



Cafcass Draft Board Meeting Minutes
6 December 2013

Present

Claire Tyler.....Cafcass Board Chair
 Mary MacLeod..... Cafcass Board Deputy Chair
 Ian Butler Cafcass Board Member
 Kamaljit Singh.....Cafcass Board Member
 Honor RhodesCafcass Board Member
 Terence Connor..... Cafcass Board Member
 Francis Plowden Cafcass Board Member
 Fay SelvanCafcass Board Member
 John LakinCafcass Board Member

In attendance

Anthony Douglas Cafcass Chief Executive
 Julie Brown Cafcass Director of Finance
 Christine BanimCafcass National Service Director
 Jabbar SardarCafcass Director of HR and OD
 Colette Jacobs.....Cafcass Head of Communications
 John Hall..... MoJ Observer
 Alison Wedge..... MoJ Observer
 Usman Ali..... Family Justice Young People’s Board
 Luke BerryFamily Justice Young People’s Board
 Claire LockeyHR Projects Officer (Minutes)

Apologies

Geoffrey Bush, Stuart Smith

BUSINESS SESSION	
1	<p>WELCOME AND APOLOGIES</p> <p>The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular the Chair welcomed Luke Berry and Usman Ali, representatives of the Family Justice Young People’s Board, and also Alison Wedge and John Hall, attending for the first time as observers from the Ministry of Justice in preparation for Cafcass’ transfer of sponsorship to the Ministry of Justice in April 2014.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Geoff Bush and Stuart Smith.</p>
2	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>Honor Rhodes declared that she will be working alongside Cafcass as part of her employment at the Tavistock Centre for Couple Relationships (TCCR), following receipt of a joint grant by TCCR and Cafcass from Department for Work and Pensions to look at work being carried out in intractable Private Law cases. The Board agreed that this did not constitute a conflict of interest.</p> <p>There were no further declarations of interest.</p>

3	<p>MINUTES FROM THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 25 OCTOBER 2013</p> <p>The minutes of the last Board Meeting on 25th October 2013 were agreed by the Board as an accurate record.</p>
4	<p>ACTION LOG/MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>The Board noted that NDPB Framework document has not yet been signed off and sought confirmation on when this could be expected. The Director of Finance notified the Board that confirmation had been received that no further changes were anticipated and that the document was awaiting sign off. The Director of Finance confirmed that this document would be circulated in line with the Board Action Log once signed off.</p> <p>Upon review of the Board Action Log, the Board sought confirmation on arrangements for the Board Away Day in April 2014. It was confirmed that this meeting will take place on 25th April 2014 and a venue has been booked.</p> <p>There were no further matters arising.</p>
5	<p>REPORT FROM THE CHAIR</p> <p>The Chair reported to the Board as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair has continued to work on amendments for the Children and Families Bill as part of her parliamentary role and has worked closely with Tom McNally and Edward Timpson in this role. • The Chair visited the Cafcass Oxford Office, meeting the management team and practitioners. The Chair noted from the visit that issues raised in conversation largely relate to private law work, in particular the balance of caseloads between private and public law cases. • The Chair met with a further 6 practitioners at the House of Lords as part of the ongoing practitioner visits to the House of Lords. The Chair informed the Board that this visit went well and that the key focus of discussion with practitioners related to the balance of managing workloads and quality of work, training and continued professional development. • The Chair attended the launch of Family Dispute Resolution Week. • The Chair met with the New Chief Social Worker for Children and Families, Isabelle Trowler. • The Chair attended a meeting convened and hosted by Family Room, a collection of charities for Children and Families, to discuss Family policy in relation to the development of Party Manifesto's. • The Chair spoke at the launch of the Relationship Alliance which will focus on a collaborative agenda for Family charities over the next few years. <p>Board members were invited by the Chair to provide an update on any activity undertaken since the last Board meeting. The following updates were received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Francis Plowden attended a visit to the Cafcass Guildford Office and provided very positive feedback about staff engagement. • The Deputy Chair attended the Social Worker of the Year Awards ceremony alongside the Cafcass Management Team and staff nominated for the awards. Mary MacLeod informed the Board that Cafcass received nominations for three categories and received two silver awards and congratulated all those nominated on their success. • The Deputy Chair notified the Board that she chairs the advisory group for ESRC funded project looking at outcomes of Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes and informed the Board that she will keep them updated on the outcome of this work and the ways in which this

	<p>may help Cafcass' work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fay Selvan visited the Manchester Office recently and informed the Board that staff are positive about the new IT technology which has been provided to staff. (deleted as simply not true – that the process has gone well in Manchester!
<p>6</p>	<p>REPORT FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE</p> <p>The Chief Executive presented the highlights from his report to the Board and invited comments or questions from Board members. In addition he gave the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ofsted Framework and Methodology has not yet been received but is due to be launched on 9th December 2013 • Ofsted will also be providing 100 days advisory work to the wider Family justice System and Cafcass will work with the Ministry of Justice and Judiciary to look at the most effective use of these 100 days. • A single standardised national template for PLO cases by Local Authorities will be produced. Cafcass will work with the Association for Directors of Children's Services and the Law Society on this template. • The Chief Executive has provided the Board with an updated version of the Operating Framework and invited the Board to review this document and provide comments. • Recruitment for a Board Administrator role and an Assistant Director for Policy role will commence early in the New Year.
<p>7</p>	<p>REPORT FROM THE FAMILY JUSTICE YOUNG PEOPLE'S BOARD</p> <p>The Board welcomed the representatives of the Family Justice Young People's Board and the inclusion of the first report from them in the Board Meeting Papers. The Family Justice Young People's Board representatives presented the highlights of the report to the Board and invited comments or questions from Board members. In addition they provided the following updates to the Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Family Justice Young People's Board have begun planning for their next Voice of the Child conference in July 2014. They invited the Board to provide recommendations for appropriate speakers for the conference programme for them to consider. • Usman Ali spoke at a Northern Circuit Family conference at which he heard the President speak about transparency in the courts and Judges speaking directly with children. The President also spoke on the same subject the following day at the ALC conference. • The Family Justice Young People's Board have written to judges and asked if they would like members of the Family Justice Young People's Board to speak at other circuit conferences. • Representatives of the Family Justice Young People's Board met with the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Justice. • Usman Ali has started working with Cafcass Cymru as part of their work to implement a Young People's Board in Wales, similar to the Family Justice Young People's Board. <p>The Board thanked the Family Justice Young People's Board for the helpful and informative report and noted the excellent work they have been doing, particularly with the judiciary and with sharing good practice. The Board noted that in their recent meetings with the judiciary they have received very positive feedback on the work of the Family Justice Young People's Board.</p> <p>The Board noted the work being undertaken by the Family Justice Young People's Board in coordinating their next conference and sought clarity on the target audience for the conference. The Family Justice Young People's Board representatives confirmed that the conference was</p>

	<p>targeted at both young people and also adults working in the family justice system, particular those with less of a focus on the voice of the child. The Family Justice Young People's Board confirmed that they were pursuing accreditation for the Conference as a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) conference to assist with this but stated that they would like to ensure they utilise the networks of Board Members to secure a good level of attendance. The Board agreed that they would be happy to assist.</p> <p>The Chair informed the Family Justice Young People's Board that she would be happy to arrange a tour of the House of Commons and House of Lords for their members.</p>
8	<p>REPORT FROM ARAC, PERFORMANCE AND QUALITY COMMITTEE CHAIRS</p> <p>The Chair of ARAC referred the Board to the draft minutes of the ARAC meeting held on 25 November 2013 which were circulated with the Board papers. He informed the Board that as part of the internal audit programme PwC had looked at the management of Development Projects and that the Director of Finance will be meeting with PwC to explore this work further. The Chair of the ARAC informed the Board that the Strategic Risk register will also be revised in future to document more explicitly the relevant sources of assurance. The Chair of the ARAC informed the board processes in place relating to the management of abuse to staff by service users in order to provide assurance an appropriate policy and process is in place.</p> <p>The Chair of the Quality Committee referred the Board to the draft minutes of the Quality Committee Meeting held on 19 November 2013 which were circulated with the Board Papers and informed the Board that two items from the Quality Committee Meeting will be considered today as part of the Board Meeting agenda. The Chair of the Quality Committee noted that the Quality Committee received an Internal Management Review Research Report and that this has also been circulated to Board members for information. The Chair of the Quality Committee informed the Board that the Quality Account remains under development and will be included as a draft paper at the next Board Meeting following its review at the next Quality Committee</p> <p>The Chair of the Performance Committee referred the Board to the draft minutes of the Performance Committee Meeting held on 25 November 2013 which were circulated with the Board Papers. The Chair of the Performance Committee informed the Board that the Committee reviewed the Human Resources activities and data relating to Health and Wellbeing, Talent Management and Workplace Engagement. The Chair of the Performance Committee informed the Board that some further work is being done around recording and auditing of Performance Learning Reviews in order to support this and this will be reviewed at the next meeting of the Performance Committee. The Chair of the Performance Committee informed the Board that the October Performance Report was reviewed fully at the last Committee meeting and noted that there a greater focus now being spent on Private Law across the Family Justice System, and less so on Public Law with the achievement of reductions in care case duration. The Performance Committee will continue monitoring this trend. The Committee also received a paper on the Estates rationalisation programme and how this links to improved ways of working. The Chair of the Performance Committee noted that it would be useful to have a Board member involved in the future development of the Estates Strategy and invited expressions of interest from Board members. It was agreed that John Lakin would be the Board Member lead on the future development of the Estates strategy. The Chair of the Performance Committee informed the Board that the Performance Committee will give further consideration to measuring Board Effectiveness at their next meeting. It was noted that The Director of HR and OD has done some work commissioning tests of impact which may be helpful and John Lakin has also worked on the development of board effectiveness tools at universities.</p> <p>Board Decision: It was agreed that John Lakin would be the Board Member lead on the future development of the Estates strategy.</p>

9.1	<p>QUALITY COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE</p> <p>The Chair of the Quality Committee presented the Board with the revised Terms of Reference for the Quality Committee for consideration. The Chair of the Quality Committee referred the Board to point 3 in the revised Terms of Reference and informed the Board that this now includes the role of the Quality Committee in providing assurance and scrutiny on our arrangements to minimise risks to children.</p> <p>It was noted by the Chair of the Board that it may be helpful to have a joint Committee Meeting for the Performance and Quality Committee to consider the issue of the quality and quantity of work as there is an overlap in their Terms of Reference on this issue. It was agreed by the Board that a joint Performance and Quality Committee Meeting would be arranged in the Board and Committee Meeting Programme for 2014</p> <p>Board Decision: The Board agreed to sign off the revised Quality Committee Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Board Secretary Action: It was agreed by the Board that a joint Performance and Quality Committee Meeting would be arranged in the Board and Committee Meeting Programme for 2014</p>
9.2	<p>CHILD PROTECTION POLICY</p> <p>The National Child Care Policy Manager attended the Board Meeting to present the Board with the revised Child Protection Policy for consideration. The National Child Care Policy Manager informed the Board that this document had been carefully condensed to make this readily accessible to staff with some elements now included in the Operating Framework instead where appropriate</p> <p>The Board noted that an amendment was required to the wording in 2.3 for consistency within the document. The Board agreed to sign off the Child Protection Policy once the agreed amendment to paragraph 2.3 has been completed.</p> <p>Board Decision: The Board agreed to sign off the Child Protection Policy once the agreed amendment to paragraph 2.3 has been completed.</p>
10.1	<p>QUARTER TWO FINANCIAL RESULTS</p> <p>The Director of Finance presented the Board with the Quarter Two Financial Results. The Director of Finance informed the Board that the overall forecast still projects that the budget will balance for 2013-14 and that no particular areas of budgetary pressure are anticipated at this stage. The Director of Finance informed the Board that the split of the budget between front office and back office will be documented more clearly in the next financial report to the Board.</p> <p>The Board sought clarification on the cost of the pay award in comparison to last year. It was noted that there has been no pay award previously and that this is the first year government restrictions on a pay award have been lifted.</p> <p>The Board sought clarification on the variation between forecast and budgetary expenditure on workforce costs. It was noted that a recruitment drive for increasing the number of Self Employed Contractors forming Cafcass' flexible workforce has not been as successful as anticipated and led to a greater reliance on agency workforce, accounting for this variation.</p> <p>The Board noted that proposals for utilizing any underspend will be provided to the Board for consideration but that an underspend was not forecast at this stage. The Director of Finance</p>

	<p>noted that any underspend normally emerges in the Quarter 3 Financial Results. It was agreed that if appropriate options will be included in a paper to the Board at the February Board Meeting, alongside the Quarter 3 Financial Results.</p> <p>Board Action: It was agreed that options for use of any emerging underspend will be addressed in the February Board finance paper.</p>
<p>11.1</p>	<p>NATIONAL PRACTICE AUDIT RESULTS</p> <p>The National Service Director provided the Board with an amended version of the National Practice Audit Results. The National Service Director informed the Board that results of the National Practice Audit provide confidence that the Organisation can say that 49% of work is considered good and noted that there are clear strengths and learning points to be taken forward. The National Service Director informed the Board that each area has an action plan to look at these learning points and noted that where there are significant learning points these will be included in the National Training Plan and picked up in future thematic audits.</p> <p>The Board noted the significant improvement made in the quality of work over the last 12-18 months and sought clarity on the work being done with staff whose work has not met the required standard. The National Service Director informed the Board that those staff will have an action plan in place specifically targeting the improvement required.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the National Service Director for her continued focus on quality of work and commended the work of the National Service Director, Assistant Directors and Heads of Service in the improvement achieved.</p>
<p>12.1</p>	<p>QUARTER TWO STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER</p> <p>The Director of Finance provided the Board with a copy of the Quarter Two Strategic Risk Register for information following scrutiny by the Quality Committee and the ARAC.</p> <p>The Board noted the Quarter Two Strategic Risk Register and that this will continue to be a living document with risks scrutinised regularly by the appropriate lead assurance committee. The Board thanked everyone involved in the development of the Strategic Risk Register.</p>
<p>12.2</p>	<p>ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING REPORT</p> <p>The National Child Care Policy Manager attended the Board Meeting to present the Board with the Annual Safeguarding Report for information, following scrutiny at the Quality Committee on 19th November 2013.</p> <p>The Board noted the report and thanked the National Child Care Policy Manager for his continued work on this report.</p>
<p>12.3</p>	<p>PERFORMANCE REPORT</p> <p>The National Service Director provided the Board with a copy of the October 2013 Performance Report following scrutiny by the Performance Committee on 25 November 2013. The Board noted that performance against all KPIs is positive. The Board raised concerns regarding the trend in Private Law case duration following the increase in Litigants in Person in Private Law Proceedings and it was noted that this would be an area for further investigation by the Performance Committee.</p>

12.4	<p>QUARTER TWO STRATEGIC PLAN DASHBOARD</p> <p>The Chief Executive and the Director of Finance provided the Board with a copy of the Quarter Two Strategic Plan Dashboard for information and an accompanying Information Paper.</p> <p>It was noted that limited work on diversity is documented on the dashboard and clarity was sought from the Board regarding the work being conducted locally and nationally on diversity as a strategic priority. It was noted that considerable work is being done at a local level to build partnerships with appropriate local organisations and raise diversity awareness, in addition to national projects to focus on diversity. It was agreed that further detail on local and national diversity projects and partnerships could be incorporated into the Strategic Plan Dashboard.</p> <p>Board Action: It was agreed that further detail on local and national diversity projects and partnerships could be incorporated into the Strategic Plan Dashboard.</p>
13	<p>SCHEDULE OF BOARD VISITS</p> <p>The Director of Finance provided the Board with a schedule of proposed dates and locations for visits to local offices, following consultation with local managers. The Director of Finance invited Board Members to identify which dates and offices they would be able to visit from the proposed schedule.</p> <p>Board Action: It was agreed that that Board would provide details through the members office of the dates and offices they would be able to visit from the proposed schedule.</p>
14	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>It was noted by the Chair that the forward planning agenda was not circulated alongside the Board Papers. It was agreed that the forward planning agenda would be included with future Board Papers.</p> <p>The Director of Finance informed the Committee Chairs that the next agenda planning meeting has been scheduled for 17th January 2014</p> <p>There was no further business.</p>
	<p>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT BOARD MEETING</p> <p>Board Seminar and Dinner Thursday 6th February 2014 17.00 – 19.00 Board Meeting Friday 7th February 2014 9.30 – 13.00</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Summary of Board Actions and Decisions</p> <p>Board Decision: It was agreed that John Lakin would be the Board Member lead on the future development of the Estates strategy.</p> <p>Board Decision: The Board agreed to sign off the revised Quality Committee Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Board Secretary Action: It was agreed by the Board that a joint Performance and Quality Committee Meeting would be arranged in the Board and Committee Meeting Programme for 2014</p> <p>Board Decision: The Board agreed to sign off the Child Protection Policy once the agreed amendment to paragraph 2.3 has been completed.</p>

Board Action: It was agreed that if appropriate options will be included in a paper to the Board at the February Board Meeting, alongside the Quarter 3 Financial Results.

Board Action: It was agreed that further detail on local and national diversity projects and partnerships could be incorporated into the Strategic Plan Dashboard

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