

DEVON AREA CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE

**Minutes of a meeting
Held on Friday 13th January 2006 at Buckfast Abbey**

Present:

Anne Whiteley, Interim Director (Chair), Devon Children's Services
Chris Dimmelow, County Child Protection Manager, Devon Social Services Directorate
Helen Hyland, Designated Nurse, North & East/South & West Devon Health Community
Derek Moore, Assistant Director, NCH
Carole Town, Clinical Psychologist, JACAT and CAMHS
Laura Hubbard Field, Devon Partnership NHS Trust
Jane Richards, Portfolio Holder Child Protection, Devon Local Medical Community
Ann Wilson, Learning & Development Advisor, Human Resource Directorate
Juliet Hammacott, Acting P.E.W.O.
Ann Morecraft, Designated Manager Child Protection
Charles Holme, Designated Doctor, South & West Devon Health Community
Martin Spragg, Youth Offending Service Manager
John Clements, Crime Manager, Devon & Cornwall Police
D.S. Bob Brown, Devon & Cornwall Police
Kearnes Martin Gladwin, CAFCASS
Dave Brander, Superintendent South & West Devon BCU
Peter Jeffs, Corporate Director – Communities, East Devon District Council
John Shaw, Lead Officer, JAS
John Davey, Director of Partnerships, Connexions
Alison Kearnes, ACSM, NSPCC Devon, Dorset & Cornwall
Louisa Grimes, Child Protection Administrator (minute taker)

Apologies

Tony Sweeney, Assistant County Solicitor, Devon County Council
Deborah Booth, Group Manager, Inclusion, Devon Local Education Authority
Alison Lewis Smith, Children's PCT
Claire Mitchell, Exeter PCT
Debra Laphorne, Director of Public Health, South & West Health Community
Adrian Childs, Devon Partnership Trust
Mary Mitchell, Devon & Cornwall Probation Services

Chris Dimmelow advised that Debra Laphorne had now actually resigned from the ACPC.

1. MINUTES OF 15TH JULY AND MATTERS ARISING

Page 1 - Membership:

Hazel Curtis to be removed from the ACPC Membership List.

Page 2 – Licensing Laws:

Chris Dimmelow advised that the process had slowed down considerably, however he noted this was likely to pick up again as they drew closer to the next set of deadlines when full Applications would be required to re-licence premises.

Page 3 – Common Assessment Framework:

The meeting was advised that the National Exemplar Forms would be adopted locally. A multi-agency ISA/CAF Steering Group is being convened to lead the implementation in Devon. (Health Police and Local Authority). Anne Whiteley noted that there were still a lot of issues in respect of information sharing, common assessment framework and integrated children's systems, as none of these were linking together. As a result, the Director General of the DfES, who was responsible for overseeing the project, visited Devon two months ago and was due to send a representative to Devon in November to discuss the complexities of the situation.

Chris Dimmelow distributed a handout headed 'How ICS, CAF and the IS index fit together' and urged members to ensure that practitioners were not developing their own systems/solutions for local use.

Page 4 – Integrated Children's System:

Anne Whiteley advised that in Devon the implementation process had been put back by 6 weeks, as a result of problems with suppliers, however training regarding staff was still on-going.

Page 4 – Ensuring compliance of P.A.F. 20:

Chris Dimmelow advised that Devon was currently running at 99.5 / 99.8%. He noted, however, that once the last case dropped out the system Devon would be running to 100% of reviews being held on time.

Page 4 – Private Fostering:

Chris Dimmelow advised that Devon were due to start a higher profile Awareness Building publicity campaign in respect of private fostering in conjunction with Plymouth, Torbay and Cornwall.

ACTION:

- **ALISON DAVIS TO FORMALLY REPORT BACK AT THE JANUARY MEETING.**

Page 5 – Sudden Infant Death Response Team

Chris Dimmelow advised of his recent meeting with DfES, where the new ways of working together were being considered. One of the areas covered in the working groups was the child death screening teams and the lack of capacity/resources for these roles to be fulfilled. He noted, however, that funds had been allocated to each Safeguarding Board to fund this process, and he aware that pilots were being considered for funding.

ACTION:

- **CHRIS DIMMELOW TO INVESTIGATE FURTHER**
- **CHRIS AND CHARLES TO LIAISE RE: PUTTING THE EXETER PILOT FORWARD FOR FUNDING.**

Page 6 – ACPC Communication

Anne Whiteley advised that most ACPCs recognised the need to promote the Local Children’s Safeguarding Board within the community, however like Devon they were still at the formative stages regarding how that might happen. She advised that one area for debate was the use of the Safe Parenting Handbook as a way to promote some of the LCSB messages. A meeting was due to take place with Torbay and Plymouth ACPCs to consider ways of joint implementation.

It was agreed that there was a need to have a sub-group of the emerging board to look at specific areas of the promotional issue.

Page 7 – Children & Young Person’s Plan for Devon

Chris Dimmelow advised that the draft plan was now available and published on the Devon Children’s Trust Website. The consultation period was running until 25th November 2005 and was due to be signed off and published by 01 April 2006. The requirement was that all Agencies to take the plan through their own decision making process and executive framework.

ACTION:

- **ACPC MEMEBERS TO READ THE DRAFT ‘STAY SAFE’ SECTION AND FEED THEIR COMMENTS BACK TO CHRIS DIMMELOW.**
- **CHRIS DIMMELOW TO RECORD AND CO-ORDINATE FEEDBACK BY DEADLINE IN NOVEMBER.**

Page 7– Substance Misuse & Safeguarding

Chris Dimmelow advised that the second Substance Misuse Group had been convened and that the key area of concentration was the issue of outcomes of Part 8 Reviews in terms of; consistency of the process around recognising the types of situations where children are placed at obvious/direct risk, thresholds, and the clear understanding of the referral processes and the responsibility of the joint assessment processes to determine the nature of intervention.

Page 7 – Part 8 Training for Managers

Chris Dimmelow advised that the training session booked for 19 October 2005 was unable to take place due to John Fitzgerald being away on sick leave. He noted that Renuka Dent had agreed to pick up the area of training and that a date would be scheduled for February 2006.

ACTION:

- **CHRIS DIMMELOW TO SECURE A DATE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**

The meeting was advised that a revised version of the Working Together Guidance Document had been published.

Chris advised that all Part 8's were completed and submitted to CSCI and DfES and noted that the away day in December would look at their outcomes and recommendations of historical Part 8's over a period.

Martin Spragg addressed the issue of adults working with sexually abused children who are potential perpetrators themselves, and advised that a package of one day awareness training programmes entitled Identification of Risk Awareness had been developed to help staff to identify potential sexual abusers.

ACTION:

- **MARTIN SPRAGG TO LIAISE WITH CHRIS DIMMELOW RE; DRIVING AWARENESS OF THE TRAINING PROGRAMMES THROUGH ACPC DISTRIBUTION LIST.**

2. REPORT FROM THE EDUCATION SUB COMMITTEE

It was noted that the meeting date unable to be changed to be held before October's ACPC.

ACTION:

- **JULIET HAMMACOTT TO CIRCULATE A COPY OF THE EDUCATION SUB COMMITTEE MINUTES ONCE AVAILABLE.**

Update re: Child Protection Training in Schools:

Juliet Hammacott advised that to date 31 training sessions had taken place and reached over 500 people. It was hoped that by the end of the academic year, 90% of school staff would be trained. Furthermore, as a result of awareness training for all staff, attendance of teachers and deputies on Multi-Agency Programmes had increased significantly.

ACTION:

- **DATA REGARDING COURSE ATTENDANCE THE IMPACT / RESULT OF AWARENESS TRAINING TO BE CAPTURED AND REPORTED AS PART OF THE REQUIREMENT UNDER THE JOINT AREA REVIEW PROCESS.**

Martin Spragg addressed the issue of sharing information with schools in respect of Young Offenders, in particular the concerns re: a) data protection and b) how some schools use that information.

ACTION:

- **TO BE EXPLORED FURTHER OUTSIDE THE MEETING.**

3. REPORT FROM THE TRAINING SUB COMMITTEE

Ann Wilson presented an overview of the minutes from the Training Subgroup dated 4th October 2005.

The meeting discussed the issue of gaps within the 'College of Training' approach and the need for more commitment / trainers to complete the courses in the numbers required. It was agreed that this was an area for further development.

ACTION:

- **ANN WILSON TO DEVELOP FURTHER WITHOUT COMPROMISING THE CONSISTENCY & QUALITY OF STANDARDS.**

Ann Wilson presented an update re: the E-learning Programme being developed for usage by frontline staff in respect of Outcomes from Serious Case Reviews. She noted, however, that costs had doubled (to the tune of £8-10K) and asked for feedback from ACPC members.

ACTION:

- **ANN WILSON TO PROGRESS INITIATIVE FURTHER**
- **CONSIDERATION TO BE GIVEN TO NEXT STAGES IN TERMS OF ROLLING OUT TO NEIGHBOURING AUTHORITIES**

Action Learning Sets

The meeting was advised that the proposal was strongly supported at the Training Sub Committee as it was felt to be a way of addressing some key issues, particularly in respect of consistency of thresholds, an area reflected in the core themes of the inspections.

ACTION:

- **CHRIS DIMMELOW, ANN WILSON AND ALISON DAVIS TO WORK UP FURTHER IN DEVELOPING A 'PRACTICE MODEL'.**

Chris Dimmelow advised that the proposal to incorporate Domestic Violence Foundation Training into general Child Protection Training had raised concerns as this was potentially laying down the marker for all types of representation. He noted that as the broader scope of Local Children's Safeguarding Boards developed, the issue of wider interests being reflected in training programmes (e.g. drug & alcohol misuse, mental health) was an area of debate. This meeting discussed this in detail and the general view was that this posed a risk of ultimately compromising the

integrity of core Child Protection Training.

ACTION:

- **FURTHER CONSIDERATION TO BE GIVEN TO THIS IN TERMS OF IDENTIFYING THE KEY AREAS TO SIT WITHIN THE CORE, AND THE AREAS THAT SHOULD SIT ON THE OUTSIDE.**

Ann Wilson circulated details of a free Study Day in London on 11th November 2005 re: Parental Mental Health and Child Welfare

4. REPORT FROM THE HEALTH SUB COMMITTEE

Ann Morecraft presented an overview of key agenda items discussed at the last Health Sub Committee.

ACTION:

- **ANN TO FORWARD A FULL COPY OF THE MINUTES TO CHRIS DIMMELOW FOR CIRCULATION TO ACPC MEMEBERS.**

5. REPORT FROM THE CASE REVIEW SUB COMMITTEE

Chris Dimmelow advised that the Part 8 Reviews in respect of LB and MG had been completed and final reports were with DfES and CSCI pending their feedback.

Chris Dimmelow provided an overview of the work in progress including the following key points:

LB

- Following the inquest there was a view that working relationships needed to be reviewed, and this was now in progress.
- LB's mother had asked for representation in the Part 8 Review process and in the absence of any guidance re: parental input, this was going ahead.
- There were general concerns re: the possibility of litigation progressing with DCC and the Partnership Trust.

ACTION:

- **CHRIS DIMMELOW TO KEEP MEMBERS UPDATED.**

MG

- MG's uncle was convicted and received 5 year for charges of Manslaughter and Neglect.
- There were no significant issues for agencies re: their involvement with MG, although there were some concerns re: communication between Education and Children's Services.

NOTE:

- **CHRIS DIMMELOW TO MARK 'CONFIDENTIAL' ON THE FRONT PAGE OF ALL FUTURE REPORTS.**

AC (Mid Devon Case)

The meeting discussed the need for a Part 8 Review vs. a formal Case Audit and it was agreed that the criteria was met for a Part 8 Review.

ACTION:

- **CHRIS DIMMELOW TO WRITE UP AS A PART 8 REVIEW.**

Paper Audit

ACTION:

- **CHRIS DIMMELOW TO FOLLOW UP RE: THE RESOURCES IDENTIFIED TO CARRY OUT OVERVIEW ANALYSIS.**

Martin Spragg referred to the two recent Part 8's, noting that both were teenagers and expressed the growing concern amongst YOT services in respect of more and more risks being taken with teenagers and their general living situation. It was felt that the situation was worsening and needed to be addressed as a matter of priority.

Anne Whiteley acknowledged these concerns and suggested that tools such as the Common Assessment Framework and the Children & Young Person Plan were ways to begin the process of taking this forward.

6. SAFEGUARDING BOARD

Chris Dimmelow advised that a letter had been circulated amongst agencies, setting out Section 11 responsibilities, asking for nominations, and seeking commitment re: financial contributions.

Representatives received to date include:

- John Davey, ConneXions
- Martin Gladwin, CAF/CASS
- Adrian Childs, Devon Partnership Trust
- Mary Mitchell, Devon & Cornwall Probation Service
- Alison Lewis-Smith and Alison Alan, North Devon PCT
- Peter Geoffs, East Devon
- Karen Grimshaw, South Hams / West Devon PCT (Chris Reilly to Deputise)

It was noted that a response was outstanding from the following agencies:

- Police, Mid Devon PCT, Teignbridge, Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital, YOT and the Strategic Health Authority.

Regarding funding, it was noted that there was an 'in principal' commitment from most agencies who responded, but that a request had been made for a more detailed account of budget allocations.

ACTION:

- **HELEN HYLAND TO CHASE REPRESENTATION FROM MID DEVON**
- **CHRIS DIMMELOW AND ANNE WHITELEY TO DISCUSS BUDGET ALLOCATION AND RESPOND TO QUERIES**
- **NEW MEMBERSHIP TO BE INVITED TO THE NEXT ACPC MEETING IN JANUARY AS A 'SHADOW' ARRANGEMENT.**
- **CONSIDERATION TO BE GIVEN TO SUB GROUPS NEEDED AS PART OF THE EMERGING SAFEGUARDING BOARD.**

Anne Whiteley advised that she recently had a very positive meeting with District Councils, and it seemed they had a high awareness of their responsibilities re: Safeguarding, and were keen to take part in that agenda. They appeared to be in tune with their responsibilities under Section 11 and keen to play a more strengthened role in the Children's Trust.

Another awareness raising meeting was being scheduled in November with Counsellor John Smith and the non executive chairs of the PCT's, District Council, inviting all Section 11 partners who have a duty to cooperate and members.

Martin Spragg advised that with 33% of the Safe & Strong budget was being allocated to the CSP's, and suggested putting in a request to have part of these funds used as their contribution to Section 11.

ACTION:

- **MARTIN SPRAGG TO RAISE AND ADVISE OF OUTCOME.**

7. CHILD CONCERN PATHWAY

Anne Whiteley advised that the Consultation for Devon was now available on the Children's Trust website.

ACTION:

- **ALL AGENCIES TO DISCUSS AND PROVIDE FEEDBACK, PARTICULARLY IN TERMS OF IDENTIFYING THE RANGE OF AGENCIES WHO CAN POPULATE THE LEVELS.**

8. COMMON ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Anne Whiteley advised that a strategy meeting was being held in November, with key representatives from Health, Police and the Local Authority, to discuss and agree the implementation process. She noted that a Project Manager would soon be appointed to take forward the development and implementation plan.

9. SEXUAL ASSAULT REFERRAL CENTRE

Charles Holme advised that a bid had been submitted to Victim Support at the Home Office and was pending a response.

ACTION:

- **CHARLES HOLME TO KEEP MEMBERS UPDATED.**

10. POLICE CENTRAL REFERRAL UNIT

Bob Brown advised that he had recently received feedback which stated that it was not possible to aim for a centralised unit and that the way forward was on a more decentralised basis. In terms of how this would impact referral units, the proposed plan was to have a referral unit for each of the BCU's. Bob noted that whilst there were benefits in terms of risk assessments around domestic violence and missing persons, there were also concerns re: the assessment of 121A, and the work required to ensure that the important cases are allocated to the appropriate people.

Overall it was felt that the proposed way forward presented mutual and very positive opportunities for Social Services as well as Police in terms of:

- the issues of resource implications and how these could be resolved through the joint police / children's services.
- the opportunity to resolve issues around Part 8 Reviews re: communication and consistency of thresholds for Section 47's.
- the effectiveness of an integrated helpdesk service and the mutual benefits of this moving forward.

ACTION:

- **TO BE AN AGENDA ITEM AT THE NEXT MEETING**
- **BOB BROWN AND CHRIS DIMMELOW TO DISCUSS NEXT STAGES AND HOW SOCIAL SERVICES CAN FORM PART OF THE ONGOING DISCUSSIONS.**

11. JOINT CHIEF INSPECTORS REPORT

Chris Dimmelow presented a summary of the report. Anne Whiteley stressed the importance of giving focussed attention to the findings of this report, in particular around the issue of Behavioural Management.

ACTION:

- **CHRIS DIMMELOW AND CHARLES HOLME TO UNDERTAKE AN ANALYSIS TO IDENTIFY WHAT THE CRITICAL ISSUES ARE FOR ACPC, WORK OUT AN ACTION PLAN AND REPORT BACK TO THE JANUARY MEETING.**
- **DEBRA LAPTHORNE, MARTIN SPRAGG, MARY MITCHELL AND JULIET HAMMACOTT TO DRAW UP AN ACTION PLAN MATRIX BASED ON RECOMMENDATIONS MADE IN THE REPORT.**

12. CROSS GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE – SHARING INFORMATION ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Chris Dimmelow present a summary of the report, and noted that it provided a blue print in terms of what information should be shared and the criteria which should be applied in the decision making process.

ACTION:

- **COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO PASS THEIR COMMENTS TO CHRIS BY 7TH NOVEMBER TO ENABLE A RESPONSE TO BE SUBMITTED BY 15TH NOVEMBER.**
- **TO BE AN AGENDA ITEM AT THE NEXT MEETING.**

The meeting discussed the lack of clarity re: information sharing in the absence of any clear guidance, the number of protocols in existence and how this was impacting on how agencies were being expected to work.

ACTION:

- **COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO INVESTIGATE THE EXISTENCE OF INFORMATION SHARING PROTOCOLS IN THEIR RESPECTIVE AGENCIES, AND REPORT BACK TO THE NEXT MEETING.**

13. IDENTIFICATION OF INDIVIDUALS WHO POSE A RISK TO CHILDREN

Chris Dimmelow presented a summary of the report. He noted that there were very broad additional requirements being placed on agencies, particularly Children's Services, in terms of areas of assessment and possible action.

A discussion took place and the following points were highlighted / addressed:

- the issues re: communicating known offenders, and the wider issue of those who have not been convicted.
- Concerns re: young people presenting risks to other young people and MAPPA's recognition of this as an issue.
- The crossover into health in terms of e.g. mental health and where this fits in with data protection policies.
- IT systems and the financial implications to widen the definition from Schedule One Offenders.

ACTION:

- **CHRIS DIMMELOW TO SEEK ADVICE FROM TONY SWEENEY AND OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES.**
- **CHRIS DIMMELOW TO PRESENT AND DISCUSS WITH MAPPA AND FEEDBACK TO COMMITTEE MEMBERS.**

14. WILLOWBROOK CHILD PROTECTION PROJECT

Jennie Martin presented an overview of the project being carried out in 7 schools in the Willowbrook Learning Centre:

Purpose of the Pilot:

For Social Services to have a strong presence in schools to facilitate communication and provide consistency of workers. The idea was to take cases on from strategy to Child Protection Case Conferences, through to registration and later de-registration.

Key benefits:

- Communication and learning increased, resulting in a reduced number of referrals coming from schools, which were previously much higher due to the differing perceptions re: thresholds.
- Identifying school perceptions of Children's Services (e.g. never receiving any feedback) and providing them with a clearer understanding of processes and the allocation of limited resources to affect the most change.
- Closer communication with schools that have a more in depth understanding of the children and their families which is extremely valuable.
- Facilitation the identification of patterns of interaction between parents and child(ren) as well as the intuition which can be lost through assessment by distance.
- Allows for an improved relationship between social workers and schools in terms of trust and a mutual understanding of key concerns.

ACTION:

- **JENNIE MARTIN TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE TO THE NEXT MEETING.**

15. A.O.B.

Helen Hyland addressed a key issue of individuals undertaking different types of training e.g. Nursery Nurses, whose children were/are on the Child Protection Register. It was agreed that the proposed way forward was for key workers to understand the reasons for child being placed on the Register, discuss and advise universities/colleges and potential employers to make them aware of the implications. Depending on their response, key worker to feed back for strategic discussion.

Chris Dimmelow presented the following papers for information only:

- a) NSPCC National Child Protection Symposium 17th – 18th May 2006
- b) South West Region MAPPA Seminar 17th November 2005
- c) Peninsula Family Justice Forum 1st November 2005
- d) LGA Domestic Violence Information Bulletin.

16. NEXT MEETING

The next ACPC meetings were scheduled for:

1. 9th December 2005 (interim meeting)
2. 13th January 2006
3. 17th March 2006