

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF CORPORATE PARENTING ADVISORY COMMITTEE & CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PRACTICE COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, 11 OCTOBER 2011**

Councillors Allison, Amin, Brabazon, Davies, Hare, Reece, Reith, Rice, Solomon, Stewart and Watson

Apologies Councillor Stennett

Also Present: Marion Wheeler, Sylvia Chew, Iain Low, Attract Craig, Wendy Tomlinson, Chris Chalmers.

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION	ACTON BY
CSPAPC 7	<p>APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIR</p> <p>The Chair of Corporate Parenting Committee and Chair of the Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee had previously discussed the chairing of these joint meetings and they had agreed that they would alternate this responsibility. Councillor Rice was appointed as Chair for the meeting.</p>	
CSPAPC 8	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE(IF ANY)</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Stennett and Debbie Haith, Head of Children and Families service.</p>	
CSPAPC 9	<p>URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>No items of urgent business were considered.</p>	
CSPAPC 10	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>There were no declarations of Interest put forward.</p>	
CSPAPC 11	<p>DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/QUESTIONS</p> <p>There were no deputations, questions or petitions put forward.</p>	
CSPAPC 12	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>The Committee considered the minutes from the previous joint meeting held on the 17 March 2011. A remark was made on the timeliness of</p>	

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	<p>the Joint Committee considering these minutes as it would be difficult to recall the issues discussed at the last meeting. A suggestion was made to have the minutes agreed with by the Corporate Parenting Committee and Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee at their next available meetings and not at the next joint meeting in March. The Committee agreed that this suggestion be taken forward.</p> <p>Clarification was sought on the number of children at the time of the meeting in March that were subject to child protection plans as there were two figures contained in the minutes. The Committee noted that it was likely to be 326 children but Committee members would receive an email update on this. The service have since advised that</p> <p><i>The 326 figure relates to the number of Children and Young people subject to Child Protection Plans across the Department; the figure of 253 is the number of children and young people subject to Child Protection Plans within the Safeguarding and Support Service. The data came from Iain Low's presentation about the work of the Safeguarding and Support.</i></p>	Clerk
CSPAPC 13	<p>THE MUNRO REVIEW OF CHILD PROTECTION: FINAL REPORT - A CHILD-CENTRED SYSTEM</p> <p>Committee members considered a summary of the Munro review into child protection along with the government's response to the review. The key components of the recommendations from Munro report were: developing social work capacity; ensuring children were communicated with, and that the child was at the centre of the organisations process. Overall, the government response was to agree with the recommendations of the review. However, the Independent Member of the Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee, advised that the government had not set out how local authorities were able to change fully to the direction of preventative services at a time of reduced funding for Children's services. It was anticipated that local authorities would begin to review their models of social care following this report and it was suggested that the social work care model developed in Hackney would be worthwhile to look at. The Chair of the Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee agreed to take this forward as an action.</p> <p>Clarification was sought in whether the Children's service had undertaken a systems analysis approach to the changes that would be required following the Munro report. The Committee were informed that separately to considering the Munro recommendations and impact on the service, there was an equal need to examine sufficiency to know the level of services that would need to be commissioned in order to meet the needs of children coming into the care of children's services. For example this would mean considering whether there were right levels of accommodation available for looked after children and care leavers, now and in the future. There would also to follow some joint</p>	Cllr Rice

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strategic assessment work with the involvement of partners to look at how services are provided. The Children's service would also be completing an exercise on care pathways to examine how the service identifies children coming into care.

The Committee were advised that to meet the requirements of the prevention agenda, would mean the service, along with partners, looking at incrementally compiling services around the support that would be needed to prevent a child coming into care. This support package would need to include voluntary sector and partner agencies with consideration given to how the services were provided in totality. The Committee noted that these were high level changes which required consideration of the strategic direction of the service, involved service redesign and considering how other children related services could be included in this support offer. This could only be led by the incoming Children's Services Director who would be in post on the 14 November. It was agreed that the Cllr Reith and Cllr Rice would speak with the new director about how the Munro recommendations would be taken forward with a more substantial report likely to be available for consideration by both Committees in May 2012. Members of the Committee learnt that in the meantime the Safeguarding Team were already working with the Early Intervention and Prevention service to look at how they can support the de-escalation of certain circumstances which lead to children coming into care. The Head of First Response explained that the service recognised it would be crucial to de-escalate these circumstances permanently and this was a key part of their work with the Early Intervention and Prevention service when considering the services for the families to access.

Cllr
Reith/
Cllr
Rice

In terms of the impact of the Munro recommendations on systems and processes followed, the service were already exploring the impact on IT systems.

A question was asked about the plans for developing social work practice. The Committee noted that there was already a multi agency team in First Response and this team would be expanded with staff from Police intelligence, Adult Safeguarding and Mental Health. This Multi agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) would also have satellite links to services such as Probation and Adult services with a member of their team physically situated in the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) one day a week. This team would consider referrals to the Safeguarding Service and instantly share information they had on the family in turn assisting the information gathering stage of an assessment and expediting the decisions on how the referral should be progressed by the Children's service. In terms of social work development, there had in been a graduate trainee programme in place, which had been very good at recruiting trainee Social Workers. Past members of this scheme were now becoming team managers and senior practitioners. The key aim for the service was to continue to build the experience and expertise of

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	<p>Social Workers so that it was a workforce able to work and deal with complex cases .</p> <p>Members asked about help to families and early intervention services to reduce the number of children going into care . Officers explained that Munro saw early help to families as different to early intervention services .The new meaning for early intervention service encompassed all work outside statutory sector . With regard to work with families, Munro was interested in Social Workers engagement with families and their work with them . Munro also advocated learning from existing family intervention projects and having evidenced systems in place that will help families who need more than the support provided by universal services.</p> <p>Understanding was sought on the relationship between safeguarding social care and providers of care such as children's centres. It was felt that children between the ages of 0 to 5 had critical developmental milestones which needed to be supported especially if they were LAC or children in need and therefore should be focused on as a group . In response it was noted that this relationship between the Safeguarding Team and Early Years continued to improve each month. Social Workers who were responsible for children on child protection plans, under the age of 4, would ensure that they could access day care services.</p> <p>Members noted the report.</p>	
<p>CSPAPC 14</p>	<p>CHILDREN MISSING FROM CARE AND HOME</p> <p>The Committee considered a report about children that go missing from care and missing from home . The Committee gained further understanding about the statutory guidance followed by the council when children go missing and what the council's responsibilities are . This was a particular national area of concern especially when it was concerning vulnerable children and children under the age of 11. Haringey was part of 3 London boroughs awarded £300,000 of funding over the next 3 years through an externally funded joint project with Aviva (formerly Norwich union), the Railway Children international charity and Barnardos. This was an early intervention project, beginning in November, aimed at engaging with and supporting with children that were likely to go missing from home and reduce the level of harm that they could come to.</p> <p>Members of the Committee were provided with some local context about the children that are reported missing in Haringey. Usually the primary sources for reporting missing children to the service were the police. It was noted that children could be reported for a number of reasons i.e lateness in coming home from school, children going missing in the shopping centre, missing from home overnight or not</p>	

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coming back following attendance at evening events . All of these circumstances were recorded by the Children's service . The Safeguarding service had established a triage system involving a multi agency response to absences in their area of responsibility . This was set out in appendix 2 of the report and used to assess and measure the level of concern that should be given when they receive a report that a child has gone missing. Where there was the highest concern it often indicated that there is an improper activity involved which lead to a series of assessments and speedy responses.

Section 5.2 of the report detailed the number of children between April and mid September 2011 that had gone missing. It was noted that 51 children out of 630 LAC had gone missing from care or had a period of unauthorised absence. The Committee noted that of these 51 children there were two children still missing. Child A came from an extended Gypsy Roma family where other members of the family have previously gone missing and returned . At the current time Police were trying to locate this young person. The second young person went missing from care . He was an unaccompanied minor and UK boarder agencies had been notified as he has previously tried to leave the country. The Committee noted that when children go missing from a placement the service will try and ascertain whether there are any issues with the child placement .

Some Members expressed particular concern about LAC that are placed in residential homes as they seemed to be the highest number going missing .Officers explained that children that go missing from residential homes are older teenagers and there will a higher difficulty in dealing with these absences with different levels of engagement undertaken with the young people . The Committee noted that it was not always the case that placing older children in a residential homes was the last option but would largely be a placement of choice as the children may have previously been in unsuccessful foster care placement . Young people that went missing from residential homes may have previously also absconded when in a foster placement.

In terms of monitoring children that go missing from placements, the Deputy Director or Children and Families received weekly reports , and completed risk assessments. There was quite a tight process for recording absences which had been recently reviewed to ensure that all departments in the Children and Families service were fully aware of the details to record when a child/missing person goes missing.

It was noted that the Barnado's joint borough project on missing children would, as part of its remit, be awareness raising, with the selected children and young people, about the situations/ groups to avoid where they could be vulnerable and open to inducement into unsafe activities.

The Chair enquired about the work with Gypsy Roma families . The Committee noted that the council was working with the London Councils

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	<p>and Bulgarian government on tackling the trafficking of young people from this community into the borough. The Committee learnt that, through a previously funded project, the Safeguarding service had gained a wealth of experience and knowledge about the risks of vulnerable children being subject to sexual exploitation and could use this in their work with the community. The service were aware of the named addresses that the Gypsy Roma families moved to and from in London so that they were able to communicate with the boroughs that they moved to. There was also a Romanian and Bulgarian speaking staff member in the Children and Families team who was able to provide vital language support to Social Workers and police working with children in this community that were in the care of the service. This member of staff was also assisting the service to ensure children under the age of 4 in the Gypsy Roma community had access to GP services and were being seen by health workers if required.</p> <p>The statutory guidance applicable when children go missing from home was attached to the report and it was recommended that the Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee could consider the statistic for children missing from home and the strategies in place to deal with these occurrences. There was also a scrutiny review on missing children and it would be worthwhile checking the areas that they were considering in case of cross over.</p>	MW
CSPAPC 15	<p>NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>None</p>	
CSPAPC 16	<p>EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</p> <p>The press and public were excluded from the meeting for consideration of the following item 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): parts 1&2: namely information relating to any individual, and information likely to reveal the identity of an individual.</p>	
CSPAPC 17	<p>REFERRALS AUDIT JULY 2011</p> <p>A programme of audits had been established by the Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee in order to monitor</p>	

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practice and performance in Children's Social Care, and identify areas of good practice and areas for improvement. An audit of new referrals between July the 12th and 19th 2011 had been examined by the Independent Member with involvement from Cllr Amin. The findings had been considered by Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee at their meeting in September and were also shared with the Corporate Parenting Committee as part of this joint meeting.

Comment was made on the following: the number of cases where statutory timescales were not being fully adhered to, whether there were fewer referrals to the service but higher numbers of children being taken into care and the length of time the cases were open for in comparison to other comparator boroughs. The Independent Member of the Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee advised that at the time of writing the report the 2010/11 comparator data had not been published. Since this report comparator data for 2010/11 conveyed that Haringey were now more significantly in line with comparator boroughs in terms of number of children coming into care. In response to the query about the adherence to timescales i.e. for core and initial assessments, in this sample of cases, social workers were awaiting information from GP's or teachers in order to decide how to take the referral forward. Overall the timescales for dealing effectively with referrals was improving. In cases where there was a risk of significant harm to a child, these were prioritised. Due to the nature of some referrals there was a need to do preparatory work to understand how best to take the referral forward. This was further explained by the Head of First Response in the attached action plan arising from the audit.

A councillor attending Regulation 33 visits asked the Independent Member whether in her experience in working with the council she had seen missing information from files. The Independent Member confirmed that the paper work she had seen in files relating to this audit were up to date.

It was further confirmed that the follow up actions relating to the audit were attached to the report and the cases looked at in July would be further followed up in November to check their progression or outcomes.

The Committee thanked the Independent Member for the insight and knowledge gained from considering the real life and complex cases in the audit and understanding how Social Workers were dealing with them. Cllr Amin had assisted with this audit and was thanked for her input and advice. Councillor Amin advised the Committee that some of the social work practices she had seen, being applied to the referrals, were to a very high standard and the service should be commended for this.

Arising from the discussion of this paper Members asked various questions and learnt the following:

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the number of children recently moving to the borough and the subject of a referral to the safeguarding service, would be recorded. Officers advised that there would be children and families from the borough put in out of borough placements and therefore this data may need further analysis to compile a narrative that could be used in future to make a case for the borough receiving additional resources . • That there would be further training with staff that make referrals to safeguarding working in schools and other partner agencies, to include appropriate information to aid the speedier processing and evaluation of the referral when received by the MASH. The referral format was also currently being worked on with tips and advice on how to compile a good referral this would consider and signed up to by LSCB(Local Safeguarding Children's Board) which included a wide membership of partner agencies. 	
CSPAPC 18	NEW ITEMS OF EXEMPT BUSINESS None	
CSPAPC 19	NEXT MEETING 05 March 2012	

Cllr George Meehan

Chair