

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

MONDAY 25 JANUARY 2010

Councillors Jones (Chair), Lister, Mallett, Davies and Oatway

Also Present: Sylvia Chew, Hilary Corrick, Marion Wheeler.

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION	ACTION BY
CSPPAC31	<p>APOLOGIES</p> <p>None received.</p>	
CSPPAC32	<p>URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>There were no items of urgent business.</p>	
CSPPAC33	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>Cllr Oatway declared that she was still involved in the Disciplinary Panels with regard to Baby P.</p>	
CSPPAC34	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2009 be agreed as an accurate record.</p> <p>MATTERS ARISING - HEALTH VISITING SERVICE</p> <p>Cllr Mallet presented a report which had recently been considered at Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the health visiting services. Members noted that in July 2008 the decision had been made by the PCT, due to staff shortages, to temporarily suspend the traditional universal health visiting services and to concentrate on those in greatest need. This meant that children and families were assessed at the new birth visit, or on the first contact with the service and were then prioritised for further intervention. Where there were no concerns families were given contact details for any queries or concerns that they had. This was called "progressive universalism". The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had expressed concern that they had not been informed of these changes earlier and felt that there could be some stigmatism around targeted services.</p> <p>Officers advised that they had experienced some difficulties with contacting health visitors but that the situation should improve with the move to multi agency working and the location of three health visitors to be based in their offices. However there was concern that the health visiting duty desk was staffed by health visiting staff or administrative staff.</p>	

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	<p>Members expressed concerns around how the targeting was carried out and that the U5s were a particular vulnerable group. Also there was no reference to the views of families.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That a report be prepared for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee child protection meeting in March to include proposals for NHS Haringey to carry out an evaluation and to convening a Parents Focus group to establish their views.</p>	<p>Hilary Corrick</p>
<p>CSPPAC35</p>	<p>THRESHOLDS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE</p> <p>In collaboration with children and young people's partnership agencies the Children and Young People's service had produced a threshold of need and service document. This set out levels of need and risk which triggered referrals to universal or targeted services. Also it provided a guide to practitioners in all agencies that worked with children to assist in assessing and identifying children's level of need and to consider which services might be available to meet those needs.</p> <p>It was noted that each individual child's situation was unique to them. Also the members noted that children could and did move from one level of support to another. For some children/young people it was clear that they fell on the continuum, whilst for others a practitioner might need to use the threshold guidance which had been produced to determine additional needs and where they fell in the continuum. This process could help to decide if a CAF would be appropriate to help identify need and response. The cooperation and engagement of parents and carers was central to understanding where a child's needs might lie.</p> <p>It was noted that most children and young people needs would be met through universal services such as schools, GP surgeries etc as well as support from within the family and from friends, whilst a relatively small number of children and young people at risk of significant harm or significant impairment to health or development required specialist support, usually led by Children's Social Care.</p> <p>In between levels 1 and 4 were the vulnerable children/young people who had additional needs and were in need of targeted support.</p> <p>It was noted that training had been given to all partner agencies, schools and GP's and posters were on display in key work places within the Authority. Biannual events with schools were planned in order to address any concerns. It was hoped that the training would identify any gaps or overlaps in service provision and support would give a wider picture of the whole process.</p> <p>Members were informed that the Children's Service were working on joint protocols with Adult Services. It was acknowledged that some</p>	

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	<p>adults with children were vulnerable and needed support; this had to be taken into account and worked with. Also it was noted that the adult threshold for receiving support was high and many adults who did not met the threshold level needed support, especially if they had parenting responsibilities. .</p> <p>RESOLVED;</p> <p>That the report be noted.</p>	
<p>CSPPAC36</p>	<p>REVIEW OF ROLE OF INDEPENDENT PANEL MEMBER</p> <p>Following the establishment of the Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Advisory Committee in April 2009, Ms Hilary Corrick had been appointed for an initial six month period as an Independent Member to provide advice and to facilitate the Committee's work.</p> <p>The Committee noted the details of the work undertaken by Ms Corrick. It was agreed that it was essential that this Committee had the support of an independent social worker.</p> <p>The Chair reminded the meeting that it had previously been suggested that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should consider organising a child protection conference along the lines of previously held health conferences.</p> <p>Cllr Mallet and Ms Corrick reported back from their meeting with the Chair of the LSCB on the role of this Committee. It was noted that the LSCB acknowledged the work being carried out by this Committee and its ability to delve in greater depth into issues than other bodies scrutinising child protection.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That Cabinet be advised of the essential role that the independent social worker played in supporting the Committee. 2. That officers pursue the possibility of Overview and Scrutiny Committee organising a child protection conference. 	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>CSPPAC37</p>	<p>COMMITTEE'S ROLE REGARDING MECHANISMS FOR MONITORING AND AUDITING SAFEGUARDING IN HARINGEY</p> <p>Members discussed the role and future of this Committee. Whilst it was noted that there were a range of other mechanisms for scrutinising safeguarding work such as the Safeguarding Children's Board, Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Member for Children and Children's Services itself, this was the only backbench Member body that examined individual cases in detail. Also the Members on this Committee had received in depth training.</p>	

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	<p>It was considered that there was still work to be carried out and that to disband of this body would send out the wrong message. Members also agreed that in continuing the Committee's reporting mechanisms and influence should be higher within the Council structure and that it should report direct to full Council. This would ensure that information was disseminated better to all Councillors.</p> <p>Details of the work that the Committee had been involved with in respect of the voice of service users (children and their parents) and referrers and the tracking of cases over a period of time was noted.</p> <p>For the future it was agreed that the Committee should focus on particular vulnerable groups of children such as the under fives. Also it was agreed to focus on groups of vulnerable children who fell just below the eligibility thresholds, by exploring the robustness of preventative services by tracking some cases. Also the transition from children's to adult services and how children of adult service users were referred should be key areas for investigation by the Committee.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>1. That Cabinet be informed:-</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a) that there was a need for the continuation of this body b) of the proposed future areas of work c) of the suggestion that in order to give this body more influence, it should report direct to Council.</p> <p>2. That officers seek approval for the Chair to give a presentation to full Council on the work of this Committee and suggested proposals for its future.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>CSPPAC38</p>	<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. 	
<p>CSPPAC39</p>	<p>CHILD PROTECTION PROCESSES</p> <p>Members received a detailed report setting out the processes from referral to review for children "at risk of significant harm". It was noted that referrals were possible from a number of sources such as the police, a professional in the child's network, or from the public, including a family member. The process for assessing a child who could be at risk was set out in the Pan London Child Protection Procedures. Every referral into the service was looked at and assessed by the screening manager. Where the screening manager concluded that a child was at</p>	

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	<p>risk a referral was made to the police Child Abuse and Investigation Team and a Child Protection Strategy meeting convened within 24 hours. If the meeting concluded that there was insufficient evidence to suggest significant harm a social worker would be allocated and a core assessment carried out. Details of the S47 core assessment which was carried out when the social worker had concerns was noted. Where substantial concerns remained following the strategy meeting, albeit not life threatening an Initial Child Protection Case Conference was convened within 15 working days of the Strategy meeting. This meeting would determine whether a child had a ongoing risk of significant harm and should therefore be the subject of a child protection plan. In less urgent cases a Core Assessment, taking up to 35 working days could be undertaken before the Initial Child Protection Conference, but there would be regular strategy meetings during that time frame to ensure the child's continued safety. Members were informed that the police now require updates every seven days if there was a single agency investigation. Details of the processes and timescales for reviewing a child protection plan were noted. Currently there were 264 children who were the subject of a plan, this constituted 54 per 10,000 and was higher than the national average of 42 per 10,000 which was of 31 March 2009, although it was noted that the national figure may well now be higher. In future with a more effective CAF model and better intervention strategies it was hoped that this figure would be reduced. In circumstances where the harm was found to be so great that children could not remain with their parents immediate alternative care was found either through police protection, an Emergency Protection order through the court or, if parents agreed, children could stay elsewhere whilst the investigation and planning took place.</p> <p>Details of the cases subject to ongoing social work intervention that were being tracked since July 2009 were noted.</p> <p>The Committee welcomed the conference feedback from parents and children and were pleased to note the number of children and young people who wished to be involved.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>That the report be noted.</p>	
<p>CSPPAC40</p>	<p>NEW ITEMS OF EXEMPT URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>There were no items of exempt urgent business.</p>	
<p>CSPPAC41</p>	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING - That the next meeting be re- arranged to either 18 or 25 March and that the Cabinet Members for Adult Social Care and Well Being and Children and Young People be invited. It was agreed that this would be the last meeting for this Municipal year. (Subsequently agreed for 25 March)</p>	

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	<p>Items for the agenda to be:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Follow up report on recommendations made to Cabinet.2. A report on children with vulnerable parents3. A report on the transition of children to adult services.4. Details of all children under 5s referred in January 2010, or if the numbers were excessive, then to examine Under 2s or a random percentage of referrals.	<p>AD Safegu arding</p>
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Cllr Emma Jones

Chair