

Meeting between Minister for Children and Young People, and the Chairs and Chief Executives of SCRA and CHS – Online Meeting, 24 June 2021

Clare Haughey, Minister for Children and Young People
Michelle Miller, Chair, SCRA
Gary Coutts, Chair, CHS
Neil Hunter, Principal Reporter and CE, SCRA
Elliot Jackson, National Convener and CE, CHS
[redacted], SG Children's Hearings Team

Key issues discussed were the pandemic response and The Promise.

MM discussed questions on how the government holds all the different areas of change together that are needed across the system, and emphasised that all parties need to contribute.

GC advised that the requirements on volunteers are significantly increased by the current system – knowledge, digital skills etc. Ideally every panel member would be trained in trauma informed decision making, but this is a three to four day training programme, for thousands of volunteers. Refresher training would be required which increases the burden on volunteers. We remain reliant on volunteers to manage the system at a local level. Believes it is time to take a step back to decide what is appropriate for us to ask volunteers to do. Are we stretching the definition of “volunteer”?

NH discussed the increasing complexity of lives of children, and how this is going to be even more challenging due to the pandemic. There is ongoing work across different services about hidden harm. The Hearings System needs to be equipped to respond to that. Reform and adaptation are the norm and we are keen to think about the next phase of transformation as part of The Promise. 50 years of incremental reform have led to a very complex place. We have an opportunity to strip back and focus on the rights, needs and outcomes for happy, thriving children.

EJ agreed that he could sense the ambition on further reform. He believes the pandemic response has been successful and emphasised that there has been excellent collaboration together across CHS and SCRA to ensure continuity. Fatigue is an issue at this stage in the volunteer community, and we are not yet seeing an increase to pre-pandemic numbers – there are suspicions of a wave of referrals coming.

There was a broader discussion about principles of the system, the increased pressure on volunteers, and the issue of gender balance was raised and how this continues to present challenges due to the legislation being prescriptive. As part of The Promise, there needs to be a refresh of our understanding of Kilbrandon and what it means currently, and this should not be perceived as an attack on the whole system.

From: [redacted]
Sent: Thursday, November 25, 2021 11:18 AM
To: Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>
<<mailto:MinisterCYP@gov.scot>> >
Cc: [redacted], [redacted], Communications Education & Skills
<CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>
<<mailto:CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>> >
Subject: Comms request for the Minister for Children and Young People

[redacted]

I think this was covered at the recent meeting between the Minister and Elliot Jackson.

Every year Children's Hearings Scotland puts a festive message out from the National Convener/Chief Executive (currently Elliot) to the CHS community (3,000 volunteer Area Support Team and Panel Members) to say thank you for their continued commitment to supporting children and young people in their community.

The ask is to add a supporting quote from Ms Haughey – highlighted below: -
“You give your time to supporting children, young people and families in your local community. I am continually impressed by the resilience you have demonstrated throughout this pandemic, to ensure that our children and young people grow up feeling safe, loved, valued and protected. Thank you and have a wonderful festive period!” Claire Haughey MSP, Minister for Children and Young People

They have also suggested a digital festive card for the National Team (approx. 40 staff members) featuring a joint message very similar to the one issued to the CHS community to be jointly signed by the Minister and Elliot.

A draft of each of the full messages are attached seeking approval.

Happy to discuss

[redacted]

Message for CHS community (volunteer Area Support Team and Panel Members)

Dear XX

Your commitment to supporting our children, young people and families, attending children's hearings, over the course of the last year has remained steadfast - you are truly inspiring!

It has been a year of changing restrictions and guidance which has presented opportunities and challenges to the way we run and attend hearings. I, your colleagues in the National Team, and our partners in the children's hearings system, appreciate how you have embraced change and continue to support the best possible outcomes for children and young people across Scotland.

"You give your time to supporting children, young people and families in your local community. I am continually impressed by the resilience you have demonstrated throughout this pandemic, to ensure that our children and young people grow up feeling safe, loved, valued and protected. Thank you and have a wonderful festive period!" Claire Haughey MSP, Minister for Children and Young People

As a gesture of appreciation for the time you have given over the course of the last year, the team at Children's Hearings Scotland and I would like to give you a gift card, which can be accessed [here](#).

As we look to 2022 and beyond, there is yet more opportunity for us to deliver on our commitment to The Promise, as together, we redesign the children's hearings system with the views of children, young people and their families at the heart of this work.

We look forward to working with you to develop and deliver this change but in the meantime, I echo what our Minister has said, THANK YOU and have a wonderful festive period.

SIGNATURE

Elliot Jackson
Chief Executive & National Convener

**

Message for National Team (40 staff members)

Dear XX

Thank you to you for your continued commitment to supporting the CHS community and of course our children, young people and families, attending children's hearings.

It has been a year of changing restrictions and guidance which has presented opportunities and challenges in the way we run and attend hearings. You are a small, agile team with a huge remit. In the last year or so the pandemic has challenged you to rethink how children's hearings are run, how you deliver online learning and development to 3,000 people and of course a fully digital recruitment process. We have also seen real headway being made with pilots and tests of change taking place across the country to support our commitment to keep The Promise. The team has really risen to the challenge and we remain continually impressed by what you deliver on a daily, weekly and monthly basis.



As we look to 2022 and beyond, there is yet more opportunity for us to deliver on our commitment to The Promise, as together, we redesign the children's hearings system with the views of children, young people and their families at the heart of this work.

I look forward to working with you to develop and deliver this change but in the meantime, have a wonderful festive period.

SIGNATURE

Elliot Jackson

Chief Executive & National Convener

SIGNATURE

Claire Haughey MSP

Minister for Children & Young People

From: [redacted] Behalf Of Minister for Children & Young People
Sent: Thursday, November 25, 2021 2:26 PM
To: [redacted], Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>
<<mailto:MinisterCYP@gov.scot>> >
Cc: [redacted], [redacted], Communications Education & Skills
<CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>
<<mailto:CommunicationsEducation&Skills@gov.scot>> >
Subject: RE: Comms request for the Minister for Children and Young People

Hi [redacted]

Ms Haughey is content with each. Could you change the spelling of her name though? Clare rather than Claire.

Thanks
[redacted]

[redacted] | Private Secretary | Minister for Children and Young People
*: [redacted] | Mobile: [redacted] | St Andrews House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG

All e-mails and attachments sent by a Ministerial Private Office to any other official on behalf of a Minister relating to a decision, request or comment made by a Minister, or a note of a Ministerial meeting, must be filed appropriately by the recipient. Private Offices do not keep official records of such e-mails or attachments. Scottish Ministers, Special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot
<<http://www.lobbying.scot>>

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Sent: 25 November 2021 11:18
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<<mailto:MinisterCYP@gov.scot>> >
Cc: [redacted], [redacted], Communications Education & Skills
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A draft of each of the full messages are attached seeking approval.

Happy to discuss

[redacted]

From: [redacted]

Sent: Monday, October 25, 2021 8:46 AM

To: [redacted], [redacted]

Cc: [redacted]

Subject: Meetings between Minister and CEs SCRA and CHS

Anything we could add? Or is it too heavy?

From: [redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, June 22, 2021 2:41 PM
To: Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>
<<mailto:MinisterCYP@gov.scot>> >
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: FW: Introductory meeting - Scottish Children's Reporter Administration and Children's Hearings Scotland

[redacted]

Sorry for the follow up. Meant to add to my last email that [redacted], [redacted] and [redacted] received the meeting request but we can't attend so I'd be grateful if you could forward it to [redacted]. When I was checking who the invite had been sent to I noticed that Michelle, Neil, Garry and Elliot are not in the meeting request. Were they sent their requests separately? I just wanted to check to make sure that everyone ends up on the same teams call!

Thanks

[redacted]

[redacted] | Children's Hearings Team
Children's Rights, Protection and Justice Division, Directorate for Children and Families, Scottish Government
Area 2A South | Victoria Quay | Edinburgh | EH6 6QQ

Please note I work part- time – all day Monday, Tuesday until 3, all day Wednesday and Thursday until 3.

Tel: [redacted] | Ext: [redacted]

From: [redacted]
Sent: 22 June 2021 14:34
To: Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>
<<mailto:MinisterCYP@gov.scot>> >
Cc: Sheppard L (Lesley) <Lesley.Sheppard@gov.scot>
<<mailto:Lesley.Sheppard@gov.scot>> >; [redacted], [redacted], [redacted], [redacted]
Subject: FW: Introductory meeting - Scottish Children's Reporter Administration and Children's Hearings Scotland

[redacted]

I've attached a background note for the Minister's call on Thursday morning.

Please let me know if your require anything further.

Thanks

[redacted]

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Tel: [redacted] | Ext: [redacted]

From: Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>
<<mailto:MinisterCYP@gov.scot>> >
Sent: 09 June 2021 13:03
To: Sheppard L (Lesley) <Lesley.Sheppard@gov.scot>
<<mailto:Lesley.Sheppard@gov.scot>> >; [redacted], [redacted]
Cc: Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>
<<mailto:MinisterCYP@gov.scot>> >
Subject: RE: Introductory meeting - Scottish Children's Reporter Administration and Children's Hearings Scotland

Hi Lesley, [redacted], [redacted]

[redacted] – thanks for kindly providing Garry's contact email, that's him invited now.

Would it be possible to get the Minister a short background note for this call by 5pm on Tuesday 22 June? Apologies for sending you so many similar emails Lesley, this is the second last introductory meeting to go in the diary so you should stop hearing from me soon!

Many thanks,

[redacted]

[redacted] (she/her)|Assistant Private Secretary to Minister for Children and Young People – Clare Haughey

Scottish Government | St Andrew's House, Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG| E: MinisterCYP@gov.scot <<mailto:MinisterCYP@gov.scot>>

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From: Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>
<<mailto:MinisterCYP@gov.scot>> >
Sent: 09 June 2021 12:58

To: Jackson E (Elliot) <Elliot.Jackson@chs.gov.scot> >; Hunter N (Neil) <Neil.Hunter@scra.gov.uk> >; garry.couttsboard@chscotland.scot <<mailto:garry.couttsboard@chscotland.scot>> >; Miller M (Michelle) <Michelle.Miller@scra.gov.uk> <<mailto:Michelle.Miller@scra.gov.uk>> >
Cc: Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot> <<mailto:MinisterCYP@gov.scot>> >
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Phone Conference ID: 830 976 912#

Find a local number <<https://dialin.teams.microsoft.com/73133191-9ad3-4434-8102-57296ee8b85c?id=830976912>> | Reset PIN

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Many thanks,
[redacted]

[redacted] (she/her)|Assistant Private Secretary to Minister for Children and Young People – Clare Haughey

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Sent: 07 June 2021 11:15
To: Jackson E (Elliot) <Elliot.Jackson@chs.gov.scot> <<mailto:Elliot.Jackson@chs.gov.scot>> >; Hunter N (Neil) <Neil.Hunter@scra.gov.uk> <<mailto:Neil.Hunter@scra.gov.uk>> >; garry.couttsboard@chsscotland.scot <<mailto:garry.couttsboard@chsscotland.scot>> >; Miller M (Michelle) <Michelle.Miller@scra.gov.uk> <<mailto:Michelle.Miller@scra.gov.uk>> >
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Subject: Introductory meeting - Scottish Children's Report Administration and Children's Hearings Scotland

Good Morning,

Ms Haughey would welcome a brief introductory meeting.

Would 09:00-09:30 on Thursday 24 June be a suitable time for this to take place? If so, I'll send out a diary invite and Teams link.

Kind regards,

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Cc: Sheppard L (Lesley) <Lesley.Sheppard@gov.scot> <<mailto:Lesley.Sheppard@gov.scot>> >; Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot> <<mailto:MinisterCYP@gov.scot>> >

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MinisterCYP@gov.scot <<mailto:MinisterCYP@gov.scot>>

Background note for Minister's call with Michelle Miller (Chair, SCRA), Neil Hunter (Chief Executive, SCRA), Garry Coutts (Chair, CHS) and Elliot Jackson (Chief Executive, CHS)

Scottish Children's Reporters Administration (SCRA)

Focused on children and young people most at risk, SCRA's role and purpose is to:

- Make effective decisions about a need to refer a child/young person to a Children's Hearing
- Prepare for and participate in court proceedings where statement of grounds or Hearings findings are appealed and ensure the wellbeing of children and young people – particularly vulnerable witnesses – are protected throughout the court process
- Support Panel Members (though SCRA are not involved in making Hearing decisions) and ensure fair process in Hearings
- Enable children, young people and families to participate in Hearings
- Disseminate information and data to influence, inform and reassure
- Provide premises for Hearings to take place..

SCRA has nine localities, supported by a Head Office. The nine localities are: Highlands & Islands, North Strathclyde, Glasgow, Grampian, South East, Tayside & Fife, Ayrshire, Central, and Lanarkshire/Dumfries & Galloway.

Their key priorities during 2021-22 include:

- Corporate Parenting, Rights, Inclusion: During 2020-21, they will be developing a route map to set the organisational direction in aligning rights, inclusion and corporate parenting with the direction and actions of The Promise and the Zine calls for action from Our Hearings, Our Voice. They will maintain a clear focus on becoming better Corporate Parents through improved engagement and communication, and delivering Better Hearings - ensuring they are better informed by undertaking Trauma, Corporate Parenting and Rights and Inclusion training across the organisation.
- CSAS (IT Platform): They will continue to develop their internal capacity and capability to support the delivery of the next stages of their IT Strategy journey.
- Workforce: They are committed to taking care of the health, safety and wellbeing of their staff. They are focussing on the training and deployment of the Recovery Team to bolster and support service capability.
- Partnerships: They are committed to work with their partners to ensure effective continuing response to pandemic for the Hearings System, and work cohesively to agreed protocols, shared goals and common standards to ensure they meet the needs of children and young people.

Michelle Miller – Chair, SCRA - Michelle has worked primarily in local authority children and criminal justice social work services, first in England, moving to Scotland in 1985. In 2002, Michelle took up the post of Depute Chief Inspector of Social Work with what was then the Government's Social Work Services Inspectorate. Michelle was Chief Social Work Officer for the City of Edinburgh from

2007 to 2018. She was President of the Association of Directors of Social Work (now Social Work Scotland) in 2010/11.

Neil Hunter, Chief Executive, SCRA – Neil Hunter became Principal Reporter/Chief Executive of the Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration in April 2011. Neil has held previous operational and strategic posts across Social Work and Health Care Services in Glasgow/Greater Glasgow and Clyde. Until December 2010 Neil was the Director of West Glasgow Community Health and Care Partnership (CHCP). For 5 years prior to that he led the Addictions Partnership for the City of Glasgow. Both of these posts were joint NHS/Local Authority appointments.

Children’s Hearings Scotland (CHS)

Children’s Hearings Scotland is a national non-departmental public body which was formed in June 2013. They are one of a number of organisations who work within the Children’s Hearings System, including the Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration, local authorities, health and Police Scotland. Their role is to recruit, train and support around 2,500 skilled volunteer Panel Members who sit on children’s hearings. They also support a network of 22 volunteer led Area Support Teams with a further 500 volunteer back office.

Their main priorities for 2021-22 are –

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

Gary Coutts, Chair, CHS - Garry was appointed Chair of the CHS Board in April 2014. Garry has extensive governance experience and a wide range of board experience that he has developed in both current and previous Chair posts in different public sector organisations. Having served as an elected councillor on both Edinburgh and Highland Councils, Garry has also sat on the Looked After Children’s Strategic Implementation Group and chaired its Strategic Commissioning Group. Garry was Chair of the Board of NHS Highland. He also sits as the Chair of the University of the Highland and Islands Board of Governors. Prior to this, Garry held the position of Chair of the Scottish Social Services Council for a period of six years until August 2013.

Elliot Jackson, Chief Executive, CHS – Elliot became Chief Executive in October 2019. He was previously Depute Chief Executive at Children’s Hearings Scotland. In this role he worked with the National Convener and Board overseeing the implementation of volunteer and corporate planning. Prior to joining Children’s Hearings Scotland, he held the post of Head of Planning and Strategy at the Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration. Elliot has also spent time as a Children’s Panel Member.

From: [redacted]
Sent: Wednesday, October 27, 2021 11:04 AM
To: Minister for Children & Young People <MinisterCYP@gov.scot>
Cc: [redacted], [redacted]
Subject: Briefing for Meetings with Elliot Jackson, CHS and Neil Hunter, SCRA

Hi [redacted],

Please find attached briefing for Ms Haughey's meetings with Elliot Jackson on Thursday 4th November and Neil Hunter on Wednesday 17th November.

Thanks,

[redacted]

[redacted] | Business and Policy Support Officer
Children's Hearings Team | Care, Protection and Justice | Scottish Government
[redacted] | Area 2A South Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

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MEETINGS WITH NATIONAL CONVENER, CHS (4th November) AND PRINCIPAL REPORTER, SCRA (17th November)

Background

In recent years, Ministers for Children & Young people have met with the SCRA's Principal Reporter/Chief Executive and the CHS' National Convener/Chief Executive on a regular, semi-formal basis. This has been to allow new Ministers opportunity to develop their knowledge of developments affecting the children's hearings system and to hear of the current challenges and to offer their own reflections and support to the key leaders. 2-3 meetings per year have been the norm.

Your Ministerial responsibilities

The Scottish Ministers are ultimately accountable to the Scottish Parliament for the activities of the NDPB and its use of resources.

Ministers are not, however, responsible for day to day operational matters and the founding legislation prevents them from directing or guiding the Principal Reporter or National Convener in relation to their statutory functions. As well as acting as Chief Executives for their organisations, these individuals have particular statutory powers and duties in respect of the Children's Reporter profession (Principal Reporter - SCRA) or of the children's panel lay tribunal (National Convener -CHS) – those are insulated from the executive arm of Government and from other actors like local authorities.

The responsibilities of the Scottish Ministers include:

- Agreeing the NDPB's **strategic aims and objectives** and key targets as part of the corporate planning process
- Agreeing the **budget** and the associated grant in aid requirement to be paid to the NDPB, and securing the necessary Parliamentary approval
- Carrying out responsibilities specified in schedule 3 of the 2011 Act, such as **appointment of Chairs and Board members** to the NDPBs, approving the terms and conditions of members and approving appointments of the Chief Executive and Principal Reporter or National Convener (noting that these roles may both be held by the same person, as at present)
- Other matters such as approving the NDPB's chief executive and **staff pay remit** in line with the SG [Pay Policy](#) and laying the **annual report and accounts** (before the Scottish Parliament).

Overview/Covid 19 response and recovery

The most pressing, and ongoing, challenge issue has been responding to the Pandemic - SCRA and CHS have led the wider hearings system to i) rapidly adapt fundamental operating models and then ii) to respond constructively to the various challenges as the pandemic developed. The Hearings model up to March 2020 was hearings that took place by bringing people together in increasingly homely, informal and intimate spaces – designed to meet the needs of children and young people more effectively and to allow more comfortable and relaxed environments to stimulate and

support good participation. As with other key public services the necessary suppression measures meant that for the first 4 months of the initial lockdown, inperson hearings could not take place at all and had to move into virtual arrangements. The priority was ensuring that those children already subject to legal protections could have those protections kept in place, whilst being able to focus on those children who were new referrals and who were known to be at the highest risk of significant harm. Eighteen months later, the system is making good progress towards recovery and stability through deployment of additional resources, in particular extra staffing and significant improvement in the digital infrastructure. SCRA staff and up to 3000 volunteer panel and Area Support Team members have remained hugely committed and resilient, despite acute pressures and changing requirements and expectations.

Other immediate challenges for these lead partners for the Hearings system : -

- Responding to the policy environment and further rapid and significant change – implementing advocacy nationwide and incorporating fuller involvement for siblings. Looking forward, they will be essential to delivering the likely expansion of Age of Referral to the Reporter, the implications of UNCRC incorporation and of course Keeping the Promise.
- The Promise has asked for the Hearings system ‘shrink and specialise’, ensure that children and young people have their rights fully met and continue to ensure that voice, experience and participation are central features
- Retention, training and increased demands on unpaid volunteer panel members and volunteer managers in the Area Support Team network
- The need for organisational and financial capacity to meet these challenges and contribute positively to the transformational change ahead.
- The inclusion of Children’s Services and Community Justice within the scope for consultation of the National Care Service requirements raises significant uncertainty for actors within the hearings system; re-design requirements and interaction with The Promise requirements. These will not become clear until early 2022 and may require a re-focus of timelines and priorities.

Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS)

Children's Hearings Scotland is a national non-departmental public body which was formed in June 2013. Its role is to recruit, train and support around 2,500 skilled volunteer Panel Members who sit on children's hearings. They also support a network of 22 volunteer led Area Support Teams representing a further 500 strong volunteer-led 'back office' / quality assurance resource.

Elliot Jackson, Chief Executive, CHS



Elliot became Chief Executive in October 2019. He was previously Depute Chief Executive at Children's Hearings Scotland. In this role he worked with the National Convener and Board overseeing the implementation of volunteer and corporate planning. Prior to joining Children's Hearings Scotland, he held the post of Head of Planning and Strategy at the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration. Elliot has also spent time as a Children's Panel Member.

CHS key objectives:

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

Main Challenges

- exploring the volunteer model and the requirements of decision makers in a Promise centred tribunal and ongoing impact on hearings, panel member management and continuity
- panel member recruitment carried out each year and whether a sustainable model alongside challenge of maintaining statutory requirement of gender balance of hearings panels

- As The Promise Plan 21 – 24 is delivered it is as yet unknown what the next phase requirements will be for CHS and this may require additional/different resourcing to be considered at that time.
- Further exploration in digital options to meet the expectations of the Panel Community or the organisational aspirations as to what this digital solution could be. Further support, training and engagement will be required to deliver against this ambition and drive security improvements and print savings for the hearings system.
- The digital strategy ambition to use digital to improve the engagement and experience of children and young people in their hearings has not yet been taken forward. This is a significant ambition in line with Promise delivery and which will require substantial engagement and support from the hearings community to embrace and deliver.
- As the hearings system digital journey evolves and influences the potential hearing models available in the future, requirements to effectively support and manage this may require to adapt.

Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA)

Focused on children most at risk. SCRA's role and purpose is to::

- Make effective decisions about a need to refer a child/young person to a Children's Hearing
- Prepare for and participate in court proceedings where statement of grounds or Hearings findings are appealed and ensure the wellbeing of children and young people – particularly vulnerable witnesses – are protected throughout the court process
- Support Panel Members (though SCRA are not involved in making Hearing decisions) and ensure fair process in Hearings
- Enable children, young people and families to participate in Hearings
- Disseminate information and data to influence, inform and reassure
- Provide premises for Hearings to take place.

SCRA has around 470 staff in nine localities, supported by a Head Office in Stirling. The nine localities are: Highlands & Islands, North Strathclyde, Glasgow, Grampian, South East, Tayside & Fife, Ayrshire, Central, and Lanarkshire/Dumfries & Galloway.

Neil Hunter, Chief Executive, SCRA



Neil became Principal Reporter/Chief Executive of the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration in April 2011. Neil has held previous operational and strategic posts across Social Work and Health Care Services in Glasgow/Greater Glasgow and Clyde. Until December 2010 Neil was the Director of West Glasgow Community Health and Care Partnership (CHCP). For 5 years prior to that he led the Addictions Partnership for the City of Glasgow. Both of these posts were joint NHS/Local Authority appointments.

SCRA's statutory functions

- Assist the Principal Reporter in carrying out the functions conferred on that officer by virtue of the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 ("the 2011 Act") or any other enactment and to facilitate the carrying out of those functions, as per section 20 of the 2011 Act.
- Provide suitable accommodation and facilities for children's hearings under the terms set out in section 21 of the 2011 Act.
- Comply with the requirements set out in schedule 3 of the 2011 Act.
- Comply with any general or specific directions given by the Scottish Ministers about the carrying out of its functions, as per section 23 of the 2011 Act.

- Prepare and disseminate information and data essential for the Children's Panel to make decisions about children and young people
- Provide national statistics and data for Scotland on vulnerable children and young people, for the benefit of the NDPB, SG and other partners, to inform and influence improved outcomes for children and young people.
- Provide a research facility, drawing in particular on the data within the NDPB and that of partner agencies, to undertake research to inform and influence improved outcomes for children and young people.

SCRA Challenges

- to prepare for changes arising from UNCRC and the Promise ,
- to contribute and implement new and emerging legislation and policy including work with Children's Hearings partners and The Promise on the 21-24 Promise Plan.
- to collaborate with partners and ensure delivery of the Covid Recovery Plan.
- reshaping localities and workforce planning for the longer term
- to provide the additional resources required to resource bespoke hearings and the complex court work that is the reality of the current operational environment.