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Organisational Change - Child Sexual Exploitation

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This report contains an overview of the creation of Kent Police's Child Sexual Exploitation Team

Date: Friday 18th September 2015

Overview - Child Sexual Exploitation Team

In March funding was secured from the Police and Crime Commissioner to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) across Kent and Medway (£200,000 recurring for 3 years). This was added to with funds from the Chief Constable (£440,000 recurring for 3 years) and has led to the formation of a new co-located team, including staff from Kent and Medway Children's Services.

To date the Police establishment of the team includes a Detective Inspector, 2 x Detective Sergeants, 3 x Intelligence Officers, 6 x Investigators, 2 x Analysts and a Trainer. Working with the team is an Operational Delivery Manager from KCC Children's Services. It is anticipated we will be joined by another member of KCC Children's Services and a member of staff from Medway Children's Services imminently. We are yet to secure firm agreement of an investment of staff from Health or Early Years help, two key elements which directly engage with those at risk of CSE and their families. This remains subject of discussion at Executive level within the respective agencies.

Significant milestones to date

Recruitment –All identified police staff will be in place by the end of October, with some already in post.

Operational Framework – Workshops have been held to identify what processes need to be improved to make sure agencies work better together to provide services to those at risk of CSE. In July partners from across Kent and Medway came together and identified a lack of information sharing and intelligence gathering as a significant undermining factor, along with a lack of early joined up working. The lessons learnt from recent CSE investigations Op Lakeland (Thanet) and Op Mercia (Medway) were acknowledged during the workshop. A workshop held by Health identified similar issues, and a workshop in August for Kent Police identified a number of new processes for development to increase awareness amongst staff of CSE and the capturing of intelligence. This has resulted in action plans to identify key work streams that directly affect service delivery. These are to be refined in to one overarching action plan, incorporated into the current CSE Action Plan and to be owned by the new CSE Team.

Work in progress

The Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) terms of reference have been written and are in their second (final) draft for sign off. The governance arrangements are subject of recent work and again are awaiting final agreement. The CSE Team will complement and not replace existing Child Protection arrangements.

An information sharing protocol for partners has been written and is awaiting agreement via the respective MASEs.

Intelligence products and information capture is subject of several strands of work including how CSE is incorporated in District Community Safety Plans, access to data held by other agencies e.g. sexual health clinics and problem profiling at District and County level.

Contact has made with a number of forces across the country to look at their practice in tackling CSE and working with partners. This helps us to be sure we are not repeating mistakes made by others and are identifying best practice.

Pivotal to the progress of this team is increasing the awareness and understanding in Communities across Kent and Medway and our own respective workforces. A number of developments are underway including delivery of training to priority groups such as taxi drivers, licensees and social housing landlords. Training products are under constant review and form part of the early work of the CSE Team. A KSCB road-show is being held in October to promote greater awareness of CSE and how to report concerns. This will include a local launch of the national 'Say Something' campaign, managed by the 'Missing People' charity.

The CSE Team Remit

The police elements of the team will adopt a proactive approach to identifying and responding to CSE concerns, hence the significant investment in the intelligence capability. They will focus on disrupting activity alongside other colleagues, as well as safeguarding victims. They will also educate others on the dangers of CSE, working with colleagues in Community Safety Units to better understand and respond to the issues locally. CSUs are seen as local 'Champions' to make sure the intelligence picture is better understood, gaps are identified and partners are working effectively together to tackle the issue. This will include engagement with young people in schools and youth groups. Early work with police elements of CSUs has started and this will be broadened in the coming weeks.

Summary

A lot of progress has been made since early funding was secured, but there is a lot more work to be done. This requires the full support of all key agencies to make sure we are joined up in our approach. National guidance tells us the best way forward is a co-located multi-agency team. While we are not there yet, there is significant traction on a daily basis to deliver an improved service. CSE is being identified daily by agencies and responded to, but we do not fully understand the scale and scope due to an incomplete intelligence picture.

Training, increased awareness of CSE, the existence of the new team, a joined up approach and sharing of information underpin our success at this stage.

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