

## Response to Children P SCR Report – 19 February 2018

Cumbria LSCB published the Children P SCR in September 2017. Prior to publication, historically reports have been confidential and embargoed, with only a very small number of senior people in relevant agencies seeing the report in its entirety.

It should be noted that the author of the report is rightly independent and was supported by a panel of Cumbria “experts” known as the Expert Leads Panel. These experts are knowledgeable about practice but have had no involvement in the particular case.

Professionals and their managers in Social Care, upon reading the report, challenged some of the assumptions and findings in the report and these are detailed below. This does not change any of the findings or learning from this SCR.

The LSCB, In order to ensure the independence of the report is not compromised, has published this document to sit alongside the report. The inaccuracies do not change the overall learning or findings in the report.

Since this SCR has concluded the LSCB has changed and reviewed its SCR processes and includes professionals and their managers in SCRs in Practitioner Learning events and they are involved in signing off the report and any findings and learning. This ensures that the process is inclusive and there is good ownership across all agencies.

Fiona Musgrave – Senior Manager LSCB

*This response has been produced in order to address issues raised by Children’s Services in respect of inaccuracies detailed in “Children P Serious Case Review Overview Report”. This response was signed off at the LSCB on 24 January 2018. It was disputed by the Author of the SCR Report – The Chair of the LSCB took the decision to publish this response anyway stating “I am not sure we will ever fully resolve it to everyone’s satisfaction.”*

*In addition to reviewing the children’s records on the Cumbria Children’s Services electronic case management system, the minutes of the SCR Children P Expert Leads Panel dated: 27th April 2015, 6th July 2015, 17th December 2015, 29th April 2016, and 17th June 2016 were also reviewed as was the Children P combined chronology.*

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### **Issue 1**

Section 12 of the Serious Case Review Overview Report is titled “**Significant Events during the first period of child protection planning 2009 – 2011**” (pg.8). Cumbria Children’s Services maintain that the events contained in the first three entries within this section took place prior to the children becoming subject to a Child Protection plan. Further to that, the events took place prior to Children’s Services being involved with the family. Therefore not only did the events not take place during a period when the children were subject to a Child Protection plan, but in addition, Children Services were not aware of the events at the time that they occurred.

### **Information Available**

Sections 12.1, 12.2 and 12.3 of the Serious Case Review Overview Report relate to incidents that occurred between January 2009 and April 2009. The information available from Children’s Services electronic case management system would indicate that there was no contact with the family during

this timeframe. Contact was not made with Children's Services until 16th June 2009. It is therefore apparent that Children's Services would have no knowledge of these events until, at the earliest, June 2009.

### **Conclusion**

By including the events detailed in sections 12.1, 12.2 and 12.3 in the Serious Case Review Overview Report under the heading "Significant events during the first period of child protection planning 2009-2011", it implies that Children's Services were aware of these events at the time that they occurred. These events were significant in respect of safeguarding. It is clear that these incidents did not occur during the first period of child protection planning and would not have been known by Children's Services until the children were subject to a referral in June 2009. The Serious Case Review Overview Report should have accurately reflected when events occurred and what information was available to Children's Services at what time.

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### **Issue 2**

Section 19.3 of the Serious Case Review Overview Report states that in respect of the application for a residence order, ***"It is reported that the local authority was not aware of grandmother's application to the court despite the allocated social worker and other professionals being involved in the lives of the children. It is puzzling why the court would not have sought a Section 7 report from the local authority given the substantial professional involvement with the family"***. Cumbria Children's Services maintain that they were aware of the application for the residence order. In addition, the local authority are of the opinion that the rationale for not requesting a Section 7 report was that the children had been residing with the grandmother for a period of 12 months.

### **Information Available**

Cumbria children's Services electronic case management system contains multiple case recordings in respect of grandmother's application for a residence order over the period from 2009 until 2010. These include conversations between the allocated social worker and the grandmother and the allocated social worker and grandmother's solicitor. Most significantly, the record contains a case recording completed by the social worker detailing her attendance at court in respect of an application for a Residence Order and that the Residence Order was granted.

There are, however, no specific case recordings in respect of the rationale behind a Section 7 report not being requested.

### **Conclusion**

It would appear evident from this recording on the case management system that the local authority was aware of the application for a Residence Order, had liaised with the carer and her legal advisor throughout the preliminary discussions and had attended two hearings in respect of the granting of the Residence Order. In light of this information, it is difficult to ascertain why the Serious Case Review Overview Report reported that the local authority was not aware of these proceedings. The issue in respect of the lack of request by the Court for a Section 7 report remains unclear.

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