

# 102nd Council Meeting

**Saturday, December 9th 2006**

**10.30a.m – 15.00p.m.**

**The Millennium Hotel  
Glasgow**

Report By Barry McGugan



Copyright © 2006 Scottish Association of Children's  
Panels (SACP).  
All Rights Reserved

# Scottish Association of Children's Panels

## 102nd Council Meeting

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2006

10.30am – 15.00pm

The Millenium Hotel, Glasgow

### 102.1 Sederunt and Apologies

M. Easton (Highland), A.Philp(Aberdeen City), M. Fawcett (Aberdeenshire), A. McGroarty (Glasgow 3), B. McGugan (Inverclyde), S. McMenemy (N.Ayrshire), A. Lee (W. Dumbartonshire), B.Burke (Midlothian), L.Benton – (N.Lanarkshire), Angus MacLeod (Western Isles), Roger Graham, (Dundee), G.Adamson (Borders), J.Noble (Argyll & Bute).

**Apologies:** M. Stenhouse (Clackmannanshire), M.Gaughan (Glasgow 4), S.Panton (S.Lanarkshire), G.Reoch (Glasgow 5), W.Milne (Angus), P.Maynard (Dumfries & Galloway).

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

### 102.2 Minutes of Previous Meetings

101st Council Meeting:- Proposer: Mary Fawcett, Seconded: Joyce Noble.

### 102.3 Matters Arising From Minutes and other correspondence.

ID Badges – some areas have ID badges, some don't. It is something that is being considered for all areas.

SACP Expenses – some people are still having difficulties getting expenses paid by their Local Authority. A copy of Gordon Watt's letter is available if required to explain to their Local Authority it is their responsibility to cover this.

### 102.4 Matters Arising

Unallocated Cases – Glasgow didn't want to give out a lot of information and pointed out that you have to be careful with statistics, e.g. a nominal Social Worker could be allocated, but no care plan in place. They are willing to feed this back to Panel Members at their Area meetings. Margaret to write to the other Local Authorities, individually, to obtain the number of cases where there is no allocated Social Worker.

Margaret to write a letter to SCRA on whether it is legally acceptable to carry on with a hearing if there was no Social Background Report available.

Time off to attend hearings – Gordon Watt replied to our letter, but it did not really clarify the situation. Margaret to write a letter to Gordon Watt to follow-up on this point to get more details and specific guidance.

### **102.5 National School**

There was good representation from the SACP and it proved very worthwhile to spread the word about the work of the SACP. A report on the School itself will be produced in the near future.

### **102.6 Chairman's Report**

Children Law UK. Next meeting rescheduled until 2007 and they are discussing collaboration with other organisation which will assist with funding.

### **102.7 Autism & Asperger's**

After a good report from the conference earlier this year, we had an offer from a panel member to come and speak on this subject, if we felt it was relevant. Angela to ask for a written report so we can circulate it to Panel Members. A discussion ensued on this subject, that such children, who are not offending, could be helped voluntarily rather than appear at a hearing.

### **102.8 Discrimination between areas**

Different areas handle things in the different ways, e.g. expenses, training. This was brought up at a recent refresher training weekend. Often relevant discussion happens outwith the formal training session, and it would be conducive if everyone had the opportunity to stay overnight. Margaret to write to the Scottish Executive to highlight the different practices in each area, e.g. as above and some areas tutors receiving honorarium and some not.

### **102.9 Treasurer's Report**

The financial position is satisfactory just now to perform our duties. A review will be carried out in 2007, to ensure we have enough funds and prepare the annual business plan for the coming year.

### **102.10 Pre-service Pack**

Prepare a pack for new members at their pre-service training. Include:-

- Information letter
- Annual Report
- Promotional Items
- Etc.

This will cost some money, £6-700, which will be affordable.

Margaret, Angela, and George will pull this together as they have all been involved already.

### **102.11 Closure of local hearing rooms**

Midlothian intends to close the local hearing rooms in Dalkeith, and moving it to Tranent which is in East Lothian. Some Panel Members have raised concerns about having to travel to another area. Not only is this inconvenient, but public transport is not as good and people may have to take more time off work to attend. This affects Panel Members, families and others who have to attend the hearings. Margaret will write to SCRA in support of the panel members concerns with this proposal.

### **102.12 Conference Reports and future events**

SACP members to consider what conferences they want to attend, and apply for funding approval through Linda Benton. A report on the conference must be provided.

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

No update from the media as the press secretary not in attendance.

The website is functional and any outstanding reports or information they have should be supplied to Margaret Easton or Haydn Gleed. [www.sacp.org.uk](http://www.sacp.org.uk)

### **102.14 Membership secretary**

Mary Fawcett has been very busy and has very positive replies from several areas. Where areas have not responded positively, a letter is being constructed to encourage the Clerks who have not replied, to provide this information. The Freedom of Information Act indicates that the clerks must provide a list of all Panel Members in their area.

### **102.15 Communication - Database**

A hard copy of the database was distributed for people to check names in their areas. If anyone requires a softcopy, please contact Barry.

### **102.16 AOCB**

**Lunch** will cost slightly more at future meetings in Stirling.

**GIRFEC** progress – Highland is involved as a pathfinder/pilot area, and the sharing of information on children is not working very well. There is limited information being shared, as people are reluctant, from a confidentiality point of view, to pass on information about children.

#### **Practice issues**

Strictly speaking a relevant person cannot be asked to leave the hearing room if the child is not present, as they cannot be 'upsetting the child'. However, if the relevant person is causing considerable disruption, it may be appropriate.

The Local Authority now have to provide:

- 1) A foster carer profile
- 2) Reasons why they have chosen the recommended foster placement and an explanation of why it is the most appropriate placement for the young person.

A Panel member was suspended as they had an issue with a CPAC member and did not want to be monitored by this individual again. The Panel member is still suspended. Is there a right to appeal? What is the process?

### **102.17 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?

ID Badges – what areas have them? Inform your areas, that they may be coming.

Gather information on the variation between areas – training/expenses.

Ask if the issue of not getting time off to attend hearings is a widespread problem?

Closure of local hearing rooms.

Legalities of proceeding with a hearing without papers.

Unallocated cases – to be followed up.

Practice issues – as written above.

Clarification on appeals process to be sought.

### **Summary of Actions**

Margaret to write to the other individual Local Authorities to get number of cases where there is no allocated Social Worker.

Margaret to write a letter to SCRA on whether it is legally acceptable to carry on with a hearing if there was no Social Background Report.

Time off to attend hearings – Gordon Watt replied to our letter, but it did not really clarify the situation. Margaret to write a letter to Gordon Watt to follow-up on this point to get specific guidance.

Angela to ask for a written report on Autism and Asperger's, so we can circulate it to Panel Members.

Margaret will write to SCRA in support of the panel members concerns with the closure of local hearing rooms in Midlothian.

Margaret to write to the Scottish Executive to see if there a right to appeal where there is a dispute with CPAC? What is the process?

Margaret to write to the Scottish Executive to highlight the discriminating practices in each area.

Date of next meeting:- Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2007, 10.30 am., Stirling.