

## **Hillingdon CYPF Directorate Legal Planning Meeting**

### **Purpose**

LPM is a weekly meeting attended by the Social Worker, Team Manager, the Court Tracker. The LPM will be chaired by the Service Manager LAC. Hillingdon legal services will provide legal advice and consultation in relation to cases open within Children's Social Care.

There will be five possible outcomes at a legal planning surgery;

1. Issue (LA to prepare the statement within a set time –tracked by Court Tracker)
2. Formal Pre-proceedings- (FPP letter to be tracked, FPP meeting to be tracked and review Meeting to be listed)
3. Review LPM- (it maybe the SW/TM needs to consult other agencies or SM prior to making a decision- reviews must be booked in a timely manner giving consideration to the risk management plan)
4. At this point, No further Action under PLO. Other appropriate plans to be considered. (CIN/CP)
5. Poorly Prepared- The SW team have not prepared for LPM. Risk Management plan to be formulated and case returned to LPM ASAP.

**In all cases the risk management plan must be discussed at LPM. The above outcomes will be tracked and documented by the Case Progression Manager to inform practice and learning within Hillingdon.**

Minutes of the meeting will be a brief record of the discussion, legal advice and decisions, provided by the attending lawyer.

All cases that come to LPM should be agreed by the Service Manager through discussion with the team Manager, prior to attendance. A short discussion noted on the child's record as management oversight must be recorded on protocol. **The LPM is not for social work consultation;** these discussions should be held within the social work supervision prior to any legal consideration.

Additional work is not required in order to seek legal advice and gathering or preparing additional documents should not delay seeking legal advice. However, there is an expectation that **in most cases there will be a case outline evidencing supervision/case discussion, most up to date assessment, genogram, eco map and chronology of significant events that led to the decision for a legal consultation/planning meeting.** All of these should be available from casework already in place. A checklist of evidential documents is available to help with preparation.

It is important that the Chair Person, the Case Progression Manager and lawyer have time to read the evidence before the meeting. **This should be provided 3 days prior to the meeting.** The documents should be emailed to legal services to Aliya Rana and (CC - Joseph Matia) and the chair person and the **Case Progression Manager**.

LPM Slots (**45 mins each**) should be at set times each week. (**Each Monday at 1pm**) If there are other issues that require legal advice, for example Complaints, consultation should be had with legal services direct following agreement from the SM to seek legal advice. **EPO/Short Abridged Notice- please ensure legal advice is sought immediately.**

Presentation of the cases will be made by the SW and/or their manager who will be responsible for bringing all relevant documentation to LPM.

Existing legal cases will be reviewed regularly in LPM where this is helpful to the case progression. In this case, records will be completed on the review section of the LPM form.

### **Recording**

The Legal Consultation Form serves as an evidence based tool to record decision making on cases where it is felt that the Local Authority needs to seek legal advice or action about a child. It is vital that the form is completed as described below and that the record is attached or scanned to Civica.

**The Social Worker** must complete part 1 of the legal consultation form (attached) with a brief history, reason for seeking advice and advice required. This section can be left blank if an annotated model statement is attached containing the information required. It is not necessary to record the same information twice. Cases without will not be heard until the form is completed.

The consultation document in its entirety, with supporting documents, will be brought to LPM by whoever is presenting the case.

**The LPM Chair** will then use the form as a basis to lead a discussion about the case.

**The Lawyer** will record brief notes directly on to the form of the discussion within surgery, the legal advice and the actions required, this will be specific and include timescales to reduce drift. The lawyer will ensure that the typed version of the LPM consultation form is emailed to the relevant team, copying in the court tracker.

**The Case Progression Manager** will ensure that dates are noted and tracked with the social work team. If timescales are not adhered to cases will be escalated to the relevant Manager. If a response is not received from the Manager by day 2, the case will be escalated to the Service Manager. The non compliance will be escalated to the Assistant Director by day 3. The CPM will not make case work decisions or outcomes at an LPM however, will

raise any safeguarding issues or outstanding primary evidence if need be. The CPM will escalate any cases with safeguarding issues that remain outstanding and have not been addressed at LPM to the relevant Service Manager.

**Cases requiring review** will be brought back to legal surgery, the SW will be required to fill in Pt 3 of the consultation form with a case update this is to include a review of actions and advice required, the Lawyer will record the discussion, legal advice and actions.