

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Children and Young People Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	22 nd March 2016	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
TITLE:	Update on Service Developments in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation and “Missing” Young People.	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: N/A		

1. THE ISSUE

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

2. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

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

3. STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS AND BASIS FOR PROPOSAL

- 3.1. There are no specific statutory considerations to be addressed in this report. The Council will continue to address any identified issues that relate to Care Leavers through compliance with the Children Act 1989 and 2004.

4. THE REPORT

Service Developments in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation/Missing are co-ordinated by the LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board) Sub-group. This group was formed in June 2014 to develop and co-ordinate multi-agency services for young people at risk of CSE and young people that are missing from home/care/education. The sub-group meets on a six weekly basis. In October 2015 we held a half-day review of the first six months of the Willow Project. The Willow Project is the multi-agency team of volunteers from a number of

LSCB agencies that work young people at risk of CSE. The review included many of the Willow Project volunteers plus their line managers/supervisors. The review was very productive in confirming that the basic premise of the project, which is a strong emphasis on trying to maintain positive engagement/communication with these young people appears to be the right approach and there were early signs that this is proving to be positive for vulnerable young people at an early stage and has been successful in preventing an escalation of concern.

The review meeting also identified the need for action in the following areas;

- Development of promotional materials to use with young people and parents that highlight the role and function of the Willow project and key contact numbers. These materials are currently being developed by Rachel Allen-Ringham and some members of the team.
- Changes to the way in which Return Home Interviews are managed and undertaken. There was a strong view that the increase in referrals for RHI's meant that volunteers did not have sufficient time to undertake both these and the CSE work. Therefore it was agreed that RHI's would be undertaken by the Compass team, based in the YOS as the workers in this team had the requisite skills to do this work. The Compass team took over this work in November 2015.
- Discussion also identified the need for a third wave of volunteers for the Willow Project. These latest wave have recently completed their training, meaning that we now have 15 trained volunteers for the team.

Review/Clarification of Contact arrangements for referrals

Our on-going discussions and refinement/learning from developing our services have also seen some improvements to how we manage referrals and sharing information.

- a) Development of Single Point of Contact (SPOC); This new facility was launched on 15TH February 2016 and came out of discussions at the review of the first six months of the Willow Project. There was a view that although referrals relating to CSE were being received at a regular rate, a large number needed to be referred straight to the BASE project because they were too complex to be worked within the Willow project. Therefore the discussion identified a need to offer agencies the opportunity to discuss cases where initial/early stage concerns might be developing and to offer the opportunity of Willow workers to intervene/work with young people at risk of CSE at an earlier stage. The e-mail for SPOC is CSE.Referrals@bathnes.gcsx.gov.uk. Referrals are monitored on a daily basis so that one of the Willow team can contact referrers back without delay.
- b) Dedicated telephone number for "missing" referrals. Although we are also receiving a steady number of referrals in relation to young people that have gone missing or where there are concerns that they might go missing, these have been coming through the duty team, and as because the duty desk is manned on a rota system there have been some problems in ensuring a consistent understanding when making judgements about whether young people are missing rather than their whereabouts might simply be unknown at that point in time. Because of this, we have taken a decision to route all missing referrals through to a dedicated number which will be picked up by the soon to be appointed lead Social Worker for CSE/Missing. This will ensure a

more consistent and co-ordinated approach to these referrals and the interface with the Compass team who now undertake the Return Home interviews. The dedicated number is 01252 395200.

Main-streaming role for lead CSE Social Worker

For the past 18 months Rachel Allen-Ringham has lead on the training, and service development, particularly the development of the Willow Project. Rachel has been employed on a contractual basis, but we now need to mainstream a number of aspects of this role. Therefore the Council will now employ a Social Worker two days a week to undertake the management and co-ordination of the Willow Project. The advert for this post recently closed and interviews will be held on 5th March.

Update on the activity of the Sub-Group

The sub-group continues to meet on a six weekly basis which reflects the level of activity currently required in relation to this agenda. The sub-group has recently been joined by Kathryn Humphries of the Council's licensing team and at our last meeting Kathryn updated on the work that she and Rachel Allen-Ringham have undertaken with hotel owners and taxi firms which has included training sessions, and poster campaigns specifically designed and targeted at local hotels and taxi-cabs.

Regional Developments

All CSE sub-group chairs now meet on a quarterly basis to assist in developing a more consistent and co-ordinated approach to developing responses to CSE. These meetings also provide an opportunity for each LSCB to link directly with the Avon and Somerset CSE project managed by Dave McCallum. Much of our recent discussion has centred on developing an alternative to the CSE MARAC meetings. Most professionals had expressed concerns that the CSE MARAC format was duplicating or replicating the function of the strategy discussion which was leading to confusion in relation to which referral pathway agencies should take. In addition the CSE MARAC was becoming lengthy and taking up a lot of time for a larger and larger number of professionals.

All agencies agreed that this format needed reviewing so that a more strategic focus and level of information sharing could take place to ensure that perpetrators were "disrupted" and that each area was able to build up a "problem profile" of individuals and geographical areas of concern. It has now been agreed that we will pilot "Information Sharing" meetings which will take place every two months. The first of these takes place on the 9th March with further meetings in May and July prior to a review of their effectiveness.

Operation Button Update

BaNES have been involved in a number of 'Gold Group' meetings with Police and colleagues from three other LSCB's in relation to this operation which largely follows on from Operation Brooke. Seven suspects have been charged with offences, some of whom were also involved in Operation Brooke. Four young people from the BaNES area have provided testimony to this investigation and may well be required to provide testimony at the trial which is likely to be in the late summer.

The SCR sub-group is scheduled to meet on 9th March to consider what learning we might take from the way that agencies worked with these victims when they were younger and whether or not this should take place within an SCR framework.

CSE Referrals September 2015 - February 2016

	Sept 15	Oct 15	Nov 15	Dec 15	Jan 16	Feb 16 (up to 19/2/16)
New referrals to Willow Project	5	5	2	4	2	2
New referrals to BASE	2	1	0	1	0	1
Total referrals (per month)	7	6	2	5	2	3
Total number of cases open to Willow	17	19	20	18	19	21
Total number of cases open to BASE	11	10	9	10	11	11
Number of CSE crimes recorded by Police	1	2	2	1	0	2

Missing Referrals

	Sept 15	Oct 15	Nov 15	Dec 15	Jan 16	Feb 16 (up to 19/2/16)
Episodes per month	30	32	27	27	9	12
Total number of young people missing	26	20	19	22	9	10
Of which, number of young people also missing education	7	6	4	6	3	1
Of which, number of young people at risk of CSE	1	2	0	1	0	0

Return Home Interviews

	Sept 15	Oct 15	Nov 15	Dec 15	Jan 16	Feb 16 (Up to 19/2/16)
Number of young people offered RHI	16	12	17	20	7	8
Number of RHI's undertaken	10	4	17	7	4	5

5. SUMMARY

This report outlines the continued high profile of Child Sexual Exploitation and “Missing” within the Council and partners within the LSCB. Services to this cohort of vulnerable young people continues to develop, and the initiatives such as the dedicated phone-line, SPOC, Information Sharing meetings with the Police and the appointment of a lead CSE post demonstrate our continuing refinement and growth in understanding of how best to work with this group.

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Background papers	Children Act 1989
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	