



The best possible start: message from the chair

By way of introduction...

We are delighted to be recruiting to the post of chief executive at a time when the work of PAS is so vital for children and families in Scotland. We have been developing and refreshing our strategy to focus on what is important to parents and families in the current environment, and we need an inspirational leader to bring our strategy to life.

Since 2004 PAS has brought together influential member organisations to work collectively on bringing the voices of parents into the policymaking arena. We've also made their voices heard across children and families' services. These include the voices of parents and families who are not always heard nor represented in traditional channels including: families affected by drugs and alcohol, one parent families, those with parents in the criminal justice system, adoptive families. We want to encourage understanding of the issues and challenges that affect parenting in current times, inform best practice and to change lives for the better.

We are well known and respected for our policy, practice, and research work. In recent times we have supported families with information during the pandemic and run well attended seminars on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Our regular briefings, enews and other publications are valued by practitioners and policymakers alike. Over the years we've commissioned telephone surveys of parents throughout Scotland, and conducted one-off consultations on specific topics, such as parenting teenagers and kinship care.

As we head into our next phase of development, we want to focus on:

- finding out what matters most right now to parents and caregivers
- actively contributing to policy development associated with parents and caregivers
- translating this into our work programme for the next three years

The newly appointed chief executive will work closely with the board of trustees to shape the organisation, identify priorities, and ensure financial and organisational sustainability.

Although this is a time of opportunity, there are various challenges, not least the cost-of-living crisis and general environment of uncertainty for individuals and organisations alike. We need to influence a wide range of stakeholders who all have both common and competing priorities. And we need to move away from reliance on statutory grant funding.

However, with the benefit of 15 years' experience, we are confident that our work is unique and ever more necessary. When we speak our voice is credible, persuasive and informed by evidence.

Our new chief executive will provide creative, authentic, and strategic leadership PAS needs to turn strategy into action, and to realise our vision: a Scotland where all parents and families are valued and supported to give children the best possible start in life.

I look forward to working with you as, together, we continue our important work for Scotland's children and families.

Neil Mathers

Chair, PAS Board of Trustees