

## KIRKLEES COUNCIL

### CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND SAFEGUARDING MEMBER PANEL

**Wednesday 3 February 2016**

Present: Councillor E Hill (in the Chair)  
Councillors Holmes, Ahmed, Allison, Bellamy

In attendance: Helen Kilroy, Principal Governance and Democratic Engagement Officer

Apologies: Cllr K Pinnock, Alison O'Sullivan, Carly Speechley, Paul Johnson, Pauline Martin

#### **1 Minutes of previous meeting**

The Panel considered the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2015. The Panel agreed to amend the minutes of the meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2015 to reflect the comments made by Ruth Squire from CRI and The Base.

The Panel considered the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

#### **AGREED –**

- (1) That the minutes of the meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2016 be amended to reflect the comments from Ruth Squire (CRI and The Base) and that, following amendment, the minutes be agreed as a correct record.
- (2) That the minutes of the meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2016 be agreed as a correct record.

#### **2 Charity working within Kirklees on CSE**

The Panel welcomed Jackie Bolton from the Children's Society to the meeting and considered an update on CSE specific work to be undertaken within Kirklees.

Councillor Hill outlined the role of the Panel, its terms of reference and the links to the Kirklees Safeguarding Children's Board and other CSE strategies within the Council.

#### **The Children's Society**

Jackie Bolton advised that the Kirklees funding for the Children's Society had started in September 2015 and the project delivery would commence shortly. The Children's Society in West Yorkshire was based in Halifax and covered all the West Yorkshire Local Authority areas. Jackie Bolton outlined the number of staff working for the Children's Society at the Halifax base and the work that was being undertaken to get more volunteers on board.

The Panel was informed that the Children's Society provided confidential and independent support and advice for all young people at risk of, or experiencing CSE, and awareness raising training about CSE to groups of professionals.

The Panel noted that the Children's Society was a national organisation, with its Headquarters in London, but had projects running throughout the country.

### **Safe Hands Project**

Jackie Bolton advised that the main aim of the 'Safe Hands' project was to work with vulnerable young people up to 25 years of age, including care leavers in education and employment. Project Workers met with the young person on a regular basis and worked with the police to bring the perpetrators to justice. The young people were supported to help get them through prosecutions and to extricate themselves from their abuser(s).

The Panel was informed of the models of CSE which had been adapted from Barnardo's 'puppet on a string' 2011 and BLAST (The Grooming & Sexual Exploitation of Boys & Young Men) 'Not just our daughters training'. Jackie Bolton explained the 'party' model and the Panel noted that both girls and boys were being targeted.

Jackie Bolton outlined the services offered by the Safe Hands Project and confirmed that the most 'at risk' secondary schools in Calderdale had been targeted, including awareness raising of CSE in 20 primary schools that fed into those schools.

The Panel noted that if a young person was considered to be 'at risk' the project worker would work with them for 6 to 8 weeks. Intensive 1-1 support with young people, vulnerable to and experiencing CSE, could be undertaken for as long as 18 months where the Project Worker would meet with the young person at a location of their choice to give help and support.

Jackie Bolton advised that awareness raising with professionals was undertaken in the workplace, for example at team meetings, placements with young people with learning disabilities, supported living settings and young people with asperger syndrome.

### **Grooming**

Jackie Bolton explained 'The Grooming Line' and the Panel noted that young people often found it difficult to understand why their abusers were not their friends or that they were being bullied, manipulated or coerced. Family members could often be threatened and children as young as 10 were being targeted.

The Panel were given an update on the current situation in relation to migrants entering the United Kingdom which had advised that some communities were in poverty and parents would sometimes neglect their children, leaving them on their own to go out to work. Families were being trafficked from abroad and were often sold and abused on route. The Panel discussed 'invisible traffic' where people entered the country who were already part of international networks of slave trade. Jackie Bolton advised that issues such as poverty, social exclusion and neglect could lead to sexual exploitation.

Jackie Bolton confirmed that when young people have been abused, their mental health often deteriorated and they could turn to drink and/or drugs. The Panel agreed that schools had an important role to play in protecting young people by spotting the first signs of abuse and making appropriate referrals. The Panel was informed that Health professionals also played a key role in spotting behaviours, for example when a young person visited an Accident and Emergency department or GP. Project Workers engaged and worked with young people to attempt to 're-process their thinking' so they understood that the abuse was not normal. Films and other resources were used to talk

to young people about grooming. Protection plans were put in place where necessary or young people were rehoused away from their abusers. As part of their work with the young person, Project Workers would try to get them to give evidence to get prosecution and court cases together.

The Panel noted that the West Yorkshire Police now had a standard approach to CSE across the 5 local authorities.

### **Preventative work**

Jackie Bolton advised that the preventative work undertaken by the Children's Society was to help young people to have the knowledge and skills they needed to make safe and healthy choices about relationships and sexual health.

The Panel agreed with a quote by the Statutory Guidance 'Keeping Safe in Education' 2015 that stated 'Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families have a role to play in safeguarding children. Schools and college staff were particularly important as they were in a position to identify concerns early and provide help for children, to prevent concerns from escalating.'

### **CSE in West Yorkshire**

Jackie Bolton outlined some statistics from the West Yorkshire Police on CSE in West Yorkshire, as follows:-

- 180 investigations into CSE in the West Yorkshire region compared to 65 one year ago;
- From the 180 investigations, police have identified 121 victims;
- 115 of the 121 victims involved 'contact offences' where the victim is believed to have been sexually abused;
- 65 of the 121 victims had been groomed over the internet;
- 157 suspects across the region, 23 charged and awaiting prosecution.

The Panel was informed that cases of abuse by boys often go unreported due to the shame and stigma attached. The Panel noted that even though numbers of CSE cases were increasing, this was likely due to the fact that more pro-active work was now being undertaken meaning cases were being spotted and brought 'onto the radar'.

### **West Yorkshire Partnership**

Jackie Bolton advised the Panel that the West Yorkshire Partnership was a CSE Prevention Project funded by the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner for one year. The Panel was informed that the Commissioner was hoping to find the funding to run the project for a further year. Five schools in each of the 5 Local Authorities across West Yorkshire would receive preventative work and awareness raising sessions that would be delivered to targeted young people and professionals. Jackie Bolton advised that the 5 schools being targeted in Kirklees were:-

- Colne Valley High School
- Manor Croft Academy
- West Borough High School
- Upper Batley High School/Batley Girls Academy (schools merging)
- Moor End Academy

The funding allowed targeted group work with young people as follows:-

- 6 x 1 hour sessions will be delivered in each school over a 6 week period;
- 6-10 young people will be identified within those schools to attend the preventative sessions who are considered as vulnerable to CSE;

Jackie Bolton outlined the topics that would be covered on the sessions for young people.

The Panel was informed that the training would be provided for up to 10 professionals in each of the schools and the length of training and level of detail delivered would be adjusted to fit the needs of the school. Jackie Bolton outlined the topics that would be covered and advised that some schools had asked for more sessions which the funding would not cover, in these cases discussions were ongoing regarding other potential funding sources.

## **Conclusion**

Jackie Bolton confirmed that all the sessions held in the Kirklees Schools would be evaluated and the Panel agreed to invite Jackie Bolton back to the Panel in April to give feedback. The Panel noted that Jackie Bolton would be providing quarterly reports on the Partnership Project for the funders.

The Panel discussed peer mentoring within schools and whether young people would be able to cope with and/or disclose cases of abuse on behalf of other peers, as it could be upsetting for any individual approached to learn of someone who was suffering from abuse. Councillor Ahmed confirmed that the organisation 'BLAST' were looking at peer mentoring and Jackie Bolton agreed to contact them to discuss this further.

The Panel discussed whether it would be possible for the partnership project to be introduced to other schools in Kirklees via the PSHE curriculum. Councillor Hill agreed to talk to officers within the Learning and Skills service and report back to the Panel and Jackie Bolton.

Jackie Bolton circulated leaflets to the Panel that were given out to young people as part of the engagement work.

## **AGREED:-**

- (1) That Jackie Bolton be thanked for attending the meeting and that the update on CSE specific work to be undertaken within Kirklees by the Children's Society be noted.
- (2) That Jackie Bolton be invited to the Panel meeting in April to give feedback on the outcome of the Partnership Project within Kirklees.
- (3) That Councillor Hill meets with officers within Learning and Skills regarding the possibility of introducing the Partnership Project to other schools within Kirklees via the PSHE curriculum and feeds back to the Panel and the Children's Society.
- (4) That the Children's Society contact BLAST to make enquiries regarding peer mentoring within Schools.

## **3. Safeguarding Measures at Residential Children's Homes**

The Panel considered a report on Safeguarding Measures at Residential Children's Homes within Kirklees. Bev Paris (Head of Corporate Parenting) and John McGranaghan (Residential and Short Breaks Service Manager) were welcomed to the meeting.

## **Overview**

Bev Paris advised that Kirklees currently had 5 residential children's homes, 3 mainstream and 2 for disabled children (1 long term and 1 respite care). The Panel were informed that external inspections by Ofsted tested and validated the effectiveness of the safeguarding measures in place at the residential homes. All homes were currently rated 'good' with one of the disabled homes achieving an 'outstanding' grading.

The Panel was informed that the Kirklees Residential Service believed that young people's needs were best met through joint collaborative working with external partners. As such the service worked with a multi-disciplinary framework in which the Council recognised and valued the very real positive impact of early intervention and support for young people through positive working relationships with other agencies.

## **Assessment**

Bev Paris advised that residential staff understood the role of good physical and emotional health in deterring young people from engaging in risky behaviours. All young people had an initial health assessment within 28 days of admission to care, carried out by the Looked after Children (LAC) nurse. There was a strong focus on developing trust between young people and residential staff in order that they felt safe to share information and turn to staff should they need to. Each young person was allocated a keyworker within the residential staff team. Keyworker meetings took place regularly where young people were encouraged to discuss their care plan, including ways in which they could manage their own safety, both inside and outside of the home.

## **Missing Children Procedure**

The Panel was informed that there was a Local Missing Children Procedure for all Kirklees looked after children. The child's Social Worker had responsibility for ensuring a 'Missing Risk Assessment' was completed when a child was placed in a residential home, which was reviewed as part of the LAC Review process and following any episode of missing. Two recent photographs of the young person (face and full body length) were included in the 'Missing Risk Assessment' and provided to the police, should the child subsequently go missing.

Bev Paris outlined the importance of involving young people in their care planning and ensuring they knew that their voice was heard could not be underestimated. Residential staff were aware that one of the major influences of Looked after Children running away was having a sense that they were not being listened to and taken seriously, particularly about placement decisions and moves. The Panel noted that sometimes the potential risks have to be 'managed' so that the staff in the home could build relationships with the young person. Bev Paris advised that secure accommodation was used where necessary, but that efforts were being made to break patterns of behaviour in young people where possible.

John McGranaghan informed the Panel that individual assessments were carried out for each young person depending on their age so that potential episodes of 'missing' could be accurately assessed when necessary; Kirklees staff would make a judgement using those assessments in conjunction with the police. It was important that Looked After Children had as 'normal' a life in the home as possible and part of the assessment carried out would be to agree a normal 'routine' for coming and going with the young person, so that residential staff would know when behaviour was not 'normal'. The Panel

noted that most young people preferred to be contacted by text rather than by ringing their mobile. Bev Paris advised on the police guidance for levels of 'going missing', which were:-

- Absent without authorisation; and
- Missing

The Panel discussed the use of technology with mobile phones and the use of 'find my home'. Bev Paris gave an update on recent feedback from young people that they were not happy with having to hand their mobile phones to their foster carers or having their phones checked. The Panel suggested that a clearer policy and approach was needed on this matter and that there was an opportunity with smartphones and iphones.

### **Independent Return Interviews**

The Panel discussed 'Independent Return Interviews'. Councillor Hill confirmed that officers from the Kirklees Safeguarding Children's Board had indicated that the most important issue was not who carried out the interviews, but how well the interviews were conducted. Bev Paris advised that Return Interviews within residential homes were carried out by the Children's Rights Team and that the intelligence from the Return Interviews needed to be developed and gathered more effectively, so that the Council could use the information to learn from.

The Panel thanked Bev Paris and John McGranaghan for attending and agreed that their report had provided a thorough and detailed update on the safeguarding measures being applied within Kirklees Children's residential homes. The Panel also welcomed the consistently good Ofsted inspections in the 5 homes.

### **AGREED:-**

- (1) That Bev Paris and John McGranaghan be thanked for attending the meeting and that the update on Safeguarding Measures in Kirklees Residential Children's Homes be noted.

### **3. Quarterly updates to Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee**

Councillor Hill advised the Panel that she would be attending the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on the 15<sup>th</sup> February to give an update on the work of the Panel plus other aspects of her portfolio (Family Support and Child Protection). The Panel, Members agreed to forward any comments or issues on this matter direct to Councillor Hill, prior to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on the 15<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

Councillor Hill further advised the Panel that she had met with officers from the Kirklees Safeguarding Children's Board to discuss a number of issues raised by the Panel at their meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2015. The key issues raised were:-

### **Missing Person Return Interviews**

Councillor Hill informed the Panel that officers from the Kirklees Safeguarding Children's Board were more concerned about the quality of the interviews conducted than who carried them out, however, had advised that the person conducting the interview should be suitable and meet the needs of and be able to give the right level of support to the young person.

The Panel was informed that missing in the broader context was being looked at in more detail by the Kirklees Safeguarding Children's Board and Ofsted were also interested in the work ongoing within Kirklees on this issue.

### **Support to and working with Parents**

Councillor Hill informed the Panel that the Kirklees Safeguarding Children's Board had circulated a questionnaire to parents that the Council were currently working with. The questionnaire would be sent to the parent at the end of any involvement, in order to seek feedback regarding the quality of service they had received. The Panel was informed that the Board had agreed to keep Councillor Hill informed on progress in order that further updates on this matter could be shared with the Panel.

The Panel were informed that the Health and Wellbeing Board on the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2016 had agreed a report on 'Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) victim and at risk individuals strategy'. The strategy had been developed to meet the specific needs of those at risk or affected by CSE. There were a number of recommendations within the strategy that required resources and commitment to ensure they became part of the CSE support infrastructure in Kirklees. Councillor Hill indicated that Chris Porter (Public Health) had agreed to attend a future meeting of the Panel to give an update once the Strategy had been implemented.

### **Working with Schools**

The Panel noted that at the meeting in December 2015, Kevin Robinson from Barnardo's had reported that they had been approached by schools seeking help in raising awareness of CSE. Barnardo's had advised that they had been unable to assist the schools as they had to refer enquiries of this nature to the Kirklees Safeguarding Children's Board for approval.

The Manager of the Kirklees Safeguarding Children's Board had confirmed to Councillor Hill that schools could commission whoever they wanted to undertake CSE training, however, the Board retained the right to carry out quality checks. Councillor Hill agreed to contact Kevin Robinson to ascertain which schools had asked Barnardo's for help with raising awareness of CSE in order to feedback to the Kirklees Safeguarding Children's Board who had agreed to follow this up.

#### **AGREED:-**

- (1) That Councillor Hill provides updates as appropriate to the Panel from the Kirklees Safeguarding Children's board on the work being undertaken to seek feedback from parents on the service they had received from Kirklees.
- (2) That Chris Porter from Public Health be invited to attend a future meeting of the Panel to give an update on the implementation of the 'CSE victim and at risk individuals strategy'.
- (3) That Councillor Hill contacts Kevin Robinson at Barnardo's for details of the schools who had sought help from Barnardo's with raising awareness of CSE. Councillor Hill to feedback to the Kirklees Safeguarding Children's Board.

#### **4. CSE Management Information**

The Panel considered an update on CSE Management Information.

**AGREED:-**

(1) That the update on Management Information be noted.

**6. CSE and Safeguarding Member Panel agenda plan for 2015/16**

The Panel considered the agenda plan for the CSE and Safeguarding Member Panel for 2015/16.

The Panel noted that Jackie Bolton from the Children's Society would be invited back to the Panel in April 2016 to give an update on the Partnership Project being undertaken within Kirklees.

The Panel agreed to discuss 'Hate Crime Reporting' at the meeting in March.

**AGREED –**

(1) That the agenda plan for the CSE and Safeguarding Member Panel for 2015/16 be noted and updated as agreed.

**7. Date of next meeting**

**AGREED –**

(1) That the date of the next meeting of the CSE and Safeguarding Member Panel be held on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2016 at 10.30 am till 12.30 pm in Meeting Room 1, Huddersfield Town Hall.