

104th Council Meeting

Saturday, April 21st 2007

10.30a.m – 15.00p.m.

**ENTERPRISE HOUSE
Springkerse Business Estate, Stirling**

This report was written by an attending representative of SACP and is not an official minute of the event



104th Council Meeting

Saturday 21st April 2007

10.30am – 15.00pm

Enterprise House, Springkerse Business Park, Stirling

104.1 Sederunt and Apologies

P.Maynard (Dumfries & Galloway), A. McGroarty (Glasgow 3), M. Easton (Highland), M. Fawcett (Aberdeenshire), B. McGugan (Inverclyde), A. Lee (W. Dumbartonshire), Roger Graham, (Dundee), G.Adamson (Borders), G.Reoch (Glasgow 5), M.Gaughan (Glasgow 4), K.Perfect (East Dumbartonshire).

Apologies: S. McMenemy (N.Ayrshire), B.Burke (Midlothian), M. Stenhouse (Clackmannanshire), S.Panton (S.Lanarkshire), D.Stalker (Chairman's Rep), W.Milne (Angus), A. MacLeod (Western Isles), J.Noble (Argyll & Bute), A.Philp(Aberdeen City), L.Benton (N.Lanarkshire)

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

104.2 Minutes of Previous Meetings

142nd Executive Meeting minutes approved; Margaret Easton (proposed), Angela McGroarty (seconded).

103rd Council Meeting minutes approved:- Margaret Easton (proposed), Angela McGroarty (seconded).

104.3 Matters Arising and correspondence

Draft Bill response – very few areas had any discussion on this.

Unallocated Cases –Margaret has had a mixed response from Local Authorities on the number of cases where there is no allocated Social Worker. Margaret provided a comprehensive handout indicating areas that had responded and how they had responded. 10 areas still to respond, but those who have indicate the majority of children have allocated Social Workers. Margaret will continue to chase the Local Authorities, and some SACP members indicated they would like to contact the relevant person to see if they could help move the process forward. Most letters were addressed to Head of Service.

104.4 Issues raised by panel members

i. appointment of safeguarder

Continuing annual reviews for the appointment of a safeguarder. The SACP has written to ask if any changes can be made under the new legislation as panel members are being placed in a difficult situation, where they are being expected to make a substantive decision due to insufficient time before the S/R lapses in a situation where they would normally continue for the appointment of a safeguarder.

ii. review hearings

Are too many hearings being called for early reviews? Some areas have been asked to consider if an early review is absolutely required. Panel members are entitled to ask for an early review and should not feel pressured into not asking for this. Specific reasons should be documented why an early review is required.

iii. Education cannot ask for an early review. Feedback from Highland and Dundee confirmed this where education have to go through Social Work to do request.

iv. Training attendance

Records are kept but the practice is very different in each area, i.e. rural areas 2 local training sessions versus 8 to 10 sessions in more populated areas. Some areas appear to be stricter than others on whether there are ramifications for non-attendance. It was agreed by all, that panel members should be attending the majority of local/regional training sessions.

104.5 Correspondence

Response from Gordon Watt on various items raised with him. Margaret Easton will follow-up on this. Gordon's letter is on the website.

Thank you received from Tom Philliben – SCRA – happy to assist us in the future (see Chairman's Report below).

SEED – Appeals procedure - CPAG have been addressing this and a consultation document is due to be issued. Margaret to ask if Panel members are being consulted on this and request that SACP is involved in the consultation process. Variations in approval of expense claims – still open. To be discussed at the next meeting.

Training expenses – being reviewed under GIRFEC.

Time off Work – still open. To be discussed at the next meeting.

104.5 Chairman's Report

Meeting took place with Tom Philliben – SCRA – Director of Reporters

- Closure of hearing rooms – Tom agreed to look into this.
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, not being communicated effectively.
- Social Background Reports not available in time.
- Appointment of a Safeguarder versus substantive decision.

Alison Wright – responsible for these items not available and we have to write to her again.

CPAC Seminar – the Roles, Relationship and Retention (3 Rs).

Verbal report provided by Ann Lee – written report to be posted on the website.

Speakers:- Alan Millar, Archie Stodart, Gavin McGregor.

104.6 Membership Secretary Report

A formal request has been made to areas where there is no SACP representative under the Freedom of Information Act for the names and addresses of all panel members in those areas to be released

An application has now been made to the Scottish Commissioner for Information who will be reviewing the decision taken by two of the local authority areas not to release the names and addresses of panel members on a voluntary basis.

Attendance – there are a few representatives who have not attended SACP meetings regularly and it was felt that we must encourage them to attend or send a deputy.

103.7 Business Plan

Ann has contacted the Lennox Partnership to assist with next years Business Plan. We are awaiting feedback from them, but in the meantime it was agreed we would start pulling this together. Margaret to look at it initially and send others the details required to complete.

103.10 Conference Reports and future events

SACP members to consider what conferences they want to attend, and apply for funding approval through Linda Benton. If there is no SACP Rep available, a panel member could attend on behalf of the SACP. A report on the conference must be provided. Barry McGugan will attend an upcoming conference on Alcohol & Violence at Strathclyde University.

103.11 Press Secretary's Report and Website update

Various articles were displayed at the meeting, including, comments from the public about Panel members being too soft and instant ASBO's
Two new reports and the last set of minutes on the Website.

103.13 Pre-service pack

Pre-service packs have all been distributed to all new panel members who have recently completed their training. Some SACP forms have come in from these people.

103.16 AOCB

AGM – 9th June 2007 - Dundee – Hilton Hotel (at Discovery Point)

If anyone is coming by car, the hotel will make arrangements for parking if you let them know in advance.

103.17 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?

Membership progress and Website.

Meeting with SCRA and inviting SEED to discuss points raised above, i.e. appeals, counselling, Insurance, Legal Advice, Time Off for hearings, appointing of Safeguarder at the same time as making a substantive decision, etc.

Early Reviews – consider why you need an early review and write appropriate reasons.

Unallocated cases – Handout and feedback on response from SEED. 10 areas still to respond, but those who have indicate the majority of children have allocated Social Workers.

Training – it was agreed that attendance at training is essential for all Panel Members.

AGM – If anyone wants to become an SACP Rep, they should attend.

Panel members can attend conferences on behalf of the SACP if no SACP rep available (a report must be produced and submitted).

Summary of Actions

Margaret to follow-up with Alison Wright from SCRA;

- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, not being communicated effectively.
- Social Background Reports not available in time.
- Appointment of a Safeguarder versus substantive decision.

Mary Fawcett to continue chasing for Panel members details from the Local Authorities.

Everyone to help Margaret with the completion of the Business Plan.

Time off to attend hearings – Gordon Watt replied to our letter, but it did not really clarify the situation. Awaiting a reply from a person due back from absence.

Date of next meeting:-

Saturday 9th June 2007, 10.30 am., Hilton Hotel, Dundee