

## **DSCB CSE SUB GROUP UPDATE**

### **Report of the Head of Childrens Social Work and Child Protection**

#### **1. Introduction and background**

In March 2015 the Devon Safeguarding Children's Board (DSCB) set up a new Missing and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Sub Group. The Sub Group is accountable for the delivery of the Devon Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy and Action Plan 2015-16.

This report updates on the progress made against each area of the plan in addressing the recommendations made in the Scrutiny Committee report as well as giving updates with regards to work that has been generated as the group has evolved and we understand more about CSE in Devon.

#### **2. Progress in delivering the Devon CSE Action Plan**

##### **Overall Planning**

Agencies are engaging well with regards to tackling CSE. There is clearly a high motivation across Devon amongst all partner agencies to develop innovative ways of safeguarding children with regards to CSE. This is well demonstrated by the attendance at CSE sub group meetings, MACSES and related task and finish groups.

##### **Prevent**

Bespoke single and multi-agency learning and development has been rolled out. Every agency can report on take up levels of formal training and other development opportunities.

Devon Youth Service (DYS) completed a CSE survey to enhance our knowledge of young people's understanding of CSE. 168 young people participated in the survey. 68% of respondents felt they had an understanding of CSE, 23% thought they knew someone suffering from CSE; 40% felt that it was a significant issue on social media platforms; and 63% felt they knew how to access support about CSE for themselves or a friend if required. This is an encouraging picture of the impact of prevention activity in Devon.

Research indicates that children from seldom heard groups are more likely to be abused or exploited. To date there has been no co-ordinated activity to raise awareness amongst children in these groups. The following groups have been identified as the focus for more targeted prevention activity:

1. Children with Disabilities (physical, learning, deaf, blind, communication difficulties)
2. LGBT (focus on boys at risk)
3. Migrant workers
4. Travelling community
5. International students.

DCC in collaboration with its partners redesigned the MACSE (missing and child sexual exploitation forums). This introduces a new co-ordination post, new chairs and vice chairs. This has resulted in a far more organised structure that allows the forums to deal with CSE in their respective areas. There is good multi-agency representation at all 3 MACSE's in Devon.

MACSEs are a truly multi-agency group of professionals who together form the hub of knowledge relating to CSE risk and activity within that MACSE area. The MACSE information sharing process supports those responsible for protecting children and pursuing offenders by ensuring all agencies pool their collective knowledge of individuals and situations when a concern is first raised. These have been running since November 2015 and are proving effective in sharing information, safety and disruption planning. They have raised awareness in practitioners of CSE and are improving skills.

The Organised Crime Local Profile for CSE and CSA (appended) is the first multi-agency problem profile of CSE that agencies have had to work with. This provides the baseline for partners to measure progress. This profile will develop as we learn more about this difficult and complex subject.

### **Protect**

The CSE screening tool has been re-designed. Its purpose is to identify young people at risk of sexual exploitation or who are already being sexually exploited so that appropriate interventions can be put in place.

Three year Big Lottery funding has enabled a CSE worker in the Exeter Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) and 3 more CSE workers employed by Childrens Society around Devon. The role of these workers will be to support and treat children who have been victims of CSE.

Embedding workers' knowledge and skills in working with and managing CSE in open cases is a priority in Devon.

### **Disrupt**

A multi-agency CSE disruption manual has been produced. The manual highlights traditional methods of disruption that may be open to law enforcement agencies, but also non-traditional methods using legislation open to partner agencies. This disruption manual has been passed to attendees of MACSE's to help give the MACSE chairs some guidance in terms of directed intervention within that forum. It has also been passed to all the chairs of policing tasking meetings.

Over the last 9 months there have been a number of successful and ongoing joint operations combating CSE. Examples include Operation Juke, (two lead offenders were subjected to a total of 21 years in prison) and Operation Pangram (lead offender) received an 8 ½ year sentence.

A Strategic Governance Group (SGG) has been set up in the South West region to help deal with the police and multi-agency response to CSE. Practice from Devon has been identified as best practice by this group and the level of involvement and interaction has been good, resulting in key inputs to the regional strategy being developed by this group.

## **3 Conclusion**

Good progress, led by the DSCB sub group, has been made across the partnership to respond to the challenge of CSE. Levels of awareness of professionals and of young people have been raised and Devon is in the embedding practice stage of development. We need to satisfy ourselves that we have a shared understanding of what best practice looks like so that we accurately benchmark and accelerate improvement.

Jo Olsson

### **Electoral Divisions: All**

Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Skills: Councillor James McInnes

Strategic Director, People: Jennie Stephens

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972: LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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