City of York Safeguarding Children Partnership

Families First
Building Brighter Futures

Procedures for Child Protection Conferences and Core Group Meetings



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Document Updates and Approvals

Revision	Group or Person	Date	Comments
1	Dallas Frank	30/03/23	Baseline 2020 version reviewed and updated
2	Clare Davies	31/03/23	Updated and amended template
3 – 5	Dallas Frank/Clare Davies	03/04/23	Reviewed and updated
6 - 9	SAPP Sub-Group	15/05/23	Baseline version circulated for comments
10	SAPP Sub-Group	19/07/23	Approved
11	Sophie Keeble	31/07/24	Change to paragraph 3.17 from one working day to three working days
12	Sophie Keeble and Emma Bedford.	13/01/25	Change to Police information sharing in conference paragraphs 1.6 to 1.8
13	Sophie Keeble and MACPT sub group	Feb 26	Shared at MACPT

1. Initial Child Protection Conference

Purpose

- The purpose of a Child Protection Conference is to bring families and multi-agency professionals together to understand risks for the child.

1.1 An Initial Child Protection Conference is to be held where, following the Strategy Meeting and Section 47 Child Protection enquiries, there is reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm (Children Act 1989).

1.2 This Child Protection Conference have responsibility:

- To develop an outline plan, if appropriate, to protect the child. The plan will identify what is required of the family and partnership, to ensure a child's safety. The outline plan should clearly identify what needs to be done, by whom and include clear timeframes. This should include clear actions which explain what the intended outcome for the child is where progress can be clearly seen and documented.

  If the child is subject to a Child Protection Plan, it is the responsibility of all members of the Child Protection Conference to produce and agree the plan.

  It is the overall responsibility of the conference chair, Lead Child Protection Practitioner (LCPP) from the Multi Agency Child Protection Team (MACPT), to decide whether or not a child or young person should be supported by a Child Protection plan and the rationale behind this, taking into consideration the views of all those agencies present.

  Parents should be fully involved in the process around decision making and their views will be taken into consideration when the LCPP makes their recommendation about whether or not a child or young person should be supported under a Child Protection Plan.

To be responsible for making recommendations on how the family and agencies protect and safeguard the child.

To analyse information which has been obtained about the child's developmental needs.

To consider the wishes and feelings of the child.

To consider the parents' capacity to respond to the child's needs to ensure the child's safety, health and development needs are met.

- To identify membership of the Core Group of family members and professionals who will develop, implement, and review the Child Protection Plan. The LCPP will maintain oversight of the core group process.

- To establish a timescale for the Initial Core Group meeting, development of the Child Protection Plan and for Child Protection Review meetings.

- To ensure a contingency plan is in place if the agreed actions are not completed and/or circumstances change impacting on the child's safety and welfare.

  Complaints made about the process of the Child Protection Conference should be made to the LCPP in line with the Conference Complaints Procedure.

Specific Roles

- **All agencies** should work together to safeguard the child from harm in the future, taking timely, effective action according to the plan agreed.

- The allocated social worker, from the Family Help service, will prepare a report for the Conference which identifies their analysis of the risk to the child and the ability of the parents and wider family network to address risk/need. The report will provide a clear analysis of the intended outcome for the child.

- The allocated social worker will attend the Conference and present information about the reason for the concern, their understanding of risk, the child's needs, parental capacity and family and environmental context and evidence of how the child has been abused or neglected and its impact on their health and development.

- The allocated social worker will share their report and any other information with the child and their family, in person before the meeting.
- All professionals are expected to submit a report and, except for police, are expected to share and discuss their report with the child and their parents or carers, where the child is of sufficient age and understanding, at least **three working days** in advance of the Conference. This is to enable any factual inaccuracies to be identified, amended and areas of disagreement noted.
- All reports should be made available to the LCPP as soon as possible and be available at least **three working days** in advance of the Conference.
- The police report will not be shared with professionals or family, it is only shared with the LCPP. The LCPP can share relevant information from the Police report within the conference (being alert to third party information and the need to be compliant with Data Protection and GDPR), except for information which is intelligence. If there is an Attending Officer in the conference, they will share the relevant Police information depending on the specific circumstances of the child and conference. The LCPP may also receive a 'Chair's letter' containing information they need to be aware of, but which is not contained in the Police report due to concern it may put a conference attendee at risk of harm. This information cannot be shared unless the Attending Officer has made this decision prior to the conference. If there will be no Attending Officer the LCPP can contact VAT for a Police decision about information sharing prior to the conference.
    - The social worker should provide the single assessment, which should include the outcome of the Section 47 Enquiry and additional information arising from the in-depth assessment. The report should include every relevant child.
    - Professionals will be expected to have read all relevant reports prior to the Conference and be expected to

contribute any additional information including any developments since the reports were written.

- Professionals will be expected to give their opinion of risk to the child, based on the information they have read and heard and to decide whether the child should become subject to a Child Protection Plan (Initial Child Protection Conferences) or remain subject to a plan (Review Child Protection Conferences).
- Each agency conference report should include:
  - The views, wishes and feelings of the child, their parents and other family members
  - An analysis of risk including any areas of concern and information considered relevant
  - A chronology of significant events and agency and professional contact with the family, incorporating relevant historical information
  - A Cultural Genogram, identifying the family support network
  - Information on the child's current and past developmental needs
  - Analysis of the capacity of the parents and wider family members to ensure the child is safe from harm and to respond to the child's developmental needs
  - Information about how children's needs have been, and are currently being met
  - An analysis of the implications of the information obtained for the child's future safety and meeting of his or her developmental needs
  - A proposed, outcome focused, SMART plan for future safeguarding of the child and promotion of their welfare including recommendations.

- If any professional has a particular problem in relation to sharing information with one or more family members, they should discuss this with their line manager or designated safeguarding lead and/or the LCPP. Such issues should be brought to attention as far in advance of the Conference as possible.

- In all reports, when information is provided from another source, i.e., it is second or third hand, this should be made clear.

Involving Family Networks

- Family attendance at a Conference must be carefully planned. It may not always be possible to involve all family members throughout the Conference (for example, where it would not be safe to have a child's parents together in a meeting where there have been allegations, or evidence of, domestic abuse). The Conference should be planned so that the welfare of the child remains paramount.

- It is vital that parents, including estranged parents, those with Parental Responsibility, carers and members of the child's wider family network, are supported to participate in discussions, decisions, and planning for their child.

- To achieve this, social workers should ensure families have sufficient information about the Conference and have had sight of all professional reports before the Conference, so that they have sufficient information and support to make a meaningful contribution. This should include consideration of childcare and travel arrangements to enable attendance. Social workers should explain the complaints process as well as the social care process. Written information should be supplied to a child to support their understanding of why they are being considered at conference.

- Those for whom English is not a first language must be offered, and, if required, provided with, an interpreter. A family member should not act as an interpreter of spoken or signed language.

- Provision should be made to ensure that the needs of all attendees who may have health conditions or impairments are met at the Child Protection Conference to enable all members, including the child and their parents and carers, to fully participate.

- Consideration should be given to ensure that the child's and their parents' or carers' voice and views are taken into account. This may be through the use of an advocate, independent person, friend, via their social worker, or their solicitor if appropriate. The role of the supporter is to enable children, parents, and carers to express their point of view – not to cross examine participants. Voice and views could also be obtained through a letter, audio tape or any other suitable means.

- If a child wants the support of an independent advocate, a referral should be made to the Speak Up service (https://www.speakupyork.co.uk/make-referral).

- If a parent of carer wants the support of an independent advocate, a referral should be made to the Volunteer Service (email: volunteer@york.gov.uk / tel: 07542510430) or the parent can contact the service directly.

- The LCPP should speak with family members to ensure they understand the process. Where possible this should be some days before the conference as well as just before the conference. This may (where the potential for conflict exists) involve separate discussions with the different parties.

- The 'lived experience of the child', including the very young child, is of crucial importance to Child Protection Conferences in conveying their experience, wishes and feelings. The child, subject to her/his level of understanding, must be given the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to the Conference.

- The responsible social worker must ensure the child has had a clear explanation of the Conference from the most suitable person to do this, and, where possible, potential provision of an advocate or support person. For older children, written

information should be provided.

- Children should be encouraged to attend the Conference. Where this is not appropriate, other opportunities for attendance at Conferences must also be considered i.e., via Teams.

- In considering whether it would be in the child's best interest to attend the Conference, the following should be considered:

- Each child's circumstances will be assessed on his/her merits, taking into account the understanding the child has of the situation and the process and their age and development. Based on this information, the LCPP will decide the extent of the attendance of the child within the Conference.

    - Whether the child has expressed an explicit or implicit wish to be involved.

    - The parents' views about the child's proposed presence.

    - Whether, overall, it appears to be of benefit to the child to attend, this includes considering the impact of the Conference on the child.

    - A declared wish not to attend a Conference must be respected.

    - If a child is not attending the Conference, it is the responsibility of the social worker, or another appropriate practitioner, to let the Conference know what the child wishes to say.

- The social worker, or an appropriately informed practitioner, should help prepare the child when they are to attend their Conference. This should include whether the child wishes to be present with their parent (or supporter) when meeting the LCPP.

- The LCPP may meet with the child in advance, ensure they

have sufficient support to present their views and wishes, make it clear which parts of reports can be shared, and ensure the language used is understandable to the child and their family. Consideration should also be given to the venue, timings, and any special needs/requirements.

- If it is decided that it is not in the best interest of the child to attend or to restrict participation, every effort should be made by the social worker to obtain and present the views and wishes of the child. This can include:
  - A letter, e-mail, text message, a picture etc.
  - The child's independent advocate or other professional speaking on the child's behalf.
  - The child meeting the LCPP in person or via a telephone call or an online meeting before the Conference to share their views.
  - The child attending to observe rather than contribute him or herself.

Exclusion

- There may be circumstances where it is necessary to exclude one or more family members in full or in part to ensure that professionals and other family members can share information in a safe and non-threatening environment.
- Factors for consideration include:
  - Indications that the parents' presence may seriously prejudice the welfare of the child.
  - There is evidence to suggest that a parent, carer or family members' behaviour may disrupt the work of the Conference. This includes violence, threats, racism, or other forms of discriminatory or oppressive behaviour or by being under the influence of a substance. Or, if there is conflict between different family members who may not be able to attend at the same time, for example

where there are concerns about domestic abuse.

- A child requests that the parent/person with Parental Responsibility or carer is not present while s/he is present.
- The need for members to receive confidential information that would otherwise be unavailable, such as legal advice or information about a criminal investigation.
- Any conflict of interest between the child and parent/carer.

- Where a worker from any agency believes a parent should be excluded, representation must be made to the LCPP, as soon as possible. The agency concerned must indicate which of the above grounds is believed to be met and the information or evidence to support this.
- Any exclusion period should be for the minimum duration necessary and must be clearly noted in the Conference records.
- It may become clear during a Conference, that its effectiveness will be seriously impaired by the presence of a person. In these circumstances, the LCPP may ask them to leave. This will be recorded in the Conference minutes.
- Where a parent is on bail, or subject to an active Police investigation, it is the responsibility of the LCPP to ensure that the Police can fully present their information and views whilst at the same time allowing the parents to participate as fully as circumstances allow.
- If, prior to the Conference, the LCPP has decided to exclude a parent, this must be communicated in writing with information on how s/he may make their views known, how s/he will be told the outcome of the Conference and about the complaints procedure.
- In each case of exclusion, the LCPP will decide what written

information from the Conference is to be made available to the person excluded.

- On occasion, it may be appropriate to share medical information about the child or another member of the household on a confidential basis. Family members who should not be party to this information should be excluded for this part of the meeting.

Structure for Child Protection Conference

Chairing the Conference: The LCPP

- All Child Protection Conferences will be chaired by an LCPP using a Signs of Safety format. Wherever possible, the same person should also chair subsequent Conferences for the child to ensure continuation.
- The responsibilities of the LCPP include:
  - Meeting the child and family members in advance of the Conference.
  - Ensuring, that the voice of the child/ren is heard and listened to and that children are included in the development of their plans.
  - Setting out the purpose, tasks, and process of the Conference and determining the agenda.
  - Ensuring participants understand the confidentiality of the meeting and its content.
  - Enabling all those present (and absent contributors) to make their full contribution to discussion and decision-making.
  - Ensuring that the Conference takes the decisions required in an informed, systematic and explicit way.
  - Ensuring that CYSCP principles are reflected in all aspects of the Conference.

- Summarising the discussion and ensuring an assessment of risk for each child is undertaken.
- The LCPP will consider the views of all members of the Conference and make a final decision regarding whether a Child Protection Plan is required.
- Deciding the category of abuse if it is decided that a Child Protection Plan is required.
- Ensuring the formulation of an effective outline Child Protection Plan.
- Informing the Local Authority children's data systems of the outcome of the Conference.

Quorate Conferences

- To be quorate, a meeting should include as a minimum, a representative from Children's Social Care and a representative from at least two other professional groups or agencies who have direct contact with the child who is the subject of the Conference.
- The LCPP will decide whether to hold a Conference where quoracy is not achieved. The LCPP may also decide to reconvene the Conference if it becomes apparent during the meeting that there is insufficient information. This decision, and the reason for it, must then be recorded within the child's case notes.
- If the LCPP makes a decision to cancel the Conference, there must be a clear interim safety plan for the child communicated to all agencies by the allocated social worker.
- The LCPP may decide to proceed with the Conference despite lack of agency representation. This would be relevant where:
  - A child has not had relevant contact with 3 agencies e.g., Pre-Birth Conference

- Sufficient information is available
- A delay will be detrimental to the child.
- Where an inquorate Conference is held, an early review Conference should be arranged.

Membership of Child Protection Conferences

- Membership of a Child Protection Conference should include the child, where appropriate, their parents and members of the wider family network. Professionals who have a significant contribution to make should attend to share professional expertise or their knowledge of the child or family.
- There should be sufficient information and expertise available, through personal representation and written reports, to enable the Conference to make an informed decision about what action is necessary to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child.
- A Conference should be no larger than it needs to be, as this can inhibit discussion and intimidate the child and family members.
- The social worker and their manager should draw up a list of professionals to invite, and this list should be agreed with the LCPP.
- Membership is likely to include:
  - The child or their representative
  - Parents and those with Parental Responsibility
  - Members of the wider family network
  - Children's Social Care staff who have been involved in an assessment of the family
  - Any other professionals involved with the child (e.g.,

Health Visitor, 0-19 practitioner healthy child service, Paediatrician, GP, School Staff, Early Years staff, CAMHS etc)

- Professionals with expertise in the particular type of harm suffered by the child or the child's particular condition (e.g., a disability or long-term illness)

- Those involved in investigations (e.g. police)

- Midwifery services where the Conference concerns an unborn or newborn child

- A supporter or advocate for the child and, or their parents

Additional invitations to Conference should be provided to all professionals who 'need to know' or who have a contribution to make. These may include:

- The child's guardian where there are current court proceedings

- Local authority legal services

- Professionals involved with the parents or other family members (for example adult mental health services, probation, GP, family support services)

- Probation or the Youth Justice Service

- Local Authority Housing services

- Domestic abuse services

- Alcohol and substance misuse services

Note: A professional who wishes to observe a Conference may only attend with the agreement of the Chairperson (the LCPP), the child (where they are of sufficient age and understanding) and those with Parental Responsibility.

- Agreement for observers to attend a Conference should be obtained prior to the meeting by contacting the LCPP.

- Parents should be assisted to make arrangements to provide care for small children to enable parents to fully engage in a meeting.

Timing of an Initial Child Protection Conference

- All Initial Child Protection Conferences should take place within **15 working days** of:
  - The initial child protection conference should take place within 15 working days of a strategy discussion, or the strategy discussion at which section 47 enquiries were initiated if more than one has been held.
  - Notification by another authority that a child subject to a Child Protection Plan has moved into York.
- Where a child has been subject to an Emergency Protection Order, the Conference should be held in time to agree next steps prior to the end of the Emergency Protection Order.

Child Protection Plan

Threshold for a Child Protection Plan

- After consideration of the information available and discussion, the Conference should decide whether the child should be the subject of a Child Protection Plan, or if they could safely be supported by a Child in Need Plan, or another plan.
- To assist the Conference in making this decision they should consider if the child has either:
  - Been shown to have suffered ill-treatment or impairment of health or development as a result of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect, **and** professional judgment is that further ill-treatment or impairment are likely or

- Is likely to suffer ill-treatment or the impairment of health or development as a result of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect based on professional judgement, substantiated by the findings or enquiries in this individual case or by research evidence.

- Conference participants should base their judgments on:
  - The view of the child and their family
  - All available evidence obtained through the Section 47 enquiries, their own assessments and those of the social worker
  - The views of all agencies represented at the Conference, taking into account any written contributions that have been made and any views expressed by family members
- If a decision is taken that the child is at continuing risk of significant harm, the LCPP should determine which category of abuse the child has suffered or is at risk of suffering (physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect).

- Only one category should be used, in accordance with Department of Education guidance.
- Where consensus cannot be reached, the LCPP will decide whether the child will become subject of a Child Protection Plan, giving, and clearly recording the reasons for their decision.

The Outline Child Protection Plan

- Where it is decided that a child is at continuing risk of significant harm, the Conference will formulate an outline Child Protection Plan.
- In formulating the outline Child Protection Plan, the Conference must consider and make recommendations on how agencies, professionals and the family should work

together to ensure that the child will be safeguarded from harm in the future. It is important that the family and professionals understand exactly what is expected of them, also that services are provided to give the child and family the best chance of achieving the required changes.

- The overall aim of a Child Protection Plan is to:
  - Establish how the family and professionals will work together to manage risk and safeguard the child.
  - Ensure the child is safe and prevent him or her from suffering further harm
  - Promote the child's health and development
- The Child Protection Plan should:
  - Identify a qualified, experienced social worker to be allocated to the child.
  - Identify the members of a Core Group of professionals and family members who will develop, implement, and drive the Child Protection Plan. Professionals should ensure that they understand their responsibilities in developing and reviewing the Child Protection Plan, which includes basing decisions and progress on evidence and challenging drift.
  - Identify the outcomes that should be achieved for the child, clearly Identifying what needs to change, what will be done, by whom and in what timeframe.
  - Include a contingency plan if agreed objectives and actions are not completed and/or circumstances change.
- Identify and record the date of the first Child Protection Review Conference, and provide clarity regarding circumstances in which it might be necessary to convene the Conference before that date.
  - Agree and record the date of the first Core Group meeting. This must be **within 10 working days** of the

Conference.

- As part of the Child Protection Plan, the child's social worker will undertake or arrange direct work with the child and family, taking into account the child's wishes and feelings and the views of the parents in so far as they are consistent with the child's welfare. The social worker will explain the plan to the child in a manner which is in accordance with their age and understanding and agree the plan with the child.
- Any child subject to a Child Protection Plan will be seen at least once every 10 working days for a Statutory Child Protection Visit. Further visits may be required at a higher frequency, but this should never exceed 10 working days. The child must be seen alone and at their home for this to be considered a Statutory Child Protection Visit.
- If a decision is taken that a child does not need to be the subject of a Child Protection Plan, the Conference, together with the family, should consider the child's needs and what further help would assist the family in responding to them.
- Subject to the family's views and consent, it may be appropriate to develop a Child in Need plan and identify support for the child going forward.

Dissent from a Conference Decision

- In all cases, the Conference minutes should record clearly where there is dissent from a Conference decision and the reasons why there is this disagreement.
- CYSCP Child Protection Procedures on Resolution of Disputes outline the actions to be taken if appropriate where there is dissent from a Conference decision.

Administrative Arrangements for Child Protection Conferences

- A written copy of the outline Child Protection Plan should be made available to parents and professionals within **three working days**.
- The child should be given a copy of the Child Protection Plan written at a level appropriate to his or her age and understanding.
- A record of the Conference will be sent to all those invited and to others, at the discretion of the LCPP. The record will be sent within **15 working days** of the Conference.
- The record is confidential and should not be passed by professionals to third parties without the consent of the LCPP.

Children who become Looked After

- The Looked After Review must be sure that the child's Care Plan provides adequate security for the child and sufficiently reduces the likelihood of the child suffering significant harm as identified by the initial Child Protection Conference. The LCPP will seek assurance that the core group has been notified so the members can share if they do not agree with the decision making process.

Review Conferences and Children who are Looked After

- Where a Looked After Child remains the subject of a Child Protection Plan there must be a single plan and a single planning and reviewing process, chaired, by the LCPP.
- Consideration should be given to whether the criteria continue to be met for the child to remain the subject of a Child Protection Plan. Significant changes to the Care Plan should only be made following the Looked After Review.

Transfer Child Protection Conference

- Transfer Child Protection Conferences are required to be held within **15 working days** of a child subject to a Child Protection Plan moving to live in York on a permanent basis.

Purpose of Review Child Protection Conference

- To review the progress against the Child Protection Plan and agree whether a Child Protection Plan is needed.
- To consider whether the current plan continues to manage risk to the child and whether any other plan, for example Child in Need Plan could better support them.
    - Review the safety, health and development of the child against planned outcomes set out in the Child Protection Plan
    - Review each of the set objectives, and the outcomes of these, within the Child Protection Plan
    - Ensure that the child continues to be safeguarded from harm
    - Consider whether the Child Protection Plan should continue in place or should be changed.
- Unless otherwise specified, the same approach is to be taken as with Initial Child Protection Conferences in relation to:
    - Professional involvement
    - Provision of information and reports

Timescale of Review Child Protection Conference

- The first Child Protection Review Conference is to be held within **three months** of the Initial Child Protection Conference, and further reviews should be held at intervals

of **not more than six months**, for as long as the child remains the subject of a Child Protection Plan.

- A Review Child Protection Conference must always start with the background and reason for the existence of the Child Protection Plan.
- The child's wishes and feelings should be sought and considered during the reviewing process. The review requires as much preparation, commitment, and management as the Initial Child Protection Conference. Every Review should consider whether the child continues to be at risk of significant harm, and hence continues to require a Child Protection Plan. If not, then the child should no longer be the subject of a Child Protection Plan.
- The Conference Chair should ensure that evidence of progress is available and therefore all decision made including about threshold are evidence based.

Administration of Child Protection Plan

- The social worker must ensure that they formulate the detailed Child Protection Plan and ensure that it is signed by the family and agencies involved.
- Copies of the signed plan should be circulated to members within 5 working days of the first Core Group meeting.
- The Child Protection Plan should be clearly accessible on the child's record held by each agency.
- All agencies are responsible for the implementation of the Child Protection Plan.

Discontinuing the Child Protection Plan

- A child should no longer be the subject of a Child Protection Plan if:

- It is judged that the child is no longer continuing to, or is likely to, suffer significant harm and therefore no longer requires safeguarding by means of a Child Protection Plan
- The child and family have moved permanently to another local authority area. The receiving local authority should convene a Child Protection Conference within **15 working days** of being notified of the move. Only after this event may the original local authority discontinue its Child Protection Plan
- The child has reached 18 years of age (to end the Child Protection Plan, the local authority should have a review around the child's birthday and a transition plan made in advance)
- The child has died
- The child has permanently left the United Kingdom
- It would not normally be expected that a Plan would be discontinued at the first Review Conference. This is because it is likely to be too early to tell whether sufficient change has taken place and whether there is a sound basis on which to believe that this change will be maintained.

- Where it is decided to discontinue a Child Protection Plan, the Conference and the child/family should consider what continuing support services are necessary and make recommendations in respect of these.
- When a plan ends, the social worker and/or their manager should:
  - Notify, as a minimum, all agency representatives who were invited to attend the Initial Child Protection Conference that led to the plan.

Appendix 1 - Domestic Abuse

1.1 When domestic abuse is known, or believed, to be present, particular care must be taken in arranging Child Protection Conferences and other meetings. All staff should be aware of the safety of the child and the non-abusing parent, before, during and after a Conference.

1.2 The Conference should proceed on the basis that the victim and the perpetrator each have separate time within the meeting. It will be for the LCPP to decide, considering the views of the victim, whether any part of the Conference can proceed on the basis of both parties being present at the same time.

1.3 Consultation with and/or invitation to any specialist representative, for example, an Independent Domestic Abuse Advisor is highly recommended.

1.4 Consideration should be given as to whether it is in the interests of the child and non- abusing parent or carer to allow a parent or carer, who is a perpetrator of abuse, to attend the Conference.

1.5 In a situation of domestic abuse, the parent who is not the perpetrator of abuse must be seen alone by Conference members for at least part of the Conference. The parent/partner who is the perpetrator must also be given the opportunity to be seen alone.

1.6 If the perpetrator is to attend, safety planning must take place to ensure that the Conference does not provide an opportunity for further intimidation or abuse. It may be necessary to be selective about which Conference papers and information a perpetrator of abuse is given.

1.7 Discussion in the Conference should include safe family time arrangements for the child, bearing in mind that perpetrators of abuse may use this time with children to perpetrate further violence.

1.8 Any Child Protection Plan should take full account of domestic abuse along with all the other welfare and safety issues which apply. The Child Protection Plan should not rely on unrealistic expectations that an adult victim of abuse can control the behaviour of a perpetrator.

1.9 Partner Agencies have worked together to develop a multi-agency overarching City of York and North Yorkshire Multi-agency Information Sharing Protocol to create a positive culture of sharing information and facilitate more effective Data Sharing practices between Partner Agencies, with the aim of improving service delivery.

1.10 The Department for Education has produced guidance on information sharing for people who provide safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.

Appendix 2 – Pre-Birth Conference

2.1 A Pre-birth Conference is an Initial Child Protection Conference concerning an unborn child. It carries the same status and conveys the same purpose as an Initial Child Protection Conference.

2.2 A Pre-Birth Conference should be held where:

- A Pre-Birth Assessment gives rise to concerns that an unborn child is likely to suffer significant harm
- A child is to be born into a family or household that already has children who are subject of a Child Protection Plan
- An adult or child who poses a risk to children lives in the household or is known to be a regular visitor.

2.3 Other risk factors to consider are:

- A previous child has died or been removed from parent/s as a result of significant harm
- The impact of severe and enduring mental ill health, problematic or chaotic substance misuse and domestic abuse on the parents' ability to safeguard the child

- An expectant mother is under 13 years of age or, where the mother is under 16 years, and there are additional concerns regarding her ability to self-care and/or to care for the child
- A parent has previously fabricated or induced illness in a child
- Where there is a family history of female genital mutilation, honour-based violence, forced marriage or suspected child trafficking.

2.4 Further information about pre-birth assessment can be found in the CYSCP and NYSCP Safeguarding Unborn Babies – Pre-birth Guidance.

2.5 If it is decided that the unborn baby will be at risk of significant harm when born, a Child Protection Plan must be made. Any intention to seek a Court Order in respect of the baby at birth would form part of the Child Protection Plan.

2.6 The Plan must be explicit about the actions to be undertaken, and by whom, immediately following the baby's birth in order to ensure the baby's protection until the Review Conference. Where the plan is for the baby not to be cared for by its parents after its birth Children's Social Care should convene a separate pre-discharge planning meeting to detail the steps that need to be taken to ensure the infants safety.

2.7 The Pre-birth Conference must set a date for the Child Protection Review Conference.

2.8 Where a Pre-Birth Child Protection Conference is held and the decision is made that the baby should not be made the subject of a Child Protection Plan, but it is considered to be a Child in Need, the Conference should make recommendations in respect of support for the baby and family and develop an outline Child in Need Plan to be developed, implemented and driven in Child in Need meetings.

Birth Response Plan

2.9 The Birth Response Plan must include the following elements:

- Planned duration of hospital stay
- Who to notify when baby is born, including the Emergency Duty Team
- Family time arrangements for parents, extended family members and significant others
- If supervision is required who is the agreed supervisor
- Details of any pending legal processes
- A contingency plan, in the event that the Birth Response Plan is not followed

2.10 The Birth Response Plan should be developed with parents, unless to do would put the mother or baby at increased risk of harm.

2.11 Copies of the Birth Response Plan should be held by all agencies responsible for taking forward the Child Protection Plan including, the midwifery unit where it is agreed the baby will be delivered, the community midwife, the allocated social worker and the Children's Social Care Emergency Duty Team.

Review Conference following Pre-Birth Conference

2.12 A Child Protection Review Conference should be held within one month of the child's birth.

Appendix 3 - Core Groups

Purpose

- The Core Group should:

  - Meet **within 10 working days** from the Initial Child Protection Conference. Support for the family should begin immediately after the Initial Child Protection Conference. After this time, they should meet regularly, at a minimum once every six weeks, to monitor and record and actions against the Child Protection Plan and to make any necessary changes as circumstances change.

  - Develop the outline Child Protection Plan, and set out what needs to change, what outcomes are being sought and by when/who in order for the risk to the child to be managed and to ensure their needs are met.

  - Decide what steps need to be taken, and by whom, to complete any in-depth assessment to inform decisions about the child's safety and welfare.

  - Review the plan and the objectives at every meeting, identifying families' strengths and risk.

2.13 Membership of the Core Group should include the child's social worker, the child if appropriate, the family network, and professionals who will have direct contact with the family.

2.14 The LCPP who chaired the Conference will have oversight of the core group and should receive the minutes, they may attend as

needed to support and drive the plan.

2.15 Core Groups should be informed when any new referral is received for the child or for a member of their family. In some cases, a new referral may require the Core Group to reconvene to consider the information or may require the Child's Review Conference to be brought forward.

2.16 The child's social worker will record decisions and actions agreed at Core Group meetings as well as the written views of those who were not able to attend and follow up those actions. The Core Group workflow on the children's social care recording system (Mosaic) must be used to record Core group meeting activity. A record of each Core Group meeting should also be provided to core group members. If minutes were taken during the Core Group by another professional, they must be provided to the social worker for input onto the child's case record within 2 working days so that a record can be distributed within 5 working days.

2.17 Any disagreements will be discussed at the Core Group meeting and recorded in the minutes with reasons with outcomes and reflected appropriately in the written plan.

2.18 It is the responsibility of the Core Group to consider the length of time a child has been subject to a plan and to implement the contingency plan if there are concerns that the situation for the child has not changed.

There will be a final Core Group held 10 working days prior to the Review Child Protection Conference to allow agencies and family to share information around progress made and their proposed recommendations around planning for the next conferences.