

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF A CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 21 MARCH 2019 AT 10.00 AM IN ACADEMY STREET, BELFAST

1. PRESENT Mr D Cargo (Chair)

Mrs P Carville Mr R Pollock
Mrs M Culbert

2. IN ATTENDANCE

Ms S Long, Dr C Mangan, Mr D Hanna, Mrs E Craig, Mrs L McGovern, Mr N Lavery and Mr C McNickle.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Ms Á Andrews, Mr G Lundy and Ms S O'Connor.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were reminded of the requirement to declare interests where appropriate during the course of the meeting.

5. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 10 DECEMBER 2018

The Chair informed Members that, in order to approve the minutes, the Committee required the presence of two Members that had been present at the last meeting. As this requirement had not been met the Committee noted the minutes* (CPS/3/19/3) of the meeting held on 10 December 2018. The Chair said that the minutes had been considered by the Board at its meeting held on 14 January 2019. It was agreed that the minutes would be presented to the Committee at its next meeting for approval.

***Action:** Minutes of the meeting held on 10 December to be presented at the next meeting of the Committee.*

6. MATTERS ARISING

6.1 HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT (8)

Mr Hanna updated Members on engagement with the Department of Health (DoH) and the Department for Infrastructure (DoI) on the matter of safeguarding as part of transport contracts. He said that DoI was responsible for granting Taxi Operator Licences and that all applications were subject to Access NI checks. EA was the lead agency in safeguarding the transport of children and engagement was ongoing with DoH especially in relation to the transport of Looked After Children. Mr Hanna confirmed that the matter of safeguarding in relation to transport contracts had been referred to the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI). Dr Mangan informed Members that action points were ongoing and that the Committee would reconsider the matter at a future meeting.

Mr Hanna updated Members on measures to enhance the accessibility of Child Protection and Safeguarding training for taxi drivers and he referred to discussion with Mrs Craig regarding the development of an online training programme which would be accessible in time for the start of the new school year. As part of the interim measures, the EA Child Protection Support Service (CPSS) had provided training on a face to face basis. Mr Hanna said that a shared database accessible by CPSS, Transport and HR would enable

effective management of information relating to approximately 1,600 drivers.

A discussion ensued on Access NI checks and Mr Hanna said that in respect of 1,600 drivers, less than 0.5% of the Access NI checks had failed to meet the requisite requirements. Members heard that EA required taxi drivers to complete an Access NI check every 12 months as per the requirements of DE Circular 2006/06, 'Recruitment of people to work with children and young people in educational settings'. The cost of the annual check was met by the applicant. A Member queried whether EA was notified of offences committed following an offence. The Member expressed concern that an offence could be committed shortly after an Access NI check and some time would elapse before a subsequent check. Mrs Craig said that the PSNI Disclosure Unit was responsible for undertaking risk assessments following offences and, when necessary, EA would be notified of a relevant risk.

The Chair thanked Mr Hanna for his update and requested a summary report outlining the main issues as discussed with identified actions for completion and timescales for delivery. The Chair said that the summary report would facilitate a more robust risk assessment and that it would be appropriate to forward the report when agreed to the Audit and Risk Assessment Committee. This was agreed.

***Action:** Committee to reconsider the matter of safeguarding in relation to transport contracts following ongoing engagement with DoI and DoH. Officers to provide a summary report outlining the main issues as discussed with identified actions for completion and timescales for delivery further to approval. This would facilitate a more robust risk assessment. Summary report to be provided to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.*

6.2 DRAFT EA CHILD PROTECTION POLICY (9)

Dr Mangan informed Members that the final version of the EA Child Protection Policy reflected the minor amendments as agreed by the Committee at its last meeting. This included a clarification on the definition of parental responsibility to include the role of guardians.

7. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

The Chair highlighted that Mr Pollock was attending the Committee for the final time. The Chair expressed his thanks to Mr Pollock for his valuable contribution to the Committee. Mr Pollock expressed his enjoyment at working with the Committee and thanked Members and officers for their work.

8. CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK 2019-22

Mrs Craig presented the EA Child Protection and Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework 2019-22* (CPS/3/19/6) and paid tribute to the former interim Head of Service, Mr G Young, for his work on the framework. She said that the strategy was based on an analysis of the child protection training needs of EA staff and employees of specified contracted services, and the framework reflected the aims and objectives of the SBNI Child Safeguarding Learning and Development Strategy and Framework 2015-18. She informed Members that the framework included four levels of training and each level addressed the safeguarding knowledge and skills required, key learning outcomes, target audience, potential development opportunities and organisational responsibility for implementation. Mrs Craig highlighted the objectives of the framework and, in particular, drew attention to the objective to define minimum

child protection and safeguarding learning outcomes to be achieved by EA staff. She also highlighted the objective to improve the confidence and competence of EA staff including those who had designated child protection and safeguarding responsibilities.

A Member queried at what level face-to-face training would take place. Mrs Craig said that there was no face-to-face training at level one and that from level two upwards face-to-face training was required. This included 3 hours' face-to-face training at level two. Mrs Craig informed Members that level four training was designed for staff with specialist safeguarding roles and responsibilities such as staff within the CYPS Directorate and designated Child Protection Officers.

A Member queried whether regular school visitors such as sports coaches would be required to undertake the training as a condition of employment. Mrs Craig highlighted that school coaches often worked at numerous schools and expressed the view that if a coach could assure EA that he or she had undertaken the necessary training, this should satisfy the requirement of all schools. Mrs Craig undertook to explore this issue further. A discussion ensued around the delivery of other CPS training from external organisations. Members agreed that whilst some school visitors might receive other CPS training they should still be expected to adhere to the requirements of the school being visited.

Dr Mangan informed Members that the next phase of work would consider an effective mechanism to collate data on all trained persons. The Chair expressed the view that an implementation plan was required to provide assurance that the training would be delivered to all staff. Dr Mangan undertook through the CPSS, to identify a suitable mechanism to record all training activity.

The Chair highlighted ETI's responsibility to inspect a school/organisation's arrangements for child protection and safeguarding and expressed the view that officers should engage with ETI on the content of the framework. Dr Mangan agreed that she would seek a meeting with the Chief Inspector to seek her views on the framework and to discuss how the framework could inform the inspection process.

A discussion ensued on EA's Annual Assurance Report and Dr Mangan said that an Annual Report on Child Protection and Safeguarding would be presented to the Committee and subsequently referred to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

The Chair referred to the role of EA's Learning and Development Team and Mr Lavery undertook to relay the Committee's discussions to the Head of Learning and Development.

On the proposal of Mrs Carville, seconded by Mr Pollock, the Committee agreed that the Board should approve the Child Protection and Safeguarding Learning and Development Framework 2019-22, subject to further engagement with the ETI.

Actions:

- *Mrs Craig to explore the suggestion that school visitors such as coaches should undertake training as a condition of employment.*
- *Consideration to be given to an implementation plan and a suitable mechanism to record all training activity.*
- *Officers to meet with the Chief Inspector to seek her views on the framework and to discuss how the framework could inform the inspection process.*
- *Annual Report on Child Protection and Safeguarding to be presented to the Committee and subsequently referred to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.*

9. SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Mrs Craig delivered a presentation on child sexual exploitation and the role of EA in raising awareness and providing support. She outlined the legislative, policy, and procedural base which aimed to address sexual exploitation of children and young people. She highlighted the role of the SBNI, the Health and Social Care Trusts, the PSNI, and EA. Within EA she also highlighted the role of CPSS, the Education Welfare Service, and the Youth Service.

Mrs Craig informed Members of the Northern Area Safeguarding Panel Pilot Programme which aimed to raise awareness of sexual exploitation of children and young people. This was a multi-agency programme aimed at year 10 pupils at 11 post primary schools, and 634 young people had taken part in the awareness raising sessions. Mrs Craig said that a full evaluation of the pilot programme was ongoing and a report would be provided to the Committee once it was completed.

A discussion ensued on the target audience of year 10 pupils. The Chair expressed the view that awareness sessions should also be targeted at younger pupils and a Member highlighted the need to rollout the programme to rural areas. Consideration was also given to awareness sessions for parents. Mrs Craig highlighted that some schools had parent forums and that such forums presented an opportunity for the SBNI to engage with parents. The Chair was mindful of EA's intelligence gathering function and highlighted that disclosures from children and young people would likely occur at schools or youth clubs. The relationship between EA's role and the role of the statutory agencies was discussed.

The Chair expressed the view that the Committee should receive reports from the CPSS on its ongoing work including the rollout of the Northern Area Safeguarding Panel Pilot Programme. Members discussed the governance of child protection and safeguarding and Dr Mangan said that the CPSS Business Plan would be presented to the Committee in addition to its consideration by the Children and Young People's Services Committee.

Members agreed that the presentation would be uploaded to the Members' website.

Actions:

- *Evaluation report on the Northern Area Safeguarding Panel Pilot Programme to be presented to the Committee at a future meeting further to consideration of the rollout of the pilot.*
- *Presentation to be uploaded to the Members' website.*
- *CPSS Business Plan to be presented to the Committee in addition to its consideration by the Children and Young People's Services Committee.*

10. CASE MANAGEMENT REVIEW (CMR)

On the proposal of Mrs Carville, seconded by Mrs Culbert, it was agreed that discussion on this matter would be held in committee.

A report was provided on three CMR cases.

On the proposal of Mrs Carville, seconded by Mrs Culbert, the Committee agreed to resume the meeting.

The Chair reported that whilst in committee progress reports on three CMR cases had been noted and that action points in relation to one case were being progressed by officers.

11. SBNI MULTI AGENCY NEGLECT STRATEGY FOR NORTHERN IRELAND (2018/22)

Mrs Craig presented the EA Neglect Action Plan 2018-2021* (CPS/3/19/9) and paid tribute to the former interim Head of Service, Mr G Young, for his work on the action plan. She said that the action plan was in response to the SBNI Multi-Agency Neglect Strategy for NI (2018) and it outlined EA's actions in response to SBNI core objectives. She informed Members that the action plan would be reviewed at regular intervals by the Committee.

Members noted that all actions were risk rated green. Mrs Craig highlighted that some actions related to the provision of training to Assistant Directors on their roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children and neglect. She also said that work was due to commence to scope and agree a regional neglect assessment tool in educational settings. This would be followed by the training of Designated Teachers in the use of the assessment tool.

A Member queried what impact the action plan would have on staffing and resources. Mrs Craig said that the new role of Head of Safeguarding, Welfare & Inclusion should improve EA's capacity to deliver on the actions. She also highlighted EA's role to support Designated Teachers.

A wider discussion ensued on neglect and Members made a distinction between neglect and poverty. Members were mindful that neglect was also a matter for children and young people from affluent families.

On the proposal of Mr Pollock, seconded by Mrs Carville, the Committee agreed that the Board should approve EA's Neglect Action Plan 2018-2021.

Action: *Action plan to be reviewed by the Committee on an ongoing basis.*

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on 14 May 2019.

The meeting ended at 12.05 pm.

Chair

Date

*Paper issued with agenda ** Papertabled