



**Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership Meeting  
Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

**Note of Meeting**

<b>Attendees:</b>	
Lesley Sheppard (SG) - Chair – <b>LS</b>	John Urquhart (COSLA) – <b>JU</b>
Elaine Adams (CHIP L&D lead) – <b>EA</b>	Janine McCullough (Education Scotland)– <b>JMcC</b>
Elliot Jackson (CHS) – <b>EJ</b>	Bryan Evans (Children 1 <sup>st</sup> ) – <b>BE</b>
Lisa Bennett (SCRA) <b>LB</b>	Helen Etchells (SCRA) - <b>HE</b>
Gordon Main (OHOV) – <b>GM</b>	Liz Cuschieri (SLAB) – <b>LC</b>
Neil Hunter (SCRA) – <b>NH</b>	Colin Convery (Police Scotland) - <b>CC</b>
Fiona Dyer (CYCJ) - <b>FD</b>	Kyrsten Buist (COPFS) - <b>KB</b>
Marie-Louise Fox (SLAB) – <b>MF</b>	Alistair Hogg (SCRA) - <b>AH</b>
Suzanne Orr (SWS) – <b>SO</b>	Carol Wassell (CHS) – <b>CW</b>
Aileen Nicol (CELSIS) – <b>AN</b>	Alison Todd (Angus CPC) – <b>AT</b>
Helen Crompton (SG) – <b>HC</b>	Hazel Robertson (PKC) – <b>HR</b>
Fiona McFarlane (The Promise) – <b>FM</b>	Eilidh Graham (SCTS) – <b>EG</b>
Pam Semple – <b>PS</b>	Tracey McFall (Partners in Advocacy) – <b>TMc</b>
Tom McNamara (SG) – <b>TM</b>	Iain Fitheridge (SG) – <b>IF</b>
Julie Duncan (SG) – <b>JD</b>	Craig Milne (SG) – <b>CM</b>
Leah Wilkie (SG) – <b>LW</b>	
<b>Apologies:</b>	
Sheriff Susan Craig (Judiciary)	
Lynne McNiven (NHS)	

Agenda Item	Action Points
<p><b>1. Welcome and apologies</b></p> <p>The <b>Chair</b> welcomed CHIP partners to the group, apologies were noted and brief introductions made by new partners.</p>	
<p><b>2. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Action Points</b></p> <p>Minutes of previous meeting have been agreed. The <b>Chair</b> agreed with the group that all actions are completed with the exception of AP2 where a further conversation is in diaries for <b>BE</b> and <b>AH</b>.</p>	
<p><b>3. Updates and Issues Paper</b></p> <p><b>GM</b> introduced himself as the new lead for Our Hearings Our Voice (OHOV). He provided an update OHOV board members are actively scrutinising the work of partners in the hearings system as well as other work in relation to safeguarding and appointment of board</p>	<p><b>AP1: OHOV engagement as a future agenda item.</b></p>

<p>members for SCRA. The young people have not had the same 1-2-1 support or group support over the last few months but are still committed to supporting the improvements. <b>GM</b> made a plea on how best to interact on partners work and several offers of meeting were made. Agreed to have a wider OHOV engagement discussion at next CHIP meeting,</p> <p><b>TM</b> advised that due to timings he was unable to provide a detailed update on impacts of winter Covid funding awards Those in receipt of the funding were not yet due to provide updates. He will be in a much better place to deliver CHIP partners an update paper in advance of June CHIP meeting.</p> <p><b>BE</b> raised the issue of children attending hearings without any children's plans. <b>AN</b> asked if we could give Social Work Scotland colleagues a chance to respond to <b>BE's</b> concerns and to build a broader understanding of the issues. <b>SO</b> has asked <b>BE</b> to provide an update on what local authorities were affected. <b>SO</b> has asked to meet with <b>BE</b> to discuss further. <b>NS</b> offered that this related to the previous Home CSO research and always a case to revisit however other matters had taken precedence over the last year. <b>LS</b> suggested that previous outputs should be reviewed and brought forward for a future meeting of CHIP.</p> <p><b>HE</b> currently evaluating the stability of the Teams platform and the connectivity of the participants, and what their experience was in relation to Vscene and would report back.</p>	<p><b>AP2: TM to provide update for June CHIP meeting</b></p> <p><b>AP3: Secretariat to revisit the outputs of the previous workshops with potential to revisit outstanding matters</b></p>
<p><b>4. Immediate priorities for Children's Hearings Reform</b></p> <p><b>LS</b> discussed paper 4 and asked the wider group if this is what they expected to see, is there anything missing and does anyone have any other thoughts for priorities for 21/22.</p> <p><b>TM</b> has asked what partners want to do as individual agencies and their obligations under The Promise. <b>TM</b> confirmed he would be happy to have further conversations with partners over the next month to ensure we were ready to fully focus on the key priorities over June and there can be a solidifying of the plan of work following input on appointments of new Ministers.</p> <p><b>NH</b> provided an update on paper 5 which looks at Better Hearings and where this sits in the context in the changing landscape. CHIP members will recall the work that was undertaken through Better Hearings and the compendium of 10 years of research completed in 2016. He called for clarity around an affirmation of Better Hearings and OHOV outputs as reconciled with the Promise commitments on system design issues. The paper looks at how to start to integrate the existing</p>	

<p>structure and energy sources that are already in place to render them fit for the future. <b>NH</b> has asked CHIP if they are willing to recommit to Better Hearings using some of the existing structures.</p> <p><b>NH</b> raised the main concern that if this is not started in the meantime the work could start to fragment and degrade, missing out on inter-agency connections which are crucial to Better Hearings. . Would like to keep the cross agency group going and have discussions with <b>FM</b> and The Promise team to come back with a proposal that deals with the longer term governance and system planning issues.</p> <p><b>FM</b> heartened to read the papers - crucial to engage with key partners to get prioritisation and sequencing right.</p> <p>Overall agreement to revisit the papers and discussions in June and to commit to a continued cohesive partnership.</p>	<p><b>AP4: Bilateral discussions with Promise/ CHS/SCRA/SG</b></p> <p><b>AP5 Priorities for Children's Hearings Reform on Agenda for June CHIP</b></p>
<p><b>5. CH Covid Recovery – Unidentified Demand</b></p> <p><b>TM</b> confirmed the CHCRG has been considering outstanding demand and deferred cases and how to work through them in regard to system and service recovery. The weekly recovery group are starting to take data sets on vulnerable children and families but the next stage is to better understand how these challenges or vulnerabilities might present as social work and other professionals have to make a reporter referral. <b>TM</b> will provide an update for the next meeting.</p> <p><b>AN</b> is aware alongside those hidden children and how to ensure the planning is responsive to that. There is an increasing concern about the pauses in permanence planning for the children further into that process and what those delays mean for change of placement and permanence recommendations going to court.</p>	<p><b>AP6: Further update to be provide at June CHIP</b></p>
<p><b>6. Advocacy in Hearings early reflection</b></p> <p><b>PS</b> updated CHIP that on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2020 advocacy regulations came into force. Between November and March work carried out to ensure all the organisations were prepared and ready for referrals and how to work with other practitioners within the Children's Hearings System. Advocacy providers vary from large national organisations across multiple local authorities to smaller organisations who are well established in a single local authority. An alternate provider is available in case of conflicts etc. The aim is for a child to be notified about advocacy as soon as possible. Social workers have been provided guidance on how to provide child and families on the offer of advocacy</p>	

<p>and how to arrange. There has been a lot of work done with local authorities and practitioners to identify and resolve any early emerging practice and referral issues.</p> <p><b>LC</b> is keen to explore the relationship between an advocacy worker and a solicitor and where potential cross-over of roles occur.</p> <p><b>TM</b> thought it may be a good idea to have a discussion with <b>BE, LC and TMcN</b> to discuss this further and where practicable refine approaches. <b>FM</b> asked to be included.</p>	<p><b>AP7: Separate discussions to take place and to bring an update back to CHIP</b></p>
<p><b>7. Any Other Business</b></p> <p><b>IF</b> provided a short update on YJIB from Liz Murdoch. YJIB does not meet again until 27<sup>th</sup> May. CHIP partners were thanked for providing comments on the draft Youth Justice Vision. The plan is to launch at the annual Youth Justice Conference on 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> June. This conference would be a big interest to CHIP members based on the 'Rights' theme of this year's conference.</p>	
<p><b>8. Date of Next Meeting</b></p> <p>Next meeting Scheduled for 30<sup>th</sup> June 10:00 – 12:00 and will be held virtually.</p>	