



Social Work Resources
Executive Director Harry Stevenson

AST Consultation
Children's Hearing Scotland
Area 2E South Lanarkshire Council
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Your ref:
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Date: 7 October 2011

Dear Madam

Children's Hearing Scotland
Consultation of proposal for the establishment of Area Support Teams

As requested in your correspondence of July 2011, please find below a response on behalf of Social Work Resources, South Lanarkshire Council.

South Lanarkshire Council would like to submit the following response in regards to the proposals for the Establishment of Area Support Teams, recommending the proposals as outlined in the paper:

1. To establish the National Children's Panel
2. Put in place arrangements for reporting on and monitoring practice
3. To establish the Area Support Teams

The paper discusses the need for ensuring that arrangements for transferring to a new system are sensible and streamlined and that panel members continue to be supported to ensure that children and young people have high quality experiences in hearings across Scotland. The proposals overall endorse the need to keep the child at the centre and that this supports the GIRFEC agenda.

The paper proposes that South Lanarkshire Council and North Lanarkshire Council amalgamate and that this Area Support Team (AST) considers the development of two AST sub committees, one in each authority. The joint AST will support a panel of just under 240 members. The opportunity to further develop joint training experiences for panel members which supports shared learning and good practice is welcomed and this will ultimately further enhance the experience of children, young people and their families.

I would like to suggest that greater emphasis is placed on linking with local authorities to plan, deliver and monitor the training that is offered to panel members with particular reference to Permanency Planning for children.

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The paper discusses the transference of the current Children's Panel Advisory Committees (who are appointed by Scottish Ministers) to an Area Support Team. This coupled with the transference of the roles currently carried out by the clerks to the Children's Panel Advisory Committee to the AST should mean a smoother transition which supports the overall change.

The report suggests a number of proposals/actions including the proposal to distinguish between those providing a pastoral role to panel members and those who would fulfil a performance role. This will be beneficial in the ongoing development of panel members.

South Lanarkshire Council is agreeing for the information contained within this document to be shared publicly.

Yours sincerely

Harry Stevenson
Executive Director