



Protecting Children and Young People:
Child Protection Committees



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Protecting children and Young People: child Protection committees

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Ministerial Foreword

Children and young people should be protected from abuse, neglect and harm by others at home, at school and in the community. This is one of the first commitments in the Scottish Executive's vision for children and young people in Scotland and reflects the priority we give to keeping them safe and improving their protection.

Leadership and acceptance of responsibility by top and senior management for this most challenging and difficult area is vital. This needs to be discharged by key agencies within your area, in particular, health, police and the local authority. They should work singly and collectively in order to promote the best interests of children and young people. The Child Protection Committee (CPC) is the inter-agency mechanism to support this work.

Whilst CPCs have done much useful work to date, all too often progress has relied on the personal commitment and determination of individuals on the CPC rather than clear strategic direction from, and ownership by, the agencies they represent. This guidance sets out what is expected of those at the top of agencies and CPCs. It makes clear the expectations of key agencies and their senior officials with respect to the protection of children. It also sets out in detail what is expected of CPCs themselves.

It is deliberately directive and specific in its content, and sets out clearly the functions that a CPC should undertake, and the key actions required to fulfil those functions. It is intended as a working document for Chief Officers, CPCs and their constituent agencies and provides a basis for the evaluation of the performance of individual CPCs and comparison between them.

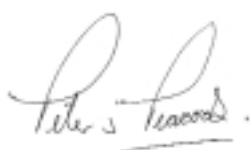
There are a number of key outcomes that should flow from the implementation of this guidance. They include:

- greater strategic leadership and ownership of activity to protect children and young people;
- improved co-operation between agencies at a local area in their work to protect children;
- clearer understanding of the functions of CPCs, and key tasks that they should undertake in order to fulfil those functions; and
- better connectedness and contribution of CPCs, both to the development and delivery of local services and, in sharing good practice, to child protection across Scotland.

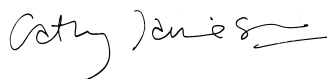
We are grateful for the work that has gone into the development of the model and this guidance and the positive engagement of agencies, the voluntary sector, CPCs themselves and others. Many areas are already well down the road of reviewing what needs to be done to respond to this and full implementation is expected by September 2005. Through the work of the multi-disciplinary inspection programme, the integrated children's services planning process, the child protection reform programme and other agency assessments, progress on delivery and development will be monitored. As has been indicated before, we have agreed to go down the route of guidance but, if it proves necessary, we will consider the need for legislation.

Ministerial Foreword

The *Children's Charter* and the *Framework for Standards* published last year provide the overarching context for the reform of child protection and our expectations of services. The clear ownership of the child protection agenda and the work of the CPC by those at the top of agencies will help ensure that protecting children and young people remains a priority within and across agencies – Scotland's children and young people deserve no less.



Peter Peacock MSP
Minister for Education
and Young People



Cathy Jamieson MSP
Minister for Justice



Andy Kerr MSP
Minister for Health
and Community Care

Introduction

- 1.1 Police Forces, NHS Boards and local authorities are key agencies and have the responsibility for working together to identify and commission child protection activity. They must account for this work and its effectiveness. Working through senior paid officials, Chief Constables and Chief Executives of Health Boards and local authorities (a group hereafter referred to as Chief Officers) are responsible for ensuring that their agencies, individually and collectively, work to protect children and young people as effectively as possible. They also have responsibility for maximising the involvement of those agencies not under their direct control, including the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA), the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscals Service (COPFS) and the voluntary sector and should report to Ministers if they deem this not to be effective.
- 1.2 Scottish Ministers have agreed how key agencies and Chief Officers should work together in respect of child protection and a model for how these responsibilities will be discharged through reformed Child Protection Committees (CPCs). This model is attached as Appendix 5 and contributes to Ministers' wider policy objective of improving the integration of services for children and young people. Ministers made clear their expectations that CPCs must:
 - be led and owned by all agencies;
 - be clearly mandated with delegated authority for action; and
 - undertake a range of core functions and activities – with flexibility for local conditions.
- 1.3 This guidance is deliberately directive and specific – reflecting the need for clear, co-ordinated and unambiguous commitment and support across all agencies and in all areas to protect children. Clear lines of accountability to those at the top of local authorities, health and the police are needed if CPCs are to be effective and drive forward the multi-agency agenda required to help improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people. Ministers have agreed to approach this through the provision of robust guidance for Chief Officers to implement, but have not ruled out legislation in the longer term should this be required.
- 1.4 This replaces previous guidance set out in SWSG 14/97 which is included as an annex to the current inter-agency guidance (Scottish Office 1998).

Who is this for?

- 1.5 The CPC is the primary strategic planning mechanism for inter-agency child protection work in each area. In undertaking this function it will work together effectively with other planning structures whose activities affect the protection of children, within and between agencies. It is essential that it links closely to integrated children's services planning and Community Planning.

Introduction

1.6 This guidance makes clear Ministers' expectations of Chief Officers in fulfilling their responsibilities in respect of child protection and how CPCs across Scotland, as key local inter-agency bodies, contribute to the delivery of the child protection agenda. The audience for this document is therefore:

- the leaders of the key agencies outlined above;
- Chief Officers as outlined above;
- representatives of partner agencies involved in child protection work;
- chairs of CPCs;
- members of CPCs; and
- members of other inter-agency bodies that link with CPCs.

1.7 This guidance could also be of wider interest, for example to members of communities served by CPCs.

Legal context

1.8 There are two pieces of legislation that provide the legal context for this approach. These are outlined in more detail in Appendix 4. Briefly these are:

Children (Scotland) Act 1995

Section 19 deals with the duty of a local authority to prepare, publish and keep under review plans in relation to services for children, and lists who should be consulted in the preparation of such plans. Section 20 covers the publication of information about services for children. Section 21 deals with co-operation between authorities in the exercise of functions in this area.

Local Government in Scotland Act 2003

Part 2 sets the context for Community Planning. It places a duty on a local authority to initiate and maintain a process of Community Planning, and also a duty on a range of agencies, including health boards and police boards, to co-operate with the process.

Part 3 of the Act deals with the power to advance well-being. This sits alongside Community Planning and allows a local authority to do anything to promote or improve well-being within the authority's area.

Policy context

1.9 Scottish Ministers have agreed a vision for Scotland's children that provides the overarching context for the development of policy. Scotland's children should be:

- safe;
- nurtured;
- healthy;
- active;
- respected and responsible;
- achieving; and
- included.

1.10 The context for all involved in the development and delivery of child protection services is provided by two documents:

- *Protecting Children and Young People: The Charter*; and
- *Protecting Children and Young People: Framework for Standards* (the Framework).¹

1.11 Both documents are essential reference points for Chief Officers and CPCs in undertaking their functions – in particular Standard 8 of the Framework. There are sections of these documents that are of particular relevance for CPCs, and these are included as text boxes at relevant points in this document.

¹ Both published in March 2004

Introduction

This Framework provides a basis for all agencies to develop effective safeguarding measures. Through raised awareness, good practice and robust systems and procedures, staff will be supported to ensure the care and protection of children. The Framework is being issued as part of a wider package of developments on quality assurance and standards which includes the Charter and proposals for multi-disciplinary inspection.

This Framework for Standards has four main functions:

- it makes clear what children and their families can expect from those professionals and agencies responsible for the protection of children reflecting the commitments made to children in the Charter;
- it sets out the practice required from those agencies and professionals to deliver against those commitments;
- it provides a framework for agencies' own evaluation of their performance; and
- it will help inform the development of multi-disciplinary inspections of child protection services.

(Protecting Children and Young People: Framework for Standards. Introduction)

Role of Chief Officers

- 2.1 Working within the accountability structures of their respective organisations, Chief Officers in each locality must work collectively to identify and commission inter-agency activity with respect to protecting children and young people. They must account for this work and its effectiveness. It is recognised that a number of areas have developed arrangements that cross local authority boundaries, either in the geographical coverage of the CPC itself or working in a consortium with neighbouring CPCs. It is for Chief Officers collectively to determine the most appropriate arrangements for their area(s). The local CPC is the inter-agency mechanism to take forward this work, whether the CPC is comprised of the Chief Officers themselves or whether it is a group clearly mandated by Chief Officers to do so.
- 2.2 The Chief Executive of the local authority – or, where it is agreed that a Child Protection Committee should cover more than one local authority area, the largest local authority in population terms – will ensure that a Chief Officers Group is initially established in such a way as to exercise fully the roles and responsibilities set out within this document. Arrangements for convening and chairing the Chief Officers Group will be agreed by that group. This may be set up as a bespoke forum on child protection or be integrated into other structures already in place where Chief Officers convene. However, the protection of children and young people must feature as a primary focus.
- 2.3 This group will meet to agree the annual report of their CPC and the business plan for the next year. In addition, it will come together with sufficient frequency to effectively discharge its responsibilities in relation to the protection of children and young people. There will also be a formal process to evaluate progress against agreed objectives through the course of the year and to ensure increased integration into other planning structures, in particular integrated children’s services planning.
- 2.4 Chief Officers, working together, have the following roles and responsibilities:
 - individually and collectively, to demonstrate leadership and accountability for child protection work and its effectiveness on behalf of their agencies – including the effectiveness of the CPC itself;
 - agree a business plan, including operational priorities for protecting children, and ensure the allocation of resources to the CPC who will support the implementation of the Framework for Standards and the Children’s Charter across agencies;
 - ensure that the CPC links to other planning fora under their control (see section 3.13 below), in particular the structures for integrated children’s services planning;
 - agree the constitution for the CPC, including the delegating of roles and responsibilities, to take forward multi-agency issues in respect of child protection on their behalf and invest it with the authority to do so;
 - agree the agencies to be represented at their CPC;

Role of Chief Officers

- appoint, or agree the appointment of, the chair of the CPC and in doing so ensure that the chair has the time, resources and dedicated professional and administrative support to properly fulfil the role;
- appoint representatives from their own agencies to the CPC with the appropriate authority and responsibility to best take forward the functions required;
- invite nominations from other agencies to be represented on the CPC;
- agree reporting mechanisms with elected members and board members that cover the work of their CPC and the implications for their locality. This will include at least annual reporting; and
- agree and endorse an annual report and business plan of the CPC.

2.5 Alignment with integrated children's services processes and planning structures is essential. Initially, it is expected that separate CPC reports and business plans will be prepared to demonstrate implementation of this guidance and the contribution of CPCs to the protection of children and young people. Since services to protect children are a fundamental component of the wide range of services provided by local authorities and their partners, we would expect to see plans relating to child protection reflected within integrated children's services plans. From 2006-2007, the CPC annual report and business plan will form a section of the integrated children's services plan.

Standard 8 Agencies, individually and collectively, demonstrate leadership and accountability for their work and its effectiveness

1. The needs and risks for the child come first in all professional decision making. Agencies have in place:
 - policies;
 - procedures;
 - systems;
 - structures; and
 - resources and personnel to support this.
2. Agencies rigorously monitor and review their work in protecting children and implement steps which lead to continuous improvement.
3. Agencies demonstrate they understand the needs of the communities they serve and direct sufficient resources to services for the care and protection of children.

4. Agencies have systems and policies in place to share information within and across agencies or professionals.
5. Agencies actively promote joint working through joint planning, training and monitoring arrangements. Agencies are responsible for ensuring that their staff work with other professionals to achieve better outcomes for each child.
6. Agencies seek to ensure that their staff are effectively and relevantly trained and that they are:
 - supported;
 - supervised; and
 - accountable in their work.

Staff and managers adhere to their relevant codes of conduct.

7. Agencies seek to ensure they have access to a sufficient range of expertise and services to meet the care and protection needs of children.
8. Agencies ensure that staff are adequately protected from violence and aggression and that in undertaking their duties the risks to both the professional and children are minimised.
9. Agencies have robust information systems that effectively account for the work of their staff and have systems to support the monitoring and review of outcomes for the child.
10. Agencies have quality assurance mechanisms to ensure that these standards are met and that this can be demonstrated.

Role of Chief Officers

Resources

2.6 The next section outlines the key functions that the CPC will fulfil. In order to fulfil these functions, agencies will be required to commit resources. Chief Officers have a collective responsibility to ensure that their CPC has the resources, including staff time and finance, to fulfil the agreed business plan. Resources will be agreed by the Chief Officers Group and reviewed as part of the business plan for the annual report.

2.7 Resources will include:

- provision of sufficient dedicated time for CPC members to fulfil their roles and responsibilities;
- provision of finance to support the activities of the CPC, including inter-agency training;
- professional, operational and administrative support to the CPC itself;
- commitment of time from staff not directly involved in the work of the CPC to contribute to specific projects, for example redrafting procedures or delivering multi-agency training; and
- provision of sufficient staff time in their agencies for child protection work and for activities, such as staff development, that are necessary to ensure competent and confident staff and continuous improvement.

Resolution of differences or disputes

2.8 CPCs will reflect the commitment of key agencies, working together, to improve the protection of children and young people and will be dependent largely on developing consensus. In the event of the work of the CPC being significantly impaired by failure to reach an agreement, it is the responsibility of the Chair to notify the Chief Officers Group as a matter of urgency, who will then arbitrate on the matter.

2.9 In the event of the Chief Officers Group failing to reach an agreement, it is their responsibility to bring the issue to the attention of the Scottish Executive to agree a course of action to resolve any dispute.

Functions of a Child Protection Committee

- 3.1 CPCs are the key local bodies for developing and implementing child protection strategy across and between agencies. A CPC is expected to perform a number of crucial functions. This section sets out what those functions are and actions that will lead to those functions being carried out to a high standard. This section will assist a CPC in evaluating its own performance. As well as the functions outlined here, each CPC will seek opportunities to share best practice and learning with other CPCs.
- 3.2 The functions are grouped as follows:
- public information;
 - continuous improvement; and
 - strategic planning.

Public Information

- 3.3 CPCs are required to produce and disseminate public information about protecting children and young people. Each CPC will develop, implement and regularly review a communications strategy that includes the following elements:
- raising awareness of child protection issues within communities, including children and young people;
 - promoting the work of agencies in protecting children to the public at large; and
 - providing information about where members of the public will go if they have concerns about a child and what could happen.

CPCs will determine the level of public knowledge of and confidence in child protection systems within their area and address any issues as required within their business plans.

Standard 7.2

Agencies provide information about:

- what professionals do to protect and care for children; and
- who to contact when parents and members of the community have concerns and how to do this.

Standard 7.3

Agencies work with parents and the public to:

- raise awareness about and promote the safety and protection of children;
- support vulnerable families and raise children's confidence and self-esteem;
- advise on how the community can help in the protection of children; and
- have strategies in place to do so.

Functions of a Child Protection Committee

Continuous Improvement

3.4 CPCs have a key role to play in the continuous improvement of child protection work. A number of functions relate directly to this key role. These are:

- policies, procedures and protocols;
- management information;
- quality assurance;
- promotion of good practice; and
- training and staff development.

Standard 8.2

Agencies rigorously monitor and review their work in protecting children and implement steps which lead to continuous improvement.

Policies, Procedures and Protocols

3.5 Clear and robust inter-agency procedures are vital to the protection of children and young people.

Each CPC will:

- ensure that constituent agencies have in place their own up to date policies and procedures;
- regularly develop, disseminate and review inter-agency policies and procedures; and
- ensure that protocols are developed around key issues where there is agreement that this is required.

Standard 8.1

The needs and risks for the child come first in all professional decision making. Agencies have in place:

- policies;
- procedures;
- systems;
- structures; and
- resources and personnel to support this.

Management Information

3.6 CPCs will have an overview of management information from all key agencies about their work to protect children and young people. Each CPC will:

- have an overview of information relating to children and young people on the Child Protection Register;
- receive regular management information reports, which include analysis of trends;
- identify and address the implications of these reports for services; and
- ensure that these reports inform the inter-agency child protection strategy.

Standard 8.9

Agencies have robust information systems that effectively account for the work of their staff and have systems to support the monitoring and review of outcomes for the child.

Quality Assurance

3.7 Whilst individual agencies have responsibility for quality assurance within their own agencies, CPCs have responsibility for the development and implementation of inter-agency quality assurance mechanisms. Each CPC will:

- agree, implement and review multi-agency quality assurance mechanisms for inter-agency work, including auditing against the Framework for Standards;
- ensure that these quality assurance mechanisms directly contribute to the continuous improvement of services to protect children and young people;
- contribute to the preparation for the integrated system of inspection of child protection services;
- consider the findings and lessons from the inspection process nationally and in relation to the inspection of their area; and
- report on the outcome of these activities, and make recommendations, to the Chief Officer Group, who are accountable overall for the quality of services including child protection systems.

Standard 8.10

Agencies have quality assurance mechanisms to ensure that these standards are met and that this can be demonstrated.

Functions of a Child Protection Committee

Promotion of Good Practice

3.8 CPCs have a responsibility to identify and promote good practice, address issues of poor practice and encourage learning from practice. Each CPC will:

- have in place mechanisms to identify and disseminate lessons from past and current practice, including systematic reviews of significant cases;
- ensure that these lessons directly inform training and staff development; and
- identify opportunities to share these lessons more widely.

Standard 6.6

Professionals keep up to date with relevant legislation, research, good practice and guidance and agencies support them to do so.

Training and Staff Development

3.9 Training and staff development for those working with children and families must be undertaken at both a single agency and inter-agency level, particularly in respect of child protection. CPCs are responsible for promoting, commissioning and assuring the quality and delivery of inter-agency training.

Standard 8.5

Agencies actively promote joint working through joint planning, training and monitoring arrangements. Agencies are responsible for ensuring that their staff work with other professionals to achieve better outcomes for each child.

Standard 8.6

Agencies seek to ensure that their staff are effectively and relevantly trained and that they are:

- supported;
- supervised; and
- accountable in their work.

Staff and managers adhere to their relevant codes of conduct.

Each CPC will:

- have an overview of single agency child protection training and consider the implications for inter-agency training;
- plan, review and quality assure inter-agency training and development activities;
- have in place, and review at least annually, a programme for inter-agency child protection training; and
- ensure relevant, effective and consistent inter-agency training is provided for practitioners, managers, non-statutory agencies and for CPC members themselves.

Strategic Planning

3.10 The CPC is the key local body in terms of the planning of child protection work. This needs to be done in conjunction with other planning mechanisms and priorities, in particular integrated children's services planning and Community Planning.

3.11 The contribution of the CPC to strategic planning falls into three broad categories:

- communication and co-operation;
- planning and connections; and
- public information (as in 3.3).

Standard 8.3

Agencies demonstrate they understand the needs of the communities they serve and direct sufficient resources to services for the care and protection of children.

Communication and Co-operation

3.12 Effective communication and co-operation, both within and between professions and agencies, is essential to the protection of children.

Each CPC will:

- demonstrate effective communication and co-operation at CPC level;
- actively promote effective communication and collaboration between agencies;
- identify and, wherever possible, resolve any issues between agencies in relation to the protection of children and young people;
- demonstrate effective communication with other inter-agency bodies;
- demonstrate effective communication about the work of the CPC with staff in constituent agencies; and
- identify opportunities to share knowledge, skills and learning with other CPCs.

Functions of a Child Protection Committee

Standard 8.4

Agencies have systems and policies in place to share information within and across agencies or professionals.

Planning and Connections

3.13 There needs to be clarity about where CPCs link into other multi-agency partnerships and structures. While this list is not exhaustive, these include:

- children's services planning structures;
- Community Planning structures;
- other CPCs;
- Community Safety Partnerships;
- Drug and Alcohol Action Teams (DAAT) or their equivalent;
- multi-agency partnerships on domestic abuse;
- Community Care planning structures;
- Child Care Partnerships;
- voluntary sector fora where they exist;
- Youth Justice structures; and
- developing fora on anti-social behaviour.

Standard 8.5

Agencies actively promote joint working through joint planning, training and monitoring arrangements. Agencies are responsible for ensuring that their staff work with other professionals to achieve better outcomes for each child.

3.14 Each CPC will:

- clearly identify the key links that are required to be made with other bodies, and ensure that these links are made;
- in conjunction with other bodies, identify issues where either joint working would be beneficial or duplication could be avoided and ensure that action is taken to address these issues; and
- have in place, and regularly review the effectiveness of, joint protocols around particular identified issues.

Carrying out the Task

- 4.1 This section outlines how Chief Officers will ensure that the tasks of the CPC are carried out effectively. It covers the following:
- membership;
 - key roles and responsibilities;
 - CPC meetings;
 - business conducted outwith formal meetings; and
 - ensuring that the work of the CPC is informed by the perspective of children and young people.

Membership

- 4.2 There are two aspects to membership of CPCs:
- level of authority, and
 - representation.

Authority

- 4.3 Each Chief Officer must ensure that their representative on the CPC carries sufficient delegated authority to realise the objectives of the agreed business plan on behalf of their agency. The agency representative will be of a sufficiently senior grade or have the sufficient level of authorisation to make the required policy and resource commitments.
- 4.4 Members of CPCs will:
- represent the commitment of their agency to promoting the safety and welfare of children and young people, preventing abuse and neglect and the protection of children and young people;
 - have the delegated authority to make strategic and operational decisions on behalf of their agency in relation to child protection;
 - facilitate communication between the CPC and their agency; and
 - contribute their skill and expertise to the work of the CPC.
- 4.5 The CPC has the responsibility to ensure that members are able to maximise their contribution to its work. This includes:
- ensuring that they reflect the contribution that all agencies have to make to child protection work;
 - providing support and training opportunities for CPC members; and
 - ensuring that new members are fully appraised of the work of the CPC and their role within it.

Carrying out the Task

Representation

4.6 Differing structures across Scotland have meant that the same functions are sometimes fulfilled by departments with different names, so this section may require local interpretation. At a minimum, the following will be represented on the core membership of the CPC:

- Local Authority Social Work Services, including children and families and criminal justice;
- Local Authority Education Services;
- Community Services, including youth and leisure services;
- Housing Services – whether Local Authority or an arms-length agency;
- Health Services;
- services in relation to drugs and alcohol;
- Police;
- Procurator Fiscal;
- Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration;
- Armed Forces in areas where there is a significant presence;
- the independent education sector in areas where there is a significant presence; and
- the voluntary sector.

4.7 The CPC should consider cross representation with other bodies where this will enhance the capacity of agencies to protect children and young people.

Role of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Services (COPFS)

4.8 The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) recognises the importance of child protection and its relevance to COPFS functions with regard to the investigation and prosecution of crime. Child protection is one among a number of issues which Procurators Fiscal (PFs) must be alert to in carrying out their investigative and prosecutorial functions. Accordingly PFs of a sufficiently senior level (at least principal depute grade) will attend CPCs.

CPC chairs are, however, encouraged to consider how meeting agendas might be structured to allow local PF representatives to attend only in respect of matters to which PFs can contribute. Mostly PFs will have a part to play in respect of agenda items related to PF/police investigations into, or proceedings involving, the abuse of children; a situation where other children are at risk in some way; or the death of a child. PFs will willingly participate in training for CPC members as regards the PF role in the area of child protection.

Role of the Voluntary Sector

4.9 It is essential that the voluntary sector is fully engaged in the protection of children in their area. This must include representation of the voluntary sector at the CPC. However, given the diversity and depth of the sector, it is recognised that this, of itself, is not sufficient to ensure voluntary sector interests have the opportunity to be aware of and help inform the child protection agenda. Each CPC will:

- engage the voluntary sector in effective partnership working to protect children and young people;
- seek to maximise the contribution to the protection of children by the voluntary sector; and
- where one does not already exist, establish a forum to engage locally with the voluntary sector more widely in relation to child protection.

Key roles and responsibilities

Chair of the CPC

4.10 The chair of the CPC is responsible for:

- chairing meetings of the CPC, and ensuring that they are conducted in a manner that reflects the contribution that all agencies have to make to child protection;
- ensuring that the CPC effectively fulfils its functions;
- managing the Lead Officer (see 4.12 below), who will be accountable to the CPC whatever the employment arrangements put in place, on behalf of the CPC. The Lead Officer will report to the chair of the CPC. However, the day-to-day management of the Lead Officer could be undertaken within one of the agencies by local agreement, but this must not confuse the clear management and accountability of the Lead Officer to the CPC through the Chair;
- ensuring the development of the annual business plan and report;
- agreeing the resource requirement for the work of the CPC, including that required to chair the CPC effectively;
- ensuring that the CPC collaborates with other CPCs; and
- reporting to Chief Officers.

The Chair will have considerable experience in both inter-agency working and child protection, and be either a senior officer from one of the key agencies or an independent person appointed specifically to the task. In either case the appointment will be made by Chief Officers or agreed by them.

Carrying out the Task

Lead officer of the CPC

- 4.11 A CPC requires dedicated staff time and resources to support the implementation and delivery of its core functions as required by this guidance. The level and configuration of that dedicated resource is a matter for agreement with Chief Officers.
- 4.12 It is recognised that the title 'Child Protection Co-ordinator' currently in usage has different meaning across the country. It is important that the title and role of the Lead Officer of the CPC is clearly distinct from other roles elsewhere in the child protection system.
- 4.13 Each CPC will have:
- as a minimum, a Lead Officer to implement its core functions; and
 - an inter-agency training co-ordinator, or specific training capacity to ensure the delivery of training and staff development on an inter-agency basis.
- 4.14 It may be appropriate for some CPCs to enter into arrangements to share such posts or, indeed, to engage additional officers (professional and clerical) as required to support and execute its functions as agreed with Chief Officers. The employment arrangements for these officers must fully reflect their status as officers of the CPC and their direct accountability to the CPC itself. It is recognised that across Scotland there are differences in terms and conditions for inter-agency staff. It is beyond the scope of this guidance to stipulate terms and conditions for Lead Officers. This is a matter for local agreement. However, Lead Officers will be of sufficient seniority to carry authority with partner agencies.

Delivering the Plan

- 4.15 The CPC will establish mechanisms to ensure that the business plan of the CPC is carried out. It is for the CPC, in conjunction with Chief Officers, to determine the most suitable arrangements for their locality. Each CPC will:
- identify the most appropriate mechanisms for their locality whether these are standing working groups or other mechanisms;
 - ensure that these mechanisms are reflected in the constitution of the CPC;
 - ensure that there is a clear remit with regard to their connection with the work of the CPC itself; and
 - ensure that there is a clear and direct link to the CPC.
- 4.16 CPCs should consider the sharing of working groups with other fora as a means of streamlining planning efforts, helping develop and deliver integrated services and avoiding duplication. An example of this would be a joint DAAT/CPC working group to consider children and young people affected by substance misuse.

Involving Children and Young People and their Families

Protecting Children and Young People: The Charter reflects the voice of children and young people and what they feel they need, and should be able to expect, when they have problems or are in difficulty and need to be protected. This is a message to all of us – politicians, communities, parents, families, neighbours; as well as police, health, social work and education authorities; and people who work directly with children and young people – about what is important to them in how we go about helping to protect them.

4.17 The perspectives of children and young people and their families will be clearly evidenced in the work of the CPC, and it is vital that this area is not addressed in a tokenistic manner.

Each CPC will:

- be able to demonstrate that its work is informed by the perspective of children and young people, including the most vulnerable and those with direct experiences of child protection services;
- review and develop their strategy for doing so; and
- ensure that children and young people are involved in the development and implementation of the CPC's public information and communication strategies.

4.18 There are a number of ways of doing this, and it is envisaged that this area will develop over time. It is not possible to be prescriptive about the methods to be employed. However, for illustration these could include:

- drawing on the experience of the voluntary sector in eliciting the views of children and young people;
- receiving regular reports from Children's Rights Officers on the views of children and young people;
- commissioning independent surveys, either individually or collectively with other CPCs, on the views of children and their families;
- improving decision-making and recording practices to ensure that the views of children and families are better able to be gathered together and reflected;
- promoting the establishment of community-based advocacy services for children and young people; or
- ensuring that the views of children and young people are accounted for through the application of inter-agency quality assurance mechanisms.

References

Children (Scotland) Act 1995.

Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.

Scottish Office (1998) *Protecting Children – A Shared Responsibility: Guidance on Inter-Agency Co-operation*.

Scottish Executive (2002) *It's everyone's job to make sure I'm alright. Report of the Child Protection Audit and Review*.

Scottish Executive (2004a) *Protecting Children and Young People: The Charter*.

Scottish Executive (2004b) *Protecting Children and Young People: Framework for Standards*.

Suggested areas to be covered in a constitution or partnership agreement:

- title;
- aims and objectives;
- role of the chief officers group and relationship to CPC;
- relationship to other structures;
- members' roles and responsibilities;
- role and responsibilities of Lead Officer and other staff working directly to the CPC;
- role of training co-ordinator;
- administrative support to CPC;
- Chair and Vice Chair;
- terms of office;
- process of appointment;
- agenda, meetings and minutes;
- confidentiality and information sharing;
- sub-groups or working groups; and
- process of amendments to constitution.

Appendix 2

Reporting Mechanisms

Each CPC is required to prepare and submit an annual report and business plan. These will be:

- integrated into the planning and reporting cycles for children's services planning, which is a rolling three year plan;
- completed annually, and cover the financial year; and
- submitted to the Scottish Executive, as part of the integrated children services planning requirements, and published no later than the end of June following the end of the financial year.

CPC annual reports need to fulfil a number of functions. They will:

- provide an account of the year's work against the previous year's plan;
- provide information on the level and quality of interagency work; and
- outline a business plan, including a budget for the coming year, in order to:
 - allow some comparison across CPCs and, more importantly, year on year trends for individual CPCs;
 - provide public information, both to staff in partner agencies and the wider public about the activity of the CPC; and
 - inform policy development at local and national level.

To fulfil these functions a significant degree of consistency is needed in both the core coverage and format of these reports, although additional local elements will also be appropriate as agreed with Chief Officers. It is important that it is possible to make comparisons between CPCs, and help assess progress made by each CPC over time. To that end, the following format is recommended and whatever format is adopted these elements will be included.

Annual Report on Protecting Children and Young People in CPC area

Preface from Chief Officers

This will endorse the report and the business plan and be signed by the Chief Officers and the chair.

Introduction

This introduction will set the scene, highlight particular issues or challenges faced by the area and/or CPC in respect of child protection in the period covered by the report, and any particular achievements or good practice.

Evaluation and Inspection

This section will summarise:

- any evaluation work undertaken or commissioned by the CPC;
- relationship between national and local statistical trends;
- any inspection undertaken of the CPC; and
- implications for future actions.

Fulfilling Functions

This section will be completed under nine key headings with reference to the bullet points. Evidence should be provided against each of the bullets.

- Public Information;
- Policies, Procedures and Protocols;
- Management Information;
- Quality Assurance;
- Promotion of Good Practice;
- Training and Staff Development;
- Communication and Co-operation;
- Planning and Connections; and
- Listening to Children and Young People.

Future Planning

The plan for the next 12 months will be summarised under the nine headings under an agreed template.

A suggested model is as follows:

- Objective
- What are we going to do?
- When will we do it by?
- What resources do we need to do this?
- How will we know we have done it?

Conclusion

Concluding comments.

Appendix 2

Reporting Mechanisms

Appendices

Membership

A list of the membership of the CPC, and officers serving the CPC, will be included here.

Resources dedicated to the CPC

Where these have come from, and new resources over the year. Any resources identified jointly, e.g. with DAATs.

Sub group/working groups

Membership (if a standing group), remit and outputs.

Partnership Assessment Tools

Introduction

This appendix briefly describes, and in electronic format provides web links to, a number of resources that a CPC may find useful in assessing and improving its effectiveness. Some can be used by CPCs themselves, whilst some may work better as part of an externally facilitated process. They are all drawn from government or government agency sources.

Communities Scotland Managing Partnerships Handbook

Communities Scotland have developed a handbook which brings together a series of online tools that can be used flexibly in a way that best suits individual or partnership needs. It has been designed to encourage users to use flexibly as the need arises and includes material relevant to all stages of partnership working, from setting up a partnership to reviewing mature partnerships. Chapters from the handbook can be accessed as follows:

Introduction to partnerships

Chapter 1: **Developing joint goals and objectives**

Chapter 2: **Monitoring and evaluation**

Chapter 3: **Forming the group**

Chapter 4: **Agreeing the ground rules**

Chapter 5: **Understanding your partners**

Chapter 6: **Assessing and managing relationships**

The link to the document is as follows:

http://www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk/Web/Site/Library/library_general_publications.asp

Assessing Strategic Partnership Partnership Assessment Tool

The Strategic Partnership Taskforce was established by the UK Government to help find innovative ways in which local government could improve public service delivery by working in partnership. They commissioned the Nuffield Institute at the University of Leeds to provide a tool that local authorities could use to assess partnership relationships and aid the achievement of successful partnership working. The tool draws heavily on the research carried out by the Institute that had been successful for health and social care partnerships. It is quick and simple to use.

The link to the document is as follows:

<http://www.valuingpeople.gov.uk/documents/PartnershipODPMAssessmentTool.pdf>

The legal context for CPCs is to be found within the legislation set out below.

Children (Scotland) Act 1995

The most relevant sections of this Act for CPCs are sections 19 to 21.

Section 19 deals with the duty of a local authority to prepare, publish and keep under review plans in relation to services for children, and lists who should be consulted in the preparation of such plans. It sets out a wide range of bodies and persons to be consulted in the preparation of such plans.

Section 20 deals with the duties of a local authority to publish information about services for children, provided by them for children in their area or which are provided for these children by other local authorities. They may also, where they consider it appropriate, publish information about services provided by voluntary organisations and by others.

Section 21 permits the local authority to request help, in the exercise of their functions in children's services, from a range of persons specified, including any person authorised by Scottish Ministers. It also imposes an obligation on the person requested to provide help, unless where doing so would not be compatible with that person's own statutory or other duties.

Local Government in Scotland Act 2003

The most relevant aspects of this act for CPCs are parts 2 and 3.

Part 2 deals with the context for Community Planning, which has two main aims:

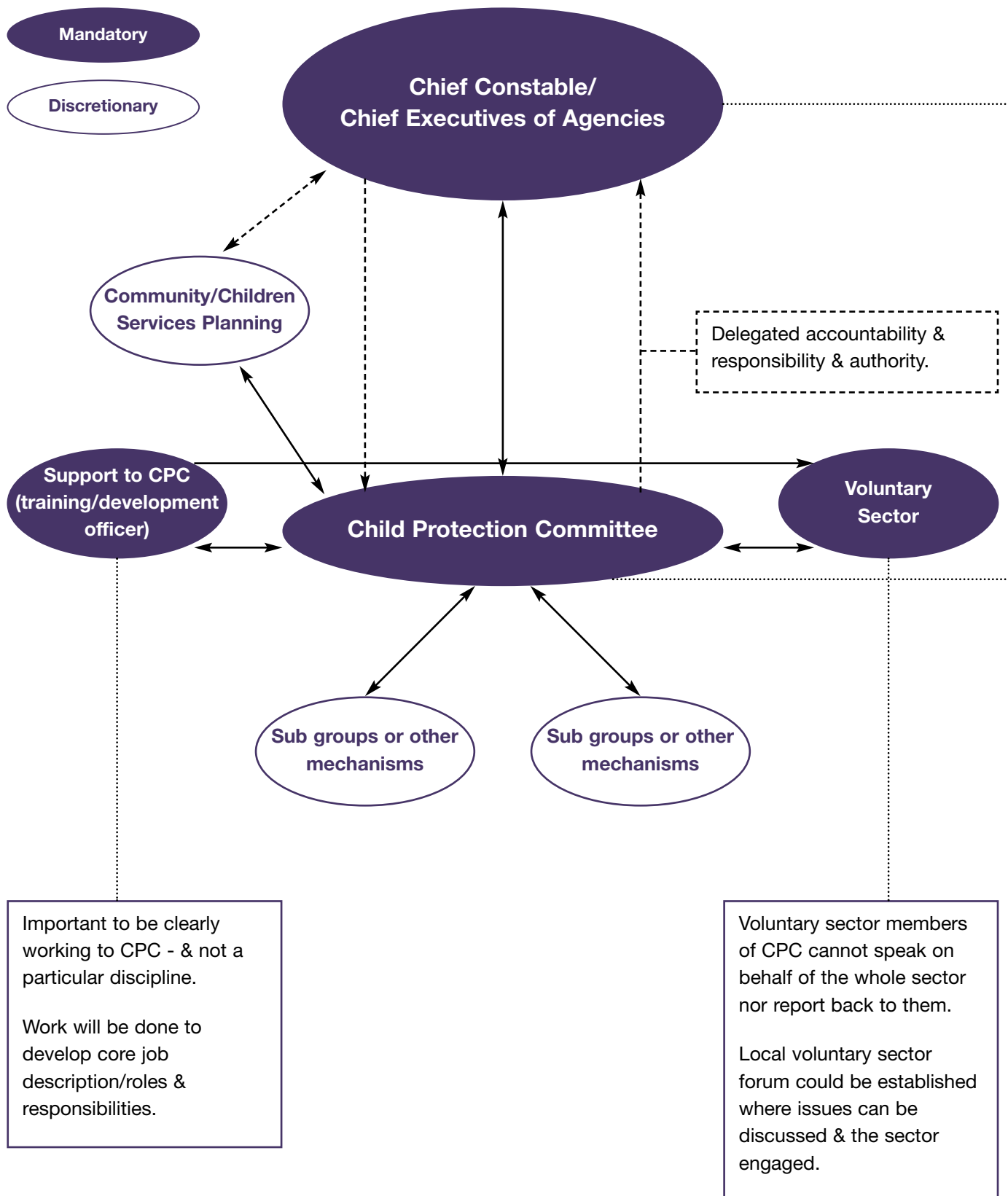
- making sure people and communities are genuinely engaged in the decisions made on public services which affect them; allied to
- a commitment from organisations to work together, not apart, in providing better public services.

Part 2 places a duty on a local authority to initiate and maintain a process of community planning, to invite and encourage a range of agencies to participate. It also places a duty on a range of agencies, including Health Boards and Police Boards, to co-operate with the process.

Part 3 of the Act deals with the power to advance well-being. This sits alongside community planning and allows a local authority to do anything to promote or improve the well-being of persons, either generally, or a particular group within the authority's area.

REVIEW OF THE ROLE & REMIT OF CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEES (CPCs)

Child Protection Committee Model



Roles and Responsibilities

- have responsibility on behalf of their agencies to, individually & collectively, demonstrate leadership & accountability for child protection work & its effectiveness;
- agree collectively the constitution for the CPC including the delegation of roles & responsibilities to take forward multi-agency issues in respect of child protection & the authority to do so;
- appoint representatives to the CPC with the appropriate delegated authority & responsibility to take forward child protection issues on behalf of each agency as required; and
- agree work plan, strategic & operational priorities & resources with the CPC taking account of the requirements of Standard 8 in the Framework for National Standards for child protection.

Strategic

- contribute to the development of strategic planning of integrated services for children that promote & safeguard their safety; and
- lead effective inter-agency communication at a local level.

Core work

- quality assure delivery of multi-agency training & development;
- develop, monitor & review protocols & guidance for inter-agency working;
- undertake analysis & research on child protection trends & identification of issues locally & report findings to agencies; and
- develop & provide information to the public & professionals.

Linking with others

- network with other bodies dealing with drugs, alcohol, domestic violence, violent offenders & sex offenders for example;
- network with other CPCs, undertake joint development where appropriate & share best practice; and
- raise public awareness & engagement with children & families.



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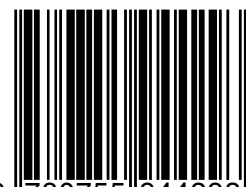
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