**11.1 Pre-birth 'Good Practice Steps'**

In a High Court judgment (Nottingham City Council v LW & Ors [2016] EWHC 11(Fam) (19 February 2016)) Keehan J set out five points of basic and fundamental good practice steps with respect to public law proceedings regarding pre-birth and newly born children and particularly where Children's Services are aware at a relatively early stage of the pregnancy.

In respect of Assessment, these were:

* A risk assessment of the parent(s) should 'commence immediately upon the social workers being made aware of the mother's pregnancy';
* Any Assessment should be completed at least 4 weeks before the mother's expected delivery date;
* The Assessment should be updated to take into account relevant events pre - and post delivery where these events could affect an initial conclusion in respect of risk and care planning of the child;
* The Assessment should be disclosed upon initial completion to the parents and, if instructed, to their solicitor to give them the opportunity to challenge the Care Plan and risk assessment

**3. What Should a Chronology Include?**

A high quality chronology involves professional judgement and should be:

* Succinct - (reports of significant events or incidents not every contact);
* Simple in format;
* Informative - the information provided should assist with the decision making process.

The level of detail required in a chronology may vary and is always dependent on professional judgement. However the following should always be considered for inclusion:

* Births of significant persons;
* Deaths of significant persons;
* Education, training and employment details;
* Referrals to Children’s Services,and outcome;
* Cases opened and closed to Children's Services / Early Help;
* Strategy discussions;
* S47 enquiries;
* Child Protection Conferences;
* Child absconded or missing from home or care of a local authority;
* Child enters the care of a local authority;
* Child leaves the care of a local authority;
* House moves;
* Persons moving in and out of the household;
* Details of new partners;
* Significant incidences, such as arrest and anti social behaviour;
* Significant assessments by any professional agency (e.g. SEN);
* Significant referrals to key partner agencies (e.g. youth inclusion services);
* Significant police reports;
* Incidences of reported domestic abuse;
* Schools attended;
* Changes of school;
* School inclusion issues;
* School attendance issues;
* Changes in social worker / significant health professionals;
* A&E / Walk in centre / hospital attendances / admissions;
* Mental health issues;
* Contact with drug and alcohol services;
* Other significant health issues.

There may be a need for specific chronologies to highlight patterns in relation to a particular concern e.g. in respect of missing episodes in relation to potential Sexual Exploitation; health appointments/attendances where there are concerns about medical neglect or Fabricated Illness.