



**EAST AYRSHIRE
CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE**

NOTE OF MEETING

28 OCTOBER 2009

PRESENT:

Susan Taylor, Chair of Child Protection Committee, Head of Service: Children, Families and Criminal Justice, East Ayrshire Council;

Cecilia Gray, Senior Manager, Locality Services, East Ayrshire Council;

Eugene Fitzpatrick, Service Manager, Criminal Justice, East Ayrshire Council;

Nancy Beresford, Procurator Fiscal Depute;

Eileen Taylor, Authority Reporter;

Maureen Bell, Consultant for Vulnerable Children, NHS Ayrshire & Arran;

Superintendent Douglas Robertson, Strathclyde Police;

Detective Inspector David Summerhill, Strathclyde Police;

Joanne Sharp, General Manager, Children's, Women's and Sexual Health Services, NHS Ayrshire and Arran;

Janet Marshall, East Ayrshire Children's Panel Chair;

Diane Burns, Child Protection Coordinator.

ATTENDING:

Gillian Hamilton, Administrative Officer, East Ayrshire Council.

ALSO ATTENDING:

Jaine Best, Solicitor, East Ayrshire Council;

Beth Smith and Jaine Scott, MARS (Multi Agency Resource Service);

Jane Scott, MARS (Multi Agency Resource Service).

APOLOGIES:

Kay Gilmour, Head of Service: Community Support, East Ayrshire Council;

Chris McAleavey, Head of Housing, East Ayrshire Council;

Dr Sheila Smith, Consultant for Vulnerable Children, NHS Ayrshire and Arran;

Donna McKee, Clinical Nurse Manager, Early Years, NHS Ayrshire and Arran.

CHAIR:

Susan Taylor, Chair of Child Protection Committee, Head of Service: Children, Families and Criminal Justice, East Ayrshire Council (Chair).

	SUMMARY	ACTION
1.	<p>MARS (MULTI AGENCY RESOURCE SERVICE)</p> <p>The Committee welcomed Beth Smith and Jane Scott who gave a presentation which covered the background to the establishment of the MARS for those working with complex child protection issues; context; consultation; functions; the MARS unit; Steering Group; work programmes; communities of expertise and links to Child Protection Committees.</p> <p>Establishing a mechanism for communicating with Practitioners, and capturing/sharing examples of good practice were described as key challenges for MARS.</p> <p>During discussion it was noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) MARS can assist with self evaluation through providing consultancy on specific areas of work. Support would be ongoing throughout the process and feedback provided; (ii) MARS will not charge for this service, acting as broker for the expert/consultant, from whom any charge would come direct. However, an element of goodwill was anticipated, and there were opportunities to secure expertise through research bodies at nil cost; (iii) local expertise, including joint Ayrshire work, should be explored prior to engaging MARS, to ensure that any enquiries were meaningful; (iv) a reference library was being developed and regular updates would be available on the MARS website, including research findings. Research requests would be reviewed for patterns, themes and geographical factors/links; (v) MARS are acutely aware of the need for wider network connections, including Criminal Justice, MAPPA and Adult Protection; (vi) the Child Protection Committee will identify a named person through whom MARS can be accessed for advice and support; (vii) there is scope for secondment, which could assist both with sustainability of MARS, and with continued professional development; (viii) there is opportunity to share areas of good practice, i.e. local developments in practice; and (ix) MARS sought ongoing dialogue with Child Protection Committees. <p>It was then agreed that Diane Burns be the named contact person for the Child Protection Committee in terms of making enquiries to MARS.</p>	

	<p>The Committee thanked Beth Smith and Jane Scott for the presentation.</p>	
<p>2.</p>	<p>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND REFLECTION ON HMIE INSPECTION TO DATE</p> <p>It was agreed to approve the Minutes of 26 August and 23 September 2009, subject to inserting “Conference” at paragraph 4(i) of the Minutes of 26 August 2009 to read “Child Protection Conference Chair”.</p> <p><u>Matters Arising</u></p> <p>a) The Evaluation form pilot in the Cumnock Area for a 3 month period had been subject to delay due to competing pressures for the Child Protection Co-ordinator and would commence on 26 October 2009.</p> <p>b) The first edition of the Child Protection Committee’s newsletter had been circulated by email. The newsletter had received positive feedback. Arrangements were required for those with no access to email.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>CHILD PROTECTION ORDERS GRANTED IN EAST AYRSHIRE IN 2008</p> <p>Jaine Best presented a report which provided an analysis of CPOs (Child Protection Orders) granted in East Ayrshire in 2008. The report focused on the rise in the number of CPOs granted in 2008, compared to those granted in the previous 5 year period, the number of CPOs involving children already subject to Supervision Orders and any evidential difficulties following the granting of CPOs.</p> <p>It was noted that:</p> <p>(i) 35 CPOs were granted in 2008, all of them appropriate. This trend reflected East Ayrshire demographics (for example the impact of substance related mental health issues, domestic abuse);</p> <p>(ii) all of these children were already on supervision requirements in 2008 when the CPOs were granted;</p> <p>(iii) the Reporter encountered evidential difficulties in 7 sibling group cases involving 11 children;</p> <p>(iv) very few CPOs were subject to recall or challenge and were all continued;</p> <p>(v) there has been an increase in the number of CPOs granted nationally;</p> <p>(vi) locally, issues were identified in respect of the need for prompt Hearings, and with the need for more planned approaches (as opposed to crisis responses) for children on Supervision Orders;</p>	

	<p>(vii) the increase in CPOs could reflect better interventions and general overall increase in Child Protection activity, including better multi agency identification of domestic abuse, families with mental health issues and substance misuse through the Girfec Group; and</p> <p>(viii) MAPPA could be having an impact in terms of connections between families and links with registered sex offenders.</p> <p>It was agreed:</p> <p>(i) that the Performance and Audit Sub-group cross-reference the recommendations in the report with the Child Protection Committee's master Action Plan and identify any need for training and/or practice guidance;</p> <p>(ii) to identify which CPOs were a direct result of the Girfec process; and</p> <p>(iii) to include in future statistical reports the number of CPOs granted and the number of children already subject to supervision orders.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p>NON DISCLOSURE OF PLACE OF RESIDENCE OR WHEREABOUTS</p> <p>It was noted that a report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Child Protection Committee reflecting the multi agency approach to non disclosure of place of residence or whereabouts.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>RESEARCH PROPOSAL: GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY CHILD</p> <p>Maureen Bell circulated a draft invitation for bids to undertake research in respect of the levels of concerns for children and young people in East Ayrshire and outcomes for children who have been considered by the GIRFEC Group.</p> <p>It was agreed:</p> <p>(i) to make enquiries regarding any opportunity to link with the researchers commissioned by Scottish Government to evaluate the pathfinders, to determine whether their methodology could inform the work being commissioned by the Child Protection Committee;</p> <p>(ii) that two distinct pieces of work were required, to determine what was behind the increased activity in East Ayrshire, and to measure the impact of the Girfec Group in achieving improved outcomes for children. Both would inform organisational learning and change in terms of best use of resources to keep children safe;</p> <p>(iii) that Diane Burns contact MARS for advice and support with these pieces of work; and</p>	

	<p>(iv) that a approach be made through the Community Planning and Partnership Manager for funding, and any shortfall be met by agencies.</p> <p>Janet Marshall left the meeting at this point.</p> <p>There followed discussion on the HMIE Inspection to date and Diane Burns circulated a scoping document which had been drafted following the Chief Officers' Group meeting with the Inspectors.</p> <p>It was noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) a presentation had been given to the Inspectors by the Chief Officers' Group, followed by positive discussion; (ii) the scoping phase was underway and the Inspectors were currently file reading. This would be followed by Practitioner's sessions; (iii) at this stage, amber gradings had been received, in the initial feedback session. Further information was required by inspectors and depending on this information provided, amber could move to green or red ratings i.e. the process was ongoing; (iv) there was opportunity to provide details to inform the gradings at a further meeting with the Inspectors on 30 October 2009; and (v) in terms of the good practice examples (IRT, Girfec and Solihull) that the newness of these initiatives did not allow for impact to be measured. The Inspectors had suggested that consideration be given to alternatives including Young Carers. <p>It was agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) that Members advise Diane Burns no later than 29 October 2009 on the location of further details to inform the HMIE ratings; and (ii) that Diane Burns and Susan Taylor request discussion with the Inspectors on the good practice examples. 	
6.	<p>SHARING INFORMATION: GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE</p> <p>It was noted that further work required to be carried out on the information sharing protocol and training. The Committee would receive a report back on these matters at the next meeting.</p>	
7.	<p>INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK</p> <p>The Committee received an update report on progress in respect of implementing the Integrated Assessment Framework in East Ayrshire.</p>	

	<p>It was agreed to note progress to date in respect of the roll out of the Integrated Assessment Framework and to receive an update in 6 months time.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT SUB-GROUP</p> <p>The Committee heard Diane Burns on the work of Performance and Audit Sub-group and noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the Sub-group had been actively contributing to the collation of self evaluation material for HMIE; (ii) the Sub-group's membership, workload and action plan will be reviewed in November 2009; (iii) information had been collated from the assessing risks and needs action plan, the baby P action plan, the annual report and business plan and recommendations from the HMIE inspection report and significant case reviews. Work contained in the collated plan would be reviewed at the above Sub-group meeting and future reports to the Child Protection Committee would be based on progress with the actions; (iv) as reported in paragraph 2 above, the Cumnock pilot to gain the views of children and their families who have experienced child protection processes began on 26 October 2009; (v) the work of the File Sampling Group carried out in August 2009; and (vi) the Sub-group had been reviewing the provision of statistical information from each of the key agencies. <p>It was agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) that a short term working group be established to look at how management information can be provided; and (ii) in relation to the case file audit, that Diane Burns draft an action plan for circulation to Child Protection Committee members. 	
<p>9.</p>	<p>TRAINING SUB-GROUP</p> <p>The Group heard Diane Burns on progress in relation to the Training Sub-group and it was noted that work was ongoing to scope training needs and resources.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>PRACTITIONERS SUB-GROUP</p> <p>The Committee heard Diane Burns on the work of the Practitioners Sub-group and noted progress with the Child Protection Committee newsletter, annual conference, review of Sub-group membership and the Practitioners Forum.</p> <p>It was further noted:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) that road show format was being considered for the Practitioners Forum; and (ii) that Practitioners were uneasy about the shift away from learning partnerships; that this could result in the loss of some of the key preventative and support work being done, and a key channel of communication between staff. 	
11.	<p>PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION SUB-GROUP</p> <p>The Committee noted progress with the online children and young people survey, the West of Scotland Child Protection Committee translation project, development of children and young people's web pages, COGS, child protection information including an information bookmark and strategy information wall planner and accessible information for adults and children and young people with learning disabilities.</p>	
12.	<p>SIGNIFICANT CASE REVIEWS: ACTION PLAN</p> <p>The Committee received a summary of main findings in respect of the Significant Case Review for Child A (2009) together with action plans for Child A 2009 and Child A 2008.</p> <p>It was agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) to note that Maureen Bell and Celia Gray would ensure feedback to the family of Child A (2009) (as appropriate to their circumstances) and with Practitioners involved in the case; (ii) to note that a collated action plan would be produced for all significant case reviews. Individual action plans were also produced for each case for audit purposes; and (iii) that the overview action plan be the subject of an event for Practitioners. 	
13.	<p>STATISTICAL REPORT</p> <p>It was noted that the statistical report would be circulated to Members.</p>	
14.	<p>INFORMATION ITEMS</p> <p>The Committee received the following items for information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) South West Scotland Community Justice Authority Annual Report 2009; (ii) South West Scotland Community Justice Authority Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) Strategic Oversight Group – Minutes of meeting held on 31 August 2009; (iii) West of Scotland Child Protection Chairs Consortium – Minutes of meeting held on 14 May 2009; 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (iv) National Child Protection Committee Chairs Forum – Minutes of meeting held on 17 June 2009; (v) Ayrshire Wide Work – Action Notes of Child Protection Committee Chairs and General Manager, Children’s, Women’s and Sexual Health Services meeting held on 27 July 2009; (vi) East Ayrshire Chief Officers’ Group (Child, Adult and Public Protection Arrangements) – Minutes of meetings held on 31 August, 1 September and 5 October 2009; (vii) Adult Support and Protection Implementation Committee – Minutes of meeting held on 4 August and 22 September 2009; (viii) CEL 16 – Action Plan for Implementation of Action 15 of the Looked After Children and Young People: We can and must Do Better Report; and (ix) Shetlands HMIE Report. <p>The Committee also noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) details of the national launch of the Caledonian System for domestic abuse work with Criminal Justice and other agencies, in respect of which an update would be provided at the next meeting; and (ii) that a Child Protection Co-ordinator’s report would be submitted to future meetings. 	
	<p>The meeting terminated at 1710 hours.</p>	