

### **3 CHILDREN'S PANEL AREA SUPPORT TEAMS (AST) (AN208-2012)**

Reference is made to Article XIII of the minute of meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee of 29th October, 2012, wherein the Committee agreed to the establishment of a Dundee Local Area Support Team and a Tayside Area Support Team.

It is now reported that each local authority can, if it so chooses, nominate people to be members of the AST. The Act provides that the National Convener must appoint one person so nominated and can appoint others if she considers that appropriate. Local authorities currently make appointments to CPAC's and this provision is designed to give local authorities a continued presence in supporting the Children's Panel. The people appointed will act as the local authority's representative(s) on the AST and, whilst they remain accountable to the local authority, they would be expected to respect the Children's Hearings Scotland vision, mission and values on joining the AST.

By taking up a role on the AST, the nominee(s) will have an overview of the Children's Hearings System and the Children's Panel. They will act as an important link between the Children's Panel and the local authority elected members and relevant senior officials and departments. They will not, however, be directly involved in the recruitment, selection, recommendation for appointment or reappointment, or practice observation and review processes undertaken by the AST panel practice advisors.

At present, the Council's current representatives are Councillor Ross and Councillor Cruickshank.

The Council's instructions are requested.