

**East Lothian Council**  
**Department of Education and Children's Services**  
**Minutes of Meeting of the Chief Officers' Group on Children's**  
**Services held on Thursday 31 August, 2006**

**Present:** Alan Blackie, Director of Education and Children's Services, ELC  
Don Ledingham, Head of Education, ELC  
Alan Ross, Head of Children's Services, ELC  
James Bruce, ELVON  
Dr David Cassells, GP Dunbar, East Lothian CHP  
Ros Boyd, Integration Manager, Health  
Catherine McDerment, Lead Occupational Therapist, Health  
Gill McMillan, Children's Services Planning Manager, ELC  
Maureen Cree, Children's Reporter, SCRA  
Raymy Boyle, Integration Manager, ELC  
Sheila Ainslie, Inclusion and Equality Manager, ELC  
Jim Lamond, Head of Policy and Business Management, ELC  
John Thomas, Programme Manager, Women & Childrens, Health  
Kay Affleck, Integration Planning Officer, ELC

**1 Apologies:** Dayeel Goh, Consultant Paediatrician, NHS - LUHD Division  
Helen McMillan, Early Years Development Officer, ELC  
Martin Gordon, Lothian & Borders Police

**2 Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 15 June, 2006-09-01**

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as accurate.

**3 Matters Arising**

**(i) Joint Meeting with Adult Services**

The meeting was advised that it had not proved possible to arrange the joint meeting for the original date suggested and the 7<sup>th</sup> December is now being considered as an alternative.

**(ii) COG Away Pay**

A short explanation of the draft programme for the Away Day in October was given. The day will include a look back at the Action Points from last year's Action Plan, an evaluation of our progress towards achieving these and a self-evaluation of the effectiveness of the leadership of the Chief Officers Group.

**ACTION:** Draft programme to be distributed for comment -Kay Affleck

**(iii) Early Years Conference**

It was reported that the Early Years Conference had now been arranged to take place at Winton House on Saturday 18 November. The key speaker would be Robin Balbernie and progress is being made in organising a series of 5 workshops from which attendees can select two. Due to the length of time since the Early

Years Review it had been decided that this would not now be the main focus of the conference but rather it would be on the importance of early years development.

#### **(iv) School Age Parents**

It has now been agreed that funding for this should come under ASL implementation and an application has been made to the exceptional needs budget. An Early Years post has also been identified to take on day-to-day to management of this for the future.

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#### **(v) Integrated Children's Service Plan - Resources**

It was reported that this was still a work in progress. There would still be a need for an infrastructure to support the work of the COG but the exact format for this has not yet been agreed.

**Action:** Alan Ross/ Alan Blackie/Don Ledingham

### **3 Student Evaluation of Learning (SELS) Presentation**

Don Ledingham gave a short presentation of the SELS programme. This is being used in schools to gain young peoples' opinions on the learning and teaching process. The system is in use in all East Lothian Schools and in 50 other schools across Scotland. East Lothian Council is the only Local Authority to have implemented it in all schools across the Authority.

Questionnaires can be easily put together and are not linked to names so entries are completely anonymous. The system then produces reports which can be used to influence practice in schools. The system also allows young people to see that their opinions can contribute to the change process. A full demonstration was given of each of the facilities for reporting within the programme using a questionnaire on the workings of the Chief Officer's Group.

The cost of the programme is £12,000 per year but this allows as many questionnaires a year as you choose. Given that the cost per school would be £800 per year this is good value for money.

The possibility of using the system as a management competency tool within the Local Authority as a whole was highlighted. In view of the feedback from the Child Protection Inspection on the importance of evaluation from service users this could be a valuable tool.

The Viewpoint software programme evaluation is nearly completed and its strengths were identified as using on a one-to-one basis and with young people with Additional Support Needs. It was agreed that the two systems were not mutually exclusive and there could be place for both systems to be used.

It was further agreed that the questionnaire on the effectiveness of the COG would make a useful addition to the Away Day programme and that it should be

circulated prior to the Away Day for completion by COG members. This would allow for a report back on the results of the questionnaire on the day.

**ACTION:** Kay Affleck/Don Ledingham

## **5 Health & Healthcare for Children and Young People in Lothian Consultation**

John Thomas gave a presentation on the consultation that is currently taking place on Health and Healthcare for Children and Young People. This is due to be completed by the end of September and all were encouraged to give feedback on this. The main themes of the proposed strategy were explained including: Healthy Living, Child Protection, Equal Access, the new Sick Children's Hospital, children and young people with disabilities, mental health and wellbeing.

The meeting was also advised of the place of Community Assessment Centres for young people and the discussions that are taking place on the future location of the Young Persons Unit.

Discussion then followed on a number of issues including:

- The relationship between the Board Paper and the final glossy consultation document - this is a condensation of the Board Paper which contains more detailed information for professional consideration. The original Board paper was distributed to all Health's statutory partners. Feedback is welcomed on both.
- The meeting was advised of changes within Musselburgh that will result in the Esk Medical Centre moving towards becoming a Child Centre.
- It was acknowledged that Health had made great strides in integrated working over the past years but the question was posed as to how the new strategy linked to "For Scotland's Children" which said that Health should be the anchor for delivery of services. This point was noted for further action within Health
- A single child health record had been mentioned and clarification was sought on when this might become available. The timescale had been mooted as one year but this could be regarded as a very optimistic target.
- It was noted that in the documents some statements were made that assumed everything was common across Lothian. It was pointed out that this was not always the case and there were very marked differences between the urban experience and the rural experience.

John Thomas thanked COG members for their comments.

## **6 Review of Social Work Services for Children with Disabilities**

The best date for a 2 hour presentation on this was agreed as 16<sup>th</sup> October. This would not be restricted to COG members but would be open to all who would benefit from attending.

**ACTION:** Alan Blackie to ask Robert Swift to arrange this special meeting.

## **7 Voluntary Sector Children's Forum**

Papers were distributed giving the guidelines for the Voluntary Sector Children's Forum and summarising the reasons for bringing the group together, the current membership and the progress made so far. Suggestion for other topics for the Forum to look at were invited and the following suggestions were made:

- Staged Assessment and Intervention
- The importance of joint working
- A response to the Health consultation
- Evaluation comments on the Integrated Children's Service Plan

A request was made for the list of members to be circulated:

**ACTION:** James Bruce to pass list to Cathie Torry for distribution.

## **8 Any Other Business**

### **(i) Chief Nurse for East Lothian**

The meeting was advised that Linda Cowe has been appointed as the Chief Nurse for East Lothian. Her background is in Children's Services so it is anticipated that she will be keen to be involved with integrated planning.

### **(ii) Child Protection Inspection - Draft Report**

Although due by today the draft report has still not come through.

**ACTION:** Alan Blackie to ask HMIE for an indication of when the report would be produced

## **9 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be the Away Day which will be held on Friday 27 October 2006 from 9.00 am - 1.00 pm at Musselburgh Race Course.