

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

DECISION SCHEDULE



Thursday, 29 January 2009

at 9.00 am

in Committee Room A, Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Councillor Hill, Cabinet Member responsible for Children's Services will consider the following items.

1. **KEY DECISIONS**

None

2. **OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

- 2.1 Adoption Service Inspection Report – *Director of Children's Services*
- 2.2 Safeguarding Children In Hartlepool – *Director of Children's Services*

3. **REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY FORUMS**

None

4. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006**

EXEMPT ITEMS

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs referred to below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006

5. **KEY DECISION**

- 5.1 Call-In Of Decision: Service Specification For Children's Centres Outreach Package – Formal Comments Of The Children's Services Scrutiny Forum - *Children's Services Scrutiny Forum* (Para 3) (Key Tests i and ii)

6. **OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

None

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
29 January 2009



Report of: Director of Children's Services

Subject: Adoption Service Inspection Report

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is presented to inform the Portfolio Holder of the findings of the recent Inspection of the Council's Adoption Service and to agree the Action Plan arising from the findings.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The background to Inspections is described and the methods used. The requirements and recommendations set out in the report are tabulated into an action plan and attached as **Appendix 1**. A summary of the requirements of the membership of the adoption panel is given in **Appendix 2** in support of one of the items in the action plan.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

The provision of an Adoption Service is an integral part of the Portfolio Holder's brief.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non Key.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Decision by Portfolio Holder for Children's Services.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

- i. receive the inspection report;
- ii. agree to the action plan detailed in **Appendix 1**; and
- iii. confirm that, as part of the action plan, only one Member be appointed to the adoption panel.

Report of: Director of Children's Services

Subject: ADOPTION SERVICE INSPECTION REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is presented to inform the Portfolio Holder of the findings of the recent Inspection of the Council's Adoption Service, to agree the Action Plan arising from the findings and to consider the issue of the constitution of the adoption panel in respect of Members.

2. BACKGROUND

It is a requirement of the Care Standards Act 2000 for inspections to be carried out in respect of all adoption services – including local authorities. Ofsted did the inspection in October 2008 and their report has been received by the authority. No proposals for changes in the report were made by the department.

Inspections seek to assure children, young people, parents, the public, local authorities and the government of the quality and standard of service provided. The report gives judgements that are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for the service.

The inspectors interviewed a number of staff, adopters and adoption panel members and attended an adoption panel.

Inspection judgements are described as:

Outstanding:	this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good:	this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory:	this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate:	this aspect of the provision is not good enough

3. FINDINGS

Overall the inspectors judged that the service quality rating is satisfactory. They noted that "The core business is undertaken with skill, thoroughness and commitment. Similarly, the arrangements for supporting people affected by adoption are undertaken in a conscientious and focussed way that provides an inclusive approach."

They noted that there have been some improvements since the last inspection but some matters remained outstanding regarding compliance with the regulations, for example e.g. ensuring that the panel is quorate, the quality of the children's guide and a strategic approach to training of staff.

Specific areas of inspection were:

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

Judgement – satisfactory

The inspection noted the varying quality of child permanence reports and that these did not routinely contain information about the birth parent's health. It also noted that further members of the panel need to be recruited and that senior managers had this in hand. Indeed a new independent member has been recruited since the inspection.

The inspectors pointed out that the Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005 state in relation to the choice of panel members, under Regulation 3 (3) (c):-

“in the case of a local authority, one member of that council”

but noted that the council has two members on the Panel.

Regulation 3 (3) (e) requires at least three other persons (referred to in the regulations as Independent Persons) to be appointed and that at least two of them should have personal experience of adoption. Taking these two points together, there is a need to review the membership of the adoption panel bearing in mind that the maximum number of panel members is ten. More details in relation to the membership of adoption panels are provided in **Appendix 2**.

Ofsted also noted that there had been no permanent Team Manager for several months. The appointment was made at the end of November and the new manager will take up post at the beginning of February 2009.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

Judgement – Good

Of note is the finding that “there is a strong approach to supporting adoptive placements.” The inspection report recorded “the very strong, professional medical advice that is available to the adoption panel, the agency, adopters and children”. No issues were identified in this section.

Helping children make a positive contribution**Judgement – Good**

The report notes “there is a strong and committed approach to maintaining children’s histories and backgrounds” and “birth parents are all provided with the facility to access support...and serious efforts are made to encourage birth parents to take advantage of this service.” No issues were identified in this section.

Organisation**Judgement – Satisfactory**

The inspectors noted that there has not been a permanent manager in post for several months and while core work of the service has been conducted to a generally good standard, it has limited the scope to undertake strategic planning.

Nevertheless, the report recorded that “the arrangements for getting core work done are reasonably well managed and include fair and balanced allocation and workload management, support and supervision of social workers and a commitment to best outcomes for children driving it”.

The report highlighted that while training to extend the knowledge and skills of the staff group is available and encouraged; the inspectors felt that there was little evidence of a strategic plan being in place. However they did note that there are plans in place to address this. Finally the report noted that while case records were generally well organised and contained the required information; there was no routine auditing mechanism in place.

4. ACTION

A draft action plan has been developed to address the issues emerging from the inspection. This is attached as **Appendix 1**.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Additional staff resources had already been agreed and appointments made. This should ensure that the issues raised by the inspection can be addressed appropriately with no further financial impact.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Portfolio Holder is asked to:

- i. receive the inspection report;
- ii. agree to the action plan detailed in **Appendix 1**; and
- iii. confirm that, as part of the action plan, only one Member be appointed to the adoption panel.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The adoption service is an integral part of the Portfolio Holder's brief. The action plan must be shared with Ofsted who will check that the authority have acted upon both the requirements and the recommendations that are intended to ensure that the authority meets the required standards for an adoption service.

The intention of the regulations, as confirmed at the Inspection, is that only one member of the authority should be appointed to the adoption panel. In the past, it had been possible for more than one member to be appointed and this had not been resolved when the regulations changed in 2006.

Recently, one of the two members tendered her resignation and while a replacement has been identified, she has not undertaken the induction process and thus not yet become a member of the panel. This would appear to be an appropriate time to change previous practice and meet the requirements of the Regulations.

Consequently, it is recommended that the Portfolio Holder decide that there will be one member appointed to the adoption panel.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Care Standards Act 2000
Adoption and Children Act 2002
Children Act 2004
National Minimum Standards for Children's Services
Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005

9. CONTACT OFFICER

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2.1 Appendix 1

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Voluntary Adoption and the Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005 or Local Authority Adoption Service Regulations 2003 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider(s) must comply with the given timescales.							
No	Standard	Regulation	Requirement	Actions	Person Responsible	Timescale for action	Progress Review
1	5	Regulation 16(2)	Obtain, so far as is practicable, information about the health of children's birth parents	Amend the department's practice guidance to emphasise the importance of gathering information about birth parents – including their health	Head of Business Unit Placement Team Manager	01/12/2008	Amended and will transfer to the web based system in February 2009
2	11	Regulation 3	Recruit sufficient numbers of people to the adoption panel to achieve the required constitution	Advert to be placed locally to attract suitable candidates from whom to select new Panel members. Report to Council's Portfolio Holder recommending that only one Councillor is a member of the Panel as required by the Regulations	Placement Team Manager Head of Business Unit	01/12/2008	Two Panel members appointed [subject to clear CRB check] Further advert appearing in mid January for remaining Independent member
3	1	Regulations 2 & 4	Prepare a Statement of Purpose that includes all required information, review and revise it as appropriate and notify Ofsted of any revisions made	Revision of Statement of Purpose to be completed. Copy of revised Statement to be sent to Ofsted	Placement Team Manager	01/12/2008	Revision completed Copy to be sent to Ofsted when Portfolio Holder has agreed the Action plan

2.1 Appendix 1

4	1	Regulation 3	Prepare a children's guide to adoption that includes all required information	An interim supplementary sheet to be produced in advance of a full revision of the published guide	Placement Team Manager	01/12/2008	Supplementary sheet produced. Full revision underway.
5	17	Regulation 9	Prepare a child protection policy and procedure that addresses the safeguarding of children in adoptive placements and children receiving adoption support services	Prepare a draft policy and procedure for the relevant sub group of the Local Children's Safeguarding Board for them to consider, adopt and include in the published procedures	Safeguarding & Review Manager	01/12/2008	Draft prepared and ready for submission
6	23	Regulation 12	Develop a training programme that meets the development needs of the service	Liaison with Workforce Development staff to include adoption staff's needs in the Departmental Training plan	Placement Team Manager Workforce Development Officer	01/12/2008	Training needs identified and included in the Departmental Training Plan published on 7 th January 2009
7	28	Regulation 15	Include all required information in adoption panel members' records	Obtain the required information and copy of documents and attach them to the records already held	Placement Team Manager	01/12/2008	Information has been obtained and is filed appropriately

2.1 Appendix 1

RECOMMENDATIONS						
These recommendations relate to National Minimum Standards and are seen as good practice for the Registered Provider/s to consider carrying out.						
No	Refer to Standard	Good Practice Recommendations	Actions	Person Responsible	Timescale for action	Progress Review
1	NMS 5	Develop a consistent approach to the writing of Children's Permanence Reports to ensure adopters receive all necessary information about children being considered for a match	Guidance to be developed and issued. Monitoring of reports by the Social Worker's line manager Audit of reports by Placement Team Manager	Placement Team Manager, Field Team Managers	February 2009	Draft guidance in preparation Monitoring now in place Audit tool developed and in use
2	NMS 12	Ensure panel administrative systems are efficient to ensure all reports are received by panel members in sufficient time	Relocation of Placement team will increase the admin capacity at peak demand times	Head of Business Unit	December 2008	Team relocated – additional admin support now available at peak demand times
3	NMS 17	Provide the executive with reports on the activity of the service twice every year	Prepare reports for Portfolio Holder in March and September each year	Head of Business Unit	January 2009	Agreement sought from Portfolio Holder in accepting Action Plan - January 2009
4	NMS 25	Place on all case files of adopters the decisions reached in supervision	Existing Case supervision documents to be used for recording case decisions in respect of adopters	Placement Team Manager	January 2009	In place for supervision sessions since December 2008
5	NMS 27	Develop a system for auditing case files	Division wide case audit tool to be developed that includes specialist files	Divisional Management Team	February 2009	Preliminary work has started

Adoption Panel

Composition of the Panel

The Adoption Agencies Regulations 2005 set out the requirements for the local authority to establish an Adoption Panel. They revised the requirements of the Adoption Agencies Regulations of 1983 where there was more latitude about the membership. Specifically, the Panel should have no more than 10 members, including the Chair of the Panel.

The Chair of the Panel must have the skills and experience necessary for chairing an Adoption Panel. The rest of the members comprise:

Two social workers, each with at least three years relevant post qualifying experience;

One member of the local authority

The medical adviser to the adoption agency

At least three other persons [referred to as Independent Persons in the rest of the Regulations], including, where reasonable, at least two persons with personal experience of adoption

A vice chair must be appointed from the membership to act in the absence of the chair.

There is also a requirement to appoint an agency adviser to the adoption panel. They must be a social worker and have at least 5 years relevant post qualifying experience and relevant management experience. The agency adviser does not vote.

A person may not be appointed as an Independent Person if they:

‘Is or have been within the last year employed by that authority in their children & family social services;

Is related to a person falling into the category directly above;

Is or has been within the last year a member of that authority’

Tenure

A panel member shall hold office for a term not exceeding three years and may not hold office for more than three terms in total.

Current Panel Membership

Panel Chair	Independent Person
Vice Chair	Team Manager
Medical Adviser	Designated Doctor
Legal Adviser	Legal Department representative
Social Worker	Social Worker
Independent Person	Adopter
Independent Person	Adopted Person
Independent Person	Vacant
Independent Person	Vacant – previously filled by a Member
Elected Member	Councillor
Panel Adviser	Placement Team Manager

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
29 January 2009



Report of: Director of Children's Services

Subject: SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IN
HARTLEPOOL

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Portfolio Holder in relation to the arrangements for safeguarding children in Hartlepool.
- 1.2 To seek agreement to regular reporting on safeguarding issues to the Portfolio Holder on a quarterly basis.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

- 2.1 The report provides the Portfolio Holder with information on the arrangements for safeguarding children in Hartlepool. The report provides statistics in relation to Safeguarding and Specialist Services, including statistics about children receiving services, levels of activity, the number and type of staff employed, caseload management systems and complaints and compliments.
- 2.2 The report also sets out information in relation to Hartlepool LSCB which is the co-ordinating body that manages safeguarding arrangements in the town. The work of the LSCB is monitored through an annual work plan. A copy of this plan is attached as an appendix to this report.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

- 3.1 The Portfolio Holder has responsibility for Children's Services issues.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non key.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

5.1 Children's Services Portfolio Meeting on 29 January 2009.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

6.1 That the Portfolio Holder notes the contents of this report;

6.2 That the Portfolio Holder agrees to the production of a report on safeguarding activity on a quarterly basis.

Report of: Director of Children's Services

Subject: SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IN
HARTLEPOOL

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Portfolio Holder in relation to the arrangements for safeguarding children in Hartlepool.
- 1.2 To seek agreement to regular reporting on safeguarding issues to the Portfolio Holder on a quarterly basis.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This report is being produced to provide the Lead Member for Children's Services with details regarding activity in relation to safeguarding children. In 2008, the Department for Children, Schools and Families published updated 'Statutory Guidance: The Roles and Responsibilities of the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Director of Children's Services.' This document highlights the key roles for the Lead Member (LM) which includes, amongst other things, *'ensuring a clear focus on safeguarding and promoting the safety and welfare of children across all agencies, especially children looked after.'* The statutory guidance details that *'In order to ensure that co-ordinated action is in place to safeguard vulnerable children, the LM should receive regular reports from the DCS about how services are being delivered.'* It is intended that this report commences a quarterly reporting arrangement to keep the Lead Member informed of the work undertaken to safeguard children.

Activity in Safeguarding and Specialist Services

- 2.2 As at 5 January 2009, Safeguarding and Specialist Services was delivering services to 861 children in the town. Of these, 62 children were subject to protection plans, 163 children were looked after and the remaining 636 children were children in need. The figures relating to activity in Hartlepool are broadly in line with national and comparator authorities.
- 2.3 The number of referrals received by the service in the year to date averages 75 referrals per month. Three main categories under which children are referred for services are:
 - Child abuse or neglect
 - Family dysfunction

- Family in acute stress.

These categories account for 86% of the referrals to the service in the year to date.

- 2.4 There are currently 62 children in Hartlepool who are subject to a protection plan. This figure has remained fairly stable since April 2008 with the average figure over this period being 61 children. The numbers of children subject to a protection plan in Hartlepool has declined over the past year from around 110 to the current figure of 62. This is as a direct result of an initiative to ensure that only those children who require a plan have one in place. Previously there had been a number of children who were looked after AND subject to a protection plan, thus having two plans in place which could cause confusion. Protection plans for looked after children are now appropriately ended when a child becomes looked after as their safeguarding is protected through the looked after arrangements.
- 2.5 The table below details the breakdown of categories of concerns for children subject to protection plans as at 31 December 2008:

CATEGORY	NUMBER
Neglect	37
Physical Abuse	14
Emotional Abuse	7
Sexual Abuse	4

The category of neglect represents 60% of all children subject to protection plans with physical abuse being the second most frequent category at 22%. This statistic very much reflects national trends where neglect is the largest category leading to a child becoming subject to a protection plan. The issues leading the protection planning under the category of neglect most frequently arise as a result of children affected by parental substance misuse and the impact of this upon their ability to care for and meet the needs of their children. In recognition of the problem of parental substance misuse, an additional social work post has been created within the service to specialise in the area of 'hidden harm – the impact of substance misuse'.

- 2.6 There are currently 163 children looked after by Hartlepool Council. Of these 99 children are subject to legal orders, 42 are accommodated under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989, ie looked after at the request or with the agreement of parent(s), and 22 children are receiving short break care on a regular basis as part of a family support package. The vast majority of these children are children with disabilities who access short break care services from Exmoor Grove.

- 2.7 74% of the children looked after live inside the council boundary. Of the remaining 26%, the majority live in placements in the north east region. A minority of children reside in specialist residential homes or schools in other parts of the country and these placements reflect the child's needs for specialist services. The following table shows a breakdown of the placement type of children looked after by the Council.

PLACEMENT TYPE	NUMBER OF CHILDREN	%
Foster care	126	77%
Residential home/school	24	15%
Placed for adoption	7	4%
Hostel accommodation	3	2%
Placed with Parents	2	1%
Independent Living	1	1%
Total	163	100%

Staffing

- 2.8 The service employs a total of 119.5 staff to work with children and their families. 57% of the workforce are qualified social workers. The remaining 43% are trained family resource workers and residential child care officers. These services are managed by qualified social workers. The service is made up of eight social work teams led by a team manager. With the exception of the children with disabilities team which has a care co-ordinator, all the teams have a principal practitioner who deputises for the manager.
- 2.9 Within the service there are a total of 38.5 social worker posts. 21 social workers work within the 4 generic fieldwork teams and a further 16.5 social workers work within the specialist teams i.e. children with disabilities, settled care, leaving care and family placement service. One social worker post is seconded to and based within the child and adolescent mental health service and a further three social workers are seconded to the Youth Offending Service.
- 2.10 The service is supported by three family resource teams plus resource workers based within the specialist teams. Each of the family resource teams has a qualified manager and there are 38 family resource workers in total. The service has one residential unit, Exmoor Grove which provides short break care for children with disabilities. This unit employs one manager, two deputy managers and 11 residential child care officers.
- 2.11 The service currently employs three social workers provided by an agency. These agency workers are being used to cover temporary vacancies of permanent staff who are acting into management posts. There are 2 vacant posts which have recently been appointed to within the under 11's Business Unit. The successful candidates are

both newly qualified social workers and will take up post within the next six weeks. There are also 2.5 vacant posts in the family placement service, it is anticipated that an advert will be made to recruit to these posts this month.

- 2.12 At this time it is not possible to provide detailed information on staff sickness absence at a divisional level, however, it is anticipated that a new system for sickness reporting will be put in place in future and once this information becomes available it will be incorporated into this report.

Caseloads

- 2.13 The Safeguarding and Specialist Services Divisional Management meeting reviews information in relation to social workers' caseloads on a monthly basis and this information is shared with the Director of Children's Services and Chief Executive. A significant amount of work has been undertaken recently to ensure that only those children receiving a service are active on social workers caseloads. The average social work caseload is 23 children, which is not dissimilar from other local authorities in the Tees Valley region. Dependent upon the level of experience of the member of staff this could include a mix of child protection cases, children looked after and cases in court proceedings. Less experienced staff primarily work with children in need and co-work more complex cases with experienced colleagues in order to develop their skills and expertise.

Comments, Complaints and Compliments

- 2.14 The service has in place a Complaints and Representation Procedure. In the year to date the service has received ten complaints, eight of which were resolved at stage one and one resolved at stage two. A further stage two complaint is ongoing. Since September 2008 there have been seven compliments about the service.

Hartlepool Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

- 2.15 The LSCB is the coordinating body that manages safeguarding arrangements in the town and is chaired by the Director of Children's Services. The LSCB produces an annual work plan which is implemented by the three subgroups of the Board, namely:
- Practice, Policy and Procedure Subgroup
 - Quality and Performance subgroup
 - Training subgroup.

A copy of the 2008/09 LSCB workplan outlining the progress to date is attached at **Appendix 1** of this report. Most actions are on target to be achieved this year.

- 2.16 There is one additional subgroup of the LSCB, the Serious Case Review Panel which is an ad hoc group convened as necessary to consider the death of or serious injury to a child and there are concerns regarding the protection of a child. This group has met to consider the circumstances of two children who suffered serious injuries in the year to date. In one case a management review was undertaken which is approaching its conclusion and in the other case a multi agency learning event was held in October 2008 facilitated by external consultants. In both of these cases, the child was not known to Safeguarding and Specialist Services prior to the serious injury.
- 2.17 The annual LSCB Development Day was held on 14 January 2009. This event provided the Board with an opportunity to reflect upon its performance and strengthen safeguarding arrangements, to consider local safeguarding priorities and to determine the work plan of the Board for the coming year. The new workplan will be prepared by 1 April 2009 and will reflect the priorities for 'Living Safely' in the Children and Young People's Plan. It will be submitted to the Portfolio Holder and the Children's Trust for information.
- 2.18 The LSCB has produced in the last year, amongst other things, a procedure for Managing Allegations against those who Work with Children. This procedure ensures that Hartlepool LSCB has in place arrangements that meet the requirements as laid out in Working Together 2006. This procedure has been consulted on and was implemented with effect from 1/1/09.

3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1 This report provides the Portfolio Holder with details on activity undertaken to safeguard children in Hartlepool. It is proposed that this report is the first of a quarterly reporting arrangement to the Portfolio Holder. This report gives information on activity during the year to date; future reports will reflect activity within the preceding quarter and may at times focus on different aspects of services, for example specialist areas such as children with disabilities. Core safeguarding data will be detailed in each report.

4. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no risks associated with this report as it is providing information for the Portfolio Holder.

5. LEGAL AND FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 There are no legal or financial matters for consideration in this report.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 That the Portfolio Holder notes the contents of this report;
- 6.2 That the Portfolio Holder agrees to the production of a report on safeguarding activity on a quarterly basis.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 It is part of the Lead Member's leadership role to ensure the effective discharge of the authority's statutory children's services functions. As the Lead Member for Children's Services, the Portfolio Holder has a responsibility to ensure there is a clear focus on safeguarding and that co-ordinated action is in place to safeguard vulnerable children.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- DCSF (2008) 'Statutory Guidance: The Roles and Responsibilities of the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Director of Children's Services.' HMSO
- Hartlepool LSCB Annual Work Plan 2008/09

9. CONTACT OFFICER

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**HARTLEPOOL LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD
WORKPLAN 2008 – 2009**

Outcome	How we will do it	Who	Review
Review the use of the Child Protection Procedures, issuing updated Practice Guidance where necessary	Review the procedures taking into account new government guidance and legislation and the practice recommendations identified in the SCR audit Issue a series of LSCB Practice Guidance	Practice, Policy and Procedures Group Head of Safeguarding	Looking at new format for updated procedures during 2009/10 dependent upon publication of new edition of Working Together LSCB considered a revised Procedures and Guidance Manual should be developed simultaneously to avoid confusion for multi agency staff
Ensuring implementation of responsibilities related to management of allegations against those working with children	Enable and support all agencies to develop/improve professional codes of practice and whistle-blowing policies that aim to safeguard children from professional misconduct. Link these to the standards for the management of allegations against staff and volunteers (Working Together 2006)	Performance and Quality Assurance Group	Draft Procedure produced Circulated for consultation October/Nov 08 Final version to be implemented January 2009 Briefings to be delivered Jan – March
Working with agencies to monitor and evaluate their responsibilities under S11 of the Children Act (2004)	Ensure compliance of S11 by Hartlepool's 'Audit and Evaluation' exercise. Analyse and disseminate results and create		Exercise completed Audit collated Results to be used in Development Day (14th Jan 09)

2.2 Appendix 1

	standards and further self audit tools.		to guide planning
Working with agencies to ensure safe recruitment practices are in place	Analyse S11 audit.	Performance and Quality Assurance	Audit collated – work plan re Safer Recruitment to be brought together from results of audit
Developing a protocol on Trafficked Children	Develop and implement a protocol and procedure for use in Hartlepool. Issue Practice Guidance and training for frontline staff that is accessible and implemented by all agencies	Practice, Policy and Procedures Group. Training Group	Not yet commenced
Develop joint working arrangements for children affected by Domestic Abuse	Ensure supplementary procedures are adopted and relevant agencies are identified and aware of their responsibilities. Ensure robust reporting mechanisms are in place from DA Forum and MARAC to LSCB. A Communication Strategy will ensure effective dissemination of information	Practice, Policy and Procedures Group LSCB Development Officer Head of Safeguarding	Scoping exercise underway – reporting to Practice, Policy and Procedure (PPP) Group Communication strategy – work in progress (1st Draft with PPP Group)
Review arrangements to safeguard children living in situations of substance misuse	Review current policy by all agencies. Link with ‘Hidden Harm Network’ to review assessment tool and its use. Review training.	Practice, Policy and Procedures Group LSCB Development Officer Training Group	Hidden Harm Strategy completed and ratified by Board Assessment tool updated and ratified by Board Training arranged for January 09

Implementing responsibilities related to deaths in childhood	Arrangements in place and agreed with other Tees LSCB's. Hartlepool to set up systems to capture and record key data and establish contacts.	LSCB Development Officer Head of Safeguarding	Child Death Overview Panel (Tees Wide) in place Monitoring in place through CDOP Manager
Supporting multi-agency activity in the area of e safety	Set up a short term task group to ensure a co-ordinated approach to e safety in policies and procedures, education and training and infrastructure and technology	LSCB Development Officer	Strategic E Safety Group in place. Vision developed and e safety strategy in development
Develop processes for conducting Serious Case Reviews (SCR) and monitoring and implementation of their recommendations	Evaluation of the action plan in response to the audit of Serious Case Reviews. Ensure there is a policy and a format for consultants undertaking SCR's and that Hartlepool has a 'bank' of appropriately skilled and independent consultants with up to date checks and procurement requirements. That action plans relating to each case is evaluated and signed off by the Chair of the LSCB. Briefings on the Review are provided and case studies and training materials are produced to support organisations learning	Head of Safeguarding Head of Safeguarding Performance and Quality Assurance Group Training Group	Tees wide Multi Agency Protocol produced and implemented. Action Plan in place to implement recommendations from audit monitored through LS CB Exec group National developments taking place around serious case reviews which will inform future planning and arrangements regarding conduct of SCR's
Make better use of statistics to drive the work of the LSCB	Use the multi-agency dataset to identify areas of concern, address it and monitor progress. Develop	Performance and Quality Assurance Group	Data set now being populated, links have been set up with partner agencies.

	key messages to feedback to frontline staff and so improve links between LSCB and frontline staff		
Ensure the availability of high quality multi-agency training in safeguarding and child protection for those who work with children and young people	Undertake a training needs analysis and compile a training strategy. Increase liaison with other sub groups to identify and deliver training needs resulting from work carried out in their sub group	Training Group	Work in progress – Training Task Group Annual training plan in implementation
Maintain a well developed, regularly updated website to support both internal and external communications	Develop a Communications Strategy to ensure clearer channels for the dissemination of information, policies etc. Provide a regular information bulletin/newsletter. A Practitioner page on the website to increase the ability of staff to relate the LSCB's work with their day to day practice.	LSCB Development Officer Head of Safeguarding	Communication Strategy in development Training arranged for current website updating – alternative web sites also being considered (meeting Jan 09)