

COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

REPORT

Title: Contextual Safeguarding & Exploitation Subgroup Update

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1. Brief Update

- 1.1 The Cotextual Safeguarding and exploitation sub-group continues to work to ensure coordinated multi-agency responses to reduce experiences of significant harm such as child criminal & sexual exploitation and serious youth violence that tends to happen in contexts outside the family home i.e. within peer groups, schools settings, online and neighbourhoods. The subgroup has not met since it’s last meeting on 16 February 2022 , and is due to meet on 14 June 2022 .
- 1.2 The agenda for the forthcoming meeting includes hearing from a commissioned partner – Lifeline who offer early intervention and diversionary youth work to our vulnerable adolescents. They will deliver a presentation on their new SWITCH Futures programme and the return of the Parents Champions group , a group of parents who have been affected by youth violence and exploitation who are able to offer peer support to other parents going through the same situation .
- 1.3 The Social Care Institute of excellence has been brought in to support the development of a Targeted Early help offer for children at risk of exploitation and SYV . They will join the meeting together with the Early Help Programme Lead drawing on the expertise of the partnership to shape the offer and model of help and support .
- 1.4 The Young people’s safety summit was held on 5th May 2022 with 88 children attending from a variety of secondary schools. Members of the Sub-group joined tables working alongside the children . The Summit acts as a vehicle to explore contextual safeguarding with young people living in LLBD . Young people were asked to identify, discuss and record safe and unsafe spaces within online, school and community domains, with reasons also being recorded. They also explored a contextual safeguarding scenario centred around peer groups, which was designed by the University of Bedfordshire as part of the borough’s participation in the University’s Contextual Safeguarding pilot. For the school and community domains, maps of their schools and of the wider borough were used to facilitate discussion

and record young people's views. Presentations from Box Up Crime and Spark 2 Life discussed the risks and impacts of serious youth violence, as well as helped signpost young people to local positive activity provision. The Fearless website and TootToot reporting app (which has been funded for all schools until 2023) were also presented to inform young people of safe ways they can report concerns. The Summit concluded with all young people recording one action they will take as a result of the session, one action they would like their school to take and one action they would like other organisations to take. These findings will be presented at the Subgroup on 14th, and our workplan going forward will be informed by what the young people are asking of us.

- 1.5 The MASE (Missing and sexual exploitation) meeting continues to meet monthly and has a tactical and strategic focus on children at risk of sexual exploitation. The last meeting in May reported there are currently 29 children assessed as at risk of sexual exploitation, of which 90 % are girls with an average age of 15.4 years, with the youngest being 11 years. 38 % of the children are Looked after. 62% have gone missing in the last 12 months, with an average of 5 missing episodes per child, however there are two children whose high level of going missing impacts on the average. The Missing Panel continues to keep oversight of our missing cohort, seeking to ensure best practice in working with children who go missing, as well as understanding the drivers for the missing episodes in order that we can best disrupt these from happening. For those children who were removed from the CSE list, they reported the following made the positive difference for them: improved relationships at home, getting back into education, motivation to find work. The meeting gave focus to persons and locations of concern and sought assurance that these were being addressed. 9 of the 42 children referred to the NRM panel were due to concerns in regard to sexual exploitation of which 6 received a Conclusive grounds decision.
- 1.6 The monthly CEG (Criminal exploitation group) continues to meet, and similar to MASE has a tactical focus. The last meeting in May heard that we have 33 children known to Rescue and Response for running county lines. 94 % are male with an average age of 17, whereas the female cohort average age is 15 years. 27 % are Looked after with 36% being Care leavers. 49% have a Missing episode with an average of 10 missing episodes per young person, however this average is high due to the fact two of the cohort make up 62 % of the missing episodes. The meeting heard a detailed presentation on these two young people. There are 76 young people with a recorded NRM status due to trafficking through criminal exploitation. The young people removed from the list reported that services such as YARM, Sparks 2 life mentor, a consistent trusted relationship with their social worker and YOS worker, together with being able to engage back in with education and having good friends to play football with made a positive difference. Parents benefitted from the support offered via a Child in Need plan which included being educated about exploitation and being supported in developing a safety plan. 26 of the young people subject to a County lines/ NRM list are known to our Youth offending service. They are known for a range of offences include Attempted Murder, GBH sec18, Conspiracy to Possess Firearms with intent to endanger, False Imprisonment, Robbery, Breach of Crown Court bail. 30% are either not in education, school refusers or have irregular attendance. In terms of their mental health -19% of young people had been known and were receiving therapy from CAMHS and there were 3 children who had been offered CAMHS appointments but had declined or not co-operated with the assessment. In addition to this list there are a number of children with ongoing challenges like insomnia (2), self-harm (5)

dealing with bereavement (1). 89% use some form of drugs and 50% have grown up with domestic abuse in their family home, with 19% having a parent known for offending behaviours.

- 1.7 This link to the Lost Hours website directs families and professionals through to the mapping of youth provision. This provides a range of positive diversionary programmes that are on offer for children and young people across the borough, both those funded by the council and funded externally.
<https://losthours.org/activities/>. Please note that this is reviewed on a quarterly basis to ensure that the information remains as up to date as possible

2. Support required from CSP Board

- 2.1 For the Board to note the content of the report .