



Minutes for All-Party Parliamentary Group on Child Contact Centres and Services 4 December 2018

Chris Leslie MP
Baroness Anne McIntosh of Pickering
Stephen Pound MP
Mike Kane MP
Lee Rowley MP

Co-Chair
Co-Chair
Officer
Officer
Officer

Secretariat

Richard Daniels r.daniels@naccc.org.uk

In attendance

Chris Leslie MP
The Earl of Listowel
Elizabeth Coe
Anne Dillon
Liz Walsh
Sharon Martin
Advone
Katie
Michael Lewkowicz
Baroness Hollins
Fynn McMahon
Richard Daniels, NACCC

Co-Chair
HoL
CEO NACCC
Vice-Chair NACCC
Editor Family Law
Cafcass
Family Justice Young People's Board
Family Justice Young People's Board
Families Need Fathers
Researcher
Office Chris Leslie MP
Secretariat

Apologies

Baroness Anne McIntosh of Pickering
Caroline Dinenage MP
David Drew MP
Jessica Morden MP
Emma Lewell-Buck MP
Kerry McCarthy MP
Angela Smith MP
Lord Wills
Alison Lamb, Chief Executive
Michelle Cuffe
Vicky West
Sir Mark Hedley
Lorna Rook
Dr Carole Caplan, Trustee
Simon Blain
Rob George
Frank Young

Citizens Advice Islington
Cuffe & Lacey Associates
Head of Service Adoption Bromley
NACCC Vice President
Hackney Council
NACCC
Private Wealth Group
Harcourt Chambers
Centre for Social Justice



Minutes of meeting

Chris Leslie MP opened the meeting and advised attendees that there were ongoing votes on Brexit.

Richard Daniels, Secretariat, reported back on actions to take forward from meeting in June. Invite wider NGO community: contacts have been made at a public affairs level with The Children's Society, Barnardo's, CAF, Centre for Social Justice and we are joined by Advone and Katie from the Family Justice Young People's Board today. Wera Hobhouse MP offered to table a 10 Minute Rule Bill on Child Contact Centres. Caroline Dinéage MP has written to Lucy Frazer QC MP to request a meeting to progress 'Out of Court Pathway' project, which she promoted in 2016 as the then MoJ minister. Chris Leslie MP has organised this meeting.

Chris Leslie MP raised the issue of standards in child contact. Anne Dillon talked around the judicial protocol and that courts should not refer any family to a Child Contact Centre which is not accredited. Highlighted that the same standards should apply in private and public law. LAs have a duty of care and standards.

Discussion on Baroness McIntosh's PMB Child Contact Centre Accreditation. Chris Leslie MP raise concern around voluntary groups response and briefing against the Bill and suggested they had not understood the purpose of the Bill, particularly Barnardo's. Highlighted the need to think about the politics of this as we progress with the Bill. Anne Dillon agreed there was the need for a broader coalition of support from NGOs.

Chris Leslie MP asked for an update on previous issues including GDPR, succession planning for volunteer base and the closure of other centres.

Elizabeth Coe updated the APPG. There are currently 340 centres (slight decrease) and we continue to have an aging volunteer base and difficulty in recruiting younger volunteers. There are challenges in recruiting coordinators as no remuneration (which we believe there should be for such a role). GDPR – Cafcass require information and important to meet in information age, issues were raised at the AGM.

Lord Listowel asked how the funding was progressing. Elizabeth Coe: £190,000 MoJ and £160,000 membership fees, for this funding we have 2 FT social workers, 20 assessors, proper HR procedures, trained volunteers fit for purposes and ongoing supervision. Anne Dillon highlighted our Independent Standards Panel headed up by Sir Mark Hedley DL.

Katie (FJYPB) advised the APPG that the FJYPB had reviewed two Contact Centres from a child's point of view and made practical recommendations. Advone (FJYPB) advised it was a resource offered to centres. Katie and Advone talked about the FJYPB top 10 tips, which the APPG agreed to circulate, and their annual conference including 'in my shoes' stories. They highlighted the importance of the child's voice and that it should not get lost in decision-making (at a policy or personal level). Advone highlighted that diversity should be inclusive of all users.

Lord Listowel asked the FJYPB about their review of Contact Centres and if there was much outside space? Katie said it was a good question and generally yes but dependent on



location and weather. Advone suggested that some toys were inappropriate for the age range.

Liz Walsh said once trust is built up Contact Centres can be used as drop off points. Sharon Martin underlined the importance of moving on in contact. Elizabeth Coe talked about how to move on and parenting plans. Katie said centres can have drop off points and Advone considered there needs to be a level of uncomfortableness, so people move on.

Lord Listowel asked how mental health issues are identified? Elizabeth Coe talked about current arrangements and requirements for funding for mental health awareness training for volunteers.

Sharon Martin highlighted how much NACCC achieve on their budget e.g. Northern Ireland received £28,000 per centre. Michael Lewkowicz agreed a lot is achieved on a very limited funding base. Michael went on to highlight the damage of any delay in contact for fathers – “delay is the enemy of the child”. There was general agreement on this point.

Decisions and actions to take forward

- Progress 10 Minute Rule Bill in Commons PMB on Child Contact Centres (Accreditation) Secretariat
- ‘Out of Court Pathway’ Secretariat
- Circulate FJYPB top 10 tips Secretariat
- Will agree date of next meeting and AGM in January Secretariat & Chris Leslie