

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SAFEGUARDING SUB-COMMITTEE (A SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE), HELD AT COUNTY HALL, CHELMSFORD, ON THURSDAY 3 JUNE 2010

Membership

Councillors

- * Mrs T Sargent (Chairman)
- * Mrs A Brown
- * Mrs M Hutchon
- * J Knapman
- C Riley

Non-Elected Voting Members

- * Mr R Carson

(* present)

The following officers were present in support throughout the meeting:

David Moses

Head, Member Support & Governance

Matthew Waldie

Committee Officer

The meeting opened at 10.00 am.

1. Apologies

The Committee Officer reported the receipt of the following apologies:

Cllr Colin Riley

Cllr John Aldridge

2. Declarations of Interest

The following standing declarations of interest were recorded:

Cllr M Hutchon	Personal interest insofar as her son is employed by the County Council in Legal Services, and he has dealt with children's cases in court .
Cllr C Riley	Personal interest as Member of the North East Fostering Panel; as Member of the provisional Children's Trust Board; as Member of the Children's Centre Partnership Board, (Strategic Group) and Vice Chairmanship of The Corporate Parenting Panel..

3. Membership of the Committee and Terms of Reference

a) Membership

The committee noted that it would not be appropriate to use substitute members, given the nature of the committee's business; but it was pointed out that

Councillor Aldridge, as an ex officio member, should be able to deputise for other members, if necessary.

It was noted that Mr Carson has a CRB certificate as a school governor; David Moses will confirm whether he will still require specific ECC CRB clearance .

b) Terms of Reference

1. The sub-committee agreed that it should be made clearer who were listed as individual partners under this paragraph, and that an appendix should be added, listing the constituent members of the Partnership Trust.

2. To ensure that the committee is able to obtain the necessary information, this paragraph should read "To receive annual reports from the above *and others* and to make ..."

3. The sub-committee agreed that the important element of their work was to conduct meaningful interviews with a full range of interested parties, particularly those actually at the coal face. This may involve hearing detailed accounts of cases on occasion, but of course these would be generalised for publication.

4. Agreed.

5. David Moses pointed out that this Committee is not a Task and Finish group, but a standing committee; it will continue to exist for as long as it is deemed appropriate by the CYP P&SC.

6. This final paragraph is included to ensure that the sub-committee can get whatever help it requires.

It was noted that the amended terms of reference would go to the full Committee for approval.

4. Monitoring the 2009 Safeguarding Recommendations

The sub-committee noted the position relating to the safeguarding recommendations, as set out in in paper SSC/02/10. It was also noted that they must monitor these and ensure that they are being followed through properly.

The sub-committee **Agreed:**

- i) that they should receive an updated version of this paper in September, which would include evidence of changes that are being brought about. This should actually inform their own investigation;
- ii) that it would be followed by a further update, in December, by which time sub-committee members will be formulating their own views on such matters.

5. Approach to the In-depth Investigation

The sub-committee considered Paper SSC/03/10, which sets out two potential approaches to the in-depth review of Essex's Safeguarding arrangements. The first is based on using the top ten questions found in the CfPS/IDeA Safeguarding Children Scrutiny Guide. These questions seek to address the core areas that are likely to be under scrutiny and are grouped under three general headings: Partnership, Quality & Performance, Practice. The actual questions may require adjustment, according to the individual circumstances of the study.

The second approach centres on the six pillars as found in the SCF Improvement Plan:

1. Confident leadership;
2. An organisation fit for purpose,
3. High quality frontline practice,
4. Measuring what counts,
5. Effective partnerships making the difference,
6. Becoming the employer of choice.

Sub-committee members had differing views of the options. For example, concern was expressed whether the questions might change in time. After some debate, the consensus was that elements of both approaches should be used, if possible. Perhaps the questions could be combined with the pillars, or come in under them.

The sub-committee **Agreed:**

- iii) that David Moses should seek assistance from IDeA; he will then present a draft project plan to the next sub-committee meeting. This will include suggestions on how best to feed back initial findings to all interested parties, before production of the final report, as well as proposals on timings and frequency of meetings;
- iv) that all sub-committee members should inform its Chairman if they had any preferred subject area for conducting their interviews (ie any preferred pillars). Councillor Hutchon confirmed she had no preferences.

It was confirmed that generally meetings of the sub-committee would be public, unless the items for discussion were confidential.

6. Dates of Future Meetings

The sub-committee confirmed the date of the next meeting:

Thursday 1 July 2010 at 2.00 pm

It was agreed that the frequency and dates of future meetings should be determined at the July meeting.

The meeting closed at 11.15 am.

Chairman

		AGENDA ITEM 3
		SSC/01/10
Committee:	Children and Young People Policy and Scrutiny Committee – Safeguarding Sub-Committee	
Date:	3 June 2010	
<u>Membership and Terms of Reference</u>		
Enquiries to:	Graham Redgwell Governance Officer Policy, Community Planning and Regeneration 01245 430360 grahamr@essex.gov.uk	

Purpose of the Paper:

To list the Chairman and members of the sub-committee, and to set out its terms of reference.

Membership

To allow the Group to work in pairs the Membership will comprise the following six members:

- Councillor A Brown
- Mr R Carson
- Councillor M Hutchon
- Councillor J Knapman
- Councillor C Riley
- Councillor T Sargent (Chairman).

As Chairman of the Childrens and Young People's Policy and Scrutiny Committee (CYP P&SC), Councillor J Aldridge is an ex officio member of the Sub-Committee. He will receive copies of all the papers, be able to attend and speak at meetings, and deputise for one of the other Members when interviewing witnesses etc.

Members of the Sub-Committee must have a current approved CRB check in place if visiting any children's residential establishments or where you may be speaking face-to-face with children.

Terms of Reference

1. To exercise the powers of the CYP P&SC in holding the following to local democratic account:
 - Executive Member for Children's Services
 - Executive Director of Schools Children and Families
 - Essex Safeguarding Childrens Board
 - Essex Childrens Partnership Trust
2. To receive annual reports from the above and to make recommendations for consideration by the CYP P&SC
3. To undertake periodic in-depth investigations into the Essex Safeguarding Children arrangements, identify findings and make recommendations for consideration by the CYP P&SC
4. To report on its activities at appropriate intervals but at least on a quarterly basis to the CYP P&SC
5. The Sub-Committee will remain in being until decided otherwise by the CYP P&SC
6. The Sub-committee is empowered to fill any vacancies in its membership, or co-opt appropriate people as members or advisers, subject to ratification by the next meeting of the CYP P&SC