



Renfrewshire
Child Protection Committee

Keeping Our Children Safe

Constitution

January 2012

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CONSTITUTION

1. Name

- 1.1 This multi-agency partnership forum will be known as Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee (hereinafter referred to as RCPC).

2. Aims and Objectives

2.1 Child Protection Committees were first established in each local authority area across Scotland in 1991. Since then, they have been subject to many reforms and reviews, in particular in 2005 when they were strengthened as part of the then Scottish Executive's Child Protection Reform Programme. The National Guidance for Child Protection Committees was published in 2005.

2.2 The National Guidance for Child Protection Committees 2005, has now been embedded in the 'National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland' 2010

2.3 RCPC will take forward the key themes of the Framework for Standards for Children and Young People (2004)

- Children get the help they need when they need it
- Professionals take timely and effective action to protect children
- Professionals ensure children are listened to and respected
- Agencies and professionals share information about children where this is necessary to protect them
- Agencies and professionals work together to assess needs and risks and develop effective plans
- Professionals are competent and confident
- Agencies work in partnership with members of the community to protect children
- Agencies, individually and collectively, demonstrate leadership and accountability for their work and its effectiveness

3. Functions of RCPC

- 3.1 RCPC is a locally-based, inter-agency strategic partnership responsible for the design, development, publication, distribution, dissemination, implementation and evaluation of child protection policy and practice across the public, private and wider third sectors in their locality and in partnership across Scotland. The role of RCPC, through the local structure and memberships, is to provide individual and collective

leadership and direction for the management of child protection services across Renfrewshire. RCPC works in partnership with Renfrewshire Chief Officers Community Protection Group (COCPG) and the Scottish Government to take forward child protection policy and practice across Scotland.

3.2 The functions of RCPC are:

❖ **Continuous improvement**

Policies, procedures and protocols

Self evaluation, performance management and quality assurance

Promoting good practice

Training and staff development

❖ **Strategic planning**

Communication, collaboration and cooperation

Making and maintaining links with other planning fora

❖ **Public information and communication**

Raising public awareness

Involving children, young people and their families

3.3 RCPC will work within the wider planning framework so that the work is fully integrated with other planning fora and is as effective as possible.

4. Role of Renfrewshire Chief Officers Community Protection Group (COG)

4.1. 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.

4.2 Chief Officers will agree and disseminate a clear vision, shared values and aims that promote the protection of all children and young people across Renfrewshire. The vision will highlight the desired outcomes for child protection and will be linked to the key processes required to achieve those outcomes. This will be disseminated amongst staff and the general public. Chief Officers will demonstrate effective collaborative working to discharge their child protection responsibilities and consistently promote effective joint working within and across services. Chief Officers will demonstrate effective collaborative working to discharge their child protection responsibilities and consistently promote effective joint working within and across services.

4.1 Chief Officers must ensure that RCPC is properly constituted, resourced and that its arrangements are clearly focused and relevant to all members of the committee itself, any sub-committees and partner agencies, and the wider public at large.

- 4.2 Chief Officers are responsible for ensuring that resources include dedicated finance to support the collective work and/or specific core functions and/or activities of RCPC
- 4.3 Chief Officers will ensure that RCPC has dedicated professional and administrative support staff.
- 4.4 Chief Officers and RCPC should consider joint funding and effective approaches to sharing resources for appropriate areas of activity.
- 4.5 Chief Officers will ensure that the chair and vice chair fully understand their specific role, responsibilities and remit, and that they have an in-depth knowledge of child protection. Chief Officers will agree their working arrangements, term of office and reporting and accountability arrangements.
- 4.6 Chief Officers will ensure that all members of RCPC have the relevant delegated responsibility level and capacity to make decisions on behalf of the service or agency they represent.
- 4.7 Chief Officers will ensure that all members of RCPC are properly inducted, have access to child protection training (particularly inter-agency child protection training) and have protected time in which to fulfil their responsibilities before, during and after meetings.
- 4.8 Chief Officers will ensure that the work of RCPC is transmitted widely, so that it is understood and embedded into their respective service or agency's child protection policy and practice arrangements. Work emanating from the Child Protection Committee must be properly implemented and monitored effectively so as to measure impact and outcomes.
- 4.9 Chief Officers will decide upon the local reporting arrangements for RCPC and the requirement for an annual report and/or annual plan, in addition to any other national and/or local planning and reporting requirements.
- 4.10 The Chief Executive of Renfrewshire Council will take responsibility for ensuring that a Chief Officers Group is convened with sufficient frequency to ensure effectively discharge its responsibilities in relation to the protection of children.
- 4.11 The chief officers group will:
- ❖ Individually and collectively demonstrate leadership and accountability for child protection in Renfrewshire
 - ❖ Agree and endorse the RCPC business plan including priorities for protecting Renfrewshire's children
 - ❖ Ensure that the RCPC links to other planning fora
 - ❖ Agree the agencies to be represented on RCPC
 - ❖ Agree the constitution for RCPC
 - ❖ Appoint, or agree the appointment, of an independent Chair of the RCPC
 - ❖ Agree reporting mechanisms with Elected Members and Board Members that cover the work of the RCPC. This should include at least annual reporting.

5. Membership

- 5.1 Membership of RCPC will be representative and inclusive and all members must fully understand their role, remit and purpose.

5.2 The Chief Officers Group will appoint, or agree the appointment of the Independent Chair of RCPC, including their contractual arrangements and/or terms of reference, role and remit.

5.3 Each Chief Officer will ensure that their representative on RCPC will be of sufficient senior grade or have the sufficient level of authorisation to make the required policy and resource commitments to realise the objectives of the agreed business plan, on behalf of their agency.

5.4 Members of RCPC will:

- ❖ Represent the commitment of their agency to RCPC vision for children in Renfrewshire
- ❖ Have the delegated authority to make strategic and operational decisions on behalf of their agency
- ❖ Facilitate communication between RCPC and their agency
- ❖ Contribute their skill and experience to RCPC

5.5 As a minimum, the following services will be represented on RCPC:

- ❖ Elected member
- ❖ Renfrewshire Council social work service
- ❖ Renfrewshire Council education and leisure service
- ❖ Renfrewshire Council housing and property service
- ❖ NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde
- ❖ Strathclyde Police
- ❖ Scottish Children's Reporters Administration
- ❖ Voluntary sector
- ❖ Procurator fiscal

5.6 Members must attend RCPC on a regular basis and lead/ serve on any working groups for which they are nominated. They must have time to prepare for meetings and take advice from their organisation where decisions are required.

5.7 All Child Protection Committee members will have designated deputies who will attend the meeting in their absence and on their behalf.

5.8 Where membership of the RCPC does not automatically follow from the role occupied, members who wish to resign from the RCPC must discuss this within their agency unless resignation is requested by the agency.

5.9 Any member who fails to attend 3 consecutive ordinary meetings will have membership reviewed.

6. Independent chair

6.1 The chair will be a suitably qualified and experienced independent person. Renfrewshire Council will act as the employing authority and the independent chair will be accountable to RCPC and Chief Officers through the Chief Executive of Renfrewshire Council.

The Chair of the RCPC will:

- ❖ be responsible for ensuring that all members are able to maximise their contribution to the work of the RCPC
- ❖ ensure that new members are fully appraised of the work and plan of RCPC and their role within it
- ❖ ensure that RCPC members receive support and training as required
- ❖ ensure the development of the RCPC report and plan
- ❖ agree the resource requirement for the work of RCPC including that required to chair the RCPC effectively
- ❖ ensure collaboration with other CPC's in West of Scotland and nationally as appropriate
- ❖ report to Chief Officer Group

7. Child Protection Lead Officer and Senior Officer

7.1 The RCPC will appoint a Lead Officer to co-ordinate its activities including the work of the sub groups

7.2 The Lead Officer will support RCPC in its key functions of continuous improvement, strategic planning, public information, communication and promoting high standards of inter-agency child protection practice in Renfrewshire

7.3 The post will be funded by RCPC via the contributions made by agencies.

7.4 Renfrewshire Council will act as the employing authority for the post.

7.4 The Lead Officer will:

- Maintain an overview of inter agency child protection activity in Renfrewshire and take a lead role in ensuring continuous improvement
- Work with key stakeholders in partner agencies to promote effective inter-agency policy and practice.
- Lead on the development of the RCPC business plan and support the inter agency working groups of RCPC in carrying out the tasks outlined in the plan
- Lead on identified areas of work on behalf of the working groups of the RCPC
- Provide reports on activity and management information to the RCPC and Chief Officer's Group
- Support and co-ordinate the process of carrying out significant case reviews on behalf of RCPC and ensure learning is embedded into practice and policy
- Be responsible for networking with other Child Protection Committees via the West of Scotland consortium and nationally across Scotland, contributing to the sharing of good practice and developments in child protection
- Report to RCPC on evidence based reports and practice developments and best practice in child protection
- Lead on the preparation for scrutiny processes developed through inspection agencies
- Support and further develop RCPC self evaluation, performance management and quality assurance processes and ensure that learning and improvement is embedded
- Be involved in supporting and training staff across agencies
- Co ordinate the development of policy, practice and procedures for child protection work across all key partner agencies

7.4 The Lead Officer will be managed by the Senior Officer for Child Protection

8. Inter Agency Development Officer

8.1 The RCPC will appoint an inter agency Development Officer to develop, design and deliver staff development opportunities in relation to child protection and lead the development and implementation of the Child Protection Training and Development Strategies.

8.2 Renfrewshire Council will act as the employing authority for the post.

8.3 The inter agency development officer will;

- Develop RCPC training and development strategy and action plan
- Facilitate and lead the implementation and delivery of inter agency child protection training.
- Provide professional advice to the lead and senior officers on staff development matters and associated development requirements.
- Identifying and planning the training and development needs, taking account of national frameworks and local requirements for protection training, across all key partner agencies.
- Organise and contribute to delivery of inter-agency training sessions, working across all sectors with a range of managers and practitioners.
- developing, deliver and implementing and evaluate the child protection training plans
- Support the development of consistent systems for monitoring and evaluation of single agency training across agencies to enable accurate reporting of training activity and impact to the protection committees.

8. Administrative support and budget

8.1 The financial year will run from 1st April to 31st March

8.2 The RCPC budget will be the responsibility of the Director of Social Work

8.3 Expenditure may be incurred by RCPC for the purpose of discharging the functions of RCPC and for such purposes as set out in the RCPC plan.

8.4 Any legal advice by RCPC will be by the legal services department of Renfrewshire Council.

8.5 Individual members will seek legal advice through their own agencies.

8.6 A secretariat service will be provided by corporate services, Renfrewshire Council. This service will arrange and coordinate the arrangements for RCPC and Chief Officers meetings and issue agenda and distribute minutes following meetings.

9. Agendas, minutes and responsibilities

9.1 Renfrewshire Council will be responsible for providing secretariat services to RCPC through the clerk to the Committee.

9.2 The clerk shall be responsible for arranging meetings, including accommodation and refreshments, issuing agendas and circulating minutes.

- 9.3 Meetings will be held on an 8 weekly cycle where possible. Changes to meeting dates will be agreed by the clerk, in consultation with the Chair, when the need arises.
- 9.4 As far as possible, agendas will be issued to Committee members electronically and in a suitable format. Papers will be issued to members at least 5 days prior to the meetings.
- 9.5 The provision of good quality accommodation for meetings will be shared amongst partner agencies. The Clerk will make the necessary arrangements to supply special equipment for use at the meetings provided sufficient notice is given for the equipment.
- 9.6 The Clerk will be responsible for the circulation of the minutes of meetings of RCPC and Chief Officers meetings not later than 10 days following the date of the meeting. The minutes will clearly allocate actions to different members of the Committee, and it is the responsibility of members to ensure that actions allocated to them are progressed.
- 9.7 Extraordinary or special meetings of RCPC or Chief Officers can be requested at any time in consultation with the Chair. Such meetings will be held within 14 days of such a request being received.
- 9.8 Decisions will be achieved at meetings of RCPC through consensus.
- 9.9 No business shall be transacted at a meeting unless at least 6 members are present, representing at least 3 different agencies.

10. Confidentiality and information sharing

- 10.1 Various provisions govern the flow of information, and there is increasing emphasis on the right of the public to access to information about the work of public bodies.
- 10.2 Information about individual children remains confidential unless there is a need to share this for the protection of the child.

11. Working groups

- 11.1 RCPC will have the power to create standing or ad hoc groups to progress particular strategic or operational issues and to appoint representatives to these groups.
- 11.2 These groups will have clear terms of reference and time scales to work to, and will report to the RCPC on a regular basis. They will usually be set up by the Committee itself.
- 11.3 Each group will be chaired by a member of RCPC to ensure effective accountability and communication, but membership will be open to a wide range of people with appropriate skills and experience to the issue concerned. All agencies will be expected to contribute to this by making appropriate staff available.

11.4 Where a matter of urgency arises, such as the need to respond to a consultation document or a specific operational issue, the Chair shall have the authority to establish an ad hoc group as appropriate. The outputs from the group must be reported to RCPC at the next meeting.

11.5 There will be a standing inter agency training group. Membership of this shall consist of at least one representative from Renfrewshire Council, NHS and Strathclyde Police and the inter agency development officer.

11.6 Other working groups will address:

- ❖ Practice improvement and development issues
- ❖ Evaluation and inspection
- ❖ Communications
- ❖ Significant case reviews and case reviews
- ❖ Management information

12. Annual Report and business plan

12.1 As detailed elsewhere in this constitution, RCPC will prepare 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 3-year plan
- Completed annually and cover the financial year
- Submitted to the Chief Officers group for approval

12.2 The annual report will:

- ❖ Provide an account of the years work against the previous year's plan
- ❖ Provide information on the level and quality of inter agency work
- ❖ Outline a business plan, including the budget for the coming year, in order to allow analysis and comparison both within RCPC and between other CPC's ; provide information for staff in partner agencies and the wider public about the activity of RCPC; and inform policy development at a local and national level

13 Amending the constitution

13.1 This constitution will be reviewed annually by RCPC and proposed amendments will be considered by RCPC. Amendments may be proposed at any other time as and when necessary. Amendments agreed by RCPC will be submitted to the Chief Officers group for approval.