

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF A CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 6 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 2.00 PM IN ANTRIM BOARD CENTRE****1. PRESENT** Mr D Cargo (Chair)

Mr J Craig Mr K Mulvenna  
Dr D Dynan  
Rev A Adams was in attendance.

**2. IN ATTENDANCE**

Ms S Long, Mr D Hanna, Mrs U Turbitt, Mrs E Craig, Mr C Reid, Mr S Dallas, Ms A Hall and Mr C McNickle and for part of the meeting Mrs K Scott, Mrs H Fraser, and Ms K Mawhinney.

Inspector Alan McKeown, PSNI, was in attendance for minute 6.

The Committee agreed to take the agenda items in the following order.

**3. APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Ms Á Andrews, Mrs P Carville, Mrs M Culbert, 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 19 DECEMBER 2019**

The minutes\* (CPS/2/20/3) of the meeting held on 19 December 2019 were agreed on the proposal of Mr Mulvenna and seconded by Mr Craig.

**6. PSNI COMMON LAW DISCLOSURE UNIT - PRESENTATION**

The Chair welcomed Inspector Alan McKeown to the meeting. Inspector McKeown set out the context of the Common Law Police Disclosure (CLPD) Scheme (2015) which ensured that, where there was a public protection risk, the police would pass information to an employer or regulatory body to allow them to act swiftly to mitigate danger. He highlighted that the Scheme provided robust safeguarding arrangements whilst ensuring that only relevant information was passed to employers. The Scheme sought to strike an appropriate balance between the interests of the individual and the importance of public protection.

Inspector McKeown outlined the process to consider whether relevant information should be passed to employers. The criteria considered included accuracy, risk, relevance, human rights, reasonableness and proportionality. Discussion ensued on the application of the criteria across various scenarios. Inspector McKeown said that the consideration of accuracy was the first criterion applied in all cases. The Chair expressed the view that if the CLPD chose not to disclose information, it carried the associated risk.

The Committee noted a list of bodies which would be informed of relevant risk. Inspector McKeown highlighted that informed bodies must be able to act to address the risk. Informed bodies included employers, direct line managers, registered bodies, organisations, oversight

bodies or any other person able to act. It was noted the notification document issued to employers or relevant persons.

A Member queried whether all PSNI officers reported all relevant incidents to the Protective Disclosure Unit. Inspector McKeown said that the CLPD Scheme had been incorporated into police training and all PSNI officers had access to the CLPD notification form. He highlighted that the Protective Disclosure Unit had followed up on relevant incidents where officers had not submitted notification forms.

Wider discussion ensued on the working relationship between the CLPD and Access NI and it was noted that drivers were subject to annual checks. Inspector McKeown agreed with this approach. Details of an incident which had been reported in local media in relation to a school bus were highlighted and officers agreed to forward details to Inspector McKeown for information.

Following questions from Members, Inspector McKeown left the meeting at 2.58 pm. *Mr Craig left the meeting temporarily at this time.*

A Member highlighted that the Protective Disclosure Unit informed bodies that had capacity to address identified risk. The Chair expressed concern that EA might not be informed of every relevant incident disclosed to schools by the Protective Disclosure Unit. The Committee agreed that procedures should be in place to ensure that EA was aware of all incidents referred to schools directly by the Protective Disclosure Unit. The Chair also highlighted the duty to refer matters to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

**Action:** *Officers to forward details to Inspector McKeown of an incident raised in the media. Procedures to be put in place to ensure that EA would be informed of all incidents disclosed to schools directly by the Protective Disclosure Unit.*

## **7. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

### **7.1 PRESENTATION FROM ACCESS NI (8)**

A paper on pre-employment checks for school governors, previously considered by the Membership and Teaching Appointments Committee in May 2019, had been circulated to Members. Mrs Scott provided background information on this matter. Pre-appointment checks were not routinely carried out for Governors appointed as EA, Transferor, Trustee, or Parent Representatives. However, DE appointments to Boards of Governors were subject to a Basic Disclosure Certificate. This matter would be kept under review.

Mrs Turbitt said that work was ongoing to provide assurances in relation to EA's duty to refer individuals to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

### **7.2 DRIVER AND ESCORT PROTOCOL - AUDIT (9.1)**

Mr Hanna said that work was ongoing in relation to the management of risk in relation to driver substance abuse.

Ms Long said that the status report provided on driver and escort protocols had been considered by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee at its meeting on 13 January. She said that DE had advised that it was content with the governance and safeguarding approaches being taken forward by EA in this area.

*Rev Adams left the meeting at 3.15 pm.*

### **7.3 CHILD PROTECTION SUPPORT SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19 (10)**

The Annual Report had been uploaded to the Members' website and a copy provided to the Chair of SBNI for member organisations.

## **8. EA YOUTH SERVICE - SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOR ALL YOUTH SERVICE STAFF**

The Chair welcomed Mr Dallas to the meeting and invited him to present the Safeguarding and Child Protection Information and Guidance for all Youth Service Staff\* (CPS/2/20/7). Mr Dallas said that all adults working in the Youth Service had a responsibility to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young people within Youth Service settings. He said that Every Youth Service setting was required to have a Designated Youth Worker (DYW) and a Deputy Designated Youth Worker (DDYW) with responsibility for child protection and safeguarding. Members noted training arrangements for DYWs and DDYWs. This included the delivery of child protection and safeguarding awareness training for all new and volunteer staff and refresher training for existing staff.

Mr Dallas said that the Youth Service would establish a regional safeguarding team and a local safeguarding team in each council area. These teams would report annually to the Assistant Director. Each safeguarding team would comprise an Adviser/Senior Youth Officer, DYWs and DDYWs. A Member welcomed this approach and was mindful that one of the key responsibilities of the safeguarding teams would be to provide support for the DYW/DDYWs. This support included a recognition of the administrative and emotional demands of the post. He said that this support should also be available for DYW/DDYWs when they were at home. This was agreed.

Mr Dallas said that where a member of staff was based in an EA Youth Centre/Project and had a concern about a child or adult, the concern should be reported to the DYW/DDYW who could seek advice and guidance from CPSS. Mr Reid highlighted the effective working relationships between CPSS staff and Youth Service staff.

*Mr Craig returned to the meeting at 3.23 pm.*

The Chair expressed the view that safeguarding matters in respect of the Youth Service should be integrated into the CPSS to make best use of expertise. Ms Long acknowledged the need to make best use of existing resources and she informed Members that the Corporate Leadership Team had asked HR to undertake a review of services within Directorates. Mr Reid said that there had been no evidence of silo working and reiterated the effective working relationships between CPSS staff and Youth Service staff.

The Chair asked for the introduction of the Guidance to be amended to highlight the central role of the CPSS in working regionally with youth provisions and other EA services to support compliance with safeguarding and child protection responsibilities. This was agreed. Ms Long said that the title of the document could be amended to reflect that the Guidance was EA Guidance for the Youth Service. This was agreed.

Ms Craig said that Youth Service staff had also shared their experiences for the benefit of CPSS staff. Mr Reid highlighted the matter of Adult Safeguarding and said that this was another example of cross directorate safeguarding services provided by EA.

A Member referred to the management of allegations of abuse against EA employees. He queried whether HR could take action against an employee in the absence of a conviction. Ms Hall said that incidents would be considered on a case by case basis. The Member highlighted the need to assess risk and considered that EA should err on the side of caution in such instances. Ms Long referred to the presentation from Inspector McKeown and highlighted the need for accurate details when considering complaints. She said that further consideration would be given to this matter.

On the proposal of Dr Dynan, seconded by Mr Mulvenna, the Committee approved the Safeguarding and Child Protection Information and Guidance for all Youth Service Staff, subject

to the agreed amendments.

**Actions:** *Guidance to outline the support available for DYWs and DDYWs when they are at home; Introduction to be amended in the Guidance to highlight the central role of the CPSS in working regionally with youth provisions and other EA services to support compliance with safeguarding and child protection responsibilities; and Title of the document to be amended to reflect that the Guidance is EA Guidance for the Youth Service.*

## **9. TRANSPORT - CHILD PROTECTION TRAINING FOR PRIVATE OPERATORS**

Mr Hanna provided a status report\* (CPS/2/20/7) on Child Protection Training for Privately Contracted Drivers and Escorts. It was noted that CPSS had delivered 19 child protection training sessions in October and November 2019 and that 780 individuals had received training, which accounted for 55% of operators and 43% of drivers/escorts. A further round of training would be delivered by CPSS in July 2020. Operators and drivers who had not attended to date would be specifically targeted to encourage attendance.

Mr Hanna said that officers from CPSS and Transport had explored a number of options in relation to a future delivery model of child protection training for private operators. These options included an online/digital solution, an in-house training model, and outsourced provision. He said that an outsourced model of provision was the preferred option as an external training provider would retain liability for provision and tracking attendance. This would enable CPSS to redistribute valuable resource whilst retaining a role in quality assurance.

A Member expressed the view that private operators should be required to install dash cameras in their vehicles. Mr Hanna said that this requirement had not been considered to date.

Mr Hanna said that a number of areas would require further consideration before a final recommendation could be brought to the Committee. He advised that a detailed proposal would be presented to the next meeting of the Committee.

The Committee noted the status paper.

## **10. EA CHILD PROTECTION SUPPORT SERVICE AND HR - PROTOCOL FOR DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE OF A CHILD/YOUNG PERSON BY EA STAFF**

Ms Craig presented the CPSS and HR Protocol\* (CPS/2/20/9) for dealing with allegations of abuse of a child or young person by EA staff. The purpose of the protocol was to clarify the roles of CPSS and HR in providing advice to school leaders and EA managers upon receipt of allegations of abuse of a child/young person by EA staff. She outlined the procedure to be followed when an allegation of abuse had been made and she referred to arrangements for precautionary suspension and alternatives to precautionary suspension.

A Member reiterated the need for EA to err on the side of caution when allegations of abuse had been made against a member of staff and a discussion ensued on the implementation of precautionary suspensions and recent case law in relation to this matter.

A Member queried the correlation between the protocol and DE Circular 2015/13 "Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against a Member of Staff". Ms Hall said that the protocol was required to ensure that EA complied with Circular 2015/13.

On the proposal of Dr Dynan, seconded by Mr Mulvenna, the Committee approved the CPSS and HR Protocol for dealing with allegations of abuse of a child or young person by EA staff.

## 11. CASE MANAGEMENT REVIEW

On the proposal of Mr Mulvenna, seconded by Dr Dynan, it was agreed that discussion on this matter would be held in committee.

Reports were provided on five CMR cases.

On the proposal of Mr Mulvenna, seconded by Dr Dynan, the Committee agreed to resume the meeting.

The Chair reported that while in committee progress reports on five CMR cases had been received. The Committee had noted that work was ongoing to refine a process to conduct case management reviews effectively. An update on this work would be presented at the next Committee meeting.

## 12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Ms Craig said that the Safeguarding Board NI had facilitated the rollout of 'The Invictus Play'. The play was performed by Alter Ego Solutions Ltd which aimed to raise awareness and to promote conversations around building resilience and childhood adversity. Members noted that an event had been scheduled for 20 February in the Antrim Office to discuss this initiative. Invitations would be issued to Members.

**Action:** *Members to receive an invitation to the event to discuss the rollout of 'The Invictus Play'.*

## 13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on 7 May 2020.

The meeting ended at 4.08 pm.

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**Chair**

\*Paper issued with agenda

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**Date**

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