

**Minutes of a meeting of the Children's Services
Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 6
September 2016 at Committee Room 1 - City Hall,
Bradford**

Commenced 4.30 pm
Concluded 8.30 pm

Present – Councillors

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT	INDEPENDENT
M Pollard D Smith	Engel Mullaney Peart Shaheen Tait	Ward	Sajawal

Observers: Councillor Dunbar, Imran Khan, Thirkill and Val Slater

VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS

- Sidiq Ali – Parent Governor Representative
- Gull Hussain – Parent Governor Representative
- Joyce Simpson – Church Representative (CE)

NON VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBER

- Stephen Pickles – Teachers Primary School Representative
- Tom Bright – Teachers Secondary School Representative
- Tina Wildy – Health Representative

Apologies: Claire Parr (Church Representative (RC), Kerr Kennedy (Voluntary Sector Representative)

Councillor D Smith in the Chair



18. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

In the interest of transparency the following were disclosed:

- (1) Councillor Peart disclosed an interest in Minute 23 as she worked in a school which had a sixth form.
- (2) Councillor Engel disclosed an interest in minute 23 as any potential changes may affect her children.
- (3) All those who were school Governors disclosed an interest.
- (4) Councillor Ward disclosed an interest in Minute 21 as his wife worked as an Education Social Worker.
- (5) Gull Hussain disclosed an interest as he was a governor at two schools.
- (6) Councillor Dale Smith disclosed an interest in Minute 22 as his son was a barrister and may have knowledge of CSE cases. He also disclosed an interest in Minute 23 as he was a Cooperation Member of Bradford College which was a sponsor of academies.
- (7) Tina Wildy disclosed an interest in Minute 21 as she worked in the nursing specialist service.
- (8) Councillor Mullaney disclosed an interest in Minute 22 as she managed a childcare centre and occasionally had Looked After Children in the centre. Councillor Mullaney also disclosed that she had two family Members that worked in Care homes.

Action: City Solicitor

19. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

20. REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

No referrals to the Committee had been received.

21. ARRANGEMENTS BY THE COUNCIL AND ITS PARTNERS TO TACKLE CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

The Strategic Director Children's Services submitted **Document "I"** which provided an update to the report presented to the Committee on 8th October 2015 and subsequently to the District's Area Committees regarding the issue of child sexual exploitation (CSE). It set out the arrangements that had been put in place, and which continued to be developed, to safeguard children from CSE.

The Manager of Bradford Safeguarding Children Board reported that:

- Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation continued to be a national priority
- An Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse was established by the former Home Secretary and would investigate whether public bodies and



other institutions had taken seriously their duty of care to protect children from sexual abuse in England and Wales (further details were included in paragraph 2.4 of the report).

- On 29 July 2016, the Chief Executive of Bradford Council wrote to the then Chair of the Inquiry drawing her attention to the call for an independent inquiry into CSE in the Bradford area by Ms Angela Sinfield; the Chief Executives letter went on to invite “robust scrutiny” of Bradford’s record and arrangements.
- The Government decision, in 2015, to designate CSE a “national emergency” had reinforced the increasingly high priority given to CSE in local authorities and police forces.
- Bradford Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) had developed a 9 Point Strategic Response to CSE which identified the priorities agreed by all partner organisations working with children and families in the Bradford District (further details were included in paragraph 2.8 of the report).
- One of the responsibilities of BSCB was to ensure that professionals learn from past experience and that organisations make improvements based on that robust learning; BSCB had commissioned an independently led case review (SCR) into a particular case of CSE; this SCR would be published when concluded.
- BSCB also undertook “Challenge Panels” which looked at a number of cases in depth, some cases were chosen as it was acknowledged that they presented particular difficulties for agencies and others were chosen from a random sample to look at how other, similar cases had been responded to.
- The Multi-Agency CSE Hub had grown since it was established in early 2012; the Hub also had responsibility for managing enquiries into and coordinating support for children who go missing.
- In the last report on this issue to this Committee (8th October 2015) it was reported that there had been 431 referrals to the Hub from 1st April 2014 – 31st March 2015. That report also stated that if the trend of the first four months of the 2015/16 year continued, there would be a year on year increase of 29% in referrals to the Hub during 2015/16. Final analysis of data for 2015/16 shows that there were in fact 713 cases referred to the Hub which is an increase of 65%.
- There was a continuing rise in the cases of potential or actual CSE that were referred to the Hub.
- In the course of 2015/16 there were an average of 54 CSE referrals per month, compared to 36 per month the previous year.
- 18% of CSE referrals to the Hub were for males.
- The peak age for males referred to the Hub was 14 years, for females it was 15 years.
- A break down of cases open on one day (29th March 2016) showed that 13% of cases were assessed as being at high risk, 42% at medium risk and 40% were low risk.
- In the course of 2015/16, in the Bradford District, 109 crimes were recorded by West Yorkshire Police as “child sexual exploitation crimes”; this constitutes 20% of all sexual offences against children recorded in Bradford during that period.



- 78% of identified offenders linked to CSE crimes were under the age of 25.
- BSCB undertook a partnership review of the working of the CSE Hub (detailed in paragraph 2.26 of the report); the review report resulted in the development of a detailed framework for professionals working with children who experience or were at risk of CSE; the review provided the need for clear pathways into therapeutic services for children and adults who had experienced CSE; the review also demonstrated the importance of ensuring that all partners provided a high quality and prompt response to all incidents of children going missing from home or from care.
- Perpetrators were referred on to the Insight programme, as an intervention by the Police, if the Police were unable to prosecute (detailed in paragraph 2.32 of the report)
- Preventative initiatives were being undertaken by partners or being commissioned by the local authority.
- The local authority had previously commissioned an educative drama tour of the District's secondary schools highlighting the risk of CSE to year 10 students; a similar, age appropriate product for primary school pupils who were approaching transition to secondary school had been developed; a play and supporting educative materials aimed at Primary School pupils entitled "Mr Shapeshifter" highlighted how children may be groomed and harmed through naive use of smart phones and other internet enabled devices; As a result of the positive evaluation of the 8 performances to date, funding was being sought for an initial tour of 60 – 90 Bradford District primary schools during the 2016/17 school year. The target audience for performances was year 6 pupils.
- It was recognised both in Bradford and nationally that there were significant challenges for large organisations such as the local authority and the police service in effectively communicating with black and ethnic minority (BEM) communities about challenging issues such as CSE. It was recognised that in Bradford and elsewhere there had been an over representation, among convicted perpetrators of street grooming, of males of south Asian heritage, when compared to population data.
- The Barnardo's NightWatch aimed to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation by offering advice, guidance, support and training to businesses, services and the general public; NightWatch placed particular emphasis on helping those working in the night time economy to recognise, respond and report CSE and played a part in keeping children safe after dark.
- A number of initiatives had been undertaken to drive up standards in licensed businesses such as independent hotels.
- More than 3500 taxi drivers and operators had been trained to recognise the risk of CSE and to respond appropriately; this training was mandatory for all new license applicants and applicants for licence renewals.
- The CSE Parenting Education Pack was a resource that addressed the gap in current service provision to help parents participate and contribute to the safety and protection of their children from CSE.
- West Yorkshire Police and Bradford Council had established a specialist team known as "Operation Dalesway", set up in October 2014 in response to the issue of historic CSE concerns.



The police representative reported that:

- Positive work was being undertaken in Bradford to tackle CSE.
- There had been a 65 % rise in the number of referrals.
- The force had worked really hard to increase people's confidence to be able to come forward and report their concerns.
- Children of Asian heritage were not reporting cases of CSE; bespoke work had been undertaken with the BEM Community to raise awareness of safeguarding issues; 12% of cases referred to the hub were of Asian heritage.
- The police were delivering sessions to schools on cyber crime; 660 sessions had been delivered in school and 24,000 children received safety training.
- There were good examples in the report of partnerships working hard to raise peoples awareness of CSE.
- CSE was taking place in all local authorities but professionals had not recognised the signs in the past but did now.
- A team had been set up to deal with historic cases.
- Proactive work was being undertaken such as the Police visiting people who displaced certain behaviours.
- The voluntary sector needed to be thanked for the work they had undertaken in Bradford it was noted that they were leading the way and there were no barriers for children when they were working with the voluntary sector.

A representative from Barnardo's spoke about the partnership work that was being undertaken on raising awareness and preventative work. They referred to initiatives such as Nightwatch which offered training and guidance to people that worked within the night time economy, to help inform them how best to protect children and young people from sexual exploitation after dark.

In response to a Member's question it was reported that the Insight Programme was being piloted locally in instances where there was not an option to prosecute a suspected perpetrator because there was insufficient evidence. Perpetrators would be referred to the programme as an intervention by the Police. It could also be used for sentenced individuals to undertake as part of their Court Order. If an offender did not engage in the programme then it could be used as evidence for bad character for any subsequent criminal case against them; offenders needed to be willing to undertake the programme.

A Member queried what support was available to looked after children. The Strategic Director Children's Services reported that more work was needed to support looked after children; a coordinator was appointed to look into children going missing; some children coming into care had complex lives and suffered abuse at home, the service was looking at commissioning specialist therapeutic support which was not currently available.

In response to a Member's question on whether CSE training provided to schools



would be sustained; the representative from the Police reported that a huge amount of work had been undertaken in terms of CSE training provided to schools and that the Police were committed to continue with this work. The Strategic Director Children's Services reported that safeguarding was a number one priority for the Authority and all its partnerships.

The Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing stressed the importance of the community as a whole being aware of CSE, parents, carers, neighbours etc. Local Councillors had a significant role and CSE Training was now mandatory for all Councillors. She urged all Councillors to undertake training and inform their communities on how to be aware of CSE. Barnardos was launching a pack for parents on CSE and how to recognise it's signs.

It was reported that Barnardos also provided the following initiatives:

- Children's Society "Hand in Hand" Service which provided support services to boys and girls in the Keighley and Airedale area;
- Blast (Bradford and Leeds Against the Sex Trade) was a campaigning, training and support organisation for young men and boys experiencing CSE;
- PACE (Parents against Child Exploitation) which provided support to parents and carers of children experiencing CSE.

Ann Cryer (ex Keighley MP) attended the meeting and spoke about the work she had undertaken on CSE; She reported that Angela Sinfield came to see her in 2003 about CSE issues in Keighley. Originally she thought it was only an issue in Keighley; she was pleased that people were now talking about this serious issue. She reported that she had been asked to visit Westminster to speak about the concerns she raised in her letter in 2003. This letter was 6 sides of A4 and contained horrific details. The hardest thing was not being believed by professionals at the time. People accused her of fabricating the issues she raised and she was called a racist. She was told by the Police Officer leading the Keighley investigation at the time that everything was being undertaken that could be and nothing more could be done by West Yorkshire Police. Angela Sinfield, one of several mothers, went to West Yorkshire Police and the then Strategic Director Children's Services. It was not until Channel 4 news produced an article on it that issues began to be taken seriously and the mothers secured changes in the law relating to CSE which made grooming for sex a criminal offence. The authorities were too slow to act on the issue of grooming in the early 2000's; The issue of grooming was raised a decade ago but they were ignored by authorities and politicians. Work was being undertaken by the Home Office on historic cases.

Angela Sinfield (Keighley mother who had campaigned for a public inquiry into how grooming had been tackled in the past) attended the meeting and stressed the importance of prevention rather than dealing with the issue after it had happened; She reported that CSE affected the child's whole future life. Unless children were in secure accommodation, people that were custodians of children did not have powers to stop them getting into the arms of perpetrators. She reported that mothers affected were not originally believed nor understood by the



Police; When the issues were raised they just wanted to be believed and treated with dignity and respect.

It was a criminal offence to have sex with a child under 16. She stressed that their children should have been protected by the necessary authorities. She asked:

- When did Bradford Council Staff become aware that cohorts of children were being abused?
- What did the Authority do?
- What contact was made with other Councils like Rotherham?
- What advice and support had been given by the Home Office to prosecute perpetrators?

She reported that the backbone of CSE was drugs. If the issue of drugs was tackled it would help tackle CSE. It was shocking that nobody believed them when they were telling the truth. Facts needed to be stated and that it was not racism. It was extremely important to be honest and transparent. A safe house was needed for children like the refuges for victims of domestic violence. Placing children out of area was expensive. Children were the most precious things in their lives and it was the duty on all to protect them.

She reported that she had spoken to many families who had been affected by CSE. She stressed that this was organised crime. It was criminal activity funded by drugs. Primary schools and parents needed to be targeted to help recognise the signs of CSE.

An Education Social Worker who used to work for Bradford attended the meeting and reported that she had set up a risk of sexual exploitation group to support ladies across the District who wanted help and support which was not available elsewhere; the report before the Committee did not contain enough information in particular how many children became parents of children, what qualifications they left the authority with; experience they had of being in care; a lot more work on preventative measures could be undertaken; the majority of children were targeted in Year 7; information sessions should be held at parents evenings to inform them of the issues that Bradford had with Child Sexual Exploitation; if a parent was concerned about their child there should be a contact for the authority/school/relevant agency, posters were not easy to understand and needed to be clearer; communities need to be made aware; there needed to be safe place for children such as refuges for women fleeing domestic violence; appropriate therapeutic services needed to be available for victims; therapeutic services could also be more outreach.

It was reported that the hub was undertaking a piece of work in relation to risk indicators and vulnerability in terms of victims.

A former Councillor and Member of the Committee requested further information on historical cases and the impact they had on previous victims; how far back were historical cases being examined; victims and perpetrators were still out there; this was not an issue of race and there should be no fear that it would offend the Asian community; this was organised crime and that was how it should



be looked at; victims were from all communities; an independent enquiry needed to be undertaken.

A Member of the Committee stated that he had visited the hub and was impressed with the work they were undertaking.

In response to a Member's question it was reported that the hub had good communication with all agencies involved and that a lot of proactive work was being undertaken. Work was being undertaken with various outlets such as snooker halls, take aways, taxi ranks, hotels. New legislation was recently used to shut down a snooker club. Training was also provided to various outlets on spotting the signs of CSE; on the spot visits were also undertaken to various places.

Preventative work being undertaken was detailed in paragraph 2.36 of the report.

A Member requested further information on therapeutic services such as what was provided, how effectiveness was monitored and how children were given a voice through these services. Young people felt very damaged and talking services were not appropriate for them; delivering services to children needed to be reviewed.

The Strategic Director Children's Services confirmed that therapeutic services was an area that needed further work and reported that therapeutic services was a national issue; NHS partners were undertaking work on a Mental Health Strategy to strengthen issues of safeguarding.

A member stressed that victims faced problems in the long term and less tolerance needed to be given to perpetrators. It was important to protect future victims, and see more outcomes to reduce the number of perpetrators and reducing their opportunities.

A Member queried the lack of information in the report relating to input from the Youth Service.

It was reported that the Youth Service played a pivotal role and were very involved in the work being undertaken. More information would be included in a future report on the participation of Youth Services.

A Member thanked Angela Sinfield and Ann Cryer and the work being undertaken by the Hub. NSPCC and Barnados recognised children with learning difficulties were more likely to suffer abuse. It was disappointing that abuse suffered by children with learning difficulties was not mentioned in the report.

A Member queried how many cyber crime training sessions had been undertaken in special schools.

It was acknowledged that not enough work had been undertaken with children with learning difficulties, the film developed by Blast was used by primary schools



and could be accessed free of charge by using Blast's website.

In response to a Member's question the Strategic Director Children's Services reported that the authority and its partners had strengthened their arrangements for tackling CSE; further work was needed in areas of children in care, children with learning disabilities and therapeutic services; the authority and its partners would continue to work hard in tackling CSE; the emphasis would be on prevention.

The Portfolio Holder for Health and Wellbeing welcomed and thanked Angela Sinfield and Ann Cryer for the work they were undertaking. She reported that it was disturbing to see the extent of CSE cases and that it was a regular story in the daily newspaper. Legislation needed changing where the child had to make a complaint for the case to progress. It was not possible to turn the clock back but there was a need to move forward to making sure children were as safe as possible. The authority and its partners would look at any crime that was reported. The hub in Blackpool would be visited to see what lessons could be learnt. Bradford was not in denial, it was open and transparent on this very serious issue. The data analysis being collected by the hub would be very useful. Looked After Children were sometimes vulnerable. She paid tribute to Looked After Children who did well in their exams this year. There was a suggestion of a safe house for Looked After Children in the same way as women fleeing domestic violence but the practice had changed in domestic violence cases and the perpetrator was now moved from the area. Safeguarding was not just about CSE but there was also neglect and other forms of abuse that came under safeguarding. If a referral was received relating to domestic violence and children were concerned the case would be referred to the hub. Perpetrators would be brought to justice no matter what their race. There was a need to look at how the Council and partners could improve and what lessons could be learnt from the past.

In response to a Member's question it was reported that some children were reluctant to make a complaint but the police would look at different techniques so that the Crown Prosecution Service could take legal action.

A Member raised concern that work that being undertaken now relating to CSE had not been just a few years ago. What degree of external review took place on the multi-agency hub. There was a need for more information on the work of the team looking at historical cases. What was missing was the fact that the Police got it wrong and the lack of awareness of CSE at the time. What was missing was the apology to victims and for blaming them for what was taking place.

The Strategic Director said the review of the CSE Hub was undertaken by an Internal Assistant Director who was new to Bradford. The Strategic Director had also commissioned an external audit of 73 cases of high, medium and low risk CSE.

Angela Sinfield reported that the Police did not take her seriously and let her and



her daughter down; she was told by police that they could not give an apology for getting it wrong as it would open the flood gates.

The representative of the Police reported that he took on the roll in 2011; at the time these issues were first raised the Police did not understand the issues relating to CSE and did not recognise the signs of CSE. The Police representative apologised for the force not recognising the signs of CSE. Tackling CSE was West Yorkshire Police's number 1 priority now. The Police and its partners had dedicated a lot of time investigating this serious crime and lessons have been learnt on how things should have been dealt with.

Members thanked the Police representative for his dedication to the service as he was leaving his current employment.

Suggested recommendations were tabled at the meeting which included:

- To reaffirm this Committee's commitment to openness and transparency with regard to CSE and the protection and safeguarding of Young People across the District and the pursuit and prosecution of perpetrators.
- only by working across partnerships could the issues of CSE be swiftly identified and action taken.
- Every person had a duty and responsibility to protect our young people and report inappropriate behaviour and concerns at the very earliest opportunity.
- The training being undertaken by taxi drivers was welcomed and that it be further publicised and members of the public be asked to support the "Kite-mark".
- A report on the outcome of similar training to Private Hire Drivers be submitted.
- The Nightwatch initiative be further explained and offered to Hotels and establishments offering accommodation more broadly across the District.
- Welcomed the Council decision for mandatory CSE e-training for elected members and urged the prompt completion.
- Recommends senior officers of the Council and Partners and their Boards to undertake similar training.
- Recommends all School Governors to be offered similar training.
- Welcomes the development of the CSE Hub and encourages all members of Council and senior officers who had not done so to visit the CSE Hub at the earliest convenience.
- Supports the CSE Hub Intelligence Officer working with the West Yorkshire Police and Court Services to ensure that a breakdown of the ethnicity of CSE offenders and suspects was available.
- A report to be submitted concerning the "Transition" of Young People to Adulthood who were vulnerable to CSE.
- Notes the Leader's response to Ms Sinfield.
- Submits minutes of this and subsequent meetings to Professor Jay.
- Whilst the change in understanding and condemnation of CSE may explain the higher number of referrals reported; needed to establish if a "plateau" had been reached or if the number of referrals was continuing



to rise and more action or resources were required.

- In order to establish these parameters and determine further recommendations the Committee required an update of these issues at its meeting on 24 January 2017.

Resolved-

- (1) That a further report be presented to the Committee in January 2017 which includes information on:**
 - **The outcome of training for Private Hire Drivers**
 - **An explanation of the Nightwatch Initiative**
 - **A breakdown of the ethnicity of CSE offenders and suspects**
 - **Information on the Historic Case Unit**
 - **Work relating to hard to reach children and those with learning difficulties.**
- (2) That the Committee urges all elected Members and Co-opted Members to complete the mandatory on-line Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) training.**
- (3) That it be recommended that senior officers of the Council, Partners and their Boards also undertake the CSE Training.**
- (4) That it be recommended that all School Governors be offered CSE Training.**
- (5) That the Committee encourages all Members of Council Co-opted Committee Members and senior officers of the Council to visit the CSE Hub at the earliest convenience.**
- (6) That the minutes of this meeting be submitted to Professor Jay who is leading the independent enquiry into CSE.**
- (7) That all those who attended the meeting be thanked for their valuable contribution.**

Action: Strategic Director Children's Services

22. UPDATED INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS ON THE WORKLOADS OF CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE SERVICES

The Deputy Director (Children's Social Care) submitted **Document "J"** which presented information on the workload of Children's Social Work Teams and updated Members on key pressures on the service. The workload analysis is based on activity up to 30th June 2016.

There have been a slight change to the overall workloads of social workers, and



pressures upon the service since the last report was presented. The report demonstrates that Social Work Services for Children & Young People in the District remained strong, robust and well managed.

Social Workers attended the meeting and spoke about their workloads and the positive support they were receiving from management.

In response to a Members question it was reported that on going support and supervision was taking place.

It was reported that staff views were collected through surveys.

Members stressed the importance of social worker workloads being manageable and the effect it could have if this was not the case.

It was reported that staff were being supervised every month and child protection was working well.

A Member raised concerns in the rise in Looked After Children and the difficulty Legal Services was having in getting Care Orders to Court; outsourcing legal work may be a cheaper option.

Members were informed that the Authority needed to ensure that it was looking after the right children and did not have children in care longer than they required; the authority looked at other permanent arrangements that could be explored; the issue for the authority was the time it took to do that and the legal resources; in some cases children were placed with parents but remained looked after.

A Member asked whether the service had capacity to deal with the 97 unaccompanied child asylum seekers.

It was reported that the new arrivals would be spread over the year; negotiations were taking place with the Home Office on how best to support the children; the pressure was in residential work.

Resolved-

- (1) That the Committee considers further reports in the 2016/17 Work Programme to ensure the continuation of safe workloads and practice into the future given the current financial climate.**

- (2) That the Social Workers be thanked for their contribution and attendance at the meeting.**

Action: Deputy Director, Children's Services



23. REVIEW OF POST-16 EDUCATION IN BRADFORD

Members agreed to defer consideration of **Document “K”** to a future meeting this item to a future meeting.

Resolved-

That consideration of the report be deferred to a future meeting.

Action: Scrutiny Lead

24. UPDATE ON THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POST-OFSTED ACTION PLAN

Members agreed to defer consideration of **Document “L”** to a future meeting.

Resolved-

That consideration of the report be deferred to a future meeting.

Action: Deputy Director Education, Employment and Skills/Scrutiny Lead

25. CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17

The Chair of the Committee submitted the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2016/17 (**Document “M”**).

Resolved-

That the 2016/17 Work Programme continues to be regularly reviewed during the year.

Action: Scrutiny Lead

Chair



Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER

