

## **CABINET – 16 DECEMBER 2014**

### **PROGRESS REPORT ON TACKLING CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

**Report by Director of Children, Education & Families**

#### **Purpose**

1. This report is to update members on progress on tackling child sexual exploitation (CSE) and to provide assurance on how we are responding to this issue.

#### **Background**

2. Cabinet received a report on Actions In Response to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in November 2012, following the successful prosecutions under Operation Bullfinch. That report set out key information about the nature of child sexual exploitation and progress in tackling the issue since the Operation Bullfinch case.
3. Work on CSE is led on a multi-agency partnership basis through the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board via the Child Sexual Exploitation Sub-Group which provides leadership and challenge to ensure the CSE Strategy and Action Plan is being delivered.
4. The CSE Sub-group has produced an annual report for the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board which is attached and which sets out progress on the key areas of the action plan.
5. In October 2014 The Jay Report was published into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham and has implications for all Councils to consider.
6. In November 2014 Ofsted published a report into the thematic inspection of Child Sexual Exploitation in eight local authorities and that report has implications for all Councils to consider.

#### **Key Issues**

7. Key areas of work which Cabinet will wish to consider include work to reduce episodes of children going missing from home and care and progress on ensuring all children who go missing have a 'Return Interview' which looks at why they went missing, what happened to them when they were missing and what needs to happen to help them not to go missing again. Going Missing is a major risk area for CSE and work across children's social care and partners has been successful in reducing the number of missing episodes. All children who go missing now have a return interview.

8. Looked After Children, for whom all County Councillors have a Corporate Parenting responsibility, are recognised as a particularly vulnerable group and Cabinet have approved the Placement Strategy which includes a commitment to keeping the most vulnerable children close. Children at risk of CSE who need to be placed away from the local area are monitored closely and this is scrutinised by the Corporate Parenting Panel. Progress on the implementation of the Placement Strategy is being reported separately.
9. On the 24 September 2014 the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the Secretary of State for Education wrote to all Local Council Leaders in the wake of the Jay Report into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham, South Yorkshire. The Secretaries of State made reference to a statutory inspection under Section 10 of the Local Government Act which is taking place in Rotherham and which is due to report back to ministers at the end of November. They requested that Council Leaders cooperate with that review as required.
10. The Secretaries of State also referred to a thematic inspection of Child Sexual Exploitation to be undertaken by Ofsted. That inspection took place in the autumn and looked at eight local authority areas. Ofsted published that report on the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2014 and an initial review of the report is contained in this report to identify any learning for Oxfordshire.
11. The Secretaries of State noted that *'Professor Jay's report highlighted serious failings in the council over a number of years with regard to the safeguarding of children, and also serious failings of corporate governance, leadership, culture, and the operation of the overview and scrutiny function. In advance of Louise Casey's inspection, we ask that every Leader read Professor Jay's report and consider whether you have adequate measures in place to ensure that you cannot be accused of similar failings'*. The Annual Report from the CSE Sub-group includes consideration of the recommendations from the Jay Report and an analysis of Oxfordshire's position in relation to those recommendations.
12. The Jay report makes 15 recommendations, most of which are targeted directly towards Rotherham Council and its safeguarding partners, including for the work of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The final recommendation refers to the Department for Education and its response to Serious Case Reviews.
13. The Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board CSE Sub-group has considered these recommendations against what is known about practice in Oxfordshire. It is positive that the issues identified have either already been addressed or are part of on-going work which is included in the CSE Action Plan. This is set out in the CSE Annual Report
14. The position in Oxfordshire is particularly positive in the following areas:
  - All cases open to the Kingfisher Team have good quality risk assessments in place and there is good evidence that the CSE

Screening Tool is being widely used across partner agencies to identify early risks and concerns.

- The Looked After Children placement strategy addresses the needs of children at risk of CSE and current practice includes close monitoring of all out-of-county placements.
- The Kingfisher Team and The Early intervention Hubs operate open access referrals to enable children, families and professionals to quickly access services.
- The Kingfisher Team is working well as evidenced by the growing number of referrals, successful prosecutions, disruption activity and outreach work to identify harder to reach children.
- The Kingfisher Team, supported by other local authority services such as the Aftercare service, are clear that victims of CSE need long term support and continue to offer that support
- The OSCB has a well-established quality assurance programme, including case file audits and 'Eyes-On' learning summaries following audit work.
- The need to reach out to harder to reach children at risk has been recognised and joint funding has been agreed for a new post within Kingfisher to work with girls and women from minority ethnic communities.
- Work has begun on perpetrator profiling with TVP taking lead responsibility.
- The Serious Case Review A-F is being written to be published without redaction.

15. The CSE sub-group is further developing work in a number of areas.

- The use and usefulness of the Child Sexual Exploitation Handbook and Screening Tool will be reviewed and revised and this will include any additional learning from the Serious Case Review.
- A mapping exercise is to be undertaken across the county to identify all services that currently engage with children and young people around CSE and grooming and to identify service gaps. The OSCB has commissioned a review of the Kingfisher Team which will consider how well, following its first year of practice, the service operates, capacity and demand and the therapeutic and support pathways open to young victims and those at risk.
- The support for young adults who have been the victim of CSE is being considered including the option of an intensive support option for the most vulnerable.

- The CSE community strategy and action plan is being developed to include targeted intervention with priority communities where profiling identifies particular victim or perpetrator risks. This will be informed by the perpetrator profiling work being undertaken by TVP.

## The Ofsted Thematic Inspection Report

16. The Ofsted thematic inspection report 'The Sexual Exploitation of Children: It Couldn't Happen Here, Could It?' contains 25 recommendations. These are set out below with the initial analysis of the position in Oxfordshire:

All Local Authorities should:

Recommendation	Position in Oxfordshire
Ensure that managers oversee all individual child sexual exploitation cases; managers should sign off all assessments, plan and case review arrangements to assess the level of risk and ensure that plans are progressing appropriately	This is a requirement of managers. Compliance is monitored by more senior managers and is considered in case file audits. The Framework recording system flags when a manager has an action to sign off a piece of work.
Ensure that every child returning from a missing episode is given a return interview. Local authorities should establish a set of practice standards for these interviews and ensure that they are consistently met. Information obtained from the interviews should be centrally collated and used to inform and improve future operational and strategic activity	All children should receive a Return Interview. This is monitored through the Missing Persons Panel and reported to the OSCB CSE Sub-group. More work is needed to collate the findings and use these to inform practice.
Ensure that schools and the local authority cross-reference absence information with risk assessments for individual children and young people	There is on-going work to ensure that key information relating to absence from school is monitored and collated by staff with CEF.
Establish a targeted preventative and self-protection programme on child sexual exploitation for looked after children	Work is in place for example the use of Chelsea's Choice and Values versus Violence which looked after children access and each LAC has a risk assessment in place. This is not set out in a separate document which will be considered as a good practice development.

Local Authorities and Partners should;

<p>Develop and publish a child sexual exploitation action plan that fully reflects the 2009 supplementary guidance; progress against the action plan should be shared regularly with the local authority Chief Executive, the LSCB, the Community Safety Partnership and the Police and Crime Commissioner</p>	<p>Oxfordshire has a CSE Action Plan in place, arrangements fully reflects the 2009 guidance. They are to be refreshed in 2015. Progress against the plan is monitored through the CSE Sub-group on a monthly basis. The sub-group reports to each meeting of the OSCB and in addition is now providing an annual report which is shared more widely. The chair of the sub-group will need to ensure this includes those persons/bodies named.</p>
<p>Ensure that information and intelligence is shared proactively across the partnership to improve the protection of children in their area and increase the rate of prosecutions</p>	<p>TVP provide a CSE prevalence report to each meeting of the CSE sub-group.</p>
<p>Consider using the available child sexual exploitation assessment tools to improve risk assessments of children and young people in their area; where these are in place they should be used consistently by all agencies</p>	<p>Oxfordshire has been using the tools since 2012 and they are used consistently by partner agencies. This is to be reviewed in 2015 to ensure any learning is incorporated and the tools amended if necessary based on practitioner experience.</p>
<p>Ensure that sufficient appropriate therapeutic support is available to meet the needs of young people at risk of or who have suffered from child sexual exploitation, including care leavers</p>	<p>Children in contact with the Kingfisher Team benefit from 'fast track' access to services such as Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHSs). This is dependent on the role of the specialist health professional in the team. Further work is need to consider therapeutic pathways for those not in contact with Kingfisher, including some older young people and this will be included in the Kingfisher review.</p>
<p>Make sure that local strategies and plans are informed by the opinions and experiences of those who have been at risk of or who have suffered from child sexual exploitation</p>	<p>The CSE Strategy and Plan was informed by the views of some young people who had been victims of CSE but this is insufficiently developed and will</p>

	be considered further as part of the Strategy and Action Plan refresh.
Enable professionals to build stable, trusting and lasting relationships with children and young people at risk of or suffering from sexual exploitation	The Kingfisher Team are committed to building such relationships and experience to date illustrates that it often takes many months for a child to build these relationships and learn to trust. The team demonstrate this through on-going work with young a adult which, whilst positive, has an impact on capacity in the team to take new referrals. The pathways for young people post abuse will be considered as part of the Kingfisher review.
Consider how effective local schools are in raising awareness and protecting children at risk of or who have suffered from sexual exploitation	All secondary schools have engaged with awareness raising and preventative work including the Chelsea's Choice drama having been presented twice in each school. Secondary schools are engaging well with the Kingfisher Team and the locality based 'extended team meetings'. Primary schools within the City have engaged with the Values Versus Violence Programme which is currently being evaluated before consideration of wider role out across the county. It would be helpful to undertake further work to collate evidence of individual schools engagement.

LSCB's should:

Ensure that the local authority and its partners have a comprehensive action plan in place to tackle child sexual exploitation	Oxfordshire has a CSE Action Plan in place which fully reflects the 2009 guidance. They are to be refreshed in 2015. Progress against the plan is monitored through the CSE Sub-group on a monthly basis.
Hold partners to account for the urgency and priority they give to their collective	This accountability is exercised through the CSE sub-group and

and individual contribution to the child sexual exploitation action plan	the minutes evidence appropriate challenge and improvement in contributions as a result.
Critically evaluate how effective the activity and progress of each of the LSCB members is against the action plan and publish these findings in the LSCB annual report	The sub-group will need to consider this recommendation further.
Ensure that all partners routinely follow child protection procedures for all children at risk of or who have suffered from child sexual exploitation	Appropriate procedures are in place. The Kingfisher Team coordinate Strategy Meetings which are the start point in any child protection concerns and these are monitored through a dedicated Independent Reviewing Officer who is attached to the team.
Ensure that partners meet their statutory duties in relation to children returning from missing episodes where child sexual exploitation is a potential or known risk factor	All children who return from being missing have an independent Return Interview.
Ensure that all partners carry out their responsibilities as defined in the locally agreed threshold document, which sets out the different levels of provision offered to individual children and young people at risk of or who have suffered from child sexual exploitation in the area, based on their individual needs	The threshold document in place for many years and is widely understood and accepted by partners. The Ofsted Inspection in Oxfordshire in April/May 2014 commented positively on how well it was understood, accepted and used.
Ensure that an appropriate level of child sexual exploitation training is available to all professionals in the local area who require it; specialist training should be targeted on those working with children and young people at risk of or suffering from child sexual exploitation; attendance for both should be monitored with follow up action taken when professionals fail to attend	There is a comprehensive range of CSE training available through the OSCB including foundation level eLearning and specialist training. In addition CSE training has been incorporated into a wide range of more general safeguarding training.  The OSCB training sub-group monitors take up and have identified some concerns which are being addressed with individual agencies.
Evaluate the impact of training with a focus on how it makes a positive difference to keeping children and young people safer	This is ongoing by both the LSCB and the CEF Directorate in order to ensure training is effective.

<p>Include information relating to child sexual exploitation activity in their performance framework – this should enable a clear understanding of how prevalent child sexual exploitation is in their area and how effectively agencies are responding.</p>	<p>This is an area under development. The TVP prevalence report is an essential document which monitors areas such as missing children and child protection plans because of sexual abuse (including CSE). The CSE sub-group have asked professionals to work on a more comprehensive data set.</p>
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17. The remaining recommendations are for Ofsted and the Government:

- Ofsted should ensure that child sexual exploitation is considered within the safeguarding sections of all future inspection frameworks and across all remits.
- Ofsted should continue to sharpen the focus given to child sexual exploitation in all children’s services inspection frameworks, including the review of Local Safeguarding Children Boards.
- The government should review and update the 2009 Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation; Supplementary Guidance to Working Together to Safeguard Children so that it reflects recent research, good practice and findings from child sexual exploitation reviews and criminal investigations.
- The government should develop a national data set that requires local authorities, the police and their partners to report on prevention, protection and prosecution activity relating to child sexual exploitation in their area to a standard format – this should include information on missing children and looked after children moving into and out of the area.
- The government should require every police force to collate information specifically on child sexual exploitation, including the number of crimes reported, the level of disruption activity undertaken and the outcomes, including cautions and prosecutions.

18. The Ofsted report notes that *‘In those authorities where child sexual exploitation has had a greater priority, the local strategy is better developed with links to other key strategies relating to issues like gangs, licencing and how personal, health and social education is being taught in schools. Senior leaders and politicians tend to have greater insight and understanding of this complex issue in areas where this has been given greater priority. Elected members are now scrutinising and challenging the work of the professionals, tackling the problem more than in the past’* and *‘In areas where there have been high profile criminal investigations, the experience has galvanised the local authorities and their partners into trying to ensure that past failings are*



*never repeated. Such resolution was not apparent in other local authorities*’. This position is reflected in Oxfordshire with evidence that activity and awareness was raised from 2010/11 when Operation Bullfinch commenced and there has been a continuous tenacious commitment to driving forward positive change.

19. Ofsted also note *‘Not one local authority area was found to be responding to child sexual exploitation consistently well across its full range of responsibilities.’* An important reminder that this area requires continuous attention and improvement and cuts across a wide range of local authority and other services including children’s services, adult social care, adult mental health, public health, environmental health, licencing and policing.
20. Both the Jay report and the Ofsted report have much to say about governance and the role of elected members. Ofsted say *‘Senior leaders and elected members in local authorities and across partnerships have to show the political and moral courage to confront and tackle child sexual exploitation wherever and however it occurs’*. In Oxfordshire members have demonstrated their commitment to tackling CSE in a number of ways including committing resources, providing challenge through the Corporate Parenting Panel , attending CSE briefings, attending the drama production Chelsea’s Choice and , importantly, its review of safeguarding at its Performance Scrutiny Committee. It is intended to develop a series of seminars for elected members in the County, City and District Councils to further develop members awareness of the signs of grooming and CSE in the community to assist them in their community leadership role. Members are asked to support this proposal.

### **Budgetary Implications**

21. There are no direct budgetary implications arising from this report but members are asked to note earlier comments about capacity within the Kingfisher Team which are likely to result in future budget pressures.

### **Equalities Implications**

22. Child sexual exploitation affects children and young people from all communities although white British children and girls are the group most likely to be identified as victims. This is in common with the national picture. A specialist worker has been funded to develop work with girls and women from targeted minority ethnic communities. Work has also been commissioned from a specialist national project working with boys who are victims and this work is being developed.
23. Similarly perpetrators come from all communities although the high profile cases which have been reported to date have been disproportionately adult males from Pakistani and other Muslim communities. There are forthcoming trials with different perpetrator groups and there have been a number of convictions with white male perpetrators acting alone.

24. TVP are currently undertaking perpetrator profiling and this will be used to target interventions.

### **Risk Management**

25. Child Sexual Exploitation presents a serious and on-going risk for the Council and its partners and it is important that strategies and plans are in place to tackle the key areas of prevention, protection and prosecution.
26. Investment in the Kingfisher Team is proving to be one way of helping to manage the risk.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

27. **The Cabinet is asked to consider the report and to:**
- (a) consider whether they are satisfied with the work that has been undertaken in relation to combatting CSE; and**
  - (b) support the recommendation for briefings to be provided for elected members to enable them to better recognise and respond to concerns about grooming and exploitation.**

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Background Papers: Nil

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