**Briefing 6: The Safeguarding and Review Service (formerly IRO Service)**

The Safeguarding and Review Service is situated within the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit and is accountable to the Head of Safeguarding.

The core functions of the service are as follows:

* Chairing child protection conferences and contributing to the risk management of child protection cases and
* Reviewing plans for children in care and monitoring the Local Authority in respect of its corporate parenting responsibilities

To complete these functions, the service has recently been reviewed and work is now allocated in the team to specialist Child Protection Reviewing Officers for child protection conferences and Independent Reviewing Officers for children in care and young people leaving care.

**Child Protection Reviewing Officers (CPROs)**

The role of the CPRO is fundamental to the risk management of child protection cases. The CPRO chairs the conference and has the final responsibility for decision-making at the conference and for formulating the plans from the conference. They have a key role and responsibility in managing the child protection conference process in a manner that engages parents, promotes children and young people’s participation, and contributes to the development of the highest standards of multi-agency safeguarding practice. In addition to the conference itself, the CPRO has a role in promoting good practice and ensuring child protection plans are implemented before and following conferences.

**Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs)**

One of the IRO’s key roles is to improve outcomes for children in care by reviewing each child’s care plan, making sure it is effective and the child’s wishes and feelings are taken into account. The IRO will scrutinise and challenge if the needs of the children are not being met or plans are not being progressed in a timely manner. The main forum through which the IRO carries out their role is the chairing of, or contribution to, a child or young person’s statutory review meeting but they also monitor the whole of the Local Authority’s support and keep track of progress through pre- and post-review processes. The IRO will make sure that reviews are timely and focused on the child’s needs. The positive participation of children in their review is critical and is most often demonstrated through children’s involvement at the meeting and in the development of their child friendly care plan. An important part of the IROs role is to have contact with children and young people between their reviews or prior to their review to go through their wishes and feelings and find out how they would like to contribute to their meeting.

**Quality Monitoring and Dispute Resolution:**

The Safeguarding and Review Service routinely monitors the quality of social work practice provided to individual children and young people to ensure that appropriate and effective care planning is in place. In order to ensure good practice is fed back to practitioners, a formal Practice Recognition tool is in place for IROs. Where there are concerns relating to a child or young person in care, IROs will initially seek to resolve such issues on an informal level via discussion with social workers and their managers. Where a concern cannot be resolved informally, officers will utilise the formal dispute resolution process which is progressed via a Management Alert. Similarly, a Safeguarding Management Alert is completed by a CPRO when he or she is concerned regarding a practice issue or a child’s safety during the child protection process.

The Safeguarding and Review Service contributes to both the Quality Assurance Frameworks for Children’s Services and the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board to ensure that the quality monitoring of services to children and young people in care and children subject to children protection process has an impact on a strategic level.

Team Structure:

Head of Safeguarding

Deb Austin

Head of Safeguarding

IRO Manager

Safeguarding Manager

IRO

X 7.5

CPRO

X 4

Head of Safeguarding

IRO Manager

Safeguarding Manager

IRO

X 7.5

CPRO

X 4

Safeguarding Manager

Tom Stibbs

IRO Manager

Sharon Martin

IROs x 7.5fte

CPROs x 4fte

Head of Safeguarding

IRO Manager

Safeguarding Manager

IRO

X 7.5

CPRO

X 4

Head of Safeguarding

IRO Manager

Safeguarding Manager

IRO

X 7.5

CPRO

X 4

Head of Safeguarding

IRO Manager

Safeguarding Manager

IRO

X 7.5

CPRO

X 4

Head of Safeguarding

IRO Manager

Safeguarding Manager

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X 4

Head of Safeguarding

IRO Manager

Safeguarding Manager

IRO

X 7.5

CPRO

X 4

Head of Safeguarding

IRO Manager

Safeguarding Manager

IRO

X 7.5

CPRO

X 4

For more information please go to [**The Safeguarding and Review Service**](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/health-and-social-care/independent-reviewing-officers-iros)