

**Meeting of the Child Protection Committee Chairs
Tuesday 12 December 2006, The Menzies Belford Hotel, Edinburgh**

**Meeting Of Child Protection Committee Chairs
Child Protection Committee Lead Officers
The Crown Office
The Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
The Scottish Executive**

In attendance:

Mary Fegan, North Lanarkshire Council (Chair)
Claire Monaghan, Children & Families Division, SE
Maggie Tierney, Children & Families Division, SE
Jan Murray, Children & Families Division, SE
Nicola Macnaughton, Children & Families Division, SE (Secretariat)
Hamish Dalgleish, Children & Families Division, SE
Neil McKechnie, HMIE
Lindsay Ferguson, SE
Catriona Laird, Falkirk Council
Bill Eadie, Stirling CPC
Margaret Anderson, Falkirk CPC
Elinor Smith, North East Scotland CPC
Claire Carthy, East and West Dunbartonshire CPC
Helen Watkins, Shetland CPC
Malcolm Bell, Shetland CPC
Bill Atkinson, Perth and Kinross CPC
Ross Drummond, Fife CPC
Eric Byers, Fife CPC
Louise Scott, Western Isles
Angus MacLeod, Western Isles
Donald Mackenzie, Dundee CYPPC
Sara Lovelock, Clackmannanshire/Stirling
Gordon McKay, Perth and Kinross
Deirdre Cilliers, Clackmannanshire
Kate Mearns, Angus CPC
Shiela Foggen, East Lothian CPS
Myla Frankland, East Renfrewshire CPC
Rena McCarry, South Lanarkshire CPC
Matuna Hawthorn, North Ayrshire CPC
Fiona Swift, North Lanarkshire CPC
Gillian Buchanan, Glasgow CPC
Brenda Doyle, South Lanarkshire CPC
Neil Watson, South Ayrshire CPC
Nora Fisher, Renfrewshire CPC
Susan Bell, Renfrewshire CPC
Robert Murphy, Inverclyde CPC
Fiona Eadie, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service
Gillian Nicol, Scottish Borders CPC
Astrid Telfer, Edinburgh CPC

Jane Ridgway, West Lothian CPC
Jo Macpherson, West Lothian CPC
Donald Urquart, Midlothian CPC
Sandra Thain, Edinburgh, Lothian and Borders CP Office
Malcolm Graham, Edinburgh Lothian and Borders Coordinating Group
Pauline Walker, Scottish Borders CPC
Iain Mitchell, SCRA
Mike Briggs, Dumfries and Galloway CPC
Beth Smith, Dumfries and Galloway CPC
Anne Ritchie, West Dunbartonshire CPC
Dougie Dunlop, Argyll and Bute Council
Pene Rowe, Highland CPC
Marian Martin, HMIE Service for Children
Liz Strang, Argyll and Bute Council
Tom Philliben, SCRA

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Apologies

1. Apologies had been received from Douglas Watson, the Independent Chair of Scottish Borders CPC, Roy Jobson of Edinburgh Council, June Gardiner from the Harthill Training Centre, Alan Baird of Dundee City Council, Martin Henry of Edinburgh, Lothian and Borders CP office, Rosie Ilett from the Scottish Executive, and Gordon McIntosh from Angus CPC.

Agenda Item 2: Minutes and matters arising

2. The Chair suggested that the minutes and notes from the National Chairs Forum be shared with members of the Executive. It was agreed that these would be issued. **ACTION: Secretariat from National Chairs to distribute minutes to the Scottish Executive.**
3. It was decided that the CPC Chairs should continue to meet quarterly with the Executive to discuss best practice, and that the format of the meetings should continue.

Agenda Item 3: Update and views on future activity of the Child Protection Reform Programme – Presentation by Maggie Tierney

4. The Scottish Executive gave a presentation on the ‘sunsetting’ of the three year Child Protection Reform Programme (CPRP).
5. The group were asked for comments on three principle areas in relation to the CPRP. First, did they believe that the objectives as laid out at the start of the reform programme had been achieved? Second, after the full delivery and implementation of the reform programme, what did they think the Executive should focus on next? Third, did they believe that child protection in general had gone too far?
6. The group expressed concern that these areas were too substantial to cover in such a short period at the meeting. However, it was emphasised by the group that the

Executive should ensure that the reform programme is fully consolidated before a new agenda is considered.

7. The Chair raised the issue of proportionality in reference to child protection. This led to a wider discussion on the issue of risk aversion in Scottish society. A number of members in the group expressed concerns that child protection had gone too far, but there was a general welcoming of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Bill.

Agenda Item 4: Presentation on the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Bill – Presentation by Claire Monaghan

8. The Scottish Executive gave a presentation on the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Bill. It was emphasised that the new vetting and barring process should only be seen as **part** of safer recruitment procedures, and that people should **not be led to believe that it will determine an individual's suitability** to work with children or vulnerable adults.
9. Discussion was undertaken on Part 3 of the Bill. The Executive informed the group that although CPCs are not specifically mentioned in the Bill and do not have a duty to share information on a child, they still have a power to disclose information about a child.

Agenda Item 5: Update on the 24 hour phone line – Presentation by Maggie Tierney

10. The Scottish Executive gave a synopsis on the 24 hour phonenumber. It was emphasised that the phonenumber will act only as a gateway service and will not provide advice to callers. The group were informed that the line would be live by mid-February.
11. The Executive welcomed any suggestions of names for the telephone line.
12. The group were informed that the campaign will be predominantly poster and leaflet based. The Executive asked CPC areas to tell them the number of posters they may need in order to advertise the line in libraries and GP surgeries.
13. The Executive outlined the importance of media interest in this project, and sought members' opinions on how to attract the media's attention in a positive way. It was emphasised that any statistics or anecdotes from CPC areas would be very welcome.
14. Members enquired as to whether or not feedback from the Grampian pilot was accessible. The Executive replied that it was now in the public domain, although a very small number of calls were received over the period.

Agenda Item 6: Child Protection Messaging: use of the eCare Framework – Presentation by Murray McVicar, Arlene Stewart and Robert Foreman

15. The Scottish Executive gave a presentation on the e-Care Framework. It was outlined that the technical model had been developed under the Organising Government Fund, and that there are currently 14 eCare frameworks being built upon across Scotland.

16. There are three main objectives of the eCare framework. Rolling out of a single shared assessment; child protection messaging (to support GIRFEC); links to the Children's Services Strategy.
17. The group were briefed on developments in Child Protection messaging. The Executive asked if CPC areas could provide guidance on when professional judgement should come into play here.
18. It was outlined that the Scottish Executive have briefing papers available that will be sent out within the next two months, specifically around Child Protection messaging.
19. The group raised that question of how the new system would accumulate information about a child if that child is not on the CP register. The Executive replied that the CP Coordinator for each area would have the responsibility of assessing soft information.

Agenda Item 7: Update on the draft Letters of Assurance report – presentation by Maggie Tierney

20. The Scottish Executive provided the group with some feedback on the Letters of Assurance replies received in May.
21. It was reported that the letters had given the Executive confidence that the new guidance for CPCs had been implemented across Scotland, and that interagency cooperation had improved. However, the data provided on the number of children affected by substance misusing parents was patchy. It was also reported that there had been definition issues, particularly surrounding 'drug misuse', and barriers to effective action within local authorities included poor information sharing across agencies.
22. The group was informed that a report on the Letters of Assurance feedback would be issued in the New Year/Early spring. The Executive said that the report would be more comprehensive than the feedback from the previous Letters of Assurance exercise, and that individual feedback could be provided upon request.

Agenda Item 8: UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – update by Claire Monaghan

23. The Scottish Executive informed the group that the latest UK reporting to the UN was the first since Scotland had achieved devolution. It was emphasised that Scotland is not where the UN would like them to be in terms of children's rights.
24. The Executive asked the group if they believed that the UN paper is an adequate reflection of where Scotland are on Child Protection.
25. The group raised the issue that there was little context for the UN Convention paper to be set. The Executive said that the covering letter would be sent out to members in order to set the context. **ACTION: Secretariat to send out covering letter to group members.**

Agenda Item 9: Any other business

26. It was agreed that there was no other business to be discussed.