## Child Sexual Exploitation

### Strategy 2017-2019

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Working together to safeguard children & young people from Child Sexual Exploitation in Bath & North East Somerset to ensure that every child and young person in Bath & North East Somerset is protected from being at risk, or experiencing sexual exploitation.

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. 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.

Our five key strategic objectives are as follows:

1. **Inform** – to ensure that identifying and stopping sexual exploitation is everybody’s business.
2. **Identify** – to identify those at risk of or experiencing sexual exploitation and those who sexually exploit.
3. **Prevent** – to prevent children, young people at Risk from being at risk of or experiencing sexual exploitation.
4. **Protect & Support** – to safeguard and support all those identified as being at risk of or experiencing sexual exploitation.
5. **Pursue & Prosecute** – to investigate, disrupt and prosecute perpetrators of sexual exploitation.

Underpinning the five key strategic objectives are the following aspirations:

To engage children, young people and their families in the development and review of services.

To maintain up to date policy, procedure and guidance consistent with regional initiatives and national guidance for the LSCB, and all partner agencies.

To develop an integrated approach to and understanding of the related issues of children and young people who are:

- Missing from Home, School, Care or from the sight of universal services.
- Trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation or modern day slavery.
At risk of Forced Marriage and/or Honour Based Violence
Perpetrators and/or victims of harmful sexual behaviour.

To establish a CSE Quality Assurance Audit framework which will inform the CSE/Missing Subgroup of what we are doing well to effectively intervene and safeguard children, young people at risk of or experiencing sexual exploitation and to highlight areas for improvement.

To successfully implement this strategy, it is recognised that the LSCB CSE/Missing Subgroup will be required to work in partnership with the LSCB Quality Assurance Subgroup, Training Subgroup and the Policy and Procedures Subgroup. This Strategy will be led by B&NES LSCB.

The LSCB and CSE/Missing Subgroup will also link with the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) Strategic Management Board whose responsibility is to ensure the surveillance and management of high risk sex offenders in the community.

INTRODUCTION

1. Like many other areas of the country, Bath & North East Somerson (B&NES) is faced with the challenge of tackling the issue of child sexual exploitation. Given the increased awareness regarding this often hidden and unreported form of child abuse, this strategy sets out how B&NES Safeguarding Children Board will work towards ensuring that effective and co-ordinated measures and responses are in place to safeguard all children and young people who are at risk of, or who are experiencing sexual exploitation.

2. Any child or young person may be at risk of sexual exploitation, regardless of their gender, family background or other circumstances. Sexual exploitation of children and young people under the age of eighteen involves, power, control, coercion, and intimidation, and may result in children and young people suffering significant damage to their physical and mental health. It can also have far reaching and damaging consequences for families; parents, carers and siblings who often feel powerless and traumatised, and may feel angry, scared, confused, whilst also suffering threats of, or experience of abuse and assault from individuals or groups who sexually exploit.

3. When referring to Child Sexual exploitation the LSCB has adopted the current CSE definition from DfE (2017): *Child sexual exploitation is a form of child sexual abuse. It occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for*
something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

4. Sexual exploitation of children and young people is child abuse and tackling child sexual exploitation is one of the most important current challenges for the LSCB. It is the responsibility of all partner agencies to identify all children and young people at risk of exploitation, in order to prevent them from becoming victims, and it is the responsibility of all partner agencies to protect and safeguard all children and young people who are experiencing exploitation from further harm. In order to meet this challenge, a shared understanding of the problem and a shared responsibility to proactively address all areas of sexual exploitation is required. This will be achieved by efficient working partnerships between agencies with active coordination by the LSCB, in recognition that the most effective way to tackle this form of child abuse is via a committed coordinated multi-agency approach, in partnership with children, young people, families and communities.

5. When working in partnership to tackle child abuse, partner agencies should focus on the child’s needs and recognise the fact that children are not always aware, recognise or acknowledge that they may be in an exploitative or abusive situation, whilst also incorporating a needs led, child and family centred approach; a focused approach towards prevention, early identification and intervention and proactively targeting, disrupting and prosecuting individuals or groups who seek to exploit children.

6. There are strong links between children being at risk of sexual exploitation and other behaviours, in particular missing from home or care. Significant evidence highlights that children and young people who go missing from home or care are at increased risk of being at risk of, or experiencing sexual exploitation. It is therefore essential that all partner agencies act rigorously to reduce incidents of children / young people going missing. In addition, robust efforts to locate a child or young person if known to be missing is required, and once located, agencies must ensure that they have processes in place to assess why a child / young person went missing, what they experienced whilst missing and how any future risk of that child / young person going missing could be reduced.

7. There is also a recognised shared responsibility to engage with communities; to inform them about sexual exploitation and agency responsibilities to protect children, whilst also providing reassurance regarding the intention to effectively tackle sexual exploitation, including the targeting, disruption and prosecution of individuals and groups whose intention it is to exploit children.

8. This strategy is intended to ensure all children and young people in B&NES can live free from the risk of, or experience of, sexual exploitation, can feel safe, and protected and have improved life experiences, allowing for better outcomes for all children young people, families and communities. The strategy has six strategic objectives to inform, identify, prevent, support, disrupt and protect.
9. The LSCB has taken a number of actions to support the translation of the strategy into action. These include the:

- Appointment of a CSE consultant to develop the strategy, protocol and response to children and young people at risk of sexually exploitation or being exploited.
- Establishment of a CSE Strategic Sub Group of the LSCB.
- Establishment of the Willow Project to provide early intervention for children and young people at risk of CSE.
- Commissioning Barnardo’s BASE service to support children and young people at significant risk of CSE or being exploited.
- Development of a missing strategy and protocol.
- Development and delivery of needs led training for all staff working with children and young people.
- Development of CSE Network meetings.
- Agreeing a detailed action plan.
- Developing a CSE protocol.
- The development of a team to respond to adolescents with specific vulnerabilities (including CSE). The aim of this team will be to ensure a holistic approach to working with young people who are identified as homeless, at risk of CSE, or referred due to harmful sexual behaviour. It is anticipated that this team will launch in June 2017.
Inform
Objective: To empower and protect children, young people, families, and communities from being at risk of or experiencing sexual exploitation by increasing understanding of the nature and impact of sexual exploitation within communities and professional workforce.

We are going to achieve this by:
- Information sharing with and by partner agencies, via a range of strategic and practitioner forums.
- Promoting the process for information sharing relating to possible individuals or groups who sexually exploit.
- Raising awareness within day-to-day practice delivery across the LSCB partners amongst parents, carers, professionals and communities to help identify the signs of vulnerability and know what they should do and where to get help.
- External facing campaigns to raise awareness of sexual exploitation and routes for disclosing.
- Raising awareness amongst professionals of the processes for tackling CSE within their organisations and where to go for support and advice.
- Continuing to deliver a tiered training programme to all relevant practitioners.
- Ensuring that professionals have access to training in relation to and an appropriate understanding of the risks and challenges presented by Social Media and online risk.
- Development of a plan for engaging the night time and business economies in awareness training and safeguarding.
- Improve accessibility of CSE Action Plan and local CSE tools across partnership and on external facing LSCB websites and social media.
- Ensuring that professionals working with all levels of need have access to expert advice and consultation through a dedicated local CSE Social Worker so that children are appropriately responded to.
Identify
Objective: To use the Problem Profile, ensuring that we have current knowledge of locations, individuals and groups who sexually exploit, as well as emerging issues and models of targeting and exploiting children in order that we can act upon early indicators relating to individual children and young people at risk and shape services appropriate to their needs.

We are going to achieve this by:
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the existing shared screening tool to identify those at risk, and roll out changes comprehensively and clearly within the multi-agency workforce.
- Development of a reporting framework and timetable for the CSE/Missing Subgroup to have oversight of current risk profile.
- Supporting regional Zephyr team to implement recommendations from the regional problem profile through regional CSE networks.
- Use the information from the problem profile to develop direct work with young people. Making sure we include a focus around online abuse as this was highlighted through the problem profile.
- Working with Avon and Somerset Constabulary to improve external agencies knowledge of information and intelligence sharing pathways.
- Development of a LSCB policy on Information Governance for managing information about CSE in order to improve identification of trends, hotspots, perpetrators and victims as a responsibility for all partners.
- Use the CSE Protocol and Missing Strategy to respond more effectively to missing children and young people.
- Monitoring and sharing information and data about children missing from home, care and education.
- Keeping up to date with new developments in technology and Social Media and disseminating learning to the wider workforce.
- To use the data developed through the Willow Project to develop work and act on early indicators.
Prevent
Objective: To prevent children, young people at Risk from experiencing or continuing to experience sexual exploitation

We are going to achieve this by:

With children and young people:
- Delivering a universal education programme through a train-the-trainers model across secondary school pupils to raise the quality of CSE awareness, peer-on-peer violence, and harmful sexual behaviour.
- Engaging schools with Education Safeguarding to achieve a safe environment where all sexual harassment, sexual bullying, sexting and other sexually inappropriate behaviour within schools is challenged and responded to effectively.
- Developing an awareness raising strategy to engage with harder to reach groups of young people in the community, addressing the needs of the younger age range in intervening early.
- Improving quality of the referral, assessment and intervention process for all children and young people ensuring CSE is considered for all children referred to Social Care.
- Promoting more robust signposting of vulnerable young people and their families to early help support services where they do not meet the threshold for statutory services or are stepped-down from tier 3 and tier 4 services.
- Reviewing the use of the LSCB threshold guidance in relation to CSE.
- Targeted CSE Skills and Practice training for practitioners delivering support to groups of children and young people who are potentially at high risk of being sexually exploited (e.g. care leavers and LGBT young people) to improve direct delivery to these groups.
- Develop the work of the Willow Project through offering targeted group work to targeted young people.
- Ensuring that online grooming and sexual exploitation is included in all training provision.

With parents, carers, families, communities and businesses:
- Working with Early Help, Schools and voluntary sector organisations to deliver awareness raising sessions for parents and carers.
- Supporting relevant teams to develop a tool kit of resources for supporting parents of children at risk of CSE.
- Signposting parents of children who go missing and are at risk of CSE to PACE as general practice within Return Interviews.
- Continue roll out of ‘Working with Parents’ to targeted professionals.
- Work with the B&NES Licencing Board and the Community Safety Partnership to embed CSE identification and safeguarding within operational delivery of these groups and stakeholders.
• Develop a parent group for the parents of children and young people in the Willow (risk) team.

With potential perpetrators:
• Working proactively with children and young people displaying harmful sexual behaviour through the AIM assessment.
• Reviewing current commissioning arrangements for young people with harmful or problematic sexual behaviour and their families.
• Raising awareness of Stop It Now helpline.
• Working with the Avon and Somerset Constabulary Manage strand to improve information pathways and communication between statutory services about identified individuals at risk of perpetrating CSE.
• Continue in the involvement of the Network Meetings to improve perpetrator focused plans for identified possible perpetrators.
• Improving data capture.
• Referring to MAPPA where appropriate for convicted perpetrators to enable resources to be directed to pursuing, disrupting and addressing risk management as well as targeting responses.

To prevent and disrupt potential exploitation we will:
• Manage the risk posed by convicted perpetrators in the community and custody through MAPPA and other arrangements.
• Prevent new locations or hotspots through Community Safety partnership plans, access to youth services and safe youth spaces.
• Involve Local Policing Area teams in safety and response plans.
• Share information about perpetrators, potential perpetrators and identified hotspots with partners at the bi-monthly CSE Networking Meetings.
• Review the online activity of those at risk to help prevent and disrupt online exploitation.
Protect & Support

Objective: To work together to safeguard current victims of sexual exploitation to minimise harm, reduce opportunities for perpetrators to target victims and to provide appropriate support, intervention, information and recovery services to children, young people and parents at Risk.

We are going to achieve this by:

- Using feedback and information received from children, young people, families, carers and others to inform the development of practice, strategic plans and service delivery.
- Ensuring that B&NES LSCB CSE Guidance is up-to-date and readily available to practitioners and families on the LSCB website.

Young people currently being abused through sexual exploitation:

- Ensuring high quality assessments are undertaken for children and young people at risk of or experiencing sexual exploitation as appropriate.
- Intervening appropriately according to assessment outcomes to support and protect children and young people, who are at risk of exploitation and experiencing exploitation, and their parents, carers and families.
- Develop the work of Willow to ensure an ongoing appropriate response to young people identified as at risk of CSE.
- Continue the work with Barnardos BASE to support children and young people being exploited.
- Developing evidence-based practitioner tools to improve safety planning and intervention strategies.
- Working with the Criminal Justice System to advocate that young people are not criminalised for their abuse or behaviour when being abused.
- Working to develop constabulary wide and cross border pathways to divert victims of CSE away from the Criminal Justice System for offences committed due to them being victims of sexual exploitation.
- Writing guidelines for commissioning placements for sexually exploited young people.
- Working with schools to ensure good quality pastoral care for young people in education.
- Providing support to young people that promotes their options, provides opportunities for achievement and empowers them to succeed in achieving future aspirations.
- Promoting a workforce that values the voices and experiences of young people, includes them as far as possible in decision-making and sees young people as unique and having the capacity to contribute to their communities.
- Positively integrating Health providers and identifying and responding to barriers to young people accessing health services when they are being sexually exploited.
• Promoting enhanced sexual health and post-assault care for all young people who have been sexually exploited.
• Referring young people into the UKHTC National Referral Mechanism where there are indicators they may have been victims of trafficking.
• Ensuring that Care Leavers and those young people transitioning into adulthood have access to appropriate support services.
• Ensuring that parents and carers are offered appropriate support.
• Development of victim participation groups; to gain a greater understanding of how to prevent the risks to children.
• Development of a CSE young people’s working group to ensure children and young people participate in CSE developments across B&NES.
• Working with partners from across the five local authorities which make up Avon and Somerset, and the wider South West regional partnerships to combat sexual exploitation across borders, share good practice, and consolidate learning.
• Ensuring that information about potential perpetrators and victims obtained from Social Media and other online sources is collated, shared and investigated in a timely manner.
Pursue & Prosecute

Objective: To successfully prosecute those who perpetrate or facilitate the exploitation of children and young people at Risk, and to disrupt activities and locations so as to prevent further incidents of sexual exploitation.

We are going to achieve this by:

- Ensuring all partners know how to report crimes of known or suspected sexual exploitation when they are not being reported to the police directly by victims.
- Sharing information via CSE Network meetings regarding more complex cases to agree an enhanced strategy to pursue and disrupt the suspect and to manage risk.
- Providing visible policing in areas where sexual exploitation is suspected.
- Learning lessons from previous and current prosecutions through multi-agency reviews and consideration of national learning.
- Seeking to locate, protect and return children missing from home or care.
- Making best use of child abduction notices, harbourers warnings, civil orders and other appropriate legislation, civil powers and litigation.
- Ensuring that all children, parents, carers and professionals who have been victims of or witness to sexual exploitation receive comprehensive support in preparing for all stages of the Criminal Justice and court processes including after-care support.
- Supporting practitioners and family members to gather information, intelligence and evidence appropriately (including online), in order to better assist police action.
- Capturing and using intelligence data to develop problem profiles of individuals or groups who are suspected to sexually exploit and utilise this to prevent reoffending and assist with prosecutions.
- Providing a clear message to the public that anyone engaging in inappropriate sexual activity with a child or young person is committing an offence, and will be actively pursued.
- Obtaining best evidence to prosecute in partnership with other professionals trained in evidence collection (e.g. joint ABE with social workers).
- Maintaining relationships with Criminal Justice partners to ensure the provision of CPS CSE specialists.
References, Key Links and Resources