



OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY VIEWS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

TO CABINET 21 JUNE 2017

Report Title	RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION
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Agenda Status: PUBLIC

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To present to Cabinet for consideration, the comments and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the findings of the Scrutiny Review – Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE.)
- 1.2 Members of Cabinet have been issued with a copy of the full report. All Overview and Scrutiny review reports are published on the Overview and Scrutiny page on the Council's Webpage and a copy of this report can be located: www.northampton.gov.uk/scrutiny - Previous Scrutiny Reviews.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends to Cabinet that:
 - 2.1.1 Northampton Borough Council establishes its own CSE Officer Group (to direct and co-ordinate all of the action the Council takes to detect, prevent and reduce CSE) and that:

Making Public Spaces Safer

- 2.1.2 Northampton Borough Council and Northampton Partnership Homes undertake a systematic review of all public spaces within their control to ensure that those spaces are made as safe as possible.
- 2.1.3 Officers of Northampton Borough Council meet with the Service Manager of the RISE Team on a quarterly basis to plan a programme of joint operations in Northampton in order to detect, prevent and raise awareness of CSE.

Communication and E-Safety

- 2.1.4 Officers of Northampton Borough Council work with Northamptonshire County Council's E-Safety Officer and the RISE Team to explore ways in which the Borough Council's website can be used to promote safe internet use by children and young people, and to publicise the services and information portals where young people can receive information and support.
- 2.1.5 Northampton Borough Council recommends to Northamptonshire County Council's Director of Education Services that healthy relationships and sex education are included within the school curriculum.

Training and Awareness Raising

- 2.1.6 All Members of Northampton Borough Council are issued with a copy of the LGA toolkit, "Tackling CSE – A resource pack for Councillors" and the NSPCC's "Solution Focused Practice Toolkit – Helping Professionals use the approach when dealing with children and young people".
- 2.1.7 All Members of Northampton Borough Council should take positive steps (as Ward Councillors and School Governors) to persuade the all the borough's secondary and academies to show the short video, "*Kayleigh's Love Story*" to their students.
- 2.1.8 All Officers and Members of Northampton Borough Council receive training on how to recognise the signs of CSE and how they should report it.
- 2.1.9 The Chief Executive of Northampton Partnership Homes is asked to ensure that all of its Officers and relevant Board Members receive training on how to recognise the signs of CSE and how they should report it.
- 2.1.10 Relevant Officers and Members of Northampton Borough Council undertake online training for practitioners on national best practice.
- 2.1.11 Northampton Borough Council actively encourages and hosts a series of briefings and training sessions for community groups in the borough (including community centres and youth groups), in order to raise awareness of how to recognise the signs of CSE and how to report it.

3. Background and Issues

- 3.1 The purpose of the pre-decision scrutiny review was to ensure Northampton Borough Council (NBC) plays an active role in tackling Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Key lines of Inquiry:

- To gain an understanding of the work currently being undertaken by partnerships, statutory and voluntary organisations, and the Police to address these issues
- To investigate how NBC contributes to the above work
- To raise awareness of CSE, human trafficking and domestic slavery of children in Northampton
- To explore best practice elsewhere in identifying and providing support to victims of CSE
- To understand what NBC is doing outside the Scrutiny process in relation to human trafficking and domestic slavery of children

3.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its work programming event in April 2016, agreed to include a review that would look at how NBC played an active role in tackling CSE. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee commissioned Scrutiny Panel 1 to undertake the review. An in-depth review commenced in May 2016 and concluded in March 2017.

3.3 This review links to the Council's corporate priorities, particularly corporate priority 2 – Safer Communities – Making you feel safe and secure.

3.4 The Scrutiny Panel established that the following needed to be investigated and linked to the realisation of the Council's corporate priorities:

- Presentation to set the scene: To identify the prevalence of the problem locally
 - Relevant national and local background research papers
 - Definitions – CSE, human trafficking and domestic slavery
 - Case Studies
- Best practice external to Northampton
 - Site visit to the RISE Team, Northampton, MAASH, and other areas of the country that have been recognised for its good work in CSE
 - Internal expert advisors:
 - Leader of the Council, Northampton Borough Council (NBC)
 - Cabinet Member for Community Safety, NBC
 - Director of Customers and Communities, NBC and the Environmental Health and Licensing Manager, NBC
 - Chair of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP)
 - Service Manager, Anti-Social Behaviour Unit
 - External expert advisors:
 - Head of Protecting Vulnerable Persons, Northamptonshire Police
 - Service Manager, RISE Team
 - Senior Manager, Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children's Board
 - Director, Education Services, NCC
 - Representative, Children's Rights' Group, Corporate Parenting Board
 - Chief Officer, Northamptonshire Victim Support
 - Cabinet Member for Adult Services, NCC

- Cabinet Member for Children's Services, NCC
- Chair, Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board
- Service Manager, Barnardo's
- Service Manager, Save the Children
- Chief Officer, Service Six
- Chief Officer, Lowdowne Centre
- Manager, Free to Talk Group
- Chief Officer, Rape and Crisis Centre
- Chief Executive, Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH)
- Chief Officer, Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

4 Key Findings and Conclusions

- 4.1 After all of the evidence was collated the following conclusions were drawn:
- 4.2 Evidence from the RISE Team over the last year suggests that CSE is being committed in Northampton predominantly by individual adults offending against young persons. Evidence highlighted that there has fortunately been very limited information that gang related or organised CSE is taking place. Where such information has been received a number of intelligence led operations have been conducted; these include Operation Vacation which targeted a group of adult males (aged in their 20s and 30's) from Northampton who were believed to be exploiting teenage females and Operation Tanka, targeting offenders exploiting teenage females in the sex trade. This resulted in the prosecution of 34 year old female at Northampton Crown Court in June 2016.
- 4.3 The Scrutiny Panel further acknowledged that child sexual exploitation is still a largely hidden and unknown crime and that it is key for Agencies to tackle this issue by working together. There is good collaborative working between Agencies in Northampton.
- 4.4 Oxfordshire has an initiative - "hotel watch" whereby an adult and child try to book a room. If successful, officers will then approach the hotel and work with them to ensure they recognise and understand the risks of CSE. The Scrutiny Panel acknowledged that Officers from NBC have held discussions with Northants Police regarding how such initiatives could be supported in Northampton. The Scrutiny Panel felt that there is a need to keep a "watching eye" on known hotspots in the town.
- 4.5 It was noted that when the "Rotherham report" had been published, NBC had been very proactive in picking up on its responsibilities and actions. A Multi Agency conference had been held. NBC works in partnership with all the relevant Agencies. Frontline Officers have received the relevant awareness training. Training has also been rolled out to Taxi and Private Hire drivers. Such training is now part of the induction process for all new Hackney and Private Hire taxi drivers.
- 4.6 The Scrutiny Panel emphasised that from the evidence received, it was evident of the huge amount of work already done by Officers at Northampton Borough Council. The Scrutiny Panel agreed that it would be beneficial for National best practice online training for practitioners is used by the Borough Council.

- 4.7 The Scrutiny Panel felt that it would be useful for ward Councillors, should they have the opportunity, to encourage all secondary schools, including academies, to show the short video - "Kayleigh's Love Story" to its pupils.
- 4.8 The Scrutiny Panel felt that there needs to be education on healthy relationships and sex education within schools. Peer education is a powerful tool; it would be useful for peer mentors to get the messages across.
- 4.9 In addition, the Scrutiny Panel recognised that it is key for there to be training and the right behaviour. For example, the Scrutiny Panel had been impressed by the safeguarding training that was offered to Councillors, delivered by Officers of the Council, the RISE Team and the Northants Rape Crisis Centre.
- 4.10 The Scrutiny Panel welcomed the fact that Operatives from Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH) have a card that they complete if they have any concerns regarding CSE or grooming. Operatives also have "Toolbox Talks" and receive awareness raising sessions. The Scrutiny Panel agreed that it is important that all Operatives have training on awareness raising.
- 4.11 Evidence received highlighted that there is an opportunity to further tackle CSE by utilising NBC staff more effectively, for example by training Neighbourhood Wardens and Food Safety Officers to recognise and report CSE. There are also opportunities to launch a hotel watch scheme and do more around the night time economy. It was acknowledged and welcomed that these are being progressed via a new action plan implemented by the CSE and Missing sub-group of the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children's Board.
- 4.12 The site visits undertaken by representatives of the Scrutiny Panel had highlighted that there are rigorous systems in place to protect children. The site visit to MASH was extremely useful in informing the evidence base of this Scrutiny Review; but the Scrutiny Panel was concerned by the number of reports of abuse.
- 4.13 There is a need to ensure that both the indoor and the outdoor environment are as safe as possible where children are likely to play in communal areas.
- 4.14 The Scrutiny Panel highlighted the need to promote on-line and telephone services available for young people.
- 4.15 Based on evidence provided by expert advisors, the Scrutiny Panel conveyed concern regarding exploitation that takes place on the Internet.
- 4.16 From the evidence gathered, the Scrutiny Panel was furnished with an understanding of what NBC is doing in relation to human trafficking and domestic slavery of children.

5. Options

- 5.1 Cabinet will need to consider the possible options as part of its response to the recommendations.

6. Implications (including financial implications)

6.1 Policy

6.1.1 The work of Overview and Scrutiny plays a major part in the development of the Council's policy framework through its work programme.

6.1.2 The report and its recommendations have policy implications in relation to the Council's response to CSE. Cabinet's response will need to consider these issues in detail.

6.2 Resources and Risk

6.2.1 Cabinet will need to consider the resourcing issues for the recommendations made.

6.3 Legal

6.3.1 Legal issues will need to be considered as part of Cabinet's response to the recommendations.

6.4 Equality

6.4.1 Equality issues will need to be considered as part of Cabinet's response to the recommendations.

6.5 Consultees (Internal and External)

6.5.1 The Committee received evidence from a variety of sources as detailed in paragraph 3.4 of this report.

7. Background Papers

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee report – Child Sexual Exploitation
- Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 8 May 2017

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