



Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy Bath & North East Somerset 2014

Contents

Introduction

Foreword

Summary

What is Child Sexual Exploitation?

Definition of Child Sexual Exploitation

What do we know about child sexual exploitation (CSE) in Bath & North East Somerset?

Prevention

Responding to Child Sexual Exploitation

How will our Local Safeguarding Children's Board be effective in raising awareness and preventing CSE across B&NES?

Protection & Support

How do we help victims break free from exploitation?

Pursue & Prosecute

How do we disrupt and prosecute perpetrators?

Governance

References

Acknowledgements

Appendices

Appendix 1 – membership of the LSCB

Appendix 2 – Terms of Reference for the Child Sexual Exploitation Strategic Sub - Group

Appendix 3 – Other relevant strategies & documents

Introduction

“Child sexual exploitation is fundamentally a child protection issue. In many areas the required agencies have only recently started to come together to tackle the issue despite the statutory guidance issued by the Government in 2009. A comparison of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) current practice against this guidance indicates that only 6% of LSCBs were meeting the requirements in full, with around one third not even meeting half of them. Substantial gaps remain in the availability of specialist provision for victims of child sexual exploitation (CSE). This report outlines the urgent steps needed so that children can be effectively made and kept safe – from decision-making at senior levels to the practitioner working with individual child victims whether a social worker, police officer, health clinician, teacher or anyone else who has contact with children.” (If only someone had listened Office of the Children’s Commissioner November 2013)

The sexual exploitation of children and young people has been identified throughout the UK, in both rural and urban areas, and in all parts of the world. It affects boys and young men as well as girls and young women. It robs children of their childhood and can have a serious long-term impact on every aspect of their lives, health and education. (“If Only Someone had Listened; Office of the Children’s Commissioner 2013 & Working Together Supplementary Guidance for child sexual exploitation 2009) It damages the lives of families and carers and can lead to family break-ups. Sexual exploitation of children and young people is completely unacceptable and we are determined to do all we can to help eradicate it

Children who are sexually exploited are the victims of sexual abuse and should be safeguarded from further harm. Sexually exploited children should not be regarded as criminals and the primary law enforcement response must be directed at perpetrators who groom children for sexual exploitation.

Although there have been welcome improvements in services for children and families, it is clear that the need to protect children and young people from harm and neglect is ever more challenging.

Child abuse and child exploitation specifically is an abuse of power: largely perpetrated by those who can exert power over the vulnerable. This power can be manifested in and by powerful elements of our society who have been successful in ensuring that the sexual exploitation of children and young people goes undiscovered as seen through many current enquiries into child sexual exploitation.

Recent media reports outlining the convictions of gangs and localised street groomers has brought the issue of child sexual exploitation into the mainstream. The sexual predators who perpetrate this horrific crime originate from all ethnicities, ages, gender and socio-economic backgrounds. They target girls, young women, boys and young men out of an abuse of power and control; coercion and threat; monetary gain and a dangerous attitude towards children and their rights.

This abuse takes a number of forms and affects victims of all ethnicities, ages, gender and socio-economic backgrounds, meaning that it is often under reported, misunderstood and therefore could be overlooked by authorities. Naivety, prejudice and incorrect assumptions need to be challenged wherever they exist and a coherent, informed area wide partnership strategy and action plan implemented which encompasses stakeholders at all levels in the organisation who have the power and control to tackle and eradicate this issue.

Foreword

This strategy sets out the commitment of the Bath & North East Somerset Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) to do everything possible to prevent Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and support victims of this abuse. Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES) commit to tackling CSE in a multi-agency manner when it occurs. This strategy is aimed at all professionals and organisations who engage with children and young people.

It builds on work already undertaken in the area since 2011 and is informed by lessons learnt. The over-riding aim is to safeguard and protect children in Bath & North East Somerset.

We recognise that only a proactive, co-ordinated, multi-agency approach will be effective in preventing and disrupting child sexual exploitation and in pursuing, disrupting and prosecuting perpetrators.

The aim of this strategy is to:

Mitigate the impact of child sexual exploitation by improving outcomes and reducing harm to young people who are:

- Vulnerable to or at risk of exploitation

- Victims of exploitation

Ensure that all LSCB understand the scale of the problem in Bath & North East Somerset and develop a co-ordinated multi-agency response as part of on-going work

To develop a strong and sustainable infrastructure to support an effective response to CSE

Disrupt activities that may present a risk of CSE to children and young people by pursuing individuals believed to be involved.

Seek prosecution of perpetrators of CSE, and supports children and young people through the legal process and beyond.

To identify and engage with children and young people who are experiencing, or who are at risk of, sexual exploitation by promoting activity that:

- Prevents children and young people from becoming subject to CSE.
- Protects children and young people from or becoming involved in CSE.
- Offers activities and strategies that divert children and young people from risk of CSE.
- Supports and engage parents and carers within this agenda.
- Raise awareness of the issue through education and training.
- Builds self-esteem and confidence in children and young people to support positive choices.
- Set out a plan to achieve these aims.

Summary

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse that is often hidden from sight, difficult to identify, and harder still to stop. It preys upon the most vulnerable in society and perpetrators mostly evade prosecution. Just as this devastating form of abuse is gaining wider publicity nationwide, we will renew our efforts to ensure we have the greatest possible impact on reducing the harm caused to victims, families, and communities.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) will form a key priority for the B&NES LSCB.

There is a wealth of expertise in Bath & North East Somerset, and many examples of excellent practice. Our ambition is to do even more to understand the prevalence of child sexual exploitation and provide a strategic framework to achieve maximum impact. This will be achieved through effective inter-agency working and having clear shared priorities and protocols for tackling concerns.

In Bath & North East Somerset we are determined to work together across agencies to identify those vulnerable to sexual exploitation, build resilience, and prevent exploitation taking place. We will work with young people, their family, professionals, and communities to raise awareness of the issue, and ensure our early help services are well placed to provide effective prevention and develop a virtual CSE team to provide effective support.

Across the partnership, we are committed to making a difference for children and young people up to the age of 18 (24 for looked after children) by:

- Enabling children and young people to make safe choices through a concerted campaign of awareness raising and education.
- Providing accessible, early support, to target vulnerable groups, build resilience and prevent exploitation occurring.
- Remodelling support to victims, making it accessible and designed around their needs.

We will:

- Ensure there is greater consistency of support from trusted adults, drawing on innovative practice to help young people to regain control and break free from exploitation.
- Develop a targeted approach for young people at high risk of CSE and involved in CSE, ensuring a longer term, enduring relationship is developed with victims of CSE.
- Work proactively across the partnership to identify, disrupt and prosecute perpetrators of this crime, to reduce the duration of abuse and minimise the impact on the victim.

What do we know about child sexual exploitation (CSE) in Bath & North East Somerset?

Information about CSE is collected by a number of agencies across B&NES including the Police, the local authority, and the voluntary sector.

It is difficult to gain an accurate picture of the true extent of CSE. There are low levels of reporting, and as such it remains largely hidden. There are limited estimated national figures from the Office of the Children's Commissioner; they reported that a total of 2,409 children were known to be victims of CSE by gangs and groups. In addition the Inquiry identified 16,500 children and young people as being at risk of CSE nationally. Locally there have been approximately 30 referrals since February 2014 into the Risk Management Panel (now known as the CSE MARAC) that have had different levels of CSE risk within them ranging from low to high risk as well as some victims of CSE. There have also been approximately 10 other enquiries in this time in relation to children and young people at risk of CSE.

Agencies from across the partnership have been engaged in trying to support young people who are potential victims. Professionals have come together to share information and draw maps of the interlinking relationships between victims, peers and perpetrators. This has been done through the multi-agency risk panel. This panel is currently under review to ensure CSE is paramount within it.

What has not previously happened is widespread recognition of the indicators of CSE and a coordinated approach to tackle it. This strategy will address this and in doing so attempt over the next twelve months to understand fully the extent of the issue for all children and young people living in B&NES, both from recorded victimisation and from belief and intelligence led standpoints.

A range of studies suggest that, due to its hidden nature, local areas should assume that CSE is occurring in their area at a higher rate than is officially identified CEOP (2011), DfE (2011), Barnardos (2012)

Definition of CSE

“Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive ‘something’ (for example food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, and/or another or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through the use of technology without the child’s immediate recognition; for example, being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain. In all cases, those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Abuse, coercion and intimidation are common; involvement in exploitative relationships being characterised in the main by the child or young person’s limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability.”

Sourced from: Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation: Supplementary guidance to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2009 & ‘I thought I was the only one the only one in the world’: Office of the Children’s Commissioner

CSE involves the sexual exploitation through coercion or enticement of a vulnerable child or young person in sexual activity for cash or some other form of reward, such as drugs, alcohol, shelter or other material gifts. The exchange is exploitative because it happens in a relationship of unequal power with an adult.

A growing number of children and young people are being targeted and groomed for sexual exploitation by adults and other young people that they meet on the Internet. This on-line grooming contributes to the difficulties in identifying the prevalence of child sexual exploitation and highlights the importance of developing robust e-safety strategies.

What is Child Sexual Exploitation?

Child sexual exploitation is a form of child abuse. Any child or young person may be at risk of sexual exploitation, regardless of their background or other circumstances. Sexual exploitation can take many forms from the seemingly 'consensual' relationship where sex is exchanged for attention, affection, accommodation or gifts, to serious organised crime and child trafficking.

Exploitation can also occur in the 'virtual' world of the Internet with perpetrators not always seeking to commit a 'contact' offence but nevertheless serious psychological distress and emotional trauma can be caused to the victim.

What marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power within the relationship and is, at minimum a form of emotional abuse and where CSE is occurring should be seen and understood as a form of sexual abuse. The perpetrator always holds some kind of power over the victim, increasing the dependence of the victim as the exploitative relationship develops. The perpetrator may be perceived by the victim as 'loving' i.e. seen as a boyfriend or girlfriend. However, coercion, intimidation, threats of violence or exposure and humiliation are often involved.

Non-contact sexual abuse involves children being persuaded, manipulated, groomed or threatened into exposing themselves or performing sexual acts over a webcam or sending indecent images of themselves. Offenders often record these images or use various forms of coercion to get the child to disclose their social networking user name and password and then blackmail the child by threatening to expose what they have done. This then forms the basis for further threats and incitement to perform more serious sexual acts.

The perpetrators of sexual exploitation can be well organised and use sophisticated tactics. They are known to target areas where children and young people might gather without much adult supervision, such as: shopping centres, cafes, takeaways, pubs, sports centres, cinemas, bus or train stations, local parks, playgrounds and taxi ranks or sites on the Internet used by children and young people. The process of grooming may also be visible in adult venues such as pubs and clubs. In some cases perpetrators are known to use younger men, women, boys or girls to build initial relationships and introduce children to others in the perpetrator networks. Some offenders are organised into groups or gangs, even if they have no obvious definition to them. Other offenders operate in isolation – so called 'lone wolfs'.

Whilst the majority of known perpetrators are male, some are female and they are from all ethnicities including minority groups. Perpetrators can range in age from teenagers (peers), whilst most are adults. Perpetrators often develop relationships with children and young people through a 'grooming process'. This involves establishing a relationship of 'trust' and then abusing this trust for their own gratification or monetary gain.

The most common forms of abuse experienced by victims ranges from individual rape, gang rape, oral rape, or anal rape to posting images on the internet and using social networking sites to humiliate and exercise power.

Victims can often feel that they are providing consent to sexual acts, though none of the victims consent to exploitation. Victims of abuse are often unable to break the cycle of exploitation. They may be too scared of the consequences of asking for help, and potential retribution from perpetrators. Victims may be emotionally attached to one or more of the perpetrators and reluctant to end the 'relationship'. Also some victims of abusers do not recognise the pattern of exploitation as a crime.

By the nature of their vulnerabilities, victims of sexual exploitation can be deeply distrustful of adults, and doubt their ability to protect them from harm. Young people may have negative experiences of involvement with statutory services, or fear that gangs or groups will seek retribution.

The process of exploitation can leave victims feeling powerless and out of control, and erode their ability to make changes to their lives. Perpetrators often exercise control over victims making it hard to break free from exploitation. Peers can also be coerced by perpetrators to facilitate the grooming of other young people, and stigmatise those who seek help.

Gathering evidence to enable prosecutions can be very difficult. Young people who are victims may not wish to provide information, or may not have the details that are necessary to support the investigation. Perpetrators often use drugs and alcohol to disorientate victims, and move young people to unfamiliar areas. In some cases exploitation occurs involving multiple abusers acting in chaotic settings.

These are all features of sexual exploitation that can erode the victim's ability to understand what is happening to them or provide those trying to help them with evidence. The research also suggests that professionals working with vulnerable young people often do not understand the requirements of evidence or the need to collect information in a systematic way.

Although there are recent high profile cases involving prosecution of groups of adults, these are the exception, and require concerted multi-agency effort and resources to achieve. Recent studies suggest that a proactive, joined-up strategic approach is necessary to increase the number of prosecutions brought against perpetrators.

National guidance recognises that early intervention is effective and a "sound investment" and is likely to be far more effective than intervention at a later stage when the impact on the child or young person's health and or development is likely to have escalated.

Prevention

Responding to CSE

Although any child or young person might become the victim of sexual exploitation, national research indicates that some groups and children and young people may be at a higher risk of sexual exploitation than others.

Groups who are particularly at risk include:

- Children who are regularly absent from education, home or care
- Children with mental health issues
- Children who are abusing drugs or alcohol
- Children with learning difficulties and disabilities
- Children who are looked after
- Children who have offended or are offending

In addition, the impact of CSE can result in young people going missing from home or care; truanting from school; becoming pregnant (possible concealment of pregnancy), or becoming involved in anti-social or other 'challenging' behaviours. Any work with CSE must be aligned with other relevant strategies (please see appendix 4) to ensure that all agencies adopt a coherent approach which recognises the impact of CSE on victim's and does not penalise them rather than the abusers.

Missing Children and young people

There are clear links between children and young people who go missing from home or care settings and CSE.

Assessing situations such as missing children goes beyond the simplicity of the actual event and needs a much more sophisticated approach. Agencies need to be mindful of the fact that the focus on the number of occasions where a child goes missing is not as important as why they go missing and the increased risks they face when they do. Any kind of assessment must take this view, and must look at any factors which may 'push' or 'pull' a child or young person into sexual exploitation. 'Push' factors are exactly what you'd expect - they're things that push a child away from home. They include not feeling accepted in the environment where children should be safe and happy. Family breakdown and arguments can generate 'pushing away', as can abuse, drug and alcohol misuse by family members, and new stepfamilies moving in.

The factors that 'pull' young people from home can include being pulled into an activity outside of their home. It can vary from staying out with peers, boyfriends or girlfriends, becoming involved in drugs and alcohol, being groomed and sexually exploited or wanting

freedom and independence. For some young people, they may begin running away because of a 'push' factor, such as abuse within their home. However, once they regularly run away they may become involved in sexual exploitation. Therefore 'push' and 'pull' factors can overlap.

Statistics show that a child associated with organised sexual exploitation can go missing many times which indicate that interventions for these children should be a high priority. There also needs to be some consideration for those children who have 'missing episodes'—occasions where their destination is known but for some reason they do not return, for example those children being looked after in residential care settings. When children have regular missing episodes, professionals must examine why this is happening and why they refuse to come back if this is the case.

B&NES are developing their return home interview process and this will link with the CSE virtual team and CSE MARAC to ensure the needs of the child and young person are understood. This clear link in terms of practice and case oversight will also ensure that information can be shared quickly and appropriately where necessary.

Key principles, when responding to child sexual exploitation are:

- **A child centred approach** which focuses on the child's needs and involves the young person in decision making, whilst recognising that they may not see themselves as being in an exploitative or abusive situation.
- **Support to parents and families** to make their own plans for the protection of their children, as long as this is consistent with the child's safety and welfare.
- **The rights of children and young people should be respected.** The UK Government is a signatory to the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and strategies and actions relating to individuals should be consistent with this convention.
- **Key entitlements that victims of criminal conduct are entitled to.** The Ministry of Justice have produced a Code of Practice for victims of crime: putting victims first, making the system more responsive and easier to navigate. Victims of crime should be treated in a respectful, sensitive and professional manner without discrimination of any kind.
- **The responsibility for criminal acts is with the perpetrator.** Sexual exploitation of children and young people should not be regarded as a criminal act by the child or young person, but as child sexual abuse, where the responsibility lies with the exploiter.

- **The response to CSE is a shared responsibility** among agencies and organisations, including education providers, health services including sexual health services, youth services, children’s services, criminal justice agencies, housing providers, licensing teams and voluntary sector services supporting children and families.
- **An integrated approach** is required at an individual and strategic level. Individual plans for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children so that plans are based on a wide ranging assessment of the needs of each child, the parents’ capacity to care for them in the context of family and wider community circumstances. Strategic work should be underpinned by committed leadership, shared understanding, improved and effective communication, joined up multi-agency working and the effective co-ordination of work by the B&NES LSCB.
- **Prevention and early intervention** should be regarded as a key part of agencies’ approaches to sexual exploitation.
- **An emphasis on “engagement” with children and young people.** Our contact with young people must be based on the principle that discussion of risk and the building of trust within a professional relationship will be one of the key ways to reduce risk. We need to recognise that within this that children and young people at risk of CSE will be amongst our most difficult to engage and among the least trustful of professionals.

How will our Local Safeguarding Children’s Board be effective in raising awareness and preventing CSE across B&NES?

The aspiration is to develop a strategic overview of the issue supporting a proactive approach to identifying those at risk and disrupting and prosecuting offenders.

The national research highlights that both boys and girls are at risk of being targeted for exploitation at a younger age than previously known. We know through experience and research that once young people are involved in patterns of exploitation it is very hard to support them to successfully break free.

The aim of this strategy is to raise awareness amongst children and young people. This will help young people to understand the potential dangers of exploitation, make safe choices, and to build their resilience. We will promote learning in all relevant services and organisations accessed by children and young people about healthy relationships including respect, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and how to access support.

We will provide information to professionals, teachers, parents and communities, helping them to understand these risks, recognise the signs that a child may be vulnerable or subject to this abuse, and take appropriate action.

We will focus on early identification and providing early help to prevent children and young people becoming victims of CSE. This will be aligned to B&NES Early Help Strategy which outlines a common approach across the partnership to support families and ensure all B&NES children achieve their full potential.

We will provide a tiered training programme to identified professionals who may be in contact with young people who display heightened vulnerability to exploitation. This will help identify those at risk, and prevent exploitation through building resilience and providing support.

We will develop and train a virtual CSE team who will respond to those children and young people who are identified as being moderate or high risk of CSE. This team will focus on building effective relationships with the young people on their caseload.

We will achieve these aims through:

The formation of a strategic multi agency CSE group. The purpose is to take a strategic overview through:

- Reviewing the progress of investigations where applicable.
- Overseeing prevention work using the CSE delivery plan.
- Reviewing the profile of CSE and ensuring effective use of resources.
- Overseeing the disruptions and prosecutions section of the CSE delivery plan.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of Early Help and Specialist Support through the CSE Risk Panel and the virtual CSE team.
- Identify a strategic CSE lead within the council.
- Create lead roles for CSE within relevant teams. Key leads will attend CSE risk panel where applicable and be responsible for implementing actions in their host agency.
- Identify and train a virtual CSE team to respond directly to young people at identified through the CSE Risk Panel.
- Develop a service level agreement with a relevant organisation to work with B&NES highest risk CSE victims where applicable.
- Develop an effective assessment and one point referral process.
- Working with our Local Authority partners in relation to Housing and Licensing to disrupt activity around CSE.
- Implementing a new CSE strategy and delivery plan.
- Develop the risk assessment for CSE to allow for professionals judgement when assessing young people to ensure all relevant information is presented.

- The CSE strategy group will have a direct link to the B&NES LSCB, providing regular progress updates and highlighting gaps in provision or barriers to the implementation of this strategy.
- Developing and delivering a tiered training programme to all relevant professionals
- Systematically implementing of a shared screening tool to identify vulnerable young people.
- Ensuring professionals working at **all levels of need** have access to expert advice and consultation through key leads and understand their duty to identify vulnerability and risk, and ensure young people are referred appropriately and provided with appropriate support.
- Developing and delivering an education programme to raise awareness amongst young people through universal services, including schools and youth clubs, and targeting the younger age range. We will support innovative approaches to engage with groups who are seen as hard to reach.
- Raising awareness amongst parents, professionals and communities to help adults identify signs of vulnerability and know what they should do and where to get help.
- Implementing the operational delivery plan ensuring that all partners are involved
- Developing links to services for young adults to ensure professionals in this area are aware of the issue and understand their duty to support vulnerable young adults.
- Linking vulnerable young people to early help support services via the CSE referral process.

Protection & Support

How do we help victims break free from exploitation?

Young people who are victims of sexual exploitation are often distrustful of adults and may have had negative experiences of statutory services.

Whilst there may be situations which require emergency interventions to protect young people, often the best approach is to work collaboratively with the young person and their family. The aim is to support and empower young people and their families to find solutions themselves wherever possible.

Taking the right approach to engaging these vulnerable children and young people (through engaging them in positive activities and working with them around self-esteem and building confidence to ensure good choices are developed) is crucial if we are to stand any chance of supporting them to break free from exploitation. We want to improve victim's experiences of being supported, ensuring that they are listened to, respected and given choices about how they are helped.

Effective help is child or person-centred, and based on building a consistent relationship of trust with the young person over time. We must understand their journey and work at a pace that is accessible to the young person. Young people must be supported to build resilience and empowered to make choices to regain control over their lives.

We are committed to involve parents, carers and take a whole family approach in the assessment and planning process, and ensure that young people are central to any decision making.

Professionals working with these young people must be supported to manage this work sensitively, and specialist advice and training will be available.

Companies such as PACE (Parents against Child Sexual Exploitation) work alongside parents and carers of children who are – or at risk of being sexually exploited by perpetrators external to the family. They offer guidance and training to professionals on how CSE affects the whole family.

We recognise that young people often respond best to support offered from the voluntary sector, which can have a more innovative and flexible approach to offering help. Traditional approaches to therapy and support may not be accessible to these young people.

Research suggests that effective strategies have a common approach to sharing information, assessing risk, and planning support. CSE guidance, a CSE referral pathway and a CSE delivery plan will be developed to support this shared approach.

In Bath & North East Somerset we will develop:

- **A Shared CSE referral process** outlining the B&NES response to CSE.
- **CSE guidance** setting out a shared risk assessment model and an integrated planning process. This will set out the expectations of officers across agencies to proactively respond to risk and vulnerability.
- **Working practice** - An approach to work with victims including those that may be reluctant. We will do this through ensuring that we engage effectively and consistently with children and young people referred through risk management panel.
- **Develop the Risk assessment panel** to provide expert guidance and support and ensure accountability.
- **A CSE virtual team** to support young people who are being exploited. We will develop this model alongside voluntary sector agencies, drawing on innovative practice. The model will draw on the themes of engaging young people, their family and the community, being proactive, ensuring support plans are child or person centred, offering consistent support and based on a relationship of trust.
- **Support plans which are evaluated based on feedback** from young people and their families. Progress will be measured against co-produced goals and other outcome measures.
- **A model of multi-agency working** enabling the effective sharing of information and building up a picture of intelligence for each case against the context of the local area profile.
- **An offer of continued support** monitoring the progress of young people who have successfully exited exploitative relationships (step-down approach). We will do this through ensuring those working within early help services are aware of the indicators of risk and have a clear route to share concerns and receive expert advice.

Pursue & Prosecute

How do we do more to disrupt and prosecute perpetrators?

We are committed to ensuring that we will do all we can to disrupt perpetrators who are sexually exploiting children and young people and where possible prosecute them. Perpetrators of CSE may be men or women and come from all backgrounds.

Investigation and prosecution is a complex area of legislation. Great strides have been made in terms of hearing the voice of the victim and recognition within the judiciary of the presentation a victim of CSE can provide. Consequently, there is greater understanding now of the exploitative abuse factors that have occurred that often prevented a prosecution due to work undertaken with victims.

Prosecutions of any number of offenders be it “group, gang or lone wolf” will be conducted by the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), on the basis of evidence provided by Avon and Somerset Police and the probation service where relevant. It is essential that all agencies support such prosecutions, which will be conducted in the best interests of the child/young person, by providing prosecutors with information to assist in their endeavours to seek justice for and on behalf of the victims.

We are therefore committed to ensuring that we will do all we can to disrupt perpetrators who are sexually exploiting young people and wherever possible prosecute. We will build on the work of committed and skilled professionals and take a strategic and relentless approach to bring offenders to justice and to bring release and support to their victims.

Avon and Somerset Police will lead on the pursuit of offenders and seek to bring them to swift justice in hand with the CPS. In doing so they will work with all agencies to support the victims and assist them in their recovery.

We will build on the work of committed and skilled professionals including probation, the police and the CPS, and take a more strategic approach to identifying, disrupting and prosecuting perpetrators.

Whilst the aspiration is to bring prosecutions against perpetrators wherever possible, we recognise that this is not always achievable, nor is it always in the interests of victims to pursue a lengthy investigation.

Developing systems to enhance information-sharing and providing clear guidance to support effective collection and recording of evidence are crucial to improve performance in this area.

Learning from national and local experience is vital to ensure continuous improvement. We will build in regular reviews, analysis and feedback to learn from successes and failures, and disseminate this learning.

A common theme across research is the difficulty in supporting victims and witnesses through the investigation and court process. We will ensure clear plan are in place to support young people through these processes and liaise with the CPS, and the courts to develop good practice in this area.

To achieve greater effectiveness in disruption and prosecution we will:

- Develop a strategic overview of the progress of investigations. Support a multi-agency approach to developing such plans (through the CSE strategy group).
- Develop a protocol to support all agencies in exchanging concerning information and intelligence information around risks and incidents of CSE.
- Understand our intelligence picture to allow for investigative opportunities to be taken to disrupt activity and prevent abuse.
- Provide guidance and training to key professionals to improve the quality of evidence gathering and recording as part of the tiered training.
- Ensure that there is accessible, consistent, and long-term support for victims throughout the investigation, prosecution and post-court phases.

Governance

A multi-agency partnership approach enables the most effective interventions and achieves positive outcomes for the victims. Our partnership will encompass Local Authorities, Children's Services, Education, Police, specialist youth workers, health specialists (particularly sexual health) and the voluntary and charity sectors.

Governance of the response to CSE in Bath & North East Somerset will be provided by a B&NES CSE Strategic Sub- Group, which will report to the B&NES Local Safeguarding Children Board.

The Strategic Sub-group will develop, deliver and monitor the multi-agency strategy alongside the CSE delivery plan.

The B&NES referral process and CSE Risk Panel are the operational delivery mechanisms for safeguarding and tactical aspects of our response.

The CSE Strategic Sub-Group will meet a minimum of 4 times a year, although the group through the chair can request an increased frequency.

The Chair of the CSE Strategic Sub-Group will provide a written update to the B&NES LSCB on an annual basis.

Glossary

Grooming	Child grooming comprises actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, to lower the child's inhibitions in order to sexually abuse the child.
Group	Organised groups with an element of status, membership and criminality of 2 or more young people involved in delinquent peer groups.
CSE MARAC	CSE MARAC – A meeting where information is shared on CSE cases between representatives of local police, health, child protection, housing practitioners, voluntary sector representatives and other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors. The primary focus of the CSE MARAC is to safeguard the victim.
PACE	'Parents Against Child Sexual Exploitation' - An organisation set up to support parents
Perpetrator	Any person who poses a risk or commits crimes against a young person
'Return home' interview	Councils have to offer children an Independent Return Interview upon their return to home, in a bid to find out why they ran away and how to prevent it happening again.
Safer Somerset Partnership	Agencies in Somerset are working together as a single Community Safety Partnership to tackle crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour, and to reduce re-offending.
Section 47	Section 47 of the Children Act 1989 places a duty on Local Authorities to investigate and make inquiries into the circumstances of children considered to be at risk of 'significant harm' and, where these inquiries indicate the need, to decide what action, if any, it may need to take to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.

References

Code of Practice for Victims of Crime	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/254459/code-of-practice-victims-of-crime.pdf
Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation: Supplementary guidance to Working Together to Safeguard Children 2009	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/278849/Safeguarding_Children_and_Young_People_from_Sexual_Exploitation.pdf
“I thought I was the only one. The only one in the world” The Office of the Children’s Commissioner’s Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation In Gangs and Groups Interim report November 2012	http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_636
‘If Only someone had listened’ Office of the Children’s Commissioner’s Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups Final Report November 2013	http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/content/publications/content_743
Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan Department for Education November 2011	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation-action-plan
Barnardos ‘Puppet on a string’ report	http://www.barnardos.org.uk/ctf_puppetonastring_report_final.pdf
University of Bedfordshire research	http://www.beds.ac.uk/research/iasr/centres/intcent
Council of Europe Convention on the protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse	http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/QueVoulezVous.asp?CL=ENG&NT=201
B&NES Draft Early Help Strategy	http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sitedocuments/Children-and-Young-People/StrategiesPoliciesPlanning/early_help_offer_bath_and_north_east_somerset_02_2014.pdf

B&NES Children Missing from
home & Care Guidance

<http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/children-young-people-and-families/child-protection/children-need-and-child-protection-h-12>

Acknowledgements

Elements of this strategy have been sourced from Somerset, Camden, Rochdale, Torbay and Birmingham

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Membership of the B&NES Local Safeguarding Children’s Board

Name	Organisation	Job Title
Reg Pengelly	Independent	Independent Chair LSCB
Sarah McCluskey	B&NES	Business Support Manager
Ann Swabey	B&NES	Clerk to the LSCB
Amanda Pacey	RNHRD	Head of Nursing RNHRD
Anita Johnson	RUH	Safeguarding Midwifery
Ashley Ayre	B&NES	Director People & Communities
Bruce Laurence	B&NES	Director of Public Health
Chrissie Hardman	Sirona	Head of Children's Health
David Gee	CAFCASS	
Dawn Clarke	CCG	Director of Nursing and Quality
Dine Romero	B&NES	Lead member CYP
Donna Clarke	CAMHS	
Duncan Stanway	Barnardos	Assistant Director SW
Fiona Finlay (Dr)	RUH	Designated Doctor
Gill Brook	NHS	Patient experience
Helen Blanchard	NHS	Director of Nursing
Helen Netherwood	AWP	PA to Dr William Bruce -Jones
Isobel Sanderson	Oxford Health	
Jackie Cooke	RNHRD	Named Nurse Safeguarding
Jennifer Daly	NHS	Named Nurse safeguarding
Judy Lye-Forster	Bath College	Dir. Teaching & learning
Liz Spencer	Probation	
Michelle Maguire	CAMHS	
Mick Dixon	Avon F&R	
Mike Bowden	B&NES	DD CYP Strategy & Commissioning
Naina Thomas	Lay Member	
Rachel Williams	Police	DS Head of Public Protection
Richard Baldwin	B&NES	Director Targeted and Specialist Divisions
Roz Lambert	First Steps CC	Voluntary Sector rep
Sally Churchyard	B&NES	Service Manager 11-18 Outcomes
Sophia Swatton	Wilts NHS	Designated Nurse
Vicky Tinsley	GWH	
William Bruce-Jones (Dr)	AWP	Clinical lead

Appendix 2 - Terms of Reference & Membership of the Child Sexual Exploitation Strategic

Sub-Group

Terms of Reference for Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) / Missing Children Strategic Sub-Group

Membership

Richard Baldwin – B&NES Council (Chair)
Rachel Allen-Ringham – Independent Consultant
Mark Coleman – Police
Sophia Swatton – Sirona
Duncan Stanway – Barnardos
Jamie Luck – Mentoring Plus
Lesley Hutchinson – B&NES Council
Trina Shane – B&NES Council
Liz Ball – Project 28
Jenny Daly – RUH
Ian Read – AWP
Judy Lye-Forster – Bath College
Sally Churchyard – B&NES Council
Lorraine Beazley – Hayesfield School

1. Purpose

- a) The B&NES Child Sexual Exploitation / Missing Children Strategic Sub-Group reports to the B&NES Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).
- b) The overall purpose of the CSE / Missing Children Steering Sub-Group is to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategic and operational multi-agency response to Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing Children across Bath and North East Somerset encapsulated in the CSE Strategy approved by the B&NES LSCB in September 2014.

2. Terms of Reference

The CSE / Missing Children Strategic Sub-Group will deliver on the CSE Strategy and action plan on behalf of the LSCB and will regularly review the Strategy.

- Ensuring that current practice and interventions are informed by evidence based and linked and mapped to national policy and developments.
- Ensuring the focus is on prevention as well as response.
- Ensure multi-agency practice is regularly reviewed and evaluated.
- Ensuring that current and future multi-agency policies and procedures are appropriately designed to be responsive in meeting the demand that CSE poses within the local community and when necessary develop new policies and procedures, for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- Ensure that there is clear data and evidence supporting effective responses to the risk to children and young people of CSE and Missing Children.
- Ensure staff are adequately trained in how to identify and respond.

- Ensure that the public receive key messages.
- Ensure links to other sub groups of the LSCB.

All members will be responsible for linking to their senior management teams in their agencies and will take on pieces of work as appropriate to their role on behalf of the Group.

3. Structure

The Chair will be the Divisional Director, B&NES Targeted and Specialist Divisions holding the lead on CSE.

4. Membership

The CSE / Missing Children Strategic Sub- Group will include membership from:

- Police
- Children's Social Care
- Education
- Designated Doctor
- YOS
- Enhanced Preventative / Youth Services
- Head of Safeguarding
- Adult Services / AWP
- RUH
- Barnardo's

Each member will have the appropriate skills base required to effectively execute the group's work plan.

Members will take the responsibility for attending meetings, fully contributing by bringing expertise to the task and informing their respective agencies of issues and developments.

5. Accountability

The CSE / Missing Children Sub Group is accountable to the LSCB.

6. Frequency of meetings

The CSE / Missing Children Sub Group will meet every six weeks or if required by the nature of or to meet the needs of a particular work stream, more frequently as decided by the Chair.

The work of the Group will be presented at the full Board on an annual basis.

Appendix 3 - Other Relevant Strategies and Documents

Local Strategies & Documents

1. Sexual Health Strategy – In development for next year
2. Sexual Health Board Terms of Reference
3. Early Help Strategy
4. Missing from Home and Care Protocol
5. Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan
6. Child Sexual Exploitation Protocol
7. Child Sexual Exploitation Toolkit for staff

Relevant National Documents

1. Safeguarding Children and Young People from Child Sexual Exploitation – Supplementary guidance to Working Together to Safeguard Children – March 2009
2. “If Only Someone had Listened” – Office of the Children’s Commissioner – November 2013
3. Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation – National Action Plan – April 2011

Please see references for further information and relevant reading