### Assessment of the parent(s) and the potential risk to the child:

**The risk to unborn babies of women involved in street prostitution**

* What are their reasons for working?
* When are they usually out on the streets - at all hours and in all weathers?
* Do they have a history that includes trauma of previous childhood abuse, mental and physical health problems and are vulnerable to the vagaries of the men who solicit them for sex, drug dealers, local people, and the police?
* Do they have regular customers who they have developed relationships with?
* Do they provide gifts, drugs, and meals, providing accommodation etc.?
* Are they vulnerable themselves and if so, in what way?
* Do the women work on the streets only or do they also work in a number of other locations, including saunas, private houses and as escorts?
* Have the women ever been subject to stigmatization; verbal, physical and sexual abuse; violence; and robbery by the very men who pay to have sex with them.
* Are they consuming drugs? Alcohol? If so, list them. Have they ever over-dosed?
* Do they have any health problems as a result of the drug use?
* Are they involved in any treatment programme – now or in the past?
* How much are they spending on drugs a day/week?
* How much does the women charge for her services? Are pimps involved?
* Is there any history of control or conflict/domestic violence in the work environment/relationships?
* Have they suffered verbal abuse, bullying, intimidation, and physical abuse in their work?
* Is such stigmatization and consequent abuse impact on them when they are a parent as well as potentially being experienced by their children and other family members.
* The main factors that will influence a woman’s ability to safeguard and promote the well-being of her child are:
* The level and combination/s of her drug/alcohol use, and any resulting chaos.
* The number of children she has, their ages, individual needs, and level of understanding.
* The level of support she gets from a non-drug using or stable partner, and any family members and friends.
* The insight she has about how her lifestyle may have a negative impact on her child, and therefore what measures that she takes to protect him or her.

**The mother**

* Is the mother’s ability to provide basic care for her child impaired by her drug or alcohol use, or mental health problems?
* Is she able to provide the physical necessities for her child, such as food, adequate accommodation, heat, light, and appropriate clothing?
* If the child has any special educational needs or is disabled, how does the mother respond/cope?
* Is she able to ensure her child is safe at all times?
* When she is out working the streets or using drugs/alcohol, where is her child?
* Is s/he being cared for by a responsible person?
* Does s/he witness any drug taking or other illegal activity?
* Is the child at risk from anyone she brings to the flat, including “punters”, drug dealers or people involved in other crimes such as handling stolen goods?
* Does her child ever witness sexual activity or other inappropriate sexual images?
* Is her child ever left alone?
* How does street working affect her as an individual? How does it affect her ability to parent her child?
* Does she use (or use more) drugs/alcohol to cope with what her work entails?
* Is she out late and therefore not functioning well in the mornings or sleeps in? If so, how does this show, physically and/or emotionally?
* Is the mother able to give her child emotional warmth?
* How consistent is she in her parenting of her child?
* Does it change depending on her drug/alcohol use?
* Does her lifestyle affect her emotionally?
* Is she able to be emotionally warm and affectionate with her child?
* What is the interaction between her and her child?
* Does the mother have a partner?
* Is he the child’s father? How does he react to her working, and how does this impact on the child?
* Does the mother provide age and capacity appropriate stimulation to her child?
* Are there toys or games in the house?
* Does the mother provide age and capacity appropriate guidance to the child?
* Does she provide the child with appropriate boundaries? If so, does she stick by them?
* Does she give her child conflicting guidance (for example, to not lie or steal and then does exactly that herself – witnessed by her child)?
* Does the mother provide the child with stability? If so, in what areas are positive and what, if any, areas need improvement?
* What other agencies are involved with the mother and how does she engage with them?
* Does she attend necessary appointments for herself or her child (health, criminal justice services, support to exit street work etc.)?
* As well as her weaknesses, what are her strengths?

**Additional issues related to pregnancy**

* How does she feel about being pregnant?
* Who is the father? Does he know and if so, what is his opinion and is she influenced by him? What does she want to do about the pregnancy?
* Bring up the baby, adoption, other permanence options, or termination?
* Does she need support with decision-making and appointments? If termination or adoption is an option, is post-termination or post-adoption support available?
* Has she had other children removed/or who are being raised by family members?
* If she is keeping the baby:
* Is she still working the streets while pregnant?
* Are there any other health issues for the baby, for example is the mother a heavy smoker, malnourished, has infections or blood borne viruses, is a victim of violence, or has mental health problems?
* What is the input/relationship/support of the baby’s father – negative, positive, or ambivalent?
* Seek advice from specialist midwifery services; referral for assessment and treatment; monitor attendance and compliance
* Discuss possible child in need/child protection issues with relevant partner agencies, including voluntary sector agencies, and implement procedures as appropriate (see local safeguarding children board procedures).
* Drug/alcohol treatment may be required for the baby when born to reduce neo-natal withdrawals.
* Once she has had the baby:
* How is she managing to care for and bond with her new baby?
* What is her compliance with drug treatment, progress with other areas of her life such as stable accommodation, coping with a reduction in income, and making friends/getting support from non-drug using social networks?
* Monitor through child in need/child protection processes as appropriate.
* How are any other children reacting to their new sibling, especially in light of their family circumstances?
* If she has previously had a child adopted or brought up by a family member, what affect does this have on her now in her relationship with her new-born baby?
* Does the woman want to exit prostitution? Is there a plan in place to achieve this?