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| **PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL** |  | **Legal Services** |  |
|  | Town Hall |  |
|  | Victoria Square |  |
|  | St Helens |  |
|  | Merseyside |  |
|  | WA10 1HP |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | DX 19484 ST.HELENS |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | Contact: |  |
|  | E-mail: |  |
| **DATE:** |  | Tel: (01744) 67 3259 |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Our Ref: **add ICS of child or youngest sibling** |  |
|  |  |  |  |

**RE: ST HELENS COUNCIL’S CONCERNS ABOUT YOUR CHILD/CHILDREN: *[INSERT NAME]***

Dear,

I am writing to let you know how concerned we are about your care of your child(ren). We are thinking about starting care proceedings in respect of ……………………. (*Child(ren)’s full names*).

We believe there are positives to your parenting, but we also have things we are worried about, and we have set out those details on the attached sheet for your reference.

**HOW TO AVOID GOING TO COURT**

If the changes we have outlined in the ‘What needs to happen?’ section attached are not made we will apply to Court and …………….(*Child(ren)’s full names*) could, if the Court decides that this is best for …………. (*him/her/them*), be taken into our care.

***PLEASE TAKE THIS LETTER TO A SOLICITOR BEFORE MEETING ON xxxxxxxxxxx***

*Take this letter to a solicitor and ask them to come to the above meeting with you. The solicitor will advise you about getting legal aid (free legal advice). Attached to this letter is a list of local solicitors who work with children and families. They are all separate from Children's Services. You do not have to bring a solicitor to the meeting, but it will be helpful if you do. During the Covid-19 period, we can assist you in contacting your chosen solicitor and send this letter and summary of worries by email.*

***WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF YOU DO NOTHING***

*If you do nothing we will have to go to Court. If you do not answer this letter and do not come to the meeting, we will go to Court as soon as we can to make sure …………………(Child(ren)’s full names) are safe.*

Please come to a meeting with us to talk about the worries we have and what needs to happen on.

Date:

Time:

Venue: (including virtual arrangements)

Please contact your Social Worker on ………………………. (*Telephone Number*) to tell us if you will come to the meeting. The Social Worker’s Manager is …………………………. (Name) and their contact telephone number is ……………………… (Tel Number)

At the meeting we will discuss with you and tell you what you will need to do to make sure your child(ren) receive the care they need and are kept safe. We will also talk to you about how we will support you to do this. Finally, we will make it clear what steps we will take if we continue to be worried about …………………………… (*Child(ren)’s full names*).

**This is likely to be your last chance to show you can parent your child appropriately.**

It is very important that we work together to plan for your children and to make sure that they are safe and well cared for. It may be that you do not agree with the Social Worker however it is still important to attend the meeting to make sure your views are heard and that your Solicitor is able to give you the advice and support you will need. If you do not attend the meeting or engage with the proposed plan, we will consider whether we need to apply to the Court to make decisions regarding your children.

This is our opportunity to work together and to support you to make sure that your children are receiving the right care and are safe. We want to work with you to avoid the need to go to Court however it is important that the concerns that have been raised regarding your children are addressed at the earliest opportunity.

**Information your Solicitor will need**

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| --- |
| **Legal Services**  St Helens Council  Town Hall  Victoria Square  St Helens  WA10 1HP  Tel: 01744 67 3259 |

**YOUR WIDER FAMILY**

Our concerns about ………………………. (*Child(ren)’s full names*) are very serious. If we do have to go to Court and the Court decides you cannot care for your child(ren), we will first try and place ……… (*him/her/them)* with another member of your family, if it is best for your child(ren) to do this. At the meeting we will want to talk to you and your solicitor about who might look after your child(ren) if the Court decides that it is no longer safe for you to do so. It is important that we understand who is in your family and who may be able to offer support.

Please tell your Social Worker if you need any help with childcare or transport arrangements in order to come to the meeting, and we will try to help. During the Covid-19 period, we are using electronic ways to meet. We can help you if you need support.

If you have any questions about this letter or the attached summary of concerns sheet, please contact your social worker or their Manager however, your solicitor will also be able to explain things.

Yours sincerely

*NAME*

Team Manager