

Glasgow CHIP

Working in partnership across the city - Face to face Hearings restarting

Background

Since just before lockdown, virtual Hearings have been taking place. However, as lockdown restrictions started to ease, planning has been taking place to reintroduce face to face Hearings.

Having Children's Hearings back to some kind of increased functioning is critically important to ensure children and young people who need legal measures to secure their care and protection, can quickly benefit from them.

However, it is likely that after face to face Hearings resume, we will be looking at a blended model with virtual Hearings still being an option.

Planning for face to face Hearings returning

Traditional, face to face Hearings will only be able to take place with strict social distancing measures in place. There is a phased approach across Scotland.

SCRA has been taking expert health and safety advice from the NHS, through Health Protection Scotland. They will help us ensure that we have all the required measures and equipment in place. As part of the preparation, SCRA has also been consulting with young people from Our Hearings, Our Voice and other groups of young people.

It is important that face to face Hearings resume in order that children and young people can fully participate in the decisions that are made about them.

Glasgow will be one of the first to gradually reintroduce Hearings in Bell Street.

Locality Reporter Managers in Glasgow have been working with principal partners in the city to ensure Children's Hearings are reintroduced safely, with all the appropriate measures in place.



Colleagues from the Area Support Team and the Health and Social Care Partnership have been in to see the changes and walk through the new processes and layout. All partners are satisfied the necessary measures and precautions are in place to safely resume face to face Hearings.

LRM Gordon Brechin said: “Successful partnership working has been key to our planning process.”

Glasgow CHS Area Convener Jennifer Phillips added: “Many Panel Members are really keen to get back to face to face Hearings, but need to be reassured that it will be safe for them and for everyone else attending a Hearing.

“Working in partnership has been vital to getting the timing for this right and it has provided that much needed reassurance.”

What’s happening in Glasgow?



The first face to face Hearing will provisionally take place on the morning of Wednesday 15 July.

Three Hearing rooms (rooms 1, 3 and 6) have been rearranged to meet social distancing requirements. Chairs have been organised so they are 2 metres apart. Any non-essential items such as cushions have been removed from Hearing rooms.

Each room allows for 4 participants, plus 3 Panel Members and the Reporter at any one time Health and Safety is of paramount importance and the Reporter will be responsible for the wellbeing of everyone who attends to participate in the Hearing.

At the start of the Hearing, Reporters will remind participants of the importance of complying with social distancing throughout. If safety is at risk, the Reporter will stop the Hearing.



What Hearings are taking place?

Glasgow will be using a traffic light system to identify cases that are appropriate for face to face Hearings. Considerable care has been taken to identify the right cases in the initial

phase of recovery, as we build up confidence and experience of resuming more traditional style Hearings

The Hearing schedule will be limited at the start.

LRM Gordon Brechin explained: “We aim to start slow and work with partners as we build up the Hearings schedule. The safety and wellbeing of everyone coming into our building is of the utmost importance and we need to manage the numbers of people in the Hearings centre at any one time.”



Virtual Hearings will continue as business as usual gradually returns.

What’s going to be different?

There will be changes as to how people will enter and exit the Hearings centre. You will enter via No 10 Merchant Exchange, Bell Street (the main entrance for visitors). On arrival you will be greeted by a member of reception staff. A sanitisation station will be at reception.

You will be directed to a designated waiting area where chairs have been arranged in line with socially distancing requirements.

In each Hearing room hand sanitisers will be available and the furniture will be laid out differently to normal. You can see photographs of the reconfigured Hearing rooms below. Signage will clearly state the maximum occupancy of each room and staff will be available to assist if you have any questions.

Everyone will then exit via No 20 (the normal staff entrance/exit). SCRA staff will be available to direct everyone safely in and out of the building.

Any questions?

If you have any questions, please contact LRM Gordon Brechin - Gordon.brechin@scra.gov.uk

