

**STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS**

**PROFORMA**

Cabinet Meeting .....12th March 2015

1. Title of Item/Report

Task and Finish Scrutiny Review of Child Sexual Exploitation

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report that presented the Task and Finish Group findings following the Scrutiny Review of Child Sexual Exploitation.

On 9 October 2014, Cabinet considered an update on CSE as part of a regular report on social care activity and performance. At that meeting Cabinet requested that a Children and Young People Select Committee Task and Finish Group be established to review how robust the Council and Multi Agency Partners' procedures were with regard to children deemed to be at risk of child sexual exploitation and that the review involved all partner agencies. Executive Scrutiny Committee agreed to add the review to the Scrutiny Work Programme and a Task and Finish Group was appointed from the Children and Young People Select Committee.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) had been identified by children's charities and highlighted in the national press as a growing problem. Furthermore the Jay report (and more recently the Casey report) into the Rotherham child sexual abuse scandal criticised the Metropolitan Borough Council for failings in the handling of abuse. This had in turn led to Local Authorities reviewing their own and partnership arrangements for identifying and dealing with the problem.

It was noted that the local media had quoted some wrong figures with regard to children at risk of CSE. The figure was not 61 children but a culminated figure of 42 during 2013/14 and a monthly average of 24.

Members noted the view from the Children and Young People Select Committee Task and Finish Group that further work was required in relation to VEMT arrangements and the need for feedback from children to assess the quality of the Council and partners response. It was requested that this be reported back to Executive Scrutiny Committee as soon as possible for the work to be prioritised urgently.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The number, membership and accountability arrangements for the VEMT groups / SLSCB be reviewed to ensure that all appropriate agencies and providers are represented, avoid unnecessary duplication and any conflicts of interest and that the outcome of the review be reported back to Children and Young People Select Committee as part of the forthcoming review of the LSCB.
2. The LSCB consider formal mechanisms for sharing information from the VEMT groups including how best to raise awareness with the wider voluntary and community sector, including the Faith Community.
3. Consideration be given to developing early support services for children at risk of CSE as part of the Early Help Strategy and Implementation Plan.
4. The Health and Wellbeing Board be asked to consider and commission appropriate prioritised services for children at risk of CSE.
5. Awareness raising activities be developed for children and young people in respect of social media and healthy relationships as well as work with parents and via schools.
6. The LSCB ensure that a multi-agency co-ordinated training strategy be developed to:
  - Map out current provision
  - Identify any gaps
  - Identify who should receive training, frequency of training and assurance mechanisms
  - Introduce mandatory safeguarding training for Elected Members (including CSE)
7. CSE should feature in regular performance reports to Cabinet and Children and Young People Select Committee as part of quarterly performance updates.
8. Information about the prevalence of CSE be included within the JSNA together with appropriate commissioning decisions and priorities.
9. Work is commissioned, accepting the challenges, to obtain feedback from children as part of further assurance work.
10. The revised VEMT Strategy and Action Plan and strengthened performance and quality assurance framework be subject to further

scrutiny together with the internal audit of CSE case files and the outcome of benchmarking work against the Ofsted thematic report recommendations as part of the scrutiny review of the LSCB.

11. The report be submitted to the LSCB for their consideration.

3. Reasons for the Decision

The report presents the findings of the scrutiny review that took place as part of the agreed work programme for 2013/14.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

N/A

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight on Friday, 20th March 2015

Proper Officer  
16 March 2015