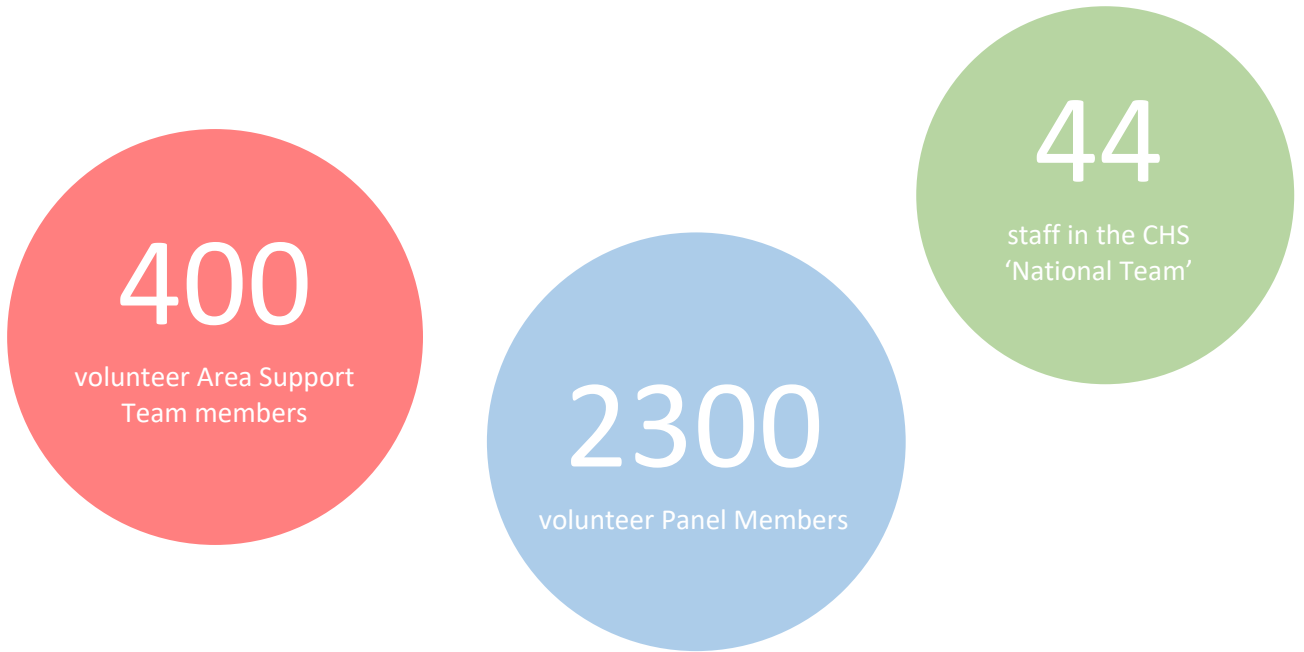
3 - Panel	15	% of eligible PM's completed Enhanced Practice and Management of Hearings training	New measure	70%
3 - Panel	17	% of areas recruiting do so with lived experience recruiters	New Measure	100%
3 - Panel	18	% of Panel Members successfully reappointed	2017/18: 83% 2018/19: 68% 2020/21: 79% 2021/22: 62% 2022/23: 70%	60%
3 - Panel	New measure	% of Panel Members retained during the year	2021/22: 86% 2022/23: 78.5%	80%
Organisational Operations		% CHS employee attendance	2018/19: 95% 2019/20: 97% 2020/21: 99% 2021/22: 85% 2022/23: 97%	99%
Organisational Operations		% invoices not in dispute paid within 10 working days, during normal operations	2018/19: 92% 2019/20: 85% 2020/21: 85% 2021/22: 85% 2022/23: 89.3%	95%
Organisational Operations		% positive staff survey feedback on opportunities for learning and development	2018/19: 33% 2019/20: 52% 2020/21: 65% 2021/22: NA 2022/23: 70%	80%

OUR RESOURCES FOR 2023-24



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

For 2023/24, our budget is £8.186m, made up of revenue and capital costs. These resources are allocated across CHS' functions to ensure that we can recruit, train and support our volunteer community whilst delivering the best quality hearings.



CHS AND THE NATIONAL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK



In our 2020-23 Corporate Plan, we set out how our Strategic Themes are aligned to Scotland’s National Performance Framework. This remains the same for 2023/24 as we extend our strategic themes for an additional year.

A summary is given below:



GLOSSARY



Area Support Teams (ASTs)

Teams who provide support and guidance to panel members at the local level. There are 22 of these across Scotland, with 400 volunteer members.

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.

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.

Learning Academy

Provides a range of training to ensure our volunteer community's learning is current and relevant for the role.

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.

Practice & Policy Bank

An opt-in consultation group from the CHS Community who provide feedback and suggestions related to children's hearings practice and policy.

Promise Programme

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

Scottish Approach to Service Design

A defined approach to designing public services that has the needs of the people who access and use services as its main focus.

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.

The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO)

The SPSO is the organisation that provides the final stage of review of complaints about public bodies such as Children's Hearings Scotland.

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

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CHS Draft Budget 2023-24

Agenda item 10

Paper number: CHS-2223-57

Accountable Officer:	Head of Strategy and Development & DCE
Report author/s:	Management Accountant and Finance Manager
Recommendation/approvals sought:	To note the draft 2023/24 budget envelopes and comment on and approve SMT's approach to closing the budget gap
Resources implications:	As per report

Impact Assessment Duties	Required	Completed
Equalities Impact Assessment	Yes	Yes
Children's Rights Impact Assessment	NA	NA
Data Protection Impact Assessment	NA	NA
Islands Impact Assessment	Yes	Yes

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 CHS is funded through grant in aid (GIA) provided by the Scottish Government (SG). The 2022/23 revenue GIA allocation was set at £4,629k, with an 'in-year revenue' allocation of £721k resulting in revenue funding for 2022-23 of £5,350k. This is broadly in-line with the forecast outturn of £5,711k after adjusting for the utilisation of cash backed reserves of £361k.
- 1.2 In line with Budget and Monitoring letter from SG the 2023-24 budget planning assumptions are flat GIA vs 2022/23 with support from SG to manage budget pressures to meet the full requirement in line with 2022-23 five year plan approved by the Board on the 22nd November 2022.
- 1.3 The 2023-24 capital GIA allocation agreed is set at £656k, an increase of £156k above the original £500k.
- 1.4 CHS continues to deliver on its core priorities whilst at the same time ensuring the time and resource is suitably invested into ensuring a successful implementation of Core System and Applications Solution (CSAS) post MVP.
- 1.5 CHS has four strategic themes in its Corporate Plan supporting the organisations strategic vision and direction to:
 - Better protect and uphold the rights of children
 - Deliver consistently high-quality hearings.
 - Continue to build an effective and empathetic panel, that is well-supported.
 - Be well-informed and influential in our environment and communities

1.6 In addition the plan reflects 3 key organisational priorities:

- Tribunal Support – Implementing an improved tribunal support model to support Panel members to deliver the expectations of an evolving Tribunal system and improve experiences for children and young people.
- Promise Reform – The requirement for transformational change and system re-design from The Promise and The Promise Plan.
- Legislative change – A projected 2,400 additional hearings annually as a result of the Children’s Care and Justice Bill the impact of a potential Promise Bill be the end of the parliamentary term.

These represent additional requirements beyond CHS’ current statutory duty to recruit, train and support volunteer Panel Members.

2. Recommendation

2.1 Board members are asked to approve the 2023/24 budget.

3. Draft 2023/24 budget consolidation

	2022/23 Original Budget	2022/23 Forecast	2023/24 Draft Budget	Increase from 2022/23 Budget	2023/24 5 year plan	Variance from 5 yr plan
	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Business as Usual (BAU)						
Staff	2,566	2,718	3,091	525	2,707	(384)
Board	59	59	61	2	61	0
Training, travel and subsistence	86	66	92	6	75	(17)
Property	123	126	129	6	125	(4)
Other Operating Costs	16	12	16	0	16	0
ICT Costs	501	626	786	285	786	0
Corporate Costs	169	427	175	7	175	0
Panel and AST Expenses	417	190	500	83	680	180
Panel and AST Training	1,049	1,044	1,131	82	1,131	0
Support for Hearings	162	107	175	13	175	0
Volunteer Recruitment	222	331	314	92	280	(35)
AST Devolved Funding	66	56	66	0	66	0
Income	(57)	(20)	0	57	0	0
Total BAU	5,379	5,742	6,536	1,157	6,278	(259)
Tribunal Support Model (TSM)			1,244	1,244	1,500	256
Child Care & Justice Bill (CCJB)			406	406	454	48
Total 2023/24 Budget Proposal			8,187	2,808	8,232	45

	2022/23 Original Budget	2022/23 Forecast	2023/24 Draft Budget	Increase from 2022/23 Budget	2023/24 5 year plan	Variance from 5 yr plan
	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
Capital Budget						
Volunteer devices	200	150	270	70	270	0
CSAS development	250	250	216	(34)	216	0
Refresh staff devices	0	0	50	50	50	0
Other Projects: TSM			256	256	0	(256)
Other Projects: CCJB			48	48	0	(48)

Total 2023/34 Capital Budget Proposal	450	400	840	390	536	(304)
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3.1 Staff costs

The key assumptions at this stage of the 2023-24 budget planning process are:

- an increase in staff headcount required to implement the Tribunal Support Model and Children's Care and Justice Bill); and
- a pay award in line with Scottish Government Pay Policy (current assumption is 5%).

3.1.1 Budget leads, supported by the Finance colleagues, prepare staff headcount budgets on the basis of individuals in post plus any vacancies as at January 2023. Vacancies will be budgeted on the basis of recruitment at the bottom of the relevant grade.

3.1.2 National Insurance contributions and superannuation costs are based on best information available at the time.

3.2 Property Costs

The property budget reflects the forecast full year running costs for Thistle House.

3.3 Training, Travel and Subsistence

Budget holders have prepared the travel and subsistence (T&S) budget, based on a return to a more typical business as usual (BAU) mode of operations post pandemic.

3.4 ICT

The ICT requirements reflect the new Digital Strategy, SCOTS network charge, all website costs and full year running costs for CSAS.

3.5 Shared services

The Shared Services budget includes anticipated costs payable to SCRA based on expected services, and costs payable to Scottish Government or other bodies for procurement support.

3.6 Volunteer Expenses

The Panel and AST Expenses reflect anticipated spend, allowing for a return to pre-pandemic activity levels and assuming a higher level of claims using the CSAS online expenses module.

3.7 Volunteer Training

The Volunteer Training budget reflects both fixed and variable costs arising from the contract with West Lothian College, as well as any anticipated additional spend relating to development or a higher number of recruits.

3.8 Volunteer Recruitment

The Volunteer Recruitment budget reflects the anticipated costs for 2023/24 recruitment campaigns, including PVG costs as well as all costs associated with recruitment of AST members, PPAs and any other volunteers.

3.9 Other Budget Lines

Other Operating Costs, Corporate Costs, Board costs, Support for Hearings, Independent Report Writers and Income are based on anticipated costs where possible.

There is a presumption that the overall total available for AST Devolved Funding remains unchanged i.e. £66k. The 2022/23 forecast outturn is currently £56k.

3.10 VAT

All budgets are prepared on a VAT inclusive basis as CHS cannot reclaim VAT.

3.11 Inflation

It is recognised that there will be unavoidable inflationary pressures on a number of the budget lines; however it is expected that budget holders will identify efficiency savings to mitigate inflationary pressures.

3.12 Savings on Business as Usual Budget

The 2022-23 approved revenue budget included a revenue savings target of £79k (3% of salaries). No target has yet been included in the proposed 2023-24 budget, though a 3%-of-salaries savings target (£90k) is thought to be achievable by SMT. This would increase the variance between the proposed budget and the 5 yr plan from £45k to £135k. SMT will consider this alongside other measures to ensure the final revenue budget aligns to available resources.

3.13 Capital

Capita budget includes volunteer devices (£270k), business-as-usual CSAS development (£216k) and refresh of staff devices (£50k). An extra £304k is expected in order to meet the needs of the CCJB and TSM. SMT will continue dialogue with Sponsor Team to secure the resource required.

3.14 Alignment and Planning

The Budget process aligns with the agreed timetable and process for updating the Corporate Plan, the Business Plan and the Corporate Parenting Plan.

3.15 Tribunal Support Model

A separate overlay has been created within the 2023/24 budget to facilitate the modelling required to capture a range of spend required in setting up and implementing a new tribunal support model once final approval is obtained. The £256k variance between the original proposed £1,500k required and the £1,244k in the revenue table above is now showing within capital.

3.16 Children's Care & Justice Bill (CCJB)

As with the Tribunal Support Model budget we also have a separate overlay to keep track of how the CCJB budget evolves as this initiative is over and above the current business as usual budget funded from existing CHS GIA and in year revenue allowances. The projected spend relating to CCJB comprises volunteer expenses (£194k), staff costs (£101k: 2 FTE, one Recruitment Officer and one Practice Lead), ICT costs (£87k, £48k of which is capital) and recruitment costs (£72k).

4. 5 year Financial Plan Timetable

DATE	ACTIVITY	LEAD
July 23	DCE and Finance Manager begin review of 5 year financial plans	Finance
Oct 23	SMT approve 5 year plan for Board approval	SMT
Nov 23	Board approval	Board
Dec 23	Submission of approved plan to SG Sponsor and Finance Teams	Finance

5. Risks

The risk to the organisational goals/realisation of this project/etc are:

There is a risk that:	We do not get our full allocation
Which may be mitigated by:	Adjusting budgets
Tolerance for risk (High/Med/Low):	Low
Treatment(Tolerate/Treat/Transfer/Terminate):	Treat
Action:	Review

6. Recommendations

6.1 To approve the 2023/24 budget.



Panel Member and Area Support Team Member Expenses Policy

Agenda Item 11

Paper number CHS-2223-58a

Accountable Officer:	Head of Area Support and Community Improvement
Report author:	Carol Wassell
Recommendation:	For approval
Resources implications:	Within available resources

Impact Assessment Duties	Required	Completed
Equalities Impact Assessment	YES	
Children’s Rights Impact Assessment	NO	
Data Protection Impact Assessment	NO	
Islands Impact Assessment	NO	

1. Introduction

1.1 The ‘Panel Member and Area Support Team member expenses policy’ (attached and updated with the proposed changes set out below) was last updated in April 2018. This paper seeks approval for a refresh of the policy including

- An increase to the basic childcare and dependents expenses rate
- Poverty proofing the volunteer expenses policy by promoting the policy and allowing additional payment within the scope of the policy to be made
- Promoting entitlement to claim additional costs incurred by people who may need additional equipment or resource because of a protected characteristic, at the discretion of CHS

1.2 It also sets out a plan for increasing awareness amongst all AST and Panel Members to increase the uptake of expenses.

2. Budget Details

2.1 The Volunteer Expenses, AST Expenses and Devolved budgets for 2022/2023 were allocated a total of £483,327. The forecast spend to the end of year is £246,237. For 2023/2024 the allocation is £566,000. The majority of claims currently made relate to travel and subsistence although the breakdown of reasons for claims is not easy to capture from CSAS and requires a deeper trawl of reasons for claiming.

2.2 For the period between April and October 2022, out of the 2322 claimants that would have been eligible to claim transport and subsistence costs only 916 (39% of the eligible claimants*) used the expenses policy. Some of the 22 AST areas have particularly low rates of take up of expenses:

- East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Shetland, Edinburgh and Inverclyde have between a 14% and 24% take up,
- Aberdeenshire and Highland and Moray having the greatest take up between 63% and 71%

*Based on the data of panel members who were required to attend a face-to-face hearing

2.3 Bench marking with other organisations would show that the CHS Volunteer Expenses Policy is commensurate, if not more generous in certain areas than those of other organisations, both third sector and for paid staff.

3. Refresh of Current Policy

- 3.1 Travel expenses and subsistence claims should remain the same. Milage rates are set by HMRC and any change to these would lead to tax implications. Parking, public transport, ferries and flights, and taxis will continue to be paid on the production of receipts and/or tickets
- 3.2 In relation to costs incurred for the care of children, the policy already allows for additional payment to be made in exceptional circumstances should the cost of care be more than the limit in the policy. This should be promoted to the volunteer community.
- 3.3 Dependent care rates for childcare should be raised from £5 to £6 per hour and this as a 'per child' rate to be emphasised, in line with the rise in Board expense levels
- 3.4 Dependent care rates for adult care and children with additional support needs should be claimed by people registered as an unpaid carer. The rates paid should be based on the ceiling equivalent to the current carer rate paid by the local authority where they live.
- 3.5 Loss of earning expenses to remain the same and be paid at the rate of the Scottish living wage with other conditions as per the current policy.
- 3.6 Telephone, postage, photocopying and printing to remain the same and be reimbursed on the production of a receipt.

4. Communications and Improved Take Up

- 4.1 Wider promotion and a sharing of the refreshed policy may contribute to supporting the wellbeing of existing volunteers and assure those who are thinking of applying to join CHS that there should be no financial detriment. To that end it is recommended
- 4.2 The refreshed policy should be part of a communication package that includes
 - An input to the Clerks at a network meeting
 - Sharing with AST Ops, highlighting the uptake rate in each AST area
 - Input to the LPR network
 - Posting on the news channel of Teams to all volunteers encouraging uptake

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 That the Board agree the changes and amendments to the current policy, and the comms plan to increase uptake. Approve a review of the policy in 2025, unless significant policy changes require an early review.

Panel Member and Area Support Team member expenses policy

March 2023



children's
hearings
scotland



1. Introduction

1.1 This policy sets out Children's Hearings Scotland's (CHS) scheme of expenses and details the types of expenses Panel Members and volunteer AST members can claim for, as well as CHS' rates of payment. CHS values the significant time and effort that Panel Members dedicate to their roles as tribunal members and also recognises the commitment of unsalaried members of Area Support Teams in support of the Children's Panel. CHS understands that their commitment to the Panel may cause them to incur expenses.

1.2 CHS is committed to:

- ensuring that Panel Members and AST members are not left out-of-pocket as a result of their volunteering; and
- reimbursing all reasonable expenses in an accessible, fair and timely manner.

1.3 Out-of-pocket expenses for volunteers are defined in best practice across the voluntary sector as including:

- travelling expenses to and from where they are working as a volunteer
- other subsistence costs – e.g. food and drink
- any special clothing and/or tools
- training
- childcare

Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, August 25th, 2012

1.4 Reasonable expenses are those necessarily incurred while undertaking approved Panel Member and AST activities. A list of approved activities is attached as Appendix 1. Only reasonable expenses as set out in this policy will be reimbursed.

1.5 Panel Members and AST members must ensure that their attendance is recorded at events, as expense claims will not be paid without proof of attendance.

1.6 The authority to determine and pay allowances to children's Panel Members is given to the National Convener in the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 (Schedule 2 Section 4) and determinations of allowances are subject to the approval of Scottish Ministers. The authority is given in Schedule 1 Section 10 (9) for CHS to pay expenses and allowances determined by the Scottish Ministers to those to whom a function of the National Convener is delegated.

1.7 This expenses policy supports CHS' vision, mission and values, as well as the commitments made in the National Standards for Panel Members.



2. CHS' Commitment to Paying Expenses

2.1 CHS will reimburse all reasonable and necessary expenses which Panel Members and AST members incur in order to organise their roles.

- CHS will provide an accessible, fair and timely process for the claiming and reimbursement of expenses.
- CHS may reimburse the actual value of all reasonable expenses subject to maximum limits.
- CHS does not require receipts for mileage or un-ticketed parking. For all other claims, claimants should upload images of receipts to the expenses service alongside their claim, or retain receipts for 12 months in case the approver requires to see them to approve the claim. If a receipt cannot be provided, any payment will be at the discretion of CHS.
- CHS will only be able to reimburse expenses which are claimed within three months of the date on which they were incurred.
- CHS will be guided by HM Revenue and Customs on recommended mileage rates and passenger payments.
- CHS will organise to provide accommodation and catering for large-scale events in order that Panel Members and AST members do not incur unnecessary expense in order to attend.
- CHS will endeavour to organise national events and meetings in locations where there are convenient public transport links.

2.2 CHS and Clerks to the ASTs will manage and monitor expenses claims and CHS will review the expenses policy after one year. CHS will seek feedback from Panel Members and AST members on the policy's operation and it will be reviewed every two years thereafter.

3. Considerations for Panel Members and AST members

3.1 CHS recognises that being present at a hearing on time is the most important factor for Panel Members when making decisions about how they will travel and what accommodation they will need, and this should always take precedence. Where there is a range of travel options available which are convenient and practical, CHS asks that Panel and AST members consider the environment and getting best value when making their choices, and as far as possible try to:

- Use public transport where it is convenient and more cost effective than private transport.
- Share private transport with other Panel Members and AST members if this is possible and practical.
- Book travel and accommodation as far in advance as possible to secure the lowest rate available.



- Use videoconferencing facilities for AST business where these are available and appropriate to reduce the need for travel. CHS will encourage the use of videoconferencing to minimise the time commitment required from volunteers.

4. Expenses Panel Members can claim

4.1 Panel Members can claim for:

- Mileage, including car, motorbike and bicycle
- Parking
- Public transport, including bus, train, ferries and flights and taxis (taxis in exceptional circumstances only)
- Subsistence, including accommodation and meals
- Financial loss, including dependent care costs and loss of earnings

5. Expenses AST Members Can Claim (see Section 10)

5.1 In addition to the expenses Panel Members can claim for which are listed above, AST members can also claim for:

- Telephone calls, text messages and postage costs incurred in respect of their duties
- Essential printing and photocopying costs

6. Costs Which Cannot be Claimed

6.1 Panel Members and AST members will not be reimbursed for:

- Any fees or fines incurred as a result of the improper use of transport (e.g. parking fines and speeding fines).
- Any expenses which are already provided by another party.
- Any expenses which should be more appropriately paid to someone else (for example, mileage claims when another Panel Member has provided transport and incurred the expense).
- Any non-essential additional costs a Panel Member or AST member chooses to pay (e.g. tipping of taxi drivers or restaurant staff).
- Any expenses for meals and refreshments when these have been provided free of charge by CHS or any other body (e.g. lunch at training events).
- The purchase of alcohol.



7. Travel Expenses

7.1 Mileage claims

Motorists are responsible for ensuring they have appropriate insurance cover. CHS will not contribute to the cost of motor insurance.

Mileage claims should be as precise as possible. Motorists should claim for the number of miles travelled, however if exact figures are not available mileage should be calculated using an online route planner tool (e.g. Google maps, AA Route Planner).

Cars and Vans - mileage may be paid to car and van users at 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles in the tax year, then at 25p per mile thereafter.

Motorcycles - mileage may be paid to motorcycle users at 24p per mile.

Bicycles - mileage may be paid to bicycle users at 20p per mile.

Passengers - an additional rate of 5p per mile may be paid to drivers carrying other Panel Members or AST members as passengers.

Parking - Reasonably incurred parking costs may be reimbursed in respect of time spent carrying out panel or AST activity. Wherever possible, parking costs should be supported by a receipt. Panel Members are encouraged to use free parking whenever available.

7.2 Public Transport Claims

Buses and Trains - bus and train costs may be paid in full upon production of a ticket for the lowest available rate. CHS will not contribute to the cost of travel passes.

Ferries and Flights- ferry and flight costs must be approved by CHS, or a person with delegated authority from CHS, prior to travel. Costs may be paid in full upon production of a ticket for the lowest available rate.

Taxis - CHS will pay for taxi fares when a Panel Member or AST member has accessibility needs which require it, or when it is more economical for group travel than any other mode of transport. CHS will pay for taxi fares where a Panel Member or AST member requires to use a taxi for reasons of personal safety. Otherwise, taxi fares may be paid in exceptional circumstances only. Taxi fares may be paid in full upon production of a receipt.



8. Subsistence Claims

8.1 Accommodation

- Overnight accommodation must be approved and booked in advance by CHS, or a person with delegated authority from CHS, except in emergency circumstances.
- The cost of overnight accommodation may be paid up to a maximum of £80 per night for bed and breakfast and upon production of a receipt.
- The cost of overnight accommodation on a ferry may be paid upon production of a ticket for the lowest available rate. Flexibility in exceptional circumstances is at the discretion of CHS.
- No claim should be made if overnight accommodation is provided free of charge by CHS or any other body.

8.2 Meals

- In exceptional circumstances, Panel Members and AST members may require to claim for meals. CHS may reimburse meal costs at its discretion.
- When a Panel Member or AST member undertakes approved activities and is obliged to take a meal away from their home or work base which requires them to incur additional expense, they may claim for the cost of the meal up to maximum limits. The circumstances must have made it unavoidable for them to spend more than they normally would have done.
- Upon production of a receipt, subsistence costs will be paid at a rate of:
 - <5 hours £4.90
 - >10 hours £10.70
 - 24 hours £25.05
- Your local clerks have accompanying guidance for the application of this policy in relation to claims for specific meals (Breakfast/lunch/dinner).

9. Financial Loss Claims

9.1 Dependent Care

- Care costs may only be paid for the number of hours spent on panel or AST activities and travelling to and from these commitments.
- CHS will consider reimbursing a higher hourly rate for child and dependant care rates on an exceptional basis.
- Childcare costs will only be paid for children who are looked after in registered childcare. Proof of registration must be submitted to CHS. CHS will not reimburse claims for children who are looked after in unregistered childcare.
- No payment will normally be made to anyone who is a parent, step-parent, guardian, sibling or child of the dependant, or who is living within the same household as the dependant. Any exceptions will be at the discretion of CHS.



- CHS will not reimburse, or contribute towards, costs for existing care arrangements that Panel or AST members may already have for their dependants.
- Dependent rates for child care will be paid at a rate of £6 per hour per child
- Dependent care rates for adult care and children with additional support needs should be claimed by people registered as an unpaid carer. The rates paid should be based on the ceiling equivalent to the current carer rate paid by the local authority where they live, and will be per hour per dependent adult or child.

9.2 Loss of Earnings

- Loss of earnings will be paid at a rate equal to that of the Scottish Real Living Wage hourly rate.
- A maximum of 4 x the hourly rate for less than 4 hours service and a maximum of 8 x the hourly rate for more than 4 hours service per day.
- CHS is only able to pay loss of earnings expenses where an employer grants the Panel Member or AST member unpaid time off to undertake panel activities. Evidence from an employer stating the employee's hourly rate, and confirmation that they are not being paid for time spent out of work, must be submitted to CHS. This must include confirmation that they are not providing flexi credit to cover any time out of work.
- Self-employed Panel Members who are unable to vary their hours of work must provide evidence from their accountant of their actual hourly earnings based upon their most recent accounts and calculated at a 35 hour week, and submit this to CHS. Please note that if you are self-employed you may be liable to business income taxation on any payment for financial loss.
- No claim can be made by Panel Members and AST members who work shifts or have flexible working arrangements and can undertake panel activities without financial loss.
- Dependent care expenses and loss of earnings expenses cannot be claimed for the same period.

10. Telephone, Postage, Photocopying and Printing Claims (AST members only)

10.1 Telephone Calls, Text Messages and Postage

- Those not provided with mobile phones by CHS (for Panel and AST business use only) may be reimbursed for telephone call and text message costs to their full value upon production of an itemised telephone bill.
- Postage may be reimbursed in full upon production of receipts.



10.2 Photocopying and Printing

- Whenever possible and practical, AST members should pass AST and panel-related documents to the clerk to the AST for printing and photocopying.
- In exceptional circumstances where AST members require to print or photocopy AST and panel-related documents at home, ink cartridges may be requested from CHS up to a maximum of one cartridge in a six month period.
- If public copying or printing facilities are used, copy costs may be reimbursed only on production of a receipt.

11. How to Claim Expenses

Panel Members and AST members should complete an expenses claim using the online expenses service, uploading receipts there if requested to. The AST Clerk will then review the claim, and either approve it for payment or return it to the claimant if there is an issue preventing approval. Claimants who cannot use the expenses service should contact their AST Clerk for further instructions.

Appendix 1

Approved Panel Member and AST Member Activities



Panel Members and AST members may be reimbursed for expenses claims incurred while attending the following approved activities:

1. Hearings
2. All national training linked to the national curriculum
3. Other local training linked to the national curriculum which has been approved by the National Convener
4. AST meetings and/or AST sub-committee meetings as agreed by the Area Convener
5. Other approved meetings (as set out in the Panel Member and AST Member Handbook)
6. Local agency meetings which have been agreed by the Area Convener or Depute Area Convener
7. Forums and events which have been organised or sponsored by CHS
8. Other legitimate panel business as agreed by CHS



Quarter 4 2022/3 Performance Report

Agenda Item 12

Paper number CHS-2223-59a

Accountable Officer:	Head of Strategy, Development and DCE
Report author:	Business Support & Governance Lead
Resources implications:	NA
Recommendation:	To Approve
Approval(s) sought:	Milestones not completed/overall report

Impact Assessment Duties	Required	Completed
Equalities Impact Assessment	No	
Children’s Rights Impact Assessment	No	
Data Protection Impact Assessment	No	
Islands Impact Assessment	No	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This paper includes the Quarter 4 Performance Report for 2022-3, quarterly data summary, and covering note highlighting completion, re-timing, and any delays to milestones.
- 1.2 Due to the governance schedule, KPI reporting is presented up to a specified date in March, as detailed per KPI.
- 1.3 Where possible, data up to the end of Q4 has been used. Where this has not been possible, the date data was sourced, or date range is given.

2. Data Summary

- 2.1 Hearings and Sessions data
Hearings and sessions data has been provided by SCRA however it has not gone through their records and data reconciliation process and is therefore classed as “unofficial”.
- 2.2 Forecasts and targets
Panel Member and Chair forecasts are based on data and calculations from October-November 2022. It is likely that based on these figures we may be overestimating the number of Panel Members and Chairs needed as early Hearings forecasts for 23/24 and 24/25 are now lower than previously predicted. Forecasting will be re-run, in line with the new business year and full data analysis from 22/23, and presented in the Q1 23/24 report.
- 2.3 Observation target
There are two major contributing factors for the performance KPI on sessions

observed not being met.

- Currently, there are fewer PPA's than required in some areas however, this will be mitigated by our PPA recruitment campaign.
- In 22/23 we have had two recruitment campaigns. During pre-service, trainees are assigned observe sessions. Only one individual may attend a hearing as an observer (to minimise the number of individuals in the hearing). While crucial for trainees experience, this has resulted in less hearing session available for PPA's to attend.

3. Year in review

Our business plan and quarterly performance report addresses activities in line with our planned and identified strategic objectives however, due to changes in year there are areas of substantial investments in time and organisational resource which the performance report does not include or expand upon. This has resulted in re-prioritisation of work and for some milestones not to be met in year (see sections 4.2 & 4.3) Below are some examples of where we have invested further to deliver on organisational and system priorities.

3.1 Hearing Re-design

- Three co-designed project teams were created led by the Promise and Office of the Chief Designer focussed on before, during and after a hearing. CHS seconded staff to Chair 2 of these groups and provided staff and volunteers to participate in all 3 re-design groups.
- Seconded a member of the National team to undertake an internal research project on tribunal models around the world to assist with the hearing redesign work. The paper created was submitted to the Promise.
- Led on the creation of a collaborative PID with SCRA and The Promise to define the redesign proposal parameters. Children's Rights
- As part of the UNCRC project, recruited an intern to support the Practice and Policy team to create a Rights Map tool.
- Created our Siblings Rights toolkit for our community in line with the implementation of the Children (Scotland) Act 2020.

3.2 Tribunal Support

- Seconded a member of the National team to act as a Senior Responsible Officer on the Tribunal Support Model project developing the thinking and structures needed to better support or community going forward.
- Engaged with community and staff members via short term working groups to identify our 'as is' and inform future improvement work.
- Continued to support panel capacity through further developments in management information (MI) reporting and data, and via fortnightly operational support meetings.
- Continue to improve chairing capacity through the implementation of a chairing working group which saw a number of identified improvements realised and executed.

3.3 Care and Justice Bill

- To prepare for the Care and Justice Bill significant organisational resources have been put into planning and influencing. We have liaised with the Bill team, responded to

the formal consultation, and submitted evidence to the lead Parliamentary Committee. We have consulted and engaged with our panel community, organising briefing and learning sessions.

- We have worked to analyse the data and carried out finance modelling to secure appropriate levels of resources in the financial memorandum. In addition, we are recruiting staff in preparation for implementation anticipated for April 2024.

3.4 Digital

- Carried out digital discovery work to scope improvements and changes within CSAS to support reform and tribunal support projects.
- Worked with CHSLA to map process and behaviours to bring forward new agreed ways of working to ensure accurate recording within CSAS of community learning journeys.

4. Performance during Quarter 4

4.1 A selection of activities that have been completed during the quarter included:

- Evidenced the impact of CHS's implementation of the Children (Scotland) Act 2020 via the Practice and Policy Bank at the start and end of this project showing significantly improved Panel Member confidence in embedding siblings' rights in children's hearings;
- Launched the CHS Mutual mentoring Programme Pilot with our first four sets of mentoring pairs from CHS staff and the Participation Group;
- Work with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman and a children's rights partner organisation to develop new processes and procedures for child friendly complaints and feedback;
- Built and rolled out management information reports via Power BI for use by recruitment, National Team, ACs, DACs, and Clerks. In addition, rolled out data summaries for monthly SMT and quarterly Board meetings; and
- Carried out engagement and improvement work focused on PPA's.

4.2 Five milestones have not been completed by the end of Q4. The details and follow up actions are documented on the final page of the Performance Report, and as below:

- While the Participation Hub for the CHS website has been created, launch remains delayed due to competing priorities in the Communications Team and for our Participation Group. Plans are on track for launch in Q1 23/24 and we do not anticipate any further changes to these timelines.
- There has been much activity to improve the quality of reasons and decisions including national sampling of Records of Proceedings and the development of a quality assessment tool. The Pilot of the quality improvement tool is currently paused while we await more clarity on coming reforms and the impacts they may have on this work.
- In Q4 we anticipated the implementation of a quality management framework for independent reports. Focus throughout the quarter has been on improved access to data regarding the Panel Members who request and receive reports in order better understand the reasons why reports are required, and to ensure they are meeting the needs of decision makers. This will continue into 23/24.

- The Majority of ASTs have continued to implement and monitor progress against their Area Plans. The prioritisation of the second PM recruitment and selection process late in 2022 and the work to drive Chairing capacity in all areas affected AST capacity to implement and monitor some Area Plan actions. ASIP's continue to provide support to ASTs to ensure core business and functions are delivered and bring forward any risks to the National Team.
- An in-depth EDI training session was delivered to all staff in Q1, and Q4. Plans are underway to p make baseline learning available for all volunteers by the end of Q4. Bespoke video content from an external provider is in progress and will be hosted on the CHSLA site for all volunteers and will form part of a wider suite of materials.

4.3 As agreed at the Board meeting of November, 2023, Four milestones have been de-scoped due to competing and changed priorities:

- Sharing mentoring programme externally has been de-scoped due to the delayed launch of the Mentoring Programme to end of Q4. This work will progress into 23/24 after an evaluation of the first cycle of mentoring pairs.
- Evaluation and expansion of our mentoring programme has been de-scoped due to the delayed launch of the Mentoring Programme. This work will progress into 23/24.
- Completion of baseline trauma training by all volunteers was descoped however this work will carry forward into 23/24 with Trauma training becoming mandatory and a KPI of 100% set for the new business plan.
- The development and influence of research recruitment opportunities with partners and the CHS community was de-scoped due to other organisational priorities, though CHS continues to engage with research requests and partner opportunities.

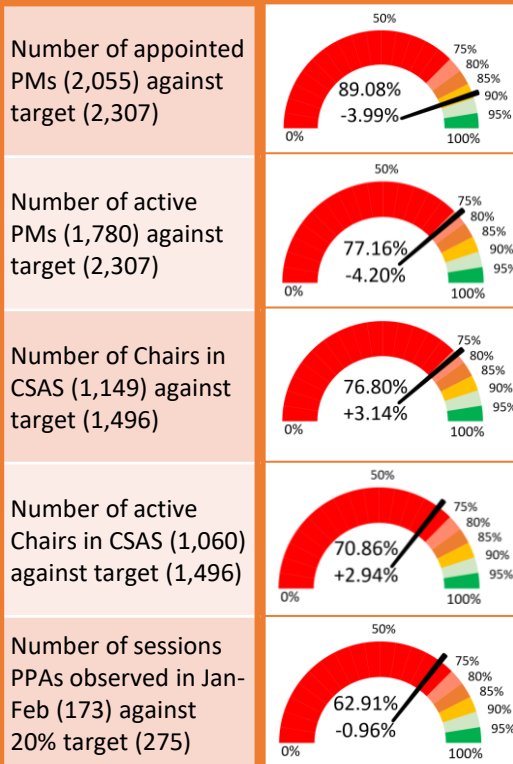
5. Board Actions:

- 5.1 To note the milestones which have not been completed at the end of quarter 4.
- 5.2 To approve the report.

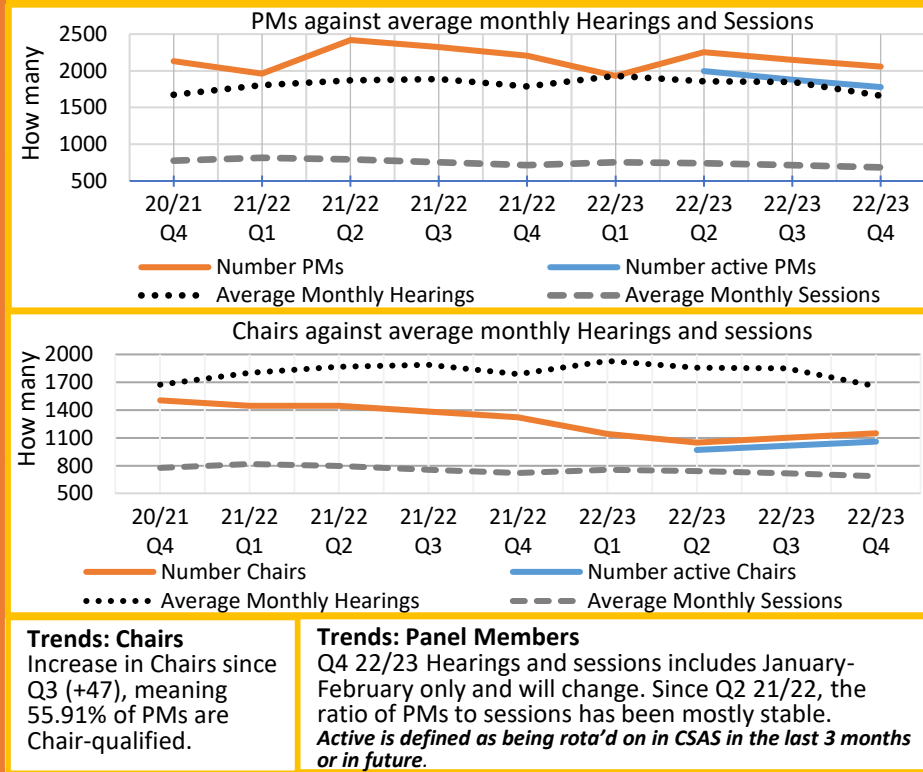
Volunteer data 15/03/23

	Panel Members	Active PMs	ACs & DACs	PPAs	Hearings Jan-Feb*	Sessions Jan-Feb*
Total	2,055	1,780	43	122	3,317	1,372
Change since Q4 end	-92	-97	-2	-6	-	-

Performance overview 15/03/23



Trends over time to 15/03/23



Trends: Volunteer Numbers

- There has been an expected decline in volunteer numbers since Q3. This trend is expected to continue until Q1 23/24 when the autumn Panel Member cohort are appointed.
- Risk to capacity and targets dependent on rate of ends of service and change in number of Hearings/sessions in 23/24.

Trends: Hearings & Sessions

- *These are not finalised Q4 figures and will change.
- Hearings and sessions have been mostly stable through 22/23.

Trends: Demographics

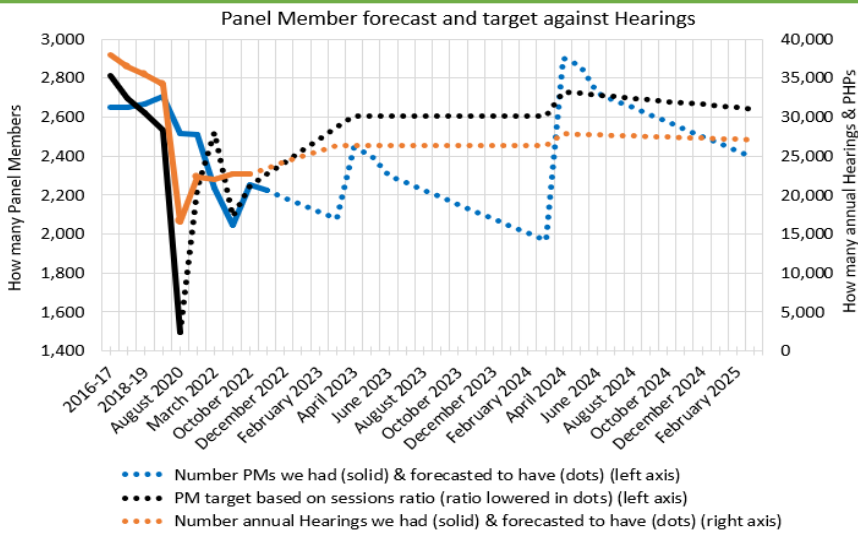
- Data similar to Q3, with the exception of AST Members' age and gender.
- A small number of AST Members have completed the equalities monitoring form, meaning any changes can show a difference.

Demographics Q4	PMs	PM change	ASTs	AST change
Average length of service (years)	5.95	+0.27	3.27	+0.25
% Female	68.56%	-0.18%	42.42%	-5.55%
% Male	31.29%	+0.22%	22.42%	-7.06%
% Other genders or not completed	0.15%	-0.04%	35.15%	+12.61%
Average age (years)	52.94	+0.26	59.09	-8.06
% Lived experience (at least this %)	3.26%	+0.04%	3.64%	+0.17%

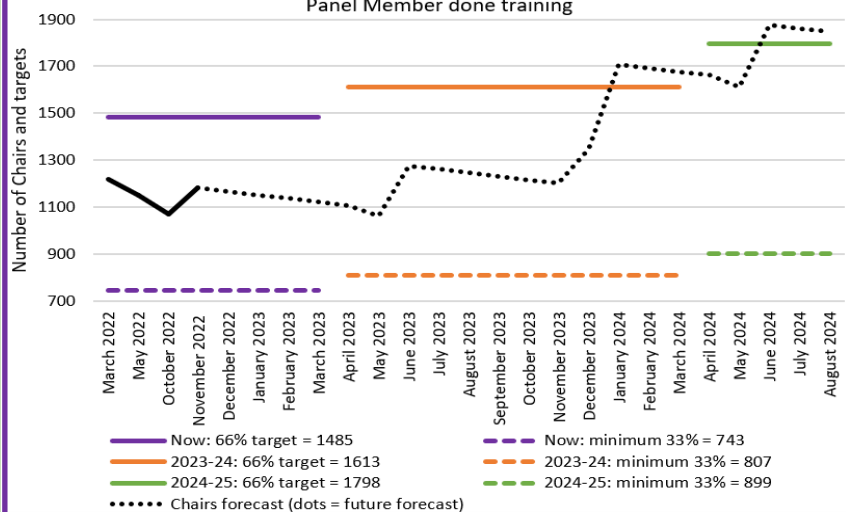
Panel Member forecast

Data last updated Oct 2022

- Number of PMs will decline until April 2023, through anticipated ends of service.
- PM numbers will increase in Q1 23/24 when new PMs are appointed. We will closely monitor PM numbers throughout the year to monitor capacity and risk.
- Hearings and sessions are forecasted to increase in 23/24 and 24/25, inline with the CCJ Bill. Forecasting will be updated in Q1 23/24.
- A high number of PMs will likely need to be appointed in 2024 to manage the additional CCJ Hearings.
- Risk is dependent on the number of future Hearings, sessions, and end of service rate.



Chair forecast with target (66%) and minimum (33%) if every single Panel Member done training



Chairs forecast

Data last updated Oct 2022

- This graph shows the best possible outcome – if every PM completed training, under the 2022 program.
- Realising our target of 66% of PMs chair trained will take time given the number of new PMs recently appointed. Changes are being implemented to improve the process.
- Training courses in Q4 22/23 will help increase the number of Chairs, with an increase expected from Q1 23/24.

Children's Hearings Scotland: Quarterly Performance Report QUARTER 4 (January, February, March 2023)



Quarter Summary - Objectives:

	Objectives				
	B	G	A	R	-
Theme 1 - Rights	4	0	1	2	
Theme 2 - Hearings	5	0	2	1	
Theme 3 - Panel	10	0	1	0	
Theme 4 - Evidence & Environment	7	0	0	1	
Organisational Effectiveness and Staff Support	2	0	1	0	
TOTAL	28	0	5	4	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 descoped, or whole objective re-timed
Red = Objective at serious risk of not being delivered on time / budget - or Objective has been descoped
Dash (-) = Not yet due for reporting / update

Milestones:

	Number of Milestones at End Q4
Planned to Complete*	74
Completed - Actual	65
Descoped	4
Notes	

* as published in the Business Plan

children's hearings scotland PROMISE PROGRAMME		Promise Programme Performance Summary
Status	Objective #	Project Topic
	1	UNCRC
	2	Children (Scotland) Act
	7	Trauma Responsive Hearings
	8	Hearings Blueprint
	26	Participation, Engagement and Consultation

Theme 1: Better Protect and Uphold the Rights of Children

	Business Objective and Owner	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
1	Under our Promise Programme , carry out activities to give further effect to the UNCRC in our work, in line with its incorporation in to law – <i>Practice & Policy</i>	Green	Green	Green	Blue	1.1	Develop and deliver a UNCRC training plan for our volunteer community and staff	Progress to end Q4	Q4: 100%	As there is still no timeline to incorporate UNCRC in Scotland, training plans based on incorporation are not yet possible however, to maintain momentum and a focus on children's rights, Children in Scotland will deliver a bespoke webinar for 250 Panel Members on 28th March. This training will be recorded and rolled out to the entire CHS Community and staff via CHSLA online. Further training is planned for 23/24 before incorporation.
						1.2	Carry out work to embed Children's Rights Impact Assessments in our work	Progress to end Q4	Q4: 100%	All CHS projects as well as SMT and Board reports now require a joint impact assessment to consider any implications for UNCRC, Equalities, Data Protection and Islands Impact.
2	As part of the CHS Promise Programme , continue to embed the Children (Scotland) Act 2020 in hearings practice and assess its impact through our "Children (Scotland) Act 2020 Phase 2 Project" – <i>Practice & Policy</i>	Green	Blue	Blue	Blue	2.1	Utilise the Practice & Policy Bank to gain feedback on experiences and practice of the Children (Scotland) Act 2020	Complete by end Q2	Q4: 100%	The Practice & Policy Bank provided insight and feedback into siblings' rights in children's hearings. This informed a targeted improvement approach involving Teams posts, Refresh training and multi-agency workshops.
						2.2	Host regional multi-agency workshops to demonstrate how Panel Members and professionals can make siblings rights real, using case studies	Complete by end Q2	Q4: 100%	All areas were provided Toolkits to deliver multi-agency workshops. Where AST and/or external agency capacity meant this was not possible, alternative support was provided.
						2.3	Evidence the impact of CHS's implementation of the Children (Scotland) Act 2020	Complete by end Q4	Q4: 100%	Surveys of the Practice and Policy Bank at the start and end of this project show significantly improved Panel Member confidence in embedding siblings' rights in children's hearings.

	Business Objective and Owner	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
3	Embed best practice in participation throughout our work by rolling out the CHS Participation Standards – Rights & Inclusion	-	Yellow	Yellow	Blue	3.1	Deliver a communications programme sharing information about the standards	Complete by end Q3	Q4: 100%	Staff communicated via CHS Bites session. Animations co-created with OHOV/VIP linked to the standards via an Introduction video launching end of March with CHSLA and AST. Participation Standards shared on social media. Further communications in development.
						3.2	Co-design and launch a Participation Standards Reflection Toolkit	Complete by end Q3	Q4: 100%	Toolkit on track for completion end of Q4 for approval in Q1.
						3.3	Gather feedback on the Participation Standards Reflection Toolkit	Complete by end Q4	Q4: 100%	See above
4	Enable CHS staff to collaborate with people with lived experience on emerging improvements and projects through a new Mutual Mentoring programme – <i>Rights & Inclusion</i>	-	Yellow	Red	Red	4.1	Launch the programme, with the first mentoring pairing	Complete by end of Q2	Q4: 100%	Pilot programme launched March 2023 with four sets of mentoring pairs from CHS staff and Participation Group. External training in mentoring to support mutual mentoring programme complete end of Q4.
						4.2	Work with the mentors to share the programme externally	Complete by end of Q3	Descope	Discussions between CHS and Mentoring training and support providers have highlighted that a partnership will be the most beneficial way to support a Mutual mentoring programme at CHS. Evaluation of pilot in Q2 23/24 ahead full scale roll out of programme.
						4.3	Evaluate the programme and consider expansion further within the CHS staff team	Complete by end of Q4	Descope	See above - programme included in 23/24 business plan

	Business Objective and Owner	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
5	Create effective systems and processes for accessible and consistent participation opportunities – Rights & Inclusion	-	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	5.1	Develop a Participation Hub on the CHS website to advertise and define our participation opportunities	Complete by end of Q2	Q4: 75%	Participation opportunities web page has been designed and developed in background, ready for launch. Launch has been delayed do to competing priorities for the communications team and Participation Group. On track to launch Q1 23/24.
			Green	Blue		5.2	Create co-designed opportunities for the people with lived experience who work with us to collaborate and identify areas of interest within CHS	Complete by end Q4	Q4: 100%	A number of co-design projects have been completed including: animations for CHSLA and Panel Members, UNCRRC Rights Map for Panel Members, Mutual Mentoring programme, Recruitment and Selection of Panel Members, and various smaller projects. The Participation Group have identified areas of interest for incorporation in 23/24 business plans.
6	Ensure our feedback mechanisms are accessible by developing child-friendly complaints processes – Practice & Policy	-	Green	Green	Blue	6.1	Work with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman and a children’s rights partner organisation to develop new processes and procedures	Complete by end Q4	Q4: 100%	Work shop held with SPSO. SPSO collecting feedback from children and young people, with report pending. Webpage in development, on track for launch. All content on track for release 31/03/23.

Theme 2: Deliver Consistently High-Quality Hearings

	Business Objective and Owner	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
7	As part of the CHS Promise Programme, carry out activities to improve the extent to which hearings and our work is trauma-informed , through our "Trauma Responsive Practice Project" – Area Support					7.1	CHS Learning Academy to embed learning on trauma in all relevant courses	Complete by end Q4	Q4:100%	Trauma is embedded in pre- service learning, and new trauma learning modules have been released March 2023.
						7.2	All CHS volunteers complete baseline training on trauma	Complete by end Q4	Descoped	Package of Trauma learning and communications for CHS Community and staff ready for released March 2023. Trauma Training is part of mandatory training for all PM's, AST, and staff for 23/24 onwards.
						7.3	Initial evaluation of the impact of baseline learning on Panel Member practice	Complete by end Q4	Q4: 100%	Project team continues to meet for baseline evaluation work with plan to involve PPAs in quality assurance of learning. Data and Evidence survey complete to establish a baseline understanding of trauma informed practice across the organisation. Limited number of PM's who undertook baseline training included - findings still under analysis.
						7.4	Develop a plan for phase 2 of the project based on pilot learning	Complete by end Q4	Q4: 100%	Draft plan developed based on a range of data including responses to baseline surveys to CHS community, roll out of toolkit to support trauma practice and creation of more CHS specific trauma related learning content

	Business Objective and Owner	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4				
8	As part of the CHS Promise Programme , lead on, and contribute to, the development of a multi-agency plan for the transformational redesign of the hearings system through the " CHS Blueprint Project " – Area Support					8.1 Define change priorities for children for before, during and after their hearings, using the Hearing System Working Group's (HSWG) issues list as the key terms of reference	Complete by end Q2	Q2: 100%	Work complete and final collaborative proposals submitted to the HSWG 23rd Nov 2022
						8.2 Create and release a collaborative Programme Plan for the redesign work, utilising the Scottish Approach to Service Design	Complete by end Q3	Q3: 100%	Work complete and final collaborative proposals submitted to the HSWG 23rd Nov 2022
						8.3 Agree the final hearings model to be pursued ("the blueprint") and release to the HSWG for approval	Complete by end Q3	Q3: 100%	Work complete and final collaborative proposals submitted to the HSWG 23rd Nov 2022
						8.4 Evidence the collaboration between CHS, SCRA, the HSWG, The Promise, people with lived experience, and the wider CHS community	Complete by end Q4	Q3: 100%	Work complete and final collaborative proposals submitted to the HSWG 23rd Nov 2022
9	Keep Panel Members equipped with accurate, up-to-date information and advice to be able to make effective and timely decisions - Practice					9.1 Issue guidance focussed on good quality hearings and decision making	Progress to end Q4	Q4:100%	In addition to the Practice and Procedure Manual, which was fully updated in October, comprehensive guidance was provided on the end of the emergency legislation and a trauma-informed, child-friendly approach to Pre-Hearing Panels.
10	Collaborate as a key partner in locally-driven projects to improve hearings environments and experiences– Area Support					10.1 Attendance and involvement in groups and projects as appropriate	Progress to end Q4	Q4: 100%	in 22/23 focus has shifted to national implementation priorities, including becoming trauma aware, ensuring we are promoting the rights of brother and sisters, improving reasons for decisions, and improving the quality of PPA outputs. Area projects have included the 'Better Meetings' project in Highland and Moray. Driven by children and young people, working with Who Cares? and the Local Authority, amongst others, this work has become nationally significant in the influence it has brought to bear on the thinking of the HSWG.

	Business Objective and Owner	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
11	Ensure our quality management mechanisms are operating effectively, through Panel Practice Advisor (PPA) support and observation delivery – <i>Area Support</i>	█	█	█	█	11.1	Carry out improvements to PPA digital tools and support	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100%	Autosave, review function, Panel Member notifications of observations, and ability to view past observations all launched. Dec 22-SCRA have sight of PPA attendance vis CSAS
				█	█	11.2	Develop and deliver engagement work focussed on PPAs	Progress to end Q4	Q4:100%	Bespoke PPA/DAC Trauma Workshops delivered in March 23. Planning for 3 PPA National Development Days with CHSLA will be complete by end of March and will be delivered in May.
12	Improve the quality of recorded reasons and decisions – <i>Practice & Policy</i>	-	-	█	█	12.1	Develop a quality assurance tool to assess reasons and decisions	Complete by end Q3	Q4: 100%	Tool developed and complete
				█	█	12.2	Conduct national sampling of records of proceedings	Complete by end Q4	Q4: 100%	Records of Proceedings from 31 areas were sampled to ensure the robustness of the assessment tool.
				█	█	12.3	Scope out pilot improvements to the ways reasons are delivered	Progress to end Q4	Q4: 75%	Pilot improvements paused to await Mackie report which is anticipated to alter the way decisions and reasons are recorded and shared.
13	Continue to ensure Panel Members receive relevant information for decision-making by developing the Independent Reports function – <i>Practice & Policy</i>	█	█	█	█	13.1	Reappoint existing report writers and recruit additional experts to maintain a robust bank for the next 2 years	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100%	Reappointment process taken place as well as recruitment for new report writers.
				█	█	13.2	Implement a quality management framework	Complete by end Q4	Q4: 75%	The focus for Q4 has been improved access to data regarding the Panel Members who request and receive reports. This will allow the team to understand better the reasons why reports are required and to ensure they are meeting the needs of decision makers. This will continue into 23/24.
14	Involve our volunteer community in the discussion around emerging practice areas through a Practice Bank – <i>Practice & Policy</i>	█	█	█	14.1	Grow the Practice Bank to ensure at least 20% of volunteer community are involved	Complete by end Q2	Q4: 100%	Practice and Policy Bank consultation and feedback requests continue to see consistent engagement. 266 members of the community have signed up to the Bank and it is not felt that any more are required at this stage to provide insight into current practice.	
			█	█	14.2	Consult on areas for development, implementation of legislation, and policy changes	Progress to end Q4	Q4: 100%	Throughout 22/23, the Bank have provided key insights into topics including advocacy provision, updated practice materials, policy changes, complaints handling, siblings' rights and UNCRC rights. This has been via surveys and online focus groups.	

Theme 3: Continue to Build and Effective, Empathetic Panel, that is well-supported									
	Business Objective and Owner	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4				
15	Promote the contribution of our volunteers through a dedicated volunteer recognition campaign - <i>Communications</i>					15.1 Volunteer recognition campaign during Volunteers Week (1st - 7th June)	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100%	Campaign focussed on sharing volunteers experiences and how they align to CHS core values.
16	Ensure CHS has appropriate and sustainable structures in place to effectively support the people needed to deliver a re-designed hearings system – <i>Strategy & Development</i>	-				16.1 Work with staff, Area Conveners and the CHS community to identify structures to deliver redesign outcomes	Complete by end Q4	Q3:100%	2 rounds consultation and engagement sessions completed with the community & staff on re-design. Blueprint and hearing system re-design project complete with collaboration from staff and community members. AC collaboration on tribunal support models.
17	Equip new Panel Members with the skills and knowledge they need to start making effective decision in hearings - <i>Training</i>					17.1 Delivery of Pre-service training, including involvement of children and young people	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100%	Last day of pre-service was 18th June 2022
18	Continue to deliver learning and development via the Learning Academy to offer innovative solutions for learning - <i>Training</i>	-				18.1 Delivery and ongoing development of training for current Panel Members	Progress to end Q2 initially	Q4: 100%	Enhance practice and management of hearings training has been prioritised through Q3 and Q4 to build on chair capacity. Trauma training suite launched March. Series of optional refresher modules released to support long standing Panel Members.
						18.2 Delivery and ongoing development of training for current AST Members	Progress to end Q2 initially	Q4:100%	AST online induction module released in Q3. PPA training and engagement events commenced in Q4.
19	Keep our community up-to-date with developments and thinking in the sector by giving them access to the views of specialists - <i>Training</i>					19.1 Deliver two 'Learn from the Experts' activities	Complete by end Q4	Q2: 100%	NES Trauma Skilled Practice Training Course ran for mix of community and national team. UNCRC learning scheduled for March 28th delivered by Children in Scotland.

	Business Objective	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
20	Work with our community to implement Area Plans that identify key activities for each area based on national and local priorities – <i>Area Support</i>	Green	Green	Yellow	Blue	20.1	Support ASTs to develop local Area Plans	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100%	21/22 AST areas have undertaken some degree of planning for the coming year.
						20.2	Support ASTs to monitor and review the plans	Progress to end Q4	Q4: 70%	The Majority of ASTs have continued to implement and monitor progress against their Area Plans. The prioritisation of the second PM recruitment and selection process late in 2022 and the work to drive Chairing capacity in all areas affected AST capacity to implement and monitor some Area Plan actions. ASIP's continue to provide support to ASTs to ensure core business and functions are delivered and bring forward any risks to the National Team.
21	Understand recruitment activities needed that respond to recovery and longer-term requirements of hearings– <i>Recruitment & Retention</i>	Green	Blue	Green	Blue	21.1	Monitor the changing capacity of Panel Members and identify what recruitment activities are needed	Progress to end Q2	Q2: 100%	Monthly capacity reporting during Q1 & Q2 resulting in various improvement actions. 2nd recruitment campaign for 2022 commencing in September for appointment of PM's in 2023.
						21.2	Undertake recruitment as necessary, involving children and young people in the process	As required / identified	Q2: 100%	Over 85% of AST areas carried out recruitment with lived experience recruiters
22	Retain Panel Members by ensuring they are reappointed in an efficient and effective way – <i>Recruitment & Retention</i>	Blue	Blue	Blue	Blue	22.2	Carry out necessary reappointment processes	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100%	Complete for 22/23. Two reappointment rounds completed (May and June)

	Business Objective	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
23	Retain AST by ensuring they are reappointed in an efficient and effective way – <i>Recruitment & Retention</i>					23.1	Carry out necessary reappointment processes	Progress up to Q4	Q4: 100%	All relevant reappointment processes taken place throughout the 22/23 business year
24	Ensure we have a digitally enabled and supported volunteer community – <i>Digital; Business Support</i>					24.1	Provision of devices to trainees	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100%	All 2022 trainees assigned a device. Plans in place to equip 2023 cohort with devices
						24.2	Provide on-going community support including frontline response, user guides and training.	Progress to end Q4	Q4: 100%	On-going digital support remains in place; new user guides were issued throughout the year to reflect updates.
25	Make improvements to our volunteer support systems by reviewing our 'community concerns' model – <i>Practice & Policy</i>	-	-			25.1	Consult with the community on new policy and procedures	Complete by end Q3	Q3: 100%	Action completed. Consulted with community, sought specialist support, peer review and SMT review. Revised version drafted and currently in review with relevant internal departments, including IT and HR. Final version approved by ARMC in Feb 23.

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

	Business Objective	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
26	As part of the CHS Promise Programme , enhance our participation, engagement and consultation activities internally and externally, including with people with lived experience, through our “ Participation, Engagement & Consultation Project ” – <i>Area Support</i>					26.1	Develop accessible opportunities for people with lived experience, the CHS community and key external stakeholders to participate, engage and consult on plans for creation of the ‘blueprint’ and redesign of the hearings system	Complete by end Q2	Q2:100%	Work complete and final collaborative proposals submitted to the HSWG 23rd Nov 2022
						26.2	Progress with trialled and tested participation, engagement and consultation platforms by developing processes at a local and national level for use in projects across the organisation	Complete by end Q3	Q3: 100%	Engagement programme delivered Aug- Sep; Progress report submitted to board. phase 2 complete with report to Board Jan 23.
						26.3	Development of a reference group of stakeholders who have experience of hearings to critically evaluate what works well and areas for improvement	Progress to end Q4	Q3: 100%	PEC project group delivering 26.2 above - ongoing use of group
						26.4	Evidence the participation and engagement of people with lived experience, key stakeholders (OHOV; The Promise; SCRA, Children’s Hearings Improvement Partnership) and the CHS community	Progress to end Q4	Q4: 100%	CRIC annual report published end of Q4

	Business Objective	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
27	Continue to lead change in the sector and hearings system through on-going collaboration with national partners – <i>Area Support</i>					27.1	Membership of the Hearings System Working Group.	Progress to end Q4	Q4: 100%	Consistent membership as active stakeholder in HSWG.
28	Active contribution to the improvement and recovery of the sector through strategic and advisory groups – <i>Area Support</i>					28.1	Involvement with key national strategic groups e.g. Children’s Hearings Improvement Partnership; Children’s Hearings COVID Recovery Group	Progress to end Q4	Q4: 100%	Recovery; CHIP; Children & Families Collective Leadership Group; Child Protections leadership Group all attended throughout the year. Sphere’s of influence and membership of groups mapped out in influencing strategy.
						28.2	Involvement with key local groups e.g. Corporate Parenting boards; GIRFEC groups	Progress to end Q4	Q4: 100%	Local attendance at key groups throughout the year with CHS usually represented by the ASIP
29	Embed our digital systems across our community and identify on-going improvements and developments to support the needs of CHS volunteers and staff - <i>Digital</i>					29.1	Make technical improvements to our system through a series of development projects	Progress to end Q4	Q3: 100%	Release 2.2 Completed Jul 22
						29.2	Improve our digital capacity and the support we have and can offer	Progress to end Q4	Q4: 100%	Additional roles recruited to digital team in Q4. Additional functions and capacity within CSAS scoped with Leidos for improvements in 23/24
						29.3	Better understand the quality of our digital operational resilience, and undertake improvements where required	Progress to end Q4	Q4: 100%	Digital strategy developed with corresponding Implementation plan and timeframes finalised
						29.4	Improve our user engagement approach to digital development, that increases response of user needs	Progress to end Q4	Q4: 100%	CHS Digital has engaged with the Learning & Development team to process map and create a SIPOC to work against when improving processes and systems. Quick wins for Data Migration have been established and updates made to Training Guides for L&D CSAS usage. CHS Digital User Engagement lead has created an Initial User Story Elaboration and identified what is ready for Development stage. Improvements have been made to the Hearing information Pack within CSAS following in depth review and user engagement via process mapping.

	Business Objective	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
30	Enhance our understanding of the CHS volunteer community and how we deliver our functions through the development of new Management Information reporting – <i>Info & Performance; (Digital)</i>					30.1	Agree main reporting formats and structures	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100%	Reports are a mix of static and dynamic, shared via online service or offline
						30.2	Begin to build and roll out reports across volunteers and staff	Progress to end Q4	Q4: 100%	Data summaries developed for monthly SMT and quarterly Board meetings. Power BI reports in use by recruitment, National Team, ACs, DACs, and Clerks.
31	Connect with, and influence, knowledge development in the sector by being involved in, including initiating where appropriate, research – <i>Practice & Policy; (Info & Performance)</i>	-	-			31.1	Engage with emerging research in the sector, including participation in external research advisory groups as appropriate	Progress up to end Q4	Q4: 100%	Engaged with emerging research through advisory group - see influencing strategy spheres of influence map
						31.2	Develop and influence research recruitment opportunities with partners and the CHS community	Progress up to end Q4	Descoped	De-prioritised. Research requests continue to be screened, evaluated and shared with the CHS community as they arise.
32	Ensure our work is informed and improved by views from a range of sources – <i>Practice & Policy</i>	-				32.1	Development of strategic intelligence and feedback frameworks and functions to influence practice and policy	Progress up to end Q4	Q4: 100%	Influencing strategy approved by the Board. Revised community concerns procedure with emphasis on feedback. Consultation and engagement work with Lens. Practice and Policy Bank. Child Friendly complaints and feedback launching in Q4.
33	Influence and engage in the development of emerging legislation that can improve outcomes for children and young people through the hearings system – <i>Practice & Policy</i>					33.1	Work with Scottish Government and partners to support legislative improvements	Progress up to end Q4	Q4: 100%	In 22/23 we led changes to legislation in the Coronavirus (Recovery and Reform) (Scotland) Act (gender). Submitted responses to UNCRC reporting, influenced design and content of Children's Care and Justice Bill, submitted response to Bairns Hoose consultation. Influenced emerging legislation - see influencing strategy map.

Organisational Effectiveness and Staff Support										
	Business Objective	Status				Actions / Milestones / Deliverables	Timescales / Target	% Complete	Update	
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4					
34	Consult with, and understand the needs of staff on a range of issues through a staff survey – HR&OD					26.1	Design and launch the survey	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100%	Survey ran in April 2022
						26.2	Analyse and communicate the results	Complete by end Q1	Q1: 100%	Complete
35	Support staff knowledge and wellbeing through staff learning and development – HR&OD					35.1	Deliver a staff training and learning programme throughout the year	Progress to end Q4	Q3: 100%	Casual engagement activities organised and promoted by team forum including an all staff meeting held in April 2022 and follow up session scheduled for end of September 2022. Ongoing work and activities linked to the 'Culture & Engagement Theme' detailed within our People Strategy. Wellbeing session delivered in January 2023. Team Forum identified wellbeing as 2023 theme.
						35.2	Deliver wellbeing and engagement activities throughout the year	Progress to end Q4	Q3: 100% ongoing	Casual engagement activities organized and promoted by team forum including an all staff meeting held in April 2022 and follow up session scheduled for end of September 2022. Ongoing work and activities linked to the 'Culture & Engagement Theme' detailed within our People Strategy. Wellbeing session delivered in January 2023. Team Forum identified wellbeing as 2023 theme.
						35.3	Deliver a management development programme	Complete by end Q3	Q3: 100% ongoing	Initial scoping completed and two sessions held with third scheduled for February 2023, in addition to monthly CHS Bites development sessions. Objective to be re-evaluated and carried on through 2023/24 in line with organisational need an anticipated changes.
36	Continue to deliver on our commitments to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) by implementing our EDI Strategy – Learning					36.1	Set up an EDI group to shape the work of CHS	Complete by end Q2	Q2:100%	Group has been created and regular meetings scheduled.
						36.2	Develop and deliver an agreed Diversity Calendar to celebrate and raise awareness of different equalities groups through internal and external communications	Complete by end Q2	Q2: 100%	Calendar agreed and social media and Teams profiling underway
						36.3	Provide up-to-date, appropriate generic and role-specific EDI training for all staff and volunteers	Complete by end Q4	Q4: 90%	EDI training session was delivered to staff in Q1. Plans underway to provide baseline learning for all volunteers by end of Q4. Bespoke video content from an external provider is in progress and will be hosted on the CHSLA site for all volunteers. This video content pending final reviews.
						36.4	Explore and recommend a form of EDI accreditation for CHS	Complete by end Q2	Q4: 100%	Disability Confident marker awarded to CHS (as an employer) in 2022. EDI strategic group will continue to explore opportunities for further accreditation.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

KPI		Past Performance	2022/3 Target	2022/3 Performance
1	% of practice bank members who evidence familiarity with children's rights	New Measure	20%	81% of Practice and Policy Bank respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they were confident in understanding the impact of UNCRC rights in a children's hearing.
2	% of hearing sessions observed during the year	12% at end Q3	20%	12% (at end 28/3/23)
3	% of pre-service trainees who felt that their learning objectives were met	2019/20: 98% 2020/21: 98% 2021/22: 99% 2022/23: 98%	99%	98.00%
4	% of applicants put forward for preservice training who complete the full training	2018/19: 92% 2019/20: 61% 2020/21: 87% 2021/22: 87% 2022/23: 83%	90%	83% - 1st cohort 22/23 - data not yet available for 2nd cohort 22/23
5	% of Panel Members successfully reappointed	2017/18: 83% 2018/19: 68% 2020/21: 79% 2021/22: 62% 2022/23: 70%	60%	74.97% (at 14/3/23)
6	% of Panel Members retained during the year	2021/22: 86% 2022/23: 78.5%	80%	78.50% (at 13/3/23)
7	% volunteer community involved in the Practice & Policy bank	New Measure	20%	Q4: 13% - Current membership of over 250 is sufficient
8	% of complaints resolved within SPSO guidelines	17/18- 100% 18/19 - 92% 19/20 - 100% 20/21 - 99% 21/22: 85%	95%	Q1 & Q2: 100% / Q3: 90% / Q4 100% (at 16/3/23)
9	% CHS employee attendance	2018/19: 95% 2019/20: 97% 2020/21: 99% 2021/22: 85% 2022/23: 97%	96%	Q1 & Q2: 95.9% / Q3: 94.8% / Q4: 97.8%
10	% invoices not in dispute paid within 10 working days, during normal operations	2018/19: 92% 2019/20: 85% 2020/21: 85% 2021/22: 85% 2022/23: 89.3%	90%	Q4: 93.5% (at 21/03/23)
11	% positive staff survey feedback on opportunities for learning and development	2018/19: 33% 2019/20: 52% 2020/21: 65% 2021/22: NA 2022/23: 70%	70%	From 2022 People Survey

Record of Changes to Planned Delivery

Milestone(s) Changed	Date of Change	Details of Change	Rationale for Change
4.1	Q2	Mutual mentoring moved to implementation in Q4	Capacity amongst the participation group has delayed the start of this project
5.1	Q1	Participation Hub website continues on hold	Allowed capacity of communications team to be focussed on Promise areas of website
7.2	Q1	Reconsideration of trauma training timeline	Due to the latest recruitment being brought forward and the ask on the community, timelines must be reconsidered
2.2	Q2	Hosting regional multi-agency workshops is on hold through Q4	Capacity of AST's to facilitate these sessions is challenged during recruitment and selection
14.1	Q2	Practice bank recruitment paused	Focus required by community on Redesign external consultation
3.1	Q3	Communications of participation standards delivery moved to end Q4	Capacity of CHS communications team and participation group
4.2	Q3	Sharing mentoring programme externally descope with consideration to include in 23/24 business plan cycle	Capacity amongst the participation group has delayed the start of this project
4.3	Q3	Evaluation and expansion of mentoring programme externally descope with consideration to include in 23/24 business plan cycle	Capacity amongst the participation group has delayed the start of this project
5.1	Q3	Participation Hub website continues on hold - launch by end Q4	Allowed capacity of communications team to be focussed on 2nd recruitment campaign
7.2	Q3	Completion by all volunteers descope. New KPI of 80% completion to be considered for inclusion in 23/24 business plan	2nd recruitment pre-service prioritised for CHSLA and AST's
14.1	Q3	KPI/milestone of 20% volunteer community part of practice bank unlikely to be realised	Current numbers sufficient for purpose
31.2	Q3	Pursuit of research opportunities descope	Deprioritised due to other priorities and vacancy with National Quality and Performance Lead
5.1	Q4	Participation Hub website continues on hold	Moved to Q1 23/24 due to competing priorities of Communications Team and Participation Group
12.3	Q4	Pilot Reasons Quality Assessment Tool on hold	The Pilot of the quality improvement tool is currently paused while we await more clarity on coming reforms and the impacts they may have on this work.
13.2	Q4	Implementation of a quality management framework for independent reports continues to be developed	Work in this area continues into 23/24
20.2	Q4	Support AST's to monitor and review area plans is incomplete	Many ASTs have continued to implement and monitor progress against their Area Plans, although the process followed and the level of detail varies across areas. The prioritisation of the second PM recruitment and selection process late in 2022 affected AST capacity to implement and monitor some Area Plan actions.
36.3	Q4	Providing appropriate, generic, and role-specific EDI training for all staff and volunteers progresses into 23/24	All staff have completed training. Plans underway to provide baseline learning for all volunteers by end of Q4. Bespoke video content from an external provider is in progress and will be hosted on the CHSLA site for all volunteers. This video content pending final reviews.



Board self-assessment and objective setting 23/24

Agenda Item 13

Paper Number CHS-2223-60a

Accountable Officer:	Head of Strategy and Development, DCE
Report author:	Business Operations & Governance Lead
Resources implications:	Within available
Recommendation:	To discuss
Approval(s) sought:	To discuss and approve for implementation

Impact Assessment Duties	Required	Completed
Equalities Impact Assessment	No	
Children's Rights Impact Assessment	No	
Data Protection Impact Assessment	No	
Islands Impact Assessment	No	

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 In 2022 the Board agreed a policy and process for Board appraisals and a Board improvement plan. Part of the Board improvement plan included the provision of an annual meeting of the Board without the executive team in order to:
 - align Board objectives;
 - provide the Chair with the views of the Board ahead of annual reviews of performance; and
 - For the Board to review their own effectiveness using the current survey tool discursively with minutes taken and an annual improvement plan created from the discussion.
- 1.2 The Board agreed to continue to use the National Audit Office's standard questionnaire as an additional means of self-assessment, as well as group discussion based on a CHS developed Board questionnaire for more in depth feedback, debate and reflection, and to inform improvement actions for the Board. This is attached at appendix C.
- 1.3 The Board met on the 14th of February, 2023 to carry out their self-assessment, the assessment of the Chair, and their annual objective setting.

2. Board self-assessment and reflection

- 2.1 Attached at appendix A are the themes and reflections from the Board development session held on the 14th of February, 2023. The improvements suggested have been pulled into an action plan at appendix C.
- 2.2 Attached at appendix B are the proposed objectives for the Board for the 23/24 business planning year.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Board are asked to note the content of this report and to approve:
 - 3.1.1 The Board objectives
 - 3.1.2 The Board improvement action plan
 - 3.1.3 The Board self-assessment questionnaire and reflections

4. Appendices

- A. Themes and reflections – Board self-assessment 2023
- B. Board Improvement Action plan 2023/24
- C. Board standard assessment questionnaire



Appendix A

Themes and reflections – Board self-assessment 2023

1. Reflections on Executive/Board effectiveness

1.1 Board/Subcommittee meetings

The Board discussed the meeting organisation, preparations, and reports, and if they provided the information and context the Board required to enable effective discussions and informed decisions. The Board reflected the following:

- The Board have noticed improvement in report length and conciseness. Reports contain helpful executive summaries at the start and sufficient information to inform discussion and decisions.
- The Board have confidence that when decisions are made and actions agreed with the Executive team, that these will be fulfilled.
- The Board feel well supported in preparation ahead of meetings and receiving paper packs.
- The Board feel well informed by the reports and the Executive team.

The Board noted the following areas for improvement:

- Increased administrative review ahead of paper issuing to ensure Board packs are complete and to avoid re-call and re-issue.
- Papers for approval should call out what is to be approved at the start of the paper to aid Board member focus when reading the report.
- Action logs can be improved by ensuring updates are included in a note section to provide assurance for Board members that actions are on track for completion.

1.2 Executive team and relationships

The Board discussed the meeting environment and their comfort in challenging the management team, when required, and what could be put in place to enable more 360 degree feedback between the executive/non executives. The Board also discussed the executive team and what could be done to provide additional support during the coming year. The Board reflected the following:

- The Board feel that SMT are receptive to feedback and receive it well. The relationship between the Board and executive team feels collegiate and supportive.
- The Board affirmed that the relationships they hold with the executive team are positive, and expressed a desire to do more in order to provide support.
- The Board felt the experience levels and balance of the executive team were well matched to the current strategic objective however they there will be a need to include expertise on change management going forward.
- The Board questioned if the executive feel the same and if there were areas they could improve.

The Board noted the following areas for improvement:

- The Board expressed concern over the changes anticipated in the coming year and how these will affect the workloads of the SMT. The Board would like to ensure that there is support in place for the executive through this phase of change.
- SMT should carry out their own evaluation of the Board to provide feedback.

- The relationship between the Board and SMT should be considered for an internal audit.
-

2. Reflections on the Board/Subcommittee own effectiveness

2.1 Board priorities

The Board discussed how their time is spent, and if the Board and its committees are prioritising the right areas of work to support the organisation. The Board reflected the following:

- The Board felt that its work plans and governance calendar were well organised and thorough in terms of governance and statutory requirements.
- The Board feel they should be more visible and available to the CHS community and would like to attend more events.

The Board noted the following areas for improvement:

- The Board felt they should be more visible within our community. It was felt that the Board could do more to communicate our reasons for change, the reform journey our sector is on, and CHS's place within it.
- The Board feel they are reactive to retrospective reports and would like to be more proactive in setting more forward looking agendas.

2.2 Board Balance

The Board examined if it had the right balance of skills it needed, and what if any were missing. The Board reflected the following:

- While there is currently a good balance within the Board, there is a need to look forward and succession plan for those Board members who's terms will soon be ending.

The Board noted the following areas for improvement:

- The Board felt there could be an opportunity to use the Learning Academy for further Board development by hosting a session for Board members highlighting the resources available which may be of interest and use in their roles.

3. Reflections on the Chair's effectiveness

The Board met without the Chair to reflect on their relationship with the Chair and the Chairs performance.

3.1 The Board reflected the following:

- The Board feel comfortable within the Committee/Board environment to be able to express their views and opinions openly.
- The Board feel well supported by the Chair both within, and out with the Board meeting environment.
- The Board are assured that when something is brought to Chairs attention, it is managed well and in a timely fashion.
- The Board asserted that the Chair is a good facilitator who invited conversation and manages meetings well.

3.2 The Board noted the following areas for improvement:

- The Board valued the time they had to reflect on their own priorities, objectives, and performance and would like to include mor opportunities to do so going forward.

- The Board would like to prioritise making meetings easier for all to attend in person and suggest holding meetings in a mix of locations that suit all Board members, particularly development sessions.



Appendix B

Board Improvement Action plan 2023/24

Action	Owner	Deadline
create an approval line at the top of Board and subcommittee paper templates to specifically call out what is to be approved within the paper or piece of work	RKW	June Board meeting
Action log – Include update for all lines of the action log indicating if actions are “on track” to be completed by the deadline or at risk of needing an extension	RKW	June Board meeting
SMT to provide feedback to the Board using a start/stop/continue format	SMT	April 23
Provide a quarterly update to the Board overlaid onto the static workplan of key workstreams, planned comms, and upcoming key legislative or programme changes to provide a more proactive and forward looking plan for the Board	LH/RKW	June Board meeting
Development opportunity – learning academy session or recommendations on the modules that should be done by the Board	CM	June 23
board to be included in engagements plans (area events/etc)	Board/Comms	Through end 2023 (then ongoing)
To add the relationship between the Board and the executive team to the internal audit recommendations going forward	RKW	Complete



Appendix C

Board Standard Self-Assessment Questionnaire

Role and remit	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Does the Board have written Standing Orders?	Yes	
Do the terms of reference cover the core functions of an Board as identified in the <i>SG Board Handbook</i> ?	Yes	
Are the Standing Orders approved by the Board and reviewed periodically?	Yes	Annually - Last approved Jan 2023
Has the Board been provided with sufficient membership, authority and resources to perform its role effectively and independently?	Yes	
Does the body's governance statement mention the Board's establishment and its broad purpose?	Yes	
Does the Board periodically assess its own effectiveness?	Yes	Annually – Last carried out February 2023
Has the Board adequately created sub-committee’s to exercise functions on its behalf?	Yes	ARMC & RAC
Are sub-committee members suitably independent of other sub-committees within the Board?	Yes	

Does the Board have a Code of Conduct and is this reviewed by members periodically?	Yes	Standard Code for Boards of Public bodies – Last submitted June 2022
Are members issued with terms and conditions of appointment?	Yes	Via Sponsor team
Membership, induction and training	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Has the membership of the Board been formally agreed and a quorum set?	Yes	Details in Standing Orders
Are members appointed for a fixed term?	Yes	All members are appointed for fixed term(s) by the Sponsor team
Does at least one of the Board members have; a financial background? Care experience? Public body experience? HR experience?	Yes Yes Yes Yes	
Are new Board members provided with an appropriate induction?	Yes	Comprehensive internal induction pack and process Induction from Scottish Government Induction training via OnBoard
Has each member formally declared his or her interests and records maintained?	Yes	Annually
Has the Board considered the arrangements for assessing the attendance and performance of each member?	Yes	Attendance is tracked and Board members receive an annual review with the Chair.

Meetings	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Does the Board meet regularly, at least five times a year?	Yes	
Do the Standing Orders set out the frequency and broad timing of meetings?	Yes	
Does the Board calendar meet the body's business and governance needs, as well as the requirements of financial and statutory reporting calendar?	Yes	
Are members attending meetings on a regular basis and if not, is appropriate action taken?	Yes	Attendance is tracked and monitored
Do members declare their interests against agenda items at every meeting?	Yes	See meeting minutes
Does the Accountable Officer attend all meetings and, if not, is he/she provided with a record of discussions?	Yes	
Does the Board have the benefit of attendance of appropriate officials at its meetings, including representatives from internal audit, external audit and finance?	Yes	Yes, details in Standing Orders and subcommittee ToR's
Internal control	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Does the Board approve policies for the organisation as necessary?	Yes	Yes, details in Standing Orders and subcommittee ToR's
Does the Board consider the findings of reviews on the effectiveness of the system of internal control?	Yes	Yes, via the Audit and Risk Committee – annually reviewed (last review May 22)

Does the Board have responsibility for review of the governance and accountability framework?	Yes	Yes, via the Audit and Risk Committee – annually reviewed (last review May 22)
Does the Board satisfy itself that the arrangements for risk management, control and governance have operated effectively throughout the reporting period?	Yes	Yes, via the Audit and Risk Committee
Has the Board considered how it is reported to via other committees?	Yes	
Does the Board satisfy itself that that systems to ensure the welfare (including health and safety), appraisal and good management of staff are in place and are observed?	Yes	Via Remuneration and Appointments committee
Has the Board satisfied itself that the body delivers the annual business plan through effective challenge and scrutiny of CHS' performance across all areas of activity?	Yes	Via quarterly performance reporting against business plan
Has the Board been made aware of internal and external audit plans and offered the opportunity to input into these activities?	Yes	Yes, via the Audit and Risk Committee
Does the Board review the risks associated with activities and practices; ensuring that the risks are acceptable; and ensuring that appropriate processes, including an annual risk review, are in place to manage risk?	Yes	Yes, via the Audit and Risk Committee
Does the Board support the Senior Management Team and holding them to account through the CEO/ NC?	Yes	
Does the Board receive and consider stewardship reports from senior staff in key business areas such as Finance, HR and ICT?	Yes	

Reporting and regulatory matters	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Is the Board's role in the consideration of the annual accounts clearly defined?	Yes	
Does the Board satisfying itself that financial control systems, including regular reviews of performance against budget, are in place?	Yes	Financial outturns are presented and discussed at every meeting, budgets approved annually
Does the Board ensure that systems are in place so that the organisation operates within the financial resources available to it?	Yes	Financial outturns are presented at every meeting
Does the Board review management's letter of representation?	Yes	Annually
Does the Board have a mechanism to keep it aware of topical legal and regulatory issues?	Yes	
Are internal audit performance measures monitored by the Board?	Yes	Yes, by way of annual follow up report
Are reports on the work of internal and external audit presented to the Board?	Yes	Yes, via the Audit and Risk Committee
Administration	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Does the Board have a designated secretariat?	Yes	
Are agenda papers circulated in advance of meetings to allow	Yes	

adequate preparation by Board members?		
Do reports to the Board communicate relevant information at the right frequency, time, and in a format that is effective?	Yes	This is reviewed annually via the Board self-assessment – Last assessment Feb 2023 found reports to the Board satisfactory
Does the Board issue guidelines and/or a pro forma concerning the format and content of the papers to be presented?	Yes	This is reviewed annually via the Board self-assessment – Last assessment Feb 2023 found reports to the Board satisfactory
Are minutes prepared and circulated promptly to the appropriate people, including all members of the Board?	Yes	
Is a report on matters arising presented or does the Chair raise them at the Board's next meeting?	Yes	Raised at meeting
Do action points indicate who is to perform what and by when?	Yes	Action log reviewed at meetings
Does the Board provide an effective annual report on its own activities?	Yes	
Overall	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Does the Board effectively contribute to the overall control environment of the organisation?	Yes	
Are there any areas where the Board could improve upon its current level of effectiveness?	NA	This is explored during Board self-assessment

**Agenda Item 14
CHS-2223-61**

AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes

4th Meeting, 2022/2023

28th February 2023

The Committee held a hybrid meeting at Thistle House/virtually via Team 10:30 – 12:30pm

Present Committee Members

- Sean Austin (SA), Chair (in person)
- Henry Robson (HR), Committee member (in person)

Also present:

- Elliot Jackson (EJ), National Convener/ Chief Executive, CHS (in person)
- Lynne Harrison (LH) Head of Strategy, Development and Depute Chief Executive, CHS (in person)
- Ross MacKenzie (RM), Finance Manager, SCRA/CHS Shared Services (in person)
- Ed Morrison (EM), Head of Finance and Resources, CHS/ SCRA (virtual)
- Claire Robertson (CR), Internal Auditor, BDO (virtual)
- Asif Haseeb (AH), External Auditor, Audit Scotland (virtual)
- Laura Nelson (LN), External Auditor, Audit Scotland (virtual)
- Mel MacDonald (MM) Complaints Management Officer, CHS (in person)
- Rachel Kavish Wheatley (RKW), Business Support & Governance Lead (minute taker), CHS (in person)

Apologies:

- Katharina Kasper (GC), CHS Board Chair
- Barbara Neil (BN), Committee member

Items	Actions / owner	Time-Scales
1	Welcome / declaration of interests	
	The meeting opened at 10.30 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Chair welcomed this year’s audit team members from Audit Scotland. There were no declaration of interest from members. CR noted an interest in agenda item 6 – External/Internal Audit Update	
2	Minutes of previous meeting November 22nd, 2022	
Decision/Actions	The Committee approved the minutes of the ARMC meeting held November 22 nd 2022	

3	Matters arising	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were no matters arising 		
4	Action Log Update	
<p>The Committee reviewed the action log;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Chair noted all items due were on the agenda. 		
5	Pension Update	
<p>RM updated the Committee on the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lothian Pension Fund (LPF) has not issued any update on the merger between LPF and Falkirk Council Pension Fund (FCPF) since the last ARMC meeting. CHS's employer contribution rate in 2023/24 is 25.0%. Provisional rates from 24/25 to 26/27 are 25.5%, 26.0% and 26.0% respectively. However, the actuary noted if the merger with Falkirk Council Pension Fund proceeds as planned, within the next twelve months, CHS's participation in the CSM (the procedure that ensures no year-on-year rise in employer's contributions exceeds 0.5 percentage points) is subject to the new administering body the newly merged fund. CSM participation is desired and we will follow this up to ensure appropriate discussions take place at the correct time. <p>Committee discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Committee did not have any further comment <p>Action:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Committee noted the update. 		
6	CHS External/Internal Audit Update	
<p>LH spoke to the paper shared;</p> <p><u>External Audit</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed external audit fees for the 22/23 audit are £14,940 which is a 30.6% increase on the previous year's fees. Fees have been set on the same percentage basis to all bodies within the same sector of public service delivery. The Committee are asked to approve the external audit fees. <p><u>Internal Audit</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once again, we will work with SCRA on a joint procurement exercise conducted by SCRA's Procurement Team, and CHS remain grateful for this approach. SCRA & CHS propose running a mini competition using the APUC Framework. SCRA's procurement team are now progressing tendering. The tender closing date in March 30th at which point tenders will be evaluated with a final decision anticipated by the 17th of May and contract awarded by the 31st of May. 		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to note that while we can offer a direct award to any supplier on the framework we have decided to go out to market via the framework. Full timelines are laid out in the report. • While our auditors may change after this year’s procurement exercise, our approach and audit themes will continue to build on the understanding, assurance, and resilience within the organisation we have gained working with BDO. We have been making good use of internal audit to help support upcoming decision making, and this is reflective in the suggested themes within paper. • The Committee are asked to note the themes for audit and make any comment or suggestions. <p>Committee discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EM noted that it may be beneficial to share some of CHS’s internal audit thinking with the suppliers who tender to ensure they can offer a comprehensive bid, and provide both organisations with the services required to support improvement over the next 3-4 years. <p>Action:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Committee approved the update. 2. The Committee approved the Audit Scotland audit fees for the 22/23 audit. 		
<p>7</p>	<p>External Audit</p>	
<p>AH & LN updated on the following;</p> <p>Asif Haseeb joined as the audit team lead from Audit Scotland, with Laura Nelson from the team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normally at this time, Audit Scotland would present the annual audit plan to the Committee however this is slightly delayed. Once finalised, it will be share offline with the Committee in early April. Timelines for audit are relatively the same as previous years. • Audit Scotland update paper outlines the proposed timetable and engagement thus far. • The papers also include the technical bulletin, which the auditors have noted CHS/SCRA finance teams have a process in place to review and action. • Frauds have been highlighted within the technical bulletin with the auditors highlighted the growing sophisticated nature of them. The auditors are content with the current controls in place. • AF noted the increase of 30.6% increase to audit fees across the sector. This is reflective of the increased scrutiny and detail expected of auditors and the difficulties the audit sector is experiencing in recruitment. • The Committee are asked to approve the audit fees of £14,940, which include an increase of 30.6% on last years figures. <p>Committee discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee welcomed our new auditors. • The Committee noted the heightened risks around payroll, and the cover currently being offered via our shared services with SCRA due to reduced 		

	<p>capacity in CHS’s finance. RM assured the Committee that process are in place for SCRA to scrutinise payroll with the support of CHS HR team to ensure any anomalies are investigated. As accountable officer, EJ signs payroll as another line of assurance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee noted the 30.6% increase in fees. While the Committee acknowledged the value for money we have always experienced from Audit Scotland, it is a substantial increase in one year. The Chair formally noted concern at the above inflation increase imposed by Audit Scotland at a time when public sector budgets, including CHS’s, have not increased at the same rate. The Chair will write to Audit Scotland to voice these concerns. • The Committee questioned if this new audit team will remain the audit team for CHS beyond this year. AF asserted this would be the intention however this cannot be confirmed. The Committee re-enforced the desire and need for continuity in the audit team going forward. <p>Action:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Committee approved the update. 		
<p>8</p>	<p>Internal Auditors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow-up ToR • Progress Report • Project Management Report 		
	<p>CR spoke to the Internal Audit Follow up ToR shared;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ToR for the annual Follow-up is shared and remains the same as in previous years. <p>Committee discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no additional comments from the Committee. <p>Committee decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee approved the ToR. <p>CR spoke to the Progress report shared;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All three audits have taken place for this year with two reports finalised and issued to the Committee – FOI in November and Project Management on the agenda for today’s meeting. Complaints will be reviewed at May’s ARMC meeting. • Of the two reports issued, there are 11 recommendations. • The follow up audit will take place at the end of March. <p>Committee discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no additional comments from the Committee. <p>Committee decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee approved the progress report. <p>CR spoke to the Project Management report shared;</p>		

- The audit offered moderate assurance with 6 medium and one low level recommendations.
- Areas for improvement were noted:
 - **PID Template** - CHS's Project Initiation Document (PID) template should include consideration of success measures, risks, and deadlines/timescales.
 - **Financial Implications** – not all project PID's had the financial implications section complete. Though the 3 sampled PID's had no financial implications (apart from staff member's time) this was not made clear in the PID. It is recommended this section is completed consistently.
 - **Change Thresholds** -There should be a template to record approved changes with a clear outline of thresholds and the required approval process for changes to timelines, cost, quality, risk and expected benefits.
 - **ZOHO** - Staff members are not consistently inputting tasks into ZOHO or updating the task status. Staff members should be chased to input and update task statuses as required.
 - **Issue Log** - For one of the three projects sample tested, the issues log was incomplete in terms of recording of issues. It is recommended these are completed fully and reviewed by the programme manager on a quarterly basis.
 - **Risk Registers** – For two of the three projects sample tested, the risk registers were not completed appropriately. It is recommended these are completed fully and reviewed by the programme manager on a regular basis.
 - **Project Handbook** - There is no set review schedule for SMT to review the handbook. It is recommended this is reviewed by SMT every 3 years.
- The management accepted all recommendations.
- EJ noted that SMT welcomed the report, commenting that it was reasonable and fair. There is a mix of procedural and behavioural changes we will need to address, which we intend to act on immediately.

Committee discussion:

- The Committee noted concern around CW being the sponsor for this work given SMT workloads. EJ noted that originally programme management sat under CW due to the Promise Programme, however this is likely to shift as we move forward with a more complex change programme.
- The Committee questioned if CHS had a lack or gap of project management skills across the organisation. EJ noted we have seen improved understanding and use of project frameworks since we initiated project management methodologies 12 months ago, though acknowledged that we will require additional skills as we move forward. We have had areas of success we intend to build on, particularly the hearing redesign project.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LH noted project management training was rolled out in 2021 however this could be built upon to further develop these skills. The Chair promoted the Prince 2 methodology and suggested all project managers within CHS should attain a project management qualification. In order to run a successful change programme we will need the foundations of good project management. The Committee noted the comments on finance and agreed with the auditors that internal resources should be reflected in PID's. The Committee noted the comprehensive project framework CHS has, and asked if there was a documented process for determining the threshold for which a project is run under the framework, over a lighter approach. EJ noted that all projects, large or small, have a detailed PID but not all are managed via the programme manager and project framework. The Chair noted that the more complex our projects become, where they are larger scale programmes, we require more sophisticated skills, particularly when we will have projects around people management. <p>Committee decisions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Committee approved the report. The Committee would like it confirmed that there is a threshold in place as part of the project management framework for determining the size and scope of projects which need to be managed under the framework, and those which do not. The Committee would like to see the plans for how project management will be developed and sponsored within CHS going forward. 		<p>JA</p> <p>EJ</p>	<p>June 23</p> <p>June 23</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Review Strategic Risk Register</p>		
<p>RKW spoke to paper shared;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Strategic Risk register for Q4 is presented for approval. The risk register is shared for assurance and approval. In line with our processes, only those risks with a 4 point or higher discrepancy between residual and target scores are included. Following a development session of the Board in November 2022, the following changes have been made across the strategic risk register: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Controls have been revised to better articulate how they specifically address and treat the risk; A column has been added alongside actions which indicated if it is a remedial or preventative action; Risk titles and descriptions have been amended to ensure the event comes before the description and impact; and The assurance map has been implemented Changes to the risk register are noted in the covering report however the committee are asked to note the new risk added at number 19 around the change of leadership and risk it may pose to the reform agenda. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Committee are also asked to note the increase to the score of risk one, which is in reflection of the reputational risks around managing in year pressures rather than a risk to not receiving the financial support for them. <p>Committee discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Committee felt that risk 19 was well articulated and questioned if it was under scored. LH & EJ provided assurance to the Committee of the consistent monitoring of the situation via relationships with the Sponsor team, Promise, and other partner organisations affected. An update will be shared at the March Board. The Committee noted the general reduction in risk levels across the register, and complimented the team on the work that has gone into reducing risk. LH noted thanks to RKW for the work undertaken on driving risk review and awareness in the organisation. <p>Committee decisions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Committee approved the report. The Committee would like an update at the next Board meeting around risk 19. 	LH	March 23
10	Information Governance Update Report		
	<p>RKW spoke the paper shared;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Q3 report is submitted for note. All FOI requests have been handled in line with policy and procedure. There have been 4 Subject Access Requests (SARs) in Q3, all of which related to personal information CHS does not hold. There were 10 data protection incidents this quarter, which is a slight drop on last. One incident was self-reported to the ICO who confirmed they would not take further action, content with our handling of the indent. The information audits are now complete for all 22 areas. Next steps are for the IG team to gather recommendations into a national report for approval by SMT. A full information asset register is currently being compiled by the records officer. Asset owners conducted audits of their areas and submitted to the IG team for a full IAR to be compiled. The work has highlighted an area for improvement around ensuring secure folders in our G drive have the correct access levels. A new Data Protection Module has been launched for Area Support Team (AST) members, National Team members, and Clerks. Completion date for training is Thursday 9th March. <p>Committee discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Committee asked for clarity on the work around surveys underway. RKW explained the work is not only to ensure surveys are compliant with IG and data protection best practice, but also that guidance is created that supports the right format of surveys in order to gain right data outputs. The Committee noted that the Market Research Society would be a good resource. 		

Committee decisions: 1. The Committee noted the report.			
11	ARMC ToR		
RKW spoke the ToR shared; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ToR is shared for its annual review and approval by the committee. No changes have been made other than to note Sean Austin as the Chair. Committee discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Committee did not have any additional comments on the ToR Committee decisions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Committee approved its ToR. 			
12	Policy Review: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Accounting Policies Financial Regulations 		
RM spoke to the polices shared; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The accounting policies are presented for approval, which go into the statutory accounts annually. There is one change from previous years with a new accounting standard treatment for leases. The only lease CHS has that is affected is for Thistle House. Thistle House will now come off the balance sheet as an asset and contracted rent will go on as an obligation. The financial regulations are presented for approval. There has been one change from previous years to bring bank reconciliations in line with other reconciliations. Previously bank reconciliations were brought to the head of finance, while others were sent to the finance manager. All will now be dealt with by the finance manager as there is nothing in the FREM to require oversight at head of level. Committee discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Committee noted that dilapidation is not noted in regards to leases. While it is not an issue in terms of CHS’s lease for Thistle House, it could be in future commercial leases. Dilapidation is covered in the standard however we will add a line to address dilapidations noting that if they were to arise we would follow the standard in terms of our treatment of them. Committee decisions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Committee approved the accounting policies pending the amendment discussed to include dilapidations in the policy. The Committee approved the financial regulations. 			
13	Feedback and Complaints Quarter 3 Report		
MM Spoke to the report shared; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This complaints report covers the period through the end of Q3. 			

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a slight increase in numbers of complaints. • There were missed deadlines for response on three complaints due to unexpected absence within the team. This has been used to create more robust internal procedures to avoid missed deadlines in future. • Themes and trends of complaints: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complaints from professionals such as social work or legal representatives, usually in relation to Panel Members not demonstrating a trauma informed approach when dealing with the CYP or family. This will be improved with the progress of our trauma informed training. ○ Complaint can also revolve around the panels perceived criticism of reports within the hearing setting, which professionals feel undermine those who created the report. • We continue to work with our partners and community to provide the feedback and lessons learned gained via complaints. • We are developing our workplan for 23/24 to address current issues and those raised via the internal audit on complaints. <p>Committee discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee noted the quality of the report and look forward to seeing the improvements to processes based on audit feedback. • The Committee noted the increase in complaints and cautioned against over reacting to any spikes, taking a longer term view. <p>Committee decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee approved the report. 		
<p>14</p>	<p>Internal Complaints Procedure</p>		
	<p>SB & MM spoke the paper shared;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This procedure is presented to replace the 2016 Internal Complaints Procedure. • We have carried out extensive consultation with PM’s & AST community members, commissioned peer reviews, cross referenced against other public body polices and best practice, and had an independent consultant review the final drafts. Overall, the procedure has been simplified and stream lined. • Three key areas have been updated, amended, or strengthened: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More clarity has been included on the review process; ○ A new section on reasonable adjustments in line with the Equalities Act has been included; and ○ More details of the wellbeing support available through CHS, if those involved in a complaint are affected. • Next steps for the procedure, subject to approval here at ARMC, is to launch on the 1st April with our community. The procedure will be accompanied by a one page summary as well as engagement sessions and workshops with the community and PPA’s. • One amendment which we propose to make to the draft submitted is around complaints against Board members, which is out of scope of this procedure 		

	<p>and will therefore be amended to advise the correct procedure for raising such complaints.</p> <p>Committee discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee were pleased to hear there will be a summary document, as the procedure and guidance can be complex. • The Committee asked about the inclusion of complaints against senior management within this procedure. MM clarified that the procedure covers all interactions with the community, and not just hearing centred. Interactions among staff are covered via staff policies. • The Committee were a little concerned about a Board member being asked to investigate a senior member of staff. This is consistent with the external complaints process, and best practice. • The Committee questioned the need for a representative to be agreed in advance by CHS. This is very much dependent on the circumstances, for example, if an external individual is requested but the complaint involves a hearing, there could be issues around confidentiality. The process is congruent with SPSO guidance. • EJ noted that if any of the findings from the external complaints audit provide insights that can improve these procedures amendments will be brought to the Committee for review. <p>Committee decisions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Committee approved the Internal Complaints procedure and guidance for launch April 1st. 		
<p>15</p>	<p>ARMC Self Assessment</p>		
	<p>SA spoke the paper shared;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report covers our governance arrangements and reviews how effective the Committee is against their ToR and responsibilities. <p>Committee discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee noted it would be helpful to reference the work plan or meeting notes directly to provide evidence of compliance but had no additional comments on their performance. • The Chair invited comments and feedback from the SMT. Generally, the SMT felt the relationship worked well, particularly the accessibility to the Chair and Committee members to review work and gather feedback out with the meeting cycles. • Much of the work of the Committee is focused on improvement, which is not reflected in the assessment, and noted it would be beneficial to draw this out more where possible. • The external and internal auditors did not have any specific feedback to offer and saw the Committee as functioning well and from a governance perspective, dealing with the correct areas of work. 		

Committee decisions:			
1. The Committee approved the self-assessment			
15	AOB		

The Meeting closed at 12:10



ARMC Terms of Reference 2023

Agenda Item 14
Paper number CHS-2223-62

Accountable Officer: Head of Strategy & Development/DCE
Report author: Business Operations and Governance Lead
Resources implications: Within available resources
Recommendation: To approve
Approval(s) sought: Approve ARMC ToR for 23/24

Impact Assessment Duties	Required	Completed
Equalities Impact Assessment		
Children's Rights Impact Assessment		
Data Protection Impact Assessment		
Islands Impact Assessment		

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 The ARMC Terms of Reference are submitted for review and approval.
- 1.2 Additions have been made in Appendix 1 to track the appointment date of committee members.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Board are recommended to consider and approve the ToR for ARMC.

3. Appendices

- 3.1 ARMC ToR

ARMC Terms of Reference

1. Constitution

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

2. Membership

- 2.1 The ARMC 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 a three year term, which can be extended for up to a maximum further three years.
- 2.4 The ARMC may co-opt independent members who are not members of the Board for a period of time (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, with the exception of 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 ARMC is authorised by the Board to review and approve any activity within its terms of reference.

4. Meetings and Quorum

- 4.1 The ARMC 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.
- 4.2 The Chair of the Board may also ask the ARMC to convene further meetings to discuss particular issues on which he/she seeks the Audit and Risk Management committee's advice.
- 4.3 A minimum of two members of the ARMC 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, Depute Chief Executive, the Director of Finance are required to attend each meeting.
- 4.5 The Audit and Risk Management committee may ask any other officials to attend in order to assist with discussions and offer expertise on a particular matter.
- 4.6 The CHS Business Support Team will provide the ARMC with secretarial support services.
- 4.7 The agenda and meeting papers are issued to members at least seven calendar days prior to the meeting, unless agreed otherwise.
- 4.8 The CHS Business Support Team minutes the proceedings and resolutions of all committee meetings including the names of those present and in attendance.
- 4.9 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.
- 4.10 The internal and external auditors attend all meetings.
- 4.11 The ARMC may ask any or all of those who normally attend, but who are not members, to withdraw in order to facilitate open and frank discussion of particular matters.
- 4.12 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 ARMC 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:

- 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.

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 ARMC 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: audit performed;
- 7.6 key issues emerging from internal audit work;
- 7.7 management responses to audit recommendations;
- 7.8 the current internal audit plan including proposed changes;
- 7.9 any issues affecting the delivery of internal audit objectives;
- 7.10 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 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 carry out its statutory functions and achieve its strategic objectives.

Chair

Date

Appendix 1 - Membership of the Audit and Risk Management Committee

Name	Term	Term
	1 st Appointment	2 nd Appointment
Sean Austin ARMC Chair	07/21-07/24	
Henry Robson	08/17-08/20	08/20-08/23
Barbara Neil	05/19-05/22	05/22 – 05/25



CHS Financial Regulations

Agenda Item 14

Paper Number CHS-2223-63

Accountable Director:	Head of Finance
Report author:	Ross Mackenzie
Recommendation:	To endorse and recommend the Financial Regulations for approval by the Board
Resources implications:	N/A
Equalities duties:	Equalities Impact Assessment Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1. Introduction and Background

1.1 CHS's Financial Regulations are a key component of CHS's governance structure, reviewable every year. This report describes the proposed changes to the Financial Regulations for 2022/23, and asks ARMC to endorse the Regulations in Appendix 1 and recommend their approval to the Board.

1.2 After review of the Regulations, the only change proposed is to delegate review of the bank account reconciliation from the Head of Finance to the Finance Manager. This brings the review into line with all other account reconciliations.

2. Recommendation

2.1 The committee is asked to endorse the Financial Regulations as detailed in Appendix 1, and recommend their approval to the Board.

APPENDIX 1



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	20.02.2023	Head of Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Para 6.2.3 amended from Head of Finance to Finance Manager

Approvals	ARMC 27.02.2018 Board 20.03.2018 ARMC February 2019 Board March 2019 ARMC Feb 2021 ARMC Feb 2022
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8. Accounting and Audit
 - 8.1 Accounting Procedures
 - 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 (ARMC) on 28th February 2023 and subsequently approved by CHS Board on 28th 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 ARMC is responsible for maintaining a continuous review of the financial regulations, through the Head of 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 ARMC is responsible for general oversight of audit related matters. The Internal Audit function reports to the Accountable Officer and the ARMC 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/Head of Strategy and Development, Head of Learning, Head of Practice and Policy, and Head of Area Support and Community Improvement, 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. With the exception of 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 Head of Finance 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 Head of Finance will inform Budget Holders of their financial allocation for the forthcoming year once this has been approved by the Board.
- 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 Head of Finance 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 Depute Chief Executive, within agreed timescales, where it is forecast that the total expenditure within their control is likely to be outwith agreed parameters. The Depute Chief Executive will, if necessary, advise the National Convener/Chief Executive and prepare a report for the Board.
- 4.1.5 The Head of Finance, Depute Chief Executive 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 situation 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 Head of 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 Head of Finance 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 maintaining proper security at all times for all CHS assets under their respective control including buildings, stocks, furniture, equipment, cash, records and information. The appropriate officers shall consult with the Depute Chief Executive 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 Head of Finance and shall not be exceeded without the prior approval of the Head of 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 Head of Finance. The Budget Holder will supply the Head of Finance 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 Head of Finance, and after consultation with the Head of 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 Head of 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 Head of Finance 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 Head of Finance, or as may be directed, to the CHS bank account. No deductions may be made from such money unless specifically authorised by the Head of 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 on a monthly basis, at least. Bank reconciliations should be reviewed and approved by the Finance Manager.
- 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 possible 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 Head of 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 suppliers, 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 into 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 Head of Finance has been obtained.

6.3.7 Except as specifically agreed in writing with the Head of 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 Head of Finance will maintain a register of authorised signatures and additions and deletions must be notified by Budget Holders to the Head of 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 indicate clearly 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 Head of 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 Head of 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 10 working days in line with Scottish Government policy.

6.5 Payment of Salaries, Wages and Pensions

- 6.5.1 The Head of Finance will keep records and in regard to salaries, wages and other emoluments. Budget Holders will be responsible for the accuracy and authenticity of such information.
- 6.5.2 The Head of Finance 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 as a consequence of their employment by CHS. Payments will be in accordance with arrangements made by the Head of Finance, 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 Head of HR 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 Head of Finance is responsible for the payment to the appropriate bodies of sums deducted from salaries and wages.

6.5.8 The Head of Finance 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 Head of HR 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 Head of Finance will maintain a register of authorised signatures and Budget Holders must notify the Head of 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 be not be considered for reimbursement unless there were exceptional circumstances which prevented the submission of the claim.

6.6.3 The Head of 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 Governance Officer and authorised by the Head of 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 Head of Finance 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 Head of Finance may from time to time determine.
- 6.7.3 The Head of 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 Head of Finance, for the amount advanced. The Head of 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 Head of Finance of all gifts given and received.
- 7.1.2 The Head of Finance 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 With the exception of 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 outwith 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 Head of 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 effect the recovery of losses.
- 7.2.2 The Head of Finance 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 Head of 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 whole 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 come to light in accordance with the Schedule of Delegated Authority.

8. ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT

8.1 Accounting Procedures

- 8.1.1 The Head of 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 Head of Finance.
- 8.1.2 All accounts and accounting records of CHS will be compiled by or under the direction of the Head of Finance.
- 8.1.3 The Head of Finance shall 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 Head of 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, Head of 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.



CHS Accounting Policies

Agenda Item 14

Paper Number CHS-2223-64

Accountable Director:	Head of Finance
Report author:	Ross Mackenzie
Recommendation:	To endorse the Accounting Policies as detailed in the Appendix below and recommend their approval to the Board.
Resources implications:	N/A
Equalities duties:	Equalities Impact Assessment Required <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1. Introduction and background

1.1 This report describes the accounting policies which will be adopted by CHS for the preparation of its financial statements for 2022/23.

2. Board's and National Convener/Chief Executive's Responsibilities

2.1 In preparing the accounts the Accountable Officer is required to comply with the [Government Financial Reporting Manual](#)¹ (FReM), and in particular to:

- observe the accounts direction issued by the Scottish Ministers, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis
- state whether applicable accounting standards 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. Changes from 2021/22

3.1 From 1 April 2022, International Financial Reporting Standard 16 (IFRS 16) *Leases* is effective. Section 1.9 has been updated to reflect this. Section 1.16, which last year referred to IFRS 16 as not yet adopted, has also been updated.

4. Recommendation

4.1 The Board is requested to endorse the accounting policies as detailed in the Appendix below and recommend their approval.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-financial-reporting-manual-2022-23>

APPENDIX 1**Accounting Policies****1.1 Basis of Accounting**

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting principles and disclosure requirements of the 2022/23 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)

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 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 2020. Details of this valuation were included in a report published by Lothian Pension Fund.

1.7 Short-term employee benefits

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

1.8 Income

CHS recognises income in the year to which it relates.

1.9 Leases

CHS occupies office space within a Scottish Government owned building under a Memorandum of Terms of Occupation (MOTO). From 1 April 2022, IFRS 16 *Leases* is effective and so from that date this arrangement will be recognised in the Statement of Financial Position as an obligation and a right of use asset.

1.10 Government grants

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

1.11 Financial Instruments

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

1.12 Value Added Tax

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

1.13 Provisions

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

1.14 Related Party Transactions

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

1.15 Review of Accounting Policies and Estimation Techniques

These financial statements have been prepared under IFRS.

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

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

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

Changes in assumptions at 31 March 2022	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, we estimate that a one year increase in life expectancy would approximately increase the Employer’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, we have 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.

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

1.16 Accounting standards not yet adopted

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



ARMC Self-Assessment Questionnaire

Agenda Item 14

Paper Number CHS-2223-65

Accountable Officer:	Head of Strategy & Development, DCE
Report author:	Business Operations and Governance Lead
Resources implications:	Within available resources
Recommendations:	To note the content of the report
Approvals:	To approve the assessment

Impact Assessment Duties	Required	Completed
Equalities Impact Assessment	No	
Children's Rights Impact Assessment	No	
Data Protection Impact Assessment	No	
Islands Impact Assessment	No	

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Committee is required to review its own effectiveness annually.
- 1.2 The Board assesses their overall effectiveness on an annual basis which includes self-reflection on its composition and skill sets.
- 1.3 The National Audit Office standard questionnaire has been used to facilitate part of this review. The standard questionnaire covers the following transactional areas, the majority of which are comprised of yes/no responses to statements of fact in relation to the Committee's responsibilities and oversight. The areas covered are:
 - Role and Remit
 - Membership, Induction and Training
 - Meetings
 - Internal Control
 - Financial reporting and regulatory Matters
 - Internal Audit
 - External Audit
 - Administration
 - Overall effectiveness

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 An initial assessment has been carried out by the Business Operations and Governance Lead. The Board are asked to review, comment, and approve.

AUDIT COMMITTEE SELF-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Role and remit	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Does the audit committee have written terms of reference?	Yes	
Do the terms of reference cover the core functions of an audit committee as identified in the <i>SG Audit Committee Handbook</i> ?	Yes	
Are the terms of reference approved by the audit committee and reviewed periodically?	Yes	Reviewed annually at the February meeting Last reviewed – 28/02/2023
Has the audit committee been provided with sufficient membership, authority and resources to perform its role effectively and independently?	Yes	The Committee is comprised of 3 Board members
Does the body's governance statement mention the audit committee's establishment and its broad purpose?	Yes	
Does the audit committee periodically assess its own effectiveness?	Yes	Annually Last reviewed – 28/02/2023
Membership, induction and training	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Has the membership of the audit committee been formally agreed by the management board and or Accountable Officer and a quorum set?	Yes	Details in ToR
Are members appointed for a fixed term?	Yes	Three years with maximum of a further three years
Does at least one of the audit committee members have a financial background?	Yes	

Are all members, including the chair, independent of the executive function?	Yes	
Are new audit committee members provided with an appropriate induction?	Yes	CHS induction pack Meeting with Chair Training provided via OnBoard
Has each member formally declared his or her business interests?	Yes	Interests are declared annually by all Board members every March/April and/or at appointment
Are members sufficiently independent of the other key committees of the Board?	Yes	
Has the audit committee considered the arrangements for assessing the attendance and performance of each member?	Yes	Attendance is tracked
Meetings	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Does the audit committee meet regularly, at least four times a year?	Yes	Governance calendar produced annually and approved by committee at November meeting
Do the terms of reference set out the frequency and broad timing of meetings?	Yes	
Does the audit committee calendar meet the body's business and governance needs, as well as the requirements of the financial reporting calendar?	Yes	Meetings align with external and internal audit requirements and timings
Are members attending meetings on a regular basis and if not, is appropriate action taken?	Yes	

Does the Accountable Officer attend all meetings and, if not, is he/she provided with a record of discussions?	Yes	
Does the audit committee have the benefit of attendance of appropriate officials at its meetings, including representatives from internal audit, external audit and finance?	Yes	Internal and External audit teams attend every meeting. The Chair meets with auditors separately annually.
Internal control	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Does the audit committee consider the findings of annual reviews by internal audit and others, on the effectiveness of the arrangements for risk management, control and governance?	Yes	Risk is reviewed at every meeting Internal and external audit are present and areas of work reviewed at every meeting
Does the audit committee consider the findings of reviews on the effectiveness of the system of internal control?	Yes	Annually as part of the controls check list Last review – 10/05/2022 Next review – 16/05/2023
Does the audit committee have responsibility for review of the draft governance statement and does it consider it separately from the accounts?	Yes	Annually Last review – 10/05/2022 Next review – 16/05/2023
Does the audit committee consider how accurate and meaningful the governance statement is?	Yes	
Does the audit committee satisfy itself that the arrangements for risk management, control and governance have operated effectively throughout the reporting period?	Yes	
Has the audit committee considered how it should coordinate with other committees that may have responsibility for risk management and corporate governance?	Yes	The Committee reports into the Board at every meeting via Chair update and shares reports for approval as required

Has the audit committee satisfied itself that the body has adopted appropriate arrangements to counter and deal with fraud?	Yes	Reports and polices reviewed annually
Has the audit committee been made aware of the role of risk management in the preparation of the internal audit plan?	Yes	
Does the audit committee's terms of reference include oversight of the risk management process?	Yes	
Does the audit committee consider assurances provided by senior staff?	Yes	
Does the audit committee receive and consider stewardship reports from senior staff in key business areas such as Finance, HR and ICT?	Yes	Details in ARMC annual workplan
Financial reporting and regulatory matters	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Is the audit committee's role in the consideration of the annual accounts clearly defined?	Yes	
Does the audit committee consider, as appropriate:		
• the suitability of accounting policies and treatments	Yes	Annually
• major judgements made	Yes	As required
• large write-offs	Yes	As required
• changes in accounting treatment	Yes	As required

• the reasonableness of accounting estimates	Yes	As required
• the narrative aspects of reporting?	Yes	As required
Is an audit committee meeting scheduled to receive the external auditor's report to those charged with governance including a discussion of proposed adjustments to the accounts and other issues arising from the audit?	Yes	
Does the audit committee review management's letter of representation?	Yes	Annually Last reviewed – 23/08/2022 Next review – 22/08/2023
Does the audit committee gain an understanding of management's procedures for preparing the body's annual accounts?	Yes	
Does the audit committee have a mechanism to keep it aware of topical legal and regulatory issues?	Yes	
Internal audit	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Does the Head of Internal Audit attend meetings of the audit committee?	Yes	Internal audit team attend every meeting
Does the audit committee approve, annually and in detail, the internal audit plans including consideration of whether the scope of internal audit work addresses the body's significant risks?	Yes	
Does internal audit have a direct reporting line, if required, to the audit committee?	Yes	
As well as an annual report from the Head of Internal Audit, does the	Yes	Progress reports are produced and reviewed by the

audit committee receive progress reports from the internal audit service?		committee at least twice per year
Are outputs from follow-up audits by internal audit monitored by the audit committee and does the committee consider the adequacy of implementation of recommendations?	Yes	Follow up reports are produced and reviewed annually
If considered necessary, is the audit committee chair able to hold private discussions with the Head of Internal Audit?	Yes	
Is there appropriate co-operation between the internal and external auditors?	Yes	
Does the audit committee review the adequacy of internal audit staffing and other resources?	Yes	
Are internal audit performance measures monitored by the audit committee?	Yes	Via internal audit reporting
Has the audit committee considered the information it wishes to receive from internal audit?	Yes	
Do formal terms of reference exist defining internal audit's objectives, responsibilities, authority and reporting lines?	Yes	Each internal audit has a ToR produced which is reviewed and approved by the committee
External audit	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Does the external audit representative attend meetings of the audit committee?	Yes	External audit team attend every meeting
Do the external auditors present and discuss their audit plans and	Yes	

strategy with the audit committee (recognising the statutory duties of external audit)?		
Does the audit committee chair hold periodic private discussions with the external auditor?	Yes	Annually
Does the audit committee review the external auditor's annual report to those charged with governance?	Yes	
Does the audit committee ensure that officials are monitoring action taken to implement external audit recommendations?	Yes	
Are reports on the work of external audit presented to the audit committee?	Yes	
Does the audit committee assess the performance of external audit?	Yes	
Does the audit committee consider the external audit fee?	Yes	Annually
Administration	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Does the audit committee have a designated secretariat?	Yes	
Are agenda papers circulated in advance of meetings to allow adequate preparation by audit committee members?	Yes	
Do reports to the audit committee communicate relevant information at the right frequency, time, and in a format that is effective?	Yes	
Does the audit committee issue guidelines and/or a pro forma	Yes	

concerning the format and content of the papers to be presented?		
Are minutes prepared and circulated promptly to the appropriate people, including all members of the Board?	Yes	
Is a report on matters arising presented or does the chair raise them at the audit committee's next meeting?	Yes	
Do action points indicate who is to perform what and by when?	Yes	
Does the audit committee provide an effective annual report on its own activities?	Yes	
Overall	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Does the audit committee effectively contribute to the overall control environment of the organisation?	Yes	
Are there any areas where the audit committee could improve upon its current level of effectiveness?	NA	
Does the audit committee seek feedback on its performance from the Board and Accountable Officer?	Yes	The Chair requests feedback

RAC Terms of Reference 2023

Agenda Item 15
Paper Number CHS-2223-66

Accountable Officer: Head of Strategy & Development/DCE
Report author:
Resources implications: Within available resources
Recommendation: To approve
Approval(s) sought: Approve RAC ToR for 23/24

Impact Assessment Duties	Required	Completed
Equalities Impact Assessment	No	
Children's Rights Impact Assessment	No	
Data Protection Impact Assessment	No	
Islands Impact Assessment	No	

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 The RAC Terms of Reference are submitted for review and approval.
- 1.2 Slight changes have been made to bring the ToR in line with other subcommittee ToR's (ARMC).
- 1.3 An addition has been made at 8.14 for formalise responsibility of the committee to monitor progress against the CHS People Strategy

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Board are recommended to consider and approve the ToR for RAC committee.

3. Appendices

- 3.1 RAC ToR

Appendix 1

Remuneration and Appointments Committee Terms of Reference

1. 1. Constitution

- 1.1 The Board of CHS hereby resolves to establish a committee of the Board to be known as the Remuneration and Appointments Committee (RAC).

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. Details of the current members including the Chair are shown in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 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. All members are appointed for a three year term, which can be extended for up to a maximum further three years.
- 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 RAC may co-opt independent members who are not members of the Board for a period of time (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 RAC 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 particular issues on which he/ she wants the Remuneration and Appointments 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 Remuneration and Appointments committee may ask any other officials to attend in order to assist with discussions and offer expertise on a particular matter.
- 4.6 The CHS Business Support Team will provide the RAC with secretarial support services.
- 4.7 The agenda and meeting papers are issued to members at least seven calendar days prior to the meeting, unless agreed otherwise.
- 4.8 The CHS Business Support Team minutes the proceedings and resolutions of all committee meetings including the names of those present and in attendance.
- 4.9 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.
- 4.10 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, the Depute Chief Executive and the HR and Organisational Development Lead are required to attend each meeting.
- 6.2 The Remuneration and Appointments committee may require any other officials to attend to assist it with its discussions on any particular matter.

*Reviewed by RAC: March 2023
Approved by the Board: TBC March 2023
Next review: March 2024*

- 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 particular 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 the procedures/policies and any changes in procedure/policies for CHS staff for:
- the setting of performance objectives for the National Convener/ CEO;
 - the appraisal of performance for CHS staff;
 - the scale rates applicable to the various grades within CHS; and
 - the recruitment process
 - and any other remuneration strategies and policies.
- 8.2 Notes and/or approves CHS' employment policies and their revision from time to time.
- 8.3 Reviews the objectives of senior staff annually.
- 8.4 Approves the annual pay remit for submission to the Scottish Government.
- 8.5 Approves the recruitment process for the NC/ Chief Executive and Depute Chief Executive posts, when a vacancy arises.
- 8.6 Formulates proposals for the Chief Executive's salary progression and other aspects of his/her 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 Periodically reviews the Board Code of Conduct and other relevant CHS policies.
- 8.9 Considers the redundancy, early retirement or severance arrangements in respect of all CHS staff, excluding retirement on grounds of ill-health, and approve these or refer to CHS Board as it sees fit.
- 8.10 Considers an annual report on the outcomes of staff appraisals.
- 8.11 Approves any Employment Tribunal settlement.
- 8.12 Notes and/or approves CHS approaches to staff wellbeing.
- 8.13 Engages directly with representatives of the CHS Team Forum at RAC meetings.
- 8.14 Monitor progress against the CHS People Strategy.
- 8.15 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 Management Team as appropriate, to decide.

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

*Reviewed by RAC: March 2023
Approved by the Board: TBC March 2023
Next review: March 2024*

Appendix - Membership of the Audit and Risk Management Committee

Name	Term	Term
	1 st Appointment	2 nd Appointment
Jo Derrick (Chair)	05/19-31/1/23	1/2/2023- 31/1/25
Beth-Anne Logan	05/17- 05/20	05/20 – 05/23
Mrs Kathryn Docherty	06/21- 06/24	

*Reviewed by RAC: March 2023
 Approved by the Board: TBC March 2023
 Next review: March 2024*



RAC Self-Assessment Questionnaire

Agenda Item 15

Paper Number CHS-2223-67

Accountable Officer:	Head of Strategy & Development, DCE
Report author:	Business Operations and Governance Lead
Resources implications:	Within available resources
Recommendations:	To note the content of the report
Approvals:	To approve the assessment

Impact Assessment Duties	Required	Completed
Equalities Impact Assessment	No	
Children’s Rights Impact Assessment	No	
Data Protection Impact Assessment	No	
Islands Impact Assessment	No	

1. Introduction and Background

1.1 The Committee is required to review its own effectiveness annually.

1.2 The Board assesses their overall effectiveness on an annual basis which includes self-reflection on its composition and skill sets.

1.3 The National Audit Office standard questionnaire has been adapted to facilitate part of this review. The standard questionnaire covers the following transactional areas, the majority of which are comprised of yes/no responses to statements of fact in relation to the Committee’s responsibilities and oversight. The areas covered are:

- Role and Remit
- Membership, Induction and Training
- Meetings
- Redundancy, early retirement, severance arrangements
- Staff and executive team appraisals and pay policies
- Overall effectiveness

2. Recommendation

2.1 An initial assessment has been carried out by the Business Operations and Governance Lead. The Board are asked to review, comment, and approve.

Remuneration and Appointment Committee Self-Assessment Survey

Role and remit	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Does the Remuneration and Appointment Committee have written Terms of Reference?	Yes	These are reviewed annually
Do the Terms of Reference cover the core functions of the Remuneration and Appointment Committee?	Yes	Yes and reviews have captured recent work such as People Strategy
Are the Terms of Reference approved by the Remuneration and Appointment Committee and reviewed periodically?	Yes	Reviewed annually at the March meeting Last reviewed – 15/03/2022 Next review – 21/03/2023
Has the Remuneration and Appointment Committee been provided with sufficient membership, authority and resources to perform its role effectively and independently?	Yes	
Does the body's governance statement mention the Remuneration and Appointment Committee's establishment and its broad purpose?	Yes	
Does the Remuneration and Appointment Committee periodically assess its own effectiveness?	Yes	Reviewed annually at the March meeting Last reviewed – 15/03/2022 Next review – 21/03/2023

Membership, induction and training	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Has the membership of the Remuneration and Appointment Committee been formally agreed by the management Board and or Accountable Officer and a quorum set?	Yes	Details in ToR
Are members appointed for a fixed term?	Yes	Three years with maximum of a further three years
Does at least one of the Remuneration and Appointment Committee members have a people management background?	Yes	Membership includes a range of experience including leadership of national organisations.
Are all members, including the Chair, independent of the Executive function?	Yes	
Are new Remuneration and Appointment Committee members provided with an appropriate induction?	Yes	
Has each member formally declared his or her business interests?	Yes	Interests are declared annually by all Board members every March/April and/or at appointment
Are members sufficiently independent of the other key Committees of the Board?	Yes	Membership of the RAC and ARMC are entirely separate
Has the Remuneration and Appointment Committee considered the arrangements for assessing the attendance and performance of each member?	Yes	Attendance is tracked and discussion included as part of annual appraisal

Meetings	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Does the Remuneration and Appointment Committee meet regularly, at least three times a year?	Yes	
Do the Terms of Reference set out the frequency and broad timing of meetings?	Yes	
Does the Remuneration and Appointment Committee calendar/work plan meet the body's business and governance needs, as well as the requirements of CHS' workforce reporting calendar?	Yes	Meetings are planned to support annual governance activity and the committee provide flexibility to include additional meetings if required
Are members attending meetings on a regular basis and if not, is appropriate action taken?	Yes	Attendance is recorded and discussed at annual appraisal
Does the Accountable Officer attend all meetings and, if not, is he/she provided with a record of discussions?	Yes	
Does the Remuneration and Appointment Committee have the benefit of attendance of appropriate officials at its meetings, including representatives from Team Forum at least once per year?	Yes	the AO and DCE attend all meetings. Other members of the Executive team attend dependant on agenda items. Team Forum attend every meeting
Internal control	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Does the Remuneration and Appointment Committee have responsibility for the reviewing and setting of performance objectives for the National Convener/CEO and formulating proposal for the Chief	Yes	This is completed annually at the June meeting

Executive’s salary progression and other aspects of his/her remuneration for recommendation to the Scottish Government?		
Approves the recruitment process for the National Convener/CEO and Depute CHO posts, when a vacancy arises.	Yes	
Does the Remuneration and Appointment Committee consider and approve staff remuneration strategies and policies?	Yes	Pay policy is a standing agenda item
Does the Remuneration and Appointment Committee approve the annual pay remit for submission to Scottish Government?	Yes	
Does the Remuneration and Appointment Committee consider the annual review of staff appraisal?	Yes	A report is provided annually in June
Does the Remuneration and Appointment Committee review the objectives set for the SMT annually?	Yes	
Does the Remuneration and Appointment Committee consider and approve redundancy, early retirement, severance arrangements (excluding retirement on grounds of ill health), and any tribunal activity?	Yes	
Does the Remuneration and Appointment Committee review Board Code of Conduct, appraisal process, and relevant policies as required?	Yes	Policies submitted on review
Does the Remuneration and Appointment Committee review HR policies, staff appointment and appraisal processes, and relevant policies periodically and in line with legislative requirement?	Yes	Policies submitted on review

Has the Committee considered how it should coordinate with other Committees that may have responsibility for corporate governance?	Yes	The Committee reports into the Board at every meeting via Chair update and shares reports for approval as required
Administration	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Does the Remuneration and Appointment Committee have a designated secretariat?	Yes	
Are agenda papers circulated in advance of meetings to allow adequate preparation by Remuneration and Appointment Committee members?	Yes	Issued 1 week prior
Do reports to the Remuneration and Appointment Committee communicate relevant information at the right frequency, time, and in a format that is effective?	Yes	Feedback from the committee is positive in terms of format and quality
Does the Remuneration and Appointment Committee issue guidelines and/or a pro forma concerning the format and content of the papers to be presented?	Yes	
Are minutes prepared and circulated promptly to the appropriate people, including all members of the Board?	Yes	Minutes approved at following meeting. The Chair verbally updates at the following Board meeting
Is a report on matters arising presented or does the chair raise them at the audit Committee's next meeting?	Yes	Raised verbally at the next meeting
Do action points indicate who is to perform what and by when?	Yes	Action log in place

Does the Remuneration and Appointment Committee provide an effective annual report on its own activities?	Yes	Completed annually and submitted to the Board
Overall	YES/NO/NA	Comments/Action
Does the Remuneration and Appointment Committee effectively contribute to the overall people activities and performance of the organisation?	Yes	
Are there any areas where the Remuneration and Appointment Committee could improve upon its current level of effectiveness?	Yes	Agreed to discuss a change in name for the committee to better reflects its broader 'people' remit
Does the Remuneration and Appointment Committee seek feedback on its performance from the Board and Accountable Officer?	Yes	Contribute to the annual review of effectiveness.



Whistle Blowing Policy

Agenda Item 15
Paper Number CHS-2223-68a

Accountable Officer: Head of Strategy and Development, DCE
Report author: Business Operations & Governance Lead, interim HR/OD Lead
Resources implications: Within available
Recommendation: To note changes
Approval(s) sought: To approve for submission to RAC

Impact Assessment Duties	Required	Completed
Equalities Impact Assessment	No	
Children's Rights Impact Assessment	No	
Data Protection Impact Assessment	No	
Islands Impact Assessment	No	

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 The Whistle Blowing Policy revision is submitted for review and approval.
- 1.2 The Policy was last reviewed in 2018 and should be reviewed every three years.

2. Summary of updates to policy

- 2.1 A full review of the policy was undertaken by the interim HR/OD Lead and Business Operations and Governance Lead. The Policy was cross referenced with other public body whistleblowing policies, as well as information on GOV.UK, ACAS, and The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. The Following changes/amendments have been made:
 - All links have been updated and additional links included for staff support and information;
 - Addition of facility to raise anonymous concern via CHS complaints;
 - Addition of information on how to raise concerns externally;
 - Clarification of escalation of concerns;
 - Re-allocation of reporting duty from Governance Officer to Complaints Management Officer
 - Review section added formalising policy review and reporting arrangements

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 To approve



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Whistleblowing Policy



Review Schedule

Document Name/Title	Whistleblowing Policy
Document Type	HR & Governance Policy
Document Owner	HR/OD
Summary of Changes	Reviewed Policy
Date of Approval	SMT: 07/03/2023 RAC:
Date of Implementation	
Impact Assessed	N/A – covered in other areas of work
Version No.	4.0
Review Interval	Three years
Date of Last Review	2018
Date of Next Review	March 2026

1. Purpose

- 1.1** Whistleblowing is the term used when an employee passes on information concerning wrong-doing in the workplace. In this policy, we call that making a “disclosure” or “blowing the whistle”. The wrongdoing will typically (although not necessarily) be something they have witnessed at work. In accordance with the Employment Rights Act 1996 (as amended by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA)), CHS’ Whistleblowing Policy enables the disclosure of serious concerns about acts carried out by CHS or, indeed, individual employees. The Act fundamentally endorses that any serious concerns disclosed should be raised in a manner that provides protection to the employee in that they are free from fear of intimidation or reprisals. It also enables employees “blowing the whistle” to complain to an employment tribunal if they suffer any form of detriment in doing so, including dismissal. This policy reflects advice outlined on the GOV.UK website. 1.3 CHS recognises that wrong doing could damage our reputation and/or performance, and affect vulnerable children and young people. We want a culture which is open, honest and transparent, in line with our National Standards, our commitments to equality and diversity and provides a good standard of customer service. We will treat all disclosures consistently, fairly and professionally.
- 1.2** The policy applies to all paid employees and ex-employees, including temporary and contracted employees of CHS who have concerns relating to;
- A criminal offences, such as fraud;
 - The health and safety of employees or visitors;
 - Risk or damage to the environment by CHS;
 - A miscarriage of justice or breaking of the law; or
 - Concern around the covering up of a wrong doing.
- 1.3** All CHS employees are encouraged to engage in regular open discussions with their line manager during which they can raise any concerns informally. See section 3.2 for relevant policies to raise issues formally.
- 1.4** All new employees to CHS will be advised of this policy through their employment contracts and the formal induction process. All existing employees in CHS will be advised of changes to the policy through our HR channels. The policy will be filed with all other CHS approved policies and on our website. As with all CHS policies, it will be updated in line with any legislative changes.
- 1.5** CHS strives for transparency and openness in its work and relationships. All employees are encouraged to report behaviours that are unprofessional, unethical, unacceptable or illegal, rather than overlook the issue.
- 1.6** This policy is not applicable to volunteers (panel or AST members) who deliver CHS services. Community members who have concerns around how CHS operates should raise these in accordance with CHS’ Core Policies for Children’s Panel and Areas Support Teams published on our website: <http://www.chscotland.gov.uk/our-publications/policies/>.

- 1.7** Grievances, including bullying, harassment, or discrimination, do not fall under whistleblowing policies and law unless the particular case is in the public interest. Employees who wish to raise a grievance should refer to the CHS grievance policy.
- 1.8** CHS provides a wide range of services to customers that require the ownership and responsible operation, as well as maintenance of physical assets, including digital devices. The purpose of this policy is to ensure assets are managed in a manner that maximizes benefits, reduces risks and provides satisfactory levels of service to employees and volunteers in a safe and sustainable manner.

2. Qualifying Disclosures that Provide Protection to the Employee

2.1 The PIDA does not introduce a general protection for whistleblowers in all circumstances. A disclosure will only qualify for protection if it is reasonable to believe that the whistleblower is acting in the public interest and has genuine cause for concern that one or more of the following has occurred, is occurring, or is likely to occur, regardless of physical evidence:

- That a criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed;
- That a person or the organisation has failed, is failing or is likely to fail to comply with any legal obligation to which s/he is subject;
- That a miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur;
- That a work situation or the health or safety of any individual has been, is being or is likely to be endangered;
- That the environment has been, is being or is likely to be damaged; or
- That information tending to show any matter falling within any one of the preceding paragraphs has been, is being or is likely to be deliberately concealed.

The above list is not exhaustive and what amounts to a qualifying disclosure is fully set out in the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (PIDA).

- 2.2** Whistleblower will qualify for protection under the Act if the disclosure is made:
- In good faith to Children’s Hearings Scotland or to another person who is reasonably believed to be solely or mainly responsible for the failure in question;
 - To a legal adviser in the course of obtaining legal advice;
 - In good faith to a Government Minister by a worker employed in a Government-appointed body like CHS;
 - To a prescribed person or body e.g. the Health and Safety Executive. In this case, a disclosure must be made in good faith and be reasonably believed that the information and any allegation in it is substantially true. The whistle blower must ensure that the correct person or body has been chosen for the issue raised. A full list of prescribed people and bodies is available on the Gov.uk website here: [Whistleblowing: list of prescribed people and bodies - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/whistleblowing-list-of-prescribed-people-and-bodies)
- 2.3** Qualifying disclosures will also be protected if they are made, other than described in section 2.2 above, provided that the individual makes the disclosure in good faith,

reasonably believes that the information and any allegation contained in it are substantially true and they are not acting for personal gain. One or more of the following conditions must also apply:

- The individual reasonably believed that he or she would be victimised if he or she had made the disclosure to CHS or to a prescribed person;
- There was no designated officer and the individual reasonably believed that disclosure to CHS would result in the destruction or concealment of evidence; or
- The individual had already disclosed substantially the same information to the employer or the designated officer.

3. Procedure for raising a concern

- 3.1** It is preferable, and at the heart of the PIDA, to raise the matter internally, if appropriate and practical, but only the employee can make the decision to proceed in this way. If there is any doubt about how to proceed, the employee should speak to the Deputy Chief Executive, who is the designated officer entrusted by the Board with the duty of investigating potential disclosures. If an employee/former employee goes to the media they will generally lose their whistleblowing rights.
- 3.2** There are a range of policies and procedures which deal with standards of behaviour at work e.g. disciplinary, dignity at work, staff code of conduct, equal opportunities, grievance, capability, recruitment and selection etc. Employees are encouraged to use these procedures when appropriate. If an employee is unsure if their concern falls under the whistleblowing policy they may raise it as such however, during the course of the investigation it may be found that another CHS policy is more appropriate.
- 3.3** CHS will not tolerate any harassment or victimisation of any employees who raises a concern via this policy (including informal pressure). This will be treated as gross misconduct which will be dealt with under CHS' Disciplinary Procedure.
- 3.4** An employee should normally approach their line manager with a possible disclosure in the first instance. However, if the employee does not feel comfortable doing so the employee can approach the Depute Chief Executive with their concerns directly. The Depute Chief Executive will act impartially to give appropriate advice and support. Employees do not need to have evidence to raise a concern however, they should be able to explain fully what has given rise to their concern.
- 3.5** CHS recognises that not employees will feel confident raising a concern and may wish to do so completely anonymously. In these cases, employees may raise a concern via the CHS Complaints process by submitting a form anonymously via the CHS Complaints portal on our website [here](#). Employees should state that they are either a current or previous CHS employee and that they are raising the complaint via the whistleblowing policy. Complaints raised anonymously will be processed via the same investigative procedures however the individual raising the complaint will not receive updates, feedback, our outcomes due to their anonymity.

- 3.6** Employees are encouraged to raise concerns internally, either anonymously or directly, however, if an employee wishes to raise a concern externally they may do so. In order to maintain the protections of a whistle blower, concerns should be raised to one of the Prescribed Persons under the Public Interest Disclosure (Prescribed Persons) Order 2014 can be found here: [Whistleblowing: list of prescribed people and bodies - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/whistleblowing-list-of-prescribed-people-and-bodies).
- 3.7** When a concern is raised to a line manager, the line manager should gather all details as described to them by the employee and pass these on to the Depute Chief Executive in order to formally raise the concern. The Depute Chief Executive will arrange an initial interview with the employee which will, if requested, remain confidential (unless required by law), to ascertain the area of concern.
- 3.8** During the initial interview, the Depute Chief Executive (DCE) will ascertain whether the employee raising the concern wishes their identity to be disclosed and will reassure the employee about protection from possible reprisals or victimisation. With the Employee, the DCE will consider any temporary adjustments that may be required in the workplace during the investigation. The DCE will review the process with the employee, managing expectations in terms of what action and/or feedback they can expect as well as timescales for providing updates. Current employees can seek free confidential support and counselling from CHS' Employee Assistance provider.
- 3.9** The Depute Chief Executive will also ask the employee whether they wish to make a written or verbal statement. In either case the Depute Chief Executive will write a brief summary of the interview which will be agreed by both parties. The Depute Chief Executive has the responsibility to ensure that the concerns raised by the employee are progressed with the appropriate person within CHS, and using the most appropriate policies.

4. Concerns about the National Convener/Chief Executive or Board Members

- 4.1** If the concern is about the National Convener/Chief Executive or the Depute Chief Executive, the concern should be made to the Board Chair, who will advise how the investigation should proceed and the route for any subsequent appeals.
- 4.2** Where the concern raised is about a Board Member, then the individual should raise their concern directly with the Board Chair. Where the concern is about the Board Chair, then the individual should raise their concern with the relevant Head of Division in the Scottish Government, either by using the following [internal link](#) (hosted on Saltire) or seeking advice from HR/OD team.

5. The Investigation

- 5.1 Dependent on the nature of the serious concern/issue raised, the Depute Chief Executive will appoint a competent manager/officer to conduct the investigation and act as the Investigation Lead. Where appropriate, a representative from Human Resources may assist. Neither should have previous knowledge of the concern raised. The investigation will be conducted in strictest confidence having due regard to the requirement to conduct a fair and reasonable investigation.
- 5.2 Throughout any investigation, employees will still be expected to continue their duties/role as normal. In exceptional circumstances where this is not possible the HR/OD team will provide support and guidance on what actions could be taken.
- 5.3 Normally, the investigation will be conducted within 20 working days, concluding with a recommendation on what action requires to be taken. All parties involved will be guaranteed a fair and impartial hearing. Where the investigation or feedback is delayed for any reason, the Depute Chief Executive will advise the employee of this.
- 5.4 If, however, it is the view of those concerned that any delay might cause harm, an immediate meeting will be arranged. It is the responsibility of the Investigation lead to record details of the meeting, and to ensure that the employee raising the concern is not openly identified at this stage.
- 5.5 If at any time throughout the investigation it becomes evident that formal disciplinary action may be a possible outcome, the investigation should be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the disciplinary procedure and in line with the gravity of the offence. The investigation should be concluded as quickly as is reasonably possible however CHS will allow for some flexibility in the timescales for completion given the possible complexity of the concerns raised. A date to conclude the investigation should be agreed at the outset and all parties concerned should be advised of this in writing. Should it be thought necessary to suspend an employee during the course of an investigation, this action should be taken in line with CHS' Disciplinary Procedure.
- 5.6 At all stages of the process any employee interviewed as part of the investigation will have the right to be accompanied by a colleague or staff representative.

6. Possible Outcomes

- 6.1 At the end of the investigation, the investigation lead should submit a detailed written report containing the findings of the investigation and any proposed actions to the DCE, or relevant executive/non-executive.
- 6.2 On receipt of the report the DCE will consider and decide what, if any, corrective actions are necessary and the final outcome of the investigation. The final outcomes will be shared with the relevant departments, accountable officers, and external bodies as required. If the investigation shows there are grounds for further action against individuals the appropriate policies and procedures will be followed.

- 6.3** It may also be appropriate during the investigation to report concerns to external agencies e.g. Police, Social Services, Health and Safety Executive and/or other public bodies. It may be necessary to suspend internal investigations until the outcome of any criminal proceedings are known.
- 6.4** Where the investigation concludes that false concerns were raised with malicious intent or for personal gain, this would constitute grounds for disciplinary action to be taken against the employee raising the concerns via the appropriate policies and procedures.
- 6.5** If the concerns are unfounded, and the disclosure is not upheld, no action will be taken against the employee. The employee will receive feedback on the investigation and outcome.
- 6.6** Every effort will be made to ensure an employee who raises concerns in good faith will not suffer adversely as a consequence of their actions, even if these concerns are unfounded. Mediation and dispute resolution to help rebuild trust and relationships may be considered.

7. Feedback

- 7.1** Once the investigation has been completed the employee who raised the concerns originally will receive feedback. This will include whether the original concerns were upheld, respecting the confidentiality of all parties.
- 7.2** Following the conclusion of the internal process, it is possible that an employee may continue to be concerned about an issue. If this is the case there are a number of options open to them. Employees may:
- Report the matter to CHS' Sponsor Team in accordance with the Regulatory Framework for CHS;
 - Report the matter to the appropriate professional or regulatory body; or
 - Access voluntary agencies for advice.
- 7.3** Anonymous whistle blowers will not ordinarily be able to receive feedback and any action taken to look into a disclosure could be limited.

8. Review

- 8.1** This policy will be reviewed every three years, or in line with changes to legislation or best practice.
- 8.2** CHS' Complaints Management Officer (where appropriate) will:
- Record the number of whistleblowing disclosure received and include in the quarterly complaints report; and
 - Maintain records of the data and content of feedback provided to whistle blowers.
- 8.3** The DCE will submit to the complaints annual report a review of any whistleblowing disclosures including any actions taken and lessons learned.

9. More Information

More information can be obtained from:

The Government: <https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing>

UNISON: <https://www.unison.org.uk/get-help/knowledge/disputes-grievances/whistleblowing/>

Public Interest Disclosure Act (PIDA): [Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/24)

Support: [Protect - Speak up stop harm - Protect - Speak up stop harm \(protect-advice.org.uk\)](https://www.protect-advice.org.uk)

Further reading: [Department for Business, Innovation & Skills Whistleblowing: guidance and code of practice for employers \(2015\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/department-for-business-innovation-and-skills-whistleblowing-guidance-and-code-of-practice-for-employers-2015)

10. Version Control

Version	Date	Owner	Summary of Changes
V3.0	20.03.2018	Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Section 4.2 – updated link.
V4.0	23/02/2023	Head of Strategy & Development/DCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">All links updated, additional links included for staff support and informationFull review with current best practiceAddition of facility to raise anonymous concern via CHS complaintsAddition of information to raise concerns externallyClarification of escalation of concernsRe-allocation of reporting duty from Governance Officer to Complaints Management OfficerReview section added formalising policy review and reporting arrangements



Equality Outcomes Monitoring Progress Update

Agenda Item: 15
Paper number: CHS-2223-69

Accountable Officer: Head of Learning
Report author: Christine Mullen, Elina Takala
Resources implications: NA
Recommendation: To approve
Approval(s) sought: To approve for final publication

Impact Assessment Duties	Required	Completed
Equalities Impact Assessment	NA	
Children's Rights Impact Assessment	NA	
Data Protection Impact Assessment	NA	
Islands Impact Assessment	NA	

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 This paper provides a progress report on CHS' Equality Monitoring Outcomes 2022 – 2023. This paper has been approved by the Remuneration and Appointments Committee.
- 1.2 CHS has previously published Equality Outcomes Reports from 2016 up until 2022 including 2-year reports and one year update reports.
- 1.3 The CHS Strategic Equality Diversity and Inclusion Group has recommended that we continue with our current Equality Monitoring Outcomes from 2022 up until 2024 to bring the timetable for implementation into line with CHS overall strategic plan and reporting framework.
- 1.4 A new set of Outcomes would then be created to be delivered alongside CHS' new Strategic Plan from April 2024.
- 1.5 Many of our 2022 – 2022 Equality Monitoring Outcomes have been achieved and those outstanding can be incorporated in our outcomes for 2023 – 2024.

2. Summary / review / details of project

- 2.1 Equality Monitoring Outcomes are an integral part of CHS' work and demonstrate CHS' commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion through the planning and actions achieved.
- 2.2 CHS' Strategic Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategic group have been instrumental in prioritising our actions in relation to our Outcomes, understanding the challenges in moving outcomes forward during Covid 19, mindful of a need to continue to deliver hearings.

- 2.3 The progress report highlights areas where current outcomes have been met particularly the delivery of impactful EDI learning for CHS staff, the development, delivery of learning and guidance on the needs for and completion of Equality Impact Assessments, CHS community training and resources in relation to recruitment and selection of new Panel and AST members, and the creation of bespoke learning modules for the CHS community to be launched from April 2023.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Board are asked to approve the progress report for publication and to agree to the continuation of our current Equality Monitoring Outcomes.

4. Appendices

- 4.1 Equality Monitoring Outcomes Progress Report

Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes

2022 - 2023

Progress Report

(March 2023)



children's
hearings
scotland



FOREWORD

Welcome to Children's Hearings Scotland's (CHS) Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes Progress report.

CHS remains fully committed to embedding and mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion as a key component of our business and the services that we provide to children, young people and their families as well as supporting the Scottish Government's national outcome of Tackling Inequality.

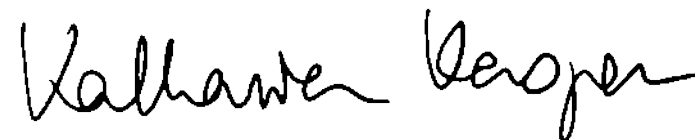
In July 2020 we published a new set of Equality Outcomes to work towards between then and now. We reported against progress in 2021 and in 2022. This report outlines the overall progress that we have made towards achieving our equality outcomes between April 2022 and March 2023.

We now welcome you to read through our progress report if you have any comments, please do not hesitate in contact us at enquiries@chs.gov.scot



Elliot

Jackson Chief Executive / National Convener



Katherina Kasper CHS Board Chair

Section 1

Equality Outcomes

OUTCOME 1

Providing training and development opportunities for CHS Community can ensure that our community is up to date in its knowledge, skills, attitudes, and legal obligations concerning to equality, diversity, and inclusion, and are able to apply these approaches to all aspects of their roles.

Overview

This outcome focuses on ensuring that our whole CHS community of staff and volunteers as well as potential staff and volunteers, are suitably trained, equipped, and supported to enable them to carry out their roles to a high standard when deploying and supporting people with protected characteristics.

General Equality Duty Link

We believe that the following equality outcomes (1.1, 1.2 & 1.3) will assist CHS in meeting the general equality duties of eliminating unlawful discrimination and of advancing equality of opportunity for all individuals with protected characteristics who work for and volunteer with Children's Hearings Scotland. Furthermore, the removal of barriers for these protected groups in our training practices, along with increased awareness and understanding and robust underpinning policies, will help to individuals to maintain making a valuable contribution either in the workplace or as a volunteer.

Outcome 1.1	Having completed mandatory introductory online training on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, all staff can demonstrate and apply awareness of how to support protected characteristics when carrying out their respective roles
Action(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source suitable accessible training resources online working with key specialist partner agencies • Pilot training with a representative group of CHS volunteer community • Host training on CHS Learning Academy site • Communicate that this training is mandatory, setting a deadline for completion (this may be phased) • Monitor completion rates

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on completion rates and actions for non-completer e.g., removal from rota, support to complete • Provide appropriate training for staff in order to ensure that all staff are aware when and how Equality Impact Assessments should be conducted
Timescale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All new staff complete online course as part of induction within 3 months of their start date. • All staff shall annually undertake at least one of a rolling programme of Equality & Diversity courses
Success Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff have completed mandatory introductory online training on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion each year. • Our staff are knowledgeable on equality and diversity related practices and feel confident that they can apply their learning and knowledge to their work. • We receive higher than our threshold 60% positive scoring in the Staff Survey to the question that assesses staff perception of own levels of knowledge and confidence regarding equality and diversity matters.
Progress Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 %: all CHS staff have completed bespoke mandatory EDI training either online or face to face. New starts are provided with this on an ongoing basis • All staff have received, or as new starts will receive learning and guidance on Equality Impact Assessments which is now applied in the workplace • 100% All staff have completed an online Equality and Diversity learning module as part of induction
Protected Characteristics	Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived experience
Responsibility	National Training Lead with support from HR/OD Lead to progress Induction training and EqIA training for staff.
Outcome 1.2	Having completed mandatory introductory online training on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, all AST, Panel Member and Trainee Panel Members can demonstrate and apply awareness of how to support people with protected characteristics when carrying out their respective roles

Action(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source suitable accessible training resources online working with key specialist partner agencies • Pilot training with a representative group of CHS volunteer community • Host training on CHS Learning Academy site • Communicate that this training is mandatory, setting a deadline for completion (this may be phased) • Monitor completion rates • Report on completion rates and actions for non-completers • PPA assessment of this course in action in observations and linked to the competency it sits under 'equal treatment'
Timescale	Was ongoing to March 2022 and is now carried into 2023 - 2024, using a phased approach e.g., groups - Area Support Teams (ASTs) <i>etc</i>
Success Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on number of people who have completed the training as a percentage with target of >70% • Sample Panel Member practice via Panel Practice Advisers (PPAs) for case study examples of application of learning to show an increase in practical application of their equality, diversity, and inclusion learning.
Progress Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between April 2022 and March 2023 50% of new Panel Members completed Equality and Diversity learning online. • Equality and Diversity training has been completed by all AST members involved in the recruitment and selection of new Panel Members. • Sampling of PPA reports to show application of learning – carried over into 2022 – 2023. • CHS hosted a large-scale event delivered by external specialist organisations on the topic of Neurodiversity. Attended by 180 people the learning and resources from the event is being shared with the wider CHS community during 2023.
Protected Characteristics	Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived experience

Responsibility	National Training Lead
Outcome 1.3	CHS operates a robust, fair, transparent and non-discriminatory Recruitment and Selection process for its Panel Member and AST volunteers
Action(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refresh the training courses for Area Support Teams (AST) members on recruiting, selecting and re-appointing with CHS Learning Academy to enhance awareness, ensure clarity and changes in practice. The content of this course, specifically pertaining to unconscious bias will ensure an objective, fair and consistent inclusive approach. • Engage with Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion experts for ongoing and regular support, training, and continuing education of community, building upon relevant work already undertaken with the CHS community • Agree with the National Convener and CHS Learning Academy (LA), the insistence of training for all AST volunteers as a mandatory requirement prior to involvement in recruitment and selection and develop an action plan accordingly. Determine that involvement in such training would be required at least once in each three-year appointment period for all those involved in the recruitment and selection of Panel community members.
Timescale	Was ongoing to March 2022 and now to March 2024 (aimed not only for annual Panel Member recruitment campaign but throughout year for recruitment of AST members)
Success Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflected in diversity of potential volunteers confirmed as trainees through equality monitoring (captured through digital system at time of onboarding onto system) – and will be reflective of Scottish society. • With new digital system, will be able to audit the actual composition of the Panel Community to provide a baseline. • Aim for at least 75% of community members having undertaken training courses.

Progress Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Recruitment and Selection course for completion by all AST members involved in recruitment and selection revised with the CHS Retention and Recruitment Reference Group (RRRG) input alongside the CHS Learning Academy • Equality and diversity learning has been incorporated within this revised Recruitment and Selection training Mandatory learning for interviewers new to Panel Member Recruitment and Selection has taken place All interviewers have attended skills sessions including young interviewers supporting the activities. • 100% completion rate for relevant AST members
Protected Characteristics	Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived experience
Responsibility	Recruitment and Retention Lead, National Training Lead
Outcome 1.4	CHS attracts a diverse range of candidates applying for its employment vacancies by operating best practice recruitment and selection practices that help to make CHS an employer of choice
Action(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out a full review of the CHS Recruitment and Selection policy in consultation with SMT and the Staff Forum to ensure that the end-to-end process is inclusive, non-discriminatory and mitigates against bias in the decision-making process • Recruitment Administration Processes are fully documented, and all colleagues involved are updated by HR on what is involved in the R&S process. • Any staff member who is involved in the selection/decision-making processes, including shortlisting applications and participating on recruitment panels must have undergone bespoke Recruitment and Selection training first, and thereafter, has undergone refresher training at least every two years. • Monitor recruitment equality data to check for trends among the applicants who apply and to then consider any barriers that may have affected them, taking action to make improvements.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be proactive in linking in with local or national equality groups to ensure that it is operating best practice in terms of equality and inclusion in its Recruitment and Selection practices. • Be proactive is engaging with a diverse range of recruitment channels to promote its employment vacancies and reach as many potential candidates with protected characteristics as it can.
Timescale	April 2021 – March 2024
Success Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No recruitment decisions are challenged on the grounds of discriminatory or unfair recruitment or selection practices • CHS attracts a range of candidates for each of its employment vacancies from a wide variety of people with protected characteristics • CHS has developed positive partnerships and links with a wide range of equality bodies and uses their expert knowledge to inform its recruitment policy, procedures and practices and ensure it remains aligned to any developments in best practice as guided by these equality bodies.
Protected Characteristics	Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived experience
Progress report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our People Strategy 2021 – 2023 works in direct partnership with the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy and supports a number of the priorities and actions outlined in the Equality Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report 2020-2022 in line with our organisational Public Sector Equality Duty. • One aim of our People Strategy is to attract and retain top talent at CHS. More specifically, our strategic aim will focus on: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring that CHS attracts a diverse range of applicants by operating best practice recruitment and selection practices that help to make CHS an inclusive employer;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Actively profiling, monitoring, and reporting on the diversity of our applicants to ensure we are an inclusive employer, and our workforce is reflective of our commitments outlined in our Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report and the communities we engage with.• We continue to work with our internal colleagues to support the work and progress that we have already made whilst continuing to build positive partnerships and links with a wide range of equality bodies and use their knowledge to inform our recruitment policy, procedures, and practices.
Responsibility	HR & Organisational Development Lead

Outcome 1.5	Extend links and partnership working with specialist equality bodies/organisations who can provide enhanced/specialist training to staff/ volunteers on particular protected characteristics
Action(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External expert partners shall be used in the development of E, D&I online courses • Expert partners shall be invited to deliver a 'Learn from the Experts' event to provide guidance and insight into a specific E, D&I area
Timescale	Was end of August 2021 and ongoing. Now until March 2024
Success Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion in external partnership working within E, D&I and the training programme. • 70% of community do specialist E, D&I training each year
Progress report	<p>Bespoke learning delivered by an external expert has been delivered to all CHS staff. This learning has been converted into an online learning module and associated resources that will be released to the CHS Community during 2023.</p> <p>CHS hosted a large-scale online event delivered by external specialists on the topic of Neurodiversity to raise awareness and create changes in practice within hearings as well as alongside colleagues.</p> <p>70% target not yet met. Original plans to ensure that EDI learning was mandatory for the whole of the CHS Community, postponed during Covid due to pressures on volunteers. Expansion of external partnerships and increase in % of the CHS community completing specialist training continues as an action into 2023 with EDI learning being mandatory for all.</p>
Protected Characteristics	Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived experience
Responsibility	National Training Lead / HR & Organisational Development Lead

OUTCOME 2

Raising Awareness of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion across the CHS Community will enhance all our roles and lead to more effective decision making, as we proactively engage with our staff members, volunteers, and work in partnership with external equality organisations who can support CHS to achieve this aim.

Overview:

This Outcome focused on raising awareness and knowledge across the employed National Team and the volunteer community to achieve a greater level of understanding and empathy not only among colleagues and volunteers of each other's protected characteristics but also for those families, children and young people who engage with CHS at children's hearings.

General Equality Duty Link

This outcome helps CHS to meet the general duty of fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not.

Outcome 2.1	CHS will work with specialist organisations to develop practice resources that support our volunteer community to better understand and meet the needs of individuals who share protected characteristics. As a result, the CHS volunteer community will have an increased awareness and understanding of equality, diversity, and inclusion.
Action(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHS will further develop advice and guidance within the 'Practice and Procedure Manual' focusing on minimising barriers in children's hearings for those who share protected characteristics. • We will work with volunteers locally to source, design and offer bespoke equalities training for Panel Members that is responsive to the locally presenting need. • CHS will further develop our communications work on accessible language to provide a central resource for all CHS staff and volunteers.
Timescale	Ongoing to March 2022 and now until March 2024
Success Measures	<p>The CHS volunteer community will have an increased understanding of equality, diversity, and inclusion –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel Members are able to identify and apply relevant parts of legislation relating to diversity, equality, and inclusion to ensure fairness within hearings. • The CHS Practice Team, having worked with specialist equality organisations, have developed comprehensive guidance around equality, diversity, and inclusion for issue in the Practice and Procedure Manual. • CHS have published the updated accessible language guide on the National Team channel on Microsoft Teams for all employed CHS staff. • The CHS Practice Team have updated the Practice and Procedure Manual a minimum of once annually and provided the CHS volunteer community with up-to-date guidance on equality, diversity, and inclusion.
Progress report	Our Practice and Procedure Manual was updated and published in October 2022.

Protected Characteristics	Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived experience
Responsibility	Practice Team (Practice and Partnerships Lead/Practice Development Coordinator), National Training Lead
Outcome 2.2	We are proactive in raising awareness of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion across the CHS Community i.e., in all our work and volunteering practices and decision-making processes, so that it leads to increased understanding, knowledge and empathy of all protected characteristics.
Action(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a notable dates calendar which outlines the Communications team’s objectives for internal and external celebration of various holidays, national days of, etc. These have all been selected specifically to align with the CHS community and the work that CHS does. It has been developed in partnership with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion working group. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This celebration will take the form of social media campaigns, as well as Teams campaigns. Depending on the day, and it’s meaning to CHS as an organisation, these campaigns will be adjusted to suit in relation to content, duration, and involvement of other community members (i.e., Volunteers’ Week). • We will work in collaboration with every team and colleague at CHS to ensure correct language and terminology is used throughout all official material and communication, specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High-level communication from National Convener and/or Senior Management Team; ▪ Practice and policy material produced by Practice team; ▪ Recruitment material produced by Recruitment and Retention Lead; ▪ This will be done through the addition of a language and terminology guide to the Practice and Procedure Manual (PPM) in collaboration with the Practice and Communications teams. This will then be extracted as a one-pager for staff who do not rely on the PPM in the same way. ▪ Training and course material produced by Learning Academy and/or National Training Lead.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage all staff and volunteers to develop and regularly use language suitable for a diverse audience, keeping in mind that certain characteristics will not be overtly seen, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Share their own pronouns to encourage an open and safe space; ▪ Ask if any individuals require additional support at meetings, events, and the like; ▪ Overall encourage dialogue that doesn't assume that everyone is the same as we are. • This will be achieved through collaboration with HR Lead, Recruitment and Retention Lead, National Training Lead and the CHS Learning Academy to ensure this language and dialogue is weaved into staff and volunteers' journeys from the start (i.e., staff and volunteer recruitment and training).
Timescale	March 2022 into 2023 now ongoing until March 2024
Success Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Communications team use inclusive language in all internal and external communications; • The CHS Learning Academy use inclusive language in all training material; • Local teams will ensure inclusive language is implemented by volunteers (monitoring language used at local meetings, on local Teams and private chats, etc.) • CHS will continually develop its library of imagery and videos to ensure full representation; • CHS clearly prioritise equality and diversity, which is felt by the wider community. • CHS include questions in the Community Survey which relate to equality and diversity so that the above can be properly measured and monitored.
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notable dates calendar complete and active • Communications are monitored and amended if required continuously • Over the past year CHS has profiled a range of events and celebrations to the CHS Staff and volunteer community via Microsoft Teams including Mental Health Awareness Week, Black History Month, and as of March 2023 Neurodiversity Week • CHS Learning Academy profile key EDI dates on the Academy site – linking these to resources and learning where available

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our full complement communications team will continue with plans to meet the success measures.
Protected Characteristics	Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived experience
Responsibility	Communications and Engagement Lead
Outcome 2.3	Our volunteers will play a central role within the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda at CHS as they are best placed to ensure that we are raising awareness of protected characteristics, fostering good relations between members of our community who share those characteristics and those who do not and creating greater empathy and understanding of the backgrounds of those they come into contact with during hearings.
Action(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Working Group as the central place for all strategic recommendations and actions relating to ED&I work within CHS. • Create role of Inclusion Ambassador; a volunteer with a particular interest / expertise in ED&I who will become an ambassador for all ED&I work within their AST area. • Set up an Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Network for CHS which includes all of the Inclusion Ambassadors and representation from across our community, particularly those with a protected characteristic or knowledge / expertise in a particular equality area. • Inclusion Ambassadors to support, promote and raise awareness of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion within their local areas, by attending events and training, ensuring national messages are shared with the local community and responding to any local queries.
Timescale	April 2021 – 2022, 2022 – 2023 and now until March 2024

Success Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Working Group meets at least quarterly. • Each Area Support Team Area has at least one Inclusion Ambassador. • CHS has an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Network which also meets quarterly • The ED&I Network is used for consultation, development of strategy and to ensure that local and national information is shared both ways.
Progress report	<p>Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working group has been superseded by the CHS Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategic Group. This group comprises a cross section of CHS volunteers, staff, and Board Members. It will meet at least 4 times a year with the most recent meeting being in February 2023. This group has identified training, communications, and the provision of reasonable adjustments as priorities for the 2023 EDI action plan.</p> <p>Inclusion Ambassador plans under review</p>
Protected Characteristics	Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived experience
Responsibility	Area Support & Improvement Partners & Area Conveners
Outcome 2.4	Staff are fully competent and confident in carrying out Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) on any new or revised strategies, policies, and processes that they are responsible for developing.
Action(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop clear and consistent Equality Impact Assessment rules and processes • Review the existing Equality Impact Assessment and Pre-screening templates to ensure they are fit for purpose • Provide appropriate and regular training for staff in order to ensure that all staff are aware when and how Equality Impact Assessments should be conducted • Create a central register of all the organisation's policies and procedures, to record key information such as noting the date of policy implementation and date of review and the date of Equality Impact Assessment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All EqIAs are accessibly published in order to meet the specific duties under the Equality Act 2010 • Keep an accurate central log of who has received the training • Keep an accurate central log of all strategies and policies that have been impact assessed and publish results in an accessible manner.
Timescale	April 2021 – 2022, 2022 – 2023, now until March 2024
Success Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The discipline of accompanying all strategy and policy documents with fully completed EqIA when submitted these to Senior Management team and Board Committees is well understood, established, and practiced within the National Team with the Senior Management Team ensuring governance is applied. • Any risk of discriminatory practices or processes are identified at the earliest opportunity during the development of new or the revision of existing strategies and policies and these risks are recorded in the EqIA and mitigated against, again with details noted in the EqIA.
Progress Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational policy tracker has been completed during 2022 and is managed by the business support team. • New EqIA templates were completed in October 2022. • Compulsory training on the new CHS Impact Assessment process was provided to all CHS staff in October 2022. All papers going to SMT are now expected to be accompanied by an EqIA. • A video course on the CHS impact assessment process was created in November 2022. All new CHS staff are expected to complete the course during induction. Completion will be tracker vis CHS Learning Academy. <p>New impact assessment process is to be reviewed during 2023 to identify any areas of improvement.</p>
Protected Characteristics	Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation.

Responsibility	Senior Management Team/ HR & Organisational Development Lead
Outcome 2.5	CHS is a recognised as an employer of choice by individuals with caring¹ responsibilities due to its positive and open recruitment approach and its flexible working and attendance management policies and practices.
Action(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will engage with national carers' organisations such as Carers UK and Carer Positive to seek advice and guidance on how to be an inclusive and supportive employer. • We will review our recruitment and selection policy to ensure that our flexible and open approach is clearly reflected here. • We will review our recruitment and selection processes and practices (including our application forms and advertising methods) to ensure that our flexible and open approach is clearly reflected thus enabling us to attract a wider pool of suitable applicants. • We will review our absence management policy and procedures to ensure that it reflects the particular needs and requirements that employees with caring responsibilities may require. • We will review our flexible working policy and procedures to ensure that it reflects the needs and requirements that employees with caring responsibilities may require. • We will support and promote national annual campaigns, such as the National Carers Week
Timescale	December 2021 – 2022, 2023 – March 2024
Success Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHS becomes an accredited Carer Positive employer and maintains this accreditation.

¹ A carer is someone who provides unpaid care by looking after an ill, frail or disabled family member, friend or partner.

Source: <http://www.carerpositive.org/>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Year on year percentage increase in the number of people with caring responsibilities who apply to join our team.
Progress Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CHS continued to improve its recruitment and onboarding process through out 2022. This included, for instance, clearer guidance to hiring managers, new job advert format and increased communication to candidates. We will keep up the continuous development of these processes throughout 2023. During 2022, CHS was recognised as disability confident and carer positive employer. CHS will endeavour to continue development in each of these areas to reach the next level of each accreditation. In 2022, CHS reviewed it's Flexible working and Flexi time policies to ensure they are in line with legislation as well as support the needs of CHS colleagues. This update also included a line manager training session on the policies to ensure line managers are able to confidently advice their team members on the policies. In 22-23, 32% of job applicants for CHS had caring responsibilities (including children). We will continue to monitor our recruitment data. HR Updates channel on teams was used to promote various resources available to anyone with caring responsibilities.
Protected Characteristics	Gender, Age, Disability
Responsibility	HR & Organisational Development Lead

OUTCOME 3

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

Overview:

We have evidence that there are challenges for some groups of children and families in engaging with and understanding the Children's Hearings process. For example, the Scottish Parliament's Education Committee has raised concerns about parents with learning difficulties engaging appropriately in the process.

CHS will work in partnership with other organisations to improve experiences and will ensure that those requiring support (e.g., parents with learning difficulties) are supported by panel members as much as possible to engage.

General Equality Duty Link

This outcome has been created due to the need for a consistently fair approach by panel members across Scotland as volunteers, trained in how to conduct hearings appropriately/ without bias or discrimination. Communication and engagement skills with children and young people are a key development focus at the pre-service stage for our panel member training and quality assurance processes are in place to help CHS measure panel member behaviour and conduct during the hearing. This outcome will help CHS to meet all three of the general duties by helping to eliminate discrimination through the removal of any discriminatory or inappropriate behaviour during the hearings process and help to foster good relations and understanding between our volunteer members and individuals from equality groups who are involved in the hearings process.

Outcome 3.1	Provide accessible and inclusive communication that meets the access needs of all those with protected characteristics and promotes inclusive language
Action(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will offer all CHS external material in accessible formats; • We will use inclusive language and imagery throughout the site; • We will build the new CHS website using accessible fonts, colours, and design throughout; • We will undertake a refresh of all templates to ensure these are accessible; • We will include captions for images on social media (where possible); • We will include captions for images in the Community Newsletter; • We will include subtitles on all CHS films
Timescale	By March 2022 and ongoing to March 2024
Success Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHS only uses accessible templates; • The CHS website is fully accessible, with clear signposting of who to contact for accessible versions of policies etc.; • CHS has a full library of accessible videos
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHS external material is offered in accessible formats • Inclusive language and imagery are used throughout the website- complete • CHS website has been built using accessible fonts, colours, and design throughout • Refreshing of all templates to ensure these are accessible – is underway as part of brand refresh • Captions for images on social media (where possible) Continuous • Captions for images in the CHS Community Newsletter - complete • Inclusion of subtitles on all CHS films is underway and continuous
Protected Characteristics	Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived-experience - All apply
Responsibility	Communication and Engagement Lead

Outcome 3.2	Area Support Teams (ASTs) will be more representative of the full spectrum of Scottish society and communities we serve, ensuring equality of opportunity for all, proactively identifying, and removing barriers which exist.
Action(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will engage with both national and local equality organisations to seek guidance and support on how to be inclusive of volunteers with protected characteristics • We will actively review AST recruitment practice, focusing on updating AST role descriptions to ensure that they are inclusive, fair, and attractive to volunteers from across our community and outwith • We will gather accurate and up-to-date information on AST demographics, using it to target and monitor AST recruitment • We will increase awareness of AST roles via our social media platforms and networks
Timescale	Ongoing to March 2022 – March 2023 and ongoing to March 2024
Success Measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All AST roles have been reviewed and updated to ensure they are inclusive and fair. • Equality data has been gathered for all ASTs. • When recruitment is required for an AST role, data is reviewed and used to ensure that ASTs are as diverse as possible. • AST recruitment attracts a range of candidates including those with protected characteristics. • A diverse range of channels such as social media and equality and other relevant organisation newsletters are used to promote AST recruitment opportunities
Progress Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role descriptions remain under review with some preliminary scoping having taken place. AST leadership roles have been advertised within the Third Sector Good Moves platform, which has raised profile and has generated some success at attracting people outwith the Children's Hearings system

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media has been an effective means of attracting volunteers to AST roles (PPA roles). • Equality monitoring is now in place for the whole Panel Community
Protected Characteristics	Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and Belief, Race, Sex, Sexual Orientation, Lived experience
Responsibility	Area Conveners (ACs) and Area Support and Improvement Partners (ASIPS)

Section 2

EMPLOYEE AND RECRUITMENT MONITORING DATA (2022-2023)

Introduction

Why we gather and monitor recruitment and employment information

Included in the duty to mainstream, CHS is required to take steps to gather information on the protected characteristic composition of its workforce and on the recruitment, development, and retention of its employees, with respect to, in each year, relevant protected characteristics. CHS must then monitor and use this information to better inform the general equality duty.

[Part A](#) gives a breakdown of our staff equality data; in line with the update in relation to how we collate our recruitment Equalities monitoring statistics via SMART SURVEY from the 1 April, our intention moving forward is that we will be looking to annually engage with our staff to update our equalities monitoring stats for our colleagues. [Part B](#) gives a short summary of our *Performance Management* processes and opportunities for *Promotion and Development* within CHS. [Part C](#) gives a breakdown of our recruitment applicant equality data. Analysis of this information will allow CHS to identify any gaps in the organisation's performance as an employer and enable CHS to investigate the causes of these gaps, and to take steps, including positive action, to address or mitigate the causes.

Important information

NOTE: While at the most recent count, CHS has been able to gather equality data for 67% of its employees, it should be noted that employees who responded to the CHS Diversity surveys are not obliged to answer any or all of the questions, and can choose to simply skip the question, or tick the Prefer Not to Say option featured with every question.

We have therefore aggregated the *No Response to Survey*, *No Response to Question* and *Prefer not to Say* into one column called Prefer Not to Say/No Response, so that this information is still reflected against each protected characteristic.

Please also note, that due to the small numbers of CHS employees, where the data in the following tables is particularly sensitive, responses of 1-5 are displayed as ≤ 5 , so that individual employees cannot be directly identified, and thus their anonymity is protected.

The tables below show the diversity information that our employees have disclosed for all x9 protected characteristics. In support of the campaign led by the charity Who Cares? Scotland to treat care experience as a protected characteristic for children, young people, and adults, CHS included a **10th** protected characteristic of 'care experienced' for the first time, during the recent March 2020 Staff Diversity survey. Extensive research indicates that care experienced people, particularly young people, are disadvantaged at multiple levels in society, including in relation to education, access to support services, and employment opportunities, all of which impact on health and wellbeing, so CHS is committed to providing equality of opportunity and elimination of any discrimination in its workplace for any employees who are 'care-experienced'. CHS has already taken a pro-active approach on this with regards to the composition of its Board, with a number of its current members who are care-experienced.

Part A - Employee Protected Characteristic Data as of March 2022

1. Age

What age bracket are you?

Age Band:	Age Band: Under 24	Age Band: 24-34	Age Band: 35-44	Age Band: 45-54	Age Band: 55-64	Age Band: 65+	Prefer not to say/No response
Total employees March 2023	0	5	9	9	6	≤5	≤5
Total employees March 2022	0	8	10	9	≤5	0	0
Total employees March 2020	0	9	7	13	≤5	≤5	≤5
Total employees June 2018	0	≤5	6	6	≤5	0	0

2. Gender Identity

Please describe your gender identity (this is about your self-perception of your gender rather than about your biological sex).

Band:	Female (inc trans female)	Male (inc trans male)	Non-Binary/In another way	Prefer not to say/ No Response
Total employees March 2023	20	9	≤5	≤5
Total employees March 2022	23	8	0	0
Total employees March 2020	31	8	0	0
Total employees June 2018	14	7	0	0

3. Trans Identity

Do you consider, or have you ever considered yourself to be a trans person?

(trans is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as the sex they were assigned at birth).

Band:	Trans	Prefer not to say/ No response
Total employees March 2023	0	0
Total employees June 2018, March 2020, March 2022	0	0

4. Marital status

Which of the following best describes your current marital status?

Band:	Single	Married/Civil Partnership	Partnership	Widowed	Separated/Divorced	Prefer not to say/No Response
Total employees March 2023	≤5	19	≤5	0	≤5	≤5
Total employees March 2022	8	15	5	0	0	≤5
Total employees March 2020	6	15	6	0	≤5	7
Total employees June 2018	≤5	9	≤5	≤5	≤5	0

With regards to Pregnancy, in 2020, ≤5 employees were pregnant or on maternity leave during 2019/20. Substantive posts were successfully backfilled with fixed term contracts to cover the period of time employee is off on maternity leave.

5. Sexual Orientation

How would you describe your sexual orientation?

	LGBT+	Heterosexual	Prefer not to say/ No Response
Total employees March 2023	≤5	23	≤5
Total employees March 2022	≤5	25	0
Total employees March 2020	≤5	26	8
Total employees June 2018	≤5	15	0

6. Caring Responsibilities

Do you have caring responsibilities for dependent children and/or dependent children?

Band:	None	None (with non-dependent children)	Yes, with dependent Child/ren only	Yes, with dependent adult(s) only	Yes, with dependent child/ren <i>and</i> adult(s)	Prefer not to say/ No Response
Total employees March 2023	16	0	10	≤5	≤5	≤5
Total employees March 2022	18	0	9	≤5	0	≤5
Total employees March 2020	15	≤5	13	0	0	6
Total employees June 2018	7	≤5	≤5	0	0	≤5

7. Ethnicity

Which ethnic group do you most identify with?

Band:	White (British, Scottish, Irish, Other)	White Scottish	White British	White Other	Pakastani/Pakastani Scottish/Pakastani British	Other Asian	Prefer not to say/ No Response
Total employees March 2023	7	20	0	≤5	0	≤5	0
Total employees March 2022	≤5	20	0	0	0	≤5	0
Total employees March 2020	-	20	7	≤5	≤5	0	≤5
Total employees June 2018	-	8	≤5	≤5	0	0	≤5

8. Religious affiliation

What religious denomination, body or belief do you affiliate to?

Band:	Church of Scotland/England	Roman Catholic	Other Christian	Islam	None	Prefer not to say/ No Response
Total employees March 2023	9	≤5	≤5	0	12	0
Total employees March 2022	7	≤5	≤5	0	19	0
Total employees March 2020	≤5	≤5	≤5	≤5	19	2
Total employees June 2018	≤5	≤5	0	0	9	≤5

9. Care Experienced

Are you care-experienced?

Band:	No	Yes	Prefer not to say/No Response
Total employees March 2023	≥25	≤5	0
Total employees March 2022	29	≤5	≤5
Total employees March 2020	30	≤5	≤5

CHS aims to have a diverse profile among its staff (and volunteers) that is reflective of the communities it serves, hence the inclusion of the above question for our 10th 'protected characteristic' for the first time in our most recent survey.

10. Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability in the following way: "A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities". Having read the above do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Band:	No	Yes	Prefer not to say/No Response
Total employees March 2023	24	5	0
Total employees March 2022	22	7	≤5
Total employees March 2020	27	≤5	7
Total employees June 2018	15	≤5	≤5

Part B - Employee Development and Performance Management

1.1 People Strategy

Children's Hearings Scotland's first People Strategy was launched in 2021. The People Strategy has been designed to promote a culture that reflects Children's Hearings Scotland's vision and values. The strategy details the way in which CHS intends to work with staff, managers, and other stakeholders to help everyone reach their potential.

The focus of the strategy is on developing and evolving the organisational culture to ensure that CHS continues to value diversity and ensure that staff have meaningful and challenging work, that they are effectively developed and motivated to perform and have their contribution appropriately recognised and competitively rewarded.

The People Strategy sets out 6 key priorities with work streams and implementation plans associated with each:

- a) Attract and Retain Great People
- b) Deliver Inspirational & Effective Leadership
- c) Reward & Recognition
- d) Create a Culture of Engagement & Wellbeing
- e) Develop our Skills, Knowledge, & Behaviours
- f) Build an Agile, Flexible, & High Performing Team

1.2 Performance management

CHS has a 6-month probation period. The process for managing this has been made clearer during the start of 2022 to ensure effective performance management during the first few months of employment at CHS. The performance management during probation consists of regular 1-2-1 meetings with the line manager and completing a full probation review by the 5th month of employment. The final review provides an opportunity to both the employee and line manager to reflect on the past 5 months, set any future goals and identify any learning & development needs.

After passing their probation, employees receive 1-2-1 supervision with their line manager approximately every 6 weeks and an annual appraisal during the first quarter of the year when past performance is reviewed, and new performance objectives for the next 6-12 months are agreed. Personal development is linked into performance management/appraisal system.

1.3 Employee Wellbeing

As outlined above, it is part of CHS' People Strategy to support wellbeing. Back in 2021/2022 we held a three-part series on resilience and focus facilitated by The Wellbeing Project which included workshops on:

- Flourishing;
- Inner drive; and
- Future focus.

In 2023, following up on the above sessions, The Wellbeing Project held a wellbeing session in January called "Energise" to support wellbeing during wintertime.

In addition to the sessions from The Wellbeing Project, staff has also been able to attend:

- An informal but informative session giving a comprehensive overview of the Menopause with Ruth Devlin from Let's Talk Menopause;
- Online course on wellbeing in our staff learning area covering a variety of topics including digital wellbeing.

In 2023, CHS employees are additionally able to take a wellbeing day off work. The day can be used in anyway colleagues wish to support their own wellbeing.

Wellbeing remains a standing discussion point at all staff 1-2-1's with their line managers.

1.4 Employee Development

CHS is committed to supporting staff to build on existing skills and provide opportunities to develop new skills. There have been a number of training and development opportunities for the full staff body including:

- CHS Bites programme (internal knowledge sharing programme);
- CHS How To programme (internal training programme);
- Line manager training (internal training for CHS line managers);
- Mandatory EDI training via Spurway Training LTD.

In addition to the staff wide training and development opportunities above, specific teams and individuals have had the opportunity to take part in training and development programmes, CDP, and learning opportunities. To support this, the CHS Learning & Development guidance was reviewed in October 2022 and process for accessing Learning & Development opportunities was clarified.

1.4.1 Equality of opportunity in accessing learning and development

- All staff should have the opportunity to access the learning they need to carry out their role, to work to the standards expected, and for their continuing professional development. Decisions about learning and development will be made in a fair and equitable manner.
- Effective learning requires choice: Learning can take many forms. To allow for different learning styles and preferences, CHS aims to support a range of approaches and to provide learning and development in its widest sense. Many practical learning opportunities in the workplace are easier to access and more cost effective than formal courses. There will be a balance between nationally and local sourced opportunities.

2. Promotions and Secondments

2.1 Secondment and Acting Up Opportunities

CHS has been active in offering development opportunities to staff by providing acting up opportunities to some staff, where there has been a requirement to fill a knowledge gap or provide project resource, within the organisation. During this period, secondment opportunities have been in relation to both external and internal projects as well as internal cover.

2.2 Internal Promotion opportunities

CHS has offered promotion opportunities to staff by providing internal applicants the opportunity to progress into roles where a need has been identified to flex and expand roles at a more senior level.

Part C - Employment Recruitment Statistics (April 2022 - March 2023)

Employee Recruitment

Equality Monitoring forms are included as part of the recruitment pack for every vacancy, and the majority of applicants do return their completed forms with their application. The equality monitoring forms are then separated from the form prior to the short-listing stage, so that no one on the short-listing or recruitment panel is aware of the protected characteristics of the applicant. Gender identifiers, such as names and email addresses, along with other contact information are also redacted from the application forms prior to short-listing.

Each application form is scored against the Essential and Desirable criteria that is clearly noted in the person specification. Only candidates who meet the essential criteria pass through the first tranche of shortlisting, at which point, the panel then score against the desirable criteria.

Please note, that due to the small numbers of CHS employees, where the data in the following tables is particularly sensitive, responses of 1-5 are displayed as ≤ 5 , so that individual employees cannot be directly identified via the “appointed” data, and thus their anonymity is protected.

Note: CHS does not request Equalities data from recruitment agencies or temporary staff recruited via agency.

April 2022 - March 2023

CHS ran a total of 8 recruitment campaigns over the past 12 months from April 2022 through March 2023, (excluding internal secondments/promotions) and attracted a total of 130 applicants.

VACANCY	VACANCY POSTED (MONTH/YEAR)	NO OF APPLICANTS
Practice and Policy Advisor		7
Communications Lead		18
Feedback and Complaints Officer		19**
Management Accountant		4*
Practice and Policy Lead (Temp)		6
Communications Lead (Temp)		14
Practice and Policy Advisor		40**
HR/OD Assistant		22

*No candidates appointed

**two candidates appointed

1. Age (%)

What is your age bracket?

Age	Total	% of Total	Shortlisted	% Shortlisted	Appointed	% Appointed
Under 24	13	10%	2	5%	1	11%
24-34	55	42%	16	38%	4	44%
35-44	31	23%	9	21%	3	33%
45-54	22	17%	11	26%	1	11%
55-64	6	5%	4	10%	0	0%
64+	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
No response	2	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Prefer not to say	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	130	100%	42	100%	9	100%

2. Gender

Please describe your gender identity (this is about your self-perception of your gender rather than about your biological sex).

Gender	Total	% of Total	Shortlisted	% Shortlisted	Appointed	% Appointed
Male	33	25%	10	24%	2	22%
Female	95	73%	32	76%	7	78%
No response	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Prefer not to say	2	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	130	100%	42	100%	9	100%

3. Care experience

In order to ensure that our organisation is attracting and appointing people with lived experience of care and children's hearings, we have added this criteria to our equality and diversity monitoring. This enables us to monitor our progress and to review our processes and support to maximise our recruitment and selection in this area.

Do you consider yourself to have had lived experience of care?

3. Care experience	Total	% of Total	Shortlisted	% Shortlisted	Appointed	% Appointed
No	112	86%	40	95%	9	100%
Yes	12	9%	2	5%	0	0%
Blank	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Prefer not to say	6	5%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	130	100%	42	100%	9	100%

4. Trans

Do you consider, or have you ever considered yourself to be a trans person?

(trans is an umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as the sex they were assigned at birth).

Transgender Status	Total	% of Total	Shortlisted	% Shortlisted	Appointed	% Appointed
Yes	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
No	128	98%	42	100%	9	100%
No response	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Prefer not to say	2	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	130	100%	42	100%	9	100%

5. Marital Status

Which of the following best describes your current marital status?

5. Marital status	Total	% of Total	Shortlisted	% Shortlisted	Appointed	% Appointed
Married/Civil Partnership	52	40%	21	50%	3	33%
Partnership	13	10%	3	7%	1	11%
Separated /Divorced	11	8%	5	12%	1	11%
Single	47	36%	12	29%	4	44%
Widowed	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Prefer not to say	7	5%	1	2%	0	0%
No response	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	130	100%	42	100%	9	100%

6. Sexual Orientation

How would you describe your sexual orientation?

Sexual orientation	Total	% of Total	Shortlisted	% Shortlisted	Appointed	% Appointed
Heterosexual/straight	104	80%	38	90%	8	89%
Bisexual	9	7%	0	0%	0	0%
Gay/lesbian	7	5%	1	2%	0	0%
No response	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Prefer not to say	10	8%	3	7%	1	11%
Total	130	100%	42	100%	9	100%

7. Ethnicity

Which ethnic group do you most identify with?

Ethnic Groups Consolidated	Total	% of Total	Shortlisted	% Shortlisted	Appointed	% Appointed
White Scottish	67	52%	28	67%	6	67%
White British	27	21%	7	17%	2	22%
White Irish	5	4%	2	5%	0	0%
White Other	11	8%	1	2%	1	11%
Black (Black Scottish, Black British)	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
African (African Scottish, African British)	2	2%	1	2%	0	0%
Asian (Arab)	2	2%	1	2%	0	0%
Asian (Indian)	8	6%	1	2%	0	0%
Asian (Pakistani)	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Asian (Chinese)	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Other Asian Background	3	2%	1	2%	0	0%
Latin American	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
No response	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Other Mixed Background	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Prefer not to say	2	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	130	100%	42	100%	9	100%

8. Religion

What religion, religious denomination, body, or belief do you affiliate to?

Religion	Total	% of Total	Shortlisted	% Shortlisted	Appointed	% Appointed
No response		0%	0	0%	0	0%
Buddhist		0%	0	0%	0	0%
Church of England		0%	0	0%	0	0%
Church of Scotland/England	13	10%	4	10%	1	11%
Humanist		0%	0	0%	0	0%
Jewish		0%	0	0%	0	0%
Muslim	5	4%	1	2%	0	0%
Sikh		0%	0	0%	0	0%
None	81	62%	29	69%	5	56%
Other (Not specified)	4	3%	0	0%	0	0%
Other Christian	7	5%	0	0%	0	0%
Prefer not to say	7	5%	3	7%	1	22%
Roman Catholic	13	10%	5	12%	2	22%
Total	130	100%	42	100%	9	100%

9. Caring Responsibilities

Which of the following best describes your caring responsibilities? (you can tick more than one if you wish).

Caring Responsibilities	Total	% of Total	Shortlisted	% Shortlisted	Appointed	% Appointed
Care for a child/children	36	28%	15	36%	4	44%
Care for an adult	3	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Care for an adult/children	3	2%	3	7%	0	0%
Prefer not to say	5	4%	1	2%	0	0%
No response		0%	0	0%	0	0%
None	83	64%	23	55%	5	56%
Total	130	100%	42	100%	9	100%

10.1 Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability in the following way:

"A person has a disability if s/he has a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities". *Having read the above, do you consider yourself to have a disability?*

Disability	Total	% of Total	Shortlisted	% Shortlisted	Appointed	% Appointed
Yes	8	6%	3	7%	1	11%
No	117	90%	39	93%	8	89%
Prefer not to say	4	3%	0	0%	0	0%
No response	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	130	100%	42	100%	9	100%

10.2 Consolidation of Health Conditions

Consolidation of health conditions	Total	% of Total	Shortlisted	% Shortlisted	Appointed	% Appointed
Deaf or Partially Deaf	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Learning Difficulty (e.g. Dyslexia)	5	4%	1	2%	0	0%
Long-term Illness, Disease, or Condition	1	1%	1	2%	1	11%
Mental Health Condition	3	2%	1	2%	0	0%
Blind or partially sighted	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
No response	117	90%	39	94%	8	89%
Other	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Physical Disability	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Not applicable to applicant	0	0%	0	0%	0	%
Prefer not to say	2	2%	0	0%	0	0%
Total	130	100%	42	100%	9	100%

Appendix 1 – Jargon Buster

Volunteers: CHS operates due to the work of our committed and hardworking volunteers. These are both those who are tribunal members attending panels across Scotland and those in our area support teams supporting the tribunal members. None are paid a salary although they may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in attending hearings e.g., parking costs.

Area Support Teams (ASTs): The ASTs are a team of volunteers who support and manage panel members in their local area supported by a Clerk who is a local authority employee.

CHS Community: The CHS Community encompasses panel members, AST members, board members and national team employees.

Panel Members: Panel members are volunteers from local communities across Scotland who are recruited and trained to make decisions to help the lives of vulnerable children and young people attending children’s hearings. Panel members commit to making themselves available at least once a month to prepare for and sit on a three-hour hearing session.

Children’s Hearings System: The Children’s Hearing System is the care and justice system for Scotland’s children and young people.

Children’s hearing: A hearing consists of three lay tribunal members called panel members, who are trained volunteers from the local community. The hearing listens to the child or young person’s circumstances and views and takes these into account as well as those of the family and all the information that has been provided by, for example, social workers. The hearing then makes a decision about what support and help is needed and whether a compulsory supervision order is required.

Protected characteristics: Age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex (male or female); and sexual orientation.

Equality groups: persons who share a relevant protected characteristic.

Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs): a set of processes for assessing the impact of applying a proposed new or revised policy or practice against the needs of the general equality duty with consideration to relevant evidence relating to persons who share a protected characteristic.



Strategic Change Oversight Group

Agenda Item 16
Paper number CHS-2223-70

Accountable Officer: Head of Strategy & Development/DCE
Report author: Business Operations and Governance Lead
Resources implications: Within available resources
Recommendation: To approve
Approval(s) sought:

1. Approve the formation of a Strategic Change Oversight Group as a subgroup of the Board for an initial period of 12 months
2. To approve the ToR
3. Decide on what constitutes quorum for the group (see 5.2)

Impact Assessment Duties	Required	Completed
Equalities Impact Assessment	NA	
Children’s Rights Impact Assessment	NA	
Data Protection Impact Assessment	NA	
Islands Impact Assessment	NA	

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 The CHS Board acknowledge the pace of change the organisation and wider sector are currently experiencing. It is understood that during this time of change, agility and flexibility will be required over decision making to enable progress.
- 1.2 The Board agreed to commission a short term Strategic Change Oversight Group made up of members from each subcommittee and Chaired by the Deputy Chair, to act on behalf of the Board in order to support the CEO to seek counsel and enable freedom to act outside the annual governance schedule.
- 1.3 It is proposed that the Strategic Change Oversight Group (SCOG) be established for an initial 12 month period, with option to review and extend as required.
- 1.4 The scope of the Strategic Change Oversight Group is to act on behalf of the Board in relation to change and reform projects. The group is only to be convened at times when decisions are required at short notice out with the CHS governance schedule.

2. Recommendations

1. The Board are asked to approve the proposal to establish the Strategic Change Oversight Group (SCOG).
2. The Board are asked to approve the Strategic Change Oversight Group’s (SCOG) Terms of Reference (ToR).
3. Decide on what constitutes quorum for the group (see 5.2)

3. Appendices

- 3.1 SCOG ToR

Strategic Change Oversight Group

Terms of Reference

1. Constitution

- 1.1 The Board hereby resolves to establish a group of the Board to be known as the Strategic Change Oversight Group (SCOG) for an initial 12 month period, to be reviewed at that time and extended, if required. The group is governed under the Boards Standing Orders.

2. Scope

- 2.1 To aid the CEO in decision making and allow the CEO freedom to act under exceptional requirements where the normal governance cycle would inhibit progress and cause delay.
- 2.2 To act on behalf of the Board on matters relating to organisational change or reform which require strategic scrutiny, advice, or approval that cannot be accommodated in the normal Board or relevant subcommittee cycle. Any matters which form part of the Board or subcommittee workplans remain out of scope for the group. Any matters which can be accommodated in a Board or subcommittee agenda without causing undue delay are out of scope for the group.
- 2.3 Align with the overarching CHS business plan and strategic outlook, taking into account wider system priorities and reform.
- 2.4 Align with the Board Standing Orders and governance requirements.

3. Membership

- 3.1 The SCOG comprises a minimum of three non-executive members appointed by the Board, not including the Chair of the Board. Ideally, this should be made up of at least one member of each of the Boards established subcommittees.
- 3.2 The Board appoints one of its members to serve as the Chair of the group. Details of the current members, including the group Chair, are shown in Appendix 1. All members are appointed for the duration of the group. Should the group be extended past its initial 12 month post, membership should be reviewed in line with any extension.
- 3.3 The SCOG may appoint a substitute drawn from the membership of the Board of CHS, with the exception of the CHS Board Chair, in line with the requirements at 3.1. A group substitute may participate at a group meeting in place of a member. When a group substitute attends a meeting (or other group activity), he or she assumes the full rights of an ordinary member of the group. In particular, the substitute can vote and is entitled to receive all group papers.

4. Authority

- 4.1 The SCOG is authorised by the Board to review and approve any activity within its scope.

5. Meetings and Quorum

- 5.1 The SCOG meets as required. Meetings may be held virtually or in person. Meetings may be convened by the CEO/NC and/or the CHS Board Chair/Depute as required.
- 5.2 All members of the SCOG 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, group substitute(s) may be required to attend.
- 5.3 The National Convener/Chief Executive Officer or the Depute Chief Executive are required to attend each meeting. In addition, the Senior Responsible Officer(s) for the programme/project in relation to the decision being taken should attend, as required/appropriate.
- 5.4 The SCOG may ask any other officials to attend in order to assist with discussions and offer expertise on a particular matter.
- 5.5 The CHS Business Support Team will provide the SCOG with secretarial support services, as required, including the minuting of discussion and resolutions of all group meetings. Minutes of every group meeting are circulated to the group for approval and approved minutes referred to the Board for noting as soon as practical.
- 5.6 The SCOG may ask any or all of those who normally attend, but who are not members, to withdraw in order to facilitate open and frank discussion of particular matters.

6. Reporting

- 6.1 Approved minutes of any meetings will be shared with the Board.

7. Responsibilities

- 7.1 The Strategic Change Oversight Group has authority to act on behalf of the Board on matters relating to organisational change or reform which require strategic scrutiny, advice, or approval that cannot be accommodated in the normal Board or relevant subcommittee cycle.
- 7.2 When decision making can be postponed until a scheduled Board or subcommittee meeting, this is the preferable.

Chair _____ Date _____

Name	Term	
	1 st Appointment	2 nd Appointment
Henry Robson SCOG Chair	March 2023	
Sean Austin (ARMC)	March 2023	
Beth-Anne Logan (RAC)	March 2023	