

CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD - NOVEMBER 2013

Title of paper:	Child Sexual Exploitation and the Local Safeguarding Children Board Response	
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Other colleagues who have provided input:		
Relevant Council Plan Strategic Priority:		
World Class Nottingham		
Work in Nottingham		
Safer Nottingham		X
Neighbourhood Nottingham		
Family Nottingham		
Healthy Nottingham		
Leading Nottingham		
Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):		
<p>This report is presented to the Corporate parenting Board to provide an overview of the partnership work currently underway in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation in Nottingham City. The work is undertaken within the governance of the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Board (NCSCB) and is reported through the Operation Management Group of the board. As a priority issue for the NCSCB, it is included within the Business Plan for 2013 /14 and a multi agency work stream is led by Martin Hillier of Nottinghamshire Police, covering agencies in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire.</p>		
Recommendation(s):		
1	The Board to note this report	

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The public perception of Child Sexual Exploitation is based on the recent high profile cases which have attracted media attention such as Operation Retriever & Kern (Derby), Operation Chalice (Telford), Operation Span (Rochdale) and Operation Bullfinch (Oxford). All of these cases have involved organised gangs of adult males of British Pakistani origin.

Definition of CSE: -

- Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where the young person (or third person/s) receive something (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing and/or another or others performing on them, sexual acts.
- Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the

child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain.

- A common feature of CSE is that the child or young person does not recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and does not see themselves as a victim of exploitation.

1.2 There is no actual offence of child sexual exploitation, it is a generic term that encompasses a number of offences involving children from the Sexual Offences Act 2003: -

- Rape
- Assault by Penetration
- Sexual Touching
- Causing or inciting a child to engage in sexual activity
- Sexual Activity with a Child
- Arranging or facilitating the commission of a child sex offence
- Meeting a child following sexual grooming.

Despite the increased profile of CSE and improvements in how agencies are tackling CSE, under reporting still remains an issue.

1.3 Any child is potentially at risk of being sexually exploited, but some children are more vulnerable than others, such as those who go missing from home or care; where there is bullying or gang links; or where there are family difficulties such as parental domestic violence, mental health issues or drug and alcohol misuse.

1.4 Facts and figures

Nottinghamshire Police data indicates that the numbers of referrals linked to Child Sexual Exploitation and Grooming have increased over the last 2 years, which will be related to the increased recognition and response to the indicators of both issues.

It is important to recognise that the definition of child sexual exploitation from the DfE National Action Plan includes all types of grooming methods, all forms of exploitation but does not include offences relating to indecent images of children only. Indecent images may form part of the grooming process itself but as a single offence it does not come under the definition for CSE.

In terms of who is at risk of CSE, it is important to recognise that any child may be at risk, particularly in the increasing world of social networking which perpetrators can access relatively easy without any safeguards. Boys, girls and young men and women can be at risk, and the age range at which children are vulnerable is also wide.

However, there are some children and young people who may be particularly vulnerable, for a number of reasons. These include:

- runaway and missing children/young people
- children/young people with special needs
- children/young people in or leaving care
- migrant children/young people
- children/young people disengaged from education
- children/young people involved in gangs

- children/young people where there is domestic violence in the family or bullying in school
- children/young people where there is a family association with sex offenders
- children/young people who have parents with a high level of vulnerability, for example, drug, alcohol or mental health issues.

This list is not exhaustive and it must be stressed that any child can potentially become a victim of child sexual exploitation from any background.

Local data in relation to children and young people, who run away from home or care and the risks that they have experienced, or may be at risk of, is collected and indicates that the risk of sexual exploitation or associating with an adult who may pose a risk is linked to going missing.

1.5 Targets and performance

Research and experience indicates that local authorities and police forces struggle to provide coherent data about CSE, so there is no viable way to compare the incidences of CSE between different local authorities or police forces. In part this is because there is no national data set or consistent way of recording such cases. There are no national benchmarks and therefore no opportunity to judge our performance in Nottingham against other local authorities or police forces. The government has, however, indicated that local authorities and partners should use a data monitoring tool devised by the University of Bedfordshire, which may lead to a position where more comparative data is available.

Based on this, as well as other factors, locally there is a drive to ensure that the police and children's social care record cases of CSE in a more consistent manner, which allows collation and analysis of data to shape and drive forward practice. Through the work of the Child Sexual Exploitation Cross Authority Group (CSECAG) from the 1 April 2013 strategy meetings for CSE will use the University of Bedfordshire data collection document. This document will also be used by Nottinghamshire Police from the 1 July 2013 and will provide the data necessary to scope and monitor the extent of CSE within Nottinghamshire

1.6 Current Investigations

There are a number of CSE investigations taking place relating to cases that involve more than one perpetrator and have some form of organisation. All these investigations involve a number of agencies working together to safeguard the victims, disrupt the activities of the offenders and ultimately progress to prosecution and conviction at court.

1.7 Case example.

Operation F is the investigation into the trafficking and sexual exploitation of a group of vulnerable juvenile females in Nottingham.

There had been a number of intelligence and information submissions regarding alleged offences against a number of girls but no individual had made any disclosure of CSE to the Police or Children's Social Care. A joint investigation was commenced with Police and CSC and in the enquiry which resulted in some direct evidence. Evidence was also captured from interaction on Facebook.

It was clear at this point that positive action was required to disrupt the activity of the offenders and in doing so safeguard the children from any further offences. One challenge was that the girls did not see themselves as victims of sexual exploitation. In order to progress the investigation evidence from the social media interaction needed capturing by the seizure of communication devices such as mobile phones and laptops from both the offenders and victims.

A joint operation with Police and Children's Social care resulted in a number of search warrants being executed, relating to both victims and offenders. The offenders were arrested and interviewed in connection with CSE. Children's Social Care supported all of the victims through the process on the day and as a result has received disclosures around specific CSE offences. The offenders have been bailed with conditions and all served with child abduction warning notices (CAWN). All of the victims have dedicated social workers who continue with the support needed for the girls

1.8 National and local strategies

Partner agencies of the NCSCB work in accordance with the national statutory guidance, *Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation (2009)*, which is issued under the Department for Education's statutory guidance *Working Together 2013*. Agencies are also mindful of the *Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation – Action Plan (2011 + update 2012)* and the All Party Parliamentary Group *Report from the joint enquiry into children who go missing from care (2012)*, which has a strong emphasis on the risk of CSE for children in care. Locally (jointly with Nottingham City Council) there is a *Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation (November 2011)* procedure which is issued under the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board.

Locally, in response to a number of national drivers and a recognition that good practice needs to continue to evolve and reflect the changing nature of CSE, a multi-agency CSE cross-authority group was established and chaired by the Police. This group has created a local strategy and action plan which all agencies involved are working towards. The group has a number of working groups which are looking at issues such as data collection, engagement with young people, awareness-raising with professionals and models of working. The group drives the recommendations from the National Action Plan (2011), the OCC report (2012) and the ACPO Action Plan (2013). The work of the group is overseen by the Operational Management Group of the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Board (NCSCB) and the Executive of the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB).

1.9 Local views

The City is in the unique position of having the NSPCC Protect & Respect Project. The project supports those subject to or vulnerable to CSE and tries to provide and support a pathway away from the abuse of CSE. The project is currently working with sixteen girls from the City and Conurbation area and it is a vital part of the intervention process. The City also has a Concerns Network for CSE which is multi-agency meeting allowing professional to raise concerns around intelligence and information on CSE that falls short of any direct referral. This was previously a gap that was identified in the intelligence gathering process around CSE.

1.10 Current activity and service provision

There is a local protocol issued under the Local Safeguarding Children Boards which professionals follow in terms of instigation of offences and concerns around CSE. A significant aspect of the protocol is that where there is a level of concern about a child being either being sexually exploited, or at risk of being so, that strategy meetings are held. These meetings are chaired by independent child protection chairs. The aim of the meeting is to co-ordinate work, with the young person and their family, to reduce the level of risk to the young person. Police Officers involved in the investigation attend the strategy meetings which in the majority of cases will be the Sexual Exploitation Investigation Unit.

There is considerable activity aligned to the cross-authority group referred to in paragraph 1.3 above, which includes training and awareness-raising for professionals, as well as awareness-raising for young people (certain schools) through a theatre production, this is explained further later in the report

1.11 What are the key inequalities?

Research indicates that the knowledge and data we have is not necessarily reflective of the whole picture and that it is probably an underestimate. With the introduction of the University of Bedfordshire (UOB) data capture form we will be better placed to show the extent of CSE.

1.12 What are the gaps in knowledge?

It is likely that as resources become more available that the numbers of children who are referred to services may increase. This is something that will need to be prepared for and responded to as appropriate and of the children that we do know about, unfortunately there is no further demographic information available (at this time) to contribute to this report or to our understanding of the issue.

1.13 What are the risks of not delivering targets?

Research and professional awareness indicate that the costs of not adequately responding to the issue of CSE are significant both from an individual's safety, health and wellbeing point of view, but also from an organisational and societal perspective, i.e. health, criminal justice and confidence/reputation for organisations.

1.14 Child Sexual Exploitation Cross Authority Sub Group (CSECAG)

There are a number of drivers in the field of CSE nationally and locally. Nationally, CSE remains high profile politically and in the media, driven by a number of key players and the voluntary sector in particular (agencies include Barnardos, NSPCC, Children's Society, the University of Bedfordshire and the National Working Group).

There have also been a number of high profile cases in the media recently, as mentioned earlier and following the review of all of these investigations criticism has been levelled at the Police, Children's Social Care and the Crown Prosecution Service for failing to respond appropriately to concerns about possible sexual exploitation of children.

Through the workings of CSECAG the procedures and policies for multi agency working in this area are being reviewed and improved in preventing and detecting the abuse of children. There is still a long way to go but multi-agency investigations

in are certainly better placed now in terms of the understanding of CSE than ever before.

As referred to elsewhere in this report, locally the driver for work is through the auspices of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards and the CSE cross-authority group which is chaired by the police. The cross-authority group has a number of specific work streams that it is working to in order drive forward standards and practice in line with new guidance and research:

- **CSE Awareness Training for Professionals**

Through the working group of CSECAG, CSE training for professionals has been introduced into safeguarding training this year. The training targets all professional who are involved with child sexual exploitation especially those who may come into contact with children and young people subject to or vulnerable to CSE. It is crucial that professionals are able to identify the indicators of CSE and take appropriate action where necessary. The first full day of CSE Training for frontline staff took place at Bulwell Riverside on 10 July 2013. The feedback from attendees has been very positive.

- **CSE Awareness for Children & Young People**

The working group has commissioned and financed a theatre production by the Pint Sized Theatre Company about child sexual exploitation. The performances of this company will be delivered to schools and academies around the City for the age range of students most at risk of or vulnerable to CSE. The NSPCC will produce session plans and DVD's and teachers will be trained around the subject before the production is performed to the children. This type of production is the most innovative way of raising awareness of CSE to children and Young People and a number of other LSCBs have been involved in similar productions within their own authorities.

A further strand of work in this area is the CSE resource catalogue that was created by the group from a various sources and media for CSE. This was uploaded on the 16 July 2013 to the LSCB website and allows access to anyone requiring professional advice around child sexual exploitation. The pack also includes posters and leaflets that can be printed offering advice and information as well as a list of support agencies and organisations involved in the world of CSE.

- **CSE Looked After Children Working Group**

The LAC working group was formed as part of the CSE action plan (1.4) and the terms of reference has been drafted and confirmed. The membership of this group will include a representative from OFTSED and the Nottingham City Council's missing children team. This group is in its infancy having had only one initial meeting but it is seen as critical in improving the protection afforded to looked after children. It is anticipated that the remit for this group will eventually extend well beyond the subject of child sexual exploitation.

- **CSE with Girls in Gangs**

CSE within girls and gangs had been included in the CSECAG action plan for the first time this year following the recommendations of the report by the

Children's Commissioner. This action is also in its infancy but contact has already been made with other work in the City to move it forward.

- **CSE Data Collection**

The scoping and monitoring document from the University of Bedfordshire (UOB) is now incorporated into every strategy for child sexual exploitation. The IRO will be responsible for populating the document with the information provided by agencies within the meeting. There will only be one document in existence for each CSE referral and hopefully in the future this process will enable us to provide a clearer picture of CSE within Nottingham.

- **CSE Co-located Team recommendation**

The CSECAG report for co-located CSE teams was presented to the City Operational Management Group on the 4 July 2013 and following advice further work has been tasked around the recommendations contained therein. It is clear that a stepped approach will be employed to bring together in a virtual team initially, professionals actively involved in CSE investigations. As part of the report, the commissioning of a local authority CSE coordinator was recommended and that this post would collate and direct activity around CSE. The OMG was supportive and this will be progressed shortly.

- **CSE Practitioners Forum**

A CSE Practitioners Forum has been created and the first event will take place before the end of the year. It is estimated that there will be between 30 & 40 attendees for the forum and that interest had been shown from a number of different agencies and support services. The first event is likely to be spent identifying gaps in knowledge/understanding and resources, which will inform future response. The content of successive events will involve pre-planned input e.g. updates from NWG. The YOT, CAMHS, Residential Care. School safeguarding leads and POW have also been invited and discussions from this forum will feed into CSECAG meetings.

1.15 What should we be doing next?

- Work continues to the CSE cross-authority group strategy and action plan, reporting into the Local Safeguarding Boards
- Commissioners will be asked to consider different approaches to working with CSE, for example through a co-located team approach.
- Commissioners may also be asked to consider how we resource the specialist emotional and psychological support needed for children and young people who may either be at risk of sexual exploitation or who are already being sexually exploited, but may not immediately recognise the relationship as such.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING VALUE FOR MONEY)

Impact on partner agencies to ensure staff are trained and supported to identify, refer and manage safeguarding issues connected to Child Sexual Exploitation.

5. **RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES (INCLUDING LEGAL IMPLICATIONS, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT IMPLICATIONS AND EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS)**

Child Sexual Exploitation has a high profile within the media as a result of a number of cases nationwide, including some that relate to Children In Care. Issues of diversity are being collated in relation to the region profile of children who may be at risk of sexual exploitation. The Police lead on all CSE operations and therefore consider the implications of the Crime & Disorder Act within their work.

6. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (EIAs)**

N/A

7. **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION**

N/A

8. **PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT**

N/A