

matters in dispute" (OCR r9.12) the sheriff, with the co-operation of the parties, is given the opportunity to address issues relating to the case which will, hopefully, prevent the case taking a long time to reach a conclusion and unnecessarily going to proof.

2.4.9 The new rules provide that when the defender, by way of Notice of Intention to defend, craves or seeks to defend a Section 11 order, the parties will be notified of the forthcoming child welfare hearing. All parties (including a child who has indicated his/her wish to attend) will personally attend the child welfare hearing (OCR r33.22A)

2.4.10 This will take place no sooner than 21 days after the lodging of the Notice of Intention to defend. This does not alter the rights of either party to make any other application to the court, for example for interim measures.

2.4.11 The child welfare hearing itself may be heard in private and the role of the sheriff is "to seek to secure the welfare of the child by ascertaining from the parties the matters in