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Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

30 June 2015

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People- Councillor Ed Ruane

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Executive Director of People

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Title:**

Coventry Strategic Objectives Plan for Children and Young People who are missing, at risk of, or experiencing Sexual Exploitation.

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**Is this a key decision?**

No

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**Executive Summary:**

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a complex issue that requires a thorough understanding of the impact on victims, how patterns of behaviour start and by whom the exploitation is perpetrated.

There has been extensive national coverage of this issue with associated guidance and recommendations as a result of a number of enquiries and reviews in key areas of the Country. Coventry agencies have come together and committed significant time and resources in order to reflect upon and address this national learning in order to inform the development of a local delivery plan to address the sexual exploitation of children.

Furthermore, the plan is supported by clear strategic objectives and has been informed by facts and findings contained within a CSE problem profile produced by West Midlands Police.

A key aspect of the plan is to not only to ensure that a safe, responsive and effective service is provided to all children and young people who experience Child Sexual Exploitation but to proactively identify children and young people that could be vulnerable to this and other types of harmful behaviour so that interventions that negate or minimise risk can be provided.

The plan facilitates the coordinated activity and resources of agencies working together in Coventry to prevent risk of harm to children and young people through targeted action against perpetrators and in locations across the City where young people may be at risk of exploitation.

A significant area of work within the plan is to enhance public awareness of Child Sexual Exploitation, in particular with parents and carers, and to increase the awareness of young people.

**Recommendations:**

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People is recommended to -

1. Consider the progress against the delivery plan; attached as Appendix 1. This plan is subject to on-going revision and is a “living document”.
2. Note the addition to the delivery plan which requires Hackney Carriage Drivers and Private Hire Drivers to have DBS checks and CSE training as part of the conditions of their licence
3. Consider updates on the development of the CSE team
4. Consider writing to Head Teachers and Chairs of School Governing Boards regarding completion of the CSE screening tool.
5. Consider data relating to CSE within the City

**List of Appendices**

1. Coventry Strategic Objectives and Delivery Plan for Children and Young People who are missing, at risk of, or experiencing sexual exploitation.

**Other useful background papers:**

Safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation: supplementary guidance (DCSF-00689-2009) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-children-and-young-people-from-sexual-exploitation-supplementary-guidance>

**Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

Not yet but to be scheduled for Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on 8th July 2015

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

No

**Will this report go to Council?**

No

**Report title:**

Coventry Strategic Objectives and Delivery Plan for Children and Young People who are missing, at risk of, or experiencing Sexual Exploitation

**1. Context (or background)**

1.1 The CSE Delivery plan is a multi-agency plan which is monitored by the CSE Steering Group - a sub group of the LSCB which is chaired by DCI Ian Green. This group receives regular updates on progress against the delivery plan. There is a CSE Operational Group which is chaired by Head of Service, Social Care and drives the implementation at operational level.

**2 Update on the Delivery Plan see appendix 1**

**3 Update on the CSE Team**

3.1 The city wide CSE team is now in place and has completed its induction. The team is co-located with the city wide Referral and Assessment Service and MASH in Christchurch House. The Integrated Youth Support Service and Community Safety are also based in this building.

3.2 The team will work across Early Help and Social Care, and will have active links with Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Co-ordinators and the Safeguarding Service. The team sits under the management of Children’s Social Care.

Permanent staff	Comments
0.5 Service Manager	
0.5 Business Support Officer	
1 Team Manager	
1 Senior Social work practitioner	
2 Social workers	
2 Children & Family Workers	
2 specialist CSE Youth Workers	
2 detached youth workers	
1 CSE Police coordinator	
CSE Co-ordinator	This worker is also responsible for child sexual violence and the DVA Co-ordinator and works within the Community Safety Team and the Coventry Safeguarding Children’s Board Team.
1 x G3 BSC Admin	

3.3 The CSE team went “live” in April and has now been in place for six weeks. It has been named ‘Coventry Horizon’ after consultation with young people, and the Communications Team is looking at how this will be branded.

3.4 In these first six weeks, the team has focused initially on team induction. The team has had a three day induction (all are new workers to Coventry) and there will be some specialised training which will be delivered throughout June and July. Team members are working well together and are very enthusiastic and motivated.

- 3.5 The team work to the 'See Me Hear Me' regional procedures. A local tool kit for all Social Work professionals has been developed from these regional procedures; this includes safety and disruption plans. This resource also has useful links to research and sets out procedurally what is expected from Social Workers and what they must do when they suspect a young person is at risk of or being sexually exploited

The team are delivering briefings on the use of the screening and risk assessment tool and to date have briefed over 300 frontline staff within Social Care, the Integrated Youth Support Service and Children and Family First teams/

- 3.6 In addition a Team Manager has been appointed and she started on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015. This is an important addition to the team and will provide the capacity to develop the use of Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) meetings as an alternative approach to strategy meetings where there are concerns about sexual exploitation. The Team Manager will have responsibility for chairing all MASE meetings within the city, develop expertise around safety planning and ensure consistency of practice. She is currently having an induction and observing practice in Solihull, where these meetings are embedded in their practice
- 3.7 There are still on on-going discussions to ensure Health have a presence within the team and the commissioning of a Parents against Sexual Exploitation (PACE) worker is being explored. It is envisaged that the commissioned worker from the Streetwise Project will also be co-located with the team in the near future.

#### **4. CSE activity within the City as of June 2015**

- 4.1 There has been a focus on working to get the current CSE data base up to date with accurate information, so that there is a better understanding of the children at risk of CSE within the City. All young people on the data base have had a screening assessment to determine the level of risk and this has led to more confident understanding of the profile of young people at risk in the City.
- 4.2 The Children Missing Operations Group (CMOG) has identified a number of hotspots in the City. Work has been done with colleagues in the Police and Community Safety to increase policing of these areas and to disrupt any identified activities. The data collection tool for City Tasking is in the process of being agreed by partners and will be signed off imminently.
- 4.3 The data base and CMOG also enable us to identify perpetrators of sexual exploitation and the CSE Perpetrators Forum meets monthly to provide a robust process of managing identified perpetrators using both the Criminal Justice process and a range of both civil tools and powers.
- 4.4 Following the development of the Child Sexual Exploitation Team it was recognised that young people needed to be central in participating in - and influencing – the work of the team and service. Taking the lead from much research and case reviews from other cities, it was felt young people did not have a voice and that professionals were making decisions about how best to raise awareness and work with young people, without consulting them. As a result, recruitment of a group of young people was undertaken to do this The group meets fortnightly on a Tuesday evening at an office in th City Centre. The group is open to any young person who wishes to have a say, including those who may or may not have been directly affected.
- 4.5 Organisers of the group were supported with referrals from Positive Youth Foundation and across the Youth Service as well as other agencies. The group has already attended a

West Midlands- wide conference in which they were highlighted as being the most impactful group on the day. They have completed training to raise their understanding and awareness on CSE, alongside taking part in research for Coventry University. They are further working alongside colleagues in communications to help get the message out and raise awareness.

Over the coming month they will be planning how they will “ get the message out “ at the Godiva festival and they intend to use the festival as an opportunity to engage with other young people and their parents. Their aim at the festival is:

- To raise awareness of sexual exploitation and provide information as to how those at risk can seek support
- Engage with community groups,
- make contacts and engage other young people in the group
- Develop some messages from people that attend the festival that will be taken away and used in public places to raise awareness of CSE

## **5 Taxi's**

- 5.1 All Coventry taxi drivers have been sent a letter offering them Child Sexual Exploitation training. The sessions are to run throughout June, July and August and are aimed at developing drivers' awareness of child sexual exploitation, the signs to look out for and how to report concerns. Approximately 750 drivers have already booked places on the training and bookings continue to be made. As part of the application process for a taxi licence, individuals must provide a DBS check. Where the DBS check highlights a conviction or a concern, these will now be referred to the CSE Co-ordinator for consideration as to whether the conviction or concern should prevent the granting of a licence to the applicant.

## **6 Awareness Raising**

- 6.1 The CSE team has been working alongside The Communications team which has developed a communication strategy for CSE. The team is currently being supported in the development of a Twitter page for professionals. The Twitter account will provide all professionals with regular news, research and information around CSE. They have also supported the CSE content on Coventry City Council website, signposting parents and young people to the relevant agencies.

'See Me Hear Me' posters and leaflets from the regional campaign have been printed and distributed to schools, children's centres, Council offices and GP's surgeries, and the 'See Me Hear Me' training is being rolled out to hotels, fast food places and other vulnerable locations. A Facebook and Twitter campaign that took place during CSE awareness raising day has resulted in 1952 website clicks, and a bus ticket advertising campaign that also took place as part of the awareness raising event saw approximately 573,000 bus tickets being issued.

## **7 Training**

- 7.1
- Staff from CCC attended a CSE trainer course on 14/05/15 delivered by 'Just Whistle'
  - The CSE training will receive 8 days of specialist training in June/ July.
  - A number of targeted sessions relating to CSE have been booked and will be delivered throughout the year for CCC staff.
  - LSCB training content has been checked against the 'Just Whistle' training content and both are very similar.
  - A meeting has taken place to scope what needs to be included in single and multi-agency training.

- Head Teachers have attended CSE awareness training throughout June. The content of this also included introducing the screening tool.

## **8 School Governors**

- 8.1 A letter has been drafted to be sent to all school governing bodies drawing their attention to the use of the screening tools

## **9 Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 9.1 The recommendations have been determined based on the production of the delivery plan and the need to ensure the content, activity and approach is appropriate, proportionate and sufficient to protect children and young people from harm and provide officers and communities with the knowledge and confidence to deal with this issue.
- 9.2 Provide reassurance to Cabinet Member that the plan has been informed by national learning and developed using evidence from a problem profile to provide a thorough multi-agency response to this issue.

## **10 Results of consultation undertaken**

- 10.1 A practitioners group has been established and meets on a monthly basis with the sole aim of raising awareness of CSE in Coventry. The members of this group ensure the effective co-ordination of resources and materials available to deliver consistent messages to the public on the signs to look for in identifying young people potentially at risk of CSE and then where to report these concerns. To support the development of the resources and campaigns, the group has a young people's forum which informs this work. The young people meet with professionals on a fortnightly basis and are currently being trained to actively support future work in order to "youth- proof" processes, procedures, publicity and activity.
- 10.2 The delivery plan has been developed in consultation with and by members of a range of agencies from both safeguarding and community safety partnerships through the CSE & Missing Persons Strategic Sub-group of the Local Childrens Safeguarding Board.

## **11 Timetable for implementing this decision**

- 11.1 The delivery plan is operational and being delivered against with performance management of progress and effectiveness being reported to the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Further recommendations arising from this report can be implemented with immediate effect.

## **12 Comments from Executive Director, Resources**

### **12.1 Financial implications**

The scheduled training programme detailed in section 7 is estimated to cost £10,000 which will be met through existing budgets.

### **12.2 Legal implications**

Section 13 of the Children Act 2004 requires local authorities and other named statutory partners to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are discharged with a view to

safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. This includes planning to prevent children from going missing and to protect them when they do.

Local authorities should name a senior children's service manager as responsible for monitoring policies and performance relating to children who go missing from home or care. The responsible manager should look to understand the risks and issues facing children missing from home or care and to review best practice in dealing with the issue.

### **Other implications**

#### **13.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?**

The Children Act 1989 imposes statutory obligations to safeguard children. These obligations are extended to specific persons and bodies to engage and work with the Local Authority to safeguard local children by virtue of Section 11 of The Children Act 2004.

These statutory safeguarding functions are supplemented by statutory guidance: 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013' and 'Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation', 2009. The 2013 guidance imposes a legislative requirement on individual services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and requires a clear framework for the Local Safeguarding Children Board to monitor the effectiveness of local services.

Specifically in respect of CSE, the statutory responsibilities of local agencies, including Councils, are set out in the 2009 supplementary guidance. The 2011 National Action Plan further clarifies these, and also brings together a range of commitments from national and local partners.

The Police have numerous legislative powers for safeguarding children, undertaking investigations and disruption of perpetrators. This requires close working together between the police, children's and health services to discharge their statutory duty to identify and eradicate CSE.

There is a range of civil interventions that Local Authorities can use, dependent upon the circumstances of individual cases.

The case of Birmingham City Council v Riaz and others [2014] provides Local Authorities with a precedent for invoking the inherent jurisdiction of the High Court to protect a young person and others from CSE.

Provide commentary on how the proposals contribute to the council's core aims – a prosperous Coventry; citizens living longer, healthier, independent lives; making Coventry an attractive and enjoyable place to be; ensuring that children and young people are safe, achieve and make a positive contribution; providing a good choice of housing; making places and services easily accessible; encouraging a creative, active and vibrant city; developing a more equal city with cohesive communities and neighbourhoods; improving the environment and tackling climate change.

#### **13.2 How is risk being managed?**

Oversight and monitoring will be carried out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and Police, Crime and Community Board.

### **13.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

Management of victims, offenders and work to prevent or disrupt this behaviour taking in locations and near establishments will require the resources of a number of agencies and will impact on staffing and human resources.

### **13.4 Equalities / EIA**

An Equalities Impact Assessment will be required in relation to CSE as it affects vulnerable groups and will also need to consider the profile of perpetrators.

### **13.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment**

CSE happens in public spaces and locations and therefore has a devastating impact on the community's health and well-being and the environment. Tackling this issue from a people and place perspective is critical to improving the environment as well as improving people's lives.

### **13.6 Implications for partner organisations?**

Responding to CSE requires a range of approaches, interventions and actions by a number of agencies and use of their resources with which to target and disrupt locations, protect victims and those vulnerable to this issue whilst managing perpetrators through sanctions.

The support and involvement of communities is critical to addressing and preventing this type of behaviour taking place



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