

Minutes of the Meeting of the SOCIAL SERVICES AND PERSONAL HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Held: WEDNESDAY, 25 JUNE 2003 at 5.30pm

<u>PRESENT:</u>

<u>Councillor Gill - Chair</u> <u>Councillor Getliffe - Labour Spokesperson</u> Councillor Mrs Chambers - Conservative Spokesperson

Councillor Beck Councillor J. Blackmore Councillor Smith (for Cllr James)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS

Mr J. Scruton – Voluntary Sector Ms S. Bray – Voluntary Sector Dr R. Shukla – Primary Care Trusts (Apologies)

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ALSO IN ATTANDANCE:

Councillor Coles – Cabinet Link Member for Social Services and Personal Health

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1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests they may have in the business to be discussed and/ or indicate that Section 106 of the Local Government Act applied to them. No such declarations were made.

10. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN: SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTABILITIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Corporate Director of Social Care and Health submitted a report that sought endorsement of the revised statement of accountabilities prepared, following the publication of the Victoria Climbie Inquiry by Lord Laming.

The Corporate Director stated that the draft summary of accountabilities attached to the report had been taken up by the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) and had been circulated to every Council in the Country. He stated that the document identified framework responsibilities as

well as personal responsibilities for officers and staff. The Scrutiny Committee welcomed the report.

Members' queried the possibility of including lay members within the membership of the Children's Homes Visiting Panel. The Corporate Director stated that there was nothing to restrict this. The Committee recommended that the Children's Homes Visiting Panel have an informal discussion at its next meeting about the possibility of including the Scrutiny Committee's co-opted members on its membership. The Corporate Director stated that he would check Regulations relating to non-councillors and to police checks.

With reference to paragraph 2, the Scrutiny Committee queried the role of the Cabinet member as a 'link' Cabinet member rather than a 'lead' Cabinet member. It was highlighted that whilst Cabinet Link members had portfolios, they did not hold responsibility for these portfolios, Cabinet held a collective responsibility for all its portfolios. The Scrutiny Committee felt that there needed to be some clarification as to whether a Cabinet member would be designated with the responsibility for safeguarding children. The Cabinet Link member stated that he was happy to take on this area of designated responsibility. He stated that he would clarify and confirm this at Cabinet and then write to the Scrutiny triumvirate to confirm his position.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the attached version of accountabilities be endorsed, and that it be formally adopted by Full Council as part of the follow up work on the Victoria Climbie Inquiry recommendations.
- 2) The Scrutiny Committee recommended that child protection awareness training be arranged for all councillors,
- 3) The Committee asked that Cabinet clarify who the lead Cabinet member for Safeguarding Children would be.

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