



Pan Ayrshire Protocol for conducting an Initial or Significant Case Review

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Version log

Review

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Following the publication in March 2015 of the Scottish Government's revised National Guidance for Child Protection Committees Conducting a Significant Case Review, (See link below) the Chairs of the three Ayrshire Child Protection Committees collectively decided that there should be a common approach across the three Ayrshire Child Protection Committee (CPC) areas for handling Initial Case Reviews (ICRs) and Significant Case Reviews (SCRs) which was consistent with national guidance. The purpose of this protocol is to provide additional local direction for multi-agency practitioners on conducting ICRs/SCRs, to augment that already provided in the national guidance and to assist a systematic and transparent approach to undertaking Initial and/or Significant Case Reviews within Ayrshire.

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0047/00474570.pdf>

2. CONTEXT

- 2.1 A Significant Case Review is a multi-agency process for establishing the facts of, and learning lessons from, a situation where a child has died or has not died but has sustained significant harm or risk of significant harm. Significant Case Reviews should be seen in the context of a culture of continuous improvement and should focus on learning and reflection on day-to-day practices, and the systems within which those practices operate. All stages of the ICR/SCR process will be progressed by partners as swiftly as possible to prevent unnecessary anxiety and stress to those practitioners involved in such cases. Wherever possible, staff should be involved in reviews and should get feedback when the review is finished.
- 2.2 In addition to the ICR/SCR process, the CPC is committed to reflecting on good and effective practice. It regularly considers learning from work which has had a positive impact and professionals are encouraged to highlight positive practice which can be reviewed to enable learning and sharing.

3. OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The overarching objectives of a Significant Case Review are to:
- Establish whether there are lessons to be learned about how better to protect children and young people, and help ensure they get the help they need when they need it in the future;
 - Learn and improve services as well as recognise good practice;
 - If and when appropriate, make recommendations for action (albeit that immediate action to improve service or professional shortcomings need not await the outcome of a formal review);

- Consider how any findings, recommended actions and learning will be implemented;
- Address the requirement to be accountable, both at the level of the agency/agencies and the occupational groups involved;
- Increase public confidence in public services, providing a level of assurance about how those services acted in relation to a significant case about a child; and
- Identify national implications (where appropriate) including good practice.

3.2 The national guidance supports the achievement of these objectives by helping those responsible for reviews to:

- Undertake them at a level which is necessary, reasonable and proportionate;
- Adopt a consistent, transparent and structured approach;
- Identify the skills, experience and knowledge that are needed for the review process and consider how these might be obtained;
- Address the needs of the many different people and agencies who may have a legitimate interest in the process and its outcome; and
- Take account of the evidence base.

3.3 The national guidance also sets out:

- The criteria for identifying whether a case is significant;
- The procedure for undertaking an initial case review (ICR);
- The process for conducting a significant case review including reporting mechanisms and dissemination of learning; and
- Tools to support the process of conducting an ICR and an SCR.

4. CRITERIA FOR ESTABLISHING WHETHER A CASE IS SIGNIFICANT

4.1 Firstly, a child is generally a person under the age of 18. (See National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland, 2014, (Part One) for more detail).

4.2 Where a notification for an initial case review for a young person aged 16-17 years, is made to the CPC, the Chair of the CPC should contact the Chair of the local Adult Protection Committee to discuss the notification and agree how the ICR notification will proceed.

4.3 Where a notification for an initial case review for a young person aged between 18 and 25 years who is eligible for receipt of aftercare or continuing care from the local authority is made to the Adult Protection Committee (APC), the Chair of the APC should contact the Chair of the local Child Protection Committee to discuss the notification and agree how the ICR will proceed.

4.4 A significant case need not be about just one significant incident. In some cases, for example, neglect, concerns may be cumulative.

4.5 **Criteria**

When a child dies and the incident or accumulation of incidents (a case) gives rise to significant/serious concerns about professional and/or service involvement or lack of involvement, and one or more of the following apply:

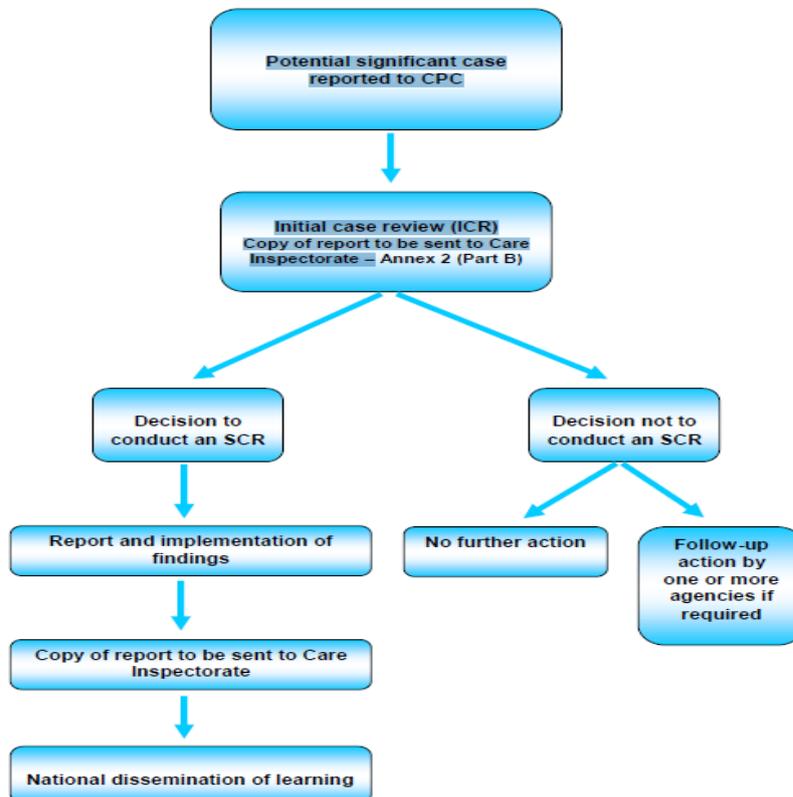
- *Abuse or neglect is known or suspected to be a factor in the child's death;*
- *The child is on, or has been on, the Child Protection Register (CPR) or a sibling is or was on the CPR. This is regardless of whether or not abuse or neglect is known or suspected to be a factor in the child's death unless it is absolutely clear to the Child Protection Committee that the child having been on the CPR has no bearing on the case;*
- *The death is by suicide or accidental death;*
- *The death is by alleged murder, culpable homicide, reckless conduct, or act of violence;*
- *At the time of their death the child was looked after by, or was receiving aftercare or continuing care from, the local authority,*

- 4.6 ***When a child has not died but has sustained **significant** harm or risk of significant harm as defined in the National Guidance for Child Protection Scotland, and in addition to this, the incident or accumulation of incidents (a case) gives rise to serious concerns about professional and/or service involvement or lack of involvement, and the relevant Child Protection Committee determines that there may be learning to be gained through conducting a Significant Case Review.***

(National Guidance for Child Protection Committees -
Conducting a Significant Case Review, 2015)

5. **THE PURPOSE OF AN INITIAL CASE REVIEW (ICR)**

- 5.1 The stage before moving to a Significant Case Review involves the Initial Case Review process which is carried out to enable a decision to be made about whether there is a need to hold a Significant Case Review. This ICR process allows any agency to refer a potential "significant case" to their local Child Protection Committee (CPC), where a professional considers the criteria for an SCR has been met. The ICR process is designed to capture all relevant information across agencies/services involved with the child, with a view to allowing the CPC or a mandated Panel thereof to make an informed decision on whether to progress to an SCR or not. The flow chart below provides a basic outline of the ICR/SCR process.



6. POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANT CASE REPORTED

- 6.1 Any agency can ask for a case to be considered for review by a Child Protection Committee (CPC). Concerns raised by families should be addressed through relevant agencies' normal complaints procedures, and will not be considered for an ICR/SCR within this protocol. When considering whether to ask for a case to be reviewed, agencies should consider if the circumstances of the case appear to meet the nationally agreed criteria, set out above. The professional seeking a review should, consult with their respective Manager/Head of Service and with their agreement, **complete the Initial Case Review Notification Form (Annex 1) and send it electronically by e-mail to the CPC Chair and Lead Officer as soon as possible and in any case within 7 working days from the date of the incident leading to the concern or the date when cumulative concerns are recognised as being potentially significant.**
- 6.2 It is recommended that contact be made with the CPC Lead Officer to provide an alert of the impending submission of an ICR notification.
- 6.3 The ICR Notification form should include the following information:
- A statement about the current position of the child, their details and, if they are alive, what actions have been or will be taken on their behalf;
 - A brief description of the case and the basis for referral;
 - Any other formal proceedings underway;
 - A summary of agency/professional involvement; and
 - Lead contacts for each agency and those involved with the child.

- 6.4 Due to the need to proceed swiftly, this form must be submitted within the timescales specified above, **even if all the information is not available**.

7. RECEIPT OF ICR NOTIFICATION

- 7.1 On receipt of the Initial Case Review Notification Form (Annex 1) the Lead Officer will liaise with the Chair of the CPC (Note: Reference to the Chair in this Protocol also means, in their absence, the Vice-Chair(s) of the CPC). The Chair will then decide which members of the CPC/partners should make up the CPC's ICR/SCR Panel and the Lead Officer will circulate the **Initial Case Review Agency Report template** (Annex 2) to Heads of Service (or equivalent) for all partner agencies or services involved with the child, for completion. Once completed, the form and associated chronology **must be returned electronically by email to the Lead Officer as soon as possible and in any case no longer than 14 calendar days from the date the Initial Case Review Agency report was requested.**
- 7.2 Note: In exceptional circumstances the foregoing timescales in relation to the submission of the Initial Case Review Notification and Initial Case Review Agency Report may be re-visited if agencies have a legitimate reason as to why they cannot comply but in all such cases the Lead Officer of the Child Protection Committee must be made aware as soon as possible.
- 7.3 On receipt of a notification requesting a case review the CPC Chair is to provide an update to the Chief Officers' Group.

8. ICR AGENCY REPORT

- 8.1 Practitioners gathering information to complete their Initial Case Review Agency report should include the following:

- Agency specific details known about the child and family;
- Any other significant adults or children involved;
- A summary of involvement including background;
- An outline of known key issues;
- Any identified elements of emerging practice;
- Any identified areas for improvement;
- The link to APC Chairs relative to age determination should also reference Adverse Event Reporting by NHS A&A
- A detailed chronology of involvement with the child/family (See Summarised Guidance for more details);
- Any particular sensitivities (for example, from the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), Police, Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) or any other agency, about cases where there are ongoing, or likely to be, criminal proceedings, Fatal Accident Inquiry (FAI), Sudden Unexpected Death in Infancy Review (SUDI), or disciplinary proceedings - whether they be actual, pending or being considered).

8.2 It is important that the Chair of the CPC establishes from the outset whether or not there are linked investigations or processes, maintains a close dialogue with those responsible for the linked investigations/processes and takes these linked investigations/processes into consideration at every stage of the ICR/SCR process.

8.3 The purpose of this is to:

- avoid witness contamination or otherwise interfere with evidence gathering;
- avoid duplicate information being collected;
- establish agreement in relation to the processes and timescales that can be applied to actions required under this guidance;
- be sensitive to the involvement of key personnel in a range of processes, and the potential implications for the SCR;
- secure cooperation from all agencies in relation to the release and sharing of information;
- decide whether a parallel process should mean that an ICR/SCR should be adjourned or not.

8.4 Criminal investigations always have primacy and some of the other processes such as those noted above, have a statutory basis. In such circumstances contact must be made by the CPC Chair/Lead Officer with the relevant Procurator Fiscal to seek clarity as to whether a parallel SCR process will be permitted or not. In certain cases it may be prudent to postpone an ICR/SCR. This is a decision for the Chair of the CPC following consultation with COPFS.

8.5 Those referring significant cases for consideration for review should not delay in referring because of an ongoing investigation. It is critical that when an agency becomes aware a CPC is considering, or undertaking, any level of review of a case under this guidance, that the agency notifies the Chair of the CPC of any type of investigation or review being conducted by their agency or any other.

8.6 Once an ICR/SCR is underway, if any agency requires to take remedial or disciplinary action in relation to the case, this must be done by prior consultation with the ICR/SCR Panel Chair. In addition, the CPC Lead Officer must be kept informed of significant changes to the family's circumstances, given regular updates on the wellbeing of the child and advised of progress with respect to any criminal proceedings.

9. CONSIDERATION OF ICR INFORMATION

9.1 In conducting ICRs and SCR, CPCs will have in place an ICR/SCR Panel, with representation at senior level of the statutory agencies, which will operate on behalf of the CPC. Other services/agencies may be involved as required. The Panel will be chaired by the Chair (or Vice Chair) of the CPC and will be responsible for determining the approach to be taken to an ICR / SCR, including the need to appoint an independent review officer. The Panel will also be responsible for notifying the CPC of arrangements being made to

undertake an ICR / SCR, and for reporting findings / recommendations to the CPC and the respective Chief Officers' Group.

10. ICR PANEL MEETING TO CONSIDER ICR INFORMATION

10.1 Within 28 days from the date of the ICR Notification being received, the ICR Panel of the CPC will convene, at a date, time and location set by the CPC Chair, to consider the multi-agency information provided (collated by the Lead Officer), including each agency's/services' report, collated chronology and timeline with a view to:

- Establishing if further information is required to enable a recommendation – set timescale for completion and supplementary meeting; or
- Agreeing there is sufficient information available to enable a recommendation to progress to an SCR or not (recording rationale).

10.2 In coming to a decision at the meeting, the ICR Panel should consider the following:

- An SCR should only be undertaken when the criteria are met; where there is potential for significant multi-agency learning; and where an SCR is in the public interest and in the best interests of children and young people and their family. Consideration will also be given to whether the review should be internal or external. If internal, appointment of a Lead Reviewer and members of the Review Team will be required. If external, it will be necessary to appoint a Lead Reviewer(s), set terms of reference and in either case, set timescales for any interim progress reports/meetings and delivery date of the final report. In addition, the Panel will assess the need for any actions which may be necessary in the interim. If there is no clear consensus within the CPC Panel as to whether or not to progress to an SCR, the final decision rests with the Chair of the ICR Panel.
- The ICR Panel may decide that no SCR is needed but follow-up action by one or more agencies is required. This may be the case if, for example, there has been a misunderstanding of guidance, or if local protocols need to be reinforced. The ICR Panel may want to draw appropriate guidance to staff's attention or review training or protocols on a particular theme. They may also decide to initiate local action to rectify an immediate issue or to undertake single agency action. Follow-up action should be agreed and scheduled into the CPC's future work programme.
- Where the ICR Panel is satisfied there are no concerns and there is no scope for significant multi-agency learning or it is clear that appropriate action has already been taken they may decide to take no further action.

11. RATIFICATION OF DECISION

- 11.1 Once the ICR Panel has decided the outcome of the ICR, the Child Protection Committee will be notified of the decision and a note will be made at Part B of the ICR Report of any discussions and decisions made, along with the reasons. The outcome will then be communicated to the Chief Officers' Group for ratification of the decisions made. Again, a note of any comments/discussions made by Chief Officers will be recorded along with any decisions made, on the ICR Report (Annex 3).

12. WHEN A SIGNIFICANT CASE REVIEW (SCR) IS NECESSARY

Step 1- Consideration of how the SCR will be undertaken, whether it is to be an internal or external review.

- 12.1 The SCR panel will consider if it is necessary to commission an external review, factors which may influence this decision are;

- There are likely to be national as well as local recommendations;
- Local recommendations are likely to be multi-agency rather than for a single agency;
- The case is already high profile, or is potentially likely to attract significant media attention;
- Councillors/ MSPs/MPs have voiced their concerns about services locally;
- The CPC is undertaking multiple reviews, which is impacting on the availability of local resources;
- and/or the child's family/carers or significant adults may have already have expressed concerns about the actions of the agencies.

- 12.2 Where an external organisation or individual is commissioned to undertake/lead an SCR it shall continue to be owned by the CPC.

12.3 Following the decision to conduct an internal SCR

Step 2- Identification of the Review Team

- 12.4 The SCR panel will identify the SCR team and the best person to be the Lead Reviewer (internal or external). This will be a multiagency team from the key agencies and where possible will not involve anyone who was substantially involved in the situation directly.

- 12.5 The review team members should have the skills to:

- Gather relevant evidence from a wide variety of sources and be prepared to negotiate if information is not forthcoming;
- Have skills of investigation;
- Test the validity of the evidence and sift the evidence;
- Interpret information from a wide variety of sources;
- Make sound judgements on information collected;

- Analyse the root cause of factors that contributed to the significant case;
- Liaise with other bodies and establish a good working relationship;
- Demonstrate sensitivity to national and local level issues; and
- Appreciate the need for clarity about the difference of remit and task of an SCR as opposed to other ongoing proceedings relating to that case such as a criminal investigation.

12.6 Each agency that has an employee, or employees, on the review team shall ensure that the person has enough time to carry out the SCR tasks assigned to them. Each agency is responsible for ensuring that relevant staff are informed of the SCR review team having authority to undertake whatever tasks are necessary to fulfil the remit set by the SCR Panel and to meet the objectives of an SCR. Any difficulty in relation to these matters shall be reported to the SCR Panel by the SCR Lead Reviewer(s).

Step 3 Developing the Remit- the Terms of Reference (TOR)

12.7 The SCR must have a clear and specified remit to ensure clarity of purpose and assist those contributing to the review. The TOR will be drafted and agreed by the SCR Panel and the SCR Lead Reviewer(s). The TOR will clearly set out

- Aim of the SCR
- Circumstances
- Anticipated outcomes
- Objectives
- Methodology
 - Review process
 - Independence (Within the review team or external ‘critical friend’/ reflective support)
 - Family involvement (identifying who will be the key family link, approach to be taken to engaging and involving the family)
 - Staff involvement (presumption that key staff will be engaged in the review)
- Timescales
- Commissioning and reporting
- Dissemination of learning
- Publication
- Media interest

Step 4 Setting the work plan

12.8 Within 5 working days of the first meeting of the SCR Panel, the CPC Lead Officer shall convene a meeting of the Review Team. The purpose of this is to establish a detailed plan on how the SCR tool/methodology, approved by the SCR Panel, will be used to conduct the Review.

12.9 Should delays in the process begin to emerge, the SCR Lead Reviewer(s) must immediately report these to the CPC chair.

13. KEY FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED IN CONDUCTING THE REVIEW

- The remit and time period of the review and timescales for receipt of the interim and the final report;
- The extent to which the Lead Reviewer(s) have access to the SCR Panel for ongoing discussion;
- Interim reporting arrangements - how often, in what format and to whom should interim updates be sent and received;
- Who on the SCR Panel has delegated responsibility to be the point of contact should the findings of the SCR be used as evidence in civil proceedings that might arise out of a case;
- Agreed approach to deal with media enquiries;
- Who will make the links with relevant interests outside the main statutory agencies;
- The SCR panel will identify who the key contacts are for the Review Team across all the involved agencies. These key contacts will advise on, and broker access to, relevant practitioners and information, provide any agency information that may be relevant (protocols/guidance) and generally act as a liaison point;
- The work undertaken by SCR team members is on behalf of CPC. The reports and findings of the review should not be shared without the agreement of the chair of CPC.
- Whether there are likely to be issues of access to case records and how that will be addressed;
- Whether the review team need to conduct interviews or whether it is sufficient for them to look at the files to establish the facts of the case;
- Which agencies and professionals should contribute to the review, and who else should be asked to submit a report or otherwise contribute. This will be based on the chronology of who has been involved with the child and family/carers;
- What briefing will be provided for contributors, and by whom. A briefing will normally be an oral discussion about the purpose of the Review. SCR panels will need to consider whether contributors should receive information about the areas to be covered in advance of the interview and whether the files should be available to them for reference;
- What arrangements are in place for feedback to the contributors, including the child and their family/carers, and what mechanism will be used to enable contributors to check the accuracy of what is recorded as it is drafted up for the interim and/or final reports.
- If the SCR panel uncovers evidence of criminal acts or civil negligence unrelated to the case under review, the SCR Lead Reviewer(s) will bring this to the immediate attention of the chair of the CPC.
- Establishing a link with the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) to discuss the speed and progress of the SCR in relation to parallel proceedings.

14. INVOLVEMENT OF THE FAMILY

- 14.1 In the case of a decision to proceed to an SCR, it is the responsibility of the SCR panel to consider the best method for advising the child and family of their intention to conduct a SCR and ensure that the child and/or family/carers are informed of CPC's intentions. The terms of reference will set out any specific details/expectations of the SCR team in relation to involvement of family members. The SCR team will consider
- who will be the liaison person for the child (if alive), and/or for their family/carers;
 - how the family members will be invited to contribute to the review;
 - the need to ensure that there is a clarity of purpose. It is essential that the appointed liaison ensures that the family members have a clear understanding of the review process and an agreed understanding of the purpose of their involvement is reached;
 - the level of family involvement (this should be discussed and negotiated with the family);
 - who the SCR team consider to be the family members; and
 - the ongoing care and protection of the child/ren should continue to be monitored with key/significant changes in the family's circumstances being shared appropriately.

15. CONSIDERATION OF A 'CRITICAL FRIEND'

- 15.1 The Lead Reviewer(s) in consultation with the CPC Chair will consider if it would be beneficial to appoint a 'critical friend'. This could be to assist in a particular area, for example, a complex medical process/analysis of assessment. Or the SCR Lead Reviewer(s) could consider the views of a 'critical friend' in reviewing the draft report to enable an independent perspective on the work of the review and its findings. Support in identifying a 'critical friend' can be sought from *WithScotland* to access members of their community of expertise.

16. PREPARING THE REPORT

- 16.1 The Lead Reviewer(s) is/are responsible for drafting the **Significant Case Review Report** (see Annex 4 for template) to be presented to the SCR panel. This shall be compiled from the records made by the members of the SCR team. The content, including the findings and any recommendations, should be agreed by all members of the SCR team. Should there be disagreement, this shall be noted in the report. Ultimate responsibility for the content of the report going to the SCR panel rests with the SCR Lead Reviewer(s).

17. STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

- 17.1 It is important that there is a degree of consistency in the structure and content of SCR reports - although this will depend on the methodology used - to make it easier for people to identify and use the findings, and for read-across to other reports to be made. The report should, therefore, include where possible the areas outlined in National Guidance Exemplar SCR Report (**Annex 4**).

17.2 The report compiled by the SCR team should contain the following details;

- An introduction – summarise the circumstances that led to the review, state the remit and a list of contributors to the review suitably anonymised;
- Separate executive summary and list of recommendations (and who the recommendations are for);
- A chronology of agency/professional involvement;
- The extent of family/carers' involvement;
- Good practice that has been identified by the review;
- Areas for practice development identified by the review;
- Analysis; and
- Findings/recommendations.

17.3 Annex 4 sets out an exemplar from the National Guidance for Child Protection Committees Conducting a Significant Case Review (March 2015). This should be viewed as guidance, outlining the key areas to be covered but can be amended to take account of local requirements.

18. MAKING FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS

18.1 Findings or recommendations for actions identified within a significant case review have to be clearly linked to the analysis and the learning identified from the review. The findings/ recommendations should address the 'whys' identified as part of the review. Equally, the events within a significant case review need to be considered within the wider context of service delivery and practice. Therefore if an issue is identified with the quality of assessment, consideration needs to be given as to whether this is part of a wider issue around assessment skills and training or whether this was a single incident that perhaps has more implications for management and supervision.

18.2 The findings/ recommendations should be few in number, focused, specific and capable of being implemented. It would also be helpful to identify who these are aimed at and any resource implications. CPCs recognise that the best learning from significant case reviews may come from the process of carrying out the review.

19. EXTERNAL SCR

19.1 When commissioning a Lead Reviewer(s) and or Review Team the CPC must: -

- Confirm the remit is clear and deliverable;
- Establish clear reporting lines and agree handling of the review itself and the report;
- Identify milestones and agree the various elements of the process;
- Consider whether indemnity cover is required;
- Provide appropriate administrative support;
- Agree the method for obtaining additional resources if it becomes clear that these are necessary;
- Confirm if issues arise that need urgent action, the Chair of the CPC (and agencies) will be advised;

- Consider requirement for external reviewers to be disclosure checked;
- Establish a named contact person within the team;
- How the contract will allow the CPC to reserve the right to proof-read the final draft to comment and amend factual errors;
- Clarify arrangements between the CPC, as the commissioner and owner of the SCR report, and the review team for communicating with the media regarding the review, and at what stage(s) of the SCR process.

20. FINAL STEPS

20.1 Following the completion of the review and the submission of the report to the SCR panel, there a number of issues which each CPC must consider, these include:

• Action/ Improvement Plan

On behalf of the CPC, it is the responsibility of the SCR panel, to devise the action/improvement plan. The action plan should be developed under the direction of the Chair of the CPC and agreed by the full membership of the CPC in response to the SCR and its recommendations. The Action plan should reflect the required activity to achieve the recommendations and be owned by all the relevant agencies. Mechanisms to review the outcomes and impacts of such actions should be agreed and formally built into the CPC action plan. The plan then needs to be endorsed by the Chief Officers' Group.

• The role of the Chief Officers

Each CPC works on behalf of its respective Chief Officers' Group, which comprises of the Chief Executive of the Local Authority area, the Divisional Commander of Police Scotland and the Chief Executive of NHS Ayrshire and Arran. In exercising their functions as Chief Officers, as defined in *National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland*,¹ it is the Chief Officers who will 'sign-off' the report.

The report shall be presented to the Chief Officers by the Chair of the CPC on behalf of the SCR Panel.

Having considered the report, the Chief Officers' Group shall issue any direction or instruction pertaining to the report that they believe necessary and, in particular, indicate:

- their views on how actions to address areas for improvement are incorporated and implemented within and across relevant agencies and their staff,
- having taken account of the proposals presented by the SCR panel, their wishes, in relation to dissemination of the report.

• Dissemination

The circumstances of every case are different and the communication strategy for dissemination of the report and/or its findings and recommendations will

¹ *National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland, 2014* - <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00450733.pdf>

differ. For each individual SCR, the CPC – in conjunction with the Chief Officers – should have a dissemination strategy that best serves the public interest and the purpose of improving service delivery. Further detail on dissemination and publication of the report or an executive summary thereof can be found in the National Guidance on Conducting an SCR 2015.

21. ADMINISTRATION

- 21.1 Each CPC should maintain a register of all cases referred to it which are potentially significant cases. This allows for evidencing the decisions made; monitoring the progress of the reviews; monitoring and reviewing the implementation of recommendations; and identifying contextual trends (such as prevalence of substance misuse).
- 21.2 A written record of the decision(s) contained in **Part B of ICR Report** (Annex 3) should be sent to all agencies directly involved with the child and recorded in the child's case files and the case files of relevant adults. Where there are on-going criminal proceedings connected with the case, consultation with the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) will be required in advance of any notification being made to the child/family/carers of the decision to proceed to a SCR.

22. CARE INSPECTORATE NOTIFICATION

- 22.1 A notification should be sent to the Care Inspectorate, using Part B of the ICR Report (Annex 3) and, if appropriate, for parallel processes to other relevant parties (for example, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service). The primary role for the Care Inspectorate is to support continual improvement in the quality of services for children and young people, including child protection services. The Care Inspectorate aims to further improvement by:-
- (a) seeking information about all Initial Case Reviews (ICRs) carried out by CPCs to understand the rationale for proceeding or not proceeding to an SCR
 - (b) acting as a central collation point for all SCRs completed across Scotland at the point at which they are concluded
 - (c) reviewing the effectiveness of the processes for conducting each SCR and reporting informally to individual COGs and CPCs on good practice and areas of improvement
 - (d) conducting a biennial review of all SCRs completed in Scotland, and, reporting nationally on the key learning points for the benefit of relevant services across Scotland and the Scottish Government

23. CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

- 23.1 Cases being considered for review under this guidance are subject to strict

confidentiality guidelines. Government Protective Marking should be used along with appropriate use of secure storage arrangements, transmission mediums and email facilities when communicating sensitive personal data about a child or their family. During the process of a review, it is important that all investigation is kept confidential until the conclusion of the process and an agreement is reached by the ICR/SCR Panel about what information should be shared with others and in what way. The primary purpose of case reviews is to identify learning and this can only be achieved when those involved are able to reflect on practice within a culture of openness, trust and support. This culture supports the concept of responsible accountability.

24. SUPPORTS FOR THE TEAM AROUND THE CHILD

- 24.1 The need for an early response to events and providing an opportunity for practitioners to come together and be advised of action being taken should be accommodated where possible. Early and effective communication regarding the progress of the review is crucial and appropriate steps should be put in place to advise practitioners, who have supported the child, that an ICR/SCR will be undertaken along with relevant updates, as the review progresses. Provision of information from direct line managers can be the most meaningful support for staff and should be actively encouraged. Managers will require to be responsive to the needs and requests made by their staff, which will help to manage/reduce levels of distress.
- 24.2 The ICR/SCR Panel will be responsible for ensuring that each agency has in place appropriate support mechanisms for staff members who have been involved in or affected by the significant case. Where appropriate a multi agency approach to this support will be considered. Referral to the NHS Staff Care Team can be on an individual or group basis (subject to approval by the Associate Director of Nursing).
- 24.3 The work plan of the ICR/SCR will set out how practitioners will be involved in the process and what feedback mechanisms will be put in place to advise them of the progress of the review at key stages.

25. MEDIA STRATEGY

- 25.1 Significant Case Reviews frequently attract the attention of the media and CPC Chairs, in conjunction with the Chief Officers' Group, will wish to develop a proactive media strategy, and agree a single point of contact to ensure clarity of communication in respect to all media enquiries.
- 25.2 A Pan Ayrshire CPC Joint Media Protocol (Annex 6) has been developed for use across Ayrshire and provides clarity on the processes to be undertaken when engaging with the media.

APPENDIX 1 FLOWCHART FOR SIGNIFICANT CASE REVIEWS

