

Education and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda
Item No. 6

24 November 2015

An overview of the work currently being undertaken in Walsall to address issues the of Child Sexual Exploitation, Grooming, Female Genital Mutilation, Trafficking and Forced Marriages

Ward(s) All

Portfolios: Councillor E Hughes - Portfolio Holder Care and Safeguarding

Executive Summary:

This report provides an overview of current work being done in Walsall to address the issues of Child Sexual Exploitation, Grooming, Female Genital Mutilation, Trafficking, and Forced Marriages. This includes the local and regional response to these issues. It will provide up to date information on the numbers of children/young people at risk and what work is being carried out to address these issue, locally and regionally.

Reason for scrutiny:

The report was requested by Members of the Education and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to provide a current overview of the numbers of young people being affected by Child Sexual Exploitation, Grooming, Female Genital Mutilation, Trafficking and Forced Marriages in Walsall, and a broad overview of the work being undertaken to address these issues.

Recommendations:

Scrutiny notes, supports and makes recommendations for further action as a result of the contents of the report and the current activity to protect child and young people in Walsall from the risk of Child Sexual Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation, Trafficking, Grooming and Forced Marriages.

Background papers:

The following reports provide an overview in to issues of Child Sexual Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriages, and Trafficking nationally.

- *Working Together to Safeguard Children* A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, March 2015
- The Jay Report: Independent Enquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham, August 2014.
- The Louise Casey Report of an Inspection of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, February 2015
- West Midlands CSE Framework, July 2015
- *'If only someone had listened'*: the Office of the Children's Commissioner

inquiry in to child sexual exploitation in gangs and groups report, November 2013

- *Female Genital Mutilation Protection Orders* A guide to the court process, July 2015
- West Midlands Police and Crime Panel. Executive Summary: Tackling Female Genital Mutilation in the West Midlands, June 2015
- Introducing mandatory reporting for female genital mutilation consultation – summary of responses, February 2015
- Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation: procedural information, October 2015
- National Referral Mechanism: guidance for child first responders, Home Office, August 2013.
- The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014
- Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance for dealing with forced marriage, 2014

Resource and legal considerations:

Responding to children at risk of significant harm is a statutory duty placed on Local Authority Chief Executives, Directors of Children's Services, LSCB Chairs and senior managers within organisations who commission and provide services for children, young people and families. This includes social workers, professionals from health services, adult services, the police, academy trusts, education and voluntary and community sector that have contact with children, young people and families.

The resources required to respond to this statutory requirement comes from within the existing resources across the partnership of organisations working in Walsall to protect vulnerable children and those at risk of harm.

Citizen impact:

The effective delivery of high quality services to protect children and young people from significant harm, including the risk of child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, trafficking, being groomed and forced marriages has a direct impact on the welfare and well being of children and Young people in Walsall. It directly links to the corporate priority to improve Health and Wellbeing and the Children's Services priority that all children and young people in Walsall are safe and supported.

Environmental impact:

There is no environmental impact

Performance management:

Walsall Safeguarding Children Board actively monitors the performance of the partnership in successfully identifying and supporting children and young people at risk of child sexual exploitation, grooming, female genital mutilation, forced marriages and trafficking including taking forward the prosecution of offenders and the promotion of disruption activity.

Equality Implications:


The co-ordinated provision of services designed to address the protection of children – together with the disruption and prosecution of activities by adults – provides specific support for those children and young people who are at risk of significant harm.

Consultation:

This report has been prepared collaboratively between Walsall Children's Services, Walsall Children Safeguarding Board, Street Teams, the Regional Child Sexual Exploitation Co-ordinator, Walsall's Child Sexual Exploitation Co-ordinator and the Police. Officers will be available to provide more detailed information to Education and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.


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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), grooming, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), trafficking and forced marriages are all forms of abuse.
- 1.2 Members will be aware that an overview of the issues of child sexual exploitation, including the national and regional response activity around this significant priority have previously been presented to Scrutiny on 14 April 2015 and 14 October 2014 by officers from West Midlands Police, Children's Social Care and the Chair of the Children's Safeguarding Board. At April's meeting Members resolved to recommend to Cabinet that the post of CSE Co-ordinator, currently grant funded via the Police and Crime Commissioner should become a permanent post. Cabinet have approved this recommendation and work is underway to identify funding to support that decision.
- 1.3 CSE is complex and widespread and can manifest itself in different ways. In all cases those exploiting the child or young person have power over them, including by virtue of their age or physical strength. Sexual exploitation can take many forms from seemingly 'consensual' relationships where sex is exchanged for attention, affection, accommodation or gifts, to serious organised crime including group and gang related exploitation as well as child trafficking.

The West Midlands Metropolitan Area has adopted the following definition of sexual exploitation taken from statutory guidance:-

"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' (e.g. 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 their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, 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."

CSE can happen to any child/young person no matter what their background, culture or where they live. There is no specific criminal offence of CSE and legal redress is via prosecution for a range of other offences, including rape, trafficking offences and child abduction.

- 1.4 The term grooming can be used in respect of a variety of issues including CSE, radicalisation, online grooming, etc. For the purpose of this report the term is used in connection with CSE and online grooming. Grooming occurs when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for the purposes of sexual abuse or exploitation. Children and young people can be groomed online or in the real world, by a stranger or by someone they know - for example a family member, friend or professional. Groomers may be male or female and can be any age. Many children and young people do not recognise that they have been groomed or that what has happened is abuse.

1.5 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a criminal offence in the UK. It is a form of child abuse and violence against women and girls, involving procedures which include the partial or total removal of the external female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is extremely painful and has serious health consequences both at the time the mutilation is carried out and later in life. The new Mandatory Reporting duty requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers in England and Wales to report 'known' cases of FGM in girls and young women under the age of 18 years to the police. For the purposes of the duty 'known' cases are those that are visually identified or verbally disclosed. The duty does not apply to girls or women thought to be at risk of FGM, cases where FGM is suspected or in cases where the woman is over 18. In these cases, professionals are required to follow existing local safeguarding procedures.

1.6 There are three different types of trafficking of children for the purposes of sexual exploitation:

- trafficking from abroad into the UK;
- internal trafficking, where children are moved from one place to another in the UK for the purposes of sexual exploitation. This may be from one street to another; from one town/city to another; or across Local Authority borders;
- trafficked out of the UK to other countries and brought back again.

Trafficking children, including for the purpose of sexual exploitation, is a criminal offence. Concerns that a child may be being trafficked should always be reported to the Police. Anyone who works with children and young people may come into contact with a victim of trafficking. They need to be able to recognise children who have been trafficked and take action to protect these children from harm. Where exploitation is present, statutory Child Protection and Safeguarding responses should be applied and a referral should be made to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for a decision on the status of the potential victim of trafficking.

The NRM is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking or modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support. The NRM is also the mechanism through which the UK Human Trafficking Centre collects data about victims. This information contributes to building a clearer picture about the scope of human trafficking and modern slavery in the UK. The nationality or immigration status of the child does not affect agencies' statutory responsibilities towards a child and this should only be considered when the child's need for protection from harm has been addressed. Establishing the child's nationality or immigration status should not delay or impede any protective action.

1.7 Any agencies and organisations who find themselves with grounds for concern that a person may be a victim of human trafficking has a responsibility for identifying the person as a possible victim and putting him or her in touch with the responsible authorities and support providers.

1.8 In respect of children, if the first agency to identify a child as a victim of trafficking is not the Children's Services Department they are responsible for ensuring an immediate referral is made to their Local Authority Children's Services and the Police. This is to ensure that Local Authorities are aware of the child and can put in place any necessary measures to safeguard, and the police are made aware that a potential crime has been committed.

1.9 A forced marriage is where one or both people do not, or in cases of people with learning disabilities cannot, consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used to ensure the marriage takes place. Forced marriage is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against both women and men encompassing both domestic abuse and child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights. The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical and included threats, actual physical violence and sexual violence or emotional and psychological; for example the notion of shame and dishonouring their family. Financial abuse, for example taking wages or not providing money to meet basic needs, can also be a factor.

2. Local position in respect of CSE in Walsall March – June 2015

2.1. Walsall Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) has agreed a Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy which was last updated in July 2015. This provides a robust plan of action to safeguard those child/young people that may be at risk of being groomed and to be sexually exploited in Walsall. There is active engagement from the Police CSE team who work closely with WSCB CSE Co-ordinator and social workers in order to monitor those that have been identified to be at risk of CSE.

2.2. The CSE Coordinator has been in post since March 2015 and has reviewed the pathways in place to ensure that all partner agencies are aware of and fulfil their responsibilities in order to safeguard children and young people in Walsall.

2.3 Where young people are identified as at risk they will have an intervention appropriate to their level of need either via an Early Help plan, Child in Need Plan, Child Protection Plan or through their Looked After Care plan. Successful outcomes for individual young people will be sought and monitored through the review of these plans and regular assessment updates.

2.4 A key part of the monitoring process in Walsall is the MACE meeting (Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation meeting) for those children and young people deemed to be medium or high risk of CSE. These children are reviewed every 6 weeks until the risk for the individual has reduced and is assessed as now being low. The MACE meeting will run in parallel with any other plan that may also be in place.

2.5 All young people who are assessed as being at medium/high or high risk are discussed at the CSE and Missing Operations Group (CMOG) which meets every month. CMOG is well supported by partners from across the wider children's partnership and includes representatives from the police, social care, the youth offending team, early help and the community safety partnership. Partners provide written and verbal updates on activity with victims and perpetrators as appropriate. Practitioners attend the meeting well prepared and ready to share information and agree actions and the level of urgency required, to meet the young person's needs.

2.6 At November's CMOG 13 victims were discussed; of these 5 are categorised as being at high risk. Progress reports on a number of ongoing criminal investigations were also received from West Midlands Police.

2.7 Where partners have intelligence relating to children from other Local Authorities being found in Walsall this information is shared across Local Authority Boundaries as appropriate.

2.8 CSE is not confined to any one area. Victims may indeed be from a specific area; however this does not necessarily mean they are being exploited in that area. Often

the child or young person is trafficked from their local area to another area where the exploitation may place. CSE does not respect boundaries and while young people may live in one area they may go to school somewhere else or be exploited somewhere else and the offenders may come from somewhere else.

- 2.9 The recently released quarterly data assessment gives a breakdown of the figures for each Local Authority within the West Midlands Region. It is not possible to say which area is 'worst' as from all that is known about CSE it must be assumed that it is happening everywhere. A high number of victims could be seen as a positive step forwards in the journey to comprehensively tackle CSE as it means there is increased identification of young people who are at risk and can therefore have plans put in place to safeguard them. We could expect our overall number to rise which would indicate the effectiveness of staff and community awareness raising; however the number of those at highest risk should reduce which would indicate that interventions and safeguarding measures are effective.
- 2.10 Care also needs to be taken to ensure that information shared does not lead to young people or locations becoming identifiable as this could increase risk or negatively impact on-going protective actions or criminal investigations and disruptions.
- 2.11 Similarly, the home location of the perpetrator is not necessarily the location in which the offences occur. 'Hot spots' are robustly tackled; however, the nature of 'hot spots' is that they are mobile and perpetrators move location. The ethnic profile of perpetrators identified in Walsall includes all the principal ethnicities in the Walsall population.

April – June 2015

Gender / age	Risk Factor	Ethnicity
51- Female 5 - Male Age Range: 10 – 18	10 - Serious Risk 9 - Significant Risk 37 - At risk	White UK – 38 White other – 1 Black Caribbean – 1 Black African – 1 Indian – 1 Other Asian – 4 Mixed – 6 Other – 4

Based on the Office of National Statistics 2013 census data this total would indicate a rate of 0.09% of all 0-17 year olds in Walsall

- 2.12 Five secondary schools have bought The LoudMouth Theatre Company into their school to deliver a drama workshop for year 9 pupils and above. The production provides an interactive workshop, small group working and a range of teaching materials about grooming and CSE and has been well received by those schools that have chosen to use it.
- 2.13 A number of other educational materials have been produced by a range of companies and organisations. The CSE Co-ordinator is currently evaluating these and will provide an overview as part of a resource manual for schools once this has been completed.

3 Local position in respect of Female Genital Mutilation in Walsall 2015

3.1 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is not common in Walsall. It has been documented mainly in Africa and in some countries in the Middle East e.g. Yemen, Kurdish communities, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and among certain ethnic groups in Central and South America. As these communities are not represented in significant numbers in Walsall, the practice is not common.

3.2 Notwithstanding this low prevalence awareness raising and promoting awareness of the new statutory duty to all teaching staff, social workers, health workers has taken place and professionals are aware of the duty to report any verbal disclosures or visually identified cases. FGM protection orders can be applied for by the Police or Local Authority to either protect the girl or to protect other girls who may be at risk for example female siblings.

There have been two potential cases reported to children's social care in the last six months. In both the outcome was that assessment found the child not to be at risk and no further action was needed.

4 Local position in respect of Forced Marriages

4.1 Forced marriage is an issue in the West Midlands. In June 2015 Karma Nirvana, a local charity based in the West Midlands revealed that in 2014 they received 399 calls. In the year so far they report having received 213 calls. Across the West Midlands Police force there are 85 cases reported as relating to forced marriages the past 5 years.

4.2 The reported incidence of forced marriage in Walsall is not high. In the last six months there have two cases presented to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). One presented with a need but no further concerns materialised when the situation was investigated. The second led the Police to make an application for a Forced Marriage Protection Order, but it was not granted.

4.2 Awareness-raising in relation to the issue of forced marriage has taken place specifically with Designated Teachers in schools and social workers.

5 Local Position in respect of Trafficking

5.1 The prevalence of trafficking into Walsall from outside of the UK is not high. However, across the partnership there is recognition that there is an issue with internal trafficking. The Police are currently in the process of referring all Walsall's high risk CSE young people to the National Referral Mechanism. As a result 7 of the high risk cases in Walsall now have an NRM status.

Information from West Midlands Police for Walsall

NRM Status January – November 2015	National Referral Mechanism, applied and granted
Female	7 have Trafficking Status
Males	0 have been applied for

6 Training

- 6.1 WSCB has recently appointed a new Training Coordinator who is currently mapping and planning training needs in Walsall.
- 6.2 CSE training has been delivered across the partnership from March 2015. This has included Designated Teachers in schools, social work staff, youth services staff, health staff and children's workforce from the private and voluntary sector. 230 staff have attended these sessions so far with a further three sessions planned between now and March 2016.
- 6.3 Street Teams, a local voluntary sector provider, are currently delivering a project seeks to engage and work together with the BME community to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation and how to take action to identify and prevent. This project is funded for 12 months and is currently working with mosques and other community groups across Walsall.
- 6.4 Work is nearing finalisation in respect of seeking agreement to the delivery of mandatory training for all public hire and licensed taxi providers in respect of CSE. This proposal will be discussed at the forthcoming Licensing Committee.
- 6.5 With colleagues in Communities and Public Protection a bite size briefing is currently being developed. The aim of these briefings is to provide some basic awareness of safeguarding issues for a range of operational staff on the ground across Walsall, e.g. Clean and Green, park wardens etc. This will include CSE.
- 6.6 FGM Training has been delivered in March 2015 by West Midlands Police. The Home Office on line FGM eLearning package has been widely promoted.
- 6.7 A similar on line eLearning package in relation to forced marriages has also been widely promoted.
- 6.8 Training in relation to trafficking and grooming is covered through the CSE training programme.

7 Next Steps

- 7.1 Walsall Safeguarding Children Board continues to provide leadership in this area. Partners across Walsall have made significant progress to embed processes and practice that will enable children and young people who are at risk of CSE, grooming, FGM, forced marriage and trafficking to be identified and supported. Processes are also in place to identify and deal with offenders.
- 7.2 Work continues to further embed the use of the CSE Screening tool and the use of the risk assessment across all partner agencies to ensure victims and potential victims of CSE are identified and provided with support.
- 7.3 The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is now operational. Staffed by children's social workers, West Midlands police officers, education welfare officers and an early help officer it ensures that information relating to children and young people and the adults in their lives can be shared at the earliest opportunity. This will ensure that early decisions can be taken to convene the necessary strategy

meetings to safeguard children and young people who are at risk from CSE, grooming, FGM, trafficking or a forced marriage.