

Version Control			
Version number	Author	Date	Changes
V1.0	Kay Fletcher	24 <sup>th</sup> March 2020	Approved and circulated to staff

**Initial practice guidance for holding CP Conferences and LAC ROA during COVID 19 period.**

**Planning – week beginning 23 March**

During this period CP Chairs and IROs will take steps to remotely chair as many conferences and reviews as possible and will be largely home based. This practice started from 23 March.

The aim is to continue to provide oversight to planning for children subject to Child Protection plans and Care plans for children in care, whilst reducing the amount of face to face contact and any risk of transmission of the virus. This will mean that some normal expectations of the review process are not fully met.

**Managing virtual meetings for Child Protection and LAC**

Efforts to utilise a range of ICT solutions will be used to promote virtual meetings.

Partner agencies will be invited to contribute by Skype. Business support staff are currently converting all planned meetings into Skype meetings so that professionals and family members can be invited to participate.

If any agency has difficulty implementing these arrangements, contact should be made with the conference clerk who is sending out invites. Agencies are requested to continue to present their reports in preparation for the meeting as normal to provide the background information to the progress of the plan.

Conferences will be as succinct and short as possible.

**Involving parents**

All parents are being invited to join the meeting via Skype where technology is in place. The IRO will contact the parent before the meeting to agree how best to share their views including the arrangements for use of Skype. The IRO will update parents after the meeting by phone if they have been unable or unwilling to attend the meeting.

**The IRO will be responsible for ensuring the family views are shared and considered within the meeting.**

**Involving young people**

The Children's rights service has currently been suspended so that these staff can support other key front-line contact with young people.

Where age appropriate the IRO will decide how to gather the views of some young people or where this is not currently appropriate. The IRO will be responsible for sharing the decision for the participation of the young person with other participants in the meeting and this will be captured in the record of the meeting.

**Where the views of the young person are known the IRO will be responsible for ensuring that their views are shared and considered within the meeting.**

### **Keeping records**

The Case Conference Clerk will dial into the meeting and take a record being careful to capture any reason why the views of the young person and or parents have not been available. All participants and the family will have a copy of the agreed plan within 5 working days of the meeting. A wall chart will not be currently available

If our capacity to take a record of the meeting be reduced we may make a decision to record the meeting using Skype facilities.

### **Cancellation**

Any decision to cancel a case conference or LAC review will need to be agreed with the Safeguarding Service Manager with a clear rationale recorded on the child's record.

For a situation where the wider conference and LAC arrangements are changed due to changing capacity or service priorities this will be agreed at Assistant Director level and communicated as an update to this guidance.

### **How we are reviewing arrangements**

These arrangements are being kept under careful review and plans may be introduced to reduce and prioritise meetings if IRO capacity is reduced or at some point in the future so that IRO capacity can be diverted into front line in response to changing business continuity priorities.

Daily meetings are being held to review capacity and priorities so that any necessary changes to these arrangements can be made.

23 March 2020