



Chief Officers' Leadership Events

Summarised Events Report

Protecting Children Programme Team, CELCS

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Introduction

This is a summarised report of the Child Protection Chief Officers' Leadership Events (COLEs) which took place in April and May 2018, in Glasgow and Perth respectively.

A detailed report was been issued to all delegates who attended the events, plus all members of the National Child Protection Leadership Group.

Background

On 25th February 2016, the then Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning, Angela Constance MSP, announced in Parliament that the Scottish Government would be undertaking a Child Protection Improvement Programme (CPIP). The Programme's core objective was to identify where recommendations for sustainable improvement could be made, building upon the observable improvements in practice that have already taken place in recent years and seeking to further embed Scotland's unique approach to child wellbeing: *Getting it Right for Every Child* (GIRFEC).

CPIP includes nine interconnected work strands: the Child Protection Systems Review; Neglect; Child Sexual Exploitation; Child Trafficking; Child Internet Safety; Children's Hearings; Inspections; Leadership; and, Data and Evidence.

Throughout 2016, a review of the formal elements of the child protection system (child protection committees; initial and significant case reviews; the child protection register and case conferences) was conducted. This review, led independently by Catherine Dyer, former Crown Agent and Chief Executive of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, included representatives from key stakeholder groups. Its findings focused on three thematic areas: Leadership, Governance and Accountability; Developing a Learning Culture, and, Shared Values. Twelve recommendations emerged from the review and the Scottish Government accepted these in full.

Recommendation 2 of the Systems Review states:

"Chief Officers should be supported by the National Child Protection Leadership Group and Child Protection Committees Scotland to strengthen delivery of their responsibilities, as set out in the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2014), and to identify areas where further work may be required, such as:

- *Clarity of reporting mechanisms between Child Protection Committees and Chief Officers' Groups;*
- *Descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of Child Protection Committees (including that of Chairs of CPC's) and Chief Officers' Groups; and*
- *Supporting Child Protection Committees to carry out their roles and functions in line with the requirements set out in National Guidance.*

(...) The Scottish Government should resource a number of regional leadership events via the Leadership Group for all Chief Officers' Groups and Chairpersons of Child Protection Committees to network, share good practice and collectively horizon scan for new risks facing children and young people."

Scottish Government (2017), Child Protection Systems Review, Recommendation 2.

CELCIS supported Scottish Government in the planning for these events, working closely with the newly established National Child Protection Leadership Group chaired by Maree Todd, the Minister for Childcare and Early Years.

Programme and Purpose

The purpose of these Chief Officers' Leadership Events was to provide opportunities for Chief Officers' Groups (COGs) to come together to reflect on their respective roles and responsibilities in relation to the protection of children and young people; to share their experiences, successes and challenges; and to consider how best to utilise learning, data and evidence to continue to improve the protection and wellbeing of children and young people.

A full day event was planned, which ran twice to accommodate the large numbers of delegates across the country.

The focus of this first event was the opportunities and challenges inherent in strategic leadership. The programme was as follows:

09.30 Registration

10.00 Welcome by Chair

*Donald Henderson, Head of Care, Protection and Justice, Scottish Government
(chaired Glasgow event)*

*Angela Leitch, Chief Executive, East Lothian Council and Chair SOLACE
(chaired morning of Perth event)*

10.10 Opening Remarks

Maree Todd MSP, Minister for Childcare and Early Years

10.20 Leadership in a complex environment

*Catherine Dyer, former Crown Agent and Chief Executive of the Crown Office
and Procurator Fiscal Service*

11.05 Q&A

11.30 Comfort break

- 11.45 Workshop 1:**
Revision of Children and Young People: Child Protection Committees (2005) Guidance
Key questions and table discussion
- 12.55** Lunch & networking
- 13.35 Effective collaborative leadership for child protection**
Karen Reid and Helen Happer, Care Inspectorate
- 14.05 Workshop 2:**
Reflections on strategic leadership of child protection
Key questions and table discussion
- 15.30 Q&A**
Donald Henderson, Head of Care, Protection and Justice, Scottish Government
- 15.45 Challenges and opportunities**
Iona Colvin, Chief Social Work Adviser, Scottish Government (Glasgow event)
Anne Houston, Chair of Child Protection Committees Scotland (Perth event)
- 16.00 Final remarks & finish**
Donald Henderson, Head of Care, Protection and Justice, Scottish Government

Delegates

Invitations from the Minister for Childcare & Early Years were sent to the following groups:

- Chairs of Child Protection Chief Officers' Group
- Chief Executives of Local Authorities
- Chief Executives of NHS Boards
- Police Scotland Divisional Commanders
- Chief Social Work Officers
- Child Protection Committee Chairs
- Child Protection Committee Lead Officers/Coordinators
- Chief Officers of Integration Joint Boards

In addition, invitations were sent to HMIC, Healthcare Improvement Scotland and Education Scotland.

A total of **165** participants attended these events.

Workshops

WORKSHOP 1

Workshop 1 asked attendees to reflect on and discuss the revision of the *Children and Young People: Child Protection Committees (2005) Guidance* that was led by the National Leadership Group. The discussion across the two events raised points under the following headings:

1. Identified Strengths of the Revised 2005 Guidance.
2. Identified areas for Improvement in the Revised 2005 Guidance.
3. Comments on Specific Sections of the Revised 2005 Guidance.
4. Opportunities and Supports for Child Protection Committees and Chief Officers' Groups.
5. Wider Priorities or Challenges Facing Child Protection Committees.

WORKSHOP 2

Workshop 2 asked attendees to reflect on and discuss what they were committed to do differently, individually and collectively, as leaders for the protection of children. A number of areas were discussed:

1. How are we going to better engage with and involve children, young people and their families?
2. How are we going to make better use of data and evidence?
3. How could we build on the relationship between Child Protection Committees and Chief Officers' Groups?
4. How could we build on the role of the Chief Social Work Officer?
5. How can we ensure the role of the Child Protection Committee Chair is the most effective it can be?
6. How can we ensure that we are able to identify and respond to emerging risks and concerns?

Evaluation

Between 77% and 89% of respondents expressed high and very high levels of satisfaction with the events, with the highest levels reported in relation to the relevance of the content and discussions, the representation at the event and the usefulness of the content and discussions.

The events supported Chief Officers Groups and Child Protection Committees to network and improve clarity around roles and responsibilities, to great and moderate extent; with slightly more modest contributions reported in terms of improving clarity around reporting mechanisms and sharing good practice. At the other end, the most modest contribution to the Chief Officers' Leadership Event's specific aims was in relation to horizon scanning for new risks facing children and young people. The distinct scores (average rating) for Glasgow event and Perth event were very similar.

The participants noted the following ways in which the event would impact on their strategic leadership locally:

- Developing a learning culture, reflecting on reviews and practice, with a focus on good practice; Supporting leadership and accountability; Strengthening the relationship between CPC and COG, including in terms of informing improvement plans and local strategies.
- Strengthening the links with the wider sector and the engagement at various levels within the system; Networking with other areas; Strengthening prevention and identifying priorities; Strengthening the engagement with children and young people, families/carers and service users in general, as well as using the Guidance for CPCs/COGs.
- Reflecting on data collation, and considering a development day on information sharing and impact of legislation as factors of concern amongst CPC/COG.

Summary

Child Protection Chief Officers' Groups across the country engaged very well with these events and, overall, the representation was excellent.

Over three quarters of delegates who completed an evaluation form expressed high and very high levels of satisfaction with the events, and feedback indicated that the events supported Chief Officers' Groups and Child Protection Committees to network and improve clarity around roles and responsibilities.

The rich discussion which took place within the workshops has value both for the continuing development of Chief Officers' Groups themselves, but also as a contribution towards the continuing implementation of the Child Protection Improvement Programme.

In addition to direct input to the consultation opportunity in relation to the revision of the guidance for Child Protection committees, the feedback forms submitted by delegates also contained suggestions for improvements at any future events, all of which will be considered by the National Leadership Group in June 2018.

Next Steps

The Child Protection Leadership Group will utilise the learning from these events to inform the future workplan of the group and to plan future events.

The comments specifically related to the revised 2005 Guidance for Child Protection Committees will be utilised by the Task and Finish Group who are undertaking this revision work on behalf of the National Leadership Group.

Comments related to data and evidence will inform the data and evidence workstream of the Child Protection Improvement Programme – and specifically by those working directly on the shared dataset for vulnerable children and young people.

The Child Protection Improvement Programme will continue to be implemented; the progress of which is overseen by the National Leadership Group. Updates on progress are available here:

<https://blogs.gov.scot/child-protection-improvement-programme/>

Appendix

Thanks are extended to all delegates who participated in these events; to Catherine Dyer for delivering the keynote address; to Karen Reid and Helen Happer of the Care Inspectorate for their input on key findings from joint inspections; and to members of the National Leadership Group who introduced the workshops and facilitated the smooth running of the day.

Presentations given at the event are available here:

<https://www.celcis.org/knowledge-bank/search-bank/child-protection-chief-officers-group-event/>

About CELCIS

CELCIS, based at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, is committed to making positive and lasting improvements in the wellbeing of Scotland's children living in and on the edges of care. Ours is a truly collaborative agenda; we work alongside partners, professionals and systems with responsibility for nurturing our vulnerable children and families. Together we work to understand the issues, build on existing strengths, introduce best possible practice and develop solutions. What's more, to achieve effective, enduring and positive change across the board, we take an innovative, evidence-based improvement approach across complex systems.

For more information

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