

Report of the Chief Executive Office to the meeting of the Council Executive to be held on the 3rd of January 2023

AM

Subject: Protecting Children & Vulnerable Adults at Risk of Exploitation

Summary statement:

This report provides an annual update on the information to be presented to the Council Executive on the 3rd of January 2023 regarding the issue of exploitation. It focuses on the strategic partnership response to all forms of child and adult exploitation and how partners from the Bradford District Safeguarding Children Partnership, and the Bradford Safeguarding Adults Board work to drive improvements across the district and hold agencies to account for their work in their area.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

Abuse and Exploitation affects people from all communities, but more victims come from disadvantaged communities. Services are designed to be accessible in communities and to focus on areas of need.

Jenny Cryer
Assistant Director Office of the Chief Executive

Portfolio: Children & Families

Report Contact: Darren Minton –
Manager of Bradford Safeguarding
Business Unit / Janice Hawkes –
Scrutineer & Independent Chair
Phone: (01274) 434361
E-mail: darren.minton@bradford.gov.uk

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Children Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides an annual update on the information to the Council Executive regarding the issue of Exploitation. The Bradford District Safeguarding Children Partnership (BDSCP) scrutinises the district's responses to this and provides a professional challenge to these responses.
- 1.1 This report will focus on the strategic response to all forms of exploitation of Children and Adults and how partners contribute to improving service provision across the district. This ensures that partners work to improve how children and adults at risk are supported and protected and to seek assurance for work in this area. Partners continue to work together to protect vulnerable children and adults through increased collaboration between BDSCP, Bradford Safeguarding Adults Board (BSAB) and the Community Safety Partnership (CSP). This has been achieved through improved awareness and understanding, enabling professionals to recognise and respond at an earlier stage to broader types of exploitation.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Nationally and locally, safeguarding partners are addressing the emergence of interlinked exploitation themes, including Serious & Organised Crime, County Lines, Cyber-enabled crime, Modern Day Slavery and Criminal Exploitation, as threats in a similar way to the same conversations in the last decade around Child Sexual Exploitation.
- 2.2 This is not only within children's safeguarding arrangements but also recognising that vulnerable Adults can be exploited in the same way. These complex safeguarding matters impact the Bradford District Safeguarding Children Partnership (BDSCP), Bradford Safeguarding Adults Board (BSAB) and the Community Safety Partnership (CSP). Scrutiny and quality assurance have also increased through the media, inspections and inquiries locally and nationally.
- 2.3 In Bradford the response to exploitation is led by the All Age Exploitation Sub Group of the Safeguarding Partnership.
- 2.4 Key strands of work include:
- The All Age Exploitation Sub Group
 - Exploitation Hub
 - Non recent CSE prosecutions
 - Education and safeguarding in schools
 - Supporting victims
 - Cyber CE
 - Missing children and the Philomena Protocol
- 2.5 **The All Age Exploitation Sub Group**
- 2.6 Bradford's All Age Exploitation Group has been established as a sub-group of both Children and Adult Safeguarding Partnerships and the City's Community Safety Partnership specifically to focus on the issue of exploitation. It is supported by the

Safeguarding Business Unit and chaired by a Senior Police Officer who ensures a focus on the exploitation of children and adults, including those in transition to adulthood.

- 2.7 The Group is full of committed professionals from various sectors, including health, social care, policing, education and third sector organisations such as Barnardo's and the Bridge Project. The purpose of the group is to get partners working together as effectively as possible to understand, prevent and combat exploitation, whilst focusing on the most effective support to those subject to various types of exploitation.
- 2.8 Over the past year, a key piece of work has been the creation of a Bradford Partnership Exploitation Profile. In September 2021, over 100 partners from a wide array of partner agencies and organisations and some people with lived experience were brought together at Valley Parade for an all-day facilitated workshop. This allowed the harvesting of information, experience and expertise regarding the current harms and threats in Bradford and emerging issues of concern. There was also an exploration of what the partnership is doing well and where we can improve. Over the following months, with the support of analysts from West Yorkshire Police, a small task and finish Group analysed the data from the event and a range of other data from various sources to create an exploitation profile for Bradford.
- 2.9 The expanded task and finish group, which has representatives from various sectors, is now developing a City-wide Exploitation Strategy and Delivery Plan, will be formally launched in early 2023. This not only takes account of the recently produced exploitation profile but also the product created as a result of a mapping exercise of provision for those subject to exploitation in Bradford. The mapping exercise, initiated by the All Age Exploitation Group, was completed with the assistance of a PhD student at Huddersfield University and identified gaps in provision.
- 2.10 The regular meetings of the All-Age Group and the energy of the business unit and Chairs team have helped create genuine momentum amongst partners in focussing on exploitation. There has been a willingness to share and receive learning from local practitioners and the involvement of external contributors from across the Country. By way of example, this has included an understanding of the work of the Lotus Project in the use of Navigators to support adults subject to exploitation, an exploration of financial abuse led by the West Yorkshire Joint Services Team, a focus on online exploitation including ways to better support victims and the families of perpetrators amongst numerous other aspects of exploitation. There has also been regular support and oversight of the development of the recently formed Bradford Exploitation Hub. The Chair of the All-Age Group was honoured to speak to about 200 front-line workers at the recent Exploitation Hub launch event.
- 2.11 The Group has also been keen to reflect on how it can continually improve its effectiveness. This has included a session dedicated to such a review, where feedback was received from Group members and considered. An indication of the momentum that has been seen is the number of organisations and individuals seeking to join the Group. Whilst membership has grown, we are now at the stage there is a danger that the Group does become unwieldy, and the interactive nature could be impacted. Therefore, we are working with interested organisations whether

their contribution could be realised through one of the other subgroups.

2.12 Exploitation Hub

- 2.13 On June 16th 2022, launched the new multi-agency exploitation hub. The hub now consists of several specialist practitioners from a variety of partner agencies that have enhanced and built upon existing practices across the district that are working together to reduce and mitigate the risk of children and young adults being involved in or being subject to exploitation.
- 2.14 The Hub also tackles online exploitation of children as well as more conventional examples of sexual harm. The hub offers additional support to children, families, wider communities, and partnerships both directly and virtually to help them reduce the risk of impending sexual harm and support recovery through trauma informed practices.
- 2.15 The hub has representation from adult social care. This has been a significant and positive move that will capture those at risk from exploitation who are transitioning from children to adulthood.
- 2.16 Exploitation does not stop when a victim or potential victim turns 18. Young people need ongoing support and safeguarding as they reach the legal age of adulthood.
- 2.17 Nationally, regionally and locally, the transition into adulthood has been raised as a significant gap in safeguarding provision for several years. To support this work locally, an investment in a resource of an adult social care worker has been allocated to work with and work alongside the exploitation hub to focus primarily on the identified age range of 18-25-year-olds who fall outside the legislation for adult social care provision
- 2.18 Within the Exploitation Hub, a daily RAM (Risk Assessment Meeting) is held to consider the vulnerabilities and safety plans for children at risk of Exploitation. The meeting is attended by partners from Social Care, Police, Health and the Voluntary Sector. Action plans are agreed upon to manage and mitigate risk. When demand is high, there is an option to hold these meetings daily.
- 2.19 Any children or young person considered 'high risk and stuck' are discussed at our 6 Weekly MACE (Multi-agency Child Exploitation) panel. Strategic leads in Social Care and West Yorkshire Police jointly chair the MACE meeting. Senior managers from Health, Education and the voluntary sector are also present. Leaders can 'unblock' any resource issues and provide senior manager oversight so young people can access timely support. The meeting is split into two parts so that local issues, demographics and data are considered alongside specific cases

2.20 Non recent CSE – Operation Dalesway – West Yorkshire Police

2.21 What is the current demand?

- 2.22 There are currently 14 live complex non-recent CSE investigations underway in Bradford District under the policing operational name of Operation Dalesway. These are at various stages, from initial scoping to awaiting trial.

2.23 Since the last report, two investigations have been finalised, one re-opened, and five started. Initial scoping of the new investigations suggests that they will be smaller in scale than earlier ones, with fewer suspects involved.

2.24 Since the last report, eight offenders have been sentenced to 90 years in prison. There are currently 37 suspects charged and due to stand trial.

2.22 What is the anticipated future demand?

2.23 While it is hard to predict future demand, the West Yorkshire Police Force Management Statement forecasts that demand is levelling off. Although the number of open investigations has increased over the last period, the new investigations look to be of a smaller scale. A number of the open investigations are listed for trial or are already well advanced – most of the work in these investigations has been completed.

2.24 Police do not see a significant new wave of reports, but as the threat has evolved and changed over time, the emergence of new demand cannot be ruled out.

2.25 What is the current capacity/capability to meet demand?

2.26 The non-recent CSE team at Bradford has sufficient resources to meet the current demand. Most police officers and staff are trained and accredited to PIP (Professionalising the Investigation Process) 2 level. Some will attend a new 'Serious Sexual Abuse Investigators Development Programme'.

2.27 Following a review of safeguarding demand, capacity and capability across the force, policing resource has increased in safeguarding.

2.28 In the non-recent CSE investigation arena, there have been slight changes to the structure. There is now a Senior Investigating Officer (DCI rank, PIP3 major crime accredited) dedicated solely to non-recent CSE investigations in Bradford District. A PIP 4 accredited SIO provides strategic oversight of all non-recent CSE investigations across the force and reports to the Chief Officer Team.

2.29 The force has recently invested in dedicated police staff researchers and analysts to support non-recent CSE investigations.

2.30 What notable practice / good work is occurring?

2.31 The CPS and the non-recent CSE team have a close working relationship. Early in the investigation, there is consultation with the CPS. The significant cases may be dealt with by the newly formed CPS Organised Child Sexual Abuse Unit (OCSAU). Smaller cases are dealt with either by the regional Complex Case Unit (CCU) or RASSO (Rape And Serious Sexual Offences) unit.

2.32 In all cases, the CPS provides early investigative advice early in the investigation, which assists in focusing evidence gathering on those offences where a prosecution appears viable. The SIOs meet regularly with the management of the CPS teams to discuss progress with investigations.

- 2.33 A 'Gold' partnership group, consisting of strategic statutory partners from Police , the Local Authority and colleagues from Health, meets quarterly to oversee the partnership response. This includes verifying that sufficient support measures are in place for victims.
- 2.34 Officers in the team are committed to providing exemplary care and support to victims. This includes ensuring that "special" measures are offered to victims at Court.
- 2.35 Using an intermediary to assist a victim in giving evidence over a video link has been positive.

2.36 Education and safeguarding in schools

- 2.37 National research demonstrates how the continued engagement of exploited children in Education is crucial to promoting disruption, safety, and better outcomes.
- 2.38 The Education Safeguarding team placed a specialist Education Safeguarding Officer (ESO) into the Multi-Agency Exploitation Hub to strengthen relationships between Social Care and Education. The role of the ESO is to provide support and challenge to schools across Bradford when an exploited child is on the brink of exclusion. Exploitative traumas can manifest in many ways, including in the child's behaviour which can be challenging for agencies to support in isolation. By adopting a shared responsibility, professionals have ensured that exploited children continue to access learning alongside supportive interventions.
- 2.39 The Bradford district has 16 Safer School Police Officers. These officers are fully trained in recognising and identifying children and young people who may be a risk of exploitation and other contextual safeguarding issues.
- 2.40 To enhance the awareness of exploitation within the educational settings schools across the Bradford District have access to the award winning Ineqe Safer Schools APP. The APP is available to staff , parents, carers and pupils to have :-
- Access to credible , contemporary relevant information
 - Age-appropriate resources
 - CPD courses for school staff , including Governors
 - Customised communications through push notifications
 - Advice, guidance & signposting to seek help
 - Artificial Intelligence Prompts

2.41 Supporting victims

2.42 The Youth Service

The Youth Service remains committed to its work around exploitation in all forms. Exploitation is a key element of our safeguarding children processes, and all staff are trained in safeguarding and contextual considerations through initial inductions and onward training.

- 2.43 Our locality-based youth provisions, in open access and street-based work, consistently support young people's information, advice and guidance to raise

- awareness around exploitation. This agenda is to ensure young people gain critical thinking skills and that they can identify when people do not have their good interests at heart. The area-based teams are well placed to identify early those young people who are vulnerable to exploitation or who are being actively exploited. The teams work directly with the young people by linking with other agencies and ensuring that the right support is given to each young person so that actions can be taken to protect the young person and disrupt the perpetrators of their exploitation.
- 2.44 Youth work practitioners are committed to ensuring young people develop voluntary solid relationships with youth workers, empowering young people to support them to make safe choices and consider safety when out with friends, in public spaces or travelling around the district.
- 2.45 Our youth work teams in the areas are working 1-1 with many young people through our “Youth in Mind – Buddies” work. This work primarily focuses on young people with poor mental health. In mental distress, those who are anxious or isolated and through this work, we have supported several young people regarding their vulnerabilities to exploitation, particularly in some of our new communities where there are cultural differences. Working around what is acceptable and what constitutes a healthy relationship is a pivotal contributor to helping young people begin to see relationships of power imbalance and coercion and control.
- 2.46 The Youth Service is working with partners in key hotspot areas –this work continues to actively target and support young people to reduce their vulnerability to exploitation. This includes empowerment work to help increase reporting of hate crimes, verbal and physical abuse and has work that is targeted towards single genders and communities of interest to ensure the interventions are bespoke to meet the identified need.
- 2.47 The Youth Service has continued to develop work that supports criminally exploited young people. Breaking the Cycle work was identified by Ofsted in its recent visit as being effective as an intervention provider, something equally endorsed by the independent evaluations undertaken by Warwick University and the Violence Reduction Unit.
- 2.48 Breaking the Cycle, as a Youth Service project, has further developed work that identifies those young people who are vulnerable to exploitation and actively exploited. Youth Work practitioners who work on this piece of work are all highly skilled youth workers with specific trauma training to support their understanding of children and young people who have had adverse childhood experiences. Their delivery is undertaken against a resilience framework used to evidence the distance travelled by the young people.
- 2.49 The Service is committed to identifying victims as early as possible and, as such, has committed itself to work “upstream” of the core Breaking the Cycle work. This has seen youth work practitioners working in the BRI Accident and Emergency Department, working with young people who present at A&E due to an incident of violence, a sharp instrument injury or where medical or clinical staff are concerned that the story about the injury does not match the harm they are seeing. This work provides intervention opportunities that start in A&E but continue into treatment areas and inpatient wards. Also, it gives onward support to young people once they

are discharged from the hospital. This work is held in high esteem by the funder. It has proven to be very effective in getting alongside young people in a moment that is considered a reachable moment to better support and understand what is going on for a young person. The hospital-provided provision works seven days a week, 365 days a year. This has been very successful as a pilot project and has secured another year of funding to ensure this work can continue.

- 2.50 The Breaking the Cycle team also work four nights a week alongside police colleagues as part of a response to incidents of violence on the street. This deployable mobile resource directly responds to calls for Service from police and the out-of-hours emergency duty team for Children's social care. They will also undertake follow-up visits to individuals involved in incidents of violence to reduce the likelihood of reprisals. In cases of child-to-parent violence, they have a role in helping to calm tensions and reduce placement breakdowns. The team will undertake initial interventions and provides onward support and work to address any identified issues.
- 2.51 We have youth work practitioners working within the refugee communities, providing targeted interventions and activities for young people who are new to the UK and are part of the Home Office resettlement programme. This work supports young people to understand better and spot signs of exploitation in all its forms and build their resilience.
- 2.52 The Youth Service continues to support the development of exploitation services across the district and plays a vital role in the ever-developing integrated exploitation hub. The Exploitation Hub is working hard to become a centre of excellence in respect of joined-up working across services and supporting victims, tackling exploitation locations and disrupting exploiters. This sees the Breaking the Cycle team working with health, education, social care, Barnardos and police colleagues daily to manage risk and flag young people identified as being at risk of / who are being actively exploited. This process ensures each young person has their risks appropriately managed and monitors responses to ensure interventions are effective. Where appropriate, the team will also make referrals to the National Referral Mechanism, a national framework for identifying and referring victims of modern slavery. A young person who receives conclusive or positive grounds conclusions will be flagged within national police databases ensuring they are recorded as exploitation victims. Where concerns around the exploitation risks escalating, or where young people are 18+, their flag status is discussed at the MACE meeting, a strategic meeting attended by Youth Service management that looks at more creative responses to support or disrupt exploitation for exploitation individuals.
- 2.52 Nationally the Service continues to work with the NSPCC, BBC Childline and Missing People UK in further developing the Service. "Is this ok?". Initially developed and piloted in Bradford, the success of this free, confidential, anonymous chat service for young people 13-18 years is now being rolled out across more local authorities.

2.53 Barnados- Turnaround Project

Turnaround meets a need for specialist trauma-informed support to young people assessed by the Child Exploitation Team as being at moderate or significant risk of CSE. The young people referred have been affected by or are suspected to be affected by CSE and the trauma associated with this. Many have experienced multiple and complex trauma. The service offers:

- Specialist assessments completed in collaboration with the young person
- Plan of support identifying strengths and protective factors; how to build on these; and worries and vulnerabilities; and how to address these. If the risk is assessed as higher or lower than when referred, feedback to RAM/CSC/support network is provided
- Regular reviews of the support offered
- Support tailored to the needs of the individual
- Individual support is delivered using a trauma-informed approach, exploring topics such as coping strategies and grounding techniques, relationships; grooming; sexual health; consent; the law, and managing risk and safety strategies.
- Support to access sexual health services
- Specialist support through the criminal justice process. This can involve supporting young people to meet with the police to give police statements; and supporting them through court.
- Specialist consultation and support to other professionals supporting young people at risk of CSE
- Attendance at multi-agency meetings
- Information and intelligence sharing to disrupt child exploitation

2.54 Turnaround works in partnership with the CE Hub and attends the daily RAM meetings. The service continues to take a flexible approach led by young people's support needs; for example, direct contacts have been carried out in a range of settings, including; on doorsteps, in gardens, in houses, in community settings and at Listerhills.

2.55 In 2021/2022, Turnaround has seen an increase in referrals for young people from the Eastern European (17% overall referrals) and Roma communities (13% of overall referrals) where there are trafficking/modern-day slavery concerns. This has seen a reduction of White British referrals from over 50% in 2020/2021 to 40% in 2021/2022. Turnaround has also seen an increase in young people using Class A drugs, including crack cocaine and heroin. This includes an increase in intravenous drug use. The age range of referrals for young people at significant risk range from 17 years old to as young as nine years old.

2.56 Since June 2022, Turnaround has seen a significant increase in referrals, and consequently, this has left several young people waiting for support. The service has responded by increasing the caseload of practitioners and providing weekly contact with the young people awaiting support. Within the weekly contact, face-to-face visits are arranged with the young people to start building a relationship with the service and conducting an assessment to establish an accurate evaluation of their needs. Turnaround is developing a weekly group work support session for moderate-risk young people, which will be in partnership with health.

2.57 This year has seen the implementation of a weekly CSE Health Drop-In hosted at Listerhills (Barnardo's office). This is an opportunity for young people from

Turnaround and Trusted Relationships to engage with health professionals to meet their health and wellbeing needs. This new provision has already seen around 20 young people engaging since May 2022 who have previously refused to access sexual health services, resulting in receiving treatment and contraception. The Turnaround staff and health also integrate wellbeing activities to support young people's emotional and mental wellbeing.

- 2.58 On exit from the service, young people's risk status is consistently reduced by the Child Exploitation Multi-Agency Team as a result of young people's engagement with their dedicated Turnaround worker. This has been evidenced in **case studies 2, 3 and 4 (Appendix A)**

2.59 Trusted Relationships (TR):

The Trusted Relationships programme reduces young people's involvement in exploitation and abuse as victims and/ or perpetrators through:

- increasing the consistency and quality of support for children and young people at risk of becoming involved in exploitation and abuse;
- improving trust between young people and adults who are there to support them;
- developing protective factors that build resilience in children and young people (including support networks; positive role models; a sense of purpose; self-esteem; critical thinking skills).

- 2.60 Trusted Relationships has two distinct strands; one-to-one preventative and targeted group work in Bradford East (from April 2022, this was extended to all Bradford District).

- 2.61 The programme is an established (Home Office Funded from 2018) and successful early intervention service with specialists and experienced practitioners. It has continued to have a positive impact on reducing the risk of CE for young people by supporting them to:

- Provide intensive 1-1 support to ensure risk does not escalate
- Support engagement in education, health and youth provisions
- Targeted group work in schools across the district
- Community activities during the school holidays
- Opportunity to reconnect with Trusted Worker for advice/guidance when they feel vulnerable and need advice.

- 2.62 TR continues to provide stability and reassurance to young people at their most vulnerable periods, including providing intensive emotional support when young people are removed from their families. This programme's significant impact on young people within a year is highlighted with the overall reduction in risk through the services support was 75% (based on 103 young people). This has been evidenced in **case study 1**.

- 2.63 The funding for TR has not been extended, and as such, the service is due to come to an end on the 30th of September, 2022. Referrals into the service stopped from the CE Hub and allocations of a TR practitioner on the 30th of June 2022. All young

people open to the service are currently being supported with a positive ending.

2.64 Cyber Exploitation

Bradford District Polit and Cyber Team

- 2.65 Child sexual abuse and exploitation continue to be identified across the district. This is particularly true of online abuse wherever-more-sophisticated digital tools protect anonymity and where apps encourage children to engage in risky behaviour. This has been the subject of increased concern when the district was in increased lockdown due to Covid-19, where children isolated at home are at an even higher risk of being targeted by online groomers for abuse.
- 2.66 Law enforcement agencies, including the Police, are working with partners from the industry and voluntary sector partners, both in the UK and abroad, to raise awareness and support children and parents. TBP has published guidance for parents on the Safer Bradford website for advice about signs of this form of abuse.
- 2.67 Bradford Polit Team has successfully executed 120 warrants in the last year. They have also dealt with over 220 offenders in the Bradford District for various child sexual offences. The team acts on the relevant Partner Agency's intelligence to identify and locate offenders.
- 2.68 Bradford District Cyber Team, which has been in place since 2015, has significantly contributed to the educational sector and targeted establishments that have vital connections to early intervention, safeguarding and other vulnerabilities.

2.69 Missing children and the Philomena Protocol

- 2.70 All missing children will have a return home interview to explore the missing episode and future safety. Return home interviews for looked after children are currently completed by our commissioned service Voice ability. For children not looked after, the RHI's are conducted by our in-house Missing Officers, who are attached to the Exploitation Hub. We have decided to include the missing team within the Hub, given the link between children experiencing exploitation and repeat missing episodes. Bradford has adopted the Philomena Protocol specifically to support, understand and respond to children in residential care reported missing. The protocol has allowed closer working relationships between West Yorkshire Police and our care providers.
- 2.71 The number of children in care missing from residential placements has reduced significantly since the launch of the Philomena protocol. The protocol ensures every child placed in a residential provision has their own personalised missing trigger plan, irrespective of whether they have the propensity to go missing. The plan is agreed upon with the Social Worker, Residential provider and West Yorkshire Police upon a child's initial placement. It sets out the child's networks, frequent locations, key contacts and a photograph. In addition, several reasonable actions agreed that the placement must carry out before the child is reported as missing. Below is an extract from one of our young people regarding their experiences with the protocol:

"Knowing that the staff will look for me if I don't come home now makes me feel wanted and loved. This is the first time I have ever felt this way whilst in a care home."

- 2.72 The principles adopted in the protocol expect care providers to exercise normal parenting responsibilities and undertake reasonable actions to establish the child's whereabouts. For example, a child late home from a party should not be regarded as missing until the carer has undertaken enquiries to locate the child. Our data regarding the number of children missing from care tells us that the protocol has a positive impact. In addition, we can see resources being deployed for missing children at the right time, ensuring interventions are efficient and effective.

2.73 Adult Exploitation Awareness

The Bradford Safeguarding Adults Board Adult Exploitation Awareness Conference was held on 23 November 2022. The conference attracted over 100 delegates and was oversubscribed. The conference had several local and regional speakers who provided professionals with opportunities to challenge, learn and showcase the work across the district and included service user voice experiences. This conference was led by BSAB and had service user voice experiences.

- 2.74 This conference was designed and developed by Darren Minton with the support of BSAB and the Business Unit. The feedback and evaluation have been highly positive and was a great success. It attracted positive social media feedback. As a consequence, the conference identified a number of other opportunities of awareness raising and preventative activity through additional training of council officers such as street wardens etc.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- There are no other considerations

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

There are no financial implications

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

- 5.1 The protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults is the highest priority for the Council and its partners when considering the implications of exploitation, as is the provision of services to support those who are victims of this abuse. Failure to protect and provide appropriate services significantly increases the risk to Children and vulnerable Adults in the District. It would also lead to significantly reduced public confidence in Bradford Council, West Yorkshire Police and other partners, as has been demonstrated in some other Districts.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

- 6.1 Concerning the protection of children and vulnerable adults, the report engages

many legislative areas, including the Children Act 1989, Children Act 2004, Children and Families Act 2014, Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together Guidance 2018, Care Act 2014, Modern Day Slavery Act 2015, Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007, Mental Capacity Act 2005, Equality Act 2010, and Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

- 6.2 This report is, of necessity, a very high-level description of key activities undertaken by the Council in order to protect the members of the local population who are at risk of unlawful exploitation due to their vulnerability. The statutory safeguarding duties of the Council under both the Care Act and the Children Act are of pre-eminent significance and involve complex co-operative activities with both local and national partners. Effectively discharging these duties requires their integration into all the other activities undertaken by the Council. For this reason, any list of specific statutory provisions must be qualified by the need to consider the practical effect of each and specifically whether it may lead to or facilitate unlawful exploitation.
- 6.3 The exchange of information with other statutory or involved agencies to facilitate measures to combat exploitation is a permitted form of data processing but requires the Council to undertake risk-assessments to ensure that the correct level and detail of information is communicated.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no other implications

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

None

7.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

None

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.31 The exploitation of Children and Vulnerable Adults is a criminal offence. The consequences of exploitation can be long-standing for the victim, and there is growing evidence that CE victims are over-represented among young people coming to the attention of police services as potential offenders. In addition, exploitation has lasting consequences for families of victims and perpetrators and has potential implications for community relations.

- 7.32 The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) currently oversees the commissioning of funding from the passporting of funding from the West Yorkshire Deputy Mayor for Police and Crime against critical priorities, including CSE and broader exploitation themes.

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

- 7.41 Exploitation is a wide concept; and there is no direct provision that deals with it in the

Human Rights Act. The abusive or criminal exploitation of vulnerable people, whether they are adults or children, will inevitably breach specific human rights. Where the Council becomes aware of this it will have a duty, as a public body, to take all proportionate steps to prevent such abuse and to enable all persons to effectively assert their human rights. The arrangements made by the Local Authority and partners are intended to both prevent the human rights of children , young people and adults being breached and to enable those right to be effectively asserted.

7.5 TRADE UNION

None

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

It is recommended that each Area Committee receives an update report regarding exploitation response in the next 6 months.

7.7 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS (for reports to Area Committees only)

None

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

7.81 National and local evidence shows that children who are looked after by the local authority are more likely to become victims of Child Exploitation than other groups. This means that concerning safeguarding and corporate parenting responsibilities, partners must understand the safeguarding risks facing children, especially in relation to Child Exploitation.

7.82 The current cost of living crisis creating further poverty can a factor in children and vulnerable adults being at risk due to the stresses it creates in families and the limitations it places in choice , thereby making individuals more vulnerable to exploitation.

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

7.91 Sexual and Criminal Exploitation work requires partners to manage confidential matters and data under GDPR regulations per individual agency guidelines. There is no sensitive data included in this report that needs a Privacy Impact Assessment.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

Nil

9. OPTIONS

None

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 That the report be noted.

10.2 That the Executive commit to working closely with partners to continue to raise awareness of exploitation of both adult and children.

11. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – Case studies (Barnados)

- **Case Study 1**
- **Case Study 2**
- **Case Study 3**
- **Case Study 4**

APPENDIX B – Local Data

APPENDIX C – West Yorkshire Police data

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Nil

Case Study 1

B was referred to Trusted Relationships for 1:1 after concerns were highlighted by residential staff relating to B

- Speaking inappropriately to unknown older males via social media.
- Sending indecent images to older males via social media.
- Using sexual language and sexual gestures towards staff and young people
- Exposing herself in public places as well as within the residential unit
- making allegations of a sexual nature about residential and school staff

B could be described as having no sense of personal boundaries, both physically and psychologically with other people, B has SEMH needs and a learning delay which makes B extremely vulnerable to the risk of exploitation.

Professionals around B were contacted and were able to gain contact with B through their support. Initial activity and information packs were sent out but was apparent that B struggled to communicate and engage via phone calls, so face-to-face sessions were organised at B's educational provision.

Challenges were had around engagement and trust of professionals however after continued relationship building B engaged in support and covered key themes.

From the support, B was able to be 'settled and engaged'. Peer relationships had begun to be formed and B's confidence and self-esteem improved.

B said:

'Thank you for bringing me out to do activities... thank you for taking me to do horse riding and everything... I don't know where I'm going but they better always have horses'.

Case Study 2

Barnardo's Case study – Child S

Risk flag at referral – significant.

Risk flag as closure – emerging

S's referrer was around CSE and CCE. Key issues were around CSE, missing and breakdown of family relationships as well as education concerns.

S was cautious of professionals and Turnaround Worker (TW) spent time to build a positive relationship with her. Session was completed with focusses around key themes of healthy relationships, trust, managing risk, safety strategies, and self-esteem. Support was tailored to meet her learning needs.

Emotional support, advice and guidance was also provided to mum who was supportive and engaged with the TW.

Support as highlighted above for S was effective with engagement with the health drop in, referral to Locala and Barnardo's WRAP service. S in addition benefitted from a change in education provision to a smaller setting.

Case Study 3

The community outreach sessions were inspired and delivered with the aim to engage two young people at significant risk, who had refused to work with "professionals"

Both young people prior to the outreach well-being sessions had refused a service from Turnaround. Through perseverance and trying different ways to engage, eventually the young people allowed us into their worlds, their trauma, and their daily well-being. One of the key tools within the outreach sessions has been to reach out to the young people and see them in their safe space and their community.

One of the girls who we will name 'L', refused to come down for the first 30 minutes, whilst 'A' engaged straight away, 'L' came down and took part in the initial visiting session and since, has not missed one session and has been consistent with her engagement, looking forward to her sessions

One of the key concerns that was initially passed on was the influence that 'L' held over the other young person "A" in placement'. By bringing the well-being group to them as a collective took pressure off both young people and allowed them to engage in a positive activity together. In a short period of time 'L' went from saying that she wouldn't text us back and engage over the phone to contacting us to ask us about the next session. We have received positive feedback from social workers, placement workers and professionals chairing their child protection reviews at how well both girls have responded and spoke about us, as Barnardo's workers.

'L' is also reflecting about her journey in care, we have given her the space to explore this in an in depth way through an experienced trauma informed way of working: by tapping into the five senses of the human body, creative writing and reflecting, looking at photo's from childhood and allowing her to express her story through show and tell, giving the young people the opportunities to engage in activities that they otherwise would not have done.

The work has been groundbreaking, both young people have gone from not being able to express and recognise their potential, to consistently showing up, engaging outside of their sessions, and allowing us as Barnardo's workers into their world.

Case Study 4

Y referred September 2021.

Risk flag at referral – significant.

Y had previously worked with the service and was re-referred following a significant change in circumstances leading to new concerns around CSE and missing.

Y had previously lived with extended family (uncle) on a Special Guardianship Order. She has experienced a lot of trauma and loss throughout her life. Y was placed in a semi-independent accommodation. After a couple of months in the placement she reconnected with her mum, who is a known drug user. This led to Y spending much of her time with other adult drug users and street drinkers and she started to go missing.

Prior to being re-referred Y was seen by her Turnaround Worker (TW) with much older adult drug users and street drinkers and TW shared intelligence with partner agencies around this.

Y began to associate with an adult male known to pose a risk in terms of CSE and domestic abuse. He is also a drug user. There were concerns that Y's mum was exploiting her or facilitating exploitation.

Y welcomed the re-referral saying, *"I'm so happy to have you back on my team"*.

Y has engaged consistently since she was referred and has received consistent intensive emotional support, using a trauma informed and strength-based approach. Y has said

that it means a lot having a worker who had known her a long time and that *“just meeting and being able to talk to someone I trust (TW) is help”*

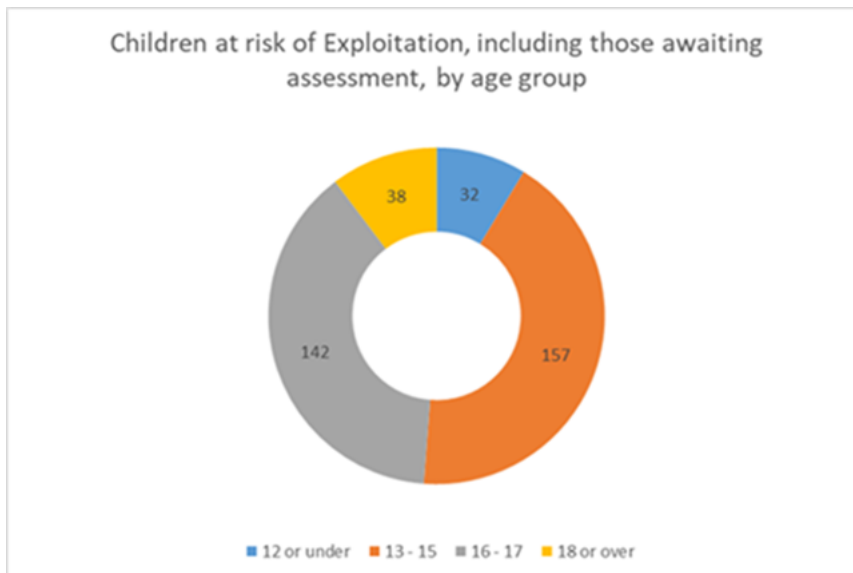
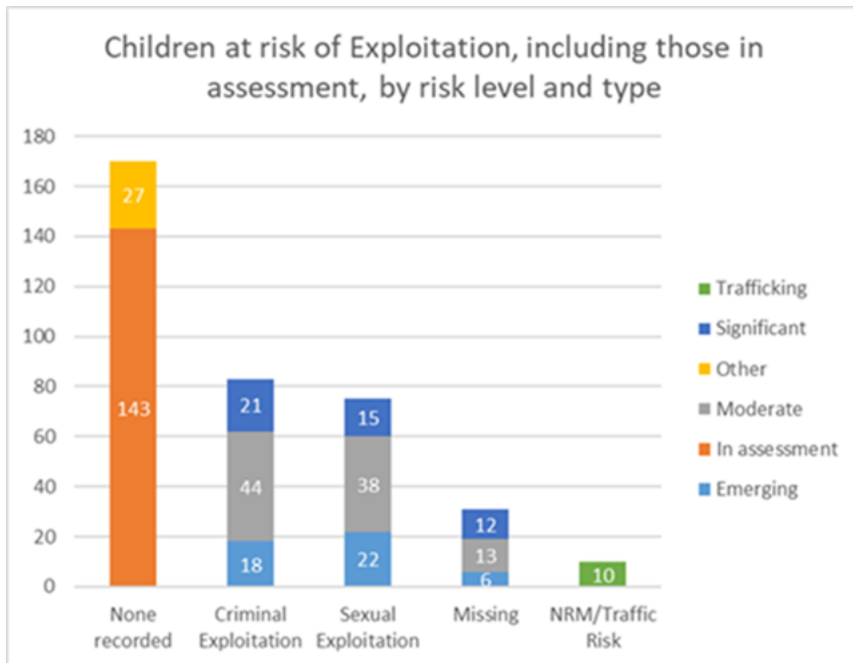
TW has supported Y to access sexual health support and to have a Clair’s Law disclosure in partnership with the police.

Concerns for Y have now reduced and with the support of the Police and Turnaround Y gave a statement and the CSE perpetrator was arrested and charged. He is now awaiting a court hearing date. Y has agreed to attend court and give her evidence in person with protective special measures in place.

Y is now in her second year of college received an achievement award for her attitude towards learning, skills and abilities at the end of her first year. She is also an active member of the Barnardo’s Voice and Influence team; she has met with senior leaders and co-produced podcasts to raise awareness and have young people’s voices heard on various issues.

*Please note these figures are only valid at the time of writing and will be subject to change on a daily basis.

There are currently 312 children, that are at risk. Some of these children may have more than 1 type of risk and as such the numbers in the charts below may not add up to 312.



Children at risk of Exploitation, including those in assessment, by CS plan type

