

**13 January 2014****Agenda Item: 6**

## **REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE**

### **CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE) ACTION PLAN**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on progress with work undertaken by agencies within Nottinghamshire to respond to the risk to children and young people of child sexual exploitation. Previous reports were submitted to the Children and Young People's Committee on 5 November 2012 and 10 June 2013. It is proposed that a further report be provided to the Children and Young People's Committee in six months.

#### **Information and Advice**

2. Child sexual exploitation (CSE) remains a high profile area of safeguarding children work and is likely to be a focus of any Ofsted inspection as well as the subject of media interest. Most recently this was demonstrated by the media focus given to the Office of the Children's Commissioner's report into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups (November 2013). Locally, developments in this area of work are overseen by a cross-authority (Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City) group which has developed an action plan most recently updated in September 2013. This is an active document which monitors progress across agencies.
3. The CSE Cross-Authority Group (CSECAG) is chaired by a Detective Inspector from the Nottinghamshire Police Sexual Exploitation Investigation Unit and continues to meet quarterly with the aim of driving forward work within both Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City. This group is well attended and the chair reports regularly to the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) as children vulnerable to sexual exploitation is a key priority area for the NSCB.
4. At a recent meeting of the NSCB Executive, it was reported that Nottinghamshire Police were subject to a 'mock inspection' earlier this year by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary. The outcome of this was to comment favourably on the work undertaken in Nottinghamshire to date to respond to the risks of child sexual exploitation.
5. The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment was updated in June 2013 regarding child sexual exploitation and summarised the position within Nottinghamshire. This also highlighted the connectivity between work focussed on children missing from home and care and that focussed on child sexual exploitation.

6. The key areas of work being taken forward within Nottinghamshire are: training and professional awareness; engagement with children, young people and their families; organisational issues and data collation. Further consideration will be given to the report into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups as part of this ongoing work to ensure that the operational and strategic framework proposed by that report is reflected in the work being taken forward.

### **Training and Professional Awareness**

7. Four multi-agency training events have been held to date with more planned during 2014. Of the events held so far, approximately 240 professionals from a range of agencies have attended either a half day or full day course. The Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board is also in the process of establishing a basic e-learning course aimed at a broad range of staff including, for example, park rangers. A multi-agency conference was hosted by the NSPCC in November 2013 which included key speakers from national organisations and was attended by approximately 50 professionals from within the County. The NSCB also provides regular 'What's new in safeguarding' events and these include an overview of the challenges of e-safety linked to child sexual exploitation. Newly qualified social workers within Children's Social Care also receive specific training regarding CSE and missing children as part of their dedicated learning events.
8. A new initiative is to provide a practice forum for professionals working with child sexual exploitation and the first of these events was held in December 2013, facilitated by the NSPCC. The forum provides an excellent opportunity for professionals to come together to discuss cases and share best practice and learning. The first of these events was well attended by professionals from agencies within Nottinghamshire and it is planned that further sessions will be held on a quarterly basis involving representatives from organisations with specialist knowledge of child sexual exploitation issues, for example those working with young boys at risk.

### **Engagement with children, young people and their families**

9. Between November 2013 and January 2014, 10 senior schools and academies (20 performances) in Nottinghamshire have had the benefit of performances of a specially commissioned play about child sexual exploitation written, produced and performed by an educational theatre company aimed at increasing the awareness of young people of the risks of sexual exploitation. This includes a workshop for young people and feedback has been very positive. There is evidence that at least one young person has raised concerns regarding sexual exploitation as a result of this initiative. It is planned that this will be offered to all secondary schools during 2014.
10. In order to promote awareness with parents of the risks of child sexual exploitation, the potential of promoting free e-learning for parents is currently being explored and will be developed during the next few months. It is anticipated that this will involve engaging schools in supporting this initiative.
11. Additionally, work is being undertaken with the voluntary sector to strengthen specialist provision for young people and parents where child sexual exploitation has been identified as an issue of concern. Currently the NSPCC provides some services but

negotiations are underway with another national voluntary organisation to complement this work and provide additional support in this very challenging and specialist area of work. The importance of engagement with children and young people is one issue raised within the Office of the Children's Commissioner's report in terms of the need to have an understanding of children and young people's views of their needs and what would best help them.

## **Organisational issues**

12. In July 2013 a report was considered by the NSCB with recommendations as to how the structural agency response to CSE could be strengthened. One option of moving towards a co-located multi-agency team was considered favourably as was the option of a CSE co-ordinator role. Following further consideration, the potential of developing a role of CSE co-ordinator within Nottinghamshire is being actively explored.
13. In addition to the work outlined above targeted at young people, further consideration is being given to how engagement with secondary schools can be further enhanced. There are a number of avenues through which schools are currently encouraged to address the subject of CSE either within their curriculum or as a safeguarding response to a particular situation. During the spring term of 2014, feedback from the Governors' Compliance Checklist, which is sent to all schools, will provide an overview of how many secondary schools, in particular, are actively doing this. Within Nottinghamshire, there is also the opportunity to access a Government funded initiative being run by the NSPCC between 2012/2015. Years 5 and 6 pupils, in all primary schools, are being provided with a session on 'keeping happy and safe' which includes an e-safety and exploitation angle. To date 86 schools have accessed this. The Nottinghamshire County Council anti-bullying co-ordinator also offers e-safety sessions to parents and schools, predominantly in the primary sector, providing approximately ten sessions a term. The aim of this training is to promote the embedding of e-safety within the curriculum, and the ethos of the school, by showing and recommending resources.
14. In addition to the developmental work being undertaken, there is a well-established response to individual cases. Multi-agency meetings are held for all cases where it is identified that children or young people are at risk of, or are experiencing, child sexual exploitation. These meetings are chaired by a child protection coordinator and all relevant agencies are involved in order to ensure appropriate sharing of information and effective action planning.

## **Data collation**

15. National information would indicate that across all local authorities and police forces, data monitoring, collation and analysis is a challenge. Within Nottinghamshire a data monitoring tool has been adopted which was devised by the University of Bedfordshire and promoted by the Department for Education. The use of this is still being embedded and Nottinghamshire Police are currently developing a spreadsheet for use in collating and analysing the data gathered. This will be complemented by information management processes being developed within the County Council to assist with service planning and evaluation.

16. Between April and November 2013 there have been 70 child sexual exploitation strategy meetings held to consider the circumstances relating to 32 individual children. The children considered at these meetings may have been confirmed as being sexually exploited or at risk of being exploited. This is projecting an increase in numbers from last year. Whilst regrettable, this is seen as positive as it demonstrates a higher level of identification and referral to services.
17. The above numbers of course relate to a very small minority of the total child population of Nottinghamshire. However, these children and young people are vulnerable and will continue to be seen as requiring a high quality response from agencies within Nottinghamshire, both strategically and operationally.

### **Other Options Considered**

18. As this report is for noting, it is not necessary to consider other options.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

19. The Children and Young People's Committee should continue to have scrutiny and oversight of the developments to further develop the response to child sexual exploitation within Nottinghamshire.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

20. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

That:

- 1) progress made regarding developments in the response to child sexual exploitation within Nottinghamshire be noted
- 2) a further report be provided to the Children and Young People's Committee in six months.

**Steve Edwards**  
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### **Constitutional Comments (LM 16/12/13)**

21. The Children and Young People's Committee has delegated authority within the Constitution to approve the recommendation in the report.

### **Financial Comments (KLA 16/12/13)**

22. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan – report to Children & Young People's Committee on 5 November 2012

Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan – report to Children & Young People's Committee on 10 June 2013

Cross-Authority CSE Action Plan

<http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00246-2011>

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, June 2013

'If only someone had listened' – Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups, Final Report, November 2013

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

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