



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **The Royal Gibraltar Police, Childline and the Care Agency join forces to tackle child abuse cases**

Social workers from the Care Agency, a representative from Childline (Gibraltar) and Royal Gibraltar Police officers have completed a one-week joint training course on child abuse investigation at Bleak House. Known as SCAIDP, (Specialist Child Abuse Investigator Development Programme), this is a UK based scheme designed to enhance the professional skills of those investigating and dealing with child abuse offences in Gibraltar. The basic aim is to allow the two organisations to work together in resolving child protection matters and dealing with the effects of trauma on children.

Police officers and social workers have received specialist training in child abuse investigations covering topics such as Child Development in the context of abuse, Identifying Abuse and Significant Harm, Assessing Risk and Sharing Information, multi-agency working with the use of Signs of Safety model, as well as working through case studies.

There is also a specific module on Domestic Abuse, which trains officers and social workers to analyse these cases with a specific emphasis on the impact to the child.

The instruction has been carried out by Ann Stuart, a former Detective Sergeant for the UK Metropolitan Police Service who, with 34 years of service, worked in Child Protection Units and developed policy and procedures for the Association of Chief Police Officers. Mrs Stuart still carries out work for the College of Policing and reviews policies, practice and Serious Case Reviews for Local Area Safeguarding Boards, (the equivalent of our Child Protection Committee). She was awarded an MBE for her lifelong work in safeguarding children.

Training commenced on Monday 22 May 2017 and culminated today, Friday May 26, with a presentation of SCAIDP certificates to the participants by the Minister for Health, Care and Justice Neil Costa MP. An RGP spokesman said: "As a result of the ongoing commitment to multi-agency work and the development of local professionals in the field of child protection, the Care Agency and Royal Gibraltar Police have provided a UK standard specialist programme to professionals in the field known as SCAIDP."

Minister Costa added: "I am delighted to have attended the closure of the training week for police officers and social workers, who are in the frontline of the Gibraltar Government's strategy to protect children and families from the scourge of domestic abuse in its various forms. The excellent



training that has been carried out this week by a recognised UK expert like Mrs Stuart, will ensure that our professionals are equipped with the necessary skills to investigate cases, which by their very nature are extremely sensitive and complex. We are confident that local professionals who handle this important work, have attained a degree of specialisation and competence which will allow them to ensure that vulnerable children in the community are brought up in a safe environment and afforded the maximum degree of care and protection possible.”