

Title of meeting:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	28 September 2017
Subject:	Response to the Education, Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel report on child sexual exploitation
Report by:	Alison Jeffery
Wards affected:	All
Key decision:	No
Full Council decision:	No

1. Purpose of report

1.1 The Education, Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel has conducted a review into how well Portsmouth City Council and partners are preventing and dealing with child sexual exploitation. The purpose of this report is to set out the response of the PCC officers (Children, Families and Education Service, Licensing and Public Health) to the Scrutiny Panel's recommendations.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Panel is thanked for its work in undertaking the review

2.2 That the Cabinet notes and supports the recommendations of the review, which are listed at the end of the Scrutiny Panel's report at appendix 1 and the response of officers which are set out in section 3 of this report.

3. Background

3.1. The key questions explored by the Scrutiny Panel and the evidence considered are set out in the Executive Summary of the report at appendix 1.

3.2 Over recent years there has been increasing awareness of the incidence of sexual exploitation of children and its impact, with a number of high profile prosecutions. Officers very much welcomed the decision of the Scrutiny Panel to review the effectiveness of work not just within the council but also by partner agencies.

3.3 The Panel's report contains some positive reflections on actions which have been taken and current approaches being pursued by the council and partners to ensure that exploitation is identified and that the response to it is effective. While we share the view of

the Panel that there are some strengths in the work done in this area in the city we also strongly share the Panel's view that a high level of continued vigilance is very important and that there is no room for complacency.

3.4 The following section sets out the response of the Children, Families and Education Service to the specific recommendations of the Panel, considered in turn.

Recommendation 1: Although good work is taking place to tackle CSE within Portsmouth, partners should not be complacent and should continue to raise awareness. CSE should be seen at all times as a corporate council and wider Children's Trust responsibility. In addition, as protection of vulnerable children is one of the priorities of the Safer Portsmouth Partnership (SPP), the Partnership should take a greater role in addressing CSE. It would be helpful for the SPP to include a representative from children's services.

3.5 We strongly agree that tackling CSE must be seen as a corporate council and partnership responsibility. Within the council, investment in this area has been increased this year through the use of the Public Health Transformation Fund to create a new Missing, Exploited and Trafficked Coordinator post, to promote the use of a risk assessment tool and to analyse information gathered through its use, to inform needs assessment work. The Director, Children, Families and Education is now a member of the Safer Portsmouth Partnership, which is currently refreshing a needs assessment for the city to guide its work. Knowledge about the current risks around CSE will be included within the assessment. This will provide a basis for on-going consideration by the Partnership of whether current actions and approaches are sufficient.

Recommendation 2: That the Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board (PSCB) ensure that consistent information on children at risk is obtained and shared between partners. All partners should maintain efforts to ensure that all sectors of the city receive the support they need. PCC and commissioned services should draw on all possible sources of support in order to link well with all young people

3.6 We will share this recommendation with the PSCB. Tackling CSE is one of the three key priorities of the Safeguarding Board for 2017-2018.

Recommendation 3: That all schools devote time to issues of emotional and mental wellbeing and healthy relationships and promote consistent approaches to identifying and prevention of CSE.

3.7. As Cabinet will be aware, the school curriculum is a matter for schools, subject to legal requirements. Through the new Portsmouth Education Partnership, however, the council is strongly championing a new strategy for promoting emotional wellbeing and mental health in education. We are funding a full time post to support the Partnership with particular focus this year on the implementation of this strategy, which includes rolling out restorative approaches to managing conflict and sustaining healthy relationships. Guidance and training specifically on identifying and preventing CSE is available through the Safeguarding Board. The council will also be working with schools this year to draw up a new Portsmouth Schools Safeguarding Charter, articulating a high level of commitment

to effective safeguarding, including an effective response to the risk of CSE, and sharing examples of good practice. We expect this work to be strongly supported by the new Chair of the PSCB who has a particular interest and expertise in safeguarding practice in education.

Recommendation 4: That careful evaluation and continued thought be given on the way that children can raise concerns about CSE. The PSCB should work with schools to raise awareness of the NSPCC app which will refer concerns directly to the relevant LA. The CSE publicity campaigns should continue to encourage children to report concerns to an adult and these should be evaluated and continue to be monitored. Schools should be forthright and have a dialogue with parents and guardians about CSE and the importance of relationship education at school.

3.8 The council will continue to press for multi- agency commitment to effective awareness raising around CSE including how young people can seek help. We will encourage evaluation of the impact of the recent "Alice" CSE campaign by Hampshire Constabulary. Dialogue between schools and parents will be addressed as part of the work referenced in relation to recommendation 3.

Recommendation 5: That the PSCB continues its focus on online safety and getting key messages across to families about the risks of the online world.

3.9 The PSCB already has a programme of awareness raising for families, including a set of local workshops. There is no scope for extending this programme within current resourcing levels but we will continue to encourage schools to direct families to well-regarded sources of on-line advice in this area.

Recommendation 6: That as part of judging the effectiveness of the Stronger Futures Strategy, regular discussions should take place with schools about the nature of the support available and the role of both the council and schools in supporting families. This will also help to remind schools about the services available to children and schools in their work in supporting families.

3.10 Cabinet will recall that as part of the council's "Stronger Futures" strategy for promoting the resilience of families and ensuring children's services are sustainable, a new targeted early help service has been created. We are in regular dialogue with schools to ensure that they are aware of the new service and can provide feedback to us on how effective they believe it is. We also encourage feedback to us on the support we provide to schools through regular locality network meetings bringing together professionals from our three area based Multi Agency Teams with pastoral and safeguarding colleagues from schools. So far feedback from schools on this support is very positive.

Recommendation 7: That the PSCB and Hampshire Constabulary consider holding further Operation Makesafe training sessions for all taxi drivers, hoteliers and employees of licensed premises. This will be subject to monitoring the continuing feedback of the effectiveness of the sessions.

3.11 The PSCB will be reviewing its business plan including support for the CSE priority at its meeting on 18 October. The Directorate will continue to encourage appropriate investment by HCC where possible in well-judged training.

Recommendation 8: That PCC makes CSE training mandatory for taxi drivers and the possibility of other licensees. Officers should investigate how other local authorities have achieved this and explore the best model for Portsmouth.

3.12 The training arrangements for taxi and private hire drivers have now been modified to include a mandatory section within the knowledge test for CSE matters. In summary, applicants are tested as follows:

- Upon making an application for a driver licence, all applicants are provided with a hard copy of the attached presentation which they are asked to read. It is also explained to them that they will be formally assessed on their knowledge of CSE and preventative actions they can take.
- As part of the testing requirements, there is a specific module for CSE assessment which applicants have to pass in order to progress their application. As part of this applicants refresh their memory on key measures and they must read each page before they can undertake the assessment.
- Approximately 7 questions are then posed and the pass rate is 60% for this module.

As regards the recommendation relating to making CSE training mandatory for other licensees, this is unlikely to be possible as other licensing regimes such as the Licensing Act 2003 (alcohol, entertainment and late night refreshment) and the Gambling Act 2005 (licensing of gambling premises) are strictly controlled by statute and associated regulations and do not allow for a great deal of discretion by the local licensing authority in terms of imposing conditions requiring mandatory training.

Recommendation 9: That a whole family approach be undertaken to understand the whole family unit in order to support families and children at risk of CSE.

3.13. Where the council is providing targeted support to young people at risk of CSE, whether through the statutory social work service or the new targeted early help service, a "whole family" approach is always followed, recognising the importance of relationships within families (consistent with the message from young people in the Scrutiny review).

Recommendation 10: That there is a lead professional for children and young people who have been identified at risk of CSE as continuity of contact and the relationship with an individual worker is important. This should be in a form that is empowering not intimidating to vulnerable young people.

3.14. Whenever we provide targeted support to individual young people and their families there is always a lead professional responsible for coordinating that support, whether that is a social worker or an early help worker. We very much recognise the power of what is

known as "relationship based practice" to helping people to bring about change in their lives.

Recommendation 11: That the PCC Cabinet should be encouraged to pay close attention to the information about CSE in the annual report by the PSCB and that aggregate information on cases open to Children's Social Care should be included within quarterly performance reports to the Governance Audit and Standards Committee.

3.15. The Children, Families and Education Directorate will ensure that information about the numbers of young people known to be at risk of CSE and receiving support from PCC is included within the quarterly returns to the GAS committee.

Recommendation 12: To review the delivery of workforce training around sexual health

3.16 The new contract in place with Solent NHS Trust to deliver an integrated sexual health service includes comprehensive training requirements - in relation to the internal workforce, the local sexual health network (i.e. clinicians working in other settings), and in relation to multi-agency partners. In relation to the wider workforce this includes the provision of sexual health training for practitioners and organisations working with children and young people, and the co-facilitation of local authority SRE training programmes. Discussions are underway between Solent NHS Trust, the Early Help Team and Public Health to develop the training offer, including awareness raising of the Sexual Health pathways with schools and other partners and settings.

Recommendation 13: That a report on the progress against the above recommendations be monitored and a report received by the Scrutiny Management Panel 6 months after the report has been signed off.

3.17. A progress report to the Scrutiny Panel will be coordinated as requested by the Deputy Director, Children Families and Education (Children and Families).

4. Reasons for recommendations

4.1 The Children, Families and Education Directorate shares the view of the Scrutiny Panel that the recommendations set out in its report will strengthen the response in Portsmouth to the threat and incidence of child sexual exploitation. CSE is expected to continue to be a significant threat to the well-being of young people in the city.

5. Equality impact assessment

5.1 The recommendations are designed to have a positive impact on young people at risk of CSE; there are no proposals to reduce the current levels of support provided. A preliminary EIA was completed and forms part of the panel's report.

6. Legal implications

6.1 None (these are covered within section 10 of the panel's report)

7. Director of Finance's comments

7.1 The approach to the recommendations by the CFE Directorate set out in this report can be delivered within the current budget plans for the Directorate.

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Signed by:

Appendices:

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by: