



NOTICE OF MEETING

Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Advisory Committee

THURSDAY, 17TH DECEMBER, 2009 at 19:30 HRS - CIVIC CENTRE, HIGH ROAD,
WOOD GREEN, N22 8LE.

MEMBERS: Councillors Davies, Jones, Lister, Mallett and Oatway

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair will consider the admission of late items of urgent business. Late items will be considered under the agenda item they appear.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A member with a personal interest in a matter who attends a meeting of the authority at which the matter is being considered must disclose to that meeting the existence and nature of that interest at the commencement of the consideration, or when the interest becomes apparent.

A member with a personal interest in a matter also has a prejudicial interest in that matter if the interest is one which a member of the public with knowledge of the relevant facts would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the member's judgement of the public interest.

4. MINUTES (PAGES 1 - 4)

To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2009.

5. LEARNING FROM SERIOUS CASE REVIEWS (PAGES 5 - 16)

To receive a presentation on learning from serious case reviews.

6. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of Item 8 as it contains 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.

7. SERVICE USER FEEDBACK: OCTOBER 2009 (PAGES 17 - 34)

To provide an update report from the Independent Member on feedback from service users involved in the five referral cases the Committee were tracking forward and an accompanying action plan from the Service.

8. UPDATE ON CASE FILE QUALITY AUDITING

To provide an update on progress with the selection of referrals the Committee are tracking forward.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Date of next meeting: 26 January 2010.

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9 December 2009.

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PRACTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**TUESDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 2009**

Councillors Davies, Jones (Chair), Mallett and Oatway

Apologies Councillor Lister

Also Present: Sylvia Chew, Hilary Corrick, Mark Gurrey.

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION	ACTON BY
CSPPAC09	APOLOGIES Apologies were received from Cllr Lister.	
CSPPAC10	URGENT BUSINESS There were no items of urgent business.	
CSPPAC11	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST There were no declarations of interest.	
CSPPAC12	MINUTES RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 July 2009 be agreed as an accurate record.	
CSPPAC13	FORWARD PLAN RESOLVED: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the date of the next meeting be changed and a new mutually acceptable date circulated to Committee members. 	
CSPPAC14	ETHNICITY ANALYSIS FOR CHILDREN COMING INTO SOCIAL CARE The Committee received a report providing details of the ethnic breakdown of children entering and passing through the care system in Haringey, set within the context of national trends. Haringey data shows significant under-representation of referrals from white British and Irish and Asian children and over-representation from all other ethnic groups, in particular mixed ethnic origin children, who are additionally significantly more likely to become subject to a child protection plan. These over- and under-representations to a large extent reflect patterns observed on a national basis and with extensive research failing to provide a definitive explanation for the differences. In response to a request as to whether further sub division of ethnicity categories could be undertaken, the Committee were advised that this was likely to generate such small results as to be statistically insignificant.	

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	<p>RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the report be noted. 	
CSPPAC15	<p>TRAINING SESSION</p> <p>The Committee received a training session from the Independent Committee Member on Initial Assessments (IA) and considerations underpinning the safeguarding assessment process. The Government Framework for Assessment provides for a systematic approach to be used by local authorities to determine whether a child is in need and is suffering or at risk of significant harm. This is based around a series of key principles such as inter-agency working and a conceptual map focusing on the child's development needs, parenting capacity and family and environmental factors when assessing information.</p> <p>The Committee were advised of key elements required for IAs, including seeing the child and family, information gathering and analysing etc. IAs are required to be completed within 7 working days, and the Committee were advised of the difficulties experienced nationally by local authorities in meeting this target within the allocated timescale, whilst maintaining necessary quality of work.</p> <p>In response to a query regarding the definition of significant harm and assessing the impact of neglect, confirmation was provided that the judgement of harm was considered as a continuum, in accompaniment with threshold considerations guiding what constitutes significant harm. A revised threshold document was currently being drafted, with approval to be sought by the Local Safeguarding Board in October, along with roll out of a threshold training programme for partner organisations. It was advised that for situations where the threshold for significant harm was deemed not to be met but where harm could potentially be detrimental to a child, support services were available at a lower level of intervention, for example referral to parenting intervention programmes, children's centres etc.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the training session be noted. 	
CSPPAC16	<p>EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That as the following items contained exempt information (as defined in Section 100a of the Local Government 1972; namely information likely to reveal the identity of an individual, and information relating to any individual) members of the press and public should be excluded from the remainder of the meeting. 	
CSPPAC17	<p>CASE FILE QUALITY AUDITING</p> <p>The Committee received a draft protocol document to guide scrutiny of</p>	

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	<p>individual case files undertaken as part of the remit of the group and linking in with priorities identified in Ofsted's report 'Inspection of progress made in the provision of safeguarding service'. The protocol was developed in consideration of advice obtained by Legal Services.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the draft file auditing protocol be approved. <p>The Committee considered key documentation from the five referral case files selected to be tracked by the Committee on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Independent Member of the Committee make attempts to obtain feedback from service users and referrers through contacting individuals involved with the five referral cases being tracked forward by the Committee. The Committee to receive a summary report at the next meeting. • That the Committee receive a summary report of findings from local monitoring of service user views and feedback undertaken at Haringey such as from Child Protection Conference forms, 'TellUs' survey outcomes etc. • That a copy of the Children Act Complaints Annual Report setting out complaints made under the Children Act procedures for 2008-2009 be forwarded to Committee members. 	<p>Indep Memb</p> <p>Ass Dir S/guard</p> <p>Clerk</p>
CSPPAC18	<p>RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET</p> <p>The Committee considered draft recommendations to be reported to Cabinet to take forward improvements to the safeguarding of children. The Chair would be meeting with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People to discuss the draft recommendations prior to informal presentation of the recommendations at the special Overview and Scrutiny meeting on child protection on 17 September.</p> <p>Recommendations would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That a review and necessary improvements be made to GP attendance at multi agency and NHS child safeguarding training. • The development of explicit exit strategies in conjunction with partner agencies for the closure of cases previously subject to a Core Assessment. • Ensuring training for council and partner agency staff as necessary in the new referrals threshold guidance. • Improving systems for obtaining the views of service users, in particular those in receipt of social services but who are not CiC. • Improving the transition from children to adult social services, in particular those in receipt of social care services but who are not CiC. In addition that communication between children's and 	

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	<p>adult social services be reviewed and improved as necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the Council lobbies government in relation to issues identified with the initial and core assessment process including the format and focus of the forms and deadline for completion. • That the Council lobbies government in relation to the definition of 'significant harm', particularly in relation to the long term effects of neglect. <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the draft recommendations to be reported to Cabinet be noted. 	
CSPPAC19	NEW ITEMS OF EXEMPT URGENT BUSINESS	
	There were no items of exempt urgent business.	
CSPPAC20	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	

Cllr Emma Jones

Chair

together...
...we protect children

**Learning the lessons from
the case of Baby Peter
Oct 2009**

NHS
Haringey

**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**
Working together for a safer London

LSCB
Haringey

Great Ormond Street **NHS**
Hospital for Children
NHS Trust

Haringey

**The Local Safeguarding Children Board – a
sum of many parts**

Haringey Council

**METROPOLITAN
POLICE**
Working together for a safer London

NHS
Haringey

Barnet, Enfield and Haringey **NHS**
Mental Health NHS Trust

Cafcass

Great Ormond Street **NHS**
Hospital for Children
NHS Trust

**NATIONAL
PROBATION
SERVICE
LONDON**

LSCB
Haringey

together...
...we protect children

SCRs - The Statutory Context

- Serious Case Reviews are carried out when abuse and neglect are known or suspected factors when a child dies or is seriously injured – and when there are lessons to be learned about inter-agency working

(Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2006)



SCR Process Lessons

- Importance of independent chair; SCR panel membership
- Importance of being open vs defensiveness
- Willingness to critically challenge
- The focus is on **learning** not apportioning blame



Safeguarding is Everyone's Business

- Lessons from SCRs do not just relate to agencies whose work involves responsibility for child protection
- Everyone that has direct or indirect contact with families where there are children has a responsibility to those children and should raise concerns if they have them
- Critical role for universal services

“It is simpler to lift the telephone than live with the regret of not doing so” SCR Baby Peter



Only by working together....

- Child Protection work is complex
- We all work most of the time with shades of grey and need help from each other to give these definition
- In the context of a child protection investigation there is no reason not to share what you know or what makes you concerned – an assessment is a process that is constantly under review, not a one-off event

It's called 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' for a reason



Peter the Story

- Peter was born on 1st March 2006 and died on 3rd August 2007
- Executive Summary on www.haringeylscb.org



Peter the Story

- We knew from the outset there were indicators of risk - indicators that individually and together warranted further investigation
- Every agency had opportunities later to review their assessment of what was going on – and didn't
- Facts reduced in significance in the face of an adult's apparent willingness to comply and professionals' willingness to believe



Authoritative Practice

- ✦ Authoritative practice is about being a confident professional
- ✦ Authoritative practitioners share information appropriately
- ✦ Authoritative practitioners contribute effectively to assessments, conferences and core groups
- ✦ An authoritative child protection plan is not a list of concerns; it clearly identifies risk, response and desired outcome



Healthy Scepticism

“Are they lying? Of course they are lying. Everybody lies.” David Simon, creator of ‘The Wire’



Why should we consider this?

- Fear is a powerful thing, especially when you are vulnerable
- We are the 'authorities' (do you tell the truth?)
- We can take their children away (myth/defences)
- Addiction is based on deception and takes many forms; you'll find most in any child protection investigation
- As a challenge to 'blind trust'



Healthy Scepticism

75% parents do not co-operate with services (includes disguised compliance & "telling workers what they want to hear") Brandon et al, 2009

"Although perhaps not consciously a parent/carer... is testing the resolve of the safeguarding and child protection systems" SCR Baby Peter

"It is crucial to be sceptical of the accounts which are given for any maltreatment of children ... they should be tested thoroughly against the facts"

Brandon et al; Biennial Review of SCRS 2005-2007



Past history – an indicator of present risk

- ✦ Understanding the impact of an adult's past history is crucial to any assessment of risk to their children in the present
- ✦ The effects of child abuse can be severe and last into adulthood
- ✦ Insight and resilience in relation to the past are indicators of capacity for good attachment

Research

"Any assessment should take account of past or potential patterns of behaviour or concerns" Brandon et al, 2009



Attachment is not the same as Interaction

- ✦ Do not confuse an apparent strong attachment with a good adult/child interaction
- ✦ Abusive parents can appear to have good interactions with their children– they may overcompensate or put on a display for strangers
- ✦ A proper assessment of the quality of attachment takes time and expertise



A 'Seen' child is not a Safe child

- ❖ How many case files record 'child seen'? What does that really tell you?
- ❖ Almost every child that has died in the last 40 years was 'seen' by professionals within days (or hours) of their death
- ❖ Are there other children in the family?
- ❖ Seeing a child is only effective if it helps you understand what it is like to be that child - ask yourself – what is it like to be that child, or better still, ASK THEM



Domestic Violence is a serious risk to children

- ❖ The presence of a child in a household where domestic violence is an issue should immediately alert you to risk. To see them and do nothing is unacceptable
- ❖ A child does not have to be hit to be harmed
- ❖ "Where there is DV in families with a child under 12 months old (including an unborn child), even if the child was not present, any single incident of DV should trigger a CP investigation"

London Child Protection Procedures 2007, 5.11.35



Involvement is not the same as Engagement

- At times, professionals failed to act because they thought other involved professionals would take action
- NEVER ASSUME
- Working together in child protection is like being in a relay team – make sure the information you hand over has been received and understood
- CP Plans must be clear about what a task is intended to achieve and who is responsible for what



Participation is not the same as Co-operation

- Don't confuse an **apparent** willingness to comply with an **actual** willingness to accept the need to change
- Rule of optimism more likely to prevail when staff feel under pressure
- Rule of optimism rationalises evidence that contradicts progress
- Solution focussed brief therapy is not appropriate for child protection work



Neglect is a Relationship Issue

Neglect is not just about nits

- ✦ It could be an indicator of a flawed adult/child relationship, about which you need to do something
- ✦ All neglect indicators stem from a parental choice to prioritise something else above their child's basic needs
- ✦ Use the indicators (head lice, weight loss, appetite etc) to question the relationship



Challenge low expectations

There is no such thing as a typical Haringey family and it is dangerous to think that way

- ✦ Many families in Haringey are vulnerable; it's easy to be too tolerant of levels of neglect and miss the individual risk indicators
- ✦ Learned optimism
- ✦ Want more for them than they want for themselves



Expectations of all professionals

- Keep a child's best interests at the heart of what you do
- Always contribute to assessments, CP conferences and core groups
- Ensure clear, concise and timely recording
- Know which children you work with have CP Plans
- Keep practice policies and procedures up to date and tested
- Challenge your own assumptions



And finally...make time for the research

- Biannual reviews of SCRs www.dcsf.gov.uk/research
- BMA "Child protection toolkit for Doctors" May 2009
http://www.bma.org.uk/ethics/consent_and_capacity/childprotectiontoolkit.jsp
- www.C4EO.org.uk (Centre for Excellence Outcomes in Children & Young People's Services)
- www.rip.org.uk (Research in Practice)
- www.scie.org.uk (Social Care Institute for Excellence)
- www.nice.org.uk (National Institute for Health & Clinical Excellence)
- www.ofsted.gov.uk
- www.haringeylscb.org (Haringey Local Safeguarding Children Board)



Pick up the telephone

Haringey First Response Team
020 8489 4592/4582/5652/5762



By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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