

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Early Years, Children and Youth Panel.	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	23rd March 2015	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
TITLE:	Update on the BaNES Response to Child Sexual Exploitation	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
N/A		

1. THE ISSUE

- 1.1. The Early-Years, Children and Youth Panel have requested an update on the progress and initiatives that have been undertaken to address the growing awareness and understanding of Child Sexual Abuse. This report sets out the actions undertaken by the Council and the Local Safeguarding Children Board over the past six months.
- 1.2. The public profile in relation to issues of Child Sexual Exploitation continues to be very high. This heightened profile and continued scrutiny means that it is vital that the Council and the LSCB continue to develop a strong, co-ordinated response to these challenges.
- 1.3. Since September 2014, considerable activity has taken place to ensure that BaNES has a clear and co-ordinated response to concerns of Child Sexual Exploitation. This activity has involved the development of services in three key areas. These are; a) The development of an agreed set of documents and guidance that set out the vision and expectations of all partner agencies in relation to CSE, (b) The development of practice/intervention resources that will offer support to young people (c) Ensuring that staff from all partner agencies have the appropriate training so that they can either offer direct support, or identify CSE/Missing concerns.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1. There are no specific recommendations attached to this paper, it is tabled for the purposes of up-date and discussion.

3. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 1.1. There are no specific resource or financial implications outlined or addressed in this paper as its remit is one of broad update.

4. STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

- 1.1. There are no specific statutory considerations to be addressed in this report. The Council will continue to address any identified issues of Child Sexual Exploitation under its powers under the Children Act 1989 and 2004.

5. THE REPORT

- 1.1. As stated at the beginning of this report, the activity in relation to addressing CSE/Missing has focused along three key strands. This activity is as follows;
- 1.2. Development of Documents and Guidance that set out the vision and expectations. The LSCB has developed and agreed a CSE Strategy in September 2014 (previously reported) and has undertaken training events to launch this and to promote this with front-line staff. In addition the LSCB has written and launched the CSE/Missing Protocol document which provides detailed guidance for staff on what signs to look for and who to contact when concerns are identified. We have also drafted a referral workflow so that both Council staff and staff from referring agencies are able to have a clear description of what happens when a concern is raised and that all are clear about responsibilities. The Protocol document will assist all staff to be clearer about thresholds for concern and when it is appropriate to make referrals and when concerns might need to be raised with the multi-agency CSE panel.
- 1.3. The LSCB Child Sexual Exploitation Sub-Group has also drafted a Strategic Action Plan which sets out the tasks to be completed over the coming 12 months to ensure that these protocols and working practices are embedded, understood and reviewed to ensure they are being effective.
- 1.4. In September 2014, the LSCB also approved the protocol for working with young people in care and at home who go missing. This protocol also makes clear for front line staff the procedures that need to be undertaken when they are notified that a young person has gone missing. The links between CSE and missing have been highlighted in many recent reports/investigations and so we have ensured that all training events highlight the importance of these links. The Missing protocol also includes a workflow for all partner agencies so that all professionals have a clear understanding of how concerns can be addressed and progressed.
- 1.5. Developments in Practice/Interventions; The Council's Multi-Agency Risk Management Panel was set up in October 2013. This panel monitored and risk-assessed cases of CSE alongside cases where young people were using drugs, were absent from home and putting themselves "at risk". Having run the panel in that format for over a year, a number of themes began to emerge from the staff that were presenting cases at the panel, as well from the panel members. There was a view that the remit of the panel was too wide to allow the necessary focused discussion on CSE/Missing issues. At the same time a number of guidance and "good practice" documents began to highlight the

importance of panels that focused more clearly on CSE issues and new guidance also highlighted the need for a forum that shared key information from Police, and Social Care agencies in relation to missing children.

- 1.6. Our response to these developments was to review the focus of the panel, and move the remit to have a sole focus on CSE/Missing issues. We have also reduced the core membership of the panel to those agencies with a statutory role in addressing these types of concern. The membership of the panel now comprises; Police, Council (representation covering Social Care and school attendance) and Health. The panel will now meet on a monthly basis and has met twice in its new format. The new panel arrangements place an emphasis on the sharing of information between the statutory partners in respect of the young people that have been identified on each of the lists of missing/vulnerable young people brought to the meeting by each of the agencies. The sharing, and "triangulation" of information will be a crucial part of ensuring that plans and interventions remain co-ordinated and regularly reviewed.
- 1.7. The CSE strategy which was agreed by the LSCB at the September meeting outlined the need to create a "virtual" CSE comprising of a group of staff from a number of professions that have skills in engaging with young people where concerns of CSE have been identified. Additionally, these staff would also undertake the "Return Home" interviews for young people that had been reported as "missing" by the Police. This group of eight professionals have all received their training and are known as the "Willow Project". We are also recruiting a second wave of professionals for the Willow Project. Over the coming months it will be important to monitor closely the demand on this team to work with young people, and review the level of complexity of cases that they are working with.
- 1.8. Training. Over the past six months the LSCB sub-group has commissioned another round of training for staff across all LSCB agencies. As previously highlighted, the members of the Willow Project have all received three days of intensive training on the key issues relating to CSE and in how to successfully sustain relationships with vulnerable young people. In addition to this we have set up for 100 staff across the LSCB which is aimed at being more specialist and builds upon the training which was provided last year. All 100 places on this training have been filled. At the request of the RUH we have also provided bespoke training for health and hospital staff to assist them in recognizing signs of CSE and missing. We will also be providing training to the managers of staff involved in the Willow Project. This will ensure that they also have the appropriate understanding of the key issues to support staff who are undertaking direct work with young people.

6. SUMMARY;

- 1.1 Future Challenges; The effectiveness of all of the above initiatives will need to be evaluated over the coming months, and where appropriate, amendments and changes will be made to improve the delivery of services. The key factor that will run through all interventions will be the importance of sharing information effectively and speedily. All agencies will need to have a clear and shared understanding of thresholds.
- 1.2 Along with six other regional Local Authorities, BaNES recently agreed to become a partner in a joint bid to the Home Office Innovation Fund which is also being co-ordinated by the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner. If successful the bid will provide additional resources into the region to tackle CSE. The bid will enable the region to provide additional training capacity that can reach out into rural areas and

ensure that awareness and recognition are priority issues for agencies outside of the urban centres in the region. The bid will also provide funding for provision of a regional CSE co-ordinators post that will assist in consistency of thresholds and decision making across the seven Local Authorities.

Current Data;

CSE;

The numbers of young people being referred to the CSE/MARAC Panel over the previous 6 months is as follows;

17 th September 2014	3 cases
29 th October 2014	3 cases
10 th December 2014	4 cases
21 st January 2015	1 case
4 th March	8 cases
Total	19 cases

33 cases currently open with a focus on reducing risk of CSE.

Missing;

September 2014	7 missing episodes (2 LAC)
October 2014	5 missing episodes (0 LAC)
November 2014	8 missing episodes (0 LAC)
December 2014	3 missing episodes (0 LAC)
January 2015	14 missing episodes (4 LAC, one of whom is from Bristol)
February 2015	8 missing episodes (4 LAC)

Contact person	<i>Richard Baldwin; 01225 396289</i>
-----------------------	--------------------------------------

Background papers	<i>LSCB CSE Strategy.</i> <i>CSE Protocol</i>
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	