

Report to Community Safety Forum – 2nd March 2015**Subject: Child Sexual Exploitation****Contact Officer:** Name: *Deb Austin* Tel: **29-5237**

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Wards Affected: All**1.0 What is meant by Child Sexual Exploitation?**

1.1 There are a number of definitions of what constitutes child sexual exploitation (CSE) but across partnership working within Brighton & Hove, the definition devised by the National Working Group for Sexually Exploited Children and Young People (2008) is used:

"Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive 'something' (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of performing, and/or others performing on them, sexual activities. Child sexual exploitation can occur through use of technology without the child's immediate recognition, for example the persuasion to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones with no immediate payment or gain. In all cases those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources. Violence, coercion and intimidation are common, involvement in exploitative relationship being characterised in the main by the child or young person's limited availability of choice resulting from their social/economic and/or emotional vulnerability."

Such abuse can be further defined using the 3 models defined by Barnados (2011)¹:

Abuse model 1 – Inappropriate relationships: Usually involved one abuser who has inappropriate power - physical, emotional or financial – or control over a young person. The young person may believe they have a genuine friendship or loving relationship with their abuser.

Abuse model 2 – Boyfriend: Abuser grooms victim by striking up a normal relationship with them, giving them gifts etc. A seemingly consensual relationship develops but later turns abusive. Victims are required to attend parties and have sex with multiple men and threatened with violence if they

¹ Puppet on a String: The urgent need to cut children free from sexual exploitation, Barnados (2011)

refuse/try to seek help. They may also be required to introduce their friends as new victims.

Abuse model 3 – Organised exploitation and trafficking: Victims are trafficked through criminal networks - often between towns and cities - and forced or coerced into sex with multiple men. They may also be used to recruit new victims. This serious organised activity can involve the buying and selling of young people.

- 1.2 CSE is a complex and difficult abuse to investigate and support the victims of. Often children and young people subject to CSE don't view what is happening to them as abuse and this, coupled with the fact they can be some of the most hard to reach and difficult to engage young people within the city, means providing support and protection is a complex task that requires perseverance and tenacity.

2.0 What we are doing about CSE in Brighton & Hove:

- 2.1 The identification of and support to children and young people within Brighton & Hove at risk of CSE has developed significantly over the past 12 months:
- Sussex Police (Feb 14) have undertaken a strategic profile of CSE across Brighton & Hove, East and West Sussex. Operation Kite, launched in May 14, is a Sussex police initiative around the reporting and identification of children and young people who are at risk of CSE across East and West Sussex and Brighton and Hove.
 - A multi agency group, the Red Op Kite CSE Risk Management Meeting, convenes on a monthly basis to consider child and young people who have been identified at risk of CSE and to assess the level of that risk. Those children and young people identified as at high risk (i.e. Red) are discussed at every meeting and agencies work together to provide a joined up response that mitigates that risk. Multi agency attendance at the meetings is excellent with representations from health; schools; community safety; YOS; RuOK; SW teams: police; WiSE (YMCA Downslink Group).
 - The Red Op Kite CSE Risk Management Meeting reports into a CSE Operational Group that has responsibility for co-ordinating the "Protect" and "Pursue" agendas around CSE. This multiagency group, chaired by Sussex police and attended by all partner agencies, considers how agencies work together to meet the needs of children and young people identified at risk of CSE. It also considers how the perpetrators of CSE within the city can be effectively pursued.
 - In February 2015 Children's Services launched a specialist Missing and CSE team (Kite Team) which is co-located with the Police Missing Co-ordinator and CSE lead at the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub. This team will work with the most complex children and young people identified as either persistently missing and/or at high risk of CSE. The team will take an assertive outreach approach to their work with young people, in recognition

that this cohort can be some of the most difficult children and young people to engage.

- Children’s Services have commissioned Alter Ego theatre company to perform Chelsea’s Choice, an acclaimed play which highlights the serious and emotional impact of CSE, in the city’s high schools during March 2015. These performances will be supported by specialist social workers and police officers, to ensure that children are in receipt of appropriate supports and services afterwards.
- The Local Safeguarding Children’s Board provides free training around CSE to professionals working with children across the city. This training is provided by WiSE, who have over the past 4 months, delivered CSE awareness and recognition training to all children’s social workers in the city.
- A data mining exercise has been undertaken to explore patterns and trends around CSE across the city, so that “hot spots” can be identified and appropriate supports put in place. Using the warning signs and vulnerability indicators developed by the Office of the Children’s Commissioner² and cross referencing with data available from children’s social work, schools, and the Youth Offending Service, those young people with 4 or more indicators of CSE have been identified. In addition to testing the reliability of the current identification process, this data trawling will highlight those young people who might otherwise not be known in the context of CSE to statutory service. The results of this exercise are to be discussed at a meeting in March 2015.
- The identification of boys and young men who are victims of CSE is thought to be nationally under-reported³. Within Brighton & Hove a task and finish group has been established (Feb 15) with partners from across both statutory and voluntary sectors to devise ways of working together to improve early identification and prevention to this cohort of young people. The work of this group will feed into a soon to be established “Prevent” and “Identification” CSE group which will be responsible for co-ordinating the multi-agency response to early identification and prevention of CSE within Brighton & Hove.

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² The Office of the Children’s Commissioner’s Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups (Nov 2013)

³ Hidden in plain sight – a scoping study into the sexual exploitation of boys and young men in the UK, Barnados (Aug 2014)

