

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 26 AUGUST 2009 AT
1400 HOURS IN THE DE WALDEN ROOM, DOWER HOUSE, DEAN CASTLE
COUNTRY PARK, KILMARNOCK**

PRESENT: Susan Taylor, Chair of Child Protection Committee, Head of Service: Children, Families and Criminal Justice; Kay Gilmour, Head of Service: Community Support; Cecilia Gray, Senior Manager, Children and Families; all East Ayrshire Council; Karen Wallace, Authority Reporter, SCRA; Superintendent Dougie Robertson, Strathclyde Police; Joanne Sharp, General Manager, Children's, Women's and Sexual Health Services; Maureen Bell, Consultant for Vulnerable Children, NHS Ayrshire & Arran; Janet Marshall, Chair and Marjorie Blaikie, Vice Chair, both East Ayrshire Children's Panel; and Diane Burns, Child Protection Coordinator.

ATTENDING: Gillian Hamilton, Administrative Officer, East Ayrshire Council.

ALSO ATTENDING: Sandra Winton, Child Protection Advisor, NHS Ayrshire and Arran; Mhairi Gillespie and Christopher Lockwood, both East Ayrshire Council, IT Services.

APOLOGIES: Chris McAleavey, Head of Housing; Eugene Fitzpatrick, Service Manager, Criminal Justice, both East Ayrshire Council; Stuart McMillan, Procurator Fiscal Depute; Dr Sheila Smith, Paediatrician (Child Protection); and Detective Inspector David Summerhill, Strathclyde Police.

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

WELCOME

1. The Committee welcomed Marjorie Blaikie, Depute Children's Panel Chair who would, on occasion, deputise for the Children's Panel Chair, Sandra Winton, Child Protection Advisor, NHS Ayrshire and Arran in attendance for Item 4 below and Mhairi Gillespie and Christopher Lockwood, East Ayrshire Council, IT Services in attendance for Item 2 below.

It was noted that May Dunsmuir, Authority Reporter was taking a career break and SCRA would be represented on the Child Protection Committee by Karen Wallace for the duration. Appreciation for May's contribution to the CPC was noted, and the best wishes of the committee will be forwarded to her.

IT PRESENTATION

2. Mhairi Gillespie and Christopher Lockwood demonstrated a potential IT solution for storing Child Protection Committee documentation, which would allow members "read only", download and print facilities to these documents, accepting that such documents contained no private details/client information and were in due course published on the Child Protection Committee's website where they were available to members of the public.

It was noted that:

- (i) such a arrangement should improve access to Committee reports by Child Protection Committee members;
- (ii) to access the storage area, members would require a username and password. The onus was on members to keep these details secure, and to access papers lodged on the storage area;
- (iii) the storage area could be accessed from anywhere, requiring only access to the internet;
- (iv) administration staff who print papers for Committee Members would also require access;
- (v) past papers could also be held on, and retrieved from, the storage area;
- (vi) a forum could be established to improve communication about potential agenda items;
- (vii) storage areas would also be established for the Committee's Sub-groups. These would require different permissions;
- (viii) if required, an audit trail could be introduced, showing when and by whom papers had been accessed;
- (ix) administration support staff would advise members by email when documents for forthcoming meetings had been lodged on the storage area and could be accessed. Deadlines for submission of papers for forthcoming meetings would be communicated to members; and
- (x) Mhairi Gillespie would develop a brief operating protocol for members.

It was then agreed that electronic storage would be set up for the next meeting of the Child Protection Committee on a trial basis.

The Committee thanked Mhairi and Christopher for the demonstration and they left the meeting.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 3.** There were submitted and approved as a correct record, subject to the deletion of paragraph 3.1.1 (i) minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 May 2009 (circulated).

3.1 Matters Arising

3.1.1 NHS Representation on Child Protection Committees

It was reported and noted that Donna McKee, Clinical Nurse Manager (Early Years), NHS Ayrshire and Arran would replace Angela Shevlin on the Child Protection Committee.

3.2 Meetings with Sub-group Chairs

It was noted that arrangements were being made for the Chair of the Child Protection Committee to meet with the Sub-group Chairs on a regular basis.

3.3 GIRFEC Group

It was noted that a draft "Good Practice" Action Plan which was circulated following the Girfec meeting on 30 July 2009, would receive further consideration at the Girfec meeting scheduled for 3 September 2009.

The Chair reported further on a meeting attended by NHS Ayrshire and Arran, Strathclyde Police, SCRA and Social Work on 19 June 2009, which had been convened as a result of observations made by the Authority Reporter and the Head of Service: Children, Families and Criminal Justice respectively following their attendance at Girfec meetings.

As contained in correspondence dated 30 July 2009 (circulated) by the Head of Service: Children, Families and Criminal Justice, it had been agreed at the meeting:

- (i) to revise the existing protocol and flow chart for the Group in an attempt to evolve into a Multi-agency Screening Group which would seek to avoid single agency referrals to the Reporter;
- (ii) that specific guidance would be developed for staff, which would build on the recently agreed information sharing protocol. This action was required as the Girfec Group had increasingly been used to ensure information exchange between agencies and should not exist for this purpose;
- (iii) that referrals made to Social Work should be actioned by Social Work. This involved information gathering and initial screening which tasks should not be delayed to enable the referral to be tabled at the Girfec meeting. As a consequence, Social Work staff would not routinely table referrals at the meeting;
- (iv) that there were no implications for other partners in respect of changes to the existing arrangements for referring to the Girfec Group; and
- (v) that the primary purpose of the Girfec Group is to ensure (a) that the needs of children and young people are responded to appropriately at the right time, in the right way, by the right persons; and (b) early intervention on a single or multi-agency basis to prevent children/young people being subject to compulsory measures of supervision.

It was then agreed:

- (i) to note that Strathclyde Police and SCRA, both being national organisations, had been investigating whether there was scope to amend their respective standard operating procedures locally;
- (ii) to note that SCRA had looked at the possibility of details being forwarded to the Reporter for information only, however, in terms of the Children's Scotland Act, SCRA could only receive referrals. In terms of their own procedures, Strathclyde Police were required to make referrals to SCRA in respect of domestic incidents where children were involved;
- (iii) to note that these matters would be received further consideration by the Chief Officers Group at their forthcoming meeting;
- (iv) that the above information be fed back to the Practitioners Forum who had raised questions about the operation of the Girfec Group;
- (v) to note the contents of correspondence (circulated) from the Scottish Government which indicated that they were unable to respond positively to East Ayrshire Council's Chief Executive's request for support for an independent evaluation of the Girfec Group and the reasons for this; and
- (vi) that Maureen Bell and Marlyn Nicol develop a proposal for submission of a funding bid to the Community Planning Partnership Board for independent

academic research and an evaluation of (a) the Girfec Group; and (b) the statistical profile for East Ayrshire which received consideration at the Child Protection Committee's seminar held on 26 January 2009.

3.4 Co-location of Co-ordinators

It was noted that discussions were ongoing about the implementation of a collocated base for the support staff of the CPC and APC, ensuring links to MAPPA and Strathclyde Police.

3.5 Tracking and Recording of Trafficked Children

It was noted that the 3 Ayrshires would work together to develop a protocol for tracking and recording trafficked children.

SIGNIFICANT CASE REVIEW CHILD A

4. Sandra Winton, Child Protection Advisor, NHS Ayrshire and Arran gave a presentation on the Significant Case Review Child A (2009).

Arising from discussion on the presentation it was agreed:

- (i) to note the positive practices and strengths highlighted by the review;
- (ii) to note the recommendations in the report;
- (iii) that the full report be shared with the Review Group and Panel only;
- (iv) that the Review Panel develop an executive summary and action plan and determine arrangements for wider information sharing; and
- (v) to reflect further on how such reviews are to be carried out in the future.
- (vi) to report the findings and the recommendations of the review to the Chief Officers Group.

It was further agreed:

- (i) to note the benefits flowing from the appointment of the independent Child Protection Chair in terms of communications with SCRA;
- (ii) to receive a report at the next Child Protection Committee meeting on proposals for phasing implementation of Integrated Assessment Framework (IAF); and
- (iii) to note that Multi Agency Resource Service (MARS) were looking at current arrangements for conducting Significant Case Review's.

PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT SUB-GROUP

5. The Committee heard an update from Maureen Bell in respect of the work of the Performance and Audit Sub-group and it was noted:

- (i) the Sub-group is overseeing the compilation of a report on the multi-agency self evaluation activity which has taken place in East Ayrshire. The first draft will be circulated by 17 September 2009. It was noted that each agency is also currently compiling their own self evaluation report, detailing areas of good practice, impacts and areas for improvement. This will be submitted to the Chief Officer's Group on 5 October 2009, and will subsequently be provided to the HMle Inspection Team on 26 October 2009;

- (ii) information from the Assessing Risks and Needs Action Plan, the Baby P Action Plan and other tasks allocated to the Sub-group from the Annual Report and Business Plan, recommendations from HMIE Inspection Report and Significant Case Reviews had been collated into a master plan and progress with the actions was charted at each Sub-group meeting;
- (iii) a 3 month pilot in the Cumnock area designed to gain the views of children and their families who have experienced the child protection process commenced on 24 August 2009;
- (iv) the File Sampling Group had audited 9 initial investigation reports (CP1s) and 4 files and a full report would be circulated to the Child Protection Committee in due course highlighting areas of good practice and areas for development, together with an Action Plan;
- (v) a supervision check list had been drafted and remitted to the Practitioner's Group to determine whether a multi-agency supervision tool was viable; and
- (vi) the sub-group had been reviewing the provision of management information from each of the key agencies. A separate multi-agency group needed to be established to look at how this information could be provided, also taking account of the Pan Ayrshire Chairs/Lead Officers meetings that are looking at an Ayrshire data set for management information.

It was then agreed:

- (i) that a special meeting of the Child Protection Committee be convened towards the end of September 2009* for consideration of the first draft Multi-agency Self Evaluation report.

* **subsequently agreed 23 September 2009 at 1000 hours, venue to be confirmed; and**

- (ii) to note an issue for the File Sampling Group in respect of health case files. Where consent had not been given by the parent/child for the case file to be read by another agency, only the health representative, on the Sampling Group, could read the file.

TRAINING SUB-GROUP

6. The Committee heard Diane Burns on Training Sub-group activity and it was noted:
- (i) Maureen Nicol would take over Chairing of this Sub-group until a Co-ordinator (0.5 FTE) was in post; and
 - (ii) one training session had been cancelled due to the Training Officer's ill health. Members of the Training Sub-group had volunteered to facilitate the Multi-agency training day on 31 August 2009 to avoid its cancellation;
 - (iii) work had taken place to review the Multi-agency training day; and
 - (iv) Marlyn Nicol had developed a training session in relation to neonatal head injuries.

PRACTITIONERS SUB-GROUP

7. The Committee heard Diane Burns on the work of the Practitioners Sub-group and it was noted:

- (i) the Group had considered the Vulnerable Young Persons Protocol and was currently considering the Risk Management Protocol for Children and Young People with Problematic Sexual Behaviour;
- (ii) the Child Protection Newsletter would be ready for issue in September with a further edition in the new year, primarily available by email, with some printed copies for notice boards and offices;
- (iii) there had been preliminary discussion on the Child Protection Committee's annual conference to be held in February 2010;
- (iv) the Practitioners Forum had received a presentation on the Baby P Report and reviewed the pilot self evaluation proforma for children and young people and parents/carers and the supervision checklist developed by the Performance and Audit Sub-group; and
- (v) the next Practitioner's Forum would be held on 2 September to receive a presentation on the Child Protection Committee's work and a brief input on the forthcoming inspection. The key discussion item that this Forum would be supervision.

It was then agreed:

- (i) that the theme for the Child Protection Committee's annual conference would be risk assessment;
- (ii) to note with regard to the Practitioners Forum's concerns about learning partnerships, that the only change would be the removal of Children's Service Co-ordinator posts. A Learning Communities Framework was being developed for issue in due course; and
- (v) to develop a mechanism for the Child Protection Committee to feedback to the Practitioners Forum on issues that they had raised. Notwithstanding, Practitioners should not wait for feedback from the Child Protection Committee but could make direct contact with Services on urgent issues that required action.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION SUB-GROUP

9. The Committee heard Diane Burns on the work of the Public Engagement and Information Sub-group and it was noted:
- (i) a pilot online survey had been undertaken, to address the Child Protection Business Plan 2008/11 objective "further develop means of engagement with young people and seeking their views" (report circulated);
 - (ii) Community Safety had agreed to fund East Ayrshire's share of the costs associated with the West of Scotland Child Protection Committee Translation Project. Confirmation from other Authorities was awaited;
 - (iii) website hits for the period from April to end June 2009;
 - (iv) the Group were working to ensure that specified actions from the Business Plan were achieved, or being progressed, for the forthcoming inspection by HMIE;
 - (v) a draft communications strategy had been developed (circulated);

- (vi) a public information audit had been undertaken and would be repeated on an annual basis (report circulated); and
- (vii) adult information posters had been redistributed to public buildings.

It was then agreed that Members submit comments on the online survey, communication strategy, website hits and public information review direct to Dorothy McAvoy by week ending 11 September 2009.

Contact: .mcavoy@east-ayrshire.gov.uk.

STATISTICAL REPORT FOR PERIOD 1 APRIL TO 30 JUNE 2009

10. The Committee heard Diane Burns on child protection activity in East Ayrshire for the period from 1 April to 30 June 2009 and it was agreed:
- (i) to note that discussions were ongoing to develop an agreed data set for the 3 Ayrshire Authorities;
 - (ii) to note that during the period, there had been a significant reduction in children on the register. This included 2 large sibling groups. Other possible contributing factors were the impact of the Girfec Group and Initial Response Teams, the significant increase in Social Work staffing and earlier interventions/good practice. More detailed analysis of the statistics, backed up by evidence, was required to inform the Committee's understanding of statistical trends;
 - (iii) to note that this quarter had seen a return to the previous pattern of physical neglect being the largest category of investigations. In the last quarter there had been a deviation from the norm when physical injury accounted for 52% of referrals. Prior to this, physical neglect had consistently accounted for the highest number of referrals;
 - (iv) to note SCRA's quarterly statistical report;
 - (v) that additional statistical information from SCRA on trends would be of value to the Committee, however SCRA currently did not have the capacity to make this available;
 - (vi) that SCRA be represented at the next meeting of the Performance and Audit Sub-group to review what parts of their report were of use to the Committee; and
 - (vii) to note that fuller statistical information was available on SCRA's website.

INSPECTION CO-ORDINATION GROUP

11. Diane Burns reported on the work of the Inspection Co-ordination Group and it was noted:
- (i) the pre inspection return had been submitted to HMIE;
 - (ii) a sample of 33 cases had been selected for review by HMIE. Information had been emailed to agencies who were required to identify key people involved with the cases;
 - (iii) Emma McWilliams, Lead Inspector and Len McConnell, Depute Inspector would provide a pre inspection briefing to the Chief Officers' Group on 1

September 2009. This would be followed by a briefing for the Inspection Co-ordination Group;

- (iv) staff briefings would take place at the beginning of October;
- (v) self evaluation was key to this inspection; and
- (vi) good practice examples were being considered by the Group that could be highlighted to HMIE.

SIGNIFICANT CASE REVIEW CHILD A (2007)

12. It was noted that the Lead Officer of the Review Group in respect of Child A (2007) had reported the findings and recommendations to the Chief Officer Group.

An action plan has been drafted, however further work is taking place to coordinate the action plan relating to significant case reviews, and to ensure dissemination of key learning.

DEVELOPMENT DAY

13. It was noted that the Child Protection Committee Development Day had taken place on 22 June 2009 to review the Constitution and the vision of the Child Protection Committee.

It was agreed:

- (i) to approve the revised vision statement "Working Together to Keep our Children and Young People Safe";
- (ii) to retain the existing logo as a clear trademark for the Committee's work;
- (iii) that discussion on the Constitution be carried forward to the next meeting of the Child Protection Committee; and
- (iv) to note that a further development day would be held jointly with the Chief Officers' Group on 31 August 2009, at which consideration would be given to the Business Plan.

NATIONAL PROPOSAL FOR TRANSFER OF CHILDREN'S RECORDS ACROSS AUTHORITIES – GENERAL PRINCIPLES

14. It was agreed:

- (i) to support the general principles for the transfer of children's records across Authorities in Scotland to promote consistency across the Country; and
- (ii) that further consideration be given to local implications arising from the national proposals.

RISK MANAGEMENT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH PROBLEM SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS

15. It was agreed that Members forward comments on the proposed guidance to Diane Burns;

Contact: diane.burns@east-ayrshire.gov.uk.

INTER-AGENCY STAFF GUIDANCE FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK OF SIGNIFICANT HARM

16. It was agreed:
- (i) that a group of Practitioners be established to look at the national proposal for the communication and risk strategy for young people who could present a high risk to public safety whilst accommodated outwith their home area;
 - (ii) this matter was linked to risk management for children and young people with problem sexual behaviours (paragraph 15 above);
 - (iii) that a Sub-group be established to consider both matters; and
 - (iv) that Members contact Diane Burns direct regarding representation on the above Group.

CHILD PROTECTION ORDERS GRANTED IN EAST AYRSHIRE IN 2008

17. It was agreed that this matter be carried forward to the next meeting of the Child Protection Committee and that Jaine Best be invited to attend.

SIGNIFICANT CASE REVIEW: BRANDON LEE MUIR

18. It was agreed to remit the Significant Case Review to the Performance and Audit Sub-group for action.

INTERIM MULTI-AGENCY GUIDANCE: NON-DISCLOSURE OF PLACE OF RESIDENCE OR WHEREABOUTS

19. It was agreed that this matter be carried forward to the next meeting of the Child Protection Committee.

INFORMATION ITEMS

20. The Committee received the undernoted agenda items for information:
- (i) East Ayrshire Chief Officers' Group (Child, Adult and Public Protection Arrangements) – Minutes of meeting held on 2 June 2009;
 - (ii) Adult Support and Protection Implementation Committee – Minutes of meeting held on 9 June 2009;
 - (iii) Draft Children's Hearings (Scotland) Bill, explanatory notes prepared by the Scottish Government and an overview by SCRA on the proposed programme of reform for the Children's Hearings System;
 - (iv) South West Scotland CJA, MAPPA, SOG – Minutes of meeting held on 13 May 2009;
 - (v) PR Action Plan for Social Work Services – report submitted to Cabinet on 19 August 2009 seeking approval of a PR Action Plan for Social Work Services;
 - (vi) In Care Survivors – Information leaflet on the In Care Survivors Service Scotland
 - (vii) Girfec Letter – correspondence dated 7 July 2009 from Boyd McAdam, Head of Girfec Team, Scottish Government;

- (viii) Anne Ritchie withdrawal – correspondence dated 1 July 2009 from Anne Ritchie intimating her withdrawal from the Child Protection Committee;
- (ix) Ayrshire Wide Work - report dated 18 August 2009 by the Chair of the Child Protection Committee on work being undertaken on an Ayrshire-wide basis;
- (x) HMIE Inspection Reports (previously circulated);
- (xi) National Chairs Minutes (previously circulated);
- (xii) West of Scotland Minutes (previously circulated);
- (xiii) NSPCC – correspondence dated 14 May 2009 from the Head of Research, NSPCC on their Child Safety Survey; and
- (xiv) Gambling Act – correspondence dated 14 July 2009 on an Application for a Gambling License.

The meeting terminated at 1730 hours.