

From: Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform

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To: Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee – 8 July 2015

Subject: Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Training for Schools

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: This is the first time the paper has been published

Future Pathway of Paper: Future meeting of this Cabinet Committee

Electoral Division: All

Summary: The scale and prevalence of child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a national issue. A large scale CSE criminal investigation, Operation Lakeland occurred in Kent in 2014. A large number of national reports have stressed the importance of effective partnership working to tackle CSE, and schools and education providers are essential partners. This paper sets out the national and local context, outlining the training and support provided to schools in Kent to ensure children are safeguarded and outlines future partnership developments.

Recommendation: The Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and note this report and receive a further report in 2015 in relation to the lessons and recommendations of the Operation Lakeland multi-agency review and the impact of the introduction of the multi-agency CSE team in Kent.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This paper outlines key national and local developments concerning Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), with a focus on the importance of safeguarding children within Kent schools.

2. Background

- 2.1 Since 2012, and particularly over the last few months, the scale and prevalence of CSE has come under an increasing amount of scrutiny both in terms of national policy making and media attention. There have been numerous high profile CSE cases over this time – from Rochdale to Bristol, Oxford to Barnsley - and a correspondingly high number of reviews into child sexual abuse and exploitation. Each review has found evidence to suggest that CSE is a pressing and largely concealed issue which is endemic across

the country. The Prime Minister has outlined that CSE is a national threat and requires co-ordinated action to address. ¹

3. National Context

- 3.1 In August 2014, Alexis Jay published her review into CSE in Rotherham. The investigation found systemic failures in the way the Council and its partners had dealt with child abuse and exploitation between 1997 and 2013, amounting to a serious dereliction of their safeguarding responsibilities. The report concluded that 'blatant' weaknesses within the authority had led to approximately 1,400 children being exploited over this time, and that concerns about 'political correctness' (since the majority of the crimes were perpetrated by gangs from the Pakistani heritage community), alongside repeated leadership and management failures, had prevented necessary actions from being taken.
- 3.2 In November 2014, Ann Coffey published her 'Real Voices' report into CSE in the Greater Manchester Area. The review found that CSE is a 'real and ongoing social problem' that has become a 'new social norm' in some neighbourhoods of Greater Manchester. Coffey advised that the primary safeguarding agencies - police, the judiciary and local authority children's services - cannot succeed in protecting children alone at a time of deep spending cuts. Instead, she proposed that progress could only be achieved if children themselves are empowered to lead the way in the fight against CSE. The review further suggested that the reason successful CSE prosecutions remain so low is due to prevailing public attitudes and negative stereotypes towards children whom are sexually exploited. To address this, Coffey maintains that the whole local community needs to be involved and informed about trends and types of CSE in their local area.
- 3.3 In February 2015 Louise Casey published the results of her review into Rotherham MBC, following the Jay Report. Casey found the Council had continued to fail in its duties to protect vulnerable children, and that adequate improvements had not been made since the initial Report had been made public. Casey concluded that the LA had an 'unhealthy' culture in which 'bullying, sexism, suppression and misplaced 'political correctness', meant the Council was 'not fit for purpose' and, importantly, '[did] not have the capacity to address past weaknesses.' Since the abuse scandal, Rotherham's Cabinet has resigned and Government Commissioners have been drafted in to run the LA, with a focus on Children's Services.

¹ For instance, Phase One of the Office of the Children's Commissioner's 'If Only Someone Had Listened' report, 2013, identified 16,500 children and young people at high risk of sexual exploitation, alongside 2,409 children who had already been victim to CSE – though the report also acknowledged that the true figures were likely to be 'far higher.' A number of reports also focus on CSE occurring in underrepresented groups e.g. in the BME community and amongst boys and young men. 'Hidden in Plain Sight', published in 2014, looks at CSE in relation to boys and young men known to Barnardo's; the study found that a third of the children and young people Barnardo's have supported since 2008 whom have been subject to CSE were boys/young men. The report also identified that stereotypes held by professionals mean that boys can be less well safeguarded than girls, and the symptoms of CSE exhibited by boys and young men are often left unidentified.

- 3.4 In March 2015, Oxfordshire County Council published a Serious Case Review which found that approximately 370 children were targeted for abuse by gangs and groups over a sixteen year period. The Chair of the Oxford Local Safeguarding Children Board stated that failures across all agencies with safeguarding responsibilities had led to 'a culture...that failed to see that these children were being groomed in an organised way by groups of men.' Though the report found no evidence of wilful neglect or signs that exploitation had been ignored, it highlighted a 'professional tolerance to knowing young teenagers were having sex with adults'.

4. Kent Context

- 4.1 On Tuesday 3 March, a number of senior Council and Police officers, alongside health and social care professionals, Voluntary Community Sector bodies and victims and survivor groups, were invited to a Downing Street Summit to discuss new measures to protect children from sexual exploitation. The measures included proposals to extend the offence of 'wilful neglect' for failure to take action on abuse or neglect where it is a professional responsibility to do so, to cover children's social care, education and elected members - and to impose fines on individuals and organisations that have failed in their duty to protect vulnerable children and young people. On the same day, Government circulated a Joint Commitment to share information effectively between agencies for the protection of children and a 'Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation' report in response to the findings of the Jay and Casey reviews in Rotherham. 'Tackling' sets out a series of measures designed to clarify roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding at a local level.
- 4.2 On 9 March 2015 the Kent Operation Lakeland CSE criminal trial was halted due to juridical concerns regarding the collection of evidence and the reliability of a key witness. As a result, prosecutions will not be progressed. This was a complex and sensitive operation involving several agencies working together to safeguard vulnerable children. However, the case sets a concerning precedent regarding the potential prosecution of future suspected offenders and the ability of local authorities to appropriately protect children and young people in the process of being, or whom are at risk of being, exploited. There is currently a multi-agency review of Operation Lakeland, and Education and Young People Services officers are members of the review panel. A report summarising lessons learned with recommendations will be submitted to the Kent Safeguarding Children Board.
- 4.3 On 26 March 2015 the Government published a revised version of 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' statutory guidance. The 2015 guidance marks a shift in position from the previous guidance (2013) which cast safeguarding and the promotion of child welfare as 'everyone's responsibility' to a position whereby this is, first and foremost, viewed as a local authority duty. The

purpose of this change was to create an 'unambiguous statement of accountability' – clarifying and strengthening the overarching responsibilities of local authorities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and in particular the role of the Director of Childrens Services and Lead Member for Childrens Services as the key points of professional and political accountability within LAs. The guidance also makes additional provisions around CSE and Child Sexual Abuse, including directives that:

- professionals need to be aware of – and alert to – any risks of harm that individual abusers, or potential abusers, may pose to children.
- all professionals share appropriate information in a timely way and discuss any concerns with colleagues in children's social care.
- partner agencies with safeguarding responsibilities need to collaborate to determine a 'full picture of a child's needs and circumstances' i.e. the full picture can only be obtained through effective cooperative working. Agencies must also take prompt action to address these needs.
- Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCB) should take note of relevant information regarding vulnerable children from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, and use this information to help the Board and partner agencies to understand the prevalence of abuse and neglect in their area, and in turn to shape services in response to changing need.
- LSCBs should agree with the LA and partner agencies the levels of different types of assessment and services to be commissioned and delivered, including services for children who have been - or may be - sexually exploited; have undergone Female Genital Mutilation ; and children who may be radicalised. Children's Social Care has the responsibility for clarifying the process for referrals.
- Local authorities should have clear procedures and processes for cases relating to the sexual exploitation of Children and Young People.

5. Education

- 5.1 Kent Safeguarding Children Board (KSCB) is the lead agency for multi-agency training and co-ordination of awareness raising. This is exhibited through the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Children Abused through Sexual Exploitation procedures, toolkit and strategy.
- 5.2 The EYPS Education Safeguarding Team (EST) provide support, guidance and challenge to schools, LA services and Early Years settings to ensure that children are kept safe and their welfare is promoted, as required by Section 175 of the Education Act 2002. Statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015), Keeping Children Safe in Education (2015). Kent Safeguarding Children Board (KSCB) procedures help to inform the work of the team and any good practice guidance that is developed.
- 5.3 The Education Safeguarding Team has included CSE in recent Safeguarding Newsletters for schools and regularly acts as an advisor for schools' dedicated

child protection staff. Comprehensive information on CSE is also contained on the KESLI website, providing easy access for education providers and signposting to other documents such as KSCB policies and toolkits. Bespoke single agency training for Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) in schools and settings also references CSE and signposts the use of the toolkit when assessing risk. There have been in excess of 2000 places offered to designated school staff this academic year and courses are generally over-subscribed.

- 5.4 There are CSE training courses available from KSCB aimed at multi-agency professionals, however these are very much in demand and as a result allocation has been prioritised for social workers. During 2014-15 staff from 22 schools attended this training, including schools most affected by relating to Operation Lakeland. Education providers have been advised that if they cannot access a KSCB course in the near future they should make use of the materials provided via KSCB. As a minimum they are advised to download the CSE toolkit and the CSE procedures and add them to their DSL information.

6. Early Help and Preventative Services (EHPS)

- 6.1 CSE training is mandatory for frontline EHPS staff. Officers within EHPS have been trained to conduct the KSCB CSE classroom training. EHPS staff use the CSE toolkit where appropriate and supervisory processes are robust and focused on managing potential risk.
- 6.2 An excellent example of leadership and partnership working is the establishment of a Gravesham CSE Group. This has been led by the local Troubled Families Manager and brings together key partner agencies, including schools, to focus on CSE within the area. This is being replicated in other areas.
- 6.3 Kent Youth County Council are working with KSCB to produce a short video, entitled 'Positive Relationships' to be used in schools and other youth settings, to raise awareness about CSE.

7. Future developments

- 7.1 An operational, multi-agency CSE Specialist Team has now been formally agreed, including funding from the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner. The team will be a multi-agency group of experts, which will lend support to CSE investigations anywhere in Kent. Although initial funding was secured from the PCC, individual agencies are also contributing resources. KCC Specialist Childrens Services will be providing two Practice Development Officers who will be responsible for leading the CSE education, coordinating and sharing learning.
- 7.2 In the event of another full-scale sexual exploitation investigation, these two team-manager level members of staff will automatically be made available to manage the social work involvement in this operation. This is a clear demonstration of the commitment between agencies to tackle sexual

exploitation, coordinate efforts to prevent exploitation and drive awareness and communication. Strategically, the team will lead on the progression of actions within the multi-agency CSE work-plan.

- 7.3 It is planned for this team to be operational by autumn 2015. The team will be co-located at the Police Headquarters in Maidstone. Co-locating will enable effective multi-agency working, information sharing and the building of strong, professional relationships. The CSE team will be further supported by a data analyst. This post will have full access to all the relevant IT systems, including SKWO, Liberi and the Police systems. This will mean that Kent will have the ability to drill down on key agency's data, providing analysis on gaps, trends and areas requiring development.
- 7.4 A multi-agency child sexual abuse group (MASCE) will also be established to oversee the strategic direction and co-ordinate activity. EYP senior officers are members of this group and are assisting in shaping the set up arrangements.

8. Recommendation:

The Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and note this report and receive a further report in 2015 in relation to the lessons and recommendations of the Operation Lakeland multi-agency review and the impact of the introduction of the multi-agency CSE team.

9. Background Documents

9.1 Kent and Medway LSCB toolkit

http://www.kscb.org.uk/professionals/sexual_exploitation.aspx

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