

DEVON LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD

Minutes of the Meeting held on Friday 28th September 2007 at Buckfast Abbey Conference Centre, Buckfast Abbey, Buckfastleigh

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
Jo Tennant, BCU Commander for North and East Devon, Devon & Cornwall Constabulary
Michele Thornberry, Named Nurse – Child Protection - Devon
Lucy Beckwith, Operational Manager Child Health, South Devon Healthcare NHS Trust
Peter Mitchell, Head of Service – CAF/CASS
John Davey, Director of Service Delivery, Connexions Cornwall & Devon
Mary Mitchell, Assistant Chief Officer, Devon & Cornwall Probation Service
Martin Spragg, Youth Offending Services Manager
Beverley Dubash, Principal Education Welfare Officer
Derek Moore, Assistant Director of NCH Devon and Cornwall
Graeme Barnell, Adult & Community Services
Roy Tomlinson, Adva
Laura Spittles, Named Nurse – Child Protection, Devon NHS Partnership Trust
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) RD&E NHS Trust
Chris Vigar, Child Protection Officer, Exeter (attending as observer)
Louisa Grimes, Administrator/Minute Taker

Apologies/copy of minutes to:

Maria Kasprzyk, Policy & Performance Improvement Manager, Devon County Council
Charles Holme, Designated Doctor – Child Protection - Devon
Cathy Ellingford, Children's Lead Representative (SW Region) Devon PCT
Ian Fraser-Roe, A/DCI Devon & Cornwall Police Community Support Unit
Peter Jeffs, Director of Communities, East Devon District Council

Chris Dimmelow opened the Meeting and chaired until the arrival of Anne Whiteley.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Ian Fraser-Rowe, Peter Jeffs, Charles Holme, Peter Hancock, Maria Kazprzyk and Cathy Ellingford.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Accuracy & Matters Arising

Page 4 - Report of the Case Review Sub-Committee - Helen Hyland advised that she had a draft audit tool with her today and could present this to the meeting during the Serious Case Review sub-report.

Chris Dimmelow advised that he had received a call from a senior officer involved about the application of a health protocol used in the Police investigation into professional conduct as part of the RM investigation. It had eventually been agreed that the protocol did not fit in terms of initiating that investigation, but the Police view was that it was the best they had at the time and that each case should be looked at on its merits and a decision made about whether a Police investigation is required.

Page 5 - Internet bullying - Chris Dimmelow advised that he would be attending a meeting of the LSCB e-safety group next week, when the issue of internet bullying would be on the agenda. Beverley Dubash advised that new guidance had just been published for schools on this subject and was sent out last week.

Page 6 - Child Death Screening Function of LSCBs - Mandy Cox advised that she had not yet made a presentation to the Coroner and did not feel it would be appropriate to do so until after Christmas.

Chris Dimmelow said the setting up the child death process for the peninsula was progressing well and the Government Office South West had recently commented that they were one of the most advanced LSCBs around, as they already had costings for the child death process. Chris had written to the Coroner to advise them of the process to be initiated next year and was awaiting a response; he had invited their comment on specific issues such as whether someone from the Coroner's office should sit on the Child Death Screening Panel. Costings had been done for the cost of the panel to each LSCB, with the estimated cost for Devon being approximately £40,000. It should be known in November whether there would be any central government funding for the Child Death Screening Panels.

ACTION:

CHRIS DIMMELOW TO BRING A MORE DETAILED PAPER TO THE NEXT LSCB.

Chris Dimmelow advised that the national concern for LSCBs was whether they would be able to have these panels up and running by 01/04/08, given the complex organisational and funding issues being raised. Devon was as far down the line as any LSCB could be at this point in time and there would now be a greater involvement from the Government Office South West.

Lucy Beckwith queried who would be responsible for the creation of the Rapid Response Teams. Chris Dimmelow said Chapter 3 of the guidance made it clear that it would be the responsibility of the LSCB to have a Child Death Screening Panel up and running to include a Rapid Response Team, although the funding of those teams would not be the direct responsibility of the LSCB, but would fall upon the key agencies. He advised that a meeting had been held in July, from which an initial funding scoping document had been produced and each PCT and Acute Trust had now taken those proposals away and were looking at how to work them on a local level in terms of the local response -v- a consistent approach for the whole of the peninsula. Lucy Beckwith said she had not seen that document. Mandy Cox said she had attended that meeting, but had not yet seen any papers.

ACTION:

CHRIS DIMMELOW TO WRITE TO PAUL SULLIVAN TO REQUEST CIRCULATION OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN JULY TO ALL CONCERNED AND TO PROVIDE A DATE FOR WHEN FEEDBACK IS REQUIRED. THIS ITEM TO GO ON THE AGENDA FOR THE LSCB TO BE HELD ON 07/12/2007.

Page 7 - Multi-Agency Age Banded Thresholds - Martin Spragg said he felt this matter would need to come back to the LSCB at some point, to see how it was working; it had not been raised at the Access Pathway Management Board and he was unsure if the multi-agency threshold tool was being made use of; he suggested tabling this item for the next LSCB in December. Chris Dimmelow advised that Maria Kazpryk had sent him documents via email including the latest version of the thresholds form, multi-agency referral form and covering guidance, and the thresholds document had been seen by the Inspectors as part of the recent inspection, who had felt it was a very good document and one of the best attempts at trying to produce threshold advice

across the whole intervention service. The meeting discussed this matter and raised the issue that these documents should not be circulated until training had been undertaken. Beverly Dubash made the point that a Social Care Manager came to talk to the Education Sub-Committee and advised that there would not be any training on these documents and that the form would go live at the end of the September. Concerns were raised by the sub-committee about the confidentiality of the information contained on these e-forms, given that they would be sent via e-mail. Michelle Thornberry responded that she had seen the referral form, as it was on the CYPs public website, and as it was a PDF document it could not be electronically written on.

ACTION:

CHRIS DIMMELOW TO TAKE NOTES ABOUT PEOPLE'S CONCERNS BACK TO THE ACCESS GROUP AT COUNTY HALL ASAP AND GAIN CLARIFICATION, TO ISSUE A SEPARATE NOTE TO MEMBERS ONCE HE HAS SOME RESPONSE TO THEIR QUERIES AND TO INCLUDE THIS ITEM ON THE AGENDA FOR THE LSCB SCHEDULED FOR 07/12/2007.

Page 9 - LSCB DATASET - Chris Dimmelow reported that he had sent out the latest version of the LSCB dataset, which was produced in conjunction with a consultant from Outcomes UK, who attended the last LSCB in June.

ACTION:

MEMBERS TO PROVIDE ANY COMMENTS TO CHRIS DIMMELOW VIA EMAIL.

Chris Dimmelow reported that he had recently signed off the annual return re private fostering, there would also be one in terms of child death screening and he had just received a request for the first return on allegations against professionals, which he was currently trying to complete. He expressed concern that Child Protection Officers currently spent time before and after each meeting collating statistics. Helen Hyland said this would change once the Child Protection Register had been disbanded. Chris Dimmelow agreed it would change slightly, as the number of children with a Child Protection Plan would still need to be recorded.

ACTION:

TO DISCUSS AT THE NEXT MEETING WHEN MARIA KAZPRYK IS PRESENT.

Page 11 - Revised Version LSCB Funding Agreement - Jo Tennant advised that she had not received the invoices yet and asked if these could be re-sent.

ACTION:

CHRIS DIMMELOW TO RESEND INVOICE TO JO TENNANT.

Claire Mitchell advised that Corrine Hayes would like to feedback that these were not the figures she remembered and queried the split. Chris Dimmelow advised that the decision had been made at the last meeting, when the costings for the Child Death Review Panel had been agreed at a total cost of £89,978. This would mean a cost of £40,172 for Devon unless the allowance made for a contract with CEMAC was taken out, which equated to c£9,000. Therefore, the Devon contribution would be £31,000 - £40,000 approximately.

ACTION:

CHRIS DIMMELOW TO DISTRIBUTE AT THE NEXT LSCB.

Janet Phipps advised that the only money allocated for the Child Death Review Panel was for 1 additional PA for a consultant for the Acute Trust. Chris Dimmelow advised that the Regional Health Authority had written to PCTs to give advice on paediatric resource applications and making their recommendations as to what sort of PA allowance each PCT should be making. Janet Phipps said she had received a letter to advise that they would only be funded for 1 additional PA, which equated to half a day and would only cover general administration costs for preparing reports.

Chris Dimmelow responded that 1 PA of consultant paediatric time had been built-in as the only costed and shared cost of the Panel. Chris Dimmelow advised that the budget consisted solely of training and management support costs to the LSCB and varied between £80,000 - £88,000 to Devon Children's Services, down to £4,000 - £5,000 for the less involved agencies, such as CAF/CASS.

Page 11 - Phasing Out of the Child Protection Register - Chris Dimmelow advised that Devon would not be able to phase out the Child Protection Register by the deadline of 01/04/2008; the technical changes to the IT system had not yet been introduced and the best estimate at the moment is that this would not be achieved until May 2008 at the earliest. Decisions would need to be made about whether to change the procedures in the meantime so that professionals did not talk about placing children on the Child Protection Register at meetings, but continue to record registration in the current way, or to continue with the procedure as it currently stood.

ACTION:

CHRIS DIMMELOW TO REPORT AT THE DECEMBER MEETING.

Page 12 - Young Witness Support Scheme - End of Year Report - Chris Dimmelow reported that he had received an e-mail from a colleague of Alison Kearnes about the funding issue, which he felt had been resolved in advance of this meeting. Alison Kearnes said she would be happy to approach agencies direct rather than Chris Dimmelow having to act as broker all the time; she would be invoicing direct and her colleague needed the addresses of where to send invoices. Chris Dimmelow noted that the Young Witness Support Scheme was a complex issue, with some agencies sitting on 4 different LSCB panels and contributing to them all. A fundamental review was required of the way in which the LSCB went through the practicalities of getting funding in, in terms of the number of invoices being sent out to individual agencies working on a peninsula-wide basis, which would increase if the unitary bid for Exeter was successful.

Alison Kearnes advised of a correction to the minutes of the last meeting and advised that the Child Line Service, not the Youth Witness Support Scheme, had relocated from Newton Abbot to Exeter. There would be a formal opening in November of the new facilities in Southernhay Gardens, which members were welcome to attend.

Page 13 - LSCB Logo - Chris Dimmelow reported that a number of logos had been prepared by young people attending Connexions. John Davey asked members to have a look at the artwork during the coffee and lunch breaks and write their comments down and he would then be able to take a view on what people thought about the designs. He said he had to explain to the young people what the LSCB was and their purpose and suggested that a leaflet might be produced at some point in order for young people to have more understanding of the work a group like this did. Chris Dimmelow said he had previously discussed making people more aware of the LSCB and the work they did and had recently put an advertisement in a youth publication to describe what the LSCB did, but he felt a more concerted and organised approach was required.

Martin Spragg said asking young people and the public how they think the LSCB should be measured might be a very good idea in terms of getting some very grounded, practical examples on how the LSCB could be measured on how they were doing their job.

Chris Dimmelow advised that Devon had just re-established an advocacy service, with a contract having been set up with an independent sector company called Reconstruct, to provide advocacy to children involved in the formal Child Protection system, to assist them in giving their views to Child Protection meetings and LAC Reviews. Also built into this was obtaining young people's views on what they think LSCBs do, etc and once up and running a piece of work around this could be organised. Michelle Thornberry asked what age the children would be receiving advocacy from. Chris Dimmelow replied that children from the age of 10 upwards would receive advocacy, but younger children could be considered, particularly for looked after children.

3. REPORT OF THE TRAINING SUB-GROUP

Michelle Thornberry presented the minutes of the LSCB Training & Workforce Development Sub-group Meeting to the meeting and advised that the Police attendance at training sessions seemed to be quite low. Michelle provided the meeting with a break down of the attendance monitoring. Mary Mitchell asked if this information had been sent to the Probation Training Department, as there was an issue if they were over-allocated due to implications on their budget. Michelle Thornberry replied that there might be some cost implications if an agency was over-allocated. Mary Mitchell suggested funding for Level 4 places could be brought over to fund more Level 3 places, as not all the Level 4 allocation had been taken up.

ACTION:

MICHELLE THORNBERRY TO FORWARD DETAILS OF TRAINING ATTENDANCE TO THE PROBATION TRAINING MANMAGER AND TO EMAIL INFORMATION ON THE PERFORMANCE DATASET TO CHRIS DIMMELOW.

Michelle Thornberry said a clear message from the LSCB was required about where South West procedures sit in relation to ACPC procedures. Chris Dimmelow responded that Plymouth had tried to introduce South West procedures electronically using a complex system, but this was not successful; Torbay had issued a letter to agencies, but this was very complicated. Chris said he had taken the decision not to even invite people to use the South West procedures yet and the existing Devon/Torbay/Plymouth multi-agency procedures were still the definitive ones. As and when the South West region had done all that they were going to do and a sensible way of running alongside the current procedures had been established, then he would introduce people to the South West procedures. Chris advised that there was a printable version of the procedures on the DCC website, as well as an interactive web-version. He advised there was also a part of the website dedicated to the LSCB, which currently only contained the minutes of these meeting but he would like more information to be added.

ACTION:

CHRIS DIMMELOW TO SEND MEMBERS THE HYPERLINK FOR THE DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL WEBSITE.

MICHELLE THORNBERRY TO FORWARD HER REPORT BY EMAIL TO CHRIS DIMMELOW, WHO WILL DISTRIBUTE TO ALL MEMBERS.

Chris Dimmelow reported there was a misunderstanding on the part of some agencies, who believed if they contributed to the College of Trainers as well as to the budget, they would have unlimited spaces on training courses, but this was not the case; if an agency did go over their allocated number of spaces, then there would be a cost at the per-capita rate.

Chris Dimmelow advised that he had provided the Government Office South West with an assessment of the LSCB's standing on safe recruitment training, which was currently green to amber. There was central provision of a trainers programme on safe recruitment, with 3 places on available on a course in Nottingham. Claire Mitchell would be attending this, along with Karen and a person from the HR section. There would then be 3 people trained as trainers on safe recruitment and they would then devise a course to be offered to all agencies. Karen had recently attended a course run by Somerset, which she had felt to be a very good course.

Michelle Thornberry reported that she was looking to develop a course around disability and child protection and asked if any agency had any personnel who would like to contribute either towards developing that course or undertaking the training, to contact Karen. Beverly Dubash suggested contacting the special needs schools for appropriate personnel.

4. REPORT OF THE CASE REVIEW SUB-COMMITTEE

John Ingham, Independent Social Worker and Marie Novell, Director for Nursing, were in attendance for this item.

Chris Dimmelow advised that the report of the Serious Case Review Committee was included within the papers for this meeting and gave a summary of those Serious Case Reviews that had been completed and those in process, as well as some additional items for discussion.

Case RM - A way of combining the overview report with the required report by Devon Partnership Trust was being looked into, given that they had been involved with RM's mother prior to the incident. Chris Dimmelow advised that he had agreed extensions with a number of agencies, but this matter was now quite seriously beyond the deadline originally set for the end of July.

ACTION:

THOSE AGENCIES WHO HAVE NOT YET SUBMITTED REPORTS NEED TO DO SO AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Case ZV & CV - Chris Dimmelow reported that the most recent case he had issue an initiating letter on was the case of ZV and CV, 2 children who died as a result of a fire in their home. However, it had now emerged that both children were killed by their father prior to the house being set alight, which subsequently caused the death of the children's father.

ACTION:

REPORTS ON THIS CASE TO BE IN WITH CHRIS DIMMELOW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. CHRIS DIMMELOW TO ADD THE DEVON FIRE SERVICE TO THE AGENCIES REQUESTED.

Case TC - Chris Dimmelow advised that he had agreed the memorandum used in another case was not always immediately applicable in terms of explaining why the Police should be involved in undertaking a criminal investigation into the culpability of involved professionals. Marie Novell said she had picked up a number of cases where by default the Chief Executive had found out something was happening within the organisation; it was her understanding that if there was anything serious it should through the Chief Executive for a number of reasons. It needed to be defined who the senior management were, in order to guarantee the right person was notified. The meeting held a full discussion on this matter and it was agreed that a list of points of contact for all agencies would be devised, to ensure the correct process could happen in future cases.

ACTION:

ALL AGENCIES TO DISCUSS AND CLARIFY WHO SHOULD BE NOTIFIED TO AND LET CHRIS DIMMELOW KNOW THE POINT OF CONTACT IN THE EVENT OF A POLICE INVESTIGATION; IF THERE IS NOT ALREADY AN INTERNAL PROTOCOL IN PLACE WITHIN AN AGENCY THEN THAT AGENCY SHOULD LOOK AT THOSE INTERNAL REQUIREMENTS AS WELL. IF THERE IS A VIEW THERE MIGHT BE BENEFITS IN PUTTING TOGETHER A CORPORATE POLICY, THEN A SMALL PART OF THE LSCB COULD GET TOGETHER TO LAY DOWN A BASIC POLICY.

Case KB - Chris Dimmelow advised that an overview report had been written by John Ingham and Jane Richards. This was a very complex overview report as it involved two other Local Authorities, both of which had been sent copies of the initial report.

John Ingham reported that most of the Devon agencies did interview key staff involved in this case, however the other 2 Local Authorities did not and produced their management report purely by reviewing their files, which was felt to be unhelpful as there were key people who should have been interviewed. John wrote back to Bedfordshire at one point asking if a particular person could be interviewed, was informed that Bedfordshire would interview them but that did not happen. John felt there would have been more clarity if the key people involved had been interviewed. He said the adopters were clearly power, articulate people and their influence on the chain of events was not insubstantial. There were serious questions about their degree of honesty and general integrity and John suspected that if it had been known that Mr B had been in Court in 2003 in respect of financial irregularities it was doubtful the adoption would have gone ahead in the first place. The key issues in this matter were:-

- There was a very dubious kinship placement and it was unclear how this was made and whether the information used to make it had been full enough;
- It was discovered the kinship placement had been made by the Derbyshire Local Authority rather than Bedfordshire. If the full information had been available, it was doubtful this placement would have gone ahead.
- There were serious questionmarks about whether KB was ready to be adopted or whether adoption was actually feasible for her, as she had some significant attachments remaining to her birth family that had not been properly addressed.
- The decision-making after the placement was made and during introductions was quite confusing - there was some pre-planning for the placement and a period of introductions, after which it felt as though subsequent decisions were made in different forums and involving different people; some decisions were made outside of forums and contradictory to what had been agreed in previous meetings.
- It seemed that two separate "camps" developed during the decision-making process, with 1 set of professionals feeling that the placement should continue, that KB's difficult behaviour was based on the abuse she had suffered when younger and that a structure should be put in place to work on this; the other set of professionals were sceptical about the placement and about some of the things KB was saying was happening within the placement.
- There were a couple of crucial issues from Devon CYPS' point of view - the inability to identify that 2 separate teams were working with 2 children in the family without people realising that and some issues around IT equipment that contributed to that. A Section 47 enquiry was undertaken on KB with professionals involved in that unaware that AB was being worked on by the Joint Agency Team (JAT) and JAT not realising that KB had been placed for adoption and that this might have contributed to how AB was behaving.
- There were a number of 121As from the Police which created a picture of AB having some difficult behaviour. He was becoming known within the area because of various incidents. There were 5 121As, 4 of which were filed without any professional input to analyse what was going on, although this was corrected after the incident involving KB came to light.
- Looking at AB's situation, he was a boy with special needs and was known to have a variety of agencies working with him. During his adolescence there were a number of different systems addressing the way he was - he was statemented by the Education Dept, he had an annual JAT review, he was seen by the community physician and was linked to a Consultant Paediatrician in the hospital, who had known him since birth. Much later on JACAT also became involved. All of those agencies were creating plans but none were co-ordinated. There was a picture of quite an uncoordinated approach to try and address AB's needs, which would have contributed in some way to the situation escalating as it did.

Jane Richards commented that in many ways AB was as much a victim as KB, due to the overall systems involved.

Chris Dimmelow said there were clearly significant implications for the other 2 Local Authorities and he was expecting a more comprehensive response from both. There were implications for the adoption process nationally and he had heard from Jonathan Hepworth that he would be taking these issues through to the regional adoption board and then nationally.

ACTION:

MEMBERS TO PROVIDE THEIR COMMENTS ON THIS REPORT TO CHRIS DIMMELOW PARTICULARLY AGENCIES WHO SUBMITTED A MANAGEMENT REPORT - COMMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED BY 31ST OCTOBER 2007.

Case of RB - Jane Richards reported that this case covered more than one Local Authority, although it had mostly been Cornwall that had been looking after this family, who had moved into Devon shortly before RB was born. RB's mother had already booked into Derriford for the birth, Cornwall had arranged her care. It appeared that a lot of protection and support had been given to mother and that this was adequately covered. RB was born and came under Devon's care, under the Devon Primary Healthcare Team as a whole, which appeared to have been in a lot of disarray at that time. A lot of the handling of this case had been poor, communication between members of the team had been faulty, with people going on holiday without leaving adequate notes. Mother obviously found this child difficult and had had difficulties with her elder child when in Cornwall.

Most of the problems with this case were within the Primary Care Team in Devon, with issues around caseload, communication and a lot of agencies being involved. It was confirmed that RB's father was currently on bail and was still charged with murder.

John Ingham said there were interesting themes in this case. No Local Authorities were involved and the care had been based mainly around the Primary Healthcare Trust. A mental health assessment of mother had been undertaken quite late on in the process; the management report from Devon's Primary Care Team had been very good and did have some quite interesting ideas. One of the issues was the uncoordinated approach by the surgery - 2 parents both with mental health problems were looking after a child of 2, with another baby expected; the Psychologist from Derriford was working with mother and had concerns about how these parents would be caring for another child. The management report had suggested having a surgery meeting, possibly to include the Psychologist and to produce a plan.

Chris Reilly said the Health Visitors, GPs and midwives were all based in the same building, but did not communicate directly. When interviewed, the Health Visitor had felt very much that it had not been her responsibility. One of the main issues was the record-keeping, which had been appalling. Records had been partly electronic and partly paper, with so many inaccuracies that it had taken a long time to unpick. Jane Richards advised that although the Health Visitor record-keeping was poor, the GP's record-keeping had been fine.

The meeting noted that there appeared to be an emerging theme of viewing the mental health condition of a parent in isolation, with no full recognition of the implications of that condition on any children within the family. Chris Dimmelow suggested a piece of work was required to ensure that when psychological services were provided to parents, the implications on any children should be taken into account, there should be communication and adult psychiatric services should be invited into Child Protection procedures. Chris Vigar, Child Protection Officer, said adult psychiatric services were often invited to Child Protection meetings but very often did not attend or even submit a report; in addition, parents often backed off from this area, not wishing professionals to discuss it within a Child Protection meeting, feeling that it did not have any relevance to Child Protection concerns. The meeting discussed this matter and it was agreed that the Independent Reviewing Unit needed to know who to contact if a report was not received for a meeting or if an invited professional did not attend.

Chris Dimmelow advised that the defendant would be charged with murder and there would be a criminal trial at some stage, which would lead to media interest. It was therefore important that an executive summary was produced by that time, with recommendations made and an action plan put in place.

ACTION:

MEMBERS TO PROVIDE COMMENTS TO CHRIS DIMMELOW WITH REGARD TO THE REPORT ON RB.

Case KW - Chris Dimmelow advised that this case also had the implication of mental health issues, after KW was stabbed by her mother who had been telling agencies for quite some time that as a consequence of her mental health conditions, she was fearful that she might harm her child and subsequently carried this threat out. KW had since made a full physical recovery and was now living with her father.

Helen Hyland reported that this family moved to North Devon; mother was clearly seeking out agency support to help her in the care of her child and various agencies were involved from an early stage. After a while, the situation deteriorated and the case was referred to CYPS, who stated that they did not feel the threshold was reached for Child Protection and that as KW had not been harmed by her mother and her father was still in the household, they would not take the case on. Mother had told people on at least 10 occasions that she was going to harm her child. After the referral was refused by CYPS, the Community Mental Health Worker felt she needed to do something and so organised a Child In Need Meeting, which was the only path open to her and for which she should be commended. The staff worked very hard together to try and do their best, but unfortunately lost sight of KW. Mother was seen by psychiatrists, but there were delays in

professionals getting the relevant information and the psychiatrist was not invited to the CIN meeting. The second time mother was seen by a psychiatrist, it was not recognised there was a child in the family. The risk to KW was not acted upon and the case was very service-led rather than needs-led, mother carried out her threats and stabbed KW at least 30 times. KW was now safe and in the care of her father.

Chris Dimmelow commented that the response from CYPS on this occasion was extremely poor; this was a time when there were concerns about thresholds and work had been undertaken since then and as a consequence, there had been a considerable rise in the number of children placed on Devon's Child Protection Register. The inspectors had specifically looked at thresholds recently and were heartened that the number of children on the Child Protection Register had increased. A lot of action had been taken across the directorate in terms of thresholds and work being undertaken with staff involved in this case.

Jo Tennant referred to the recommendation at 7.29 in the report and said more information was requested, as it read as though the Police were not involved in the initial meetings. Helen Hyland said they were not; it came out of people's reports that mother had been to the Police Station on 2 separate occasions stating that she wanted to leave home and leave her child, but that information was never communicated back to anybody. Jo Tennant noted that a 121A should have been completed and said she would look into that.

The meeting discussed whether targets were a good guide in respect of numbers on the Child Protection Register and concern was noted that previously reducing numbers had been seen as a good thing. Graeme Barnell queried whether staff within DPT had the knowledge to use Child Protection procedures, rather than Child In Need. Laura Spittles advised that when interviewed the Community Mental Health Worker who had called the meeting thought she was calling a Strategy Meeting under Child Protection and doing in effect what CYPS were not doing; there was a misunderstanding from all of the other agencies, who thought it was a Child In Need meeting. Chris Dimmelow advised that there were procedures that if anybody wanted to insist a Child Protection meeting was convened, they could do that.

Chris Dimmelow advised that mother was still being held in psychiatric care, but there could still be a criminal prosecution.

ACTION:

ALL COMMENTS ON THIS REPORT TO BE SENT TO HELEN HYLAND AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

5. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Roy Tomlinson advised there was concern from the ADVA partnership to ensure the system for MARAC was right across the County and any cases that go to MARAC where children are involved should go to the Criminal Justice Board. Chris Dimmelow said it was important to get MARAC right and people needed to recognise the heightened responsibilities in relation to domestic violence as described by the latest version of Working Together and to ensure the proper procedures were in place. There were concerns across agencies about the implications for already scarce resources and an appropriate balance needed to be struck. There would be a need for a more pro-active role on the part of the Children & Families Committee of the ADVA partnership in terms of taking agencies away from the LSCB.

ACTION:

CHRIS DIMMELOW AND ROY TOMLINSON TO DISCUSS OUTSIDE OF THIS MEETING HOW TO PROGRESS RESPONSES TO RECOMMENDATIONS BEING MADE.

Beverly Dubash queried why School Nurses were being listed, as the EWOs were the link between MARAC and schools.

Claire Mitchell referred to the 121A system and said that in certain parts of the county Health were involved in this. Chris Reilly said there had been some issues with 121As and domestic violence summaries, in that they would be passed on to CYPS and be re-graded, with no communication coming back; she thought somebody from CYPS was going to take this matter back to their management to be looked at further. Beverly Dubash advised that there was a meeting at Middlemoor yesterday regarding 121As and to discuss their distribution to agencies. Chris Dimmelow advised that he and Roy Tomlinson had been looking at getting some proper policy around 121As and to also reduce the number of unnecessary notifications and increase the necessary notifications.

Roy Tomlinson referred to the LSCB / ADVA action plan and reported that some aspects of this were going well, whereas other aspects were of concern; it was not clear if there was the right membership for this joint group and he was concerned that some of the necessary people were not in the group. Chris Dimmelow asked Roy Tomlinson to provide specific recommendations of who he thought should be on this group; there was scope to improve representation on that group, but people would need to be prepared to do that. Roy Tomlinson said the issue of nominated people in schools remained a problem and he was concerned about how many people had taken on a domestic violence role. There was a plan to develop a CYPS police on domestic abuse, which would iron out a lot of the inter-relationship problems.

Anne Whiteley chaired the meeting from this point.

6. HIDDEN HARM ACTION PLAN

Claire Sowerby was present for this item.

Claire Sowerby reported that she had sent out the action plan she was working to, which had been overseen by the Substance Misuse Sub-Group, which dealt with substance misusing parents and the effects that might have on their children. Claire had prepared a short report to pick out some of the immediate issues, which she summarised to the meeting.

Claire Sowerby advised that in the last week since writing her report, there had been an agreement between the maternity services and social care about changing the time of a referral to 16 weeks of pregnancy, to ensure the allocation happened more quickly. This could be discussed in more detail at the Substance Misuse Sub-Group, although there had not been any representation from CYPS at this group for the last 2 meetings.

Anne Whiteley asked why the NTA might withdraw their funding. Claire Sowerby replied that the NTA have said the funding should be met by funding streams to safeguard children. Anne Whiteley asked how much this service was accessed at the moment. Claire Sowerby advised that it had taken a long time for social care agencies to become aware of this service, so it had not been accessed a lot. However, there had been more awareness of it over the last year and so more people had been accessing it. Martin Spragg asked about the nature of that service and what interventions had been undertaken. Claire Sowerby replied that they had been using an alcohol concern model, with the first step being to encourage the children to talk about what was going on at home and to also talk to the children about how they could keep themselves safe. Martin Spragg expressed his concerns about whether these were the right people to do that work, if it was not normally their core skills and whether this work should be done by counselling services; he felt the statement by the NTA had some validity, as the NTA workers were not children's counsellors or skilled in that area. Claire Sowerby responded by saying that it had been identified from talking to those services that they had built up a level of expertise in the area, which nobody else in the county had done; they did now have that expertise, although tended not to work with children under 8 years of age.

ACTION:

CLAIRE SOWERBY TO FORWARD THE DOCUMENT ON THE CONSULTATION TO CHRIS DIMMELOW, FOR DISTRIBUTION TO BOARD MEMBERS.

Graeme Barnell queried what engagement Claire Sowerby had with ENDAS, to which Claire replied that she had been engaging with ENDAS, particularly around a substance misuse booklet and working around the training of workers; there was a piece of work being undertaken in consultation with Torbay drugs workers. Graeme Barnell noted the funding streams were from both PCT and DAT and advised that he was working with DAT to work up a proper commissioning system for alcohol services; if Claire Sowerby was inputting into that, then that would need to be taken into account with DAT and PCT.

Graeme Barnell referred to Martin Spragg's earlier comments about whether these workers should be undertaking this work with children and said in his view they should, however care was needed to ensure the right skills and expertise were being delivered. Anne Whiteley proposed discussing this matter with Virginia Pearson, PCT and Graeme Barnell, to explore the links and how to get the needs analysis together. Graeme Barnell agreed to this suggestion.

ACTION:

CLAIRE SOWERBY TO FORWARD THE RELEVANT INFORMATION ON TO ANNE WHITELEY AND TO TALK TO THE YOUNG CARERS GROUP AS PART OF THAT.

Claire Sowerby advised that she needed small amounts of funding to produce a booklet for pregnant women with a substance misuse. Anne Whiteley asked if Claire Sowerby was also having discussions with Plymouth about this. Claire Sowerby replied that she had now identified somebody in Plymouth to discuss this matter with. Anne Whiteley advised that the LSCBs were looking at what work they should be doing together across the peninsula and suggested taking the leaflet to the other LSCBs in the area, which the meeting agreed with.

ACTION:

CHRIS DIMMELOW TO TAKE THE LEAFLET TO THE NEXT PENINSULA LSCB GROUP MEETING; DEVON LSCB TO CONTRIBUTE £200.

Martin Spragg asked about the research programme and queried what stage that had reached. Claire Sowerby advised that her post was due to end at the end of February 2008; ideally the research was to end in September, but unfortunately there had been issues around identifying the right amount of young people and the date had had to change to the end of March, which was when the board would receive that information. The research involved interviewing young people with parents with substance misuse issues. Chris Dimmelow advised it had been difficult to get together the appropriate number of interviews to make the study worthwhile, due to the parents' unwillingness to talk about their substance misuse issues.

7. REPORT OF HEALTH SUB-COMMITTEE

The minutes of the LSCB Joint Sub-Group's last meeting were presented to the meeting and there were no matters arising from this document.

8. REPORT OF EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE

Beverly Dubash summarised the minutes of the LSCB Education Sub-Group meeting and advised that they were looking at delivering the CEOP training to the designated person for Child Protection within the secondary schools and then cascade through other schools. This needed to be discussed with the Police, to ensure efforts were not being duplicated. Anne Whiteley noted that would link into anti-bullying, which was being raised by young people as their main concern. Beverly Dubash advised that Annette Lyons chaired the Anti-Bullying Group and the EWS were part of that providing a link. Children were safe when using the internet in school and the issue of when they were using it at home now needed to be tackled, as that was where they were at greater risk.

9. CONTACT POINT UPDATE

Rob Weeks of Contact Point was present for this item.

Anne Whiteley reported that Contact Point was now moving forward, with implementation dates coming on line. Rob Weeks reported to the meeting that Devon had agreed to a deployment date of September 2008 for Contact Point, although this would only be with the basic data initially. Anne Whiteley advised that Local Authorities had to identify national implementation slots and it was felt Devon should implement the system in 2008 even though it would not be complete at that stage, in order to get familiar with it and to understand what the potential and the issues were likely to be.

Rob Weeks advised that the regulations for Contact Point following on from the Children Act 2004 came into effect on 01/08/2007. There had been consultation on those regulations and the main thing that had happened was the removal of the indicator fields (i.e. indicators of whether a practitioner was actively working with a child). It was decided to remove this information, as it was considered quite controversial. New users had been identified (CEOP, CAFCASS and the First & Rescue Services) and it had been agreed that data on children who had died would remain on Contact Point until 1 year after death. It had also been defined what data would be visible in case a young person was shielded, with a new "Break the Glass" facility on shielded children being proposed. The detail behind how Contact Point would work would be published within the Contact Point guidance, which had been to local consultation and a response was expected in November.

Martin Spragg queried the issue of shielding and asked what mechanism would be in place at the first stage when national data was loaded in terms of deciding which children needed to be shielded. Would there be a process where local agencies would be asked which children needed to be shielded? Rob Weeks responded that the principle behind shielding was that any practitioner could shield a child if they felt it was appropriate; this could also come from local systems, such as Carefirst. Other than that, all shieldings would have to be reviewed by a separate body to ensure they were appropriate. The DfES had reached an agreement with Health around the data to be provided and the requirement of advanced CRB checks for users. A local project was recently undertaken to try and gauge the user base and the results were in line with what other Local Authorities had found - there was a strong correlation of 1 user per every 30 children. There were a large number of users in schools, however 1 in 5 would not have the required CRB status.

Graeme Barnell asked how his service would have a need for this system, the point of which was to improve outcomes for all children and young people. Rob Weeks said the system could also hold data for 18-25 year olds and care leavers. Anne Whiteley asked about adult mental health workers working with adults, with children in the family - would they be able to access Contact Point and check whether there were any other workers working with a family? Rob Weeks said adult mental health workers had been taken into account in terms of there being some 18-25 year olds included on the database; he presume adult services would get in touch with child services using normal procedures, as the guidance would only permit people working with children and young people to access the system. Anne Whiteley said this was an issue for now and would need to be explored further; there were a lot of concerns being expressed by Directors of Children's Services and being raised formally with the Minister.

Rob Weeks said there were some areas that were still very grey, i.e. the definition of a user and the impact of information sharing. It had previously been said that anybody in receipt of the information would need to be classed as a user, but it was now being implied that it would be possible for a certain amount of people to have access to the system and share the information with others. With regard to whether agencies would use Contact Point that would be a service-by-service decision. Martin Spragg said in the case of YOT, it was planned that databases around the country would be upgraded to automatically include Contact Point, which would take away the principle of it being decided locally. Rob Weeks responded that there was not clarity about how that would be managed at the moment.

Martin Spragg returned to the issue of shielding and noted that it would be possible for a case to be put onto the database before the decision was made to shield that particular child, therefore making it more possible for people tracking children down for the wrong reasons. Rob Weeks advised that from day one there would only be national data on the system and nothing else; if professionals wanted to maximise the protection for those vulnerable people then they would need to ensure they applied the shielding before the information became available for use. Contact Point were in the process of deciding in what order to plug the local systems in and what activity should be done to effect shielding before general use. The more systems that were plugged in, the more accurate the

data would be. There was a particular focus on shielding and it was currently thought that prioritisation should be given to local processes that have shielding available on them and a shielding process should be in place before any users were allowed to access Contact Point.

Laura Spittles raised the issue of how adoptive parents could be assured their child's information was shielded. Rob Weeks advised that the information on adopted children would be shielded, as it was on existing systems.

Rob Weeks advised that the first area to go live would be the North West of England in April 2008 and that area would get access to all of the national data from that date. If that situation remained, there was a possibility of professionals being able to access information about children in other areas without other areas being able to shield that information.

Helen Hyland queried how a perpetrator of domestic violence working within the system could be prevented from getting information from Contact Point. Rob Weeks said that could only happen if the perpetrator was in the special category of professionals able to access that information; there was no greater clarity on how that could be managed at the moment.

Anne Whiteley queried what information would be visible on a shielded child. Rob Weeks advised that a child's name would still be visible along with the date of birth and ID, but not the address; a professional would be able to deduce that the record was shielded by virtue of only being able to see specific data. Jo Tennant asked if there would be a vigorous audit process from the beginning. Rob Weeks advised that would be a key requirement of the project; each time a user accessed the database, they would need to give a reason for accessing it and this would identify any potential misuse.

Alison Kearnes asked what the confidence level was in terms of the core data the system would start with, as sources indicated this data was quite dirty. Rob Weeks advised that they expected to get a very high quality of basic details, with a 99% accuracy, based on trials undertaken.

Jane Richards noted that GPs were not on the list of users. Rob Weeks advised that GPs would be included on the list.

ACTION:

MEMBERS TO PROVIDE ROB WEEKS WITH COMMENTS ON WHAT WOULD BE THE MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO THE LOCAL SYSTEM.

Graeme Barnell asked how the issue of compatibility with the NHS system would work. Rob Weeks said there was a key risk with the health data, but there would be national health data in terms of the NHS strategic tracing service, which would give GP details. Further to that, the system would be reliant on local systems such as the child health system, but it would be some time before that was plugged in, as the agreement with local Trusts was not mature enough for that to happen in the near future. However, Health professionals could still have the benefit of finding out the other professionals involved with a child.

Janet Phipps asked if a child's consent would be gained as well as a family's consent, as there might be some information a child did not want included on a database. Rob Weeks advised that "family" would mean parent or carer or young person, based on their competency. Martin Spragg said the consent issue was around more detailed information rather than name, date of birth, etc. Rob Weeks advised that it would be in line with standard data sharing principles.

Jo Tennant asked who would be the owner of the system, as that would be a huge issue for the Police. Rob Weeks advised that Devon County Council owned the data, but the system itself was the responsibility of DCES.

ACTION:

ROB WEEKS TO PROVIDE A PRESENTATION TO CHRIS DIMMELOW, WHO WILL CIRCULATE TO MEMBERS. MEMBERS TO THEN TAKE THIS BACK TO THEIR

ORGANISATIONS. ANY FEEDBACK TO GO BACK TO ROB WEEKS. THE SUB-GROUPS OF THE LSCB TO INCLUDE THIS MATTER ON THEIR OWN AGENDAS.

10. STAY SAFE CONSULTATION

Chris Dimmelow advised that he would be sending 3 representatives to the consultation event next month. Those who would be attending the event will be contacted directly by the organisers. Claire Mitchell confirmed she had a place, although it had not come via the LSCB.

ACTION:

ANY VIEWS ON THIS TO BE PASSED TO CHRIS BY THE END OF THE MONTH.

11. ALLEGATIONS AGAINST PROFESSIONALS

Chris Dimmelow advised that the key issues were around training and the names of responsible officers within each agency needed updating.

ACTION:

CHRIS DIMMELOW TO EMAIL MEMBERS SEPARATELY IN ORDER TO UPDATE THE GOSWELL LIST.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Children's Trust Executive - There will be an all day meeting on 13/11/2007 to look at the CYPS plan and all LSCBs were invited to attend. Anne Whiteley advised that this event would be for all strategic partnerships to look at priorities for the next 3 year Children & Young People's Plan and the LSCB had been invited as one of the key partnerships. Invitations had also gone out to the School Forum, Children's Executive and Children's Trust Board.

ACTION:

FURTHER DETAILS TO BE PROVIDED BY CHRIS DIMMELOW IN DUE COURSE.

OFSTED Visit - Anne Whiteley reported that the Annual Performance Assessment had been given a very good hearing by the Inspectors, who commented that they agreed with the self-assessment but it would now have to go to the national process of moderation, so there would be no publication of that judgement at the moment. Anne Whiteley said she was encouraged by the comments made on safeguarding amongst other outcomes and it was a good base to go forward from in terms of thinking about the next 3 year plan. An official letter would not go out to the Council until November.

LSCB Development Day - This will be held on Friday 5th October 2007 at Buckfast Abbey and would be looking at taking stock, reviewing progress within the national process and where Devon LSCB was in relation to the national review. There were key challenges around how to ensure the Board dealt with strategic business without letting operational business fall down.

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

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