



Haringey Council

NOTICE OF MEETING

Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Advisory Committee

TUESDAY, 29TH JUNE, 2010 at 19:30 HRS - CIVIC CENTRE, HIGH ROAD, WOOD GREEN, N22 8LE.

MEMBERS: Councillors Rice (Chair), Amin, Davies, Hare, and McNamara,

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. New items will be dealt with at Item 10 below.

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 - 6)

To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2010.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE (PAGES 7 - 8)

To consider the terms of reference for the Committee for the Municipal year 2010/11.

6. ROLE OF COMMITTEE AND OF THE INDEPENDENT MEMBER. (PAGES 9 - 12)

To consider the role of the Committee and that of the Independent Member.

7. SAFEGUARDING AND SUPPORT (PAGES 13 - 16)

To receive details of the services to support and safeguard children.

8. FIRST RESPONSE (PAGES 17 - 20)

To inform the Committee of the service provided by First Response and the processes for referral of children and young people in need of support.

9. MEETING DATES

To consider the Committee meeting dates for 2010/11:

Start time: 7.30pm

4 October 2010
15 November 2010
20 January 2011
7 March 2011
11 April 2011

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Ken Pryor
Deputy Head of Local Democracy and Member
Services
5th Floor
River Park House
225 High Road
Wood Green
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18 June 2010

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MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PRACTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 25 MARCH 2010

Councillors Jones, Mallett and Oatway

Apologies Councillor Davies

Also Present: Sylvia Chew, Hilary Corrick and Mark Gurrey

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION	ACTON BY
CSPAC40	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>An apology was received from Councillor Davies.</p>	
CSPAC41	<p>URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>There were no items of urgent business.</p>	
CSPAC42	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>There were none.</p>	
CSPAC43	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2010 be agreed as an accurate record.</p> <p>MATTERS ARISING -</p> <p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee- Hilary Corrick reported that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had received a report on the work of this Committee and on local health visiting services. It was noted that officers from Great Ormond Street hospital and NHS Haringey were present at the meeting.</p> <p>The Committee was pleased to note that, from April 2010 with the move to multi agency working there would always be at least one health visitor working for half a day every day located in the offices of the First Response team.</p> <p>Resolved:</p>	

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	<p>That an update report on the operation of these arrangements be presented to the Committee in Autumn 2010.</p> <p>Child Protection Conference- The Committee was advised that a conference about child protection was being organised by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board, to be held in September 2010.</p> <p>Report to Council – Cllr Jones advised that she had presented a report to Council on the work of this Committee and its future.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That, as information on the work of this body needed to be disseminated more widely, a report should be presented to Council twice yearly. 2. That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may wish to review their Child Protection role and their relationship with this Committee. 3. That the idea for the future, of a cross party informal information sharing body for children's services be supported. 4. That as part of the generic child protection training to be provided to all old and new Members Cllr Mallett should talk about the Committee including its history and main decisions made. 5. That the new Members of this Committee will need extensive additional and ongoing training to ensure they have the knowledge and skills necessary to continue the Committee's work effectively. 	
<p>CSPAC44</p>	<p>QUALITY OF PRACTICE AUDIT - UPDATE</p> <p>In order to ensure that improvements in the quality of social work practice continued a new comprehensive quality audit had been implemented. The first set of audits focusing on quality of practice were completed in October 2009 and had been carried out monthly thereafter. A random sample of cases had been selected across 10 sections of Children and families. More specific themed audits would also be carried out periodically where a need had been identified. Heads of Service were responsible for follow up actions on any audits that were rated as inadequate and a sample of these were re-audited on a quarterly basis and notified to the Assistant and Deputy Directors.</p> <p>A summary of the number of cases audited, overall ratings and section ratings was noted. Members also noted the results from a themed audit undertaken in January 2010 based on the standard quality of practice audit tool, which examined how the new format of child protection core assessment was working.</p> <p>Some concern was expressed over the drop in the number of cases</p>	

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	<p>perceived as good in February 2010. It was noted that this could be due to the fact that these audits had been carried out by independent review auditors who had been out of the operational area for some time. Also it was noted that officers considered some of the evaluations to be harsh.</p> <p>The Committee welcomed the fact that a considerable amount of effort had gone into improving risk assessment.</p> <p>There was a need to get the balance right between managing and monitoring cases and getting the work done. Consequently in the future the number of cases audited might reduce or alternatively audits might be carried out every other month.</p> <p>Members noted that OFSTED welcomed the audit tool and that it was now being used by the health service and shortly would be used by the police. This would greatly assist with multi agency working. It was felt that Adult services would also be able to adopt it as a model to use.</p> <p>Resolved:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That a further report be presented to the next meeting in respect of the January themed audit on child protection. 2. That the audit tool be passed to Adult Services for their use. 3. That a further report be presented in six months time on progress and on cases followed by this Committee. 4. That the Independent Social Worker analysis some of the cases deemed to be inadequate. 	
CSPPAC45	<p>CONTACTS INTO FIRST RESPONSE IN JANUARY 2010 OF CHILDREN UNDER FIVE</p> <p>Members received details of the number of children aged between 0 – 5 years who had come to the notice of the Children and Young People's Service during January 2010.</p> <p>In total there had been 226 contacts relating to 120 children aged 0-2 and 106 children aged 2 – 5, the total number of children was 189. 32 cases were audited in February and again in March. The Committee was pleased to note that there had been a marked improvement from the audit carried out in July 2009, and senior officers had found evidence of families being correctly signposted and evidence of throughput to other Authorities and of multi agency working.</p> <p>The sources for referral of cases was noted which included the police, emergency duty service and midwives. With regard to outcomes the Committee noted that 63 of the children were already known to the service and further information had been provided, 40 cases had resulted in advice and information being given, but only 3 cases had progressed to an assessment under the Common Assessment Framework. It was considered that more work needed to be done in this area. All of 59 cases which had progressed to the referral stage had</p>	

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	<p>been allocated within timescales. The audits on these cases had shown timely and appropriate work.</p> <p>It was pleasing to note that the follow up audit in March 2010 had demonstrated that some cases had either been closed or were now allocated within the safeguarding and Support service.</p> <p>However the Committee was concerned to note the number of cases that involved domestic violence and it was agreed that this was an area that should be examined further. Members noted that the LSCB Domestic Violence Sub – group were looking to produce a cross borough strategy on this issue.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the Committee examine cases involving domestic violence in more detail.</p>	
<p>CSPAC46</p>	<p>NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>None</p>	
<p>CSPAC47</p>	<p>EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>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.</p>	
<p>CSPAC48</p>	<p>REFERRALS OF CHILDREN UNDER FIVE</p> <p>In order to ensure some element of independence in the quality of cases referred into the First response team the Committee's independent social work consultant provided details of a further brief audit of 12 random sample of cases which had been carried out.</p> <p>All of the children that were audited were at a very vulnerable age and were all living in challenging circumstances. Whilst there was a lot of evidence of excellent pro-active work and good core assessment of a high standard there was some concern about failure to follow plans through and to complete work begun. This was an area where the service needed to investigate further.</p> <p>The Deputy Director reported that regular meetings were now being held between children's and adult services which was particularly</p>	

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	<p>helpful as many families had adults with problems.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That staff in the First response team be thanked for the good practice identified in the audit. 2. That senior managers in Children and Families service review systems for ensuring that assessments are completed and signed off by Managers. 3. That senior managers in Children and Families ensure that care plans for children in need are actively pursued and monitored. 4. That managers ensure that regular supervision takes place and is recorded on casefiles. 5. That the Committee receive a report on joint work with Adult Services. 6. That the Independent Social Worker be thanked for the work she had carried out on behalf of the Committee during the last year. 	
<p>CSPPAC49</p>	<p>NEW ITEMS OF EXEMPT URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>CSPPAC50</p>	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 29 JUNE 2010</p> <p>FUTURE WORKPLAN</p> <p>Workplan for the next year to include:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Joint working with Adult Services, transition of young people to adult services and families with vulnerable adults. 2. An examination of cases where domestic violence is involved. 3. A themed U5's quality of practice audit and the child protection themed audit carried out in January 2010. 4. Further work on the child protection process and the quality of child protection plans and follow up Action plans. 5. The first response service following the co-location of the health visitors into the team. 6. Children referred for a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and an analysis of cases that are presented to the CAF Panel. 7. Recommendations made to Cabinet 	

**MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PRACTICE ADVISORY
COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, 25 MARCH 2010**

Cllr Emma Jones

Chair



Haringey Council

Briefing for:	Children's Safeguarding Policy and Performance Advisory Committee
Title:	Terms of Reference
Lead Officer:	Carolyn Banks
Date:	29 June 2010

1. To consider the terms of reference for this body for the Municipal year 2010/11

2. Background information

When this Committee was originally set up in April 2009 it was agreed that its terms of reference would be the subject to a review by the Cabinet member for Children and Young People after one year in operation. Accordingly the Cabinet Member has requested that this meeting consider the terms of reference for the Committee.

3. Summary

The Cabinet at its meeting on 15 June agreed the membership and the terms of reference as follows:-

Proposed Membership:

Councillor Rice
 Councillor Amin
 Councillor McNamara
 Councillor Davies
 Hilary Corrick (Non-Councillor Member - appointed by the Panel)

Quorum:



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The quorum will be three members.

Terms of Reference:

- To examine and consider the effectiveness of the Council's policies and practice, including policies and practices in schools, children's homes and children's centres, relating to the safeguarding of children.
- To examine and consider the effectiveness of the arrangements for co-operation on child protection matters between partner agencies.
- To consider the Council's policies and performance relating to safeguarding through observing practice in Haringey and obtaining the views of key stakeholders (staff, families and children /young people) to attain a qualitative understanding of safeguarding practice.
- To make recommendations on these matters to the Cabinet or Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Director of Children and Young People's Service in taking forward improvements to safeguarding of children.

The Chair will determine the Committee's procedures and the means for conveying the Committee's views to the Cabinet but, in the event of any dispute, the outcome will be determined by the majority vote of the Committee's membership with the Chair having a casting vote.

4. Recommendation

That consideration be given to the current terms of reference and whether any changes should be recommended to Cabinet.



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Briefing for:	Children's Safeguarding Policy and Performance Advisory Committee
Title:	Role of Children's Safeguarding Policy and Performance Advisory Committee, and of the Independent Member
Lead Officer:	Hilary Corrick, Independent Social Work Consultant, and Independent Panel Member
Date:	29th June 2010

1. Introduction

The Children's Safeguarding Policy and Performance Advisory Committee was set up by Haringey Council in April 2009 to enable it to examine in more detail the work of children's services and:

- ensure that members have some understanding of key child protection issues;
- ensure that members have confidence in the safeguarding arrangements and practice in Haringey;
- ensure that members have developed a range of questions which enable them to consider all aspects of safeguarding and which can be shared with other members.

The Terms of Reference for the Committee are set out in a separate report to the Committee. Originally when the Committee was set up it was intended that the Committee would be short life, possibly only until the elections in May 2010.

2. Background information

Following the Baby P situation, Members had felt that they had insufficient knowledge and experience in safeguarding children to



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challenge or scrutinise the work of Children's Social Care; the Committee would give them more in-depth understanding, the opportunity to consider cases in detail, and meet with service users, referrers and front line workers when appropriate.

It was planned that Members would explore different aspects of child protection in Haringey with the help of key members of staff and develop a longer term programme of debate with staff, in the Laming spirit of respectful enquiry. An Independent Member was appointed to provide advice and training to Members and facilitate the Committee's work.

Members were aware of the range of other mechanisms for scrutinising safeguarding work but noted that the Children's Safeguarding Policy and Performance Advisory Committee is the only backbench Member body that examines individual cases in detail and whose Members have received in depth training. For that reason, the Committee felt that it was important that it continued to undertake this work. The Committee believed it had benefited from the work of the Independent Member and felt that such support was essential to its role.

3. Work undertaken by the Committee

The Committee met regularly throughout its first year. There was training for Committee Members on:-

- Referral processes
- Eligibility thresholds
- Assessment
- Child Protection procedures
- Learning from Serious Case Reviews

The Committee undertook a detailed audit of all referrals received on 1st July 2009, and tracked those cases over time. There were nine new referrals of children on that day. The Committee explored these cases with officers in considerable detail and was challenging about actions taken. The Committee tracked those children throughout the year, with particular scrutiny of those children who became subject to child protection planning.

The Committee commissioned a snapshot feedback survey of a sample of the July 1st cases, to gather the views of referrers and parents. Although this was a very small sample, the Committee was able to identify themes and as a result additional feedback is now provided by the First Response service to referrers.



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The Committee reported to Cabinet on 17th November 2009 about their work and presented recommendations which were endorsed by the Cabinet.

The Committee commissioned a report on all January 2010 referrals of children aged under 5, with a detailed audit of a sample of under 2s, and a further independent audit of a sample across the age range.

The Committee Deputy Chair and the Independent Member met with the Independent Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the Lead Member for Children, and considered its role within the range of scrutiny mechanisms within Haringey. These include:-

- Monthly multi-agency audits undertaken by the LSCB;
- Case file audits commissioned by the Lead Member;
- Regular reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee has worked closely with Officers from the First Response service, the Assistant Director, Safeguarding, and the LSCB Manager, all of whom have been helpful and open to challenge and question.

4. Role of the Independent Member

The Independent Member was appointed on the basis of a recommendation from the Director of Children and Families, Children and Young People's Services. The Committee appointed Hilary Corrick for 6 months in the first instance. She has extensive experience in a wide range of social service work including senior positions at local authority and national level and now works as an independent social work consultant. In January 2010 the Committee considered her longer term appointment and this was confirmed.

She has provided training for Members at each meeting, undertaken independent audit work for the Committee, undertaken a brief feedback survey with service users and referrers on behalf of the Committee, and supported Members in scrutinising a number of referrals and challenging officers.

She has attended Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings on behalf of the Committee, as well as Cabinet meetings, and attended full Council to support the Committee Chair. She has drafted reports on behalf of the Committee Chair.

5. Future work plans

The Committee were concerned that certain groups of children were particularly vulnerable and sometimes fell just outside the Children's Services eligibility thresholds. This might include the children of disabled



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parents, children whose parents had mental health issues, life style issues and other vulnerabilities, as well as vulnerable young people who may have been children in need who do not meet the eligibility thresholds of Adult Services.

A future work programme might be:

- The role of the Common Assessment Framework and an audit of all cases referred to the CAF Panel on a particular date. This could be a date in March so that the cases could be reviewed by the Committee at its July meeting.
- The relationship between Children and Adult Social Care services, particularly in respect of young people who have been the subject of child protection plans and are vulnerable young adults.
- An audit of children known to the police as living in households where domestic violence is a feature.

This would sit alongside briefings from officers about the new First Response arrangements and joint work with other agencies, as well as briefings about assessment and the child protection and safeguarding agenda from the independent Member and other relevant professionals. There would be the capacity for other immediate relevant issues to be considered.



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Briefing for:	Children's Safeguarding Policy and Performance Advisory Committee
Title:	Safeguarding and Support
Lead Officer:	Iain Low – Head of Service Safeguarding and Support iain.low@haringey.gov.uk 0208 489 5430
Date:	29 ^h June 2010

1. Introduction

Haringey's Children's Social Care is committed to providing high quality services to support and safeguard children, young people and their families across the Borough. Our aim is always to put children and young people at the centre of all our work.

The services provided by children's social care follow from specific Government legislation, including the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004, and the "Every Child Matters: Change for Children" agenda.

Children's Social care deliver services through three main functions:

- First Response
- Safeguarding and Support
- Children in Care

This paper is to update members on the Safeguarding and Support Services within Children's Social Care.

All children's services across the country have experienced an increase in the number of children and young people subject to Child Protection Plans but the increase been particularly acute in Haringey.



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There are currently 117 children under 5 subject to Child Protection Plans in the Borough and they are particularly vulnerable due to their age and development.

There are over 300 children and young people subject to Child in Need Plans. The plans for these children and young people are managed through multi-agency reviews by workers within the Safeguarding and Support Service.

Where any child or young person is subject to a Child Protection Plan or Child in Need Plan and their circumstances change, if these circumstances place them at risk of significant harm, social workers in the service work with our Child Care Legal Team and the Police to ensure they are protected. The child is removed from the parent(s) where necessary.

The teams in Safeguarding and Support are made up of Team Managers, Senior Practitioners, Practice Managers, Social workers and Assistant Social Workers. The teams work with other agencies across the Borough, especially Community Midwifery, Health Visiting, Police and schools to ensure children and young people are safe and have the right services delivered at the right time.

The Department have implemented a range of procedures to support practitioners and managers within the service. Audit and quality control processes to ensure best practice and management oversight are carried out across all cases.

Some of the mechanisms for implementing quality control processes are:

- Safeguarding Panel
- Legal Case Work Meetings
- Revised Legal Planning Meeting Processes
- Monthly thematic audits carried out by all managers from Deputy Head of Service to Director of Children's Services
- Safeguarding Champions
- Multi-agency audits

2. Background information

The Safeguarding and Support Service delivers services to children, young people and their families living in the community, some of the most vulnerable in the Borough.

The children and young people who receive a service are subject to Child Protection (CP) Plans, Child in Need (CIN) Plans and Supervision Orders.

As at the end of May 2010 there were 280 children and young people subject to Child Protection Plans, all with key-workers from the Safeguarding and Support service, who manage the Child Protection Plans and the team of professionals working with the child or young person through a series of Core Group



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meetings. There has been a 55.6% increase in the number of children and young people subject to plans in the twelve months to May 2010. This has placed enormous pressure on the service and other agencies working with the families.

3. Options for consideration

Members are asked to note this report and for an update to be brought to the Committee within six months.

4. Financial Implications

The service is facing difficult financial times ahead. All public services are facing further significant reductions in their resources over the next few years. In spite of these difficulties, we will continue to work effectively with our partner agencies to ensure that our safeguarding work continue to improve.

5. Legal Implications

This is an update for members information and there are no new legal or policy implications.

6. Policy Implications – As above

7. List the proposed routing for the report through the formal decision making process – Not applicable

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Briefing for:	Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Advisory Committee
Title:	First Response
Lead Officer:	Sylvia Chew, Head of Service, First Response
Date:	29 th June 2010

1. Introduction

This report aims to inform the panel about the service provided by First Response and the process by which referrals relating to Children and Young People living in Haringey and believed to either be in need of support or at risk of harm are managed and the appropriate action taken.

2. Team Structure

First Response consists of 7 social work teams:

The Screening Team is a multi agency triage service consisting of a core team of Metropolitan Police Officers, Health Visitors and Social Work staff. Aligned with this is an extended team including part-time support from Child and Adolescent Mental Health, the Youth Offending Service and the Police Child Abuse and Investigation Team. The role of the team is to screen all contacts and ensure that appropriate action is taken in a timely manner.

The 4 Duty Teams work on a rota basis to provide social work assessment and support to the 60 cases per week which meet the threshold for children's social care. The cases of families that require long term social work intervention transfer to the long term social work teams.

The No Recourse to Public Funds Team (NRPF) is a bespoke service for families with children who are destitute and unable to access public funding support. Many of these are single parent families with a history of domestic violence. The team works closely with the Home Office and Border Agency.



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The Emergency Duty Team (EDT) provides an out-of-hours service to both adults and children outside office hours including weekends and Bank Holidays.

3. Process

3.1

In keeping with the current computerised data system (FWI) information, queries and referrals into the service are all designated as a '**contact**'. This typically includes notifications from the Police Public Protection Unit that a child has come to their notice (known as P78's or Merlin's), information from the out of hours Emergency Duty Team (EDT), requests for information from other agencies and expressions of concern from members of the public or other professionals bodies inside and outside the service , typically schools, health and adult social services.

3.2

Contacts come into the service either electronically, by post or by fax. All contacts are considered by a manager and are logged onto FWI. The latter process includes ensuring all personal details are recorded and family records are linked together to give an accurate picture. The number of contacts per week varies enormously from 190 – 281 per week (average 235 per week)

3.3

Consideration of each contact will lead to a variety of outcomes. These are made in keeping with Haringey's Threshold guidance. Some contacts will be designated for No Further Action. These would include police notifications relating to older Young People reported missing but who have returned home at a reasonable hour or Young People victims to petty crime.

3.4

At times the information received on the contact are insufficient to enable decision making. In this case the dedicated screening officers, al social workers , will ring the referrer for more information and to offer information and advice. This will include recommending assessment via the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) in some cases.

3.5

Contact's which require further action are designated as a '**referral**' on the FWI system. Currently this constitutes an average of 25% of all contacts.

3.6

Referrals of an urgent nature, such as those relating to Child Protection concerns (between 6 – 10 referrals per week) are dealt with immediately via a referral to the Police Child Abuse and Investigation team (CAIT) and a Strategy Meeting is convened. These referrals are actioned as part of our statutory responsibilities under S47 of The 1989 Children's Act. This relates to children and young people at risk of significant harm.

3.7



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Referrals of a less urgent nature are designated as child In need cases and will be actioned for Initial Assessments, and should be completed in 10 working days. Work on these cases is undertaken under S17 of The 1989 Children Act, which relates to children and young people who may not reach their developmental potential without a service being provided by the Local Authority.

Subject to parental consent being given, other agencies including GP's, health, schools and other agencies as appropriate are contacted. The family home is visited, parents interviewed and the child seen alone if age appropriate.

In the rare circumstances where parents do not agree to an Initial Assessment being completed, the case is reviewed by a manager and the referrer contacted again. At this stage, a decision is made whether the concerns are such that the matter needs to be escalated to a Child Protection Investigation, in which case other agencies can be contacted without parental consent in order to safeguard the child, or whether no further action will be taken. In the latter instance, the referrer will be advised and asked to contact the service if they have any further concerns.

3.8

Complex cases are subject to a Core Assessment, a more detailed piece of work taking 35 days.

Contacts regarding children or young people known to other parts of the service such as Children in Care or Safeguarding and Support are passed to the named service. Information about children known to other Local Authorities are passed to their allocated social worker.

4. Current referral rates and workload

Comparison with three other inner London boroughs is as follows: Compared with our statistical neighbours Haringey receives a high number of contacts into the service. The relatively low percentage that move to referral relates to high number of police reports received which do not meet the threshold for children's social care.

2009/10

Borough	Number	of	% which became	% of referrals
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	contacts into the service	referrals	that moved to assessment
Haringey	14,355	23.8%	54.3%
Borough 1	11,000	51%	51%
Borough 2	12,500	32%	75%
Borough 3	14,700	27%	NK

The low annual conversion rate from referral to assessment reflects the significant amount of backlog work undertaken in 2009/10. The table below demonstrates the sustained improvement in the service over the year with the conversion rate from referral to assessment now standing at 61.2%.