

**THIRD MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SUB GROUP OF  
THE REGIONAL STEERING GROUP ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

**THURSDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2005**

**ROOM 135, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

<b>In attendance:</b>	John Devaney (Chair)	Eastern Health and Social Services Board
	Liz Shaw	Southern Health and Social Services Board
	Dawn Shaw	NCH - National Children's Home
	Pip Jaffa	Parent's Advice Centre
	Joan McGovern	Barnardos
	Anne Graham	Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland
	Master Wells	Office of Care and Protection
<b>Apologies:</b>	Anne Marks	Police Service of Northern Ireland
	David Mann	Department of Education (NI)
	Caroline Holloway	National Society for the Prevention And Cruelty to Children
<b>Secretariat:</b>	Kevin Shiels	Domestic Violence Unit
	Marie Austin	Domestic Violence Unit
	Elaine Farrell	Domestic Violence Unit

**1. Introductions and Apologies**

1.1 Mr Shiels welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**2. Appointment of replacement Chair**

2.1 Mr Shiels advised members that Mr Ken Wilson (Chair) had retired on 21 October 2005 and that John Devaney had accepted the role of Deputy Chair as proposed at the last meeting. Mr Shiels proposed that Mr Devaney assume the role of Chair. Members agreed the proposal. Appointment of a new Deputy Chair will be placed on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting.

**3. Minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2005**

3.1 Members agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2005.

#### 4. Matters arising

4.1 Ms Jaffa informed members that she had spoken to Ms Pauline Leeson (CiNI) regarding ways in which to access the views of children and young people affected by domestic violence. Ms Jaffa agreed to report back on the matter at the next meeting.

**Action:** Ms Jaffa to discuss the matter further with Ms Leeson

4.2 Mr Shiels informed members that a meeting had been arranged with Ms Geraldine Loughran (Chair of the Anti-Bullying Forum) to discuss ways in which to establish links between the Forum and the Regional Steering Group. Mr Shiels agreed to update members at the next meeting.

4.3 Mr Shiels informed members that David Mann (Department of Education) would be leaving his current post soon and that a replacement representative would have to be found. He advised that he had already spoken to Eddie Rooney (Grade 3 in DE) in relation to the matter and emphasised the importance of identifying a replacement due to action points in the Action Plan relevant to DE. Mr Shiels agreed to write to Eddie Rooney in relation to the matter and update members accordingly.

**Action:** Mr Shiels to write to Eddie Rooney re a replacement for David Mann on the Regional Steering Group and on the Children and Young Peoples Sub-Group - letter to be copied to members.

4.4 In Mr Mann's absence, Mr Shiels updated members on domestic violence on the school curriculum. He advised that CCEA were currently drafting guidance on the new curriculum and that Glynis Henderson had agreed to consult the Sub-Group on the draft guidance in the New Year. Ms Graham agreed to provide the Group with a list of resources used in schools to help inform discussions. Mr Shiels also advised that the timescale for the introduction of the new curriculum was September 2006 and that it would be phased in over a period of four years.

**Action:** Ms Graham to forward to DV Unit a list of resources used in schools.

Ms Graham advised that Women's Aid had recently produced good practice guidelines on "Delivering domestic violence preventive education programmes in schools and external settings" and that this should be made available to David Mann's replacement. She explained that the document had not been launched yet but asked if it could be issued to CCEA via the Domestic Violence Unit. Ms Shiels agreed to write to CCEA and the Department of Education and to offer a meeting if they wished to discuss the guidelines.

**Action:** Mr Shiels to write to CCEA and DE to provide a copy of Women's Aid Federation good practice guidelines.

4.5 Mr Shiels advised that David Mann is still liaising with his colleagues in DE regarding the production of domestic violence guidance for head teachers and others working with children and young people. Mr Shiels advised that due to the tight timescale for the production of this guidance (June 2006) he would also raise this matter in his correspondence with Eddie Rooney

- 4.6 A copy of the Home Office Good Practice Guidelines on Domestic Violence and Children was tabled for members' information. Members agreed that consideration should be given to amalgamating this guidance with the Welsh and Women's Aid guidance to form one document. Mr Devaney advised the group that DE were currently rewriting their Pastoral Care Guidance/Child Protection Guidance and that this could provide another opportunity to promote good practice on domestic violence.
- 4.7 Mr Shiels advised that Eugene Mooney and Edel Robinson were considering the draft guidance framework for the collection of domestic violence data. A copy of the draft guidance issue to members when it has been developed further.

## **5. Domestic Violence and the Workplace**

- 5.1 Mr Shiels reported that some organisations already had domestic violence guidelines in place and that the NICS and NIO would be introducing a domestic violence policy at the end of the year. Members noted that contact had been made with Trade Unions and CIPD on how best to approach the introduction of a workplace policy with other large public and private organisations. Each member outlined their own organisation's position in relation to domestic violence workplace policy:
- Master Wells - NICtS has a policy in place;
  - Joan McGovern - Human Resources Branch within Barnardos felt that the staff counselling service was covering this issue, however she would take this matter forward;
  - Pip Jaffa - draft policy has been developed for consideration by the Board of Trustees;
  - Anne Graham - NIWAF has a policy in place (they also assisted the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and others in drafting their guidelines);
  - John Devaney - EHSSB were currently looking at the strategy as a whole and this would be one of the areas taken forward;
  - Dawn Shaw - subject on the agenda for NCH senior management team;
  - Liz Shaw - SHSSB do not have a policy in place but she agreed to raise the issue.

Master Wells informed members that most public organisations had signed up to Investors in People, which had to be re-accredited each year. She suggested that Workplace Guidelines could be a future initiative for those seeking re-accreditation. Mr Shiels agreed to contact IIP in relation to the matter. Mr Shiels advised that domestic violence workplace guidance had also been raised at the Chief Executive's Forum. Members noted that the DV Unit, together with the Community Safety Unit of NIO, was giving consideration to holding a Corporate Alliance event for employers on Domestic Violence in 2006. Mr Devaney agreed that workplace policy should be put on the agenda again for 6 months time for a further update.

**Action:** Domestic Violence Unit to contact Investors in People

**6. Links between the Regional Multi-Disciplinary Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and their Families and Barnardo's Domestic Violence Risk Assessment Model**

6.1 Mr Devaney gave background information on the Regional Multi-Disciplinary Framework and explained that the overall aim was to develop a multi agency framework, which would not be seen in isolation from existing frameworks. Mr Shiels advised that Maddie Bell from Barnardos (Risk Assessment Framework) had also been involved in developing this. Ms Wells suggested that it would be useful to have children's mental health included in the framework. Mr Devaney advised that a report on Child Protection Inspections was due for completion next year and that domestic violence would be an issue.

6.2 Ms Graham raised the issue of appropriate training for social workers in relation to domestic violence. Members felt that current training did not always cover this area adequately. Mr Shiels suggested that it might be useful to issue a letter to all Trusts regarding the level of training for HPSS staff including social workers. Members agreed that the matter should be placed on the agenda of the meeting between Sub-group chairs to discuss the Training Strategy. Ms Jaffa advised members that she was currently in contact with the Trusts regarding a draft protocol on referrals to social workers and agreed to report back when it was completed.

**Action:** DV Unit to draft letter to all Trusts in relation to levels of training for HPSS staff

**7. Discussion on research/overview of research on the impact of domestic violence on children**

7.1 Mr Devaney explained a meeting had taken place with Justice Gillen to discuss children's issues, Judge Gillen had suggested that more research was needed on the impact of domestic violence on children. Members felt that perhaps there had been enough research done, but acknowledged there may be a need to collate it. Ms McGovern suggested that research conducted by Mary Furniss on behalf of the Probation Board already contained a good summary of the impact of domestic violence on children and recommendations that may be worth looking at. Mr Shiels agreed to obtain this report and issue to members. Mr Devaney advised that research would be on the next agenda and if members could recommend other pieces of research it would be useful.

**Action:** DV Unit to obtain a report by Mary Furniss and issue to members.

**8. Links between the Children Order Advisory Committee, Domestic Violence Sub Committee and the Regional Steering Group on DV and its**

**sub groups; and use of COAC Best Practice Guidance in child law cases which feature evidence on domestic violence.**

8.1 Master Wells felt that it would be useful to update the Sub-Group on a regular basis on what work was being done by COAC in relation to domestic violence. Master Wells outlined three initiatives COAC would take on over the following year:

- Awareness raising – to improve the outcome for the child/victim/alleged perpetrator;
- Review of literature (COAC have a good practice guide);
- Statistics – to identify public/private law cases and what are the main issues in each case i.e. domestic violence.

Master Wells agreed to send details of the COAC website and relevant documents to the DV Unit for information.

**Action:** Master Wells to forward web site and other relevant COAC details to DV Unit

**9. Attendance at Raising the Standards Conference (6 & 7 February 2006)**

9.1 Mr Shiels advised members that invitations would soon issue for the Raising the Standards Conference and, as there was limited availability for Northern Ireland, members should advise the Domestic Violence Unit if they wished to attend.

**10. Any other business**

10.1 Mr Shiels advised members that Ms Patricia Nicholl had requested that a nomination to the Children and Young People's Sub-Group from the Local Domestic Violence Partnerships should be considered. It was agreed however that there was already a sufficient link with Local Domestic Violence Partnerships through the Board representatives on the Sub-Group. It was also agreed that if any specific issues arose then contact would be made with the DV Partnership.

**11. Date of the next meeting**

11.1 The date of the next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 23 February 2006 at 1.30 p.m. in Parliament Buildings.