



PRESS RELEASE

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Minister for Care opens inaugural meeting of renewed Child Protection Committee

Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Hon. Neil F. Costa MP, has today met for the first time with the newly restructured executive Child Protection Committee. The meeting was chaired by Natalie Tavares, CEO of the Care Agency. This Committee was created under the Children Act 2009, with the purpose of bringing together key agencies, such as the Care Agency, the Royal Gibraltar Police, Probation Services, Youth Services, the Gibraltar Health Authority, the Department of Education, and others, to ensure that local safeguarding arrangements and child protection procedures are effective.

In his meeting today, Minister Costa highlighted the responsibilities of the Committee, among them, coordinating with the relevant organisations on how they should best work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and ensuring that they provide an effective service. He also raised that the Committee will be responsible for the training of all professionals working and analysing trends in children's safeguarding issues in order to advise the Government on the development of appropriate services and resources.

This first meeting set the agenda that the Committee will work towards in the year ahead. Tasks and projects will be delegated to an operational committee, which will ensure that systems and procedures are established within their organisations' working practices and ensure the safeguarding of our children.

The Honorable Neil F. Costa M.P said: "It gives me great pleasure to have opened the first meeting of the executive Child Protection Committee. I am reassured to know that the heads of the organisations that have safeguarding responsibilities will be meeting regularly so as to ensure that appropriate systems are in place to guarantee the safety and well-being of children and young people in Gibraltar. This professional, trained, and well-resourced multi-agency and multi-disciplinary Committee, in this critically important area, will have the ability to delegate operational matters, while retaining responsibility for safeguarding. The Committee has set the agenda for its invaluable work. I very much look forward to receiving their advice in this area in order to ensure that we do all that we can in safeguarding and protecting our children."