

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

16 December 2015

Update on Child Sexual Exploitation

Report by Director (Social Work)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report provides an update to Council on the work being taken forward to tackle child sexual exploitation (CSE) since February 2015. The Child Protection Committee and Child Sexual Exploitation Working Group have been active in establishing zero-tolerance to sexual abuse and exploitation and this work remains a key priority.

1. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 1.1 The Scottish Government published *Scotland's National Action Plan to Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation* in November 2014. This action plan reflected the issues raised in the Scottish Parliament's Public Petitions Committee inquiry into CSE and sets out 41 actions for Scottish Government, Child Protection Committees, third sector organisations and the Care Inspectorate.
- 1.2 The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning reported on the progress made in relation to the national action plan in October 2015. Her report highlights key developments including:
- A summit held in February 2015 bringing together local authorities, health boards and Child Protection Committee Chairs to share best practice and another will be held in February 2016;
 - A steering group established to oversee the implementation of the recommendations of the report by Jackie Brock, *Safeguarding Scotland's Vulnerable Children from Child Abuse*;
 - Police Scotland's National Child Abuse Investigation Unit now fully operational;
 - A national public awareness campaign on CSE launching in January 2016; and
 - A programme of work to raise awareness of CSE among night time economy workers beginning next year.

The CPC and the CSE Working Group will consider this progress report and map our local developments against the four themes identified. The four themes are:

- improving outcomes
- improving integration and implementation
- identifying priorities and gaps
- supporting learning and sharing good practice

- 1.3 Tackling CSE is a key priority in Perth and Kinross. On 25 February 2015 Council members agreed to take forward a proactive approach to tackling CSE locally through a comprehensive action plan, and to emphasise the importance of establishing zero-tolerance for child sexual abuse and exploitation.
- 1.4 The Perth and Kinross Child Protection Committee (CPC) monitors national developments and has taken forward a proactive approach through the CSE Working Group which was established in February 2015. CSE will remain a key focus for the CPC 3-year improvement plan throughout 2015-2018. The CSE Working Group finalised its workplan in April 2015 and developments to date include:
- Completion of a CSE self-assessment exercise against the University of Bedfordshire's CSE Self-Assessment Toolkit;
 - Gauged levels of awareness and understanding of CSE through surveys with children, young people and adults;
 - Created a CSE electronic resource library of CSE publications to ensure that all staff have access to appropriate and up to date information materials;
 - Developed and disseminated a working definition of CSE; including warning signs; risk indicators and vulnerability factors identified;
 - Developed a web page for CSE as part of the child protection website to promote awareness across a wide range of professionals and the general public;
 - Worked jointly with the NSPCC and continued the roll-out of the schools programme to improve children's awareness of, and strategies to keep themselves safe from, abuse across our primary schools;
 - Developed bespoke information and advice publications for specific stakeholders (firmly focussed on prevention) for further design, publication and distribution;
 - Engaged with the minority ethnic access development project (MEAD) to ensure wider engagement with minority ethnic communities;
 - Purchased the roshni Abuse, Culture and Child Protection OnLine Training Modules which include modules on GIRFEC; child protection; sexual abuse; forced marriage; honour-based violence and female genital mutilation (FGM) to improve the capacity to identify and respond to harmful practices;
 - Developing a CSE screening toolkit and guidance to strengthen existing screening and information sharing arrangements for child concern reports;
 - Mapped our existing recovery services into a single directory of services showing contact numbers; referral pathways; types of support services and identified gaps to assist in the support provided to young people at the right time;
 - Provided key members of staff (including CSE Working Group) with training in relation to CSE which has been subject to high levels of evaluation;
 - Launched bespoke CSE training for specific stakeholder groups for delivery from August 2015;

- Consulted with young people on their understanding and appreciation of the risks associated with exploitation, elicited their ideas and solutions to build this into the action plan for delivery from December 2015 onwards;
- Agreed to participate as one of 4 pilot areas in Scotland for the Children 1st Stop To Listen Project which is aimed at providing a rights-based, child-centred approach to supporting children and young people who have been sexually abused and exploited;
- Held a successful multi-agency leadership summit on abuse and exploitation in September 2015.

1.5 Leadership Summit: Zero-tolerance of abuse and exploitation

A very successful summit took place in Perth Concert Hall in the afternoon of 8 September 2015. The *Leadership Summit: Zero-tolerance of abuse and exploitation* was intended to follow the young people's *Speak Up Innovation Lab* which took place in the morning of that day to allow the voices and ideas of young people to permeate throughout. The audience was made up of 125 senior managers and represented a wide range of services including:

- Elected Members
- the full spectrum of Council services
- Police Scotland
- NHS Tayside
- SCRA
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service
- Perth Prison
- Various 3rd Sector organisations including MEAD and Citizens Advice
- Local independent schools
- Skills Development Scotland
- Perth College UHI
- Young people who had helped to plan the Speak Up Innovation lab attended the full day.

1.5.1 The Leader of the Council re-stated the Council's commitment to zero tolerance of abuse and neglect, and the major role of elected members in exercising robust scrutiny and challenge, to ensure that the systematic failures evidenced in recent enquiries are not repeated in Perth and Kinross. The Chief Executive of the Council and Chair of the Children, Young People and Families Partnership set out the purpose of the summit in raising awareness of CSE in the context of *Getting it Right for Every Child*, and building capacity for leadership to address it in a complex world where social media presents huge challenges. The ideas of young people from the morning's Speak Up Innovation Lab about how best to tackle sexual exploitation were presented by two young people and fed into table top discussions. The victims' perspective was prominent throughout the summit through film, visual presentations and a powerful recital of poetry by Jo MacFarlane. The keynote speech by Nazir Afzal OBE was particularly well received by the participants with numerous requests to have the opportunity to hear more from him.

- 1.5.2 Table top discussions took place to identify the challenges and solutions to: creating the right attitudes and culture to help victims of abuse and exploitation to recover, and what could be done together in partnership to embed zero-tolerance of abuse and exploitation. A full evaluation report of the day will be considered by the CPC and the solutions and ideas will be considered by the CSE Working Group in December 2015.
- 1.5.3 Dedicated web pages to CSE were launched at the summit along with e-learning modules on Abuse, Culture, and Child Protection Online Training Modules). <http://www.pkc.gov.uk/cse>

1.6 Young People's Speak Up Innovation Lab

- 1.6.1 The Chair of the CPC and CSE Working Group facilitated a follow-up meeting on 29 September 2015 with key members of the CSE Working Group and five young people who had been involved in facilitating discussions at the Young People's Speak Up Innovation Lab which took place on 8 September 2015. The meeting considered the detailed recordings, ideas and solutions from all of the groups which had focussed on Sexual Exploitation. They identified those issues which were already addressed adequately within the CSE action plan, those which needed to change, and new ideas which needed to be taken into account. These decisions will inform a revision of the CSE action plan in December 2015. There was interest expressed by some young people in continuing to work with the CSE Working Groups to ensure that the perspective of young people is taken into account fully and to inform ongoing developments.
- 1.6.2 The meeting also considered the results of the voting in relation to the best options for the development of the Named Person Service for school leavers up to the age of 18 years. This will be central to ensuring the ongoing protection and wellbeing of young people after they leave school. Young people gave their advice on the most appropriate way to communicate the outcome to the Speak Up participants and an individual letter was issued via schools in October.
- 1.6.3 An analysis of the results of 150+ votes and other suggestions showed that young people favoured the provision of the Named Person through local youth services and they sought a variety of ways of getting in touch with a Named Person, including youth workers, a central telephone helpline and a drop-in facility at @Scott Street in Perth. Services for Young People will now take forward the development of the Named Person Service which will be in place to comply with the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 by August 2016.

1.7 Stop to Listen

- 1.7.1 Perth and Kinross will be a pilot area, along with three other Scottish Local Authorities, for the Stop to Listen project being led by Children 1st. The aim of

this work is to improve the way in which we work alongside young people by building strong and trusting relationships to create a system for encouraging disclosures about sexual abuse from children and young people. It allows them more control over, and involvement in, the process. It goes at their own pace as far as possible, responds to their own fear about disclosure and gains their trust while offering them support throughout the process.

As a pilot area we will commit to:

- Offer children a better means of finding safety and support that upholds and respects their rights, by allowing space for their voices to be heard and for their best interests to be taken into account;
- Create a truly child-centred child protection system that responds to children and young people's own development, fears and behaviours and is guided by the child or young person;
- Enable children and young people to determine their own pace with respect to talking about abuse and supporting them to overcome potential fears relating to disclosing what has happened to them;
- Improve the quality of evidence-gathering through child centred practice, and through reducing fears, which could lead to retractions of evidence; and
- Raise the morale and sense of efficacy of professionals involved in child protection.

1.7.2 It is proposed that this is launched via a "Masterclass" which will take place on 3 February 2016. The audience will be people who manage or are directly involved in the detection, investigation and prosecution of perpetrators of child sexual abuse/exploitation. This would include specialist police officers, medical personnel who carry out forensic medical examinations, social workers and staff involved in joint investigations, staff involved in early screening of concerns about young people and legal services, etc. The purpose would be to provide a forum to learn from experts and to examine what it is we could do differently to get alongside victims and slow down the investigative process to a pace which allows the victim to build trusting relationships, and to gradually develop confidence in being able to talk about what has happened to them, without losing the credibility of the evidence.

2. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The information above describes much of the work undertaken by the CPC and the CSE Working Group since February 2015. A significant amount of work has been carried out locally and there is a high level of commitment across services to this important area.

2.1 It is recommended that the Council:

- (i) Notes the ongoing work of the Child Protection Committee and the Child Sexual Exploitation Working Group and success of the local

leadership summit to raise awareness across senior managers in local services, the engagement of young people to inform the delivery of the local action plan; and the range of ongoing work across a wide range of organisations to tackle abuse and exploitation;

- (ii) Notes the intention to take part in the Stop to Listen project; and
- (i) Requests regular updates on progress on the work to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation by the Child Protection Committee and Child Sexual Exploitation Working Group.

Author

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1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	n/a
Workforce	n/a
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	n/a
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	n/a
Strategic Environmental Assessment	n/a
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	n/a
Legal and Governance	n/a
Risk	n/a
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	n/a

Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 This report relates to Strategic Objective No (i) Giving every child the best start in life.

Corporate Plan

- 1.2 This report relates to Strategic Objective No (i) Giving every child the best start in life.

- 1.3 Education & Children's Services Policy Framework

The report also links to the Education & Children's Services Policy Framework in respect of the following key policy area – Integrated Working.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 There are no known resource implications at this time.

Workforce

- 2.2 There are no known workforce implications at this time.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There are no asset management implications at this time.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:

- (i) Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 The matters presented in this report were considered under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

Sustainability

- 3.3 Not Applicable.

Legal and Governance

- 3.4 There are no legal implications at this time.

Risk

- 3.5 There are no associated risks at this time.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Head of Democratic Services, Head of Finance, Head of Legal Services, Corporate Human Resources Manager, the Children, Young People and Families Partnership, Education and Children's Services SMT and the Child Protection Committee and partners have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

External

- 4.2 The Child Protection Committee and partners has been consulted in the preparation of this report.

5. Communication

5.1 There are no Communication issues at this time.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

3. APPENDICES

None

