

HILLINGDON CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION STRATEGY

Cabinet Member	Councillor David Simmonds
Cabinet Portfolio	Deputy Leader of the Council Education and Children's Services
Officer Contact	Tony Zaman - Children and Young People's Services Nikki O'Halloran, Administration Directorate
Papers with report	Hillingdon CSE Strategy and Action Plan Note: the Professional Toolkit (Appendix 7 of the Strategy) is available upon request as a background document

1. HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	Cabinet is asked to approve the Hillingdon Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) strategy and action plan. This incorporates useful recommendations from the External Services Scrutiny Committee's single meeting review on the matter, which is also outlined in this report.
Contribution to our plans and strategies	Putting our residents first: <i>Our People</i> Hillingdon's Children and Families Trust Plan
Financial Cost	There are no direct cost implications resulting from this report.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	External Services, Children Young People & Learning and Social Services, Housing and Public Health
Ward(s) affected	All

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

- 1. Commends and approves the Hillingdon Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) strategy and action plan;**
- 2. Welcomes the insight and findings of the External Services Scrutiny Committee and asks officers to further develop a programme of joint CSE training in partnership with the Metropolitan Police Service, Local Strategic Children's Partnership (LSCP), Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL) and the Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group (HCCG) and;**
- 3. Agrees that consideration be given to the incorporation of CSE work undertaken by the Council into the Hillingdon LSCB annual report.**

Reasons for recommendation

A Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Strategy has been developed involving the members of the London Borough of Hillingdon Children Local Safeguarding Board to ensure that the individual agencies work effectively together to prevent CSE, intervene early when risks are identified, help, protect and support children who are being exploited and determinedly pursue the perpetrators.

As part of the development of this work, Elected Members on the External Services Scrutiny Committee reviewed the partnership approach to CSE at a special meeting, inviting a number of witnesses to give evidence. The Committee looked at the work that is planned and already taking place in the Borough and possible improvements.

These recommendations have been formulated to ensure continued organisational resilience against CSE in the Borough.

Alternative options considered / risk management

Cabinet could choose to not approve or amend the Strategy and Action Plan.

3. INFORMATION

1. The sexual exploitation of children and young people is a form of child sexual abuse. The following description of child sexual exploitation has been supplied in the guidance provided by the Department for Children, Schools and Families:

'Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g., food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example, being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.'

2. Sexual exploitation results in children and young people suffering harm and causes significant damage to their physical and mental health. Some young people may be supported to recover whilst others may suffer serious life-long impairments which may, on occasion, lead to their death, for example through suicide or murder.
3. Over the last few years, there has been an increase in the media exposure of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) which has heightened awareness of the issue amongst statutory agencies as well as amongst members of the public. However, Serious Case Reviews have looked at the way that certain cases have been handled by the responsible authorities elsewhere in the country. This has highlighted the need for all organisations to look at their practices and procedures and, most importantly, to use the lessons learnt to inform the further development of our joint work on child sexual exploitation.

The External Services Scrutiny Committee Review

4. The External Services Scrutiny Committee, along with the Chairmen and Labour Leads from the Children, Young People and Learning Policy Overview Committee and the Social Services, Housing and Public Health Policy Overview Committee, held a single meeting review on 13 January 2015. At this meeting, Members considered the work that was being undertaken in the Borough in relation to the prevention of sexual exploitation, the protection of children and young people who are being (or are at risk of being) sexually exploited, as well as the disruption and prosecution of offenders. The Cabinet Member for Education and Children Services gratefully provided his views to the Committee on the matter along with questioning and evidence from the following witnesses:

- Jenny Reid - Designated Nurse, Safeguarding Children, Hillingdon CCG
- Maggie McCutcheon - Children's Commissioning Lead, Hillingdon CCG
- John Goddard - Head Teacher, Hedgewood School
- DI Graham Hamilton - Metropolitan Police Service
- Sharon Daye - Interim Director of Public Health, LBH
- Gary Campbell - Interim Assistant Director of Safeguarding, Quality Assurance and Learning and Development, LBH
- Alan Critchley - Business and Development Manager, Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB)

The Committee's primary finding was around training, but raised a number of other matters as set out below.

CSE Strategy & Action Plan

5. A CSE Strategy has since been developed involving the members of The London Borough of Hillingdon Children Local Safeguarding Board to ensure that the individual agencies work effectively together to prevent CSE, intervene early when risks are identified, help, protect and support children who are being exploited and determinedly pursue the perpetrators. The Strategy aims to build on the pro-active multi-agency work which is already undertaken in Hillingdon by providing a framework for all professionals working with children and young people in the Borough to deliver a programme designed to raise awareness of CSE in age appropriate ways and provide them with the appropriate life skills in order to prevent them becoming involved in sexual exploitation.
6. An action plan has also been incorporated into the Strategy based around the 3Ps: prevention, protection and prosecution. This action plan identifies the work that will need to be progressed and clearly highlights all responsibilities that have been agreed by the partner agencies. The action plan also includes a requirement to ensure that appropriate pathways and therapeutic support are available for those young people at risk of CSE. Members of the External Services Scrutiny Committee were keen to ensure that consideration is given to the inclusion of support for mental and emotional wellbeing in these pathways.
7. It is proposed that the action plan will be regularly reviewed and updated by the Child Sexual Exploitation Strategic Sub Group which comprises senior managers from all partner agencies and will report to the Hillingdon Safeguarding Children Board (HLSCB) twice yearly to inform the HLSCB Annual Report. The HLSCB Annual Report is considered by

Hillingdon's Cabinet, Health and Wellbeing Board, Corporate Parenting Board and Children, Young People and Learning Policy Overview Committee. To ensure that CSE is considered in the wider context of safeguarding and provides cohesiveness, the External Services Scrutiny Committee is recommending that Cabinet requests that detailed progress of the work undertaken in the Borough, as detailed in the CSE Action Plan, be included within the LSCB Annual Report.

Partnership Working

8. It is recognised that the care pathway to support children and young people could be more streamlined to avoid them being passed around to different services. In addition, the specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) provision is currently not meeting the demand for its service which has led to young people waiting longer for appointments. To address this, consideration could be given to joint development and commissioning in relation to early intervention and training in schools.
9. Insofar as oversight is concerned, new systems have been implemented whereby CSE concerns can be registered. Information gathered in the community about CSE and statistical information provided by partners is now being recorded centrally. It is recognised that this database of information will need to be built upon to record a range of different data sets such as information in relation to sexual health, police prosecutions and children that go missing from school.
10. Insofar as reports of CSE are concerned, it is reassuring to note that the Council's Safeguarding Children and Quality Assurance Service currently provides a single point of contact for partner agencies in relation to CSE through a Child Sexual Exploitation Prevention Manager. The provision of this contact has been particularly important with regard to the development of strong relationships between the Council and schools to ensure that CSE concerns are shared as they become apparent. The CSE Specialist will identify and support the training of a CSE Champion in each team within the Council's Children's Services Directorate who liaises directly with the Safeguarding Children and Quality Assurance Manager to relay any concerns.
11. Children and young people known to be at risk of CSE are tracked and reviewed at the monthly Multi-Agency Professionals Meeting (MAP). MAP is chaired by the Assistant Director of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance and attended by all partners. New cases are referred to the panel through the CSE Prevention Manager. Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation Meetings (MASE) are convened monthly and chaired by local Borough Police at a rank not below Inspector. MASE is the driver for agreeing the appropriate operational activity to tackle CSE threats, linking in with other areas and providing information to inform problem profiles and Hillingdon Local Safeguarding Children's Board.
12. There are a number of indicators that may suggest that a child or young person is being groomed for sexual exploitation which include disengaging from education or becoming disruptive at school. In addition to the Safeguarding Children and Quality Assurance Manager as strategic lead and the CSE Prevention Manager as operational lead, there are a number of Council officers who provide useful links for the schools in relation to CSE allegations. A Domestic Violence Liaison Officer and Child Protection (CP) Schools Advisor are also working with the schools and the Participation Service is continuing to work closely with young people in the Borough to disseminate information about CSE.

13. The External Services Scrutiny Committee raised the provision of support and information to children and young people and it is acknowledged that the NSPCC currently provides a dedicated helpline and the ability for reports of CSE to be made via text or online. However, to provide a more Hillingdon specific service which gathers local intelligence, it has been suggested that consideration also be given to the provision of a dedicated CSE victims' helpline. Currently the MASH and Emergency Duty Team (EDT) telephone numbers are the first point of contact for partners and the general public. Additionally, following a recommendation from Cabinet Members, clearer information online, e.g. the Council's website, will be given in order for people to find out how to report abuse.

Awareness Raising

14. Awareness raising among residents (including young people) about CSE and how it can be reported is essential and could encourage them to report any issues of concern to the relevant agencies. A programme of awareness raising has been developed to target young people, parents / carers and local businesses. This programme was put together in conjunction with partner organisations and will sit alongside work that is being driven by young people and undertaken with the Care Council. It is anticipated that this work will pay specific attention to (but will not be confined to) targeting looked after children with guidance being distributed to care home staff and information included in the skills for fostering training and private fostering initiatives

15. Given their considerable contact with children and young people, it is important to ensure that schools provide a safe environment where they feel comfortable talking about difficult issues such as CSE. Educational establishments have a significant role to play in the prevention and detection of CSE. To this end, the Council has been working with Head Teachers in the Borough to talk about the authority's role as lead agency and to explain what action is being taken to address CSE in Hillingdon.

16. As well as working with the Safeguarding Team to look at how young people can be empowered to say 'no' and to raise awareness of CSE amongst parents, the school nurse function and the development of drop-ins at secondary schools is another avenue to raise awareness.

17. A CSE training programme for 2015/16 has been developed which includes awareness raising for young people and their parents/carers in secondary schools, special educational needs schools and pupil referral units through 'Chelsea's Choice'. 'Chelsea's Choice' is a hard-hitting Applied Theatre Production that has proven highly successful in raising awareness of the issues surrounding Child Sexual Exploitation. The play is followed by a Q&A/plenary session exploring the issues raised.

18. CSE is not currently routinely included as a formal part of lessons in schools to raise awareness amongst children and young people and provide them with guidance on how to report CSE issues. To this end, the External Services Scrutiny Committee has suggested that officers, in conjunction with Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust, liaise with schools to highlight the importance of raising young people's awareness of CSE and encouraging the inclusion of CSE as a permanent part of PSHE lessons.

Training

19. During the Committee's review, it became apparent that comprehensive training can provide professionals with knowledge and awareness that enables them to recognise and address the issue of CSE in their day-to-day work. Although other local authorities have provided training for thousands of individuals, this training has been predominantly based around e-learning. Whilst it is acknowledged that e-learning provides a valuable, cost effective option that can be delivered to a huge number of people, it has been suggested that face-to-face CSE training to groups of individuals from across the different agencies provides a more sustainable solution and could be linked to training in relation to other gender related violence. It is anticipated that this approach would provide the different agencies with more of an insight into, and understanding of, the issues faced by the other disciplines.
20. In addition to the mandatory CSE training sessions that are in place for social workers, the Council's Child Sexual Exploitation Prevention Manager has facilitated nine training sessions with approximately 60 delegates in each session. Furthermore, consideration could be given to the development of a suite of modular face-to-face CSE training. It is anticipated that this training could cover a range of issues including CSE, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), radicalisation, etc, and be delivered to professionals in front line roles across all agencies. The training could then be backed up with the provision of e-learning to reach a wider audience.
21. To this end, as part of the Council's wider efforts tackling CSE, the Committee recommends that Cabinet asks officers to further develop a programme of joint CSE training in partnership with the Metropolitan Police Service, LSCP, CNWL and the CCG. Furthermore, it is suggested that consideration be given to joint development and commissioning by the Council and CNWL in relation to early intervention and training in schools.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. However, the review of the training that will be delivered could result in an additional cost as it suggests moving more towards a face to face model backed up and supported with e-learning modules, which is different to the current delivery model. As this is subject to review, the financial cost of this new approach has not been explored.

4. EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

The recommendations in this report are designed with the purpose of raising awareness of CSE amongst young people and their guardians and to ensure that procedures are in place to support and prevent CSE.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

The Hillingdon Local Safeguarding Children's Board and witness testimony from the Committee as outlined in this report.

5. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and concurs with the financial implications above, noting the recommendations outlined have no direct cost to the Council. Costs arising from the development of a Child Sexual Exploitation training programme with local bodies will be appraised at a later date, however, it is anticipated that contributions from agencies benefitting from the training provision will enable the service to be cost neutral to Hillingdon.

Legal

Part III of the Children Act 1989 underpins the Council's statutory duties towards children and young persons in its area and those who are 'looked after' by it. There is a general duty to safeguard and promote their welfare.

Under the Council's Constitution Cabinet has the appropriate power to agree recommendations proposed at the outset of this report.

Relevant Service Groups

Children's Services and Public Health have been consulted on the report.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- CSN Policy Briefing: Child Sexual Exploitation: Commons Select Committee Reports (6 January 2015)
- Combating Child Exploitation - National Action Plan (23 November 2011)
- What's Going On to Safeguard Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation - How local partnerships respond to child sexual exploitation; University of Bedfordshire (October 2011)
- What's Going On to Safeguard Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation? - Research Briefing; University of Bedfordshire
- Lessons learned - child sexual exploitation; University of Bedfordshire
- CSN Policy Briefing: Sexual exploitation of children - Ofsted report (4 December 2014)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children - A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; HM Government (March 2013)
- Real Voices - Child sexual exploitation in Greater Manchester - An independent report by Ann Coffey MP (October 2014)
- CSN Policy Briefing: Real voices: Coffey report on child sexual exploitation in Greater Manchester (20 November 2014)
- Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation: Supplementary guidance to Working Together to Safeguard Children; HM Government - Department for Children, Schools and Families
- Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation: Action Plan; Department for Education
- The sexual exploitation of children: it couldn't happen here, could it?; Ofsted (November 2014)
- Child sexual exploitation: What is child sexual exploitation; NSPCC
- Hillingdon CSE Strategy Appendix 7 - Professional Toolkit