

## IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION

- Date and Time :-** Tuesday 14 June 2022 at 10.00 a.m.
- Venue:-** Town Hall, Moorgate Street, Rotherham.
- Membership:-** Councillors Pitchley (Chair), Cooksey (Vice Chair), Andrews, Atkin, Aveyard, Bacon, Barley, Bennett-Sylvester, Z Collingham, Elliott, Griffin, Haleem, Jones, Hughes, McNeely, Mills and Thompson

This meeting will be webcast live and will be available to view [via the Council's website](#). The items which will be discussed are described on the agenda below and there are reports attached which give more details.

Rotherham Council advocates openness and transparency as part of its democratic processes. Anyone wishing to record (film or audio) the public parts of the meeting should inform the Chair or Governance Advisor of their intentions prior to the meeting.

### AGENDA

**1. Apologies for Absence**

To receive the apologies of any Member who is unable to attend the meeting.

**2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 May 2022 (Pages 3 - 10)**

To consider and approve the minutes of the previous meeting held on 3 May 2022 as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

To receive declarations of interest from Members in respect of items listed on the agenda.

**4. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any part of the agenda.

**5. Questions from Members of the Public and the Press**

To receive questions relating to items of business on the agenda from members of the public or press who are present at the meeting.

**6. Communications**

To receive communications from the Chair in respect of matters within the Commission's remit and work programme.

**7. Corporate Parenting Panel - Update**

**8. Annual Report on Child Exploitation (Pages 11 - 38)**

**9. Work Programme**

To consider and approve the Commission's Work Programme.

**10. Improving Lives Select Commission - Sub and Project Group Updates**


For the Chair/project group leads to provide an update on the activity regarding sub and project groups of the he Improving Lives Select Commission.

**11. Urgent Business**

To consider any item(s) the Chair is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.

**12. Date and time of the next meeting**

The next meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission take place on Tuesday 26 July 2022 commencing at 10am in Rotherham Town Hall.



Sharon Kemp,  
Chief Executive.

**IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION**  
**Tuesday 3 May 2022**

Present:- Councillor Pitchley (in the Chair); Councillors Cooksey, Aveyard, Bacon, Browne, Jones, Hughes, Khan, Mills and Monk.

Apologies for absence:- Apologies were received from Councillors Jones, Councillor Jenny Andrews, Barley, Z. Collingham, Elliott, Griffin, Haleem and Thompson.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-  
<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

**83. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 8 MARCH 2022**

**Resolved:** - That the Minutes of the meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission, held on 8 March 2022 be approved as a correct record of proceedings.

**84. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**85. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**Resolved:** -

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the case studies presented during agenda item 8 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 (information relating to an individual, Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

**86. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS**

There were no questions from members of the public or press.

**87. COMMUNICATIONS**

There were no communications.

**88. CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL - UPDATE**

The Chair and Vice-Chair provided an update on the activity of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

**89. SCRUTINY REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS - CULTURAL STRATEGY**

The Chair, who had chaired a spotlight review that had been carried out jointly by members of the Improving Lives and Improving Places Select Commissions on the Council's Cultural Strategy, presented the findings of the review.

**Resolved: -**

- 1) That the report be noted and the following recommendations be submitted to OSMB for consideration: -
  - a) That the range of available activities tailored for young residents of the Borough be prioritised for expansion.
  - b) That consideration be given to how best to expand access, especially for young people, to recreational swimming in the Borough, whilst protecting against hazards.
  - c) That the service liaises with CYPS to develop a system to help young carers more easily access opportunities for leisure and culture-related respite.
  - d) With a view to expanding access, that consideration be given to hosting cultural events at alternating and varied locations and venues throughout the Borough where appropriate.

**90. WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chair advised that the new Work Programme for 2022/23 would be developed with members and officers after the appointment of committee members for 2022/23 had been made at the upcoming Annual Council Meeting.

The Chair advised that due to the importance of the issue that the 2021/22 Work Programme had been extended to include the June 2022 meeting in order to enable a report to be scheduled that would provide members with the opportunity to scrutinise the Council's activity over the previous year with regard to Child Exploitation.

**91. URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no urgent items of business.

**92. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING**

**Resolved: -** That the next meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission take place on Tuesday 14 June 2022 at 10am at Rotherham Town Hall

**93. ROTHERHAM YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM. HMIP INSPECTION ACTION PLAN PROGRESS REPORT**

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services and the Service Manager - Youth Offending Team and Evidence Based Hub attended the meeting to provide a progress report on the Youth Offending Team (YOT) Inspection Action Plan that had been put into place following the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons (HMIP) inspection of the Rotherham Youth Offending Team that had taken place in September 2020. A previous progress report had been received by the Improving Lives Select Commission on 21 September 2021 (Minute No.26 2021/22). The report also provided information on the findings from the recent YJB Peer Review that had been undertaken in March 2022.

Chief Superintendent Steve Chapman, District Commander for Rotherham, two youth workers and an apprentice youth worker were also in attendance at the meeting.

The report stated that due to the impact of the pandemic that the inspection had been carried out remotely. The inspection had looked at YOT activity over the three domains of Organisational Delivery, Court Disposals and Out of Court Disposals. The Inspection report had been published on 17 December 2020 with the Overall judgement being "Requires Improvement". The inspection report had made five recommendations that were:

**The Chair of the YOT Management Board should:**

1. Make sure that Board members understand the specific needs of children known to the YOT and advocate on their behalf in their own agencies.

**The YOT Management Board should:**

2. Ensure the partnership understands the reasons for the significant number of Looked After Children known to the YOT and reviews the policies and practices of all agencies to minimise the possibility of children entering the criminal justice system unnecessarily.
3. Undertake a comprehensive health needs analysis of YOT children to better understand the health provision being delivered and what needs to be developed.
4. Review the quality and accessibility of education, training and employment provision for post-16-year-old children known to the service.

**The YOT Service Manager should:**

5. Review the quality of risk of harm work and improve the effectiveness of management oversight in all cases.

In response to the Inspection an Action Plan had been produced in January 2021 that contained 46 actions to address the areas requiring improvement that had included actions for across the partnership. The Cabinet Member advised that at the YOT Management Board meeting held on 12 January 2022 that the Board had been advised that all 46 actions had been successfully completed. The full action plan was attached as an appendix to the officer's report.

The Cabinet Member advised that following the inspection the YOT had completed a Youth Justice Peer Review in order to assist the YOT and its partners identify their strengths and to highlight areas for potential improvement in the current provision of youth justice services. The report noted that the peer review process provided an opportunity for YOT's and local authorities to gain a fresh perspective from peers alongside collaborative support in improving local youth justice services.

The Cabinet Member advised that the peer review had taken place between 29 and 31 March and had had four "key lines of enquiry" that were:

- Whether the partnership understood the needs of the YOT cohort and its role in setting the priorities for the YOT.
- The role of the partnership in relation to risk management of justice involved children.
- Looked After Children (LAC) and the disproportionate numbers of LAC in the current YOT cohort.
- Early Help partnership working and the impact that this was having locally on first time entrants to the youth justice system.

The Service Manager - Youth Offending Team and Evidence Based Hub made a presentation to the meeting that detailed the activity that had taken place as part of the peer review and its findings.

The report noted that twenty focus groups had taken place over the three days with representation from the YOT staff team as well as from YOT Management Board Members, elected members, colleagues from across the Council, Early Help, Inclusion, Education, the Virtual School, Children's Social Care, MASH, South Yorkshire Police, Voluntary and Community Sector, Housing, the Safer Rotherham Partnership (SRP), Community Safety, the Police & Crime Commissioners office, Resettlement Consortium, Young People's CHANCE Group, Probation, Remedi, EVOLVE, the Violence Reduction Unit, Outdoor Learning, the

Clinical Commissioning Group, Outreach and Engagement, Voice & Influence and SEND.

The Service Manager advised that across the four agreed key lines of enquiry, the reviewers had spoken of 'golden threads' that they felt were evident and consistent from their interactions with staff and partners. These included:

- The voice of the child and children being at the centre of decision making.
- Decision making processes placed children at the centre.
- The CHANCE (Change How Adults Notice Children's Experience) group provides genuine consideration of child involvement, providing opportunities for real child empowerment, challenge and system change.

The Service Manager advised that the review had found:

- A positive culture across the partnership that showed a clear commitment to Rotherham's children.
- Excellent engagement and commitment across the workforce
- That the management team and senior leaders were approachable and visible.
- That confidence in the staff team was evident from management and partners.
- That at both operational and strategic levels there was clear shared language and mutual respect shown between partners
- There was a culture of ensuring that children were diverted away from Court and a that there was a strong focus on engaging at the earliest opportunity.
- Clear systems were in place to support risk management.
- There was a strong commitment from all regarding achieving good outcomes for Rotherham children. This had been observed politically, strategically, and operationally.

The Service Manager advised that as a result of the peer review that a series of recommendations had been made that included:

- To develop a new vision and priorities for the Board and to mobilise the Board to help problem solve.
- Broaden the agenda of the partnership board.
- That Senior Leaders to make better use of data to drive performance across the partnership
- To develop the processes that are in place further in order to hold partners to account by agreeing actions and plans.
- To give consideration to a launch event for the Unnecessary Criminalisation Strategy.
- To develop a clear training plan for staff and partners.

The Service Manager noted that an action plan was being developed to address the recommendations that had arisen from the peer review and advised that the Youth Offending Team would be renamed the Rotherham Youth Justice Service (RYJS) in order to reflect its role more accurately.

Members asked which of the areas for development that had been highlighted by the peer review would be prioritised for action first and how performance data would be used to monitor their ongoing implementation. The Service Manager advised that how performance information and other data was used within the service was a priority area for improvement in itself as it was essential that information held by the service were effectively utilised to develop the services that were needed by the young people who the service was currently supporting. The Service Manager noted that data regarding first time entrants to the youth justice system had been used to develop processes that were able to meet the specific needs of this cohort of young people. The Service Manager advised that huge amounts of data and information was held across the partnership and assured members that this data would be used by the RYJS and its partners to develop its services further.

Members welcomed the successful completion of all the activities that had been included in the action plan that had been created in response to the inspection that had taken place in September 2020 and asked what activity was being carried out to ensure that the changes that had been made were becoming embedded in the service. The Service Manager advised that there had been a significant investment made in the provision of training across the partnership to ensure that the changes required in response to the inspection became embedded with both new and existing staff members receiving training. The Service Manager noted the unconditional bias training that had been delivered that would give the assurance that the decisions that were being taken across the partnership were the right ones. The Service Manager advised that the training plan for staff, board members and the wider partnership would be refreshed in order to ensure that it continued to provide the skills that were needed to provide the best possible service across the partnership. The Service Manager also detailed the numerous methods in which the performance of the RYJS was constantly monitored including “check and challenge” meetings where the service was required to show how it had performed.

The Chair asked what activity was being carried out across the partnership to dissuade young people from carrying knives. The Chair noted that some young people who carried knives had no intention of using them but were unaware that being caught carrying a knife was an offence that would bring them into the youth justice system. The Service Manager detailed the education and awareness activity regarding knife crime that was carried out across the partnership and stressed the importance of early intervention in this area to dissuade young people from carrying knives. Chief Superintendent Steve Chapman noted the significant amount of activity that had been carried out with schools before the pandemic as part of the Violence Reduction Strategy regarding the



laws around carrying knives and the consequences for a young person of being caught carrying a knife.

Members sought assurance that the processes were in place within the RYJS to identify areas for ongoing improvement without a formal inspection being made. The Service Manager noted the significant amount of change that had occurred not only in the RYJS but across the wider Early Help Service over recent years that had led to service developments and improvements across the service. The Service Manager also noted the constantly changing regulatory requirements with regard to youth justice that were impacting on how youth justice teams across the country were required to deliver services. The Service Manager advised that the inspection that had been carried out had only examined 10 cases across the YOT, under the small YOT inspection framework and noted that had more cases been looked at then a different conclusion may have been reached. The Service Manager acknowledged though that sometimes it needed someone to come from outside to highlight areas for improvement.

The Cabinet Member noted that during the inspection process inspectors had recognised the improvement journey that was already underway in the service and had acknowledged that had the inspection taken place six months later then the outcome would have been very different. The Cabinet Member also noted the very different type of inspection processes for youth justice services compared to those used for social care and early help and the challenges that the constantly changing inspection frameworks created for youth justice teams.

The Vice-Chair welcomed the recognition that had been made during the peer review that the “voice of the child” was not only listened to but acted upon and asked for an example of how this had worked in practice. The Service Manager advised that as a result of a young person who had left custody stating that they would have found an information booklet to assist them with the transition useful, that the service had then worked with the young person to create a booklet called “Get out, Stay out” that was now used to support all young people leaving custody.

The Chair noted the committee’s approval for the renaming of the service as the Rotherham Youth Justice Service in order to reflect its role more accurately. The Cabinet Member noted that this change had also been recommended by the Improving Lives Select Commission’s review of commissioned post-CSE support services.

At this point the meeting went into private session as it had already been resolved:

“That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the case studies presented during agenda item 8 on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1

(information relating to an individual, Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.”

Members received a presentation from the apprentice youth worker that provided information on the work of the CHANCE (Change How Adults Notice Children’s Experience) group. Members also received a presentation from the youth workers in attendance at the meeting that detailed a case study of how the service had worked with a young person who had entered the youth justice service. Members expressed their thanks to the apprentice youth worker and the youth workers for attending the meeting and for bringing to life the work of the RYJS and how it was making a positive difference to young people’s lives and how the service was listening to and working with the young people who were accessing the service to shape how services were delivered.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People’s Services, the Service Manager - Youth Offending Team and Evidence Based Hub and Chief Superintendent Steve Chapman, District Commander for Rotherham for attending the meeting and answering members questions.

**Resolved: -**

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That ongoing liaison takes place between the Youth Justice Team and the Performance team in order to ensure that the service’s qualitative performance measures are fully understood and are incorporated into the performance reporting and measurements of effectiveness for the Youth Justice Service (including the Corporate Parenting of Looked After Children who have come into contact with the Justice System).
- 3) That in recognition that the young individuals involved with the Rotherham Youth Justice Service are some of the most vulnerable residents in the Borough, that work be carried out to establish how the provision of management resources is best able to deliver the operation and maintenance an effective service that meets individual needs.
- 4) That the implementation of the positive language associated with the change of name of the Youth Offending Team to the Youth Justice Team be fully embedded across the service and wider partnership.
- 5) That a further report on the Rotherham Youth Justice Service be brought to the September 2022 meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission, with the focus of the report to be determined by the Chair and Vice-Chair in advance of the meeting.

Public Report  
Improving Lives Select Commission

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**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Improving Lives Select Commission – 14 June 2022

**Report Title**

Annual Report on Child Exploitation

**Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

No

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Suzanne Joyner, Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services

**Report Author(s)**

Laura Gough Head of Service Safeguarding Quality and Learning

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**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

This report provides a summary of key Child Exploitation activity in the borough including performance information and trends, awareness raising and safeguarding, undertaken in the year 2021 – 22.

**Recommendations**

That the activity undertaken with regards to Child Exploitation be noted.

**List of Appendices Included**

None

**Background Papers**

None

**Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

None

**Council Approval Required**

No

**Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

## Annual Report on Child Exploitation

### 1. Background

- 1.1 The National Strategy, Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy 2021 defines Child Sexual Exploitation: forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, or whether the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, and may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse.
- 1.2 Home Office Guidance defines Child Criminal Exploitation as: where an individual or group coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 to take part in criminal activities, including but not exclusively County Lines. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology
- 1.3 The National Strategy has three Objectives:
1. Tackling all forms of child sexual abuse and bringing offenders to justice
  2. Preventing offending and re-offending
  3. Protecting and safeguarding children and young people, and supporting all victims and survivors
- 1.4 Rotherham's Local Strategy, A Strategy to Tackle and Prevent Child Exploitation 2019 - 2022 was developed by the multi-agency partnership under the auspices of the Rotherham Safeguarding Children's Partnership (RSCP).

Whilst it was published after the national strategy, it follows the key objectives:

1. Safeguarding Vulnerable Children
2. Support to Victims and Survivors
3. Learning & Development
4. Child Protection and Detection of Crime

The local Strategy is driven by the Child Exploitation Delivery Group, a subgroup of the RSCP.

### 2. Key Issues

- 2.1 This report provides information on key activity in relation to Child Exploitation in the year 2021 / 22. The report demonstrates how we ensure that children, both individual and groups, that are at risk of or who are

experiencing exploitation are identified, safeguarded, and supported. There is a partnership approach to raising awareness and preventing exploitation of children and young people in Rotherham.

## 2.2 Responding to Child Exploitation (CE)

Where there are concerns about the safety of a child who is potentially at risk of CE, a referral is made to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) where screening is undertaken to identify the next steps. To make an informed decision the team share and gather information from partner agencies, children and their families and the most appropriate intervention is agreed in response to the child or young person's identified needs. This could be signposting to Early Help services and/or a more detailed assessment by a social worker is undertaken, and the young person may then be allocated to a specialist worker in the Evolve Service if identified as medium or high risk and needing level of support.

2.2.1 Rotherham is one of a small number of authorities in the country to retain a specialist multi-agency team. In any one month the Evolve service are working with approximately 91 children and young people. This can fluctuate as children are allocated to Evolve and when their cases are stepped down to a lower level of support.

2.2.2 In July 2021, the Evolve team commenced a six-month pilot to include Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) within their remit alongside Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), creating a singular Child Exploitation pathway, and utilising the expertise and knowledge within the Evolve team and applying it to Criminal Exploitation also. The pilot was able to evidence impact for children through better identification of this cohort of children, using tested methods that followed the same approach as CSE.

2.2.3 Following the success of the Pilot significant investment was provided to increase the staffing levels to translate the pilot to business as usual and meet the demands of both CSE and CCE under one pathway, Child Exploitation.

2.2.4 Children that go missing, particularly those that repeatedly go missing and children looked after can be more at risk of forms of exploitation. Throughout the year there has been a significant focus on those children, providing a robust response. Through positive work with children, residential homes, and foster carers the number of Looked After Children who go missing has significantly reduced, alongside repeat episodes, with the year ending on the lowest number of LAC children reported as missing throughout the year.

2.2.5 These decreases in missing episodes can be attributed to the extensive work undertaken by the Missing Advocates. The return home interviews are key to responding quickly to identify issues and support the young person to reduce further missing episodes. In Rotherham we ensure that all children that are reported missing are offered a return home interview within 72 hours.

2.3 The work that is undertaken in the identification and safeguarding of children and young people is supported by several child exploitation intelligence meetings. These meetings have contributed to the safeguarding of a number of children across Rotherham and continue to be an invaluable process in keeping children safe.

2.3.1 **Child Exploitation Tactical group (CETG)** is a weekly multi-agency group led by South Yorkshire Police and attended by CYPS, which brings key partners together who agree on the specific response and the next steps to the concerns and risks of Child Exploitation. The police bring on average 6-8 pieces of intelligence to each meeting for consideration and actions. Actions include police investigation, community work, child abduction orders and arrest warrants referring children to Children's Social Care – MASH.

The success of this group has recently been independently reviewed as part the Independent Review into CSE in Rotherham led by Jenny Myers and was found to be robust and good practice.

2.3.2 **Multi Agency Child Exploitation (MACE)**. In 2022 the MACE meeting replaced the RAM (Risk Assessment Management). The change brought Rotherham into line with national terminology ensuring that those in attendance at the meeting, including partners from across a regional border, understood the remit of the meeting.

2.3.3 MACE meetings are held to provide a clear and consistent identification and assessment of children at risk of child exploitation. Individual children / young people are discussed at the meeting to aid information sharing across a variety of agencies across the local area to highlight vulnerabilities, threats, and to establish and reduce risk. The meeting discuss concerns about children and young people who may be at risk from Child Exploitation, gang related crime, and human trafficking. There are 3/4 review MACE meetings held each week, and three initial MACE' meetings to consider any new child/young person.

2.3.4 **The Multi-Agency Operational Missing meeting** takes place fortnightly to identify ways to reduce the number of young people who go missing. This meeting focuses on the most regular high risk missing young people. Preventative work is undertaken with these children on 1:1 basis to safeguard, provide intervention, build a relationship, and to look at diversionary activities.

2.3.5 **Post Abuse Support, Child Sexual Exploitation commissioned services for victims and survivors.** Following a tender exercise, the Post CSE Contract was awarded to the three incumbent providers, Rotherham Rise, Grow and Rotherham Abuse Counselling Service (known as Rothacs). The contract commenced 1 January 2021 and is a three year contract with an option to extend for a further 2 years. The service is an all age service; however, this is predominantly to serve transition working as there is an internal pathway of support within the Council for under 18's.

- 2.3.6 The specification for the contract has built in a consultative referral pathway through the Trauma and Resilience Service (TRS) which is delivered through RDaSH and funded by the CCG. Using this pathway, professionals can refer cases into these services, and TRS will allocate cases to the specific service above according to available capacity and specialisms. This is designed to ensure there are no waiting lists and that expert oversight is provided in case allocation. In addition to this route, service users can self-refer direct to the providers.
- 2.3.7 The contract is now coming out of a stage of mobilisation towards “business as usual”, and officially launched on 18 May 2022 at the Whole Service Events for CYP Social Care and Early Help.
- 2.3.8 For the first time in the operation of this Service, the three providers have agreed a common set of KPIs to track throughput and activity. Joint performance meetings, with all three providers and TRS, and have taken place quarterly.
- 2.4 **Awareness Raising and Training.** In response to ongoing exploitation investigations, there has been continued awareness raising throughout the year through various sessions regarding Child Exploitation including and specifically the following examples.
- 2.4.1 **Members Session - Introduction to Child Exploitation, tackling it in Rotherham.** In January 2022, two sessions were delivered to members on Child Exploitation in Rotherham. There were 29 Councillors in attendance across both sessions. This was a positive event, Councillors were fully engaged with this important subject matter, and asked lots of questions. Presenters included representation from Children and Young People Services (CYPS), Children’s Community Safety and Rotherham South Yorkshire Police.
- 2.4.2 The sessions informed Councillors how to report concerns, the awareness raising that takes place including Spot the Signs activity, prevention including Make Safe (targeting local hotels and B&B), investigation and prosecutions, and the safeguarding pathways. The feedback was positive, that it was informative and assuring. These sessions will becoming annual refresher sessions going forward.
- 2.4.3 **Safeguarding Awareness Week (SAW),** took place the week commencing 15th November 2021. The regional launch was hosted by Barnsley Local Authority, and took place physically at Northern College, Wentworth Castle, and online.
- 2.4.4 There were 31 events available to book onto with 615 staff across Rotherham registered attending. Presentations included Child Exploitation and County Lines from SYP, Exploring the challenges of working with adults who self-neglect and/or hoard.
- 2.4.5 The presentation by Dez Holmes, Director of Research in Practice, was in keeping with a workshop delivered by the two Principal Social Workers in

Rotherham, on Transitional Safeguarding, and was pertinent to Rotherham as we deliver services across ages, including all age post CSE support, children with disabilities, and leaving care service.

- 2.4.6 **Child Exploitation Awareness Day on 18 March 2022.** Information was shared throughout the Council via the Monday Briefing and through the Chief Executives Friday Briefing. This included how staff can access and complete the mandatory e-learning modules, Safeguarding Everyone General Awareness and Keep Them Safe. Screensavers were also used on all council laptops and posters were circulated digitally to schools for display in staff areas. Councillors received a poster and Spot the Signs information cards via the Town Hall and social media posts were shared throughout the day on Community Safety and corporate RMBC channels. This was an ambitious endeavour and considered successful thanks to its reach across a large workforce.
- 2.4.7 **The Spot the Signs** campaign was refreshed for Safeguarding Awareness Week (SAW21) in November 2021. Posters were shared by South Yorkshire Police (SYP) on social media, and a poster was shared with all schools on signs to be aware of in education settings for display in staff areas. Internal information and comms were circulated within RMBC along with the Spot the Signs screensaver set on all RMBC laptops to raise awareness amongst staff. Social media posts were shared via RMBC and reached over 18,000 people, and over 400 people visiting the link provided in the posts to the RMBC Child Protection web page.
- 2.4.8 **Operation Keepsafe** is well established multi-agency targeted activity, that focus on working in particular areas to engage with young people to raise awareness of exploitation.
- 2.4.9 Between April and November 2021 Early Help and South Yorkshire Police led on 27 Keepsafe Interventions across the Borough including Rawmarsh and Rosehill Park, Wath Town Centre, Maltby and Dinnington, and engaged with 1602 young people since the start of April 2021. This has potentially impacted positively and has resulted in a decrease in the number of Keepsafe interventions. Prevention continues to be provided in the community.
- 2.4.10 **Operation Makesafe** is a joint police and local authority project that has been taking place throughout the year targeting the hospitality industry to drive the message and equip hospitality industry staff with the knowledge and skills to recognise potentially exploitative situation and take positive action. Material around 'spot the signs', was provided to local hotels to be displayed in their staff rooms, alongside a jointly produced Evolve/South Yorkshire Police video for staff to watch and asking hotel managers to sign commitments to provide ongoing staff training. In addition, several plain clothes test purchasing operations were completed to test staff knowledge, and awareness and responses. These visits were undertaken during Safeguarding Awareness Week in November 2021. Follow up visits to hotels were completed and managers were provided feedback. Where hotels 'failed' the test visit follow up visits were undertaken, and these Hotels



have already put additional measures in place including the use of a code word in one hotel to raise the alarm for other staff if they are concerned about someone at check in.

2.4.11 **Digital Safety** is a key concern regarding Child exploitation. Training has been delivered to over 60 professionals around young people sharing images online, the risks this poses and the support and information available to help address this issue. The attendees were predominantly from Children and Young People Services, and the feedback has been positive, particularly in relation to the resources and links to online information and support provided.

2.4.12 **The Evolve service** continues to raise awareness through delivering of Child Exploitation training on a quarterly basis. The training targets Secondary Heads, Post 16 education providers, social workers, residential providers. In total we have trained 150 staff. In addition to this the team have attended team meetings, and a variety of schools to raise awareness.

2.4.13 Following each of these sessions there is an increase in professionals contacting for advice and support.

## 2.5 **REMEDI Victim Engagement Project**

In 2021, 94 recorded crimes with the CSE keyword attached from 2020 were viewed by SYP to identify any themes or trends to better understand why cases didn't progress to conviction and if any different action could have been undertaken. This concluded in September 2021 and identified that crimes had been well investigated and that safeguarding had been put in place where identified.

Following on from this work SRP commissioned REMEDI to undertake consultation with a small number of survivors from the original 94 recorded crimes. The cases were filtered to remove any cases that would not be appropriate for involvement in the consultation.

Consultation was undertaken in February and March this year and the final report with findings presented to SRP in June 2022. The findings will be included in the Child Exploitation Action plan, and updates reported into the SRP and form part of wider learning opportunities.

2.6 The National and Local Strategy provides a framework which the Child Exploitation Delivery Group uses as the foundation for activity for The Council and its partners to work closely and collaboratively at strategic, tactical, and operational levels. It provides a variety of processes for tackling CE including having clear, seamless processes and reporting mechanisms and information sharing between partners, and a robust response to safeguard children where concerns are referred in.

There is an abundance of awareness raising and training provided, including Safeguarding Awareness Week, Child Exploitation Day, and a

variety of awareness raising initiatives and prevention activities taking place in the wider community to educate and raise awareness about CE.

We commission services to provide post-CSE support, taking an innovative approach to ensure no waiting lists and survivors receive the right support for them.

And we are committed to continual learning with our partners including engaging with survivors, hearing their voice and learning from their experiences.

All these systems together ensure that we have a robust response to Child exploitation across the system.

## 2.7 Glossary

|   |      |
|---|------|
| Child Exploitation                          | CE   |
| Child Sexual Exploitation                   | CSE  |
| Child Criminal Exploitation                 | CCE  |
| Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership | RSCP |
| Safeguarding Rotherham Partnership          | SRP  |
| Child Exploitation Delivery Group           | CEDG |
| Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub               | MASH |
| Early Help                                  | EH   |
| Looked After Children                       | LAC  |
| Child Exploitation Tactical Group           | CETG |
| Multi Agency Child Exploitation             | MACE |
| Trauma and Resilience                       | TRS  |
| Children and Young Peoples Services         | CYPS |
| Safeguarding Awareness Week                 | SAW  |

## 3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 This report is for information and to provide feedback on the progress made to date on the Inspection Action Plan

## 4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 There are no specific proposals as the report is for information purposes.

## 5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 There are no specific Timetables as the report is for information purposes.

**6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications**

6.1 There are no specific Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications as the report is for information purposes.

**7. Legal Advice and Implications**

7.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report

**8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

8.1 There are no HR implications arising from this report.

**9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

9.1 This report details the activities undertaken with regards to identification and safeguarding of children and young people from child exploitation 2021 / 22. It details our ongoing responses and commitments to providing a robust system within the council and in working in partnership with organisations from the statutory, Health, Education, Police, and voluntary sectors to keeping children safe.

**10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications**

10.1 There are no Equalities and Human Rights implications arising from this report.

**11. Implications for CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions and Climate Change**

11.1 There are no implications in relation to emissions or climate change arising from this report.

**12. Implications for Partners**

12.1 Working together 2018, the National and Local Strategy places statutory responsibility on organisations to work together to keep children safe. Whilst this report identifies activities undertaken by the Council, we are committed to working together

**13. Risks and Mitigation**

13.1 Any deterioration in the commitment to the strategy both internally and the wider partnership including the delivery group, could lead to a deterioration on the robust arrangements for keeping children at risk of CE safe,

**Accountable Officer(s)**

Laura Gough Head of Service Safeguarding Quality and Learning

Approvals obtained on behalf of:

|  | <b>Name</b>  | <b>Date</b> |
|--|--|-------------|
| The Strategic Director with responsibility for this report | Nathan Heath (In absence of Suzanne Joyner)                        | 31/05/22    |
| Consultation undertaken with the relevant Cabinet Member   | Cabinet Member for Children and Young People - Councillor Cusworth | 31/05/22    |

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This report is published on the Council's [website](#).

# Child Exploitation Annual Report

April 2021 - March 2022



## Overview

Summary of activity undertaken to keep  
Children and Young People safe from  
exploitation

## Definition

- ❖ The 2021 National Strategy – ***Tackling Child Sexual Abuse*** – defines Child Sexual Exploitation: forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, or whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, and may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse
- ❖ Home Office Guidance defines Child Criminal Exploitation as: where an individual or group coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 to take part in criminal activities, including but not exclusively County Lines. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Child Criminal Exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology

# National Strategy – Tackling Child Sexual Abuse

The National strategy was published on 22nd January 2021 It has three key objectives:

1. Tackle all forms of Child Sexual Abuse and bringing Offenders to Justice
2. Preventing Offending and Re-offending
3. Protecting and Safeguarding Children and Young People and Supporting All Victims and Survivors



# Rotherham's Child Exploitation Strategy 2019/2022

- Commissioned by the CEDG (Child Exploitation Delivery Group), which sits with the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership but also feeds into the Safer Rotherham Partnership (SRP)
- Published in 2019 by the Rotherham Safeguarding Children's Partnership, Safer Rotherham Partnership, and Safer Rotherham Adults Partnership. Due for renewal 2023
- Follows the National Objectives

# Responding to Child Exploitation

- Referrals to Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)  
Where there are concerns about the safety of a child potentially at risk of CE, a referral is made to the MASH where screening is undertaken to identify next steps.
- Specialist Multi-Agency team EVOLVE  
We remain one of a small number of authorities in the country to retain a specialist multi-agency team
- Direct work with Children and Young people
  - Allocation - Evolve are working with an average of 90 children
  - Assessment - In 2021/2022 there were 470 risk assessments completed for 213 individual children and young people

# Intelligence Meetings

- **Child Exploitation Tactical group (CETG)**, a weekly meeting chaired by the police and attended by CYPS, and where intelligence is shared to provide a multi-agency response and next steps
- **Multi Agency Child Exploitation (MACE)**. MACE meetings are held to respond to and discuss identified Children and young people at high risk of CE
- **The multi-agency operational Missing** meeting takes place fortnightly to identify ways to reduce the number of young people who go missing, focusing on those children considered high risk with repeated missing episodes

# Post Abuse Support Commissioned Services for victims and survivors

- Three providers, Rotherham Rise, Grow and Rotherham Abuse Counselling Service (known as Rothacs), commissioned to provide post abuse services to victims and survivors
- The three providers have agreed a common set of KPIs to track throughput and activity. Joint performance meetings, with all 3 providers and the council take place quarterly.
- Using the Trauma and Resilience Service pathway professionals can refer individuals into these services, and TRS will allocate cases to the specific service above according to available capacity and specialisms.

# Awareness Raising and Training

- **Members Session** - Introduction to Child Exploitation, tackling it in Rotherham. Presenters included representation from Children and Young People Services (CYPS), Children's Community Safety and Rotherham South Yorkshire Police. There were 29 Cllrs in attendance across both sessions. This was a positive event, Cllrs were engaged, and asked lots of questions.
- **Safeguarding Awareness Week (SAW)**, There were 31 events available to book onto with 615 staff across Rotherham registered attending. Presentations included Child Exploitation and County Lines from SYP, Exploring the challenges of working with adults who self-neglect and/or hoard from Susan Benbow – SAR author, and Transitional Safeguarding: from rhetoric to reality' presented by Dez Holmes – RIPFA.

# Awareness Raising and Training

- Child Exploitation Awareness Day on 18th March. Information was shared throughout the Council, via the Monday Briefing and through the Chief Executives Friday Briefing. Screensavers were used on all council laptops and posters were circulated digitally to schools for display in staff areas. Social media posts were shared throughout the day on Community Safety and corporate RMBC channels

# The Safer Rotherham Partnership (SRP)

- Preventing CSE is a priority for the Safer Rotherham Partnership under Protecting Vulnerable Children, quarterly reports are presented to the SRP to provide oversight and address any concerns
- The objective under this priority is:  
Monitor and drive an increase in intelligence reports and referrals through training and awareness raising with partners and the public

Through this SRP have led on a number of initiatives



# Spot the Signs

- Awareness raising Campaign launched in February 2021 on social media, through SYP alerts and via a press release
- This is a wide reaching initiative that has included posters and cards with Spot the Signs message, screensavers included on all RMBC laptops awareness raising in schools and various organisations, and a targeted approach in Safeguarding awareness week that reached over 18,000 people, and saw the weblink hit over 400 times in that week alone





# Operation Keepsake

- A multi-agency initiative, led by Early Help and South Yorkshire Police, enabling a direct response to safeguard children and young people in communities. Between April 2021 and March 2022 over 1602 children and young people were engaged with in the community, including activity for young people using street based, outreach and centre based group sessions

# Operation Makesafe

- An initiative that takes place throughout the year to raise awareness and equip hospitality industry staff with the knowledge and skills to recognise potentially exploitative situation and take positive action. This includes posters shared with Hotels for display in staff rooms on signs to be aware of.
- Assurance visits were made to Hotels during Safeguarding Awareness Week, highlighted gaps in training, and support guidance provided in feedback

# Training and Support Provided by Evolve

Each Social Care team and Early Help team have an identified CE Champion who attends bimonthly meetings with Evolve so any relevant information can be shared across the services and to provide a discussion forum for any exploitation related issues

Training is provided on a quarterly basis to professionals from social care, Early Help Schools, with 150 in attendance, and resulting in increases in advice sort and provided after each session

Evolve have delivered training to the post 16 education providers in Rotherham and to the Head teachers of the Secondary Schools in Rotherham

# Training Provided by Evolve

Evolve have completed a University lecture with Social Work students at Sheffield Hallam University

One day Child Exploitation and Contextual Safeguarding training is provided Every other month, through the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership

Additional training has been provided at the request of partner agencies for example in secondary schools and colleges.

## Victim/Survivor Engagement Project

In 2021 94 recorded crimes with the CSE keyword and where no conviction was achieved were viewed by SYP. This activity provided assurances in terms of the investigation. It also highlighted there was little understanding of how victims / survivors experienced the investigation

REMEDI were commissioned to undertake a consultation with a small group of survivors / victims, and of the those contacted 8 agreed to take part

Consultation was undertaken in February and March this year. This was a positive activity with general themes include:

# A Robust System for Identification Prevention Safeguarding and Post Abuse Support

Rotherham has a robust system for safeguarding children and young people at risk of exploitation

- Driven by the National and Local Strategy steering the Child Exploitation Delivery Group action plan
- Robust systems in place to respond to Child Exploitation Concerns for individual children and groups
- Intelligence sharing, operational and tactical meetings for managing risk to specific children groups and communities
- Evidence of impact, a reduction in missing and repeated missing high risk children, and children stepping down from high risk to medium the low
- Awareness raising and training
- Post abuse support
- Seeking out and listening to the voices of survivors to inform practice



