

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 7 December, 2006

Present: (Chair) Alan Blackie, Director of Education and Children's Services, ELC
Don Ledingham, Head of Education, ELC
Alan Ross, Head of Children's Services, ELC
Gill McMillan, Service Development Manager, ELC
Raymy Boyle, Integration Manager, ELC
Cathy Orr, Child Health Commissioner, NHS Lothian
Marion Wood, Practice Manager, ELC
Maureen Cree, Children's Reporter, SCRA
Jill Gorzkowska, Occupation Therapist, NHS Lothian
James Bruce, ELVON
Margaret O'Connor, Culture and Community Development Manger, ELC
David White, General Practice Manager, Health
Kay Affleck, Integration Planning Officer, ELC
Jane Heslop, CAMHS
Fiona Mathers, CAMHS

Apologies: Ros Boyd, Integration Manager, Health
David Cassells, GP Dunbar, East Lothian CHP
Dayeel Goh, Consultant Paediatrician, NHS - LUHD Division
Martin Gordon, Lothian & Borders Police
Catherine McDerment, Lead Occupational Therapist, Health
Jim Lamond, Head of Policy and Business Management, ELC
Helen McMillan, Early Years Development Officer, ELC

CAMHS Presentation

It was acknowledged that the amount of work undertaken by the team was considerable with more than one case per day being referred. The service available to young people in East Lothian is much improved as a result but there are still issues around funding.

The team will be moving to Edenhall in February until they can relocate to the Esk Medical Centre when it is finally ready. This is liable to be some distance in the future and therefore if any other suitable premises become available they would be

keen to hear of them. To date they have not made use of space in schools but it was pointed out that all our secondary schools should now have available space for this service and the new primary school buildings being completed should also have space available.

The meeting was advised that although referrals had not come direct to CAMHS from Youth Workers, they had participated in the ASSIST training and it was felt that youth workers were aware of the service offered by the CAMHS team.

An enquiry was made as to whether all relevant agencies had been involved in the Mental Health Framework document and it was confirmed that all the main agencies had been covered.

A short report was given on the work undertaken by the CAMHS worker based within Youth Justice Team and the need for funding to secure this post was highlighted. A proposal has been submitted under CCSF for this post. The meeting was advised that work was currently being undertaken on this and that no final decision had yet been reached. It was pointed out, however, that the current role needed to be wider, perhaps involving LAAC as well, in order to better attract funding.

Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 31 August 2006

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as accurate

Matters Arising:

Update on Integrated Children's Services Plan

Don Ledingham to attend an inter Authority Meeting regarding Integrated Children's Service Plans in the Borders later in the day. **Action: DL**

Review of Services for Children with Disabilities

A proposal for an integrated Disability Team with Children's Services, Health and Adults Services sharing resources is currently being considered. **Action: AR**

Report from HMIe on Child Protection Services in East Lothian

A detailed response to the report was given from the Authority. This has not resulted in any change to the scoring received but some wording has been altered. The final report should reach us on 11 January 2007.

COG Away Day

The feedback from the day has given some very clear pointers for work on the Integrated Children's Service Plan. The need to use time more carefully in looking at more strategic issues and rigorous self-evaluation had also become clear. The results of our evaluation will feed directly into the ICSP and we will be required to report on our progress by March of next year.

ACTION: Self Evaluation to be on agenda for next meeting

Ministerial Task Group on Non-Offence Referrals

The Reporter has been completely overwhelmed by the number of referrals being received, 87% of which come from the police. They are therefore instituting a system which follows on from *Getting It Right For Every Child*. In future, cases will be screened and if they do not meet the requirements, ie if the child is not deemed to be at risk, then the matter will be returned to the referring agency. The Reporter should only be looking at cases which require compulsory measures.

Children's Services indicated that they, too, had experienced a massive rise in referrals. It had been suggested that the screening process should be led by a senior social worker but given the massive increase they have already experienced it was not felt that Social Work would have the capacity to do this. Around 60 - 70% of Social Work referrals came from the police and it had been noted that JLO guideline do not mention the need for compulsory measures. This issue is currently being looked at.

It was reported that a more recent paper was now available on this and it made clear that the reporter will take no further action in low risk/low level of concern cases. This will then reduce the number IER reports required and therefore impact favourably on Social Workers. The system is to be fully evaluated and the first deadline for this is March. It was highlighted that relevant staff would be pleased to make an input to this evaluation.

ACTION: Latest paper to be distributed with minutes - KA

Mid and East Lothian agencies including the police have already met and the matter has been discussed. The police are aware of these issues and feel that there is a real training need for them.

It was noted that if referrals are returned to the referring agency then this could put more pressure on the referring agencies. At present, 75% of referrals to Social Work are at Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the referral process when in fact Social

Work, as a targeted service, should only be dealing with Stage 3 cases.

It was emphasised that the Reporter was the only person who can decide on the need for compulsory measures and if one of the other agencies wished advice from the Reporter then that would still be given verbally.

The absence of police from Stage 2 meetings was also highlighted. The need to involve police, in particular JLO's and their sergeants, in SAI training would therefore be a priority. Knowledge of the SAI system would mean that initial referrals could go to Health or Education rather than Social work or the Reporter where there was a low level of risk

ACTION: Alan Ross and Marion Wood to meet with Police to take forward, initial contact to be with Martin Gordon

ACTION: To return to this issue at a later date.

NEET Strategy

Following on from the launch of the NEET strategy (Not in Employment, Education or Training) every Community Planning Partnership has to devise an Action Plan for their Authority. Currently this is being devised by Education and Children's Services, and Economic Development. Targets are to be in place to reduce the numbers categorised as NEET by 2008. Establishing baseline numbers has been difficult, with a figure of around 500 young people being estimated.

A draft strategy is currently being structured and once this has been signed off it will be emailed to all COG members for comment. **Action: KA**

Strategic Issues to be examined in February

Draft agenda will be prepared 10 days in advance and circulated for comment and additions

- 1 ICSP
- 2 Self-evaluation using the Quality Indicators
- 3 Examine aims and targets
- 4 As suggested at Away Day - feedback from the Convenor's Meeting should come to the COG
- 5 Mental Health Framework to be added to February agenda

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Thursday 22 February 2007 at 9.00 am in Conference Rooms 1 & 2 at John Muir House, Haddington.