



Report to the Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee

Title:	Child Sexual Exploitation
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Purpose of Agenda Item

- The purpose of this report is to update Select Committee on the developments of work undertaken by Children's Social Care in relation to CSE, since the briefing provided by Maurice Emberson.
- This report will also highlight areas of work taking place in Buckinghamshire County Council, in relation to CSE and the multi-agency approach and response to this.
- This report is provided for **information** so that members can be appraised of Children's Social Care response to this critical area of work.

Background

CSE is currently a critical issue nationally for all Local Authorities and this report is to appraise members of the action that Buckinghamshire Children's Social Care are undertaking in collaboration with Partner agencies to address this concerning area of work, identifying and supporting Children and Young people who are being sexually abused and exploited.

This area of work has previously been presented to select committee for information.

Summary

It is known that not only is CSE a national issue, both in relation to historical and current concerns, but specifically there are issues arising from a recent court case looking at historical abuse in relation to two victims. Both these victims were known to Buckinghamshire County Council's Children's Social Care. CSE is not confined to an isolated historic incident.

A previous briefing to select committee set out the context of concerns in relation to Child Sexual exploitation and the intended response for addressing these concerns within Buckinghamshire.

The recommendations can be found below with comments and responses to this.

- ***That the County Council support the Police in their re-opening of the CSE investigation entitled Operation Avril and second an experienced social worker to the police team to work jointly with them.***
 - This is now an ongoing investigation being led by TVP with support from Buckinghamshire County Council and other partner agencies.
- ***The selection of a new Chair for the SERAC group at Head of Service Level from Social Care.***
 - Head of Service First Response has been appointed to cover this role.
- ***A CSE coordinator with operational experience is appointed by Children Services as soon as possible to lead on all CSE work in the County including supporting the work of the SERAC, BSCB Sub Group and advising senior officers and members.***
 - This duty is being discharged through the Swan unit.
- ***The 'Operating Protocol' that SERAC are using is taken to the Safeguarding Board to be signed off, placed on their website and re-launched.***
 - This is currently under review and is due to be completed within the next two months.
- ***At the end of each SERAC meeting, figures are reported on the number of children/young people on the SERAC list and the level of risk allocated.***
 - This is to be incorporated as part of the SERAC review

- ***A Risk scoring tool is agreed and implemented as soon as possible.***
 - This is to be incorporated as part of the SERAC review
- ***Ongoing commissioning of the Barnardos project at a cost of approximately £300,000 a year.***
 - This has been agreed.
- ***That the Chair of the CSE sub group is a member of the full BSCB to ensure good 2-way communication between sub group and Board.***
 - There has been a CSE challenge event with an action plan, but Chairs of sub-committee do not ordinarily attend the Safeguarding Board.
- ***That at least 2 Social Care Operational managers become members of this sub group and their attendance is monitored.***
 - To fully establish the links between CSE sub Committee and the co – chairs of SERAC attend this. An operational CSE Senior Social Worker also attends.
- ***Further awareness work is done with primary health care providers, particularly GPs.***
 - This is the responsibility of the Clinical Commissioning Groups
- ***Further awareness training is provided to other key groups e.g. hotels, taxi drivers, community groups, etc.***
 - Additional funding has been granted for Barnardo's to undertake this outreach work.
- ***That the Children's Scrutiny Committee receives an annual report on CSE work in Buckinghamshire starting in June 2015.***
 - Agreed this will be timetabled in.
- ***That work is undertaken to clarify the Threshold Document in Social Care as regards to the level of need for children/young people at risk or subject to CSE.***
 - This has been completed by BSCB.

- **Ensure that all risk assessments on allocated CSE cases in Social Care are up to date either as part of usual audit programme or spot check (Recommendation 1 in Jay report).**
 - To be completed.
- **Organise regular meetings between social care senior managers and Barnardos to improve joint working on CSE cases (reference to Recommendation 4 in Jay report).**
 - Head of Service First response and Chair of CSE Sub committee are undertaking this role.
- **Joint CSE team becomes operational by 1st April 2015 with location of at least 1 Social Worker in team and 1 single manager for team (Recommendations 5, 6 and 7 in Jay report).**
 - This went operational on 06.07.2015 – see more detail below (Swan Unit)
- **A clear strategy is developed and communicated regarding the over representation of Asian men in CSE cases in Buckinghamshire (Recommendation 14 in Jay report).**
 - National research is being undertaken to understand his profile and TVP are further enhancing their problem profile.
- **An update on the progress of actions from the Jay report is included in the report to the Children’s Scrutiny Committee in June 2015.**
 - This report addresses a number of the recommendations, these are being progressed through further CSE development work.

Swan unit developments

- Following on from the previous proposals made, Buckinghamshire has now moved forward on the proposals and set up a unit (Swan unit) to try to ensure that there is a robust multi –agency approach to not only consider cases in a reactive way but also to have a pro- active response to try to reduce incidences of CSE.
- Consultation has continued with partner agencies to agree the final scope for the Swan unit and these are outlined below (key issues) to inform select committee of

how this work will be taken forward to address the welfare and to assist in safeguarding children and young people who are at risk from CSE.

- It should be noted that an overarching CSE strategy is also being established, which details other areas of work which are in place to address CSE in Buckinghamshire. The work of the swan unit is incorporated in this strategy but it should be noted this is only part of what is being done to address CSE.

Resourcing for the Swan unit:

- The Swan unit is co-located at Aylesbury Police station.
- Currently one Social Worker in post (agency). 2 more have been interviewed and appointed, they are due to start in October 2015.
- The Police have appointed a Detective Sergeant and 2 intelligence officers –all in post.
- Agreement and funding for 0.5 Education post – Currently being recruited to.
- Agreement from Barnardo's "R U Safe" project to have a presence within the unit.
- Health are looking at what level of resource can be attached. (This is a significant area that still needs to be resolved).

The key functions for the Swan unit will be:

1. Victim focussed including initial engagement and assessment of children and young people.
2. Involved in the co-ordination of evidence and information gathering which will be then passed to the appropriate Police units to investigate any criminal issues. (Police in the Swan unit will not take forward the Police Investigation).
3. Following a referral to CSC (contact & MASH) casework and assessment will be undertaken by Social Workers in the Swan unit. Strategy Meeting involving partner agencies will be chaired by a CSC Manager – in line with DFE guidance. Case Management will follow usual CSC procedures.
4. Staff within the unit will be available to give consultation and advice to other Professionals. There is a national helpline for CSE which is a more appropriate public facing provision.
5. Awareness raising for other staff – but not formal training. This remains the responsibility of BSCB.

6. "R U Safe" will continue to support victims and at risk young people as they are best placed to do this. (commissioned already). Liaison with Social Workers in the Swan unit will be critical.

The ongoing development of the Swan unit is being considered through monthly multi-agency meetings which is chaired by the Children's Social Care Service Director.

Resource implications

All current work is funded through existing arrangements/budgets. Resource implications for Buckinghamshire County Council is in relation to the development of the Swan unit and this is for funding for 3 Social Workers to undertake the key areas of work previously identified in this report. This is also funded through Children's Social Care Budget and is within the current staffing assignment.

Next steps

To continue to develop the work of the Swan unit as we increase the capacity of staff. (Timescale October onwards – All agencies are responsible for this)

Further develop the preventative strategy as partner agencies increase their collaboration and awareness of the current problem/profile. (Timescale- ongoing. All agencies are responsible for this).

To finalise the CSE strategy. (Timescale –this is being presented to the BSCB in September 2015)

To review SERAC processes to ensure these are robust and that they strengthen and complement existing case work and identify gaps. (Timescale -2 months Police and CSC are responsible for leading on this)

It should be noted that all of the above, in line with procedure continues to be reported and monitored by BSCB and through the CSE sub- committee.

Issues for consideration

Following the recent outcome and experience of victims following the recent Court case, an area of concern is how these victims are supported going forward. They are both young adults now and it is critical that key agencies continue to support them at this time post trial when they remain vulnerable.

Recommendations

Propose that an updated report is submitted to select committee in 12 months -time to provide an update.