

Family Proceedings Advisory Service Committee Meeting

Tuesday 13th March at 3pm – G.I.C Boardroom

MINUTES

FPAS Present:

Head of Operations of the Office of the Committee *for* Home Affairs, Chair
 Chief Probation Officer
 Family Proceedings Adviser
 Deputy Children's Convenor, CYCT
 Advocate from Maurant Ozannes
 Representative of Royal Court
 Legal Aid Deputy Administrator
 Children's Social Care, CfHSC
 NGO Representative
 Education Officer

1. Apologies

Alderney Greffier
 Children's Convenor

2. Minutes of previous meetings

Minutes of the meeting dated 21st September 2017 were approved.

3. Matters Arising

- Children First Course
 Contact names were given for Family Bar and Court for the Contact Centre to be able to arrange suitable dates for their presentation – FPAS admin will forward to the Manager at Roseville Contact Centre – Actioned.
- Progress on Marshall Report Recommendation 8
 Initial meeting taken place – on hold at present pending implementation of Ofsted recommendations.
- Legal change of name from Safeguarders to FPAS.
 The CPO is meeting with a HSC legal representative on 17th April with regards to changes relating to the Safeguarder service within the HSC policy letter which is due for completion in June.

4. Ofsted inspection

The general feedback was that the report was fair, positive and objectively actioned and that FPAS was child focused but needed more structure and management.

The Chief Probation Officer went through the short and medium target action plan and advised that the priority of obtaining a manager was being actioned.

A general discussion was then had on what role the new Manager would take and that the majority of the recommendations could not be implemented until the Manager was in situ.

It was felt that a review of the use of expert reports and the cost to legal aid needed further discussion and whether the relevant skills were available on island.

With regards to Recommendation 5 – Joint training between the Office of the Children’s Convenor, and FPAS is taking place on Friday 16th March. Discussions are ongoing between FPAS and HSC to be more aware of each other’s roles in cases where both are involved.

The representative from Children’s Social Care advised that they had some thought in regards to setting up a forum (Family Justice Board) to be able to discuss cross agency/systemic issues and to try and find resolutions. This was just in the thought process stage at present but they would advise the Committee with any further development.

The Education Officer knows that it is a statutory requirement for Education to be part of the Committee and would like to have a key understanding of what input from their Department would be beneficial.

7. AOB

The Chief Probation Officer gave a staff update:-

An FPA was acting as manager

Another FPA had reduced to a 4 day working week

Another FPA had resigned and is due to leave in July (the replacement process is in progress)

There were legacy issues of FPA’s being the conduit for delivery of presents from parents to children. This activity had been described in the inspection report as extraneous to core activity and it was suggested that a suitable volunteer be found to assist FPAS admin at times (ie Christmas) when they have a lot of indirect contact presents to wrap for children.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be in June/July to follow a Family Court User Group. FPAS admin will arrange suitable date and advise Committee members.

Ofsted report on FPAS.

Preliminary action plan. November 2017.

The Ofsted report is in three sections:

Section 1: Practice Guidelines and management of the service (3 recommendations)

Section 2: Delay. One recommendation about addressing delay in the system – split into 4 sub-recommendations.

Section 3 Partnership working. (3 recommendations)

The inspectors observed in their introduction to the inspection report that **'FPAS practitioners work in a broader family justice system. Learning from this inspection will require a system wide response to make the most of it.'**

Ofsted recommendation	Preliminary comments and actions.	Additional resources needed
<p>Recommendation 1: FPAS should publish practice guidance for practitioners. It should very clearly set out the expectations of practitioners and their roles and responsibilities in work for the court and the Tribunal, taking account of the practice issues highlighted in this inspection report.</p>	<p>Current practise guidance can be published in the short term but this will need to evolve as changes are made to the way things are done. Paragraph's 6 – 13 of the report gives a summary of the issues to be addressed in terms of practise including consistency of scope of investigations, clarity for service users, report writing and attendance at Court. These points will form the core of change management and any published guidelines will need to reflect practise as adjustments are made.</p>	<p>This will be a main focus of the new manager.</p>
<p>Recommendation 2: The home affairs committee should appoint a subject specialist practice manager to oversee the work of FPAS.</p>	<p>CPO to write new job description and business case for replacement manager post, focussing on major change management in the first 2 years and continual improvement thereafter.</p>	<p>HR input to grade and advertise. Additional revenue budget.</p>

<p>Recommendation 3: The current FPAS IT client database needs to be replaced or upgraded to meet business need.</p>	<p>The current client database (Daisy) is currently being upgraded. Daisy 2 is scheduled to be installed by year end. The lack of ability to give meaningful business intelligence/ management information will be addressed in phase 2 of the upgrade in 2018.</p>	<p>IT support to work on the BI development.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4: FPAS should take steps to avoid delay by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☑ requesting that experts are appointed only when the case cannot otherwise move forward ☑ introducing a system of triage in private law (including improving assessment for mediation) ☑ stopping offering a service after proceedings are completed ☑ eradicating the waiting list. 	<p>This recommendation encompasses the major operational changes in FPA practice suggested in the report. It will need to initially be broken down into its 4 constituent parts. Other parts of the family justice system including courts and legal aid will need to be involved if these changes are to be embedded into practice. The report noted that 'delay is a complex phenomenonand will require the engagement and effort of all partners'</p>	<p>These practice issues will need the buy-in of the Family proceedings advisory group and the cross agency forum in recommendation 6.</p>
<p>Recommendation 5: The FPAS leadership team undertakes work with the children's convenor and other family justice agencies to promote appropriate interpreting of the legislation and associated practice implications.</p>	<p>Joint training is currently being planned with the Convenor and Tribunal. This recommendation will require close liaison with HSC who were tasked in the Marshall review with writing regulations and practice directions to underpin the new children's law.</p>	<p>FPAS Manager and equivalent managers at HSC and Office of Children's Convenor.</p>
<p>Recommendation 6: A cross-agency forum is established with appropriate decision-making powers to address cross-system family justice issues.</p>	<p>The formation of a strategic forum to address system wide issues is not in the gift of FPAS. This recommendation is for something akin to a Family Justice Board and will need to be instigated either by the Court, or by the Committee.</p>	<p>Chief Secretary/ Committee.</p>

<p>Recommendation 7: If the States of Guernsey commission a further inspection for this area of service, they consider a joint inspection of the health and social care service and FPAS so that the interface between the two and how it works for children and families is better understood.</p>	<p>For consideration following a period addressing the issues highlighted in this inspection report.</p>	<p>Chief Secretary/ Committee.</p>
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