

DEVON LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday 7th December 2007 at The Knowle, Sidmouth

Present

Anne Whiteley, Director of Children & Young People's Services
Deborah Booth, Strategic Project Manager for Educational Achievement of Children in Care
Chris Dimmelow, Children's Safeguarding Manager, Devon Children & Young People's Services
Jane Richards, Portfolio Holder, Devon Local Medical Committee
Alison Kearnes, Assistant Director, NSPCC Devon Dorset & Cornwall
Helen Hyland, Designated Nurse – Child Protection – Devon
Janet Phipps, General Manager for Women's Children's and Sexual Health, Northern Devon Healthcare Trust
Michele Thornberry, Named Nurse – Child Protection – Devon and Chair of LSCB Training and Workforce Development Sub-Group
John Davey, Director of Service Delivery, Connexions Cornwall & Devon
Mary Mitchell, Assistant Chief Officer, Devon & Cornwall Probation Service
Martin Spragg, Youth Offending Services Manager
Graeme Barnell, Adult & Community Services
Roy Tomlinson, Adva
Laura Spittles, Named Nurse – Child Protection, Devon NHS Partnership Trust
Maria Kasprzyk, Police & Performance Improvement Manager, Devon County Council
Charles Holme, Designated Doctor – Child Protection – Devon
Richard Tomlinson, Consultant Paediatrician, R D & E Hospital (Wonford) Exeter
Virginia Pearson, Director of Public Health
Catriona Cunningham, Nurse Consultant (Safeguarding Children) Torbay Hospital
Cathy Ellingford, Children's Lead Representative (SW Region) Devon PCT
Ian Fraser-Roe, A/DCI Devon & Cornwall Police Community Support Unit
Bill Pascoe, DCI, Devon and Cornwall Police
Peter Jeffs, Director of Communities, East Devon District Council
Ray Charran, Child Protection Officer, North Devon (attending as observer)
Julie Phillips, Administrator/Minute Taker

Apologies / copy of minutes to:

Jo Tennant, BCU Commander for Devon, Devon & Cornwall Constabulary
Lucy Beckwith, Operational Manager Child Health, South Devon Healthcare NHS Trust
Peter Mitchell, Head of Service – CAFCASS
Beverley Dubash, Principal Education Welfare Officer
Derek Moore, Assistant Director of NCH Devon and Cornwall
Chris Reilly – Named Nurse – Child Protection
Bob Brown – Head of Community Support Unit, Devon & Cornwall Police
Mandy Cox, NHS South West
Claire Mitchell, Nurse Consultant (Safeguarding Children) R D & E NHS Trust

1. ORGANISATIONAL UPDATE INFORMATION

DLCSB were advised that Jo Tennant had been appointed BCU Commander for new Devon. At the moment, North/East and South/West BCUs were working alongside each other. Anne Whiteley on behalf of the Board stated that the move to a single BCU for Devon was a welcome development.

Virginia Pearson gave a verbal update as follows: a number of extremely helpful meetings between senior PCT officers and SHA colleagues had taken place. The PCT had been looking at how to strengthen the governance arrangements within the PCT and planned to establish a PCT Child Protection Committee, which she would chair. The aim of that Committee would be to be a single route through which everything of a child protection nature requiring addressing by the PCT was dealt with - including following SCRs through and looking at new arrangements around child deaths. The Committee's proposed terms of reference were currently in the process of ratification. Once

the Child Protection Committee had had its first meeting, the agreed terms of reference would be brought to a LSCB meeting for Board members to note. It was envisaged that the Committee would develop into safeguarding roles at a later stage.

Chris Dimmelow was congratulated by Anne Whiteley, on behalf of the Board, for the revised agenda and associated greatly reduced paperwork. Today's meeting was the first LSCB meeting since the Development Day in October 2007.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Helen Hyland (afternoon session) Beverley Dubash (morning session) Bob Brown, Mandy Cox, and Peter Mitchell.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Accuracy and Matters Arising

Page 1 – Apologies for Absence – should also include Virginia Pearson.

Page 3 – Revised Version LSCB Funding Agreement – Chris Dimmelow confirmed that an invoice was sent out to Jo Tennant, although he did not know if it had been paid yet.

Page 4 – Phasing Out of the Child Protection Register – Maria Kasprzyk reported that she had been in contact with Government Office South West and were awaiting functionality from Care First to allow phasing out electronically. The upgrade would be activated in three weeks' time - however Devon would not be compliant on 1st April 2008 but would be on 18th May 2008. Devon would still be one of the only 10% of authorities going live at that point. Devon had changed its wording around child protection registration on all DCC paperwork, and had a meeting with DCEF in around five weeks time concerning the phasing out of the register. DCC Leaflets were being reviewed and a leaflet of explanation for all professionals would be drawn up.

ACTION:

MARIA KASPRZYK TO PROVIDE AN UPDATE REPORT TO THE NEXT LSCB MEETING.

Page 5 – Report of the Training Sub-Group – Chris Dimmelow confirmed he had sent the hyperlink for the DCC website, and Board members should have received this. Maria Kasprzyk added that a piece of work was being undertaken with Richard Stephens to ensure that the site was tidied and smartened up.

Page 6 – Report of the Case Review Sub-Committee: Case RM – Chris Dimmelow confirmed that this case was proceeding to Serious Case Review. Dr Ellen Wilkinson, Consultant Psychiatrist, would co-author the Overview Report with an Independent Social Worker. It was hoped that a first draft would be produced fairly soon.

Page 6 – Case KB – sentence should read “He said the adopters were clearly powerful, articulate people and their influence on the chain of events was not insubstantial.”

Pages 7/8 – Cases RB and KW – Chris Dimmelow confirmed that final reports had been completed and would be submitted to Government Office South West and OFSTED in accordance with usual procedures, as well as being copied to all other relevant parties.

Page 9 – ADVA Conference – Anne Whiteley said she had attended the ADVA Conference, which was excellent. Roy Tomlinson advised he had received a lot of positive feedback about this event and had not yet had the opportunity to go through all the feedback forms. The aim of the Conference had been to push the agenda around domestic violence and its impact on children and families. The ADVA partnership planned to follow up what the impact had been and what actions people intended to take within their respective organisations.

Anne Whiteley had been particularly impressed by a speech by Dr George Hoskins who had a financial and business background as well as a clinical background. Dr Hoskins had undertaken a lot of work on the impact of prior and early intervention work around child abuse and Anne Whiteley felt there was a need to think about where Devon should be concentrating their efforts. She thought it would be a good idea to invite Dr Hoskins to Devon to share his views with a small group, and felt Virginia Pearson should be part of that process. Any other LSCB members who were interested were asked to speak to Anne Whiteley during the coffee or lunch breaks today.

Charles Holme noted that two of the big issues in the recent NHS Review were services for children aged 3-6 years and substance misuse.

Page 10 – Hidden Harm Action Plan – Martin Spragg reported that somewhere in the region of £300,000 was at risk of being cut from budgets in respect of substance misuse services for young people – for Tier 2 services. The Hidden Harm initiative could also be at risk consequently. Although funding was in place to March 2008, redundancy notices would have to be issued at the end of December and services would have to end in January 2008. Representation from the DLCSB would be helpful. Virginia Pearson noted that adult services would end up with a net reduction in funding, albeit changes would not be as significant as for children and young people's services. Strong representation had been made to the NTA, who in the past had congratulated Devon for excellence in terms of service provision and commissioning. Voluntary sector representatives had said that their staff were already starting to look for other jobs. As voluntary sector organisations did not have guaranteed funding after 31st March 2008, they had no option other than to issue redundancies.

Roy Tomlinson wondered if the LSCB could look for investment by partner agencies to do some of the work. Anne Whiteley noted representations should be made through LAA, the Association of Directors of Children's Services and Government Office South West. Anne Whiteley wanted a letter drafted containing the relevant performance information, for her to sign and then send on.

ACTION:

MAUREEN MUKERSEY TO DRAFT LETTER FOR ANNE WHITELEY TO SIGN EXPRESSING LSCB DISQUIET AT PROPOSED FUNDING CUTS.

Anne Whiteley felt consideration needed to be given as to how to start to stabilise some of the funding. Authorities had been given 198 Performance Indicators by the Government, 16 of which every Local Authority had to have in their Local Area Agreement relating to children in the education system. Then Local Authorities and partners had to select up to 35 from that national list and additionally select Local Indicators. Devon LSCB needed to prioritise what Performance Indicators they needed as part of the Devon Local Area Agreement. Virginia Pearson observed one of the Performance Indicators to be to reduce harms from alcohol and drugs. Anne Whiteley added that among the 35 PIs to be chosen had to be some safeguarding indicators.

Martin Spragg noted that in addition to the 35 PIs, there were Public Service Agreement Targets and substance misuse was one of the Youth PIs. Even if substance misuse was not one of the 35, it would get some prominence through Public Service Agreement Targets. Anne Whiteley observed the issue of reduced funding for substance prevention work to be a major concern given the level of alcohol misuse problem in Devon.

Ian Fraser-Roe stated that there is a Police National Indicator 71 for young runaways and children who go missing. Linked areas of concern there were domestic violence, alcohol/drug misuse and sexual exploitation within the family.

ACTION:

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS TO FORM AN AGENDA ITEM FOR THE NEXT LSCB MEETING. IN THE MEANTIME, ANNE WHITELEY AND VIRGINIA PEARSON TO LOOK AT THE LIST OF PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND E-MAIL LSCB MEMBERS SOME PROPOSALS WHICH THEY CAN AGREE BY E-MAIL.

Pages 11/12/13 - Contact Point Update – Anne Whiteley advised that Ed Balls, Secretary of State, had asked for independent scrutiny of Contact Point as an information sharing mechanism and this piece of work was to be undertaken by Deloitte. Implementation of Contact Point had been put back to 2009. Anne Whiteley had received a report from the Children’s Commissioner covering the views of children and young people on Contact Point. They were raising many of the issues the LSCB had raised in the past – their concerns were around the integrity, accuracy and sharing of such information. The children most at risk would not be visible through Contact Point. Meanwhile there was no suggestion of funding being withdrawn in connection with the implementation of Contact point.

Page 14 – Children’s Trust Partnership Day - Anne Whiteley asked that more LSCB members participate. The second Partnership Day would take place on Tuesday 22nd January 2008.

4. ISSUES ARISING FROM THE LSCB DEVELOPMENT DAY

4a Agenda Structure

The new agenda structure was noted by the Board, Chris Dimmelow adding that any comments/feedback in respect of items for information should be made by e-mail to him following Board meetings.

Anne Whiteley suggested the first part of the meeting should be for strategic issues as well as minutes of the last meeting and matters arising. This was agreed.

ACTION:

THE FIRST PART OF EACH LSCB AGENDA TO BE SET ASIDE FOR STRATEGIC ISSUES, AS WELL AS FOR CONSIDERING THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING.

4b Report Front sheet

A draft report front sheet was received by the Board. Mary Mitchell suggested the need to include any financial implications plus the risks of taking or not taking a proposed course of action. This was agreed.

Janet Phipps suggested that once Performance Indicators were identified, these too should be put on the front sheet. Anne Whiteley suggested highlighting predominant PIs only plus linking in with Data Set. Chris Dimmelow responded that he would see if he could build something into Section 3 of the form (DLSCB Scrutiny).

Jane Richards considered that the second box under the Report is for section could be deleted. This was agreed.

ACTION:

THE DRAFT FRONT SHEET TO BE AMENDED AS AGREED ABOVE AND THE FORM TO BE REVIEWED IN SIX MONTHS’ TIME.

4c Proposals for Independent Chair

Mary Mitchell and Anne Whiteley had had an interesting discussion of the case for and against an independent LSCB Chair, and looked at other organisations. Mary Mitchell very much agreed that “effective chairing always comes down to knowledge, leadership and personality.” Lord Laming was still of the opinion that Local Authority Chief Executives should chair, but there needed to be a link to an authority’s Children’s Trust.

Anne Whiteley reported that she had spoken with Penny Mathers, the regional Government Office South West link – some parts of the country had opted for Independent Chairs and this had not worked out. All the Local Authorities in the far South West were thinking about independent chairs

and there was a national trend towards that. There was a move into a very different phase of governance now – with an added emphasis on delivery. Anne Whiteley said that the idea of an independent LSCB chair was gaining national support, the Director of Children’s Services would then line manage the chair. She and Mary Mitchell had looked very carefully into the pros and cons and felt the time was now right to explore the idea of an independent Chair, with a view to one being in post next year. This would be a Local Authority appointment and LSCB members would need to recommend the proposal.

Chris Dimmelow advised that a regional LSCB meeting had taken place last week in Taunton. Some of the discussion at that meeting had been around the move to independent chairing of LSCBs, including because of the increasing public profile of LSCBs. Information from attendees from LSCBs with independent chairs was that LSCBs would be looking at an additional £12,000 to £15,000 costs per year (£500 a day for around 18 days’ work a year). Partner organisations would have to increase their yearly contributions proportionately. Anne Whiteley remarked that if what was being sought was a Chair to be part of MAPP and the Children’s Trust, more days than that would be required.

Martin Spragg suggested a way forward might be for Devon to share an LSCB Chair with a neighbouring authority, so that one post-holder could be offered substantially more hours’ work. Mary Mitchell cautioned the need to get the right person for the job. Chairing across a number of LSCBs would be a heavy work commitment and the post holder needed to have a good grasp of cross-agency issues.

Roy Tomlinson asked if there was any scope for working across LAAs. Chris Dimmelow responded this had been raised by South-West LSCBs at the Taunton regional meeting last week. The consensus view was that it would be a big job to Chair across a number of LSCBs. Mary Mitchell responded that what was not being sought was a full-time, professional Chair. Graeme Barnell felt the post holder needed to give the job the time it needed and would have a responsibility for quality assurance. Anne Whiteley added another important part of the job was the promotion of the LSCB and its work to all partnerships.

ACTION:

LSCB MEMBERS TO APPRAISE THEIR RESPECTIVE ORGANISATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL TO SEEK AN INDEPENDENT CHAIR FOR THE DEVON LSCB.

ANNE WHITELEY AND MARY MITCHELL TO TAKE PROPOSALS FORWARD.

4d Revised LSCB Business Plan Template

Anne Whiteley thanked Alison Kearnes and Chris Dimmelow for their work on this document.

Alison Kearnes explained that in drawing up the Business Plan, they had tried to keep the document as slim line as possible the idea being it would be used at each LSCB meeting and updated from each, so that each Board member knew the LSCBs financial position.

Chris Dimmelow said he and Alison had looked at a number of LSCB Business Plans and agreed the principle “small is beautiful”. Efforts had been made so that the draft document before the meeting made good readable sense. There was a desire to keep the good parts of Devon’s previous Plans, including around measurable objectives.

Chris Dimmelow confirmed that this document was on the DCC website. An appointment had recently been made to provide Business Support to the LSCB and this person was due to start in post on Monday 7th January 2008. There would therefore be a single source through which to make any amendments to the Business Plan. As with the revised agenda and report front sheet, there was a need to work with these documents for a while to see how they worked in practice and what changes were required. The layout of the Business Plan needed to reflect changes to the Children and Young people’s Services Plan.

Anne Whiteley considered that some of the process detail could be part of the Sub-Groups' responsibilities, so that in effect there was a Business Plan/Action Plan for each Sub-Group. Chris Dimmelow added that Sub-Groups would be responsible for specific areas of work and to update the Business Plan accordingly.

ACTION:

THE REFRESHED LSCB BUSINESS PLAN TO BE FITTED INTO THE NEW BUSINESS PLAN TEMPLATE.

Anne Whiteley felt there to be a need for something over than the actual Business Plan which showed tasks to be fully completed. Chris Dimmelow suggested this could be achieved by way of a summary report listing those tasks completed and those needing completion. Alison Kearnes added that this also needed to be reflected in LSCB agendas.

Anne Whiteley agreed Graeme Barnell's suggestion of an Action Log.

ACTION:

AN ACTION LOG TO BE USED, WITH EFFECT FROM THE NEXT LSCB MEETING, TO CLEARLY SHOW TASKS COMPLETED OR TO BE COMPLETED. (i.e. CLOSED OR OPEN)

4e Revised LSCB Links with Adva and MARACS

Roy Tomlinson spoke to this item, explaining that at a meeting between Adva and CYPS a few weeks ago it was felt the membership of the Domestic Violence Sub-Group was not the right mix. Initially, the group was mostly a mixture of Adva and Children and Young People's Services representatives, but it was felt it should include PCT and other representatives.

Roy Tomlinson stated that there was a short term impending financial issue around children in Women's Refuges in the county. Funding to the tune of around £80,000 might be withdrawn. The Sub-Group was seeking approval in principal to the recommendations contained within their report, as well as to revising the membership of the Sub-Group and working to new terms of reference.

The LSCB agreed the proposals.

4f Revised Protocol LSCB/Children's Trust

Anne Whitely suggested she pick up this issue with Mary Mitchell as part of their ongoing work.

Maria Kasprzyk felt there was a need to consider which policies belonged to the LSCB and which to the Children's Trust, and how to develop these policies. The policy regarding missing children and young people could be said to belong to both the LSCB and the Children's Trust. Anne Whiteley responded that if this was part of the LSCB's Business Plan that should be signed off by the Board, but would need to go to the Children's Trust as well. There was a need to be clear about where decisions were being made. Where there were resource implications, some work would need to be taken to the Chief Officers' Group.

5 CHILD DEATH REVIEW STEERING GROUP – FUNDING PROPOSALS

Chris Dimmelow stated that the tabled paper described where the Panel had got to, to date. Their responsibilities would commence from 1st. April 2008 and the expectation was that that date would stand.

In terms of compliance from other LSCBs, Devon was better advanced than some. Most LSCBs, like Devon, were going for some corporate arrangement with fellow LSCBs. The Steering Group had been told that the Minister was still considering cost implications for LSCBs and might be minded to make some grant monies available, but no assurances or timescales had been given as to when that decision might be made. Costs covered only the costs of establishing and running the

Child Death Steering Panel. The costs of the Rapid Response Teams will fall to PCTs and the Police to fund in the main, although there would be some implications for the Children's Trust.

Chris Dimmelow advised that the job description for the Child Death Overview Panel Co-ordinator was now issued. The post holder would need to be someone who was skilled at collating statistics and analysing information. Charles Holme observed that the support offered to the Co-ordinator would be critical – including from the Chair and the Designated Doctor.

Chris Dimmelow stated that it had been suggested the Child Death overview Panel be chaired by one of the 4 LSCB Chairs on an annual rotating basis, but on reflection this was felt not to be a good idea. Chairing the CDOP would be a significant responsibility. No costs had been built into the budget for an Independent Chair. Costs in respect of a Designated Doctor had been built in, as this was the only specific requirement laid down in "Working Together". Workload implications for voluntary Panel members would be significant. Another cost which had been built in to the budget was £20,000 for CEMACH services. They were offering a range of services based on their existing expertise and undertaking child death reviews, which CDOPs might wish to purchase.

The costings between the 4 LSCBs were based on total population rather than child population. There was a need to consider how contributions were paid – whether by means of a straightforward split between the 4 areas or not.

Charles Holmes understood CEMACH to be offering a service on four levels, in respect of unexpected deaths:

- (1) notifications system for each child death
- (2) the bringing together of information in respect of that death
- (3) informing the case review
- (4) feeding information through to the Child Death Review Panel

Charles Holme thought it would be best to ask CEMACH to help with regard to the notification system – as a failsafe position – and with regard to (4) above. The CDOP should be able to do (2) and (3) themselves, and the money thus saved could be utilised as a contribution towards the cost of the Chair. It was hoped Rapid Response Teams would be funded by PCTs. It was felt that 1 session of doctor (Paediatrician) time and one session of Co-ordinator time should be attributable to each PCT. What was envisaged was not an overnight service, but a day time service operating 7 days a week. Anne Whiteley agreed items (2) and (3) being done locally – it was important to hold on to local information about child deaths.

Charles Holme felt there was a larger issue – to communicate to all relevant parties the need to co-ordinator and produce accurate information. A publicity drive would be required here.

Chris Dimmelow advised that currently the emphasis was on drawing up protocols for Rapid Response Teams and Child Death Overview Panels

Anne Whiteley observed that from the discussion thus far in the meeting, there were a number of financial bids coming up. There was a need to look at these together and for someone from DCC Finance to work them, through. Chris Dimmelow responded that costings to date had been undertaken by Paul O'Sullivan of Plymouth PCT who had used his finance department to do initial assessment. Virginia Pearson cautioned the need to be sure that this information was accurate and up-to-date. If there was anything else to come through, the Board would need to know as soon as possible, as the LDP process was kicking in.

Ian Fraser-Roe commented that neither he nor Bill Pascoe could make decisions regarding financing, and he wondered if the LSCB had a Finance Sub-Group or similar. If so, he would suggest the Chair should be a member of the CDOP. Chris Dimmelow responded that in terms of the current invoices that had been sent out and the financial information that formed that budget, this was done by Children and Young People's Services. He felt the figures were the final figures, apart from whether the LSCB wanted to include the CEMACH costs. These figures had been accepted by the other LSCBs in terms of making a final decision.

Cathy Ellingford made the point that Health Visitors did not work weekends and she estimated those costs would be in the region of £100,000. There were Community Children's Nurses and School Nurses who could perhaps be utilised, and they would cost less than Health Visitors.

Graeme Barnell remarked that it seemed to him the LSCB needed its own budget and for participating agencies to sign up to making their contribution. He suggested it might be a good idea to have a budget set. Chris Dimmelow responded that the LSCB did have a budget, but CDOPs were something new. Anne Whiteley commented that this could not be looked at in isolation from the Independent Chair or from the CDOP Co-ordinator.

Chris Dimmelow stated that he would prefer a more budget planning approach, but information/direction was coming out piecemeal from Local Government. His suggestion would be to leave the £20,000 in the budget so that what was not used could cover other costs or be a contribution to larger costs such as for an Independent Chair. The original budget was based on Chapter 3 of "Working Together".

ACTION:

THE LSCB AGREE IN PRINCIPAL TO LEAVE THE CEMACH COSTINGS WITHIN THE BUDGET.

ANNE WHITELEY TO IDENTIFY WHICH DCC FINANCE OFFICER WOULD CHECK THE BUDGET.

THERE IS A NEED TO CONSIDER WHETHER APPORTIONMENT OF COSTS IS BASED ON THE EXISTING FUNDING FORMULA OR ON A MORE EQUAL SPLIT.

6 DEVON LSCB LOGO

Some Board members did not like the idea of an umbrella, as that could be interpreted in a negative way. However, this has been developed by young people. The smallest of the suggested logos was considered too small to be easily read.

It was agreed by a majority vote that the smallest logo would be adopted, but the font changed to make the wording more readable.

7 OPERATION CYCLONE

Ian Fraser-Roe gave a verbal presentation of Operation Cyclone, the Devon & Cornwall Constabulary's day of action which had been extensively covered in the local press.

Since 2005, Ian Fraser-Roe had been in post with the remit to review how Devon & Cornwall Constabulary dealt with missing persons and to bring practice into line with national guidance, plus to pick up issues around adult deaths. Across the force, Missing Persons Officers had been employed and in Devon that team worked with a dedicated social care worker. The Police had been working very closely with CYPS and Maria Kasprzyk to devise a joint agency protocol of reporting and responding, and this had gone to SMT.

As a prelude to the day of action, on 15th October 2007, some research was conducted into management information around missing children. Rifford Road Children's Home was found to be the main source – missing children found to be twice as likely to come from there as any other child care establishment in the area. It was found that the best time to deploy Police would be at 10.30 p.m. on a Saturday evening. Police went to Rifford Road before the day of action in order to introduce themselves to staff and clients and to explain what they were going to do. A further visit was made later in the week in order to cover other staff on different shifts.

The relationship between the neighbourhood beat officer and the young people at Rifford Road was found to be a very good and positive one. However, there were some gaps in terms of how to improve management information.

On Saturday 3rd November, between 5.00 p.m. and 2.00 a.m., Exeter as a whole was targeted. During this time there were 48 missing person reports, 68 linked incidents and 17 missing persons linked to crimes. There were no reports of missing young people from Rifford Road. A follow-up visit revealed 4 out of 7 children to have been away for the weekend and the remaining 3 were on the premises. A follow-up visit to Heavitree Road Police Station was also undertaken and some areas of practice were put right.

Ian Fraser-Roe then gave a précis of 6 young people covered by the day of action, as follows:

KB – a 14 year old female reported missing from Rifford Road and returned to there the same day.

KN – a 15 year old reporting missing from Rifford Road. When the Return Interview was undertaken, she was found to have grazing to her knuckles. Police intelligence was that she was reported missing with another Looked After Child – this girl had purchased alcohol under age and the licensed premises involved was targeted and known to the Police as a place where underage children congregate. KN was also known to associate with a friend who got her into trouble.

JW – a teenage male reported missing prior to Operation Cyclone. Guy Cochrane did some investigations which revealed JW to be associating with adults of concern elsewhere in the country.

RL – a teenage male missing person. Eventually a the correct address was identified for him, and it was discovered there was a family background of alcoholism.

HW – a young person reported missing for the first time. The home address was attended and she was found to be in the company of another teenager. There had been a family row and she had walked out. HW was found with her friend, and a Return interview was completed which ascertained she had had unlawful sexual intercourse with a 22 year old male she met via the Facebook networking site. This man was due to appear in Court the same day, Another development was someone apparently trying to intimidate HW via a 3rd party. It appeared no Sexual offences Liaison Officer was allocated to the case, but the family were happy with the Family Support Officer. There was also apparently no contact from the Victim Support Service.

CR – a 14 year old female reported missing from her foster placement. She was believed to have gone to Plymouth having been given permission to go there by train. She was reported to have special needs and to be lightly dressed. She was eventually located via her mobile phone and shortly after this contact had dialled 999 and was located in Princetown. The case was reviewed the following morning, from which it transpired the last time she absconded, abduction warrants were issued.

Ian Fraser-Row considered that this type of approach together with effective management identified key information which could be sent across to relevant agencies. Since the Force day of action, there had been a meeting between the BCU Commander, Children & Young People's Services and Kev Peers and Ian Fraser-Roe had offered to do training across agencies. The Force was looking to improve their data services and the information they shared and were in discussions around linking their IT system to Devon County Council's. Other issues were that the Force needed access to Care First and Devon County Council needed a secure e-mail link to the Police. Maria Kasprzyk added that she had met with Kev Peers in order to go through some of the Operation Cyclone issues and to make the CYPS side of the policy more active. Maria did a file audit on the 6 cases and was concerned no risk assessment could be found in respect of any of them. It was hoped to be able to set up a quarterly Performance Group.

Ian Fraser-Roe advised Board members of a forthcoming Police initiative – Operation Fagin – which was to target adults who lure children away from home by one means or another (such as through child prostitution).

Maria Kasprzyk felt there was a need to identify a range of people to undertake Return to Care interviews, not just Police Officers. Agreement had been given to look at contracting to some taxi firms to provide safe transport back to placement late at night for children returning after going missing.

Martin Spragg made the point that the spur to many children going missing was the distance between their placement and their home. Rifford Road was the main establishment in Exeter for emergency reception of young people into care, especially older ones. The Police system was available to the Youth Offending team already, including secure e-mail. Maria Kasprzyk responded that a secure e-mail link between DCC and the Police was a corporate high priority for the County Council, plus she was aware of a suggestion of a senior Police Officer sitting on the Youth Offending Team Board.

Ian Fraser-Roe observed that many young people who go missing came from homes where there was alcohol abuse/domestic violence.

The Meeting heard from Derek Moore that the Children's Society had expressed the view that Return to Care interviews needed to be undertaken by independent persons. In Exeter, the Family Intervention Project was looking at the 10-15 most vulnerable (ASBO) families. Derek would ask the Project Manager to make contact with Ian Fraser-Roe.

Anne Whiteley suggested that the Integrated Youth Support Service (due to be in place by 1st April 2008) would be a useful link in.

Martin Spragg observed a trend whereby an increasing number of young people in Care were offending. If the numbers of young people absconding their placement could be reduced, there would be a consequent reduction in youth crime.

Charles Holme asked about the cost involved. Ian Fraser-Roe responded that short term, there was a large expense around undertaking research. In the longer term, it was estimated that the rate of absconding could be reduced by over 30%. In this way, youth crime rates would be reduced and children increasingly safeguarded. The Devon & Cornwall Constabulary currently spent £5 million per year with regard to missing persons.

8 DATES OF LSCB MEETINGS FOR 2008

These were agreed as follows:

Friday 29th February 2008
Friday 6th June 2008
Friday 26th September 2008
Friday 12th December 2008

In addition, it was agreed that an LSCB Development Day take place on Friday 17th October 2008.

9 MULTI-AGENCY REFERRAL FORM, THRESHOLDS AND AXS

Maria Kasprzyk reported that the new multi-agency referral form was being tested out in path finding areas. A series of workshops had been run for the 9 path finding sites and to date a total of 420 staff had received that training, with around another 60 members of staff to be covered in January 2008.

Key issues arising were as follows: Feedback was that users liked the document (in chunks). The Chestnut Centre wanted all the 0-5 thresholds together. There were a number of issues around gaps in terms of who had not participated. There was concern that the referral forms did not become gatekeeping documents. At level 3 social care, practitioners would be asked to give an explanation as to why the criteria were not met in any given case. There were a number of anxieties expressed around resources – who would pick up multi-agency planning and services at level 2 given that some funding streams would be stopping in March 2008. Overall, practitioners wanted to use the new form. It was hoped to re-refine the tools in February 2008.

Charles Holme asked how this fitted in with local commissioning arrangements with regard to the Children's Trust? Anne Whiteley responded to confirm that that would happen. CYPS was concerned as to how children accessed services and moved through the pathway. There were some examples in two parts of the county where local commissioning was going on, including

NORDAB in North Devon with whom CYPS had been working around commissioning of services for children with special needs in terms of education. A pilot was also underway in Kingsbridge. For the first time, this year in working on the CYPS Plan it had been possible to get better information about demography, incidences of child abuse etc. so it had been possible to build up a profile around Devon towns which gave better information as to where vulnerable groups were living. Hence when the CYPS Plan for next year was published, there would be more local information.

Maria Kasprzyk observed that schools in particular were expressing concern about the roll out programme. Anne Whiteley responded that this programme had been foreshortened to 12 months – there was a huge amount of work.

Maria Kasprzyk observed a major issue being that Social Workers were still using the framework document and there was no intention of merging that with the new multi-agency form. Hence there would be a need to re-write the framework document to meet both sets of needs. The social care threshold unit used all the thresholds, and was only being tested in the pathfinder areas.

Ray Charran in response to Anne Whiteley stated that he was waiting to see the Multi-Agency form in use in North Devon.

Anne Whiteley stated that Commissioning Assessment Areas were subject to independent evaluations, and around 100 CAFs in total were anticipated.

Mary Mitchell commented that she too had attended the Adva Conference last week and attended a workshop on CAFs which she found very useful and informative.

Martin Spragg made the point that AXS was at a difficult phase, moving from trying out to actually seeing if there could be more of a consensus model before the programme was rolled out. He felt the AXS Board needed to be prepared to be more prescriptive and to make some decisions. Some had used the Team around the Child process at a higher level. Other pilot areas did a lot more pre-CAF work and used the Team around the Child process to sort things out. The CAF process was designed for Tier 2 situations. Maria Kasprzyk remarked that consistency and core principles were key. There was some work to be undertaken with practitioners so that they knew when CAF could be used. There was a need for clarity around when Child in Care or when Services around the Child were the best way forward.

ACTION:

MULTI-AGENCY REFERRAL FORM, THRESHOLDS AND AXS TO FORM AN AGENDA ITEM AT THE FEBRUARY 2008 LSCB MEETING.

10 HIDDEN HARM

Anne Whiteley advised that Maureen Mukersey had prepared a report, which had not been circulated to LSCB.

Graeme Barnell stated there was a need to make some basic decisions around strategy. He had some key agendas from Adult Mental Health Services, especially around alcohol and drug misuse, including drug-induced psychosis. He wanted to undertake a joint piece of work and wondered what the process for that might be. It was felt there was a need to be in discussion with Devon PCT, perhaps Torbay and Virginia Pearson was mentioned in that context.

ACTION:

ANNE WHITELEY TO ARRANGE FOR MAUREEN'S REPORT TO BE COPIED TO GRAEME BARNELL.

11 REPORT OF THE SERIOUS CASE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Chris Dimmelow made the point that the deadline for agency reports in respect of ZV and CV to be submitted was now passed and those concerned should let him have their reports as a matter of urgency.

With regard to case KB, Chris Dimmelow asked that comments be fed back to him, including confirmation as to whether or not agencies were happy to use the recommendations as individual agency action plans.

ACTION:

THE NEXT LSCB MEETING TO RECEIVE THE TEMPLATE FOR FORWARD AGENDA PLANNING.

ACTION:

OPERATIONAL ITEMS ON LSCB AGENDAS TO INCLUDE SERIOUS CASE REVIEW ACTION PLANS NOT YET COMPLETED.

12 REPORT OF THE TRAINING COMMITTEE

Michele Thornberry's report was received by the Board.

13 REPORT FROM THE HEALTH COMMITTEE

Helen Hyland explained that the Minutes were not yet finalised but once they were, she would send them on to Chris Dimmelow.

14 TERMS OF REFERENCE – PRIVATE FOSTERING GROUP

Anne Whiteley stated there was a need to clarify the reporting frequency of this group to LSCB, and this was needed before the annual return was signed off.

ACTION: Reporting cycle to be addressed by Business Plan Group

15 TERMS OF REFERENCE – E-SAFETY GROUP

This was received by the Board.

The point was made that many young people experienced intimidation and bullying via the internet and mobile phones.

Mary Mitchell felt there was a need to clarify the reporting frequency of this group to LSCB.

Anne Whiteley gave a short explanation about the South West Grid for Learning, which ensures quality assurance and standards in relations to schools. SWGfL had been looking into how to protect children against bullying by these sources. Their world revolved around this technology, and feedback was that young people did not want to lose it, just to have the risk factors taken away.

Anne Whiteley made a general point that there was a need for the consistent use of the phrase "group" or "sub-group" of the LSCB. She also felt it would be useful for all Board members to have a sheet giving the names of each group/sub-group, the name of each Chair and membership, plus each group/sub-group's purpose and function, roles and responsibilities.

ACTION: Reporting cycle to be addressed by Business Plan Group

16 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Maria Kasprzyk suggested there should be a cut off date by which time all reports had to be available for circulation, so all Board members could read them prior to LSCB meetings. Chris Dimmelow responded that he always set aside the Friday prior to LSCB meetings in order to sent

out the agenda and supporting paperwork, and he always asked Board members and others to provide their reports by that date.
After some discussion, it was agreed that Chris Dimmelow should make arrangements for two of next year's Board meetings to take place at The Knowle, and the other two to take place at Buckfast Abbey or at another suitable venue.

17 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next LSCB Meeting will take place on Friday 29th February 2008. Venue to be confirmed by Chris Dimmelow in due course.

Signed Dated
Anne Whiteley
Director of Children and Young People's Services

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