

REPORT TO THE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY & SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE OF MEETING: 14TH JULY 2016

SUBJECT OF REPORT: CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

TOWN OR PARISH: ALL

OFFICER/MEMBER PRESENTING: JACKIE CITRON, CSE/MISSING COORDINATOR

KEY DECISION: NO

1. SUMMARY OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to update the Children and Young People Policy and Scrutiny Panel in relation to the strategic and operational management of Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Young People in North Somerset.

There have been many positive changes over the past 6 months following the appointments of a new Strategic Safeguarding Service Lead and Child Sexual Exploitation & Missing Coordinator.

There have been strategic developments including new protocols, strategies and multi-agency meetings. In addition there have been operational improvements through training and new processes have been developed.

2. POLICY

The Multi-agency Protocol '*Children and Young People Missing from Home, Care and Education*' has been updated by Jo Baker (Service Leader – Strategic Safeguarding and Quality Assurance) to reflect numerous changes in legislation and the expectations on Local Authorities and their partner agencies.

The protocol is designed to support an effective collaborative safeguarding response from all agencies involved when a child goes missing. Effective assessments and support comes from good information sharing, joint assessments of need, joint planning and working in partnership with families.

Jackie Citron (Child Sexual Exploitation & Missing Coordinator) has drafted a new Sexual Exploitation Strategy jointly with partners from Barnardo's BASE Project, Health and Adult Safeguarding and the strategy now incorporates Adults at Risk within its remit. The purpose of this is to support vulnerable young adults who are at risk of or who are experiencing

sexual exploitation and acknowledges that the risks of sexual exploitation do not disappear when a young person reaches their 18th birthday.

3. DETAILS

There have been numerous improvements to the way in which Child Sexual Exploitation is addressed within North Somerset since the last update to the Children and Young People Policy and Scrutiny Panel.

Jo Baker (Service Leader for Strategic Safeguarding and Quality Assurance) has been in post since January and I have been in post as Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Coordinator since the end of February.

Jo Baker has amended the Protocol 'Children Missing from Home, Care and Education' and I have drawn up the new Sexual Exploitation Strategy as noted above.

Draft process flowcharts for Missing Young People and Child Sexual Exploitation in North Somerset have been developed. These are being finalised and will be circulated shortly.

The LSCB Sexual Exploitation Subgroup now includes Missing young people and Adults at Risk. As the dedicated Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Coordinator, I Chair this subgroup. My role is to support the multi-agency work required. The strategic planning and collaborative multi-agency working is enabling effective leadership and coordination, and developing our understanding and practice.

Within my role, I try to ensure that information on missing children is received in a timely manner from the police. This information is passed on to the relevant Social Worker/Team. Information is collated by myself which is helping to identify themes and patterns. This has strengthened our understanding and ability to share information effectively with partner agencies.

I have set up the Missing Children's Review Group (MCRG) which currently meets on a fortnightly basis – our partner agencies such as Education, Police, Health, Youth Offending Service and Barnardo's BASE Project are working with us to better understand how and why children and young people are going missing and how we are better able to support them and keep them safe.

I attend the bimonthly Child Sexual Exploitation Networking Meetings which are chaired by David McCallum from The West of England Victim Information and Support Service. The purpose of these multi agency meetings is to review cases where sexual exploitation is a moderate or significant risk and plan the best ways to disrupt and prosecute potential perpetrators.

There have been significant improvements made in day-to-day practice using the Child Sexual Exploitation screening tool – SERAF (Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Form). This is now being used consistently across North Somerset and is enabling us to identify and support those young people for whom sexual exploitation is a moderate or significant risk.

Barnardo's BASE Project are working with increasing numbers of young people in North Somerset for whom child sexual exploitation has been identified as a moderate or significant risk using the SERAF tool.

In relation to missing young people, 25 Local Authority colleagues from across all teams have completed training in relation to completing high quality return from missing interviews. This excellent training was provided by Barnardo's BASE Project. There is now a 'virtual' specialist team of trained support workers who are now equipped to provide high quality return from missing interviews with a specific focus on risk of Child Sexual Exploitation. Push & Pull factors (those factors which encourage children away from home when missing) will be explored using a range of tools. A further cohort of staff will be trained in due course.

On July 4th 2016 the new process for managing missing young people will be implemented across North Somerset. Trained staff in each locality team will complete return from missing interviews for those young people already known to their teams as well as for those young people not currently working with Social Care or other agencies. The staff completing the interviews will in the majority of cases be trained Independent Workers (i.e. not the young person's Social Worker) in line with National good practice guidance and recommendations.

This new process was launched on June 29th 2016 at a Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Young People launch event within North Somerset Council. As part of the new process, we have improved and updated the letters that are sent out to Parents/Carers and Young People following a return from missing episode. To date this has improved the uptake of return from missing interviews.

In addition to the many positive changes already made, there are still areas for improvement and development. These include:

Improving the quality of the data collected – The Return from Missing Interview form needs amendment and updating in order to better collate the reasons for young people going missing and their whereabouts when missing. This would enable workers to better assess risks and would help the Police to better respond to repeat missing episodes, thereby preventing future harm and Child Sexual Exploitation.

We are in the process of developing two leaflets, one for Young People and one for Parents and Carers. These leaflets will contain useful contact details of local and National support services for Missing Young People and Child Sexual Exploitation. These leaflets will be sent out with the letters requesting attendance at return from missing interviews and will also be given to young people and their parents/carers at return from missing interviews.

AUTHOR

Jackie Citron, CSE & Missing Coordinator, North Somerset Council.

Date: 1st July 2016.