

# Agenda Item 6

## Report Title

**Progress Report to Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (C.Y.P.S.P.) from Early Help Steering Group (E.H.S.G.)**

## Report Author

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## Date to C.Y.P.S.P.

**24<sup>th</sup> February 2014**

## Purpose of Report

**The purpose of this report is to update CYPSP on developments within Team Around the Child**

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## 1. Background and Context

In August 2013, CYPSP received a report from Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) following their multi-agency audit of Team Around the Child (TAC) cases. The report made the following recommendations to CYPSP, all of which were accepted:

- Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) to establish a multi-agency TAC Steering Group to deliver the recommendations from this audit
- CYPSP to establish a mechanism for effective quality assurance of the TAC process
- CYPSP to review recording arrangements and amend all paperwork used for TAC processes
- CYPSP to make recommendations to agencies on expected standards of case supervision for TAC
- CYPSP to ensure sufficient resources are available so that practitioners have access to advice and challenge
- CYPSP to ensure the voice of the child is heard in all assessments, plans and reviews.

CYPSP has given responsibility to the multi-agency Early Help Steering Group, to move these actions forward, and an update on progress can be found below.

## 2. Progress Report

### **Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) to establish a multi-agency TAC Steering Group to deliver the recommendations from this audit**

To fulfil this requirement, the Early Help Steering Group (EHSG) has been established as a multi-agency working group to drive TAC improvements. It has also been agreed that this group should have oversight of other Early Help workstreams. The Terms of Reference for this group are attached at Appendix a, and the Implementation Plan is attached at Appendix b.

Lincolnshire County Council Children's Services have established a new Central TAC Team to assist the EHSG in its work.

### **CYPSP to establish a mechanism for effective quality assurance of the TAC process**

Lincolnshire County Council, in partnership with the Schools' Forum, has agreed joint funding for four new posts within the Central TAC Team. These Early Help Consultant posts will be responsible for providing advice, support and challenge to agencies and Lead Professionals; for providing case supervision to Lead Professionals within schools and academies; and for carrying out Quality Assurance processes. The Consultants are expected to come into post during April 2014, and Quality Assure at least 50 TAC cases per month. The process and template for this Quality Assurance will be agreed by the EHSG in March.

### **CYPSP to review recording arrangements and amend all paperwork used for TAC processes**

The Early Help Steering Group has agreed a draft template for a new Early Help Assessment (EHA), and guidance to support this. This has been out to consultation with all CYPSP and LSCB partners, both managers and practitioners. The consultation received 20 individual, and 5 group responses, all of which have been reviewed by the EHSG. The responses were generally positive and supportive of the new approach. The consensus was that the new documentation was clear, and more 'user friendly' for practitioners, and children, young people and families. The draft template for the EHA is attached at Appendix c; and this is currently being updated in light of the consultation responses. This, and all of the supporting TAC documentation, including the TAC Handbook will be rewritten and presented to the Early Help Steering Group in March. It is expected that the new paperwork will be ready for implementation in April 2014.

Initial multi-agency briefing sessions will be held as per the programme attached at Appendix d; and thereafter a rolling programme will be delivered.

### **CYPSP to make recommendations to agencies on expected standards of case supervision for TAC**

As described above, additional posts are being created to support improved supervision within schools and academies. Draft standards for all agencies will be developed and presented to the Early Help Steering Group at their next meeting.

### **CYPSP to ensure sufficient resources are available so that practitioners have access to advice and challenge**

All partners are expected to have reviewed their own arrangements; and as described above both LCC and Schools' Forum have committed resources to increase access to advice and challenge. Within the Local Authority, as well as the provision of Early Help Consultants to advise on open TAC cases; Early Help Advisors will be available within Customer Service Centre (CSC), to advise partners on existing or potential safeguarding cases.

### **CYPSP to ensure the voice of the child is heard in all assessments, plans and reviews.**

All agencies are expected to have reviewed their own recording and processes to ensure that the voice of the child is evident. The new EHA and associated paperwork are being developed using the Signs of Safety Methodology (briefing paper attached at Appendix e). This methodology has an international, and national, evidence base in basing all assessment, planning and intervention on the voice of the child, young person and family. Moreover, Early Help Consultants will offer multi-agency reflective practice sessions to continue to improve practice in this area.

## **3. Current Priorities**

The current priorities within the TAC workstream are included in the Implementation Plan attached at Appendix b. These relate to restructuring of staffing provision to meet the duties described above; and the development of improved processes and paperwork. Also included within the Implementation Plan, is provision for Quality Assurance, and evaluation of the impact of these new arrangements. All Quality Assurance and Evaluation reports will be presented to the Early Help Steering Group, CYPSP and LSCB.

## **4. Recommendations to C.Y.P.S.P.**

- ✓ CYPSP accept this paper as fulfilling EHSG accountability requirements.
- ✓ CYPSP continue to support their agencies' involvement in the EHSG and its associated workstreams

## **5. Appendices**

- a) Early Help Steering Group Terms of Reference
- b) Team Around the Child Implementation Plan
- c) Draft Early Help Assessment
- d) Programme of Initial Multi-Agency Briefing Sessions
- e) Signs of Safety Briefing Paper

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