

**MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PRACTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MONDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2012**

Councillors Adamou, Allison, Bull, Corrick, Davies and Stewart (Chair)

Apologies None

Also Present: Councillor Waters, Lisa Blundell, Sylvia Chew, Marion Wheeler, Phil Dileo, Jeannette Brand, Deirdre Cregan, Michelle Robson, Chrissy Austin.

<b>MINUTE NO.</b>	<b>SUBJECT/DECISION</b>	<b>ACTON BY</b>
<b>TEX84.</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>  There were no apologies for absence received.	
<b>TEX85.</b>	<b>URGENT BUSINESS</b>  The Chair had agreed to admit a report on Safeguarding Performance Data, for the year up to July, as a late item of business. This report had been distributed to Members of the Committee and was attached at Agenda Item 7.	
<b>TEX86.</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>  Cllr Adamou declared a personal interest as both her daughters worked in Haringey, one as a Social Worker for children with disabilities, and the other as a teacher.	
<b>TEX87.</b>	<b>MINUTES</b>  The minutes of the meeting held on the 10 <sup>th</sup> July 2012 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.	Clerk
<b>TEX88.</b>	<b>MATTERS ARISING</b>  The agenda plan, listing items for future meetings, was tabled for Committee Members to consider and comment on. Since the last meeting, in July, the Chair and Independent Member had been in discussion with Cabinet Member for Children's Services about taking forward an audit on late initial assessments. Although, there was information available about the number of assessments that were completed out of timescale, there was not an understanding on how far out of timescale the assessments had been completed and the factors contributing to this. The Chair was in agreement, with the Cabinet Member, that this was an area that required further exploration. The Committee agreed the findings of the audit report would be considered at the next meeting on November 22 <sup>nd</sup> 2012.	HC

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	<p>The Committee further noted that the Independent Member had been speaking with Adults Services about her proposed audit of cases where substance misuse was an issue. The audit was also intended to explore the interface between Safeguarding and Adults service. It had now been agreed to defer this report to the Committee meeting in March as there was an existing service audit of files taking place. Instead, there would be a some questions added to the audit to cover these issues.</p> <p>The joint meeting between Corporate Parenting and the Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Committee was due to take place on the 29<sup>th</sup> October 7.30pm. The items listed for this meeting included the lessons learnt from serious case reviews. It was agreed to defer this to a later meeting to allow a discussion on the Haringey 54000 change programme. The Independent Member had recommended to the Chair that it would be worthwhile for the both Children's Committees to consider a report on the Haringey 54000 programme which was putting children and young people at the centre of what the service does. This will involve moving to a higher proportion of early intervention, preventative services and reducing the need for statutory services. This was a key programme which concerned both Children's Committee's areas of responsibilities and it was felt useful by the Independent Member that this should be dealt with in a joint forum.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The Committee agreed that a report on Haringey 54000 go forward to the Joint meeting on the 29.10.2012.</li> <li>ii. Agreed that a report on safeguarding performance data and LAC data for the half year, with benchmarking figures included, be considered at the Joint meeting on the 29<sup>th</sup> October 2012.</li> </ul>	<p>MW</p> <p>MW</p>
<p><b>TEX89.</b></p>	<p><b>PRESENTATION ON THE TRAINING ACTIVITIES BEING UNDERTAKEN WITH PARTNERS AND SOCIAL WORKERS REGARDING RAISING AWARENESS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE</b></p> <p>The Committee received a presentation from Deirdre Cregan, Domestic Violence Co-ordinator and Michelle Robson, Senior Practitioner for Domestic Violence. The information shared with the Committee was also provided to Social Workers as currently domestic violence was a factor (not necessarily the overriding issue) in 70% to 80% of child protection cases. It was this reason that had mainly led to the movement of the Domestic Violence team, from the Policy section of the council, to Children's services. The Domestic Violence Practitioners now had a significant position in Children's Service and also their work on Domestic Violence was more child focussed. The Practitioners demonstrated that they were able to link theory to real life cases by working with Social Workers who also took the opportunity to call upon their expertise and</p>	

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guidance in dealing with cases where domestic violence was a factor.

Previously in 2011 a best value review had found a lack of co-ordinated services for women escaping domestic violence. This led to the establishment of Hearthstone centre for the survivors of Domestic violence providing support with housing and access to services.

MARAC (Multi agency risk assessment conference) was established in 2008 to enable a co-ordinated multi agency response to cases where there was risk of significant harm to an individual. MARAC conferences have, since 2010, become more child focussed and include the participation of 25 agencies.

The Committee noted the following key points from the presentation on Domestic Violence.

- DV is a gender based violence – mainly affecting women.
- DV has far reaching impact on families  
A positive arrest scheme where the police themselves can charge the perpetrators without the victims consent is available but rarely used.
- There is rehabilitation programme where perpetrators are encouraged in a group setting to talk through values and understand the impact of their violence. Although, the attendance of partners at this scheme is small, in certain cases this has contributed to women feeling safer and more likely to accept support from agencies.
- There was more awareness in Safeguarding and Support about violence in teenage relationships and Social Workers are more aware of the circumstances where teenagers will be more vulnerable to domestic violence i.e. a teenage girl who has a much older male partner.
- The council were taking part in a three day consultation, through the Home Office, to review partnership working in cases of Domestic Violence.
- The Domestic Violence court would be moving to a location in Tottenham to enable cases to be progressed more efficiently.
- In October the Young Persons advocate, working in the First Response team, would be working on Domestic Violence cases involving teenagers.

The Committee learnt that there was still work to be done to challenge the perceptions about Domestic Violence and educate professionals further, that Domestic Violence was unacceptable whatever the situation.

Following questions from Committee Members about the contribution of

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	<p>key partners to reducing Domestic Violence such as the Police and Schools the following information was shared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That when Police are attending an incident ,where domestic violence is reported, they are under obligation to check if there are children in the household and report this to Children's Services. There was also a dialogue sheet compiled for Police Officers to complete which is aimed at ensuring there is a full assessment of the Domestic Violence incident. The questions include, finding out how much exposure to the Domestic Violence the child may have been subjected to.</li> <li>• Educating young people about how violence was unacceptable in both relationships or in the home should start from an early age and the Children's service would explore training activities aimed at young children, as young as 8, and also ensure that the teachers designated to child protection role were also aware of this training need .</li> </ul> <p>The Committee thanked both Deirdre Cregan and Michelle Robson for their insightful presentation.</p>	
<p><b>TEX90.</b></p>	<p><b>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</b></p> <p>The Committee considered performance information relating to safeguarding, from the start of the year up to the month of July 2012.</p> <p>OP 504 (The number of child contacts received) The Committee noted the increase in contacts received in July and that this could be attributed to the prominence of the MASH team. Also there was likely to have been an increase in families moving to the borough in this period. The Committee were aware that the borough had a high number of families living in HMO's (Houses in Multiple Occupation). Families living in unsuitable living conditions had additional family life pressures .There was a short discussion about the safety of children from Roma families who were often seen living in poor housing conditions. The Committee noted that Children's services had a specialist worker working in the Roma community with families with safeguarding issues. First Response were beginning to map and list the ROMA families that lived in the borough. This would further help deal with any safeguarding concerns and ensure the service were able to better locate the children if needed. Members were asked to contact the First Response team, in the, first instance, should they have concerns about the safety of any Roma children they had seen in their ward.</p> <p>The Committee were further asked to note that the increase in contacts would impact on the completion rate for assessments.</p> <p>OP383 (Re-referrals within 12 months of the previous referral) The</p>	<p>All to note</p>

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	<p>performance stood at 19% against a target of 16%, this was still below statistical neighbouring borough rates. The reason for re-referral was thought to be 10 to 11% housing related and similarly could be due to a significant change in circumstance for the family which they were not in a position to cope with. The Committee further noted that some cases were recorded as re-referrals as the FWI system could not support capturing the appropriate outcome and so instead Social Workers had to close and re-open the case. The service were considering ways to improve this irregularity. The Committee agreed that a short analysis of re-referrals be completed by the Independent member in time for the November meeting to provide more understanding about the issues around this performance indicator.</p> <p>OP368 (Percentage of referrals to children's social care going on to initial assessment) The Committee noted that target had been revised so that the council was aiming to achieve performance levels on par with a good and excellent services. Members questioned the increase in this target, given that the previous target levels were not being met. This led to an understanding being sought on the strategy to increase completion of initial assessments and the existing reasons for their delay. The Independent Member questioned the level of detail required in an initial assessment as some contacts, could upon initial analysis, not require a detailed initial assessment. The Committee learnt that the advantage to completing an initial assessment for contacts, meeting the social care threshold, ensured that the child was seen by a Social Worker. Other boroughs, may not complete an initial assessment for children meeting the social care threshold, and would not see the child. The Committee were further advised of the benefit of completing an initial assessment comprehensively because it would mean less information was required for collation at the core assessment stage. The Committee suggested that these issues be explored by the Independent Member as part of her audit into initial assessments.</p> <p>OP380 (Child Protection Visits) the Committee sought an understanding on why performance had not been close to target in the last three months, preceding July. The target was set at 95% of children on a child protection plan visited, and in June 12, the service had completed 76% of required visits. The Committee noted the visits were being made on time. However between Jan to June, in cases where there were less pressing issues, the write up of the visit had been completed at a later date. This had been realised in June and management had advised Social Workers that they could not mark a visit as being completed if they had not recorded the outcome of the visit. Hence the figures for June were well below target but figures for July had shown improvement and the service could now say with confidence that the visits to families were accompanied by a record. The Committee were concerned upon hearing this and reiterated that if a visit was not recorded on the Framework I system then it could be counted as being made. They were assured by the diligence of the Acting Head of Safeguarding in identifying this issue and sought further reassurance that the emphasis in the service was on quality not quantity. The Acting Deputy Head of</p>	<p>HC</p> <p>HC</p>
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	<p>Safeguarding explained that she was trying to create a culture in her management team, that was more confident with using the FWI system and was encouraging its active use in supervision. This was key to monitoring that required information was on the system.</p> <p>HY64 – (Child protection plans lasting 2 years or more) The children's service were close to target on this and were aware that there needed to be close adherence to this target due to the underlying principle that professionals should be working towards specified outcomes which, if implemented effectively, should lead to all children not needing to be subject to a child protection plan within a maximum of 2 years. If this target was not being met it consequently would lead to questioning the understanding of the professionals involved, towards facilitating outcomes for the child.</p> <p>OP381 – (Children in need visits) The recording issues outlined at OP380 were also applicable to the performance of this indicator.</p>	
<p><b>TEX91.</b></p>	<p><b>EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC</b></p> <p>The press and public were excluded from the meeting for consideration of the following item as it contained exempt information as defined in section 100a of the local Government Act 1972 (as amended by section 12A of the local Government Act 1985) paragraphs 1&amp;2 namely information relating to an individual, and information likely to reveal the identity of an individual.</p>	
<p><b>TEX92.</b></p>	<p><b>DISABLED CHILDREN AUDITS</b></p> <p>The Committee had previously heard about two audits concerning the care of disabled child and had requested to consider the findings of the audits in line with their responsibilities for overseeing safeguarding practice and policy.</p> <p>The first of the audits was learning based and conducted by the Disabled Children Policy and Practice review group. It was focussed on a specific child and involved six agencies reviewing their files in the same environment and discussing any required learning points on the care provided to the child. The child's mother was also interviewed to gain her input, on the care received by her child. The Committee noted that this multi agency group had been established for 2 years and were continually examining and challenging their approach to the care of a disabled child. The group had already started examining the safeguarding of disabled children and had previously developed an action plan which was still relevant and applicable today. Key stakeholders of the group included an Independent School Head teacher and, as well as looking at individual cases, the group looked at emerging themes and how services could respond to these. The audits were also a method for examining if the agencies really worked well together.</p>	

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	<p>The findings of this audit had also been considered by the LSCB quality assurance sub group this week. The Committee were asked to note the gaps and learning from the audit exercise which were largely in line with the proposals outlined in the White Paper (support and Aspiration – progress and next steps).</p> <p>The second audit was completed in partnership with the Domestic Violence Co-ordinator and looked at recent cases referred to the Disabled Children's team and the First Response service where the family of the child is known to both teams.</p> <p>There were only 6 cases fitting this category, however the learning from this audit was important and included the need to classify a child as disabled at the first point of contact with the service, First Response. The low numbers of disabled children identified as being affected by DV still warranted it being an area to keep under review because the experiences of this would have a detrimental impact on the emotional wellbeing and safety of a disabled child.</p> <p>The Committee noted that work was underway to identify the children and young people who have Health "blue folders", i.e. children who are known to Social Care but not subject to Child protection plans, but who have an additional need such as speech and language therapy. The outcome of this work would be ready for the Committee to consider after December 2012.</p> <p>The Committee learnt that when completing the audit there was no existing research to call upon relating to Domestic Violence and disabled children.</p>	Clerk
<p><b>TEX93.</b></p>	<p><b>REVIEW OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE WELFARE OF YOUNGER CHILDREN IN A FAMILY IS ADDRESSED WHEN THE PRIMARY REFERRAL RELATES TO AN OLDER SIBLING.</b></p> <p>The Committee had previously asked for an audit to be completed to find out how the needs of younger siblings were assessed and addressed, when the presenting issue is the behaviour of an older young person in the family. The Committee noted that 14% of contacts received by First Response relate to young people aged between 14-17 and are received from a number of sources including police, schools, and the Youth Offending service.</p> <p>There were 7 cases reviewed by the Head of First Response and it was noted that in every case the family were referred or self referred at a point of crisis. Work with the families was over a 4 month period with intensive multi agency contributions, intervention and stabilisation, followed by ongoing social work allocation. Intervention for these families at an early stage was key and cases with similar situations would benefit from the shift in focus to universal and outstanding early help. The learning from this audit, was obtaining support for the older sibling including finding an advocate which the young person was able to</p>	

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	communicate with such as a youth worker. The shift to early intervention, by the Children's service, will in future also help younger siblings in the family as they will get support from a young age.	
<b>TEX94.</b>	<b>EXEMPT ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS</b>  There were no items of urgent exempt business.	
<b>TEX95.</b>	<b>DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING</b>  22 November 2012 7.30pm.  Joint meeting with Corporate Parenting Committee 29 <sup>th</sup> October 7.30pm.	

Cllr James Stewart

Chair