



**Cafcass Board Meeting Minutes
22 March 2013**

Present

Claire Tyler.....Cafcass Board Chair
 Mary MacLeod..... Cafcass Board Deputy Chair
 Ian Butler Cafcass Board Member
 John LakinCafcass Board Member
 Honor RhodesCafcass Board Member
 Kamaljit Singh Cafcass Board Member
 Francis Plowden Cafcass Board Member
 Fay SelvanCafcass Board Member
 Stuart SmithCafcass Board Member
 Geoffrey BushCafcass Co-opted Board Member

In attendance

Anthony Douglas Cafcass Chief Executive
 Christine Banim Cafcass National Service Director
 Julie Brown Cafcass Director of Finance
 Colette Beech Head of Communications
 Alex Kirwan DfE Observer
 Luke Berry Cafcass Young People’s Board Member
 Adam CohenCafcass Young People’s Board Member
 Claire LockeyGovernance Assistant (Minutes)
 Caroline Millar.....Observer on Board Effectiveness

Apologies

Annabel Burns, Terence Connor, Bruce Clark, Melanie Carew, Richard Green, Jabbar Sardar.

BUSINESS SESSION	
1	<p>WELCOME AND APOLOGIES</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Caroline Millar and informed those in attendance that Caroline will be observing the meeting as part of the Board Effectiveness Review she has been commissioned to complete. The Chair welcomed Luke Berry and Adam Cohen from the Cafcass Young People’s Board.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Annabel Burns, Terence Connor, Bruce Clark, Melanie Carew, Richard Green and Jabbar Sardar.</p>
2	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>
3	<p>MINUTES FROM THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 1 MARCH, 2013</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Deputy Chair for chairing the last Board Meeting held on 1 March 2013 in</p>

	<p>her absence and the minutes of this meeting were agreed by the Board as an accurate record.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>MATTERS ARISING/ACTION LOG</p> <p>It was noted by the Board that the evidence of completion section on the Action Log in relation to the last Board meeting was not completed, and it was agreed to immediately update this.</p> <p>The Director of Finance informed the Board that internal changes within Cafcass' audit service provider have led to the replacement of Cafcass' internal auditor. The Director of Finance informed the Board that the ARAC will be reconsidering Cafcass' audit service provider and the audit programme for the period 2013-14 but will retain the current 'mixed economy' of internal audit with an independent Head of Internal Audit and an internal (to Cafcass) business assurance team and capacity. It was confirmed that the NAO are content with this approach.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>REPORT FROM THE CHAIR</p> <p>The Chair informed Board Members that due to the proximity of this Board Meeting to the last Board Meeting held on 1 March 2013 and the Chair's continued ill health she has been unable to conduct visits as planned. The Chair apologised to Board members that their scheduled appraisals have also had to be delayed due to her ill health and thanked them for their understanding and support.</p> <p>The Chair informed Board Members that she was aware a number of them had conducted visits and invited them to share these with other Board members. It was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honor Rhodes attended a team Development Day for A10. • Geoffrey Bush attended a conference in the Southwest, which was also attended by Local Judiciary. • Geoffrey Bush also visited the NBC and Call Centre with the National Service Director. • Fay Selvan attended the Young People's April Extended Board Meeting and commented on the excellent ideas and contributions of the Young People on how they could engage with Family Justice Reform. • Kamaljit Singh has arranged to visit the Croydon office and attend their team meeting in April. • John Lakin informed Board members that he has been shaping and co-ordinating a Board Effectiveness Review and agreed for further discussion of the review to take place as part of item 7.2 on the agenda. <p>The Chair thanked the Board Members for the activities they have been carrying out to further the work of the Board.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>REPORT FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE</p>
	<p>The Chief Executive reported to the Board as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The settlement of budget has been positive for Cafcass and the key targets outlined in the remit letter for 2013-14 are for Cafcass to play its part in delivering the 26 week target for care cases and to step up achievements in private law cases. The Chief Executive confirmed that the date indicated to transfer sponsorship to the Ministry of Justice is April 2014. • The new edition of Working Together was published on Thursday 21st March 2012. • The A17 Ofsted report result will be published on 15th April and the service is likely to

receive a 'good' rating following initial feedback. Following the four year inspection programme set up by Ofsted this leaves all service areas rated 'satisfactory' or 'good' with a clear trend towards 'good'..

- The increase in litigants in person and the impact of this on professional time for business support, practitioners and managers will be considered by a study in Manchester looking to quantify the additional time and type of support being provided to litigants in person.
- The April Extended Board Meeting has been confirmed as taking place on Friday 26th April and Saturday 27th April, with items focusing on workforce development and efficiency savings, the Board Effectiveness Review and a further slot to be decided following consultation with Board members. This will probably be the transfer of sponsorship to the Ministry of Justice
- A change in policy at the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman may impact upon Cafcass as they move towards an investigative approach rather than first conducting informal inquiries.
- Research on Cafcass' current branding has identified that Service Users in private law cases are still insufficiently clear about Cafcass' role, and can have inaccurate expectations of the service as well as being fearful about Cafcass' role. The issues identified will be addressed by taking further steps in all of Cafcass' communications to make Cafcass' role, function and how we go about our professional tasks, clearer to Service Users.

The Board discussed the transfer of sponsorship to the Ministry of Justice and proposed that planning for this might be a suitable item for the April Extended Board Meeting. It was agreed that this would be added to the agenda for the April Extended Board Meeting. The Chief Executive agreed to provide a paper on transfer of sponsorship to the Ministry of Justice at the Board Meeting in June following further work on due diligence.

Action 1: It was agreed that planning for the transfer of sponsorship to the Ministry of Justice would be added to the agenda for the April Extended Board Meeting.

Action 2: The Chief Executive agreed to provide a paper on transfer of sponsorship to the Ministry of Justice at the Board Meeting in June following further work on due diligence.

7.1 BUDGET STRATEGY 2013/14

The Director of Finance provided the Board with a paper on the proposed budget strategy for 2013-14 and highlighted that the paper is in line the preparatory work carried out and previously discussed with the Board. The Director of Finance informed the Board that the request to provide an Impact Assessment of the budget in relation to medium-term forecasting remains outstanding due to the late notification of the budget settlement.

The Board noted that whilst 92% of the budget supports frontline services the paper provided by the Director of Finance on budget strategy for 2013-14 shows 68% of the budget passing to the local regions with the rest of expenditure showing as HQ expenditure. The Director of Finance clarified that the breakdown indicated as part of the strategy is by budget area and does not separate administrative expenditure from expenditure on programmes to support the frontline. The Director of Finance agreed to send a briefing note to clarify the budget breakdown in relation to frontline and administrative expenditure.

The Chair thanked the Director of Finance, the National Service Director and Alex Kirwan for their collaborative work on the budget strategy considering the difficulties encountered by the late

	<p>notification of the budget settlement and noted the support provided by the Department for Education as Cafcass' sponsor.</p> <p>Action 3: The Director of Finance agreed to send a briefing note to clarify the budget breakdown in relation to frontline and administrative expenditure.</p>
<p>7.2</p>	<p>STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-15, INCORPORATING OUTCOMES FROM THE CONSULTATION</p> <p>The Head of Communications presented the Board with a paper summarising feedback on the draft Strategic Plan 2013-15 following a period of staff consultation and providing a revised draft for consideration. The Head of Communications indicated that this was not the final version and Heads of Service are continuing to work with their teams to consider the draft alongside business plans to provide further feedback.</p> <p>The Board provided positive feedback on the draft version of the Strategic Plan 2013-15 and suggested that greater emphasis on providing a longer term contribution to the quality of outcomes, with particular reference to the work of the Young People's Board could be incorporated as well as the transfer of sponsorship to the Ministry of Justice. The Board discussed considering longer term strategic aims over a 3-5 year period as another possible item for the April Extended Board Meeting, alongside planning for a change in demand or resources. The Head of Communications agreed to incorporate feedback from the Board into the final published version of the Plan.</p> <p>Action 4: The Head of Communications agreed to incorporate feedback from the Board into the final published version of the Cafcass Strategic Plan 2013-15.</p>
<p>7.3</p>	<p>REVISED CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS</p> <p>The Head of Communications provided the Board with a paper outlining the revised Corporate Governance arrangements and sought feedback on the proposal set out.</p> <p>The Board supported the revised Corporate Governance arrangements; however they expressed concern that work requested by the Board should not always be viewed as a burden on the executive and suggested that a Corporate Support Officer under the new structure may be able to provide support with this work under the revised arrangements. Concerns were also expressed about wider capacity to support the executive and succession planning for this. It was considered that the Board Effectiveness Review currently being conducted may provide further insight into the proposed Corporate Governance arrangements.</p> <p>John Lakin introduced Caroline Millar, who has been commissioned to complete a Board Effectiveness Review in line with the specification agreed by the Board, and invited her to outline the process for conducting the review. Caroline Millar informed the Board that the review will comprise observation of Board and Committee meetings, an online survey and telephone interviews with the Board and key stakeholders. It was agreed that the draft report on the Board Effectiveness Review would be presented to the Board at the April Extended Board Meeting.</p> <p>Action 5: It was agreed that the draft report on the Board Effectiveness Review would be presented to the Board at the April Extended Board Meeting.</p>
<p>7.4</p>	<p>UPDATE ON THE FAMILY JUSTICE REFORM PROCESS</p> <p>The Chief Executive presented the Board with a paper providing an update on the Family Justice Reform process in the absence of Richard Green. The Board noted this update. The Board noted that this would be helpful in discussion about Family Justice Reform at the April Extended Board</p>

	Meeting.
7.5	<p>CAFCASS APPRENTICES</p> <p>The Director of Finance provided the Board with a paper on the Cafcass Apprentice and Graduate Schemes in the absence of the Director of HR and OD.</p> <p>The Board supported the proposed changes to evolve the current Graduate Intern Scheme into a Graduate Development Programme, and implementation of the Apprenticeship Scheme. The Board acknowledged that providing managers with the option of appointing Apprentices to suitable roles in future is important, however they raised concerns that the Apprenticeship Scheme may be viewed as replacing positions currently held by permanent staff and sought further clarification on this point. It was agreed that the Director of HR and OD would provide the Board with a revised paper on the Cafcass Graduate and Apprentice Schemes.</p> <p>Action 6: It was agreed that the Director of HR and OD would provide the Board with a revised paper on the Cafcass Graduate and Apprentice Schemes.</p>
8	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>There was no other business for discussion.</p>
	<p>DATE AND TIME OF NEXT BOARD MEETING</p> <p>April Extended Board Meeting, Friday 26th April 11.00 - 18.00 and Saturday 27th April 2013 09.30-12.30, The Guardian Offices</p>

Summary of Actions

Action 1: It was agreed that planning for the transfer of sponsorship to the Ministry of Justice would be added to the agenda for the April Extended Board Meeting in April.

Action 2: The Chief Executive agreed to provide a paper on transfer of sponsorship to the Ministry of Justice at the Board Meeting in June following further work on due diligence.

Action 3: The Director of Finance agreed to send a briefing note to clarify the budget breakdown in relation to frontline and administrative expenditure.

Action 4: The Head of Communications agreed to incorporate feedback from the Board into the published version of the Cafcass 2013-15 Strategic Plan.

Action 5: It was agreed that the draft report on the Board Effectiveness Review would be presented to the Board at the April Extended Board Meeting on Friday 26th and Saturday 27th April 2013.

Action 6: It was agreed that the Director of HR and OD would provide the Board with a revised paper on the Cafcass Graduate and Apprentice Schemes.