

**IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION
16th December, 2015**

Present:- Councillor Hamilton (in the Chair); Councillors Ahmed, Astbury, Beaumont, Elliot, Hague, Hoddinott, Jepson, Reeder, Rose, Taylor and M. Vines. Co-opted Members Ms. J. Jones and Mr. M. Smith were also in attendance.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cutts, Jones and Pitchley.

30. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Ms. J. Jones, Co-opted Member representing the Voluntary Sector Consortium, declared a pecuniary interest due to her substantive employment with Giving Real Opportunities to Women (GROW) representing a 'beneficial interest'. This was in relation to items 9 (Rotherham Child Sexual Exploitation Needs Analysis) and 11 (Overview of progress to date of the Child Sexual Exploitation Delivery Plan 2015-2018 in the specific areas of Voice and Influence Impact and work undertaken in schools in Rotherham). GROW had been contracted to deliver support services to victims and survivors of CSE and their family members.

Joanna left the meeting room when these items were being considered and did not take any part in their discussion.

31. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS.

There were no members of the public or the press in attendance.

32. COMMUNICATIONS.

Nothing was raised under this item.

33. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 4TH NOVEMBER, 2015.

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission held on 4th November, 2015, were considered.

Councillor Hoddinott requested a progress update in relation to Minute number 25 (Minutes of the previous meeting held on 23rd September, 2015). She had been requesting the details of the Child Sexual Exploitation Scorecard since July, 2015.

Gary Ridgeway responded on behalf of the Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board (?). He acknowledged that the scorecard had been outstanding for some time and apologised for this. Finalising and circulating the CSE Scorecard had been difficult because the picture

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kept on developing, leading to the Scorecard becoming out of date. It would be circulated as it currently stood.

Councillor Hoddinott, under the same Minute from the previous meeting, asked for an explanation of Regulation 44 reports and where they had been reported to. She had first asked this question at the September meeting.

Jean Imray explained the statutory nature of the Regulation 44 reports. It was a requirement that an independent person undertake the reports and they be signed off by the Service Director. It had become clear that the reports had not been good enough, as the Ofsted judgements following inspections at the Residential Homes would not have been such a surprise. Had the reports picked-up on the matters they would have been corrected immediately. The reports needed to be undertaken with rigour and detail and the quality of future reports would be a central focus.

Councillor Hamilton, Chair of the Improving Lives Select Commission, requested that a spotlight review be undertaken in six-months' time on how the Regulation 44 visits were progressing, along with looking at the content and quality of reports and how the Local Authority was responding to them.

Councillor Hoddinott confirmed that herself and Councillor Ahmed had received communications about their new position as audit lead Member to the Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board, as agreed at the previous meeting. She asked the officers present for an update on the audit process.

Councillor Ahmed, substitute lead Member, noted that the terms of reference for the audit process had been distributed. She had comments to add into this as part of the two-way process. She required clarity on how the outcomes and lessons learned from previous audits had been taken on board.

Resolved: - (1) That the minutes from the previous meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission be agreed as an accurate record.

(2) That a future spotlight review consider the process and effectiveness of Regulation 44 reports.

34. IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION'S SCRUTINY REVIEW OF DOMESTIC ABUSE.

Councillor Hamilton, chair of the Improving Lives Select Commission, welcomed Jan Bean, Safeguarding Adults and Domestic Abuse Manager, and Phil Liversidge, South Yorkshire Police, to the meeting. The Scrutiny Review had been considered at the meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission held on 23rd September, 2015 (Minute number 20).

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Further information had been submitted, including the action plan relating to the progress against the recommendations as at September, 2015. The Service's storyboard had been included. It noted: -

- Consistent representation by a sufficiently senior childrens' social care manager who would share and disseminate information appropriately;
- The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) had gone live on 1st April, 2015, and it undertook 24-hour decision making;
- A concern of the Rotherham Local Safeguarding Board that South Yorkshire Police were referring a high number of cases inappropriately. A new inbox had been created for 'blue' low-level contact;
- An agreement had been reached between Children's Social Care and South Yorkshire Police that this information would be retained on children's files;
- Threshold descriptors had been updated, merged into a single document and were being implemented;
- Strengthening Families training had been rolled out;
- Practice audits had found that decision making was largely sound;
- Performance management was a daily, weekly and monthly factor and managers had a real-time performance dashboard;
- Issues for further improvement included timeliness of referral to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference;
- Further review was required on ensuring that national risk assessment models were jointly referred to by the police and the MASH;
- The effectiveness and attendance at the MARAC needed to be reviewed and addressed.

Jan and Phil reported that the Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVA) received and reviewed new referrals each morning along with the police and social workers.

Phil explained the previous figures quoted that stated there had been a 75% reduction in domestic abuse. Phil had spoken to the officers involved with submitting the information. They had confirmed that twelve high risk disputes had been identified and work had been undertaken to engage with the parties, including substance misuse support. Overall, of the twelve couples, there had been a 75% reduction in disruptions. The scheme had been repeated and a similar reduction had been found again.

Councillor Hamilton requested that a follow-up report be considered by the Improving Lives Select Commission in six-months' time in relation to this programme.

Discussion followed and the following issues were raised: -

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Councillor Hoddinott referred to the HMIC report into Domestic Violence and felt that there was real cause for concern around Police's handling of domestic abuse cases. It would be important to look at how the force was responding to contacts.

Councillor Hamilton asked how cases involving children were recorded? - Jan Bean described the process that her Service followed to ensure that children were appropriately followed-up.

Mr. M. Smith noted that the four workers was less than the recommended level. How was the Service coping with demand? – Jan spoke about how the scrutiny review recommendation on the staffing establishment had helped. There were more workers on permanent contracts, meaning that retaining high quality staff on stable contracts boosted the service. Prior to the scrutiny review staff had been on one-year rolling contracts; now staff were permanent employees. Prevention of domestic abuse was a priority for the Council.

Councillor Ahmed asked about the ways in which the Service analysed cases to ensure that delivery was relevant – were significant factors / triggers analysed? What links did the Service have with CAHMS and Adult Services? - Jan explained that the service was constantly evolving due to the nature of issues that it responded to. Recently it had completed work on so-called 'honour-based' violence. She explained that RDASH and CAHMS representatives attended, along with sections of Childrens' and Adults' Services.

Councillor M. Vines asked about the review of the e-learning on Domestic Abuse and if it included other agencies? – Jan explained that the aim of the training module, which was available for all staff, was to get them to be comfortable with identifying domestic violence in a safe way. The protocol with health would be signed-off in the new year.

Councillor Hamilton welcomed the progress that had been made and asked the Improving Lives Select Commission to agree that the Review be signed off. She requested an update on the working of the MARAC in six-months' time, to be considered alongside the HMIC report.

Resolved: - (1) That the Improving Lives Select Commission's Review of Domestic Abuse be signed-off.

(2) That a follow-up report on the MARAC's progress over the next six-months' be considered alongside the HMIC's report at a future meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission.

35. ROTHERHAM CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION NEEDS ANALYSIS.

Councillor Hamilton welcomed Jo Abbott, Consultant in Public Health, and Gary Ridgeway, Assistant Director (CSE Investigations), to the meeting to present the following reports: -

- Rotherham Child Sexual Exploitation Needs Analysis – CSE joint intelligence working group LSCB CSE sub-group (December, 2015);
- Needs Analysis Report following the Sexual Exploitation of Children in Rotherham – University of Salford Manchester (Final report, October, 2015).

Jo presented the reports: -

- She apologised for the delay in submitting the Needs Analysis to the Improving Lives Select Commission. It was the first attempt at producing a Needs Analysis and there was little to draw on nationally and Rotherham had been contacted by others for guidance;
- All figures were provided with a “Health Warning” as they were a snap shot in time (about one year ago) from various agencies. The figures provided a good proxy of services that were required;
- The CSE Needs Analysis had informed the commissioning of appropriate services for victims and survivors. It was not merely a paper exercise;
- As services were established, along with data recording systems, it was anticipated that data would be “firmed up” to assist in future needs analysis.

Key issues that had been found so far: -

- Lack of knowledge about age of consent;
- Gender inequality (girls classed a slags, whilst men receive credibility);
- Sexual violence viewed as “normal” and “inevitable” leading to a lack of reporting and disclosure;
- Health impacts – psychological trauma, self-harm and suicide;
- Many victims of undisclosed abuse were receiving support in mental health, drugs and alcohol, domestic violence and criminal justice system. Services may respond to presenting issues but be less effective in addressing the underlying trauma. Jo Abbott had been having discussion with Psychotherapists at RDASH to address this. She has been working closely with other agencies on

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case based discussion and help to navigate to appropriate services and offer support;

- Support for survivors – Pyramid effect with a broad base and more specialist services at the top. Self-help was at the bottom of pyramid and support going through the court process, counselling and specialist mental health services were at the top;
- All the recommendations have been picked up in the CSE Action Plan.

Jo presented the information within the report undertaken by Salford University. This report was commissioned to hear the voices of victims and their families following being accused in reports of not listening and not being transparent. This has partly led to a lack of trust. The voices of victims and their families hold the key to what is happening and how to address it.

The Salford report: -

- Independent report carried out by the University of Salford;
- The objectives were to: -
 - Gain understanding and insight into the views of victims, survivors and their families affected by CSE from all sections of the population;
 - To better understand the scale and nature of CSE as it affects the diversity of minority groups with particular emphasis on Roma and Asian communities.
- Views were collected via focus group and online questionnaires. Participants did not shy away from explaining the difficulties they faced and issues of trust as past mistakes created a sense of vulnerability;
- There was evidence that healing was starting to take place amid determination to meet current and future needs with a sense of collective rigour;
- One quote: - “I don’t want to survive, I want to thrive”.

Questions and comments followed, and the following matters were covered: -

Councillor Ahmed asked why health referrals were so low and whether there were barriers to them reporting. - Jo explained that awareness raising was leading to increased reporting. Health staff were being given designated protected learning time.

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Councillor Hamilton asked why high levels of chlamydia were being reported but there were low referrals from health partners? - Jo explained about the Sexual Health Strategy Group and the flag system that was in place to ensure that referrals were made following appropriate contacts, including following requests for emergency hormonal contraception.

Councillor Hoddinott asked what agencies had learnt from the reports. What was the feedback from victims and survivors on the reports? - Jo explained that the University of Salford was providing feedback to the victims and survivors who had contributed.

Gary explained how the reports had shown him how important the third sector was in meeting victims' needs.

Kay Denton-Tarn, Healthy Schools Consultant, explained that the issue of consent was part of national PSHE materials for secondary schools. It was also important that age-related appropriate information was shared throughout the school day; it should not just be confined to PSHE lessons. Equal choices, chances and expectations needed to be in place and their absence challenged.

Councillor Hoddinott asked whether early intervention or targeted support could be provided to groups showing concerning attitudes? - Kay explained that this would be done separately on a case-by-case basis depending on the issues involved. Professional judgement would be important and school and family engagement was crucial.

Jean Imray referred to children's access to violent and sexually violent computer games was a concern of hers, along with wider issues of community cohesion and separation.

Councillor M. Vines asked how agencies were working with ethnic minority communities - There was some mistrust within ethnic minority groups. Third sector agencies needed to be made more accessible.

Councillor Rose asked what support was available for wider families of victims and survivors and the support and guardianship available for children born as a result of CSE? - Jo Smith explained about the counselling that was available, and how this often enabled victims to disclose other incidents which resulted in other agencies needing to become involved.

Councillor Ahmed asked about participation in the focus groups. Was this positive? Did ethnic minority groups participate in the questionnaires? - Jo Smith explained how fragile participation was. Support needed to be provided individually in order to not jeopardise justice processes.

Councillor Hoddinott was concerned that perpetrator groups had not been engaged with. She also asked how Mosque groups were being engaged with in the programme of CSE awareness raising? - Gary Ridgeway agreed and this had been recognised as an issue. He saw their involvement as being key to vocalising condemnation of CSE. Expertise was being shared across organisations and key workers were involved.

Councillor Hamilton asked what the biggest challenges were to delivering the recommendations of the report? - Gary Ridgeway's concern was the need for professionals to work across boundaries to achieve all the aims of victim support and bringing perpetrators to justice. This would involve moving from a narrow agenda and a cultural shift. Jean Imray required reassurance about resources. The Council was receptive to responding to demand but large scale and significant investigations were happening all of the time that had impacts on resources.

Resolved: - (1) That the covering report and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and University of Salford reports be noted.

(2) That further updates be provided to the Improving Lives Select Commission in relation to progress against these reports.

(3) That the researchers from the University of Salford be invited to attend a future meeting of this Commission to discuss their report.

36. UPDATE ON MULTI-AGENCY REFERRAL PANEL.

Consideration was given to the report presented by Gary Ridgeway (Assistant Director (CSE Investigations)) that outlined the CSE multi-Agency Risk Management Panel (MARF).

The MARF was a monthly multi-agency group with a range of managers present with sufficient authority to make decisions in respect of their service and, if necessary, act outside traditional or accepted practice. The chair was the Superintendent Deputy District Policing Commander, the deputy chair and staff officer function was provided by an interim Assistant Director from the Council, and business support was also provided by RMBC. MARF considers potential victims, perpetrators, locations and it has a small strategic role regarding issues that may influence effective CSE service delivery.

MARF seeks to improve outcomes for young people believed to be at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) by discussing difficult cases with the allocated social worker and initiating appropriate supportive activity. The MARF was not a review process of professional practice or a means of escalation where professionals did not agree. Although by its very nature MARF sometimes strays into these areas of practice, members were increasingly proficient at staying focused on adding value rather than review and critique.

At the time of the meeting there had been seven MARP meetings and two extra-ordinary meetings. Social Workers saw the panel as a helpful and constructive resource. The MARP had considered 24 high risk victims and had strong engagement with the third sector. There were also strong links with the Licensing Service.

Councillor M. Vines asked what sort of work had been carried out at the four locations considered by MARP? - Gary described the involvement of agencies and local authority officers, including the BME Engagement Officer, workers from the EVOLVE team, licensing and regulation teams, and education professionals.

Councillor Hoddinott asked whether the MARP would be involved in taxi licensing issues. - Gary felt that this could lead to duplication of commissioner work and the lead for liaison lay with the CSE sub-group. However, the MARP was communicating with licensing on actions to be taken forward.

Councillor Ahmed asked if there were any partners who were signed-up but not participating? - Gary outlined how the experience had been that there was a need for an 18+ MARP with Adult Social Care.

Councillor Ahmed asked about Make Safe. - Gary outlined the work that had taken place with hotels and food outlets.

Councillor Hamilton asked how the MARP recorded their successes and how case recording was undertaken? – Each case was minuted and this information was circulated to each agency involved.

Resolved: - That the developments in respect of the Multi-Agency Referral Panel be noted.

37. OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS TO DATE OF THE CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION DELIVERY PLAN 2015 - 2018 IN THE SPECIFIC AREAS OF VOICE AND INFLUENCE IMPACT AND WORK UNDERTAKEN IN SCHOOLS IN ROTHERHAM.

Kay Denton-Tarn, Healthy Schools Consultant, and Jo Smith, CSE Support Services Co-ordinator, had submitted a report that provided an update on Voice and Influence Work and work undertaken in Rotherham's schools in response to CSE.

The update outlined the activities taking place across a number of activity streams: -

- CSE Delivery Plan, 2015-2018;
- Voice and Influence;
- Rotherham Abuse Counselling Service (RACS) and Pit Stop for Men;
- Giving Real Opportunities to Women;

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- Rotherham Women's Refuse (RISE) – Project Survive;
- Swinton Lock;
- NSPCC Helpline;
- Barnardo's;
- Work undertaken in schools;
- Primary children childline/NSPCC school inputs;
- Keeping safe on-line;
- Anti-bullying work;
- Puberty Education Services;
- Theatre Education on CSE;
- KS3 Chelsea's Choice – all secondary and special schools and Pupil Referral Units in the Borough had signed-up to performances;
- KS4 Working for Marcus – all but three schools had signed-up to a performance;
- Drugs Lifestory project.

Councillor M. Vines asked about take-up and funding of the theatre presentations in schools. - Kay explained that funding within primary schools was more difficult. Barnardo's funding had provided 8-12 workers to introduce CSE in an age-appropriate way.

Councillor Hoddinott asked what outcome monitoring had taken place? - Kay explained that this had been via CCG and Public Health funding.

Councillor Hamilton asked how on-line grooming and bullying was addressed by schools as there was often a link to peers within schools. - Jo outlined the Barnardo sessions presented in schools and drop-in sessions that were available. Kay explained that there was an anti-bullying officer who provided support on conflict resolution, awareness raising about on-line CSE. Rotherham's City Learning Centres offered E-safety support. Schools also had strict in-house policies on technology.

Councillor Hamilton explained how damaging bullying could be to self-esteem. She wanted to see more on-line resources offering Rotherham's youngsters support on these issues. She asked how the available information would be consistently kept up to date and whether innovative methods were being explored. - Kay described how the CCG funding had been used to quickly provide impactful resources. At risk/ vulnerable young people and their families had been invited to two evening performances. Barnardo's provision was joining-up with the Needs Analysis.

Councillor Hamilton asked whether survivors had seen any of the performances and provided feedback on it? - Gary explained that 'Chelsea's Choice' had been researched nationally with survivors.

Resolved: - That the report on voice and influence work and work undertaken in Rotherham's schools be noted.

38. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING: -

Resolved: - That the next meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission take place on Wednesday 3rd February, 2016, to start at 1.30 p.m. in the Rotherham Town Hall.