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To: Children's Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee - 22 July 2015

Subject: Update on Actions regarding Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Classification: Unrestricted

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## Summary

This report provides information about the work undertaken by Kent County Council (KCC), in partnership with colleagues in other agencies since the local authority was part of the thematic inspection by Ofsted in October 2014 which looked at the effectiveness of local authority response to child sexual exploitation (CSE).

Since October 2014, significant work has been undertaken by Children's Services, Education, Public Health, Children's Commissioning and the KSCB to raise awareness of CSE warning signs among partners, providers and front-line staff. This has been further supported by measures to evaluate the quality and responsiveness of interventions; ensuring vulnerable children and young people are appropriately safeguarded and receive the required help and support in a timely way.

This report sets out the steps taken to date and the direction of travel through the second half of 2015, into 2016.

## Recommendation

Members are asked to **NOTE** the progress made since the CSE thematic inspection in October 2014.

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## 1. Introduction

Between September and October 2014, Ofsted conducted eight thematic inspections of how Local Authorities are tackling Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). Rotherham, Rochdale, Bristol, Luton, Oldham, Camden and Brent as well as Kent, were all inspected. Kent's CSE thematic inspection took place 13th -17th October.

This was a targeted one week inspection, and not the full four week inspection under the Single Inspection Framework. As a result, there was not a Kent-specific inspection report published, nor Kent-specific recommendations. Instead, anonymised evidence collected from all eight thematic inspections were collated into a single report "[The sexual exploitation of children: it couldn't happen here, could it?](#)"

Feedback from the CSE thematic was given verbally by Her Majesty's Inspectors to:

- David Cockburn- Corporate Director of Strategic and Corporate Services (in capacity as Head of Paid Service and the accountabilities set out in '[Working together to safeguarding children: March 2015](#)');
- Gill Rigg- Chair of the Kent Safeguarding Children Board (KSCB);
- Andrew Ireland- Corporate Director for Social Care, Health and Wellbeing;
- Patrick Leeson- Corporate Director for Education and Young People's Services;
- Florence Kroll- Director of Early Help and Preventative Services (EH&PS);
- Philip Segurolo- Director of Specialist Children's Services (SCS);
- Patricia Denney- Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Quality Assurance in SCS;

Actions arising from the thematic inspection, both nationally and locally were incorporated into the Children's Services Development Plan (report C1).

## **2. Actions undertaken to recognise risks and likelihood, respond to and protect children from CSE**

The KSCB have completed a [CSE work-plan](#) detailing the necessary actions the professional agencies within Kent must undertake in order to robustly tackle and prevent sexual exploitation. It utilises analysis of all the national reports regarding CSE and Ofsted thematic inspection findings.

CSE remains at the forefront of officer's minds, with quality Assurance mechanisms such as Deep Dives have looking closely at the theme of CSE. The Council's updated [Looked After Children and Careleaver strategy 2015-16](#) and Sufficiency strategy refer to CSE as a key area KCC is focusing on; working with central government and other authorities to develop learning from the thematic inspection. A Public Health CSE Assurance Plan has also been developed in the department, based on the Ofsted thematic review findings and [Kent and Medway Strategic Plan for CSE](#).

### **2.1. Communication and raising awareness**

Substantial efforts have been undertaken by all aspects of the Council to work with both our staff, our providers and colleagues in other agencies to assess training needs, levels of awareness and actions required to ensure the safeguarding response is as robust as possible.

An internal audit was undertaken by Public Health which assessed 8 organisations (six of which are directly commissioned by KCC and two of which provide a Public Health sexual health service but are not directly commissioned by the Council). The Public Health division now have a greater understanding of the levels of staff awareness, understanding of signs and risk factors, use of the KSCB CSE toolkit and utilisation of safeguarding procedures and any gaps to work on.

Children's Commissioning have been working with supported lodgings providers- who deliver accommodation and support to over 130 young people leaving care- to ensure staff within these services are aware of the Kent CSE risk-assessment toolkit, and access relevant training.

A presentation on duties in regard to CSE was also given to senior managers from across the whole Council at the June 2015 'Challenger' event. The Challenger group comprises the most senior managers from across the organisation (targeting those at KR13 and above who are no more than two line management steps away from the Head of Paid Service). Challenger meets four times a year and each agenda contains a core briefing, with a focus at the last two meetings on the role of KCC Staff as Corporate Parents, our duties and responsibilities in relation to 'Prevent' (radicalism, terrorism and violent extremism) and Child Sexual Exploitation.

Andrew Ireland and Amanda Beer (Corporate Director of Engagement, Organisation Design & Development) presented a call to action, asking Challengers to ensure they and their staff understand the local authority's shared responsibilities, remain vigilant, professionally curious and above all report any concerns.

## 2.2. Training

Following the CSE thematic in October, KCC committed that all front-line staff responsible for the safeguarding assessment of/ planning for children and young people would undertake CSE training. Training provided includes utilisation of the KSCB CSE risk-assessment toolkit and spotting the vulnerability indicators specific to sexual exploitation in the context of sexual abuse.

As of May 2015, KSCB had run three "Train the Trainer" sessions; assisting forty seven individuals to run their own single-agency CSE training. A variety of training opportunities are open to front-line staff. Communications and presentations to SCS and EH&PS front-line staff has resulted in increased numbers of front-line staff attending or being booked to attend training, inclusive of:

- multi-agency CSE training sessions run by KSCB,
- localised workshops run by Practice Development Officers (trained by KSCB),
- KSCB e-learning "Safeguarding Children from Abuse by Sexual Exploitation" which is free and open to any member of staff within the safeguarding partnership, regardless of role.

Training and awareness-raising is widespread within Kent, with KCC Education, Admissions and School Placement Officers also attending training on CSE and associated trauma in April 2015. Professional knowledge of CSE vulnerability factors across all agencies will help ensure that information and intelligence is shared proactively across the partnership to improve the protection of vulnerable children.

A training workshop was also jointly hosted by KCC and Kent Police in April 2015 for KCC foster carers. The workshop shared [KSCB's procedures for missing children](#); alongside vulnerability factors and risks associated with children going missing (i.e. CSE) and good practice planning. The workshop was designed to increase the confidence of foster carers managing children who go missing from their placement.

## 2.3. CSE audit

Audits of all children identified as being at risk of CSE were carried out between November 2014 and January 2015, firstly by the child or young person's allocated social worker and their manager. Secondly, completed audits were assessed by a member of the Children's Safeguarding and Quality Assurance team.

Some 120 audited experiences of children and young people were then scrutinised and evaluated by an independent auditor with experience as an Ofsted Inspector. Cases were assessed across nine practice domains: overall audit grade, early identification and risk assessment, multi-agency working, assessment, the child's voice, planning, protection and support, the quality of care for Looked after Children and management oversight.

This independent overview provided the local authority with a clearer idea of themes and trends relating to the cohort of children currently identified as being at risk. Significant amounts of 'Good' practice were identified, with some cases found to have aspects of 'Outstanding' direct work with children and families, recording an multi-agency working to keep children safe. Although the majority of cases were found to require some level of improvement, it was encouraging that 'Inadequate' practice was seen in just 10 cases (8.4% of the total cohort). These cases have all been subject to further remedial work.

The [KSCB CSE toolkit](#) featured heavily as a device which supported strong, child-focussed risk assessments and analysis of children and young people's relationships.

To facilitate professional development and the establishment of a learning organisation, key points arising from this exercise (both practice strengths and areas to work on) were shared with social care staff working with vulnerable children and young people.

#### 2.4. Strategic needs assessment- analysis of prevalence

Following a direct recommendation from Ofsted, a [CSE Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#) chapter has been produced by Public Health as part of the wider Children's JSNA. The chapter will inform commissioning and safeguarding priorities moving forwards. The assessment details the current mechanisms used to train, raise awareness and prevent CSE in Kent. The CSE JSNA stipulated Kent is still in the early stages of being able to fully assess the likely prevalence of CSE within the county. CSE is often a hidden problem; not easily spotted by health professionals, families and carers. It is also often not readily reported by victims themselves, some of whom may not see the abuse for what it is.

Information-sharing and the impact of prevention efforts will become clearer once certain mechanisms- such as the Multi-Agency Child Sexual Exploitation (MACSE) Panel, multi-agency CSE team and the missing children Single Point of Contact (SPOC) have had time to embed and begin to collect sufficient data with which to analyse levels of activity.

#### 2.5. Information sharing

The Early Help Triage and Central Referral Unit (CRU) have been co-located since the end of June 2015. This ensures that contacts and referrals received are appropriately redirected to the service which best meets the needs and usage of children and families. It also looks to better manage future demand, by ensuring families receive support and attention at the earliest stage, even if they do not meet the threshold for statutory intervention from Specialist Children's Services.

#### 2.6. Multi-Agency Child Sexual Exploitation (MACSE) Panel

In line with the [KSCB Business Plan 2015-18](#), a Multi-agency Child Sexual Exploitation Panel (MACSE) was set up in May 2015. A KCC –led proposal, it follows a determination to spot CSE early and build effective information sharing mechanisms.

Although in the early stages, this panel will provide a solid foundation for the effective sharing/use of hard and soft intelligence between agencies with responsibilities for safeguarding children and young people.

## 2.7 Commissioning and long-term support

The Representation, Rights and Advocacy Service has been expanded to include child in need (CIN), those subject to a child protection (CP) Plan and those children in the process of a Family Group Conference (FGC). This increases the opportunity to identify risk and for children and young people to speak about their concerns.

The Independent Visitors Service for Looked After Children (LAC) is also key to giving vulnerable children and young people an opportunity to voice their concerns. This is particularly relevant for young people who have gone missing, as this gives an opportunity to talk to someone independent about the reasons for running away, help understand the risks and issues they experienced and help identify future risks. The commissioned provider for this service has reviewed its internal safeguarding policies to ensure they reflect awareness of CSE, associated risk and the need for intelligence gathering. The commissioning unit intend to monitor issues/emerging themes and trends arising from independent return interviews during performance reviews.

## **3. Missing children and Other Local Authority (OLA) children**

Children who runaway or go missing are particularly vulnerable to suffering harm-including sexual exploitation. The missing children Single Point of Contact (SPOC) was fully integrated and 'went live' in the Central Referral Unit at the end of May 2015. The SPOC collates in partnership with Kent Police, notifications regarding any child that goes missing in Kent in a single place and on a single database. These could be children known to a KCC service or not, they could also be children placed in Kent by other local authorities (OLA). It means that children who may be vulnerable as a result of running away are able to be given support and help at the earliest opportunity. Whilst the SPOC continues to embed, work is underway in partnership with Kent Police to build the ability to cross-reference those children who go missing, with those who are known to be at risk of sexual exploitation.

OLA have particular vulnerabilities, insofar as they are further away from their social worker, Independent Reviewing Officer/ Child Protection Chair and other support services. Kent has particularly high numbers of children placed here by other local authorities. Children are placed outside their local authority for a number of reasons, including for their own safety, localised specialist provision or as a result of local sufficiency strategies with regard to accommodation.

An OLA placement officer has been appointed who will become part of the KSCB team. The OLA placement officer will ensure placing authorities have sufficient information on the statutory, specialist and universal services available. They will also work with placing authorities to ensure there is strong intelligence on OLA who go missing in Kent and work with the Single Point of Contact to escalate any non-

compliance of OLAs in respect of requested information, including Return Interview forms.

#### **4. Moving forwards- summer 2015 and beyond**

Work to continue raising awareness, preventing and tackling CSE remains high on the agenda, embedded within the strategic priorities across the local authority. A range of measures are planned which, once embedded will hopefully ensure children, young people, carers, parents and professionals alike are equipped and empowered to spot the signs, take the responsibility and get the necessary support to address the abuse.

A conference specifically on sexual exploitation is due to be held in October 2015 jointly with Kent Police to highlight a range of exploitation issues including online (e-safety) risks, gangs, trafficking and organised crime as well as the sexual exploitation and abuse of children.

##### 4.1. Multi-agency CSE team

Efforts to ensure children and young people are protected from abuse and exploitation is a high priority for Kent's safeguarding partnership. There is currently an ongoing project led by Kent Police to develop a specialist multi-agency CSE team; a strategic and operational team of experts, which could support investigations anywhere in Kent.

The team will include representatives from the Police, data analysts and Health alongside KCC social workers. The team will be co-located to aid integration and effective partnership working.

To best support this team, KCC SCS will provide two Practice Development Officers to the team. Children's safeguarding experts, these two Practice Development Officers will be managed by the Principal Social Workers (formerly Principal Practitioners) within the Children's Safeguarding Unit. Once in post, these two members of staff will be key to assisting social care to share expertise, knowledge and develop practice. It is envisaged the multi-agency team will be operational by autumn 2015.

##### 4.2. Universal CSE training for foster carers

As part of KCC's efforts to establish a preventative and self-protection programme on CSE for CIC (national recommendation), led by fostering, plans are underway for all foster carers approved for ages 10 and upwards and all fostering service social workers to complete a CSE preventative training programme. Training is to include the direct views of young people who have experienced CSE. The proposed outcomes are that Foster carers feel able to discuss proactively with their children the risks of exploitation and what it means, in terms relevant and appropriate to the age and lives and lifestyles of individual children in care (CIC). The status of completed foster carer training will be included in the carer's training profile and assessed as part of their annual review.

##### 4.3. Commissioning and procurement

In order to set contractual quality standards and to monitor commissioned providers regarding their organisation response to CSE, KCC's legal team are currently drafting additional clauses relating to CSE for inclusion into contract terms and conditions.

The additional clauses will focus upon:-

- a) Stipulating that each provider has clear policies and procedures for dealing with CSE;
- b) Placing a requirement on commissioned providers that all staff working with children and young people have received CSE training and that this is regularly updated;
- c) Linking the provider to the resources, information and training available via the KSCB.

#### 4.4. Schools and relationship education

A consistent approach to personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education including sex and relationship education (RSE) is essential to ensure children and young people have the knowledge to- where possible- keep themselves safe, make sensible choices and know who to speak to if something worries them. This is particularly relevant as some young people do not see themselves as victims, or potential victims of sexual exploitation. Where certain behaviours are common among a group of peers, or in a relationship- activity may be regarded as being "normal". This work is being progressed between Public Health and Education and Young People's services.

KSCB is also currently working in partnership with Kent Youth County Council on a 'Positive Relationships' project to produce a short video for use in schools and other youth settings.

#### 4.5. Information and guidance for parents and carers

A wealth of [e-safety information](#) is publically available to professionals, parents and carers alike. KCC is also particularly fortunate as one of only a handful of local authorities with a dedicated e-safety officer, able to work in schools and education settings to share resources to help children be safe online. This is particularly relevant given child sexual exploitation may be as result of online grooming or 'sexting'.

Information leaflets for parents, carers and young people have been drafted by KSCB and will be published and printed by September 2015.

### **5. Conclusion**

Whilst it is evident that there are excellent examples of good information sharing, this practice is not yet systemic between all services. CSE is an extremely complex and hidden activity, therefore ongoing training and knowledge of the vulnerability indicators is critical to successfully identifying children and young people who may be at risk. Good information sharing between agencies and teams in the interests of the child/ young person is one of the activities to have the greatest impact in preventing abuse and/ or exploitation and promoting welfare. A number of informal information sharing networks exist but these are not consistent across the county, nor formally published as protocols.

Information sharing shortfalls have been clearly self-identified by divisions and plans are in place to address the majority of these issues. In light of the range of measures

that have been recently established and are due to be implemented, KCC and its' partners will be in a much stronger position to begin systematically evaluating emerging trends in behaviour, utilising this intelligence to build stronger preventative and protective measures.

In the shorter term, embedding systemic practice approaches such as Signs of Safety will help social workers and first-line case managers to address the complexities associated with identifying, working with and engaging with families and victims of/ children at risk of sexual exploitation.

## 5. Recommendations

Members are asked to **NOTE** the progress made since the CSE thematic inspection in October 2014.

## 6. Contact lead officer: KCC strategic lead for CSE and Chair of KSCB CSE and Trafficking sub-group

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## 9. Background Documents

Ofsted

- [The sexual exploitation of children: it couldn't happen here, could it?"](#)

Kent Safeguarding Children's Board

- [Kent and Medway Strategic Plan for CSE.](#)
- [CSE work-plan](#)
- [KSCB CSE toolkit](#)
- [KSCB's procedures for missing children](#)
- [KSCB Business Plan 2015-18](#)

Kent County Council's

- [Looked After Children and Careleaver strategy 2015-16](#)
- [CSE Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#)
- [e-safety information](#)