

Ayshe Simsek

08 April 2011

To: All Members of the Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice
Advisory Committee

Dear Member,

Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Advisory Committee - Monday,
11th April, 2011

I attach a copy of the following minutes for the above-mentioned meeting
which were not available at the time of collation of the agenda:

4. MINUTES (PAGES 1 - 12)

To consider the minutes of the Joint meeting with Corporate Parenting on
the 17 March 2011.

To consider for information purposes the minutes of the Corporate
Parenting committee on the 17th March.

Yours sincerely

Ayshe Simsek
Principal Committee Co-ordinator
0208 489 2929

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**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, 17 MARCH 2011**

Councillors Allison, Engert, Peacock, Reith (Chair), Stennett and Watson

Apologies Councillor Alexander

Also Present: Councillor Solomon, Debbie Haith, Chris Chalmers, Attracta Craig, Wendy Tomlinson.

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION	ACTION BY
CPAC60	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (IF ANY)</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Alexander. Councillor Solomon attended the meeting in her place.</p>	
CPAC61	<p>URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>There were no items of urgent business submitted.</p>	
CPAC62	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>There were no declarations of interests submitted.</p>	
CPAC63	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on the 24th January 2011 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting.</p>	
CPAC64	<p>MATTERS ARISING</p> <p>Members of the Committee considered the matters arising report and noted the following:</p> <p>The Corporate Parenting Strategy This was due to be considered by the Scrutiny Panel, for Corporate Parenting, and would return to this Committee for final consideration on the 19th April 2011.</p> <p>Update on the Director of Children's and Young People's Service planned meeting with the Judiciary to discuss delays in court care proceedings. A briefing note from the Director of Children and Young people's service on his meeting with Judge Altman was attached for information.</p> <p>A report on the development work on dealing with issues of isolation faced by young people leaving care. This report would follow to Committee in April 19th 2011.</p>	<p>Debbie Haith</p> <p>Chris Chalmers</p>

**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, 17 MARCH 2011**

Regular Update on North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium

The Committee noted that the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium had met last week and they had agreed to look at their development plans for the next financial year. This would include: exploring how the boroughs can share foster carers, share training opportunities for foster carers, examine the differences in allowances for Foster care. The Committee noted that there was a dedicated post working for the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium. This post holder would, among other work duties, be examining the spend of each member borough on Foster care providers and how a joint procurement process could be delivered. A work programme for the Consortium would be ready for consideration by this Committee after May 2011.

Clerk

It was noted that the North London Adoption and Fostering consortium website routed visitors to the Council's webpage for fostering and that this was still showing out of date information. It was agreed that the Head of Children's Commissioning and Placements consider the statistical information held and update as required.

Wendy Tomlinson

The Committee enquired about the Council's response to the Government's new initiative on Adoption which indicated allowing children to be based with families not from their same ethnic background. The Committee were advised that the initiative still advocated the best interest of the child as a priority which was what the Council followed in decision making on adoption. Placing a child with the same ethnic family was part of considering the best interests of the child and it could sometimes be the case that there were not exact racial matches made when choosing parents for adopted children.

CPAC attending a Young and in Care Council - It was noted that a joint meeting between the Corporate Parenting Committee and the Young and in Care Council would be progressed.

Totals Respect Training -The Committee noted that the weekend dates for the Total Respect training were not going ahead. The previously arranged training dates of the 19th and 20th April with a follow up session on the 02 August were available for members of the Committee to participate in.

All to note

Registration certificate for manager at Coppetts Road .The Committee were informed that there was frequent contact with OFSTED to ensure that they had received and were considering the necessary information required to issue the registration certificate for the Manager at Coppetts Road Children's Home. The interview process for the manager would be initiated once authorisation had been given by OFSTED.

All to note

**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, 17 MARCH 2011**

	<p>Items for the next meeting The Committee agreed that the senior designated Children in Care Nurse be invited to this meeting and the Independent Review Officer would report on work completed on stability of placements. The Committee would also consider the standing items on Performance, Regulation 33 visits, and Coppetts Road Children's Home.</p>	Clerk
CPAC65	<p>SAFEGUARDING LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, AND CARE LEAVERS WHEN SUPPORTING AND ENABLING THEM TO ACCESS INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY</p> <p>The Committee received a report on the key issues being considered in the development of a strategy for safeguarding looked after children, young people and care leavers when supporting and enabling them to access IT and communication technology. It was explained to the Committee that, when considering the access to information networks, this was not solely about controlling access within the home but that it was more about creating external knowledge and awareness among carers and parents about these systems and encouraging personal safety of the users. The Deputy Director for Children and Families set out the initial principles of the strategy which were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and young people have the opportunity to use ICT to enhance their learning opportunities, develop ICT skills and communicate in the virtual environment • Carers provided opportunities to develop their own knowledge and skills in ICT so that they are better able to monitor use of ICT by young people and support their use of it. • There was the expectation from the Council that Service providers will need to demonstrate that they can support appropriate access to ICT and have a clear e – safety policy which was more advanced than the standard security programmes and understandable to carers and children. • Haringey managed services would need to have local e- safety policies which were communicated effectively to foster carers and other support services that were contracted and work with children and young people in care. These policies would need to be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they responded to changes in technology and are able to safeguard users. <p>Members commented on the initial work completed on the strategy, and sought clarity on the position of schools in this. The Committee advised that it would be worthwhile reminding staff and teachers, of looked after children, of the additional risks attached to vulnerable children and young people accessing social networking sites. It was agreed that this safeguarding element, of access to information technology, be incorporated in the Virtual School policy.</p>	Attracta Craig

**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, 17 MARCH 2011**

	<p>Members remarked on the disparity between section 3 and 4 of the report. Section 3 which communicated that looked after children living in residential settings were not permitted access to technology in their private rooms but in section 4, which provided guidance for Foster carers there was no mention of IT access for children being open or private. It was felt to be a need for the strategy to also keep in mind the mobile access to technology which children and young people in care may have. In response to these points, the Committee were advised that the strategy was only concerned with information technology which is owned or managed by the Council and the Committee agreed that the strategy should make this more explicit. There were however broader issues of how looked after children and young people are made aware of the dangers of internet social networking sites and a need to develop their understanding of what were safe and unsafe situations, particularly with the increased use of mobile technology where there was not a fixed control over.</p> <p>In relation to monitoring the use of mobile information technology as communicated in section 4.1.5, there was a need to also apply this rule to the residential working practices. This was because there were occasions when staff at residential settings would be taking care of the belongings of children and young people living there.</p> <p>The Committee advised that, when computer equipment was provided to foster carers for use by the children and young people in their care, clarification should be sought on their skills and knowledge of IT and the internet to ascertain any relevant training needs.</p> <p>The Committee also commented that the implementation of the strategy would be as important as the strategy itself. They recommended that the training provided to staff should be kept fully up to date with the changes in technology continually factored and the training adapted. Foster carers and staff at residential settings should be made to feel that they are confident and understanding of the uses of information technology and what Children and young people can and cannot access. Also they should feel they are able to provide advice to children and young people on what are and are not safe situations to be when online.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that the forthcoming updated report should clearly distinguish the rules and principles that will be relevant to access to fixed computer technology and mobile technology. It was noted that there would be further consultation with foster carers, residential staff and young care leavers and a final version of the report to return to Committee at a forthcoming meeting.</p>	<p>Debbie Haith</p> <p>Debbie Haith</p> <p>Debbie Haith</p> <p>Debbie Haith</p> <p>Debbie Haith</p>
CPAC66	<p>ASSESSMENT OF HARINGEY'S PROGRESS WITH THE LONDON PLEDGE</p> <p>The Committee noted that the London Pledge was drawn up in 2008, and adopted by the Children's Trust, to ensure that children and young</p>	

**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, 17 MARCH 2011**

people in care across London had equal access to the same range of key services and support where they live, go to school, or access employment or training opportunities in London. The report set out the pledge principles and detailed how the Council were meeting these promises. The achievements in the overarching areas were: promises that were made to young people were clear, specialist looked after children nurse team established, and a complaints procedure for looked after children and young people.

When considering the health principles of the pledge, the Committee were informed that a multi agency forum had been established to address health, education and placements needs of LAC. Individual health assessments were undertaken by Doctors and follow up reviews completed by a designated Children in Care Nurse, Judy Mace, who was also due to attend the next Committee meeting of the Committee on the 19th April .The joint work of the Council with Tailstock Centre was pointed to as well as the signposting of children and young people to sexual health services as part of this pledge. An enquiry was made on the attendance of young people at their healthcare meetings and it was reported that, as these meetings were not compulsory, it was usual for young people in care to sometimes not attend these meetings. In relation to health visits to LAC outside of the borough, it was noted that the designated CiC nurse from the borough would travel to outside borough locations to visit CiC with weekend visits also completed when needed. The Committee agreed that the complaints procedure for children in care should be made available and published online as previously requested.

Chris
Chalmers

In the stay safe section of promises to young people, the Committee noted that young people will be consulted on their pathway plans. There would be contact and liaison, where needed, with the Youth Offending Service in the young persons new placement area.

The provisions of the Virtual School were highlighted in the section dealing with enjoy and achieve. In particular their work on intervention at critical learning stages to ensure that children go onto achieve between the ages of 16-19. The 18 projects, which assist young people leaving care, also helped young people access University. The Committee noted that there were 44 care leavers attending University. The Committee enquired about the support services to them and advised that there were potentially more bursaries available in future for access to with the Frank Butler trust referred to as a potential funding source. The Committee were advised that the Council would issue looked after children with a £2000 bursary that are attending University. There was a team which actively worked on accessing all potential funding sources to offer to care leavers and to improve the attraction of going to University.

In regards to encouraging a positive contribution in the community, activities relating to this pledge were well established with a range of activities for involving young people who included working with Tottenham Hotspur. The Council were promoting the independence of

**MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, 17 MARCH 2011**

	<p>care leavers with provision of 50 housing units each year .Children and young people in care would also have a savings account opened for them by the Council. In relation to utilising access to leisure services, it was noted that within the foster carer's allowance, there was allocation for leisure activities which allowed for the young person to pick the activities they were most interested in.</p> <p>The Committee considered the views of the Young and in Care Council on how they saw the progression with the promises made in the pledge. Following the tone and content of their response, the key message was that the Council needed to work harder on explaining how they were considering their views and what changes in services and working practices had occurred as a result of their views. The directorate gave great emphasis to listening and relating to children and young people. It was clear that there would need to be a wider representation of youth at various meetings, events and consultations. There was a need to communicate more effectively to children and young people in care the pledge and its promises regarding them so that they were more aware of them. The Committee recommended that the communication with children and young people in care should be not be in a single format but completed in an array of ways to ensure that they were fully aware of the importance placed by the Council on obtaining their views. This would also aid furthering their understanding on what services were working for them. The Committee also suggested that a further version of the Corporate Parenting Strategy could be completed which was more accessible to children and young people in care.</p>	<p>Chris Chalmers</p> <p>Debbie Haith</p>
CPAC67	<p>PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT : CHILDREN AND FAMILIES</p> <p>The Committee noted the performance report and were asked to raise any concerns by email to the Deputy Director of Children's and Families.</p>	All to note
CPAC68	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>The next meeting was on Tuesday April 19th 2011 at 6.30pm. Councillor Peacock's apologies were noted for this meeting.</p>	

Cllr Lorna Reith

Chair

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE & CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PRACTICE COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, 17 MARCH 2011**

Councillors Allison, Amin, Corrick, Engert, Hare, Peacock, Reith(Chair), Rice, Stennett and Watson

Apologies Councillor Davies, Alexander, and McNamara

Also Present: Councillor Solomon, Peter Lewis, Debbie Haith, Marion Wheeler, Sylvia Chew, Iain Lowe, Chris Chalmers, Attracta Craig,

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION	ACTON BY
JCCPSC 1	APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR The Chair of Corporate Parenting Committee and Chair of the Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee had discussions, outside the meeting, regarding the appointment of the Chair for these Joint meetings and had agreed that they would alternate this responsibility. The Chair of the Corporate Parenting Committee would begin this arrangement by chairing this first Joint meeting between these two Cabinet Advisory bodies.	All to note
JCCPSC 2	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST None were declared.	
JCCPSC 3	COURT AND LEGAL PROCESS A briefing was provided to the Members of the Corporate Parenting Committee and Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice on how children's social care cases are managed through the family courts. The Joint Committee noted that there were: currently 600 looked after children, over 300 children subject to Child protection plans and also over 300 children that were the subject of 156 court proceedings. It was noted that, in the past 18 months, the number of proceedings had increased by over 17%. This had significant cost implications for the Council as the cost per set of proceedings was £4825. The circumstances and procedures for application to court for care and supervision orders were set out in the report. It was explained to the Joint Committee, that a care order would provide the Local Authority with parental responsibility for a child or young person, parents would not lose their parental responsibility and the emphasis was that the local authority would work in partnership with the parents. The thresholds for meeting a care order requirement, which the Local Authority must evidence, were outlined along with the main principles underlying court case management and the overriding objective in public law	

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE & CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PRACTICE COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, 17 MARCH 2011**

proceedings. There was also information on the duties which the courts and the Local Authority had in regard to the timetable for the Child. These guidelines were to ensure that there was due regard given to the significant steps in a child's life, these would include social, health and educational steps. There was also an update on the action being taken by the Local Authority to reduce the delays in the court care proceedings; this included having a dedicated team which had responsibility for children in care proceedings. There were currently proposals for external local performance improvement groups that would be multi agency and linked to local courts to provide a forum to deal with issues which arise locally such as delays in proceedings.

Members sought an understanding on the length of care proceedings, and whether these delays were being experienced solely by the Council. Members asked how the Local Authority could influence the court process to ensure that the children/young people, subject to the court care proceedings, faced as minimal amount of disruption and upheaval as possible. It was noted that the Director of Children and Young People's has been involved in discussions with the Greater London Family Panel (all judges and magistrates across London hearing care cases) and their chair (and Lead Judge for London) HHJ Altman. This has culminated in the Director being invited to join the London Family Justice Panel. This Panel, chaired by HHJ Altman, is the practice body for all London care courts where practice is monitored and new approaches developed to try and improve the work of the courts. The Panel meets quarterly and the Director will join the Panel for the first time in June 2011, though he is involved in work prior to those reviewing proposals by the Panel to the Family Justice Review being undertaken by the Government. The aim of this participation was to be in key position to communicate with principal legal counterparts the impact of delayed care proceedings and be in position to expedite them. There had already been preliminary discussions on reducing the number of court appearances. It was noted that some cases from Haringey would last over 60 weeks. The service was seeking to reduce this to at least 40 weeks. The Committee noted the causes of delays which were the number of independent expert witnesses statements being required and residential assessments. The high number of cases coupled with the delays to proceedings due to requests for extra information was also placing an increased pressure on support services for Children.

In terms of the Local Authority's role in the court process and the submission of evidence, it was noted that it could be more straightforward for the courts to consider evidence which showed physical neglect to a child with reports and photographic evidence, however it could be challenging to prove the detrimental impact of neglect on a child. Although photographic evidence of living conditions and additional reports provided by local authorities was considered, it was often the case that external expert evidence was also again requested. The Committee were assured that the Council's management of cases through the court process was seen to be paramount. The Joint Committee learned that court reports are seen by managers and

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE & CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PRACTICE COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, 17 MARCH 2011**

	<p>Legal Services before submission. The care plan for the child in question would need to be signed off by the Head of Service. The Committee were reminded that the Children's service had been re-organised to enable the formation of a team dedicated to dealing with children's social care proceedings. This team work closely with legal and has a high level of expertise and skill in working with the Court process.</p> <p>The information provided was noted by the Committee.</p>	
<p>JCCPSP 4</p>	<p>SAFEGUARDING AND SUPPORT</p> <p>The independent member of the Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee provided the Committee with information on Section 47 of the Children's Act 1989 which set out the regulatory framework which Local authorities were obliged to follow for safeguarding children. There then followed a report on the Safeguarding and Support service which puts into practice these obligations. It was noted that the Safeguarding and Support team is separate to the First Response and Children in Care teams and delivers services to the most vulnerable in the borough. This service will be responsible for children that are subject to Child Protection Plans, Children in Need Plans and Supervision Orders. It was noted that there were 326 children and young people subject to Child Protection plans; this was an increase of 47% from two years ago. There were 141 children under 5 subject to CP Plans in the borough and this was an increase of 50% from Feb 2009. These increases were not dissimilar to those seen by other boroughs.</p> <p>The report set out the procedures and functions followed for Child Protection Conferences, and the Committee noted that according to London Safeguarding Procedures children and young people subject to these plans should be seen every 6 weeks. The Council were ensuring that children were seen every 4 weeks and looking to reduce this further to visits every two weeks. The report went onto explain the duties followed by Social Workers in Child Protection Plans and the additional role of the Safeguarding Panel. It was noted that there were 253 children and young people as at 28 February subject to child protection plans. Although there was no definitive time for a child or young person being subject to a child protection plan, key factors were the timing of services provided and the family's engagement with the process.</p> <p>The Committee were advised that there were 350 children/young people on Children in Need Plans. These children did not meet the criteria for a section 47 safeguarding investigation but would meet the criteria to receive a service from the Children's Social Care through Haringey's Consortium of Need and Intervention.</p> <p>Following the Baby Peter case, understanding was sought by the Joint Committee of the improvements in safeguarding in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Worker numbers and case loads 	

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE & CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PRACTICE COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, 17 MARCH 2011**

- Supervision of Social Workers
- Sharing of Information among agencies
- Legal case work
- Auditing

The Joint Committee noted that there was a significant increase in the number of Social Workers and managers in the service with a majority of them Haringey employees which made a difference to the stability and efficiency of the service. The improvements in information sharing were easily apparent by the knowledge held by Social Workers of the contact points in service areas such as Adults and Housing.

A key issue, which was heavily emphasised by the service, was having a full knowledge of the visitors and residents to a child's home. The audits undertaken on child protection plans would also check the frequency of the visits made to a child's home. The Committee were advised that these audits were designed to identify any issues with working practices and gain an understanding of the themes emerging.

The supervision of Social Workers and practitioners and level of challenge to their work was felt to be correct. The quality working practices of the current Social Workers meant that they were more capable of dealing with challenging families. There had been training sessions around authoritative practices and ensuring that Social Workers were fully aware of the legal responsibilities around their roles. The relationship between Children's Services and Legal was reported to be very good with advice provided at the right time. There was also casework planning meetings between Children's services and Legal to challenge and scrutinise the process. There were good comments noted from new Social Workers on the manageable caseloads.

In regards to families understanding their role in the child protection plan and the expectations of them, Social Workers were trained to be clear in writing in the plan what changes in behaviour were needed from the family. In those cases, where there were issues of neglect, and the circumstances had not changed after a specified period, there would be a child protection conference to agree that care proceedings could be taken forward, this would be either through a legal order or by the family's consent.

Members asked about the proposal to having fortnightly visits to children on child protection plans and whether this would create additional work pressures for Social Workers in the service. In response it was felt, with the improvements made by the service, this would be achievable.

Members enquired about the process after a child/young person ceases to be the subject of a child protection plan and were advised that families are sign posted to universal services. It was noted that information on children and families, that have been subject to child protection plans and children in need plans, is required to be kept on record by the service for the positive reasons, that in the event the family require

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE & CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PRACTICE COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, 17 MARCH 2011**

	<p>more support in the future, there is an understanding of their dynamics . This information may also be required in later years or be required by another borough if the family are moving and require support or signposting to relevant services. There would also be efforts made to obtain the family's views after the plan has ceased to counter against the feelings of stigma at having been the subject of a Child Protection Plan.</p> <p>In relation to Children in Need plans, more clarity was sought on the time period of the plans and the types of issues that would necessitate this plan as opposed to a Common assessment Framework (CAF). It was explained that some families will need a co-ordinated approach to accessing universal services as sign posting will not be sufficient. Therefore a Social worker will be assigned to co-ordinate this access for the family.</p> <p>The report and information received was noted by the committee</p>	
<p>JCCPSP 5</p>	<p>EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <p>That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of the items below as they contain exempt information as defined in section 100a of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by section 12a of the Local Government Act 1985); paras 1&2; namely information relating to any individual, and information likely to reveal the identity of an individual.</p>	
<p>JCCPSP 6</p>	<p>ANALYSIS OF A SAMPLE OF CHILD PROTECTION CASES</p> <p>The independent member of the Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee introduced the report which accompanied the previous report on the Safeguarding and Support services and specifically focused on Child Protection Plans, their challenges and issues. The independent member had examined a small sample of 15 cases starting with referrals and assessment undertaken in the first week of November, examining their case notes in February and looking at their outcomes in the first week of March.</p> <p>The Committee noted and discussed the findings of this qualitative research. It was noted that six of the 15 cases were closed or planned to be closed. Two of the children had a Child in Need plan, two children were in the care system. The remaining 5 children had good child protection plans in place. There was concern communicated about the timescales for holding Initial Child Protection Conferences which were required within 15 working days of strategy discussions and would have helped agencies come to a quicker conclusion on the child's needs. This was attributed to pressures on the conference timetable as the need for an ICPC can only be identified at the end of strategy discussions and therefore arrangements for the conference initiated after this time. It was also important to note, the timing of the audit, which was the lead up to</p>	

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE & CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PRACTICE COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, 17 MARCH 2011**

	<p>the OFSTED inspection and also the seasonal time of year for staff leave. There had been previous independent audits commissioned by the Deputy Leader on adherence of the service to quality and timing of assessments which showed good practices in place. These key service area audits had also looked at the initial responses to a referral, strategy discussions and if the child had been seen alone. Because of the good improvement of the service, the audits were now concerned with examining practices in different parts of the services. The service itself also completed a high number of internal audits to continually monitor working practices and adherence to mandatory timescales and this could be an area of work which was reported on to the next Joint Committee meeting.</p> <p>Further to considering this agenda item, the Joint Committee members noted that Members enquiries related to children's services could be sent to Debbie Haith, Deputy Director for Children and Families.</p> <p>The Chair thanked officers for their attendance and contributions to the Joint meeting. It had been useful and worthwhile for the Committee to explore and discuss the areas of child protection which overlapped between the responsibilities of both Committees. Twice yearly meetings of the Corporate parenting Committee and Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee were planned and in the intervening periods the Committees would refer relevant issues to each other.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>All to note</p>
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Cllr Lorna Reith

Chair