

# Scottish Association of Children's Panels

## 107th Council Meeting

Saturday 8th Dec 2007

10.30am – 13.00pm

Millenium Hotel, Glasgow

### 107.1 Sederunt and Apologies

M. Easton (Highland), W.Milne (Angus), G.Reoch (Glasgow 5), M. Fawcett (Aberdeenshire), A. McGroarty (Glasgow 3), B. McGugan (Inverclyde), A. Lee (W. Dumbartonshire), G.Adamson (Borders), M.Gaughan (Glasgow 4), S.McMenemy (N.Ayrshire), K.Perfect (East Dumbartonshire), A.Philp(Aberdeen City), J.Noble (Argyll & Bute),.

**Apologies:** D.Stalker (Chairman's Rep), P.Maynard (Dumfries & Galloway), B.Burke (Midlothian), M.Stenhouse (Clackmannanshire), S.Panton (S.Lanarkshire), A.MacLeod (Western Isles), L.Benton (N.Lanarkshire), Gill McBride (Stirling).

If you cannot attend, please try and arrange for someone else to come from your area in your place.

### 107.2 Minutes of Previous Meetings

106<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting minutes: Proposed: Margaret Gaughan Seconded: Margaret Easton.

### 107.3 Matters Arising and correspondence

A panel member has been removed from the rota as he had not attended Parenting Order training (due to work commitments), after clarification from the Scottish Exec. that it was mandatory training provided by the training unit. At least one other area has panel members still serving who has not been trained. Margaret Easton wrote to Gordon Watt on this subject.

Letter from Gordon Watt responding to Parenting Orders confirming that panel members must be removed from service if they haven't completed the appropriate training. Margaret to write back to Gordon and copy the Scottish ministers to emphasise that we do not agree with this. Why couldn't the panel member affected read up on the training, as new panel members are doing now.

GIRFEC response – one of the responses from Ayrshire CPAC related to the disclosure of panel members names addresses and mentions an 'external agency' which appears to refer to the SACP.

Time off from work – Gordon Watt responded that there is literature to explain the benefits to employers, but Gordon also said that the Scottish Government would take up the case with employers on the Panel Members behalf if they are having difficulties. They will also be looking at loss of earnings.

Despite Gordon's response, there is still a wide variety of practice and inconsistency from employers on this subject. Two suggestions – Ask CPAC to

emphasise the commitment required when panel members are signing up and ask the prospective panel member to bring a letter of support from their employer. Secondly, continue to press Gordon Watt and the Scottish government to revise the 'reasonable' wording and make it clearer and more formal about panel members entitlement to have time off from work. Margaret to write to Gordon Watt and copy CPAG chairman on this subject.

#### **107.4 Issues raised by panel members**

Refresher training – in Aberdeenshire was exactly the same course that was provided four years earlier. Some areas have refresher training and insist on it, some don't have it at all. Funding is a big consideration on whether this goes ahead. Is there a National Standard for Children's Panel training? In general, training seems to be extremely varied in terms of time, content or whether it is offered at all. Margaret will send a letter to Gordon Watt and copy the training units. It should be consistent for all panel members and not left to the individual Local Authorities.

Social Work in Aberdeenshire asked the subject of Safeguarders and the quality of reports they supply. Is there any quality assurance and who monitors them and the quality of their reports. In North Ayrshire there is a process in place to ensure appropriate people are appointed and if a report is not good enough, panel members will ask the safeguarder to do another report. Therefore, panel members are the final arbiter and each rep should feed this back to their members to be assertive on this subject as required.

#### **107.5 Chairman's Report**

Ann attended Child Law UK/TACT on 2<sup>nd</sup> October. Report attached.  
Next meeting will be 29<sup>th</sup> January.

#### **107.6 Treasurer's Report**

Margaret Gaughan indicated that we have enough funds to cover SACP activities.

Margaret Easton to investigate the cost of a new computer and printer to replace the outdated one we currently have.

Conferences: approval should be sought prior to attending a conference, including conference fees, travelling expenses, loss of earnings, etc.

#### **107.7 Press Secretary's Report and Website update**

Press reports:- to be carried over to the next meeting.

Website:- there have been some improvements, e.g. upgraded map, but there is still some concern about keeping the website up to date.

Discussion about posting 'items for feedback' to the website. This will need to be agreed on how and who will do this.

Encourage panel members to access the website and use it to contact the SACP.

### **107.8 Consultations**

Two consultations are due.

PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS (SCOTLAND) ACT 2007,  
CONSULTATION ON SECONDARY LEGISLATION

For full details please see [www.protectingvulnerablegroups.com](http://www.protectingvulnerablegroups.com)

To register, please [click here](#) or email  
[info@protectingvulnerablegroups.com](mailto:info@protectingvulnerablegroups.com)

For more information about the PVG Act visit  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/pvglegislation>

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN REGULATIONS – Details to be sent separately

FORENSIC LEGISLATION – Details to be sent separately

Volunteers required to help with feedback on the consultations.

### **107.9 Membership Secretary Report**

The investigation by the Commissioner for Information into the release of names and addresses to the SACP is complete and Mary will provide a detailed feedback at the next meeting.

### **107.10 Conference Reports and future events**

**Some reports in process to be submitted in the near future.**

National School was a good with a new mix of people and very worthwhile content. Report to follow.

24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> September 2008 – Glasgow TU setting up a conference; Childhood, citizenship and childhood services.

**Boyd McAdam attended and provided an update on GIRFEC.**

### **107.11 AOCB**

Network 100:- West Lothian piloted a phone in forum on panel issues, which has raised a number of topics which will be followed up by a working group. This, 'chat room' type of forum is to be rolled out to other areas. Ann and Angela will represent SACP on the working group and feedback at the next meeting.

Some key members of the SACP committee will have to stand down at the next AGM, so we need to start thinking about this now, i.e. replacements or constitutional changes. This will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned to welcome ex-SACP Reps and invited guests for Christmas lunch to celebrate the SACP's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

### **107.12 Key points for Feedback.**

All SACP Reps to ask for input from their areas - points to be raised, questions, best practice for the next meeting?

Update on letters being followed up, i.e. time off from work, training and safeguarders.

Remind panel members that if they are not happy with Safeguarder Reports, they should ask the safeguarder to do it again.

### **Summary of Actions**

Letter to Gordon Watt on Parenting Orders training to emphasise that we do not agree with this. Why couldn't the panel member affected, read up on the training, as new panel members are doing now, copy to the Scottish minister.

Margaret to write to Gordon Watt and copy CPAG chairman on the subject of time off from work.

Margaret will send a letter to Gordon Watt and copy the training units on the subject of training.

All: responses required for consultations as described above.

### **Date of next meeting:-**

2<sup>nd</sup> February in Stirling.