

THE MORAY COUNCIL

MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE CHILD PROTECTION SUB-COMMITTEE

FRIDAY 16 APRIL 2010

COUNCIL OFFICE, ELGIN

PRESENT

Councillors A Wright (Chair) L. Bell, G Coull [substituting for Councillor J Sharp], J Divers, J. Hamilton and M Shand.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors A. McKay & J Sharp.

IN ATTENDANCE

The Chief Executive, the Director of Community Services, the Director of Educational Services, the Head of Children and Families & Criminal Justice, the Acting Principal Solicitor (Litigation and Licensing) and the Senior Committee Services Officer, Clerk to the Meeting.

1. DECLARATION OF GROUP DECISIONS

In terms of Standing Order 20 and the Councillors' Code of Conduct the meeting noted that there were no declarations from group leaders or spokespersons in regard to any prior decisions taken on how members will vote on any item on the Agenda nor any declarations of Members Interest in respect of any Item on the Agenda.

2. EXEMPT INFORMATION

The meeting resolved that in terms of Section 50A(4) and (5) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the public and media representatives be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the Items of Business appearing at the relevant Paragraphs of this Minute as specified below, so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in the appropriate Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

Para. No. of Minute

3, 4, & 6

Para. No. of Schedule

7A
5

3. REVIEW OF NESCPA ARRANGEMENTS [PARA 5]

There was submitted a report by the Director of Community Services advising the Sub-Committee of the membership, roles and responsibilities in revised structures for child protection in the North East of Scotland and in that context to seek agreement to implement new local arrangements, details of which were set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

The Director of Community Services and the Head of Children and Families & Criminal Justice spoke to the report and thereafter responded to members questions during which it was noted that the recommendation be amended to include details of the new arrangements set out in Section 3 of the report and that the Constitution of the NESCPA, in regard to membership, will require to be flexible in order to take into account local arrangements so as to ensure equity in membership, for example if restructuring led to the deletion of the Director of Education post. The meeting also noted that whilst Moray Council Elected Member representation on the new local Sub-Committee would be a matter for the Council to determine it would be appropriate for this Sub-Committee to make a recommendation thereon to the Council.

Following consideration the Sub-Committee agreed to:-

- (i) approve for implementation the revised North East of Scotland local arrangements for child protection as detailed in Section 3 of the report and Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (ii) recommend to the Council that Elected Member representation comprise the Convener or Depute Convener, the SNP Group spokesperson on child protection and Councillor J Divers, given his experience in child protection issues.

4. PREPARATION FOR FOLLOW-THROUGH CHILD PROTECTION INSPECTION [Para 5]

There was submitted a report by the Director of Community Services advising the Sub Committee on the scope and timetable associated with Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education's (HMIe) Follow-through Inspection of Services to protect children and young people in the Moray Area.

During discussion the meeting noted that the follow-through inspection, scheduled to commence during the week commencing 7 June 2010, will have an inter-agency focus and will assess further progress made in meeting the six main points for action which includes strategic leadership. It was also noted that a briefing session to update Elected Members on progress will take place on 25 May 2010 following the Policy & Resources Committee meeting on that day and that a presentation by the Chief Officers Group to the Inspectorate on the joint action plan will take place at 2.30 pm on 7 June 2010 to which Elected Members will be invited to attend. It was also noted that following the presentation to the Inspectorate there will be a meeting of the Focus Group to

discuss the sixth action point 'strategic leadership' to which Elected Members on the Child Protection Sub-Committee, both present and future members, will be invited to attend.

Following consideration the Sub-Committee agreed to note:-

- (i) that the follow-through inspection of Child Protection Services will take place in June 2010;
- (ii) the actions being taken to strengthen local services and the arrangements in place to prepare for inspection; and
- (iii) the proposed arrangements for a briefing session to update Members on progress, the presentation to the Inspectorate and Focus Group meeting, details of which will be circulated to Elected Members in due course.

5. CO-LOCATED UNIT [PARA 5]

There was submitted a report by the Director of Community Services advising the Sub-Committee on the operation of the Children's Services Co-Located Child protection team (Child Protection Team). There was appended to the report as Appendices 1, 2 & 3, respectively, a breakdown, month by month, of child protection investigations conducted by the Child Protection Team as a percentage of all investigations that month, a list of questions for parents or carers and a list of questions for children or young people.

Following consideration the Sub-Committee agreed to note the report.

6. REMIT AND FUTURE OF THE SUB COMMITTEE

The meeting noted that the Moray Council Child Protection Sub-Committee had now fulfilled its remit and should now stand down. The Chairman thanked members and officers for the contribution to the work of the Sub-Committee over the past year.