

Public Report
Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 27 May 2022

Report Title

Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership – CSE Review Final Report

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

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Jo Brown, Assistant Chief Executive

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

At the meeting held on 10 November 2021, Council considered a motion regarding *Ongoing Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham*. It resolved to ask that the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership considers the issues detailed in the motion and reports back to councillors on any changes, amendments to its Strategy to Tackle and Prevent Child Exploitation or additional activities that may be appropriate.

The report of the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership outlining its findings and suggested recommendations is attached as Appendix 1.

Recommendations

1. That the report of the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership be noted.
2. That Overview and Scrutiny Management Board determines its response to the recommendations outlined in the report and forward these to the appropriate bodies for consideration.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 - Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership - CSE Review Final Report
- Appendix 2 Motion – Ongoing Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham (as agreed by Council on November 10, 2021)

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

Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership - CSE Review Final Report

1. Background

- 1.1 Following a motion to the Council meeting held on 10 November 2021, *Ongoing Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham* it was resolved to ask that the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership (RSCP) considers the issues outlined in the motion on any changes, amendments to its Strategy to Tackle and Prevent Child Exploitation or additional activities that may be appropriate.
- 1.2 Chief Officers from RMBC, South Yorkshire Police and Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) commissioned the RSCP to undertake an independent review to examine the concerns raised in an objective and transparent way.
- 1.3 The RSCP's review team appointed to conduct the review were selected based on their extensive experience in child safeguarding across the voluntary and statutory sectors, public protection and social work practice. The review team are as follows:
 - **Jenny Myers – Independent Chair of RSCP.** Ms Myers is a lead reviewer for the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and has held the role of independent chair for RSCP since October 2019. She is a former independent chair of other safeguarding partnerships and led high-profile case reviews including around CSE.
 - **Matt Thompson – Police and Justice Lead.** Mr Thompson is a former Head of Public Protection for Derbyshire Police. He is currently Head of Direct Delivery of a UK charitable network who disseminate information, best practice and learning across voluntary and statutory services to inform, educate and prevent child exploitation and abuse.
 - **Jenny Coles – Independent Consultant.** Ms Coles is a registered social worker and is a former Strategic Director of Children. She was president of Association of Directors of Children Services. She is currently chair of the board of Trustees for What Works for Children's Social Care and a member of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 The RSCP report is attached as Appendix 1. There are two stages to the report:
 - Stage 1 - addressing the specific concerns raised by Rotherham Council's Conservative Group in their briefing paper; and
 - Stage 2- ensuring that the individual points raised by the Council motion are addressed, namely:

- the multi-disciplinary approach to CSE in Rotherham, including a clear Child Exploitation (CE) strategy and senior management oversight and accountability;
- the police and local authority's mechanisms for preventing and protecting children from exploitation;
- the strategy for multi-agency training for front line staff;
- RMBC's and SYP's work on CSE to ensure that it is properly scrutinised through the appropriate committees of elected members, and that the scrutiny was robust.

2.2 In respect of Stage 1 of the report, the review team concludes that the concerns raised by Councillors in their briefing paper have been taken seriously, acted upon and dealt with appropriately. It is assured that the response of the Rotherham Division of South Yorkshire Police (SYP) and the Local Authority, regarding child sexual exploitation is effective and robust and that the specific allegations in the briefing paper are unfounded.

2.3 With regards to Stage 2 of the report, the review team further concludes that Rotherham has developed strong leadership, accountability and locally developed multi-agency relationships which takes a robust approach to tackling criminal exploitation, of which CSE is a part.

The review finds that the strategies and plans to tackle exploitation demonstrates a wide understanding of risk to children and reflects extensive partner agency relationships.

Each of the Council motion points appropriate to the RSCP has been addressed and explored.

2.4 Section 8 of the independent review identifies areas for improvement and learning. These are outlined in several suggested recommendations which cover the following areas:

- Induction and training of councillors
- Scrutiny
- Re-building trust and confidence
- Survivors
- Public awareness raising
- Keeping children and young people safe
- CE/CSE Strategy Review.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

3.1 Members of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board are invited to consider the information herein; scrutinise the findings of the independent review and determine its recommendations in response to the issues raised.

Members of Improving Lives Select Commission have been invited to attend for consideration of this issue.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 All papers supporting this item are published on the Council's website.

4.2 There is no consultation required in respect of this item.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 Any recommendations arising from this item would be forwarded to the relevant bodies for consideration and response.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this item. Any recommendations which may have financial or procurement implications will be forwarded to the relevant agency for consideration and response.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this item. Any recommendations which may have legal implications will be forwarded to the relevant agency for consideration and response.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no human resource implications.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 Any recommendations emerging from this item which have implications for children and young people and vulnerable adults will be forwarded to the relevant agency for consideration and response.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 Any recommendations emerging from this item which have direct equalities and human rights implications will be forwarded to the relevant agency for consideration and response.

11. Implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 There are no implications for CO₂ Emissions and Climate Change.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 Any recommendations emerging from this item which have implications for key partners will be forwarded to the relevant agency for consideration and response.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 Should this meeting not take place, opportunities to scrutinise areas of learning and improvement may be missed.

Accountable Officer(s)

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Emma Hill, Head of Democratic Services

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