

SHADOW FAMILY JUSTICE BOARD

Minutes

Minutes of the Sixteenth Meeting of the shadow Family Justice Board (sFJB) held on 1st March 2023 at 4.15pm in Judicial Assembly Room and via WebEx video conferencing.

Attendees: Mr Justice McFarland (Chair)
Judge Crawford
District Judge (Magistrates Court) Prytherch
District Judge Logue
Master Sweeney
Jennifer Mooney (DoH) *in place of Eilis McDaniel*
Michael Foster (DoF)
Paul Andrews (LSA)
Tom Cassidy (HSCT)
Catherine Cassidy (HSCB) *in place of Brendan Whittle*
Patricia O’Kane (NIGALA) *in place of Dawn Shaw*
Bláithin Cleland (FBA)
Janice Spence (Law Society)

Secretariat: Michelle Hanna (LCJO)
Julie McMurray (LCJO)

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked members for their attendance.
2. The Chair extended a warm welcome to Debbie Maclam in her absence who joined the Board from LCJO and wanted to pass on his thanks to Mandy Kilpatrick who retired from the service, for her contribution not only to the board but within her role in the LCJO.

Apologies

3. Apologies were noted from Karen Ward (NICTS), Brendan Whittle (HSCNI), Dawn Shaw (NIGALA), Eilis McDaniel (DoH), Debbie Maclam (LCJO) and Steven Alison (DoJ).

Minutes of the sFJB meeting on 24th October 2022.

4. The minutes of the last meeting were agreed and should be published.

Business Continuity, Recovery & Modernisation

LCJO Operational Update

5. Mrs McMurray provided an update to members regarding the Lady Chief Justice's Office unchanged [guidance](#) on the Judiciary NI website which was published on 22 June 2022. Whilst social distancing had been reduced to 1 metre, pressures on Court accommodation remains.
6. The Chair stated that the 1 metre rule is a continuing problem in court and suggested that it would be beneficial if the Department would review this.

Action: Ms Mooney to check the position on social distancing guidance.

7. Mrs McMurray continued to update members that current data shows some signs of business recovery, provisional figures for Oct to Dec 2022 were just published and are available [here](#).

The figures show that during the quarter there were:

- 508 sittings (1,436 hours).
- 1,056 Children Order Applications received and
- 1,121 Children Order Applications disposed.

In relation to waiting times the average waiting time for applications disposed was:

- 58.7 weeks for public and
- 40.3 weeks for private law.

In comparison with the same quarter in 2021 this was a decrease of 10% in public law (from 65.5 weeks) and for private law an increase of 5% (from 38.5 weeks). There was also a decrease of 7% in the number of sitting days, from 546 in the same quarter in 2021, to 508 in Oct - Dec 2022.

It is noted that figures for 2021 may not provide the best comparison and figures for the same period in 2019 have also been considered.

While this appears to show in terms of numbers of applications received and disposed a potential return to pre-Covid numbers the average time for disposals remains increased on the pre-Covid position.

Children Order	Oct - Dec 2019	Oct - Dec 2021	Oct - Dec 2022
Applications received	1033	1130	1056
Applications disposed	1110	1288	1121
Average waiting time for	51.0	65.5	58.7

disposal – public law			
Average waiting time for disposal – private law	30.6	38.5	40.3

8. The Chair stated that he had issues with the accuracy of the figures for cases and average times for disposal as these figures only took into consideration the last quarter and should maybe be looked at on a yearly basis.

Judicial Modernisation

Judicial Advisory Group

9. Mrs McMurray provided an update to members on the first meeting of the Vision 2030 Judicial Advisory Group (JAG), chaired by Mr Justice Huddleston, which took place on 29 November 2022. While not a governance board, the JAG has been established to inform and advise the NICTS of the operational judicial modernisation requirements across all court tiers and business types; and to help give effect to the supporting culture and practice change within the wider judiciary and legal profession. It aims to complement other stakeholder advisory groups established under the Vision 2030 Portfolio. Nominated members represent the judiciary across all tiers (including the Chairs of the Shadow Civil Justice Council and Shadow Family Justice Board to align priorities and work focus), the Bar and the Law Society, including the Young Bar and the Young Solicitors Associations, and Vision 2030, reform, and operational leads from the NICTS and the Lady Chief Justice’s Office. Members are expected to act as a channel to colleagues and peers in communicating and championing the business and culture change. At the meeting on 29th November 2022, it was agreed that small sub-groups would be formed from the overall membership to focus on particular business areas, which may be taken forward simultaneously, subject to capacity. Where appropriate, other ‘experts’ (e.g. academic) may be invited to contribute or join a sub-group for a defined ‘project’ or ‘task’, with meetings arranged to focus on particular, discrete or specialist areas of business, in line with the overall modernisation plan or priorities (as agreed with the NICTS). The nature and frequency of meetings and outputs required will evolve to translate high level aspirations into practical requirements throughout the initial scoping phases, to procurement and competitive dialogue and into lower level design as the modernisation programme progresses over the next 5 years.

Sub-group 1 dealing with ‘Civil Pre-Court Action and Case Initiation’ has now met twice and is considering: judicial information requirements for online case initiation and progression; appropriate promotion/signposting of alternative resolution options or initiatives using an online portal; potential for e-service and digital signatures, and management information useful to the judiciary.

10. The Chair stated that people are in support of the family online portal. He was slightly concerned that small firms might not be able to invest into the project so this could create issues with clients if their solicitor cannot assist because they cannot invest.
11. Ms Cleland updated members that Digitisation Stage 1 has commenced within the Bar and has proved very beneficial to members.
12. Ms Spence mentioned that she is a member of the Digitisation Group, and the Law Society are making every effort to make sure no one is left behind during the process and rapid progress was being made.

Modernisation update

13. Mrs McMurray provided an update to members in the absence of a representative from NICTS. The main focus of the team has been to finalise the high-level specification requirements for the Future Core Solution in readiness for the procurement launching late Feb/early March. Significant work has been undertaken by the team and stakeholders to identify and review these and it is wished to extend thanks to all those who have participated in this process.

A discovery exercise on scope for delivery of improvements to the Enduring Power of Attorney Process will conclude at the end of March and the report produced by the team will be used to inform next steps. In the meantime, testing and data migration activities continue in relation to the new Case Management System for the OSO/OCP and the outcome of this work will inform the final implementation date.

Work is also ongoing to prepare the delivery plans for the incoming financial year – these plans must balance up business priority requirements with staff and financial resources available to the team. One of the priorities for the incoming year is how improvements can be delivered to the technology used for remote and hybrid hearings. The team will scope out potential options and will develop a business case to progress this during the 2023/24 year. The overall plans for the 2023/24 year will be shared and discussed with the Vision 2030 Portfolio Board and the LCJ in advance of finalisation. In parallel, discussions are ongoing with the technical equipment supplier to consider improvements that can be made to camera angles to increase visibility of participating parties during remote and hybrid hearings – any changes will be subject to feasibility and affordability.

Estates Programme

14. Mrs McMurray provided an update to members in the absence of a representative from NICTS on the estates programme. She reported that work has continued on the development of the Outline Business Case for the RCJ

Services Infrastructure Project and internal review and scrutiny of the OBC is underway. It is anticipated that the approval process will conclude by late summer.

The North West Accommodation Project's strategic review is underway and a workshop with the NICTS SMT will be held in coming weeks to agree next steps.

SIB has been engaged to facilitate the Estate Strategy Advisory Group and invitations for nominations from key stakeholder groups will issue during March. It is envisaged that 4 workshops will take place between April and June to consider the proposed strategic outcomes, to identify success measures and to discuss planned steps to develop delivery plans.

The Mental Capacity Act Judicial Liaison Group.

15. The Chair updated members that the Lady Chief Justice was keen to see progress with the implementation of The Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016 (MCA 2016) which has not commenced as yet. A Judicial Liaison Group will be created in respect of MCA 2016. The Chair added that there was no promise of anything at this time as success can only be achieved once ministers sign it off.

Problem-solving courts

Family Drug and Alcohol Court (FDAC)

16. Mrs McMurray updated members by way of a written report in the absence of a representative from the DoJ. The report stated that the evaluation is nearing completion. The pilot was a joint DoJ, DoH initiative and next steps will be subject to consideration by both incoming Ministers and budgetary constraints.

DoJ Expert Witnesses pilot scheme

17. Mrs McMurray updated members by way of a written report in the absence of a representative from the DoJ. The report stated that the evaluation of the first stage of the pilot is ongoing. Feedback continues to be largely positive but extension of the General Authority to other court tiers will be subject to the outcome of the evaluation.
18. Ms Spence queried whether there is data going to be released as there are difficulties reported on the ground which is not reflected within the feedback.
19. Mr Andrews agreed to pass on the request for data to be made available and stated that the rates of pay seem to be the main issue.

Action: Mr Andrew to provide data on feedback.

Voice of the Child and Vulnerable Adults

Registered Intermediaries

20. Mrs McMurray updated members by way of a written report in the absence of a representative from the DoJ. The report stated that work is ongoing to determine potential next steps following the Departments consultation exercise last year. Decisions will be a matter for the incoming Minister. In the interim, the Department continues to provide RI's on a case-by-case basis, subject to an assessment of need and a direction of the court with the intention that interim provision will help inform policy development.
21. The Chair stated that he felt this was working well although children and vulnerable adults rarely give evidence in family cases. Judge Crawford agreed that it is a very rare occurrence, and the process has not posed a problem so far.
22. Ms Spence updated members that this topic remains a live issue on the committee but there was nothing to report to date.

Resolutions outside court

DoH & DoJ Private Family Law Early Resolution Action Plan

23. Mrs McMurray updated members by way of a written report in the absence of a representative from the DoJ. The report stated that good progress continues to be made with a number of tools for separating parents, including unrepresented litigants being readied for launch. Consideration is now being given to what might be achieved next in the context of current budgetary constraints.

Public law system

Guardian Ad Litem (GAL) resources

24. Ms O'Kane advised that NIGALA, like other parts of the HSC remain under pressure. Ms Shaw had written to the Chair on the 10th January to inform him and other Judges about the ongoing pressures.

At that time there were 75 unallocated cases, involving 147 children. This number has continued to increase and of 13th February 2023 there are 81 unallocated cases, involving 144 children.

NIGALA currently have 4 Guardian vacancies, due to retirements and an internal restructure to support the allocation process. A number of Guardians remain on long term sick leave, and they are impacted by the current industrial action which includes not providing cover for vacancies or sickness which has added to the pressure. The cases continue to be triaged and those most urgent cases where removal is required are allocated as a priority. The recruitment process has commenced for two of the vacant posts and shortlisting is taking place on 2nd March 2023.

Following the request from Professor Ray Jones, who is leading on the Independent Review of Children's Services within NI, a meeting was arranged

for Monday 5th December 2022, in person in the Judges chamber. The meeting was attended by Professor Jones and members of his review panel, Mrs Marie Roulston, Judge Patricia Smyth, Eilís McDaniel, Bláithín Cleland and Dawn Shaw. The time was used productively to inform Professor Jones about current practice within the public law processes.

25. The Chair confirmed that the court was unable to assist on the demand pressures as the court is obliged to appoint guardians.

Social Worker resources

26. Ms Mooney advised that the social work Workforce Implementation Board continues to meet quarterly to oversee the delivery of the recommendations arising from the social work Workforce Review. An action plan which aims to increase the pathways into SW training, improve HSC recruitment practices and take steps to retain social workers in post has been developed, and progress of the plan will be monitored by the Implementation Board.

The Department of Health has also reached agreement with the Trusts that by June 2023, the use of recruitment agencies to employ social workers will cease. The primary motivation for this change of policy is to provide more stability within the HSC social work workforce and thereby improve social workers' capacity to build meaningful and purposeful relationships with service users – especially with children and families who require assistance. Work has already commenced to provide opportunities for those social workers currently employed by recruitment agencies in Trusts to gain permanent HSC employment. Other actions are also underway to showcase the benefits and rewards of providing social work services in Trusts (children's services in particular) in order to attract a large number of newly qualified social workers into HSC employment in June 2023.

Ms Mooney reported that an update was received with the plan to issue a reform of the children services with the current workforce being looked at in regard to skillsets and recruitment requirements.

Action: Ms Mooney to share data on social work recruitment by the next meeting.

Private law system

Introduction of Domestic Abuse and Civil Proceedings Act 2021 in Northern Ireland

27. Ms McMurray updated members by way of a written report in the absence of a representative from the DoJ. The report stated that the Department continues to monitor uptake and operation of the section 28 waiver of financial eligibility limits for victims of domestic abuse to inform decisions of other evidence which might be used to demonstrate eligibility and identify potential opportunities to maximise usage.

The Department is considering the draft section 29 Report. The Report will be subject to Ministerial consideration before being laid before the Assembly.

The rules of court to enhance the availability of special measures to victims of abuse in family proceedings and ensure they can give their best evidence came into force in November. Work is ongoing to implement prohibition of cross-examination by perpetrators.

28. Mr Andrews confirmed that to date there were not a large number of applications on waivers.

Action: Mr Andrew to provide data on applications to date.

Family Resolution Hearings

29. The Chair updated members on the progress of the Family Resolution Hearing pilot was set up in September to run for one year. Resolution hearings have been convened in the High Court with the primary objective of improving the welfare of the children who are the subject of proceedings before it. The purpose is to achieve resolution of disputes in a timely fashion.

To date 4 cases have been identified and are currently listed for Resolution Hearing. These are being tracked and also compared to similar cases which started around the same time to see if it would potentially take longer to finish than those listed for the pilot.

Delays in Children Order Cases/ Performance Monitoring

Review of the COAC Best Practice Guidance

30. Ms Mooney provided an update on the review of the COAC guidance. Work to develop a draft business case to progress the Review is ongoing, with a delay to planned timescales due to other competing priorities. NICTS and DoH officials met on 20 December 2022 to discuss a draft and agreed some further work was required. This is being progressed. When completed, the business case will need to be considered in the context of significant budget constraints across all departments in 2023/24.

NIGALA Review Pilot

31. Ms O'Kane updated members on the NIGALA review pilot which commenced in December 2021. The NIGALA/HSC Delay Pilot working group have reported that they have now collated a wealth of data for the collation of the final report. The working group will continue to track through to June 2023 with the final report being available by July 2023.

32. Ms O'Kane highlighted that data captured from closed cases from 1st December 2021 and 29th February 2022 were as followed:

- 22 cases were closed involving 32 children
- 8 cases (10 children) concluded on No Order
- 3 cases had expert assessments
- 20 cases had Trust Assessments
- Duration of closed cases ranged from 209-404 days
- Placement at conclusion of proceedings:
 - 49% in kinship care
 - 17% living at home
 - 30% in foster care
 - 4% in residential care
- 152 cases (249 children) being tracked:
 - 79 cases jointly tracked with NIGALA and respective Trusts
 - 57 cases in which proceedings are ongoing
- Of the 22 closed cases 77% concluded in the Family Proceedings Court and 23 % in the Family Care Centre
- The key issues emerging from the tracked cases which were closed are:
 - Number of Trust assessments undertaken during proceedings relative to the instruction of experts
 - The proportion of children at home or in kinship at the conclusion of the proceedings
 - The number of cases being managed on No Order.

33. Ms O’Kane confirmed that the 1st March 2023 to 31st May 2023 cases will be tracked to progress the pilot findings and the pilot will conclude in July 2023 with a final report and recommendations.

Criminal Investigations Working Group

34. The Chair provided an update on the working group involving the PSNI and the legal profession. The working group have focused on issues arising from criminal investigations related to Children Order cases in particular issues with the existing protocol for requesting information from the PSNI. The group prepared the following documents, which were rolled out to stakeholders to commence on the 30 September 2022.

- PSNI Disclosure Schedule

- Pathway regarding PSNI Disclosure Protocol for Concurrent Care and Criminal Proceedings in Family Courts
- Guidance to Practitioners Regarding the PSNI Disclosure Protocol for
- Concurrent Care and Criminal Proceedings in Family Courts

35. The Chair, Judge Crawford, and Judge Prytherch agreed that it was working well in the few applications which have come along.

Litigants in Person

LIP Reference Group

36. Mrs McMurray provided an update by way of a written report in the absence of a representative for the DoJ. The report stated that the Reference Group continues to focus on improving the experience of LiPs in family proceedings and contributing to modernisation and reform initiatives but interest and concern about the role of McKenzie Friends and consistency of approach to them remains a matter of interest to LiP members. The Group is due to host a webinar on developments on dealing with LiPs in England and Wales on 13 March. Members of the profession and the judiciary are to be invited to attend.

The Department has agreed to fund maintenance of the tools developed by Ulster University for LiPs involved in family proceedings in order the valuable resources can continue to be utilised.

37. The Chair confirmed that there can be some issues with McKenzie friends as the quality is varied.

Other Business

Establishment of a Regional Care and Justice Campus

38. Ms Mooney provided an overview on the establishment of a Regional Care and Justice Campus and explained that a joint Department of Justice and Department of Health Programme Team is leading on the development and implementation of an integrated Care and Justice Campus for Northern Ireland. Following a Programme Review in late 2022, the Regional Care and Justice Campus Programme has refocused on two key priorities – **prevention** of admission (or readmission) to a secure facility, and **harmonisation** of standards and services across Lakewood Secure Care Centre and Woodlands Juvenile Justice Centre.

In terms of prevention, implementation of the Northern Ireland Framework for Integrated Therapeutic Care is continuing, with an initial focus on a small number of residential homes as well as the two regional secure facilities. In addition, the Campus Programme Team is currently considering how best to meet the needs of young people transitioning into, and out of, Lakewood or

Woodlands including, the on-site step down unit proposed in the original consultation.

In relation to the harmonisation workstream, the new 'Acorn' therapeutic service has started to operate across both sites, with recruitment into the service continuing. Work is ongoing in connection with primary health care to young people in both centres, with high level options developed. In terms of education and training, the statutory requirements to change the existing provision mean that this is likely to take a longer period of time to implement. The Department of Education is leading this work on behalf of the Programme. Preparatory work to support the future sharing of space and/or facilities has also commenced.

Any other Business

Shadow Family Justice Key Priorities Refresh Paper

39. The Chair referred members to the Key Priorities Refresh paper which was shared with members in advance of the meeting. All members approved the recommendations contained within the paper.

Open Justice

40. The Chair provided an overview on the Family Division's Transparency Review in England & Wales. The sFJB is maintaining a watching brief on the transparency Implementation Group in E&W and members have been kept up to date with developments. [Guidance](#) was issued by the President of the Family Division Sir Andrew McFarlane on the 27 January 2023 which set out that three areas in England and Wales will road test what is known as the Reporting Pilot and the pilot will run from January 2023 - January 2024.

It is hoped that the pilot in E&W will help inform future proposals for Northern Ireland, in particular the current pilot allowing reporters and legal bloggers in three courts to attend and report on proceedings, subject to rules of anonymity, in cases otherwise conducted in private in the Family Courts. It is also important to note that, in NI, judgments of the High Court, which hears the most complex family cases, are often published. The judgments, while anonymised, to protect children in particular, contain details of the cases, legal argument considered and the reasons for any conclusions reached.

41. The Chair confirmed that the press do not generally publish judgements. He confirmed that the judgements released by LCJO will have the children and parents anonymised and, if relevant, Health and Social Care Trusts, countries etc are not named. Hospitals and doctors are often anonymised to prevent identification. The Chair commented that Judges should be aware that if judgements are anonymised it still does not technically prevent identification. There still needs to be a court order in place to stop the reporting details.

42. Master Sweeney suggested that emphasis on confidentiality should be made.

43. Mr Cassidy commented that the review could be beneficial as long as the reporting is balanced but there is a concern if reporting was not balanced that families could be identified.

44. Judge Prytherch agreed that there could be a problem with online bloggers.

Correspondence from the Domestic & Sexual Violence and Abuse Partnership

45. The Chair updated members that following correspondence from the Chair of the Protection and Justice Working Group the Shadow Family Justice Board agreed at the last meeting of the sFJB on the 24 October 2022 to keep the figures on Non-Molestation Orders on the agenda. The figures are similar to the previous quarter and are set out below.

Received	Ex-Parte Occupation or Non-Molestation	403
	Inter-Parte Occupation or Non-Molestation	448
	Extend, Vary, Discharge Non-Molestation, Occupation or Other FHDV Order	14
	Total	865
Disposed	Ex-Parte Occupation or Non-Molestation	385
	Inter-Parte Occupation or Non-Molestation	434
	Extend, Vary, Discharge Non-Molestation, Occupation or Other FHDV Order	11
	Total	830
Outcome	Granted	413
	Dismissed or refused	175
	Withdrawn	147
	Vary or Discharge	95
	Other	0
	Total	830

46. The Chair confirmed that the recent training event for Judges did include an element of dealing with non-molestation and ex-parte applications. Monitoring of the figures needs to continue and will be updated for the next meeting.

Cross Border Protocol

47. The Chair updated members that NI is now a member of the Cross Border Conference Group, the purpose of the Cross Border Conference is to promote better judicial co-operation between England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. It is hoped that Northern Ireland will host the next meeting of the Cross Border Conference in 2024.

Northern Ireland has also adopted the Judicial Protocol for Children's cases in Cross Border UK cases, the protocol will assist in creating a transparent process

of judicial liaison which will be available to the parties in any proceedings. A draft was agreed between the four jurisdictions in 2022 and was published on the 6 February 2023. The protocol is available on the Judiciary NI website.

48. The Chair updated members further that in principle Northern Ireland has also signed up to the protocol for Adults Who Lack Capacity.

Northern Ireland Section to Existing Handbook

49. The Chair updated members that accompanying the Judicial Protocol is a handbook which was prepared by family law barristers and advocates and summarises the respective law and practice in Scotland, in England and, where these differ, in Wales, and provides a central source of guidance. A working Group has been set up to draft a section which will cover current NI law and it is envisaged that a further change would be required when The Children & Adoption Act comes into effect.

The working Group is working towards having a draft section prepared by the end of April 2023 and completed by September of this year. The working group will act as an editorial team in respect of the draft.

NIGALA changes

50. Ms O’Kane provided an update to members that from Monday 13th February 2023 the Department of Health issued the following three Statutory Rules:

1. The Children’s Court Guardian Agency for Northern Ireland (Establishment and Constitution) Order (Northern Ireland) 2023 – coming into operation on 6 March 2023.
2. The Adoption and Children (2022 Act) (Commencement No. 1) Order (Northern Ireland) 2023 – came into operation on 13 February 2023
3. The Guardians Ad Litem (Panel) (Revocation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2023 – coming into operation on Monday, 6 March 2023

This means that from the 6th March 2023, NIGALA will be known as The Children’s Court Guardian Agency for Northern Ireland and the Guardian Ad Litem will be known as Children’s Court Guardians.

The Agency is moving from the current premises at Centre House Belfast, to new premises in the Gasworks site in Belfast. The new address (from 13th March) will be, The Children’s Court Guardian Agency for Northern Ireland, James House, 2 Cromac Avenue, Belfast BT7 2JA. The L’Derry office and the Armagh Office remain the same.

Review of undefended divorces being dealt with by Masters

51. The Chair updated members that a review of undefended divorces being dealt with by Masters was carried out within 6 months of the change being initiated. As part of the review process feedback was sought from the Presiding Master, Master Kelly. Master Kelly very helpfully consulted with the Masters involved in hearing undefended divorces and provided a collective response. The following points are noted;

- consensus among the Masters is that their judicial tier hearing undefended divorces is going well;
- both Counsel and solicitors have adapted well to the new arrangement;
- Masters have received very appreciative feedback from the legal profession regarding their levels of preparation and how they deal with the petitioners;
- Masters were also keen to acknowledge the contribution of the court clerks in facilitating the smooth transition and all agreed that the Matrimonial Team and the Matrimonial Court Clerk assistance is excellent. This positive message has been passed to staff;
- Masters noted that the feedback from NICTS staff has also been very positive;
- The Masters currently deal with an average of 24 divorces per week, with 8 divorces listed on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday;
- This initiative has resulted in cost efficiencies, given the salary difference between the tiers involved.

52. Master Sweeney said that junior barristers who would previously have had an opportunity to deal with undefended divorces may now be deprived of this opportunity as solicitors are more likely to deal with more of the undefended divorces.

53. The Chair requested that monitoring was continued and that a full review was required.

Action: LCJO to conduct a full review.

Recognition of Social Worker qualifications in the Republic of Ireland.

54. Ms Spence advised that at a committee meeting of the Family Committee a query was raised by members about the lack of recognition of social work qualifications now in The Republic of Ireland and since Brexit. It was agreed that this matter be added to today's agenda but noting that this is a Republic of Ireland issue.

55. Mr Cassidy confirmed that this has had an impact. The Trust has recognised the requirement to get staff accredited by the Republic of Ireland body. The Western

Trust have some positions already in place within the Republic of Ireland but registering seems to be time consuming.

Action: Mr Cassidy and Ms Mooney to update members with data those social workers recognised in the Republic of Ireland by the next meeting.

Next Meeting

It was agreed the next meeting of the Shadow Family Justice Board would take place on the 19th June 2023 at 4:15pm.