

# Family Proceedings Advisory Service Advisory Group Meeting

16<sup>th</sup> May 2019 at 3.45pm

## MINUTES

### Present:

Chief Probation Officer Chair  
Family Proceedings Advisory Service Manager  
Deputy Children's Convenor  
Representative of the Family Bar  
Legal Aid Deputy Administrator.  
Children's Social Care – CfHSC

### 1. Apologies

Head of Operations of the Office of the Committee *for* Home Affairs, Chair  
Representative of the Royal Court  
Children's Convenor  
Alderney Greffier  
Education Officer

### 2. Minutes of previous meetings

Minutes of the meeting dated 27<sup>th</sup> September 2018 were approved.

### 3. Matters Arising

The Chair noted that Head of Operations of the Office of the Committee *for* Home Affairs, had asked for any comments on the remit and function of the group, and whether FPAS are aligned to the contents of the Ordinance. No comments were made.

### 4. Consideration of the remit and Functions of the Group and any observations by members of the Group.

The Chair read out the functions of the Committee. FPAS is an independent service overseen by the Committee for Home Affairs, which had been reviewed in some detail by firstly the Marshall review on the Children Law and then the OFSTED review at the end of 2017. The action plan for FPAS from the Marshall review had been completed and there is an action plan in place for the OFSTED recommendations.

### 5. Progress of HSC Policy Letter

The legal representative for HSC advised there was no update on the HSC policy letter or a date that it would be disclosed. Issues could be raised now and HSC would be sending out a

consultation document with terms of reference. HSC would looking at reviewing and implementing the following of relevance to this group in the Law:

- pre proceedings meetings,
- legal aid,
- expert witnesses
- practice direction

Representative of the Family Bar advised to put any contributions into the Consultation document when published.

The HSC policy letter is anticipated to include the change of the name from Safeguarders to FPAS. It is not known what, if any, other changes specific to FPAS would be included. The group indicated their interest in there being a realistic consultation process.

## **6. Cross Agency Forum update**

The Chair said a cross agency forum for reaching proposals regarding the Family Court system had been recommended in the Ofsted report. A paper on Family Justice Boards was considered by the group. There was discussion on the benefits of such a group in Guernsey to fulfil the recommendation that *'a cross agency forum is established with appropriate decision making powers to address cross system family justice issues'*. The Chair advised that this was led by the Judiciary in the UK.

Representative of the Family Bar commented that a FJB or equivalent would have resource implications.

## **7. FPAS Manager Report (including statistics)**

The manager of FPAS presented a draft copy of FPAS annual report for 2018 and updated the group on current developments.

There was discussion on matters arising from the manager's report.

## **8. AOB**

The Chair discussed a short term single project user group to look at the use of experts in Family Court and for this group to bring collated data to the next meeting.

The Chair stated that a paper had been presented to ISCP re pressures on the Family Court system contributed to by the Tribunal/Law Offices/FPAS. Next ISCP meeting of the executive group was on 6<sup>th</sup> June and there may be feedback on the intended way forward thereafter.

Members were advised if there were any proactive thoughts on today's meeting please send them by email.

## **ACTIONS**

- Admin to arrange and circulate date of next meeting.
- Chief Probation Officer Chair to add to agenda of next ISCP meeting.

## **9. Date of Next Meeting**

These meetings are scheduled 3 times a year. Generally after a Family Court User Group. Next meeting of this group should be in September 2019.

Meeting date to be circulated.