

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
BY DEPUTY P.V.F. LE CLAIRE OF ST. HELIER ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 17th
NOVEMBER 2009**

Question

How many serious case reviews have been instigated since the Jersey Children Protection Committee was formed?

How many are currently active?

What is the procedure to initiate a serious case review and who can request one?

What appeal mechanism, if any, is available for those who wish to trigger a review but are unsuccessful in doing so?

Answer

The Minister wishes to thank the Independent Chair of the Jersey Child Protection Committee for providing the information for this answer. The answer considers each element of the question in turn.

How many serious case reviews have been instigated since the Jersey Children Protection Committee was formed?

The Serious Case Review Sub-Committee of the Jersey Child Protection Committee (JCPC) was formed in 2008 and held its first meeting on 4th June 2008. It was chaired by Professor June Thoburn, and Dr Susan Turnbull is the Vice-Chair. Mike Taylor took over the role from Professor Thoburn in June 2009 on becoming Independent Chair of the JCPC.

The Serious Case Review Sub-Committee has considered the following cases since its inception:

- 7 cases have been considered for referral as Serious Case Reviews;
- 1 case has proceeded to full Serious Case Review
- 1 case was dealt with as a Serious Case Review in 2005 but less formally than present process

How many are currently active?

There is one currently active Serious Case Review and this is the one described above as proceeding to full Serious Case Review.

What is the procedure to initiate a serious case review and who can request one?

This is best answered by referring to the abstract below from the Terms of Reference of the Serious Case Review Sub-Committee:-

- **Roles and responsibilities:**
 - To receive and undertake an initial assessment of all cases referred to it (from any source) because abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected; **and**
 - the child has died; **or** the child has been seriously harmed or the child has sustained serious and permanent impairment to health or development through abuse or neglect **and**
 - there is cause for concern as to the way in which the States departments or voluntary agency

partners or other relevant persons have worked together to safeguard the child from the abuse or neglect that led to the death or serious harm; **or**

- there is evidence that a child has been seriously harmed by organised and/or multiple abusers (within or outside the family) or abused within an institutional or custodial setting **or**
 - a child who has died or been seriously injured was/is being looked after by the children's service at the time of death/injury..
- To decide whether the case falls within the above criteria and there is sufficient reason to undertake a serious case review and to make a recommendation to the Chair of the JCPC on the action to be taken.
 - To decide on the Chair and Members of any Serious Case Review Panel and oversee the management of the review process.
 - To decide on the scope of the specific review – including the time period for reviewing the actions taken in the case; the time frame for the review; which agencies will be asked to provide Internal Management Reports; and the person to be commissioned to write the Independent Overview Report. These decisions may be delegated to the Serious Case Review Panel and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Serious Case Review will have delegated authority to confirm these.
 - To develop procedures for the management and delivery of a Serious Case Review to the JCPC and monitor the effectiveness of these. This includes defining the purpose of the Serious Case Review process as for learning only and to clarify that information gathered for the purpose of the Serious Case Review is to be used and disseminated only for this purpose.
 - In cases in which it is decided that a full Serious Case Review is not necessary (whether or not a Serious Case Review Panel was appointed), the Sub-Committee may ask one of its members to take the lead in seeking Internal Management Reports from the relevant agencies, and prepare a report for the Sub-Committee on lessons to be learned from the case, and actions to be taken. The Sub-Committee, on receiving such a report, may conclude that a Serious Case Review is necessary and appoint a Review Panel and an Independent Overview report writer.

It should be noted that the JCPC Serious Case Review Sub-Committee, will consider information from any source as grounds for considering a Serious Case Review.

What appeal mechanism, if any, is available for those who wish to trigger a review but are unsuccessful in doing so?

The decision of the Serious Case Review Sub-Committee in respect of a request for a Serious Case Review rests ultimately with the Independent Chair of the JCPC. There is no formal appeal mechanism to challenge this. Accountability for the actions for the JCPC is through the Independent Chair to the Minister for Health and Social Services and reference of any concerns on decision making would need to be lodged with the Minister who would act accordingly.