

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE) TASK & FINISH GROUP DRAFT CSE STRATEGY NOTES – 21 JANUARY 2016

Task Group Members in attendance – Councillors Richard Cook (Chairperson), Dianne Rees, Murphy and Mrs. Arlotte (Roman Catholic Co-Optee)

On the 7 January 2016, the Director of Social Services requested that the CSE Task Group review the draft Cardiff CSE Strategy, which was due to be considered by the Cabinet on the 10 March 2016.

The Task Group held its meeting on 21 January to review and evaluate the draft Strategy and Action Plan. The meeting was held in advance of the February Committee meeting to enable Members to look at the draft Strategy document in detail and make a number of observations and recommendations prior to the implementation of the Strategy, and report these to Committee at its meeting on 16 February.

Prior to the meeting, Members were provided with a copy of the draft Strategy document and action plan. Set out below are the views, observations and recommendations of the CSE Task & Finish Group.

Overall Comments on the Strategy and Action Plan

Whilst the development of a Strategy document on this critical issue is welcomed, Members have requested that a number of additions, updates and amendments to be made to the Strategy and Action Plan before it is adopted by Cabinet. Whilst it is appreciated that it will evolve and develop, Members recommend that additional data and information that should be available at this juncture (via the audit of Children's Services in December 2015 and work commencing in January 2016) be added to the Strategy and Action Plan before it is considered by Cabinet. This includes:

- Key baseline data;
- Explicit references to governance and lines of accountability;
- Performance measures, including targets, costs and clear timeframes for review;
- Details of progress made to date; and
- Links to other key plans and strategies

The Task Group's views on specific parts of the Strategy are as follows:

Purpose of the Strategy

The draft document states *“It is important to note, for now, this is a Cardiff only Strategy..... With an aim to develop a regional strategy if it is felt that one is needed”*.

Evidence has shown that cross boundary, multi agency working is critical in identifying and tracking victims and perpetrators and it is therefore recommended that this Strategy should commit to working in this way from the outset and link to other LSCBs – to the Vale of Glamorgan; the SE Wales SCB (Newport, Torfaen, Monmouthshire, Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly); and the Western Bay SCB (Neath Port Talbot, Swansea and Bridgend). Whilst Members recognise the need for a local strategy, it is crucial that a commitment to work and interact together is put in place to maximise impact in tackling this issue.

Strategic Context

Members recommend that additional content be added to this Section. Birmingham LSCB CSE Strategy 2015-17 detailed the following in its Strategic Context and it is recommended that these be included in the Cardiff document:

- A profile of children and young people in the area – numbers, ages, breakdown of ethnicity, numbers and percentages in school, achievements; NEETs etc.
- General overview of wards in the City, including numbers and percentages of children living in poverty and deprivation etc.
- Young people’s views - for example, children & young people’s perceptions of their neighbourhoods etc.; and
- Health – admissions of Under-18s to A&E, scale of mental health issues etc.

The Cardiff CSE Strategy Action Plan states a number of activities that could provide this context. The commitment to *“complete an audit of children’s services referrals and cases..... to identify the nature and prevalence of CSE in Cardiff” (by end December 2015)* should provide this, and it is therefore recommended that the relevant parts of these audit results be included in this part of the draft Strategy at this time, prior to consideration by Cabinet on the 10 March 2016.

What we know about CSE in Cardiff and how we will make sure we understand the scale of the problem

Linked with the Strategic Context, Members recommend the following be added to this Section:

- Further details arising from the audit and other sources including:
 - The numbers of children at risk and a breakdown of what category of risk (as per the SERAF framework)
 - The ages of children at risk
 - The ethnicity of those at risk
 - Numbers of children classified as missing from school
 - How many of those at risk are in the care of the Local Authority
 - How many have plans in place
 - How many Assessment meetings have taken place in the past 3 months
- Output of the mapping of existing services exercise (*as stated in the Action Plan as being completed by the end of January 2016*);
- Profile of ethnic groups, including any changes in demographics over the past five years;
- Indicators identified that could lead children to become “at risk” from CSE;
- Further detail needs to be made in relation to the Police “problem profile findings”, for example, “hotspots” identified – not just “where”, but numbers too; and a profile of the numbers of victims who have been identified as engaging in risky behaviour.
- Results/Findings of the Children’s Services Audit should be included at this juncture to clarify and back up the statement of *“early indication from this audit suggest an improving picture in terms of effective responses to CSE and real strength in terms of protecting Looked After Children from exposure to CSE”*.

Identifying and monitoring CSE

Whilst Members supported the intention of the commitment to working with multi-agency intelligence to identify and monitor CSE, terms such as “systematically” and “routinely” were used through this Section, with no indication of timescales. Members recommend that the Strategy set out in clear terms **how** they will identify and monitor CSE, and **when** they will do this, using set timescales.

Raising Awareness, Identifying and Protecting Those who are Vulnerable

Members recommend that further detail (including supporting data) be added to this Section. In addition, arising from the Police Profile findings in a previous Section, where City Centre Hotspots had been specifically identified, Members felt that there was a need to engage with the City Centre Team to raise awareness and educate across licensed premises, large chain restaurants, hotels etc. in tackling this issue, and this should be specified in this Section.

Supporting Victims to breakaway from CSE

The Action Plan indicates that work on this commenced in January 2016, and it is therefore recommended that this Section be updated, prior to consideration by Cabinet, to support the statements in this Section.

How we will measure our Performance

Members recommend that *“progress on implementing this Strategy will be reviewed regularly”* be amended to *“progress on implementing this Strategy will be reviewed quarterly”*.

The Strategy and Action Plan do not specify how performance will be monitored or measured and recommend that performance indicators, targets and costs be added to the Action Plan. It is recommended that this be rectified at this stage to ensure that the Strategy is achievable, measurable and realistic in its expectations.

Our Plan to Implement this Strategy

The draft Strategy states that terms of reference and governance arrangements will be presented to the LSCB and Vulnerable Children and Families Board in January 2016. Members recommend that this Section be updated to reflect this, prior to consideration by Cabinet. The output from the LSCB and VC&FB presentations should be stated clearly within the Strategy, including governance arrangements across all agencies.

It is recommended that links to other key Plans and Strategies be included as part of the Strategy implementation.

There are also no details of which body will be holding the LSCB to account to ensure that the Strategy and Action Plan is being properly implemented, monitored and reviewed. As the major inquiries and serious case reviews revealed, the effectiveness of the LSCB is a critical element of managing CSE in an area. Therefore, it is recommended that these arrangements be explicitly stated in the Strategy document being considered by Cabinet.

Action Plan to implement the CSE Strategy

Members recommend that this be updated, as some of the actions specified in the Plan should have been achieved and implemented by the date of this response and by the time it is considered by Cabinet. Where this is the case, this should be reflected in updates to the Strategy document and Plan.

Performance targets and measures should also be included in the Action Plan to ensure that a thorough and proper review of the Action Plan can be achieved in October 2016.