

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE CHIEF OFFICERS' GROUP**

#### **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 13 MARCH 2006 AT 1430 HOURS IN THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S CONFERENCE ROOM, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK**

**PRESENT:** Fiona Lees, Chief Executive, East Ayrshire Council; Chief Superintendent Hamish Cormack, Superintendent Elizabeth Weir and Detective Inspector Neil Robertson, Strathclyde Police; Wai Yin Hatton, Chief Executive, Ayrshire & Arran Health Board; Liz Moore, Lead Director (Child Protection), Ayrshire & Arran Primary Care Trust; Elizabeth Morton, Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support; John Mulgrew, Executive Director of Educational and Social Services; and Sally Ann Kelly, Senior Manager, Children and Families and Criminal Justice, all East Ayrshire Council.

**ATTENDING:** Gillian Hamilton, Administrative Officer.

**APOLOGIES:** Jackie Donnelly, Executive Head of Social Work, East Ayrshire Council, and Graham Short, Head of Service, East Ayrshire Council.

**CHAIR:** Fiona Lees, Chief Executive, East Ayrshire Council (Chair).

### **MINUTES**

#### **EAST AYRSHIRE CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE CHIEF OFFICERS' GROUP**

1. There were submitted and approved as a correct record, minutes of the previous meeting of the Chief Officers' Group held on 4 November 2005 (circulated).

### **MATTERS ARISING**

#### **Review of Multi-Agency Child Protection Procedures**

- (i) It was noted that the Child Protection Committee would consider whether to be included in the review of the West of Scotland Procedures, which would be conducted on behalf of West of Scotland Authorities. Meantime, there was a requirement for specific practice notes, in relation to areas of Child Protection work to be developed and circulated within East Ayrshire as a matter of priority. It was agreed to support both actions.

#### **Freedom of Information Publication Arrangements**

- (ii) It was noted that following the review by the Council's Legal Services of publication arrangements for the Child Protection Committee and Chief Officers' Group, reports and minutes would be made public.

#### **Review of Registered Sex Offenders**

- (iii) It was noted that the audit by Strathclyde Police was completed. A briefing note on the findings was circulated to Chief Officers. It had been found that a number of cases were incorrectly scored for risk, and some had since moved up a level. Following a review of the risk management file, a number of recommendations had been implemented within the Force.

Given this review and the use of the new monitoring criteria and categories, there was now disparity in categorisation of offenders between Strathclyde Police and the Council, which matter would be reviewed to ensure that the same assessment tool was henceforth utilised by both organisations.

Chief Officers would review jointly the action plan emerging from the audit.

### **Strategic Plan – East Ayrshire Child Protection Committee 2005 - 2006**

- (iv) It was noted that the strategic plan required to be signed off at the next meeting.

### **Protection Logo**

- (v) It was noted that following agreement by the Child Protection Committee, arrangements had been made for local schools' involvement in designing a Child Protection logo, with 20 entries subsequently received. The entries would be judged during April 2006 by a joint panel involving representatives from Strathclyde Police, the Council and Ayrshire and Arran Health Board.

### **Practitioners Sub Group**

- (vi) It was noted that an inter-agency practice improvement plan was being prepared by the Practitioners Forum. This would be incorporated into both the strategic plan and self evaluation exercise.

## **EAST AYRSHIRE CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE**

2. There were submitted for information and noted minutes of the meeting of East Ayrshire Child Protection Committee held on 13 January 2006 (circulated).

### **CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING REPORT**

3. There was submitted a report dated 1 March 2006 (circulated) by the Chair of the Child Protection Committee which provided an update on the work of the Training Sub Group.

A summary of Child Protection Training inputs recorded for 2003-2005 was circulated, and the Group noted the proposal of the Child Protection Committee that consultants be appointed to undertake a base-line training needs analysis exercise, leading to development of a clear inter-agency training plan. However, this was not supported by the Group at this time.

In addition to the training inputs recorded, every police officer had participated in basic awareness raising training, and within Ayrshire and Arran Primary Care Trust this would be incorporated into training for student nurses.

Within the Council, EAGER was the recognised tool for identification and addressing of training needs. A strategic approach was required to raise awareness within decentralised work groups, whose duties involved working in family homes.

Currently Turning Point and other voluntary organisations were missing from specialist training arrangements.

It was generally agreed that training provision was needed on two levels; on a strategic level to assist culture change within staff groups in a position to pass on concerns and basic signs and symptoms (Tier 1); and specialist training for staff who

specifically worked with children and families, had lead roles in preventative and investigative work and were involved in the management of Child Protection (Tiers 2-4).

The Group was of the view that training of all staff should be mandatory recognising that the greatest volume of training would be at Tier 1 level.

It was also noted that the Child Protection Committee proposed that suitable external agencies be identified and approached with a view to commissioning Tier 1 basic awareness training, following completion of the above needs analysis, only after having determined that this could not, in fact, be provided in-house.

All partners required to produce a training base-line position statement.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that the training inputs table and the four tiered approach to Child Protection Training appended to the report be incorporated into a single table, also identifying relevant staff groups. This exercise would be undertaken by the Training Sub Group;
- (ii) that the above table be circulated to the Council's Corporate Management Team, to be populated with staff groups;
- (iii) that meantime, external consultants not be commissioned either for the base-line training needs analysis exercise, or for the delivery of basic awareness training;
- (iv) that the Child Protection Committee report back on options to effectively develop and deliver training on the proposed modules for training;
- (v) that the Child Protection Committee produce a draft strategic plan for Child Protection Training by July 2006; and
- (vi) otherwise, to note the contents of the report.

The Chief Executive and Executive Director of Educational and Social Services, East Ayrshire Council left the meeting at this point, and the Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Corporate Support, East Ayrshire Council took the Chair.

#### **PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT SUB GROUP – SELF EVALUATION EXERCISE**

4. There was submitted a report dated 1 March 2006 (circulated) by the Chair of the Child Protection Committee which provided information about the work of the Performance and Audit Sub Group in relation to self evaluation.

The group noted that the Performance and Audit Sub Group recently held a "Taking a Broader Look" Seminar, the purpose of which was to review the Child Protection quality indicators in order to facilitate more focussed evaluation, to introduce practitioners to the quality indicators and to identify potential areas of good practice, or alternatively, gaps in services.

The Group noted that the Child Protection Committee, following the Seminar, had prioritised quality indicators 3.2, information sharing and recording and 4.3, participation of children, young people, families and other relevant people in policy development, for more focussed attention in the first instance, these having received the poorest ratings. However, the Chief Officers' Group was also concerned about

the rating received in respect of quality indicator 5, strategic leadership and in particular, how the ratings were arrived at.

Having heard an explanation on the above and noted that the ratings were entirely impressionistic, as opposed to evidence based, that the exercise rather than actual self assessment, should be viewed as a pilot for inspection by HMIE to highlight, amongst other things, potential weaknesses in the process of self evaluation, and that participants were not qualified to respond to some of the questions put,

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the context of the report, which was to provide feedback on an initial exercise, involving a small number of largely unqualified participants, with no evidence to back up the scores, but which gave clues as to how to proceed with self assessment and where to look for evidence;
- (ii) that lessons could therefore be learned from the exercise in terms of the process involved in self evaluation;
- (iii) to note that all of the quality indicators would be reviewed during the course of the year, irrespective of rating;
- (iv) to approve moving to the next stage in the self evaluation of Child Protection Services, and that strategic leadership be added to the quality indicators prioritised by the Child Protection Committee for more focussed attention;
- (v) that the Performance and Audit Sub Group submit an update on progress at the next Chief Officers' meeting, detailing methodology and target group; and
- (vi) otherwise, to note the report.

#### **PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT SUB GROUP – PREPARATION FOR INSPECTION**

5. There was submitted a report dated 1 March 2006 (circulated) by the Chair of the Child Protection Committee which informed on the development of a draft inspection protocol and draft templates to support information gathering for the forthcoming Child Protection Inspection, and provided the group with details of the tool developed to support the Child Protection Multi-Agency Inspection Self Evaluation Process.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to endorse the introduction of the inspection protocol and templates detailed in the report;
- (ii) to include in the self evaluation pro-formas, a column for evidence gathered; and
- (iii) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

#### **CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE PRACTITIONERS FORUM**

6. There was submitted a report dated 1 March 2006 (circulated) by the Chair of the Child Protection Committee which provided an update on the work of the Practitioners Forum.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to remit the Child Protection Committee to review funding issues for meetings of the Practitioners Forum;

- (ii) that the Chief Officers' Group receive updates on issues arising from the Practitioners Forum; and
- (iii) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

#### **EAST AYRSHIRE CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE STRATEGIC PLAN 2006 - 2007**

7. There was submitted a report dated 1 March 2006 (circulated) by the Chair of the Child Protection Committee which informed on the development of the Child Protection Committee Strategic Plan for the year 2006 – 2007.

It was agreed:-

- (ii) that the updated strategic plan for 2005-2006 be extended to cover 2006-2007;
- (ii) that the strategic plan be circulated to Chief Officers for comment prior to submission to the Scottish Executive, as part of the integrated Children's Services planning requirement, and published no later than the end of June 2006; and
- (iii) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

#### **SOCIAL WORK INSPECTION AGENCY REPORT: INSPECTION INTO THE CARE AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN EILEAN SIAR**

8. There was submitted a report dated 1 March 2006 (circulated) by the Chair of the Child Protection Committee which informed of the current position in East Ayrshire in relation to the recommendations of the Social Work Inspection Agency (SWIA) report on the care and protection of children in Eilean Siar and the Scottish Executive's response to these recommendations; detailed the position in East Ayrshire in relation to the report recommendations; and highlighted the main areas of work that needed to be completed in 2006 to satisfy all of the recommendations.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that a timeframe for works in progress be incorporated into subsequent reports on this matter;
- (ii) to remit the Child Protection Committee to review arrangements for tracking the children of travellers. This matter had been reviewed corporately by Strathclyde Police, the details of which would be shared with the Child Protection Committee; and
- (iii) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

#### **OUTCOMES FROM SEX OFFENDERS AUDIT – EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

9. There was submitted a report dated 1 March 2006 (circulated) by the Chair of the Child Protection Committee which advised on the analysis of the information from the audit on sex offenders conducted by East Ayrshire Council staff in conjunction with Strathclyde Police, Offender Assessment Unit in August 2005.

It was agreed:-

- (i) that a consolidated action plan be submitted to the Chief Officers' Group and Child Protection Committee; and

- (ii) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

### **DOMESTIC ABUSE**

- 10.** A document on this matter was circulated by Strathclyde Police to those in attendance and noted.

The meeting terminated at 1605 hours.