

12 January 2015

Agenda Item: 04

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE)

Purpose of the Report

1. The report updates the Children and Young People's Committee on progress with child sexual exploitation work being undertaken within Nottinghamshire.

Information and Advice

2. Child sexual exploitation (CSE) remains a high profile area of safeguarding children work and will be considered as part of a future Ofsted inspection from a Children's Social Care and Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board perspective. Her Majesty's Inspectorate has recently inspected Nottinghamshire Police, including their safeguarding arrangements although the report is not yet available. They have also recently undergone a peer review of their child sexual exploitation work. CSE is a subject that continues to be of media interest.
3. Locally the work remains overseen by a cross-authority (Nottinghamshire County and Nottingham City) multi-agency group which continues to take forward the work identified within the local strategy and action plan. This group meets quarterly and is chaired by a Detective Inspector from Nottinghamshire Police Sexual Exploitation Investigation Unit. The chair reports to the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board as this work is one of its key priorities. Within Children's Social Care there is a strategic lead whose role it is to support developments in this area of work as well as with the aligned subject of missing children.

Implications from Rotherham and the Ofsted Thematic Inspection

4. During the past few months two key national reports have been published, the first of these was the publication in August 2014 of the independent inquiry in Rotherham. Following this a number of briefings for elected Members were given by the Corporate Director for Children, Families and Cultural Services. This is being followed up by seminars for elected Members on 2 & 23 February 2015. There has also been communication by the Service Director for Children's Social Care with all Children's Social Care staff. The cross-authority group also considered the Rotherham report at their November meeting.

5. It was the view of group members that there were no new issues emerging from the Rotherham report that are not covered within the local work plan. One of the areas highlighted within the report is the importance of therapeutic intervention with the young person. Currently within the County, specialist services are provided by Barnardos and the NSPCC; the importance of these services continuing is recognised and a process has begun to consider future commissioning. Some young people may have longer term needs arising from their exploitation and this has been noted for future discussion with partner agencies such as health to identify if there are any unmet needs within the County.
6. The Rotherham report also noted the importance of quality assurance. The Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board has commissioned a multi-agency audit of CSE work which will be undertaken in January 2015 and reported to the Board in March 2015 which will have a focus on quality assurance. Within the Local Authority a number of performance reports have also been developed which will enable managers to provide more oversight and scrutiny of work undertaken.
7. As a result of the report a dialogue continues with district councils, in terms of prevention and disruption work, around the licencing of taxis to ensure that there is rigour in the process of issuing licences as well as exploring the potential for safeguarding training for those involved.
8. In November 2014 Ofsted published a report following their thematic inspection of CSE in eight local authorities. The key issues highlighted within this thematic report reflected those raised in previously published national reports. The report emphasised the importance of identifying and responding to CSE and concluded that not all authorities did this robustly. It highlighted, amongst other issues, the importance of strategic leadership and the importance of prevention and disruption strategies. Lessons from this report will be further considered by the cross-authority group.

Training and professional awareness

9. Work has continued to promote awareness and increase knowledge amongst professionals. This has been through face to face training, e-learning and through other mediums such as foster carer or school governor newsletters and the County Council intranet.
10. Training provided under the auspices of the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board has continued to raise professional awareness in identifying and responding to child sexual exploitation. During 2014/15 four NSCB training days were publicised and an additional four have been added due to the level of demand.
11. Over 700 multi-agency professionals have also completed the basic e-learning course. Efforts are being made to reach a wider audience, particularly in the district councils, of those workers in more peripheral roles. Four missing children events organised for 2014/15 have also begun which reinforce the link to CSE.
12. Colleagues in public health within Nottinghamshire are also in the process of commissioning single agency training for sexual health teams on 'spotting the signs'

which is based on national guidance. In November health colleagues in Bassetlaw also used a session planned for GPs and GP practice staff to raise awareness of CSE.

Engagement with children, young people and their families

13. As noted in the last report; during 2013/14 a small number of secondary schools and academies benefitted from a specially commissioned play performed by an educational theatre company. The play and accompanying workshop aim to increase children's awareness of the risks of sexual exploitation. Feedback was positive and during the autumn the play has begun to tour again. All secondary schools and academies in Nottinghamshire have been offered one free performance with the option to purchase more. The majority of schools have welcomed this opportunity with only a small number declining to take part.
14. It is also important that parents and carers are aware of the risks of sexual exploitation to support them in trying to keep their children safe. A free e-learning course has been shared with a number of professionals, including schools, with the request that they promote it with parents and carers. Foster carers have also been able to access it. We are aware of a small number of schools publicising the training and we have re-launched it. The charity responsible for the e-learning advises us that 700 people have registered to complete the course (up to end November) with 447 people having completed it which is 10% of the national total. Whilst this is positive there is still the potential to increase this number.
15. Over the next three to six months focus will be given to promoting the engagement of children and families in child sexual exploitation multiagency meetings.
16. The NSPCC continues to offer to work with all schools with Year 5 and 6 pupils on 'keeping happy and safe' which includes an e-safety and exploitation angle and the Nottinghamshire County Council anti-bullying co-ordinator also offers e-safety sessions to parents and schools and other settings, predominantly in the primary sector.

Organisational issues

17. To strengthen and support the development of CSE work, from October a child protection coordinator has been working half time in a CSE co-ordinator role. This will allow a specific focus on key areas such as the engagement of young people and their families, further develop joint working with the police and other agencies and strengthen scrutiny and quality assurance of cases.
18. In addition to the developmental work being undertaken, there is a well-established operational response to cases. Multi-agency strategy meetings are held 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 relevant agencies are involved in order to ensure the appropriate sharing of information and planning.
19. There continues to remain an opportunity to work with schools on the subject of CSE. It is apparent that some schools do focus resources on the subject but the overall picture is not yet captured. This development work will continue with the support of the CSE co-

ordinator and others, recognising that nationally this is a challenge. The annual governor compliance safeguarding checklist process will support the process of understanding the level of work being undertaken.

Data

20. During 2013/14, 104 sexual exploitation strategy meetings were held in relation to 47 individual children. During the first seven months of 2014/15 there have been meetings relating to 28 individual children. Of these, 22 related to young women and girls and 6 to boys and young men. The age range for the young women and girls was 10 -17 years with clusters at 13 years and 15 years, and one 10 year old was identified. The age range for boys and young men was 12 – 17 years with a cluster at 14 years and 15 years, and one 12 year old was identified.
21. At the time of compiling this report, only one of the 28 young people noted above remained the subject of a CSE strategy meeting. The CSE multi-agency meetings were ended when it was concluded that the risk of CSE had reduced. If the young person was identified as remaining vulnerable and requiring support, appropriate actions were agreed, e.g. ongoing work by NSPCC or Barnardo's. One young person turned 18 years and remains supported by Leaving Care services.
22. Six of the young people were looked after, 11 had a child in need plan and three were subject to a child protection plan. These children will remain subject to formal reviews under those processes. There has been an increase in the number of children considered at a CSE meeting and this continues to be the case in the current quarter.
23. The police data as of mid-November 2014 identified that there were 16 cases being investigated by the police in relation to children living in Nottinghamshire. Of these cases, eight relate to internet based grooming allegations and eight relate to face to face contact with individuals as opposed to organised groups.
24. Work continues to amalgamate police and social care information and data into a comprehensive problem profile which will be reported quarterly to the NSCB.
25. The risk of child sexual exploitation continues to feature in some cases where children are reported missing. Periodic cross-referencing of missing information and CSE strategy meeting information leads to follow up with social work teams. This is also picked up through a monthly multi-agency meeting which considers those children who are causing the highest concern due to them going missing.

Conclusion

26. Recent reports arising from exploitation in Rotherham and elsewhere highlight the failings by agencies and the harm that young people come to through being sexually exploited. Whilst the numbers are relatively few they are significant because of the harm that can occur to young people and the inherent cost to individuals, services and society.
27. Through partnerships between agencies, under the auspices of the Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board, work will continue to build on and progress child sexual exploitation strategic and operational work.

Other Options Considered

28. The report is for noting only.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

29. 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

30. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working 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 is noted
- 2) a further report be provided to the Children and Young People's Committee in six months.

Steve Edwards
Service Director, Children's Social Care

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Terri Johnson
Service Manager, Safeguarding Children (Strategic)
T: 0115 9773921
E: terri.johnson@nottsc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments

31. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (KLA 17/12/14)

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

Background Papers and Published Documents

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.

Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan – report to Children & Young People’s Committee on 13 January 2014

Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan – report to Children & Young People’s Committee on 14 July 2014

‘Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham 1997 – 2013’ Alexis Jay OBE

‘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

Ofsted: The sexual exploitation of children: it couldn’t happen here, could it?

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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