

CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM No. 9
8 NOVEMBER 2017	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Executive Director People and Communities Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Councils	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Sam Smith, Cabinet Member for Children's Services.	
Contact Officer(s):	Myra O'Farrell	Tel. 864102

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S	
FROM: <i>Nicola Curley Assistant Director Children's Services</i>	Deadline date: N/A
<p>It is recommended that the Corporate Parenting Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • note the update and information. 	

Missing and Child Sexual Exploitation Update

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 Report requested by Corporate Parenting Committee to update in respect of current situation around children and young people who go missing and children and young people who are vulnerable to Child Sexual Exploitation.
- 2.2 This report is being presented under the Corporate Parenting Committee Terms of Reference: 2.4.3.2 To receive statutory reports in relation to the adoption, fostering, commissioning, looked after children (LAC) services and children's homes with a view to recommending any changes.
This report links in with all aspects of the Children in Care Pledge.

3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	NO	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	N/A
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4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Child sexual exploitation can have a devastating impact on the social integration, economic well-being and life chances of young people. Difficulties faced by victims of child sexual exploitation include isolation from family and friends, teenage parenthood, failing examinations or dropping out of education altogether, unemployment, mental health problems, suicide attempts, alcohol and drug addiction, aggressive behaviour and criminal activity. Child sexual exploitation can also have a profoundly damaging effect on families and communities.
- 4.2 Within Peterborough Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is managed as part of the day to day safeguarding responsibility of the Local Authority and there is no longer a

dedicated CSE team. This means that all staff have the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and experience in this area and ensures that there is ownership of the wider issues that contribute to children and young people being vulnerable to CSE and other forms of exploitation.

- 4.3 At the time of writing this report within Peterborough there were 21 young people flagged as at risk of sexual exploitation. All of which are females. Of the 21 cases flagged as at risk of CSE 10 were young people who were looked after, 8 were Children in need and 3 were child protection. 4 of the young people identified as being at risk of CSE also have episodes of Missing in the last few weeks. The age range of those young people flagged on the system were in the age group 10- 17 year old, with some children having identified disabilities.
- 4.4 Each of these cases are allocated to a qualified social worker and work is undertaken to enable the young person and their family to engage with services that will help to reduce their vulnerability to being exploited. Building a relationship with these young people can take time and it is important that there is the capacity to be available at times when they need help or are willing to share what may be happening.
- 4.5 There is a dedicated police CSE team based at Godmanchester and Children's Services meet on a monthly basis at the CSE and Missing Operational Meeting to share information across professions and review intelligence to ensure that those young people most at risk are identified and that clear plans are put in place to mitigate the risks. There is a joint Peterborough /Cambridge Strategic CSE meeting that meets every quarter and has the overview of the multi- agency CSE action plan.

Missing

- 4.6 Children who are missing from home, school or care are at greater risk of sexual exploitation. Within Peterborough the Head of Service for First Response is the strategic lead for Missing and CSE. Children's Services are alerted to missing incidents by the police. The data is updated on a weekly basis with a dedicated missing co-ordinator who undertakes return from missing interviews within 72 hours.
- 4.7 For those young people in care who are placed outside of the LA boundary, the social worker and MASH are alerted by the care provider. Since March 2015 there has been a dedicated Missing Case Worker in post. This worker undertakes all Return Interviews with those young people that live at home who go missing.
- 4.8 A Return Interview should be held within 72 hours of the young person being located. For our Children in Care National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) are commissioned to complete these interviews. The missing co-ordinator undertakes the missing interviews for the rest. If the young person is placed in Peterborough by another authority the missing coordinator will notify them of the missing/found episodes and they arrange the return interview.
- 4.9 For the whole of 2016-2017 there were 613 missing episodes reported. This related to 417 children and young people.
From April to August 2017 this has been recorded as 210 episodes and relates to 170 young people. Within that period 142 children and young people had 1 episode, 17 children and young people had 2 episodes, 9 had 3 episodes and 2 had more than 4 episodes.
- 4.10 In comparing the data to the same period in 2016-17 there is both an increase in the incidents being reported and an increase in the number of children. This links to improved multi-agency reporting and sharing of information coupled with the removal of the category of absent which was impacting on the effective response from all agencies.
Between April and August 2017 24 young people who have been recorded as missing have also been identified as being at risk of CSE.

- 4.11 Current CLA missing episodes for 2017-8 is 58% this equates to (62 children)
Current CP missing episodes for 2017-8 is 7% this equates to (7 children)
Current CIN missing episodes for 2017-8 is 35% this equates to (37 children)

4.12 The profile of children and young people going missing for 2016-17 is that males present as missing on more occasions than females with white British being the largest group of children and young people being recorded as being missing.

4.13 Analysis of the above data indicates that 106 children and young people were known to children's services at the time of the missing episode. Each of these have an additional CSE and Missing risk assessment to assess and analyse the risk and the level this is at in order to develop a multi agency response to protecting that child, young person. This is then reviewed through the Multi-Agency Child Exploitation meetings which meet monthly. The largest cohort is the Looked After population. This is not unusual and can relate to a variety of issues from staying at a friend's home and not telling their carer where they are to being a child or young person who has episodes when they are missing and nobody is certain of their whereabouts. All foster carers and residential homes have training in this area of child protection and are alert to this which means the result is prompt reporting and recording.

5. KEY ISSUES

- 5.1 Risk assessments are undertaken in respect of all young people who go missing but work needs to continue on ensuring that care plans are more robust in addressing the safety planning needs of Children in Care who go missing on a frequent basis.
- 5.2 Multi-agency strategy meetings as set out within Working Together 2015 ensures that patterns, risks and protective factors per child are assessed and analysed jointly with partners.
- 5.3 Work continues on analysing the patterns and intelligence in respect of all aspects of exploitation in respect of young people within Peterborough to ensure that there is a multi-agency response to safeguarding and that there is clear proactive planning to reduce and disrupt opportunities for exploitation of our most vulnerable citizens.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 N/A

8. NEXT STEPS

- 8.1 This report is for information only.

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 9.1 None

10. APPENDICES

- 10.1 None

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