

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY DIRECTOR of CHILDREN'S, EDUCATION AND EARLY HELP SERVICES

TO: ACE	ADULT'S, CHILDREN'S & EDUCATION COMMITTEE		
DATE:	2 MARCH 2016	AGENDA ITEM:	12
TITLE:	CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE) UPDATE 2016		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	Cllr GAVIN	PORTFOLIO:	CHILDREN'S SERVICES
SERVICE:	EARLY HELP AND SAFEGUARDING	WARDS:	all
LEAD OFFICER:	ANDY FITTON	TEL:	937 4688
JOB TITLE:	HEAD OF SERVICE FOR EARLY HELP	E-MAIL:	Andy.Fitton@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To update the committee on the progress made against the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) priorities from the CSE Strategy (p7 of the document) as agreed a year ago at March 15 ACE committee.

1.2 To raise the profile of National Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Awareness day on 18th March 2016 and to share the proposed actions taking place across Reading in relation to this campaign.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 A review of the action plan by the LSCB CSE and missing children sub group in January 2016 has identified significant progress against a range of priorities, particularly since the filling of the CSE coordinator role. The majority of the actions have been completed or will be by the end of the financial year. However there continues to be challenges that need to be addressed in the refreshed plan for next financial year. In particular the future priorities for a refreshed action plan will be:

- Development of a CSE & Missing children Dashboard and performance management arrangement that will outline impact, guide and steer policy and decision making at a strategic level.
- Increased staff knowledge and confidence leading to improved identification and response to CSE using screening tools and notifications to SEMRAC.
- Developing a model of parent support that includes self-help, peer support and professional interventions
- Improved intelligence sharing resulting in securing successful prosecutions
- Strengthening transition arrangements between Children's and Adults services for victims of CSE.
- Learning from other Local Authorities.

3. RECOMMENDED ACTION

3.1 For the committee to note the progress made against the LSCB's CSE strategic priorities and a report to be brought back to ACE committee in 12 months to update further progress to tackle CSE and children going missing.

3.2 For the committee to endorse RBCs participation in the NWG national CSE awareness day 'Helping Hands' campaign.

4. POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of sexual abuse that requires effective multi-agency partnership working to safeguard those who are being abused and those at risk of being exploited. CSE cannot be dealt with solely by individual local authorities, police divisions or public health authorities each operating in their own silos. Offenders and victims cross administrative boundaries and so should the collective response of the LSCB to safeguard the children of Reading.

4.2 In July 2012, 'Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan: progress report' was published and a 'Step by Step Guide' for practitioners was issued by the Department for Education. The Action Plan published by the Department for Education cited the expectation that LSCB's will implement a local action plan to map CSE needs and prevalence in their own area, develop an effective local strategy ensuring there is a co-ordinated multi-agency response to child sexual exploitation ensuring the response safeguards and promote the welfare of groups of children who are potentially more vulnerable to CSE.

4.3 Professor Alexis Jays report into the sexual exploitation of children in Rotherham was a stark reminder for every professional working in the field of protecting children from sexual exploitation. 'The sexual exploitation of children: it couldn't happen here, could it?' report by Ofsted, November 2014, goes further to recommend every area has a CSE action plan that robustly monitors the capabilities and progress of agencies to keep children safe from CSE. The current Ofsted Single Inspection Framework has been reviewed to ensure there is increased scrutiny of the local authority's performance in this area of practise.

4.4 As a consequence of this national picture Reading's CSE strategy (2014 - 2017) is now in place, adopted by ACE committee in March 2015 and launched at an LSCB event in June 2015, along with the associated LSCB CSE tool kit. The strategy builds upon the Statement of Intent produced by Thames Valley Police in February 2013 and was developed as part of the work of the Reading LSCB Child Sexual Exploitation Steering Group.

4.5 The 3-year strategy builds on the progress that has already been made in Reading to ensure that we are effective in **Preventing** CSE from happening, **Protecting** those who may be at risk, to **Pursue** and **Disrupt** those who may be posing a risk to children and to ensure victims of CSE are supported in their **Recovery**.

4.6 As a result Reading has established its strategic over-sight meeting, as a sub group of the LSCB. This group regularly reviews the action plan and reports into the LSCB. In addition to this Readings LSCB multi-agency operation's group, Sexual Exploitation and Missing Risk Assessment Conference (SEMRAC) meets monthly to review all concerning CSE cases. At this meeting a range of statutory partners will confirm the level of risk for new cases based on the initial CSE screening tool completed by the lead professional and new information shared at the meeting. For all high risk cases a plan is formed at the meeting to attempt to decrease the CSE risks that is then expected to be implemented between meetings. At the same meeting all existing cases with a SEMRAC plan are reviewed for progress. The risk rating of

low, medium and high is refreshed based on updated information. SEMRAC will continue to monitor the progress of cases with a SEMRAC plan until the risk is low.

4.7 The Department of Education has issued guidance for Local Authorities, LSCBs and the Police for dealing with children who go missing from home or care in June 2013. The guidance identifies key responsibilities for each of these key partners. In particular for Reading Borough Council this guidance has resulted in the setting up of return home interviews by the Youth service once the Police has completed the safe and well checks.

4.8 National guidance, key national reviews, e.g. Oxfordshire serious case review March 2015 or Louise Casey's report on Rotherham February 2015 and briefings will continue to shape our local response to tackling CSE in Reading and will support our planning of operational work and training.

5. CURRENT POSITION

5.1 A review of the LSCB CSE strategy action plan, completed in January 2016, indicates that progress has been achieved but that there are still ongoing challenges that need addressing. The table on appendix 1 (pages 6 - 8) provides an overview of the review as plotted against the 12 areas of priorities in the CSE strategy.

5.2 Significant progress has been made in the areas of Prevention and Protect. In particular our governance arrangements are now established, with stronger partnership participation. It is important to report the improvement in SEMRAC in its delivery of safeguarding individual children at risk of CSE. The CSE tool kit and training for professionals has been developed and widely available. The CSE coordinator and champions are vital in ensuring that in the next 12 months builds on the initial success to create a wider workforce confidence and use of screening tools, processes and actions to decrease CSE risks. Also of note is the growing confidence in the delivery of the missing children return interview service and the crucial learning from the 'Voice of Children experiencing CSE interventions' work and report that provides important insights on how to support children and families experiencing CSE.

5.3 Ongoing challenges include the collection and use of information and data to improve our response both strategically and operationally to CSE. This includes the need to focus more in multi-agency setting on the Pursue and Disrupt priorities from the strategy. Transition arrangements for children, aged 18 and over, into adult services needs to improve in the coming 12 months as well. This will be reflected in next years refreshed action plan.

5.4 In addition to the strategic plan review it is important to note the current position on RBCs service offer for ensuring there is a Missing Children return interview. Providing an interview once a child has returned from being missing is a critical step to safeguard vulnerable children. The interview is carried out by an independent worker and provides an opportunity to verify the situation that led up to the child going missing, and to identify the push and pull factors that are risks in the child's life. This should lead to a range of relevant preventative actions being deployed, dependant on the information gained.

5.5 A significant improvement in the performance occurred by Sept 2015 due to early learning of delivering this service in Quarter 1 resulting in a significant change to business processes. This had a positive and quick effect, doubling the return interviews within 3 months, with 69% of children receiving an interview in July to September. As of January 16 the cumulative year performance stands at 47% completion rate, which is lower than targeted but this is due to the slow start. Two recent audits have been undertaken focusing on Outcomes and Support from Interviews & Quality of the practice on completing the interviews. Both audits demonstrate positive practice and results for children, with key learning points that youth workers are now tackling.

CSE national awareness day - 18th March 2015

5.6 The National Child Sexual Awareness Day aims to highlight the issues surrounding Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) encouraging everyone to think, spot and speak out against abuse and adopt a zero tolerance to adults developing inappropriate relationships with children and children forming inappropriate relationships with their peers.

5.7 Reading wants to capitalise and promote this important event as the council is committed to raising awareness and tackling CSE and therefore Reading Borough Council and partners will be promoting the National Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness day on 18th March 2016.

5.8 The CSE Co-ordinator alongside Reading's CSE Champions have developed an action plan of activities that focuses on:

- Specific awareness raising in our Schools, local youth provision and with professionals, using School assemblies, facilitated group sessions as well as targeted publicity information in newsletters, posters and flyers.
- General public awareness raising through a media release and a local social media campaign following the NWG network lead using the 'Helping Hands' approach.
<http://www.stop-cse.org/national-child-exploitation-awareness-day/>

5.9 This report is inviting senior leaders and committee members to unite against child sexual exploitation for National CSE Awareness Day on Monday 18th March 2016. To support the campaign and join in raising awareness on social media:

- Write a personal pledge on your hands to show support for the campaign (view examples at www.stop-cse.org) then post a photo of your message on social media (including Twitter, Facebook or Instagram) with the hashtags *#HelpingHands* and *#CSEDay16* to help us raise awareness of CSE Day.
- Retweet, share or like the NWG Network Twitter <https://twitter.com/NatWorGroup> or Facebook www.facebook.com/NWG-Network-478913415488899
- Retweet, like or share the social media messages supporting CSE Day issued by Reading Council's Twitter and Facebook accounts on 18th March.

6. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

6.1 The work of on CSE and Children who go missing is aligned with the service priorities in the corporate plan for Reading Borough Council of

- Safeguarding and protecting those that are most vulnerable
- Keeping the town clean, safe, green and active

6.2 In addition to corporate service priority links the work of CSE and Children who go missing also continues to be one of the four priorities of the Reading's Local Safeguarding Board, both in the current and next financial year.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

7.1 No formal consultation is required however ensuring the involvement and participation of children and young people who have experienced CSE to shape and influence our response to this issue is essential. As noted in the current progress summary over 30 young people, and their families, have been interviewed to hear the Voice of Children regarding their experience of CSE interventions. This has resulted in key learning points for practitioners to be shared through a communication plan and the report is available on the LSCB website; <http://www.readinglscb.org.uk/information-professionals/child-sexual-exploitation/>

7.2 There continues to be strong commitment from Reading Borough Council and partners to ensure that individual young people are invited and involved in shaping the direct delivery of their services, in CSE as well as other key services.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 An equalities impact assessment is not required for this report, but in the future the CSE performance dashboard and CSE reports will include information on the impact of equalities within CSE and Children who go missing.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no legal implications to this report, although the Children's Social Care work enables the Council to meet the statutory duties set out in the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004 and the Childcare Act 2006.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no specific financial implications for Reading Borough Council from this report.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Berkshire LSCB Child Protection Procedures - July 2014 update

<http://berks.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>

See Me, Hear Me: Framework for Action from the Final Report from the Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups Policy Briefing January 2014-10-15

http://www.trixonline.co.uk/website/news/pdf/policy_briefing_No-104.pdf

Statutory guidance Safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation DCSF 2009

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-young-people-from-sexual-exploitation-supplementary-guidance>

Cutting them free how is the UK progressing in protecting its children from sexual exploitation Barnardo's, 2012

<http://www.barnardos.org.uk/cuttingthemfree.pdf>

Childhood lost October 2013 - Nicola Blackwood

"I thought I was the only one. The only one in the world" The Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups Interim report November 2012

Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham 1997 - 2013 Alexis Jay OBE

The sexual exploitation of children: it couldn't happen here, could it? Ofsted, November 2014

'Real Voices', Child exploitation in Greater Manchester and independent report by Ann Coffey, MP October 2014

Reading LSCB website references including CSE strategy, toolkit and Voice of the Child in CSE report (Nov 15). <http://www.readinglscb.org.uk/information-professionals/child-sexual-exploitation/>

APPENDIX 1

CSE strategic priority update for ACE committee (March 2016) as taken from the CSE strategy page 7. The priorities are in italics and an overview of the review progress and challenges are noted in bullet points below each priority.

Vision:	For children and young people to be free from the risks and hard of sexual exploitation in Reading		
	PRIORITIES		
PREVENT	<p><i>Ensure the governance framework for CSE delivers an effective partnership response to CSE</i></p> <p>Progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSCB CSE strategic sub group, SEMRAC and CSE champions groups are all set up with terms of references and meeting regularly. Regular reporting back to LSCB on the implementation of the action plan <p>Challenge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connection to the Community Safety partnership needs improving. 	<p><i>Provide awareness and targeted training to professionals.</i></p> <p><i>Engage parents, schools, colleges, local communities and voluntary sector in prevention & awareness training</i></p> <p>Progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CSE coordinator and CSE Champions have delivered 15 CSE screening tool & awareness workshops (to date), influencing practice of 75 relevant professionals. <p>Challenge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wider partnership involvement in the CSE training offer. 	<p><i>Establish a targeted prevention & self-protection programme for use by schools, voluntary/ community sector organisations and with targeted vulnerable groups.</i></p> <p>Progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chelsea's Choice (a drama production providing audiences with a hard hitting experience about CSE) has been commissioned to deliver the programme in 6 secondary schools, the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), in 2 professional sessions and 1 session for parents and carers. The return home interviews for missing children are improving, in terms of the number of successful interviews and a first check on the quality of information gathered as well as the experience for young people. <p>Challenge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistency of engagement and prioritisation of PHSE in schools in key related topics e.g. health relationships, drugs and alcohol.
PROTECT	<p><i>Ensure that multi agency processes and procedures are in place and effective in identifying CSE risks.</i></p> <p>Progress</p>	<p><i>Ensure there is a clear pathway in place that manages the risk of CSE at the appropriate level of need.</i></p> <p>Progress</p>	<p><i>Ensure that victim of CSE receive the support and are protected from further harm.</i></p> <p>Progress</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSCB threshold reviewed completed in 2015 and includes CSE risk factors. CSE tool kit launched June 15 and available on LSCB website, including a CSE screening tool. <p>Challenge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns around the speed of progress on Information Sharing Protocol. This is preventing a wider audience from being part of the SEMRAC process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The multi-agency SEMRAC operational group has improved significantly in the last 4 month. Regular attendance from case holding social workers improving the risk management and follow up; all partners are participating more this includes being prepared for the meeting and greater information sharing that is resulting in improved risk management planning. <p>Challenge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to the turnover of Children's Social Care staff, information into SEMRAC and follow up actions from the meeting are not as effective as they could be. No clear transition pathway into adult social care for children becoming adults who still require safeguarding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit of CSE cases completed and reported to LSCB by CSE coordinator. There is an improvement in use of CSE Screening tools, as seen on children's files. <p>Challenge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence from CSE coordinator completing quality assurance and information sharing between partners is leading to a conclusion that not enough SEMRAC notifications are being completed.
PURSUE & DISRUPT	<p><i>Use the collective intelligence gathered whilst preventing and protecting to produce problem profiles.</i></p> <p>Challenge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is an area of work that requires focus next financial year. 	<p><i>Proactively identify and disrupt locations where they maybe CSE activity.</i></p> <p>Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing cooperation with Police and trading standards to act on information. The CSE coordinator has developed a first version of a data map of CSE prevalence intended for use to inform 	<p><i>Proactively use legislation to challenge and confront inappropriate behaviour.</i></p> <p>Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing cooperation with Police and trading standards to act on information. <p>Challenge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disruption and prosecution requires greater visibility and focus at the strategy group level.

		<p>action and service planning.</p> <p>Challenge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capturing and identifying success in this area requires improvement. 	
RECOVERY	<p><i>Ensure there are clear recovery pathways for victims of CSE.</i></p> <p>Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been a strengthening of the recovery offer for victims and survivors. This includes Barnardos who are now offering its U-Turn project that provides be-spoke specialist CSE interventions to young people up to 19 year olds. Rahab, a local funded organisation, who have broadened the scope of their exploitation service to include children and young people, formerly they were an adult only service. In addition, Trust House is established in Reading and provide therapeutic support post trauma that would include CSE. <p>Challenge</p> <p>Ensuring there is enough provision in place to meet rising and identified demand.</p>	<p><i>Ensure there are smooth transitions between children and adult services</i></p> <p>Challenge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No clear transition pathway into adult social care for children becoming adults who still require safeguarding. 	<p><i>Ensure the needs of parents and families of victims of CSE are considered and support provided.</i></p> <p>Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rahab will offer a holistic whole family approach in treating CSE. • Parenting programmes are being developed and a Chelsea's Choice session was provided to families. <p>Challenge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement of whole family assessments, as per the Troubled Families ambition.