

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO HWBB

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| 1. | Meeting: | Health and Wellbeing Board |
| 2. | Date: | 24th October 2014 |
| 3. | Title: | Child Sexual Exploitation – Support for Victims |
| 4. | Directorate: | Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board |

5. Summary

Support to victims, both current and historical, of Child Sexual Exploitation and other forms of sexual abuse and violence is an agreed priority area for investment in the borough. The RLSCB CSE Review Report (December 2013) and the Professor Jay Report (August 2014) have both highlighted the need for an improved response to the post-abuse needs of children and young people in Rotherham, which includes development of existing services and also commissioning of new provision.

The needs of victims are varied, complicated and manifest differently. There is already a range of support and counselling services available across the borough for both child and adult victims of sexual abuse and violence but the current picture within Rotherham is not clear with regard to the needs, availability, flexibility and accessibility of therapeutic services for children and young people who have been or are at risk of sexual exploitation. A comprehensive needs assessment is required, informing the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and subsequently the local commissioning plan for post abuse support services.

6. Recommendations

The Health and Wellbeing Board receive this report and develop a needs assessment and commissioning plan for post abuse support services.

7. Proposals and Details

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse that can have significant long-term effects when it is not recognised and effectively responded to; the effects can endure into adulthood, negatively impacting on lifelong outcomes including personal relationships, capacity to work and parenting. The impact of abuse and the experience of trauma on children and young people are well documented within research and what is very clear is the importance of having a range of available and accessible services for responding and intervening; ranging from the skills of the broader workforce to more specialised and targeted services.

Child Sexual Exploitation is not a diagnosis but it is generally agreed that these cases are significantly complex with children tending to present with other impacting vulnerabilities and risk factors. E.g. education exclusion, offending behaviours, missing episodes, poor parental relationships, sexual health needs and substance misuse. Therefore universal and specialist health services, education services, youth offending services and voluntary and community based services all play an important role in meeting the needs of young people identified across the multi-agency partnership as being at risk of, involved in or abused as a result of Child Sexual Exploitation.

Within the Barnardo's report "*Meeting the needs of sexually exploited children in London*" (2005) practitioners highlighted the difficulty of engaging young people in therapeutic work and stressed the importance of accessible and flexible services:

'Young people do not go to counselling enthusiastically so if you happen to work with a young person who wants to speak to someone, you need to strike while the iron's hot.'

"Tackling child sexual exploitation action plan: progress report – July 2012", recognised that victims of child sexual exploitation, and their families, are likely to need substantial support in picking up their lives once the exploitation has ended. Such support, from both statutory agencies and voluntary and community sector organisations, may be needed over a long period of time. Specialist services can assist agencies in tailoring advice and guidance to a young person's needs as well as delivering direct interventions where appropriate.

It is welcomed that RMBC has recently provided 120k funding to increase capacity for the next 6 months in the area of post abuse support to both current and historical victims. However, in the longer term a needs assessment and mapping exercise should be undertaken in relation to the need for and provision of post sexual abuse support utilising the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and existing commissioning frameworks.

8. Finance

This will be determined within the commissioning process.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The assessed need has yet to be determined and therefore provision of appropriate services and care pathways may impact on outcomes for children and young people.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

- Rotherham CSE Strategy
- Rotherham Health & Well Being Strategy
- Rotherham Children & Young People's Plan 2013 - 16

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Barnardo's (2005) *Meeting the needs of sexually exploited young people in London*: Barnardo's

Rotherham LSCB (2013) *A review of the response to child sexual exploitation in Rotherham*: RLSCB

Professor Alexis Jay OBE (2014) *Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham 1997-2013*: RMBC

DfE (2012) *Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan: Progress Report*: DfE
Working Together to Safeguard Children (2013), Department for Education

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