



Minutes of the CHILDREN'S QUALITY ASSURANCE PANEL of the CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH COMMITTEE held on MONDAY 31 JANUARY 2000 at 4.30 pm

Present: Councillors Turnbull (in the Chair), Long and Monk

Officers: A Farr (Children's Services Manager) and T Mabbott (Committee Manager)

Apologies: Councillor Seymour

QA17/00 MINUTES

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 20 December 1999 be approved as a correct record.

QA18/00 CHILD PROTECTION PROCESSES

The Panel considered information on child protection processes in Milton Keynes, and noted the figures for the total number of children on the Child Protection Register in Milton Keynes and the number of unallocated child protection cases. It was noted that the trends were currently more instructive than the raw figures

QA19/00 LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

The Panel considered information on the numbers of children looked after by the local authority in Milton Keynes. It was noted that the authority had gone a considerable way towards meeting its target figure for the overall numbers of Looked After Children. Work was ongoing to ensure that the processes applied to Looked After Children was thorough.

QA20/00 INFORMATION ON REFERRALS AND ASSESSMENT

The Panel noted that information on the total numbers of referrals to Children's services was now being produced, although the information needed to be refined before major lessons could be drawn from it. The Panel also considered information relating to the breakdown of the data by reason for referral, whether it was a re-referral and by team, source, ethnicity and gridsquare.

It was noted that considerable work was being undertaken with schools to ensure adequate cross referrals, and that this included partnership work with National Children's Homes in three local schools.

CQA 21/00 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Panel noted the current level of vacancies within the service, particularly for trained Social Workers. This was currently being addressed by developing the role of Social Work Assistants, and would be discussed at a future meeting of the Children's and Youth Committee before going out to wider consultation, including with Trades Unions.

CQA 22/00 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Panel noted that future meetings of the Panel would be held on the following dates for the Council year 1999/2000:

28 February, 2000 (Room 3, Civic Offices)

27 March, 2000 (Room 35, Civic Offices)

CQA 23/00 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED – That the public and press representatives be excluded from the meeting by virtue of Paragraph 6 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, in order that the Committee may consider the following matters:

Case Discussions

CQA 24/00 CASE DISCUSSIONS

The Panel discussed two cases that had been dealt with by Milton Keynes Council Children's Services Department. It was felt that both cases could usefully inform the Council's approach to future cases, particularly in child Protection Cases. The Panel believed that the cases highlighted the need to ensure an objective appraisal of children's circumstances throughout the Council's involvement in a case.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 5.37 PM