

Name of meeting: Children's Scrutiny Panel

Date: Monday 10th September 2018

Title of report: Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Missing

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the work that has been undertaken in response to improving the quality of practice and to prevent children being vulnerable to harm and abuse from going missing and to prevent children experiencing or continuing to experience sexual and or criminal exploitation, by reducing vulnerability and proactively responding to information and intelligence shared.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Yes/ no or " not applicable" No If yes give the reason why .
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	Yes/ no or "not applicable" <i>Not applicable</i> If yes also give date it was registered
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes/ no or " not applicable" Not applicable If no give the reason why not
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Sal Tariq 31.08.18
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services?	N/A
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning Support?	N/A
Cabinet member portfolio	N/A

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: All

Public or private: Public

1. Summary

- 1.1 The report updates members on the new arrangements that have been put in place to safeguard some of the most vulnerable children and young people living in Kirklees.
- 1.2 The government published their Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation Progress Report (February 2017) where they stated that they have delivered around 90% of their commitments and achieved a step change in the response to child sexual exploitation. The commitment to tackle CSE is being driven strongly by government and remains a strategic policing requirement being 'attributed to serious and organised crime'.
- 1.3 In 2016, the government consulted on changing the current definition of child sexual exploitation and, on the 16th February 2017, published the new definition along with guidance. The new definition published by the Department for Education is as follows: *"Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victims needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology;"*
- 1.4 The new definition is much more straightforward and prescriptive and also provides a framework for decision making for all professionals. The introduction of the new definition provided an opportunity to review the aims of the CSE Hub in line with the government three objectives of tackling offending, reducing vulnerability and supporting victims and survivors.
- 1.5 A review of our existing services and response to CSE was undertaken by the Leeds Improvement Partnership and partner agencies in December 2017. The review highlighted that child sexual exploitation cannot be viewed in isolation and the strong links to other factors that place children and young people at significant risk such as missing, peer sexual violence, criminal exploitation, trafficking, forced marriage, honour based violence (HBV) and female genital mutilation (FGM) needed to be addressed. To deal with these issues the Risk and Vulnerability Team has been established to provide, and allow for the advancement of identification, and multi-agency practice in relation to these other specific priority safeguarding risks and concerns. The Risk and Vulnerability Team is working in partnership with key partners in the identification, prevention, disruption and prosecution of child exploitation.

2 Background

- 2.1 The perceptions of child sexual abuse has altered over a number of years, both nationally and locally. Earlier thinking very much focused on a commonly held view of children being most at risk from predatory paedophiles not known to them. In addition the growth of the internet has created a new form of abuse in the form of online grooming and awareness has been raised about the need to protect children and young people's safety online.
- 2.2 The acknowledgment of CSE in Rotherham has been a major driver of national work. The report of Alexis Jay and the subsequent report by Louise Casey about the response of agencies to CSE have influenced the work of a number of national bodies. The key research bodies that have contributed to the knowledge base around CSE have been the University of Bedfordshire with support from the Office of the Children's Commissioner, Barnardo's and the NSPCC, who have also undertaken research into effective interventions and the cost savings generated by supporting victims effectively.
- 2.3 At government level, various national committees have taken evidence and produced reports about the response of agencies under their supervision to CSE. The departments of Health, Education, Local Government and Communities and the Home Office have all undertaken reviews and issued guidance on the issue of CSE.

- 2.4 There are a number of agencies, such as NHS England, the College of Policing, the Academy of Royal Medical Colleges and Public Health England, who have produced guidance and advice for professionals working within their professional remit. Similarly, a number of charities have developed guidance for professionals about how to respond to CSE locally. CSE continues to be a major feature in policy guidance and there is a growing body of guidance about child safety online. CEOP and the UK Council for Child Internet Safety have produced a range of strategies to guide the telecoms sector.
- 2.5 Since 2010, the scale of CSE nationally has become clearer, with complex police investigations leading to successful prosecutions of multiple abusers and the launch of a two year inquiry by the Office of Children's Commissioner for England into sexual exploitation in gangs and groups. In 2011 the government acknowledged the prevalence of this abuse by appointing the Children's Minister as lead for CSE and producing a national action plan.
- 2.6 Since 2011, considerable national progress has been made in increasing awareness of CSE, improved data collection, service coordination, and implementing policies and procedures, (The Office of Children's Commissioner, 2013) and this is mirrored locally. Child Sexual Exploitation remains a priority for the Children's Trust and Kirklees Safeguarding Children Board (KSCB). The Board has continually monitored reports and recommendations on CSE. In its role to monitor and lead local agencies, the Board has developed a clear plan with partner agencies in light of the new learning and recommendations from all the literature published.
- 2.7 In Kirklees, a wide range of agencies work in partnership, all with the shared aim of addressing the issues around CSE. This has been the case for several years and CSE remains a priority for Kirklees Council as well as the KSCB. There is clear leadership and strategic overview of services. Risk and vulnerability of children and young people is better understood through the provision of continued training and guidance for frontline practitioners to support them in their role in addressing the issue of CSE.
- 2.8 The collective response to CSE has seen significant investment by some partners in resources and infrastructure. We have got better in how we respond to victims and those who are at risk of becoming exploited. Making wise investments in preventative work, relationship support and therapeutic interventions have saved costs across services. It is recognised that it is not simply about more staff, it is about the quality of relationships professionals are able to develop with children and young people. It is also important to note that the scope of influence across professional boundaries has improved and high quality relationships has been critical to this.
- 2.9 The CSE Hub was developed in Kirklees in October 2011 as a result of the concerns and response to child sexual exploitation both nationally and locally. The role and function of the CSE team was primarily to ensure that Kirklees had a joined up response to CSE and to ensure that clear policy and procedures were in place. The team were responsible for undertaking the initial risk assessments and undertaking direct work with children and young people who were assessed as being at high or medium risk of CSE. This was joint working between Police and Children's Social Care
- 2.10 Responses to children at risk of CSE and/or missing was undertaken by the Safeguarding Unit within the Police. The Unit works closely with the CSE Hub within Kirklees Children's Social Care who are responsible for assessing, and responding to, initial concerns for children and young people. It was recognised that when police and social care enquiries were undertaken jointly this resulted in more effective interventions and better outcomes with regard to gathering criminal evidence and protecting children. Children and families also appreciated a co-ordinated response. In order to further develop this approach in working, 2 social workers were co-located with the Safeguarding Unit within the Police in September 2011. These social workers work jointly with police officers with regard to children at risk through CSE. The social workers also work with the police within the Unit with regard to children who go missing, domestic violence concerns and referrals regarding possible forced marriage.

- 2.11 In Kirklees, the Safeguarding Children Board has responsibility, as the lead strategic body, for development and implementation of the authority's response to CSE
The KSCB strategic response sets out the key strands to be addressed in the work to tackle CSE in Kirklees:
- To safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people who have been, or may be, sexually exploited.
 - To successfully prosecute those who perpetrate or facilitate CSE
 - To limit the opportunities for potential perpetrators to abuse children and young people in this way
 - To support families and communities who are dealing with the consequences of CSE
 - To develop preventative services which raise awareness of CSE among children, young people, parents and the communities of Kirklees
 - To develop community resilience to the potentially divisive and damaging impact of CSE on Kirklees and its constituent communities.
 - To offer support and therapeutic services to survivors of CSE, and
 - To ensure that identified perpetrators receive treatment programmes in order to minimise the chances of re-offending.
- 2.12 The CSE and Missing Operational Group work stream of the Kirklees Safeguarding Children Board (KSCB) was established in November 2009 and the Strategic group was established in April 2012, for the purpose of overseeing the work of the operational group. The group has continued to evolve in the ongoing development of systems and processes working to address CSE.
- 2.13 The Operational Group meets every 4 weeks and consists of representatives from the Police, Children Social Care, Integrated Youth Support, Learning Services, Housing, Young Peoples Drug and Alcohol Agency, Health, the Youth Offending Team and Barnardo's. The meetings follow the model used in the MAPPA and MARAC processes whereby agencies make referrals about children who they believe are at possible risk through CSE. The Group considers information to identify the risks to the child within a Risk Assessment Framework which has been determined. Actions are then identified to protect the child and support potential prosecutions against perpetrators and disrupt harmful activities.
- 2.14 During 2012-13, one of the aims of the work stream was to raise awareness on the issue of CSE, through a variety of channels, without duplication of work and offering a consistency of the message being delivered across agencies. A set of procedures and policies have been agreed across the West Yorkshire consortium in respect of CSE. However there were regional differences with regards to how to make referrals and the assessment tool. Each Local Authority's referral processes can be accessed via their Local Safeguarding Board website. Although the work stream focus was CSE, it was recognised that some children who go missing are at risk of CSE but not all. This issue is a standing item on the work stream agenda. The government All Party Parliamentary review on missing children had been looked at closely by a task and finish group and gaps for potential CSE issues were incorporated into the CSE strategy.
- 2.15 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) remained a priority in the Children and Young People's plan as well as for the Kirklees Safeguarding Children Board. There was a clear and strategic overview of services during 2013-14. There was also provision of training and guidance directed from the work stream and disseminated to frontline practitioners, to support them in their role in addressing the issue of CSE. In order to make progress against the 2013-14 Strategy and action plan the work stream initially met every six weeks but due to the commitment agencies have demonstrated in taking the work forward, the meetings are now bi-monthly
- 2.16 Work continued on the Audit Tool, which was adapted from the University of Bedfordshire template. This set out five principles for working together in addressing the issues arising from CSE which included:

- A shared responsibility
- An integrated approach
- A pro-active approach
- A child centred approach
- Recognising criminality

- 2.17 The issue of CSE remained high on the political agenda, evident from the concluding report from the Office of the Children’s Commissioners into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups “if only someone had listened” November 2013. The report made a number of recommendations which the work stream highlighted to address in the 2014-2015 strategy.
- 2.18 The progress of the CSE work stream benefitted from a strong, committed and enthusiastic team of professionals. Over the year the work stream developed and where there had been identified services who were not previously involved, the work stream has been pro-active in inviting representation from these agencies.
- 2.19 The main focus of the CSE hub was to reduce the threat and risk to the victim. This was achieved by having a multi-agency personalised plan for every child at risk of CSE. The plans specific focus was on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child or young person and supporting her or him through the criminal justice system. The plans address the need for therapeutic and support services for children and young people, after the abuse has stopped. Partners also collaborate to share information about potential perpetrators, who are dealt with dynamically to reduce the risk to the victim and other children.
- 2.20 There had been a range of changes to this service towards the latter part of 2014, in order to ensure effectiveness in responding to the issue of CSE on an operational level, and incorporating recommendations and learning from relevant reports. November 2014 saw the recruitment of a temporary CSE manager. Simultaneously, the local authority appointed a designated strategic lead for CSE. There has also been a significant resource input from the police, which consist of 6 temporary investigators and a full-time Sergeant. Eight detectives had also been moved from other areas into child protection and to support the work of the CSE hub.
- 2.21 The role of the CSE manager was developed to look at referral pathways, risk assessments and develop a database in order to link systems and ultimately influence practice. The new systems and processes improved the quality of data held in relation of young people who were jointly managed by police and social care with regards to CSE. The establishment of the new database also allowed improved monitoring, reviewing and identifying trends of children and young people where concerns of CSE were a factor. These were reviewed regularly to ensure young people were assessed at the right levels of risk.
- 2.22 In light of the above, there was a review of the risk assessments which were used to identify and assist in the identification of risk and vulnerabilities. The new partner agency tool is the same that is being used across West Yorkshire, which allows a level of consistency in respect of level of risk across the five West Yorkshire districts. The partner agency tool is based on nationally identified indicators of risks and vulnerabilities to CSE. Information about the tool and how to access it has been shared with the CSE work stream for dissemination in their relevant agencies.
- 2.23 The role of the CSE-co-ordinator was a new post to the board that commenced in October 2014. The post was been funded by the Stronger Families initiative, with the remit to support the chair and the work stream in the delivering of CSE strategy / action plan. The role involved having a strategic oversight of practice and support the Chair of the work stream and coordinate a strategic response to CSE in Kirklees. This involved promoting, monitoring and evaluating multi-agency effectiveness in safeguarding children and young people and strengthening, supporting and equipping a workforce that is committed to learning and developing safeguarding practice in relation to CSE.

- 2.24 Between December 2014 and April 2018 a Child Sexual Exploitation and Safeguarding Member Panel was established to satisfy and ensure Lead Members that robust safeguarding arrangements were in place. The Panel membership consisted of 5 members i.e. one member from each of the political groups on the Council plus the Cabinet Member with statutory responsibility.
- 2.25 The panel met four weekly, and its purpose was to oversee the local developments in the monitoring of, and response to, the risks associated with Child Sexual Exploitation. To satisfy themselves, as corporate parents, that the arrangements for safeguarding looked after children in Kirklees are sufficiently robust, and to ensure that, where appropriate and having regard to confidentiality requirements, individual members of the Panel ensure that feedback is provided to members of their wider political groups. Following a review of all Kirklees Councils Children's panels and Boards, it was agreed that the Child Sexual Exploitation Member panel would cease and all delegated responsibility and reporting would be undertaken by Children's Scrutiny Panel and Children's Improvement Board effective from May 2018.
- 2.26 In December 2016 the West Yorkshire and York Leaders considered a report that looked at how a Common Licensing Policy Framework could be delivered and options for the organisational structure to deliver Licensing Services across the Combined Authority Area to ensure that governance and risk management processes are robust and effective.
- 2.27 The West Yorkshire and York Councils were determined to effectively manage the risks identified in the Jay and Casey Reports into child sexual exploitation in Rotherham to ensure that taxi services were provided by individuals who were suitable to hold a taxi licence and in vehicles that met the requirements of all the Authorities in the Combined Authority Area ("the CAA").
- 2.28 It was agreed that a Common Licensing Policy Framework would be delivered through a collaborative working arrangement and that the West Yorkshire and York Licensing group would undertake the role of an Advisory Committee to provide a political steer to the Licensing Managers. In addition it was agreed that the Action Plan would be developed for the delivery of the Common Licensing Policy Framework.
- 2.29 The Combined Authority Area have ensured that before the issuing of a license it is a mandatory requirement that safeguarding and CSE awareness training is undertaken. To date all 3000 taxi drivers had attended the safeguarding training. Multi-agency traffic days were carried out with the Police Licensing Authority and spot checks are carried out regularly. A national database has been implemented which holds the name and identifiable feature of the taxi driver, local authority details and if a licence had been revoked, refused or suspended.
- 2.30 To ensure that all taxi and private hire vehicles, drivers & operators are compliant with legislation and licence conditions across the Combined Authority Area (CA Area), the CAA has introduced Cross Border enforcement by Licensing Authorities outside their area. This allows officers to act across the whole of West Yorkshire in relation to enforcement for taxi licensing. Previously, officers could only take enforcement action in relation to taxis licensed in their area. As taxis frequently cross local authorities' borders and some exclusively work in an authority where they are not licensed. They have also undertaken training with takeaways and accommodation providers in respect of hotels and bed and breakfast establishments. These premises have also been recently visited/inspected during test purchase investigations
- 2.31 The Children Missing From Home or Care Team was set up as a pilot in June 2017 in order to provide some consistency in response and timeliness of return interviews, as this had previously been done on an ad hoc basis through a variety of changing service delivery models. The team's initial objectives were primarily:
- to provide a Return Interview (RI) service to Looked after Children
 - to improve take up and better understand reasons for the reduction of RI's being undertaken

- to offer a consistent approach to missing young people whilst ensuring that the process that are in place protect these young people are followed when a young person is/has been reported missing. The Missing Pilot focus was extended to all children and young people living in Kirklees.
- 2.32 A review of both services was undertaken in December 2017. It highlighted that a number of the young people had been involved with the CSE Hub, Missing Team and other services. It recognised that child sexual exploitation, peer on peer violence and abuse, modern day slavery, including gangs and groups, criminal exploitation, and going missing should not be seen or responded to in isolation as they often overlap, creating a complex set of harmful circumstances and experiences for children, young people, families and communities. In response to the findings of the review it was recognised and agreed that, in order to improve our arrangements for children and young people most at risk, the development of the Risk and Vulnerability Team would strengthen our safeguarding approach.
- 2.33 The Risk and Vulnerability Team has been operational since January 2018. The overall aim of the team is the work with partners to reduce the identified risk and provide a flexible and responsive service tailored to the needs and wishes of the young person and their wider family. Intervention is based on a contextualised safeguarding, whole family, child centred and relationship based approach.
- 2.34 The Risk and Vulnerability Team is made up of social workers, youth workers, children and family's workers, Risk and Vulnerability co-ordinators and specialist police officers which brings a range of experience with working with partner agencies, communities, young people and children.
- 2.35 The Risk and Vulnerability Team works with young people who are either at medium or high risk of, or have been, sexually exploited. Many of the young people are also regularly missing at the time of referral. The team is currently working with young people, providing them with a safe space where they can share their concerns with professionals. The change in approach is best described as intensive, flexible, responsive and tailored support to young people and their parents/carers.
- 2.36 The Interventions are informed by the main areas of risk, as highlighted by the CSE risk assessment, and delivered in a way which considers the views of the young person and their family, as well as addressing the areas of highlighted risk. In addition to working with young people, we also support parents, other family members whom the young person may be living with/in contact with and at times, foster carers. For young people who are missing, a safety plan is a priority piece of work and the 'push and pull' model is used to explore why they are going missing and what that 'looks like.'
- 2.37 The Risk and Vulnerability Team is building better links with the local communities and organisations. Together, they are supporting the most vulnerable young people who are at risk from CSE, Missing and Child Criminal Exploitation. This has strengthened partnership working with the police and community safety and has increased the understanding of other services in Kirklees that work with children and young people at risk of, or who are experiencing CSE, trafficking, peer harmful sexual behaviours and other specific risks associated with missing (forced marriage, honour based violence, female genital mutilation) and have identified gaps in service provision, whilst monitoring the effectiveness of current service provision.
- 2.38 The Risk and Vulnerability Team has undertaken considerable work to ensure that children and young people are better safeguarded from sexual exploitation. The emphasis now is to maintain the impetus to drive forward strategic and operational developments to continue to effectively tackle child sexual exploitation in line with the identified key priorities and challenges, these being;
- To continue to increase awareness, knowledge and process to identify areas of concern / "hotspots" within Kirklees and enhance our intelligence sufficiently to accurately identify taxi firms/hotels/other business of concern and agree best disruption tactics

- To continue the work in engaging with our local communities, and with those children and young people whose vulnerability is hidden.

2.39 The Risk and Vulnerability Team provides a period of support for young people with a view to reducing the identified risk and the exact nature of the work depends on the needs of the young person but will combine building resilience and direct work on relevant topics.

2.40 The development of the Risk and Vulnerability team has been successful in that it has enabled effective multi-agency response to CSE. This has been particularly important as it has allowed the team to build and improve on the work undertaken by the CSE and Missing team whilst also recognising the need to respond strategically and in line with legislation and statutory guidance to the emerging safeguarding issues that are associated with child sexual exploitation, and more predominately with children missing from home or care and from the view of universal services, child trafficking and criminal exploitation. In addition The Risk and Vulnerability Team:

- Will strengthen a contextual safeguarding approach, which recognises that child sexual exploitation, peer on peer violence and abuse, modern day slavery, including gangs and groups, criminal exploitation, and going missing should not be seen or responded to in isolation as they often overlap, creating a complex set of harmful circumstances and experiences for children, young people, families and communities.
- Assist with ensuring that robust multi-agency needs led risk management plans are in place that give full consideration to a child's vulnerability and need factors and help practice improve to include a coordinated, effectively actioned strengths-based approach, and where relevant compliment statutory child protection processes.
- Support continuing to develop 'profiles' relating to individuals and /or groups who exploit and abuse to enable the partnership to utilise these to effectively target resources and interventions and help safeguard children
- Help to prevent children being vulnerable to harm and abuse from going missing and to prevent children experiencing or continuing to experience sexual and /or criminal exploitation, by reducing vulnerability and proactively responding to information and intelligence shared.
- Help strengthen the response to children who are both a victim and perpetrator of exploitation, harm and abuse and ensure those children receive child centred responses, assessments and interventions.
- Help coordinate clear pathways to centrally collate feedback received from children and families; to ensure that reality of children's experiences inform and enhance strategic knowledge.

2.41 The KSCB CSE Strategy 2016/2018 and action plan is near to completion and the following objectives have been achieved:

- To develop preventative services which reduce risk and raise awareness of CSE amongst children, young people, parents, carers and communities.
- To support families and communities who are dealing with the consequences of CSE.
- To develop community resilience to the potentially divisive and damaging impact of CSE on Kirklees and its constituent members.
- To Safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people who may have been or may be sexually exploited and to ensure that they are properly supported in the course of and after criminal proceedings.
- To offer support and therapeutic services to survivors of CSE.

A new West Yorkshire Risk and Vulnerability Plan is expected to be implemented by late September 2018.

2 Implications for the Council

3.1 Not applicable

4. **Consultees and their opinions**

Not applicable

5. **Next steps**

- 5.1 Kirklees Council, with partners, is key to driving forward the improvement, innovation and practice development in relation to our response to children and young people at risk of, or being, exploited. To ensure that we effectively safeguard children and young people requires continued commitment and support from elected members, and the wider community, to deliver on the agreed priorities for improving multi-agency working regarding child exploitation, and that has been developed and agreed in partnership by Kirklees Council, the Police and wider partners.

6. **Officer recommendations and reasons**

Not applicable

7. **Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations**

Not applicable

8. **Contact officer**

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9. **Background Papers and History of Decisions**

- 9.1 Not applicable

10. **Service Director responsible**

Elaine McShane

Service Director

Family Support and Child Protection