

Family Proceedings Advisory Service Committee Meeting  
Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2016 at 2.30pm

Guernsey Information Centre boardroom

**MINUTES**

**1. FPASC Present:**

Chief Probation Officer – Chair  
Head of Family Proceedings Advisory Service  
NGO representative  
Acting Service Manager, Assessment & Intervention Team  
Education Development Officer  
Vulnerable Children’s Officer  
Advocate from Randell & Loveridge  
Deputy Children’s Convenor (CYCT)  
Deputy Greffier  
Legal Aid Administrator

**2. FPASC Apologies:**

Representative of Royal Court  
Greffier, Alderney  
Convenor, CYCT

3. The Meeting was advised that Mark Lempriere would now be Chief Secretary of the Office of the Committee *for* Home Affairs.

4. The change of service name was confirmed to the Family Proceedings Advisory Service (FPAS) except in CYCT matters where a FPA will still be referred to as Safeguarder.

**5. Minutes of previous meetings agreed**

**6. Action points from previous meetings:**

- Proposal re appointing a Family Proceedings Adviser prior to Court – Discussion regarding how the Service can provide mediation prior to Court. Legal advice is required.
- Section 4 of the ordinance.
- Providing information to the Judiciary in relation to Children First.
- Contact C.A.B re Mediation and Children First.
- Proposal that the filing date of Annual Report is changed - This will be put to the new Home Affairs committee.

## **7. Family Proceedings Advisory Service Committee Head of Service Report 11<sup>th</sup> November 2015 – 19<sup>th</sup> May 2016**

### Additional Meetings

There have been two additional meetings, namely the 18<sup>th</sup> February and the 1<sup>st</sup> March.

#### 18<sup>th</sup> February

The purpose of the meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> February was to discuss and agree the action plan which had been prepared following the publication of the report for the Scrutiny Review.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> March

The purpose of the meeting of the 1<sup>st</sup> March was to discuss and agree the Annual Report prior to it being presented to the Board for approval. The Annual Report for 2015 is now available online.

### Office Move

Building works have been taking place on the Guernsey Information Centre roof since January 2016. This has been disruptive and noisy. The work is due to finish at the end of June. The building works have caused difficulties for staff.

### Staffing Developments

A Family Proceedings Adviser left the service on the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2016, we have recruited a member of staff on a 20 hour contract. Taking into account the recommendations in the Marshall report, applications were invited from people who do not hold a Social Work qualification.

### Workloads

Since the meeting of the 11<sup>th</sup> November and up to the 10<sup>th</sup> May the Service has received 72 new referrals in total.

The service received referrals in relation to 4 adoptions, 10 CYCT referrals, 1 Public Law Application, 42 Private Law referrals which are made up of 23 Magistrate's Court applications and 19 Royal Court. The Service has also received 15 applications for mediation which are made up of 3 referrals via Advocates, 3 via the Greffe, 3 from the Magistrate's Court, 4 from the Royal Court and 2 were self-referred. There are currently 11 ongoing mediations and 4 pending.

The additional information being collated by the Service highlights that the new referrals in 2016 involve 75 children. The Practice Direction is alleged to be triggered in 10 cases and an

Advocate for the child has been appointed in 10 cases. Advocates have been appointed in 2 cases where the Practice Direction applies.

The figures for the same period last year are: 58 referrals in total, namely 2 adoptions, 10 CYCT, 7 Public Law applications, 31 Private Law referrals made up of 21 referrals from the Magistrate's Court and 10 from the Royal Court. There were also 7 mediations, 4 referred by the Magistrate's Court, 1 via the Greffe and 1 via an Advocate. There was also an application for a specific piece of work.

As the figures above show the Service is currently very busy with 42 referrals being received since January 2016.

### Complaints

Since November 2015 the Service has received 2 complaints, and 1 which was dealt with by directly by the Chief Probation Officer, this complaint was then directed to the Chief Officer.

### Training

Since November 2015 the Family Proceedings Advisers have attended training in the following areas;

Cyber bullying (growing up in Guernsey)

Male Victims of Domestic Abuse

Stalking and Harassment

Teenage Victims

Attachment and Psychopathology

Psychology of Sexual Offending

Analytical writing

Media awareness

Safeguarding Adults

### Name Change

The Safeguarder Service changed its name to the Family Proceedings Advisory Service on the 1<sup>st</sup> May 2016. This was linked into the States-wide re-branding.

We will continue to be Safeguarders for the CYCT, it is proposed that this will change as new training is delivered and new information materials are sourced.

## Children First

This is a course which runs over two sessions offered to separating parents to provide them with information to enable them to focus on the needs of children at a difficult time.

Children First is now being delivered by staff from the Contact Centre under a Service Level Agreement. The training is receiving positive feedback. Taking into account that it is now being independently delivered I do not intend to comment on it in future reports. 24 people have attended the Course in the time period relating to this meeting.

## Family Proceedings Action Plan

Recommendation 1 – Consideration should be given to extending recruitment beyond the Social Work profession.

This recommendation has been actioned and interviews will be taking place on the 23<sup>rd</sup> May.

Recommendation 2 - The minutes of the Family Proceedings Advisory Service committee should be published on the website. This would include training received by Family Proceedings Advisers.

This recommendation has been actioned and it is expected that the Head of the Service's updating report will form part of the minutes which will be published on the website.

Recommendation 3 – The template for the Safeguarders' reports to include the relevant welfare principals.

This recommendation was actioned on receipt of Dr Marshall's report.

Recommendation 4 – The Family Proceedings Advisory Service should be subject to regular external inspection.

This recommendation is agreed, the Chief Probation Officer is currently completing terms of reference.

Recommendation 5 – The Home Department should review the staffing, resources and expectation of the Family Proceedings Advisory Service to ensure that it is equipped to fulfil its responsibilities.

The Review of Service is ongoing and will also be informed by the external inspection and a benchmarking exercise.

Recommendation 6 - Consideration should be given to providing legal Aid for mediation by suitably trained advocates.

It was agreed that this recommendation would be taken to the Advisory Committee which is attended by the Legal Aid Administrator for consideration.

Recommendation 7 – The Family Proceedings Advisory Service should seek to embed within its mediation service the principle of taking account of the wishes, feelings and views of children.

This recommendation has been acted upon and consideration is given to include children where appropriate. It is also planned that Family Proceedings Advisers are going to access follow up training on Direct Consultation with Children being provided by Jackie Norton of National Family Matters.

Recommendation 8 – Consideration should be given as to whether the Child, Youth and Community Tribunal should have a role to play in some private law disputes.

It was agreed in the meeting of the 18<sup>th</sup> February that this recommendation needed to be discussed with the Convenor and those responsible for amending the law.

Recommendation 9 – Consideration should be given to providing a resource for helping parents and children to resolve difficulties that arisen after the Court case has ended.

At the meeting of the 18<sup>th</sup> February it was agreed that the Advisory Committee would discuss this issue to explore the best way to take this forward.

Recommendation 20 – The Royal Court could be invited to consider the proportionality of Rule 58.

Meetings are taking place at the Court to discuss this recommendation, the Family Proceedings Advisory Service is represented by the Head of the Service.

Recommendation 21 – Consideration should be given to setting up an independent avenue of complaints, such as an Ombudsman.

The complaints procedure is in the process of going online, there has been a delay due to the recent States and Service rebranding.

## **8. Photographic ID**

A discussion took place as to whether photo ID should be requested by the Service. To be further considered.

## **9. AOB**

The Acting Service Manager, Assessment & Intervention Team, talked through the changes at HSSD now The Committee *for* Health and Social Care and That they had restructured teams to mix up the skill sets.

The Vulnerable Children's Officer advised she had taken on the role of Children's Officer at Education with a focus on working with vulnerable children. She was attending meetings as an information gathering process at present and to meet other professionals.

**10. DONM**

Next meeting Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2pm at the Royal Court Library.