

2015 - 2017

PAN CHESHIRE

# CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

MULTI-AGENCY STRATEGY



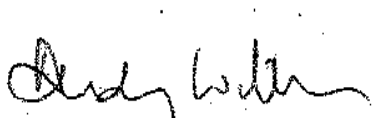
## Key Message from the four Local Safeguarding Children Board Chairs

“Child sexual exploitation destroys the lives of individuals and affects all our communities. The four Local Safeguarding Children Board’s (LSCBs) in Cheshire that we lead, are determined to address it. We want to ensure that we get it right in Cheshire and all the boards recognise that we need to improve the way we respond to those victims brave enough to come forward and report such a crime and to protect those who are or may be at risk of sexual exploitation. We also need to step up and refine the ways in which we work together to pursue the perpetrators of this kind of criminal behaviour.

An important part of this strategy is working with young people and communities to inform them about CSE and the key things to look for. We potentially have young people in relationships that they themselves do not recognise as exploitation; and we want to equip them with the knowledge and confidence to come forward.

This strategy describes how the four LSCBs and all our partners across Cheshire intend to address and continuously improve the way we are tackling CSE in the next three years. In the past two years, we believe we have made good progress and have the evidence to support this view. This new strategy builds on what we have learned, both locally and from the large number of significant reports published on this subject in the last year. The strategy confirms how we intend to continue our vitally important awareness raising campaign throughout Cheshire focusing on young people, parents, schools, sections of the business community and all local communities. It outlines how agencies work together to deal with specific cases when potential CSE concerns are reported, also our continuing plans to disrupt this kind of activity and prosecute the people who perpetrate this crime.

We will listen to and learn from the victims, their families and friends who have been affected by these terrible experiences. It is vital that we translate what they tell us into positive action, so that we can tackle these crimes more effectively whilst ensuring that children and young people who are damaged by this experience get the professional help and support they need. The LSCBs and all our partners across Cheshire have a shared commitment and determination to do this



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## DEFINITION OF CSE

### What Is Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)?

The Cheshire LSCB's has adopted the definition of sexual exploitation that is set out in statutory guidance:

*“Sexual exploitation is child abuse and children and young people who become involved face huge risks to their physical, emotional and psychological health and well-being.”*

*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, attention, gifts, money) as a result of them performing, or others performing on them, sexual acts or activities. Child sexual exploitation grooming can occur through the use of technology without the child’s immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post sexual images on the Internet/mobile phones without 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 relationships 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*

(The Department of Children, Schools and Families and the Home Office, July 2009)

## Gangs

A relatively durable, predominantly street-based, social group of children, young people and, not infrequently adults who see themselves and are seen by others, as affiliates of a discrete, named group who (Children's Commissioners Report - 2012):

- engage in a range of criminal activity and violence
- identify or lay claim to territory
- have some form of identifying structural feature
- are in conflict with similar groups.

## Gang Associate

A Gang Associate is any individual that has one or more of the following features:

- Offends with or for gang members, either willingly or through coercion or exploitation but does not identify themselves as a gang member and there is no other corroborative information that they are a gang member
- Is shown to associate with gang members by Police, Partner agencies, community intelligence or has displayed though conduct or behaviour, a specific desire or intent to become a member of a gang.

## Groups

Child sexual exploitation by a group involves people who come together in person or online for the purpose of setting up, co-coordinating and/or taking part in the sexual exploitation of children in either an organized or opportunistic way (Children's Commissioners Report - 2012).



## WHY WE NEED A STRATEGY

### Introduction

This strategy sets out the commitment of the Cheshire Safeguarding Children's Boards to do everything possible to prevent child sexual exploitation and support victims of this abuse. We recognise that only a proactive, co-ordinated, multi-agency approach will be effective in disrupting child sexual exploitation and prosecuting perpetrators.

Sexual exploitation of children is child abuse and is completely unacceptable; the only effective way to tackle sexual exploitation of children is via effective multi agency and partnership working.

We recognise that sexual exploitation can have serious long term impact on every aspect of the child or young person's lives, health and education. It also damages the lives of families and carers and can lead to family break ups.

Sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative relationships, violence, coercion and intimidation 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.

It is our collective multi-agency responsibility to identify those children and young people at risk of exploitation and our joint responsibility to protect them and safeguard them from further risk of harm. It is also our joint responsibility to prevent children becoming victims of this form of abuse and reassure our communities we can perform our duties effectively. It is the police responsibility to focus on the detection, disruption and prosecution of perpetrators of CSE.

This multi-agency strategy for safeguarding children who are abused or at risk of abuse through CSE draws on:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2013),
- Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation (DCSF, 2009),
- Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan (DfE, 2011)
- I thought I was the only one. The only one in the world: The Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups, (OCC 2012).

## Purpose of the Strategy

The purpose of the strategy is to ensure a robust, co-ordinated multi-agency response to CSE across Cheshire under five priorities:

**Priority 1 – Strategic Commitment Across all Agencies**

**Priority 2 – Identify - Improve Awareness, Understanding and Recognition**

**Priority 3 – Prevent CSE – Communication**

**Priority 4 – Protect - Improve Effectiveness of Interventions**

**Priority 5 – Disruption - Improve the prosecution of perpetrators**

Taking a proactive approach focused on early identification and intervention can only be achieved through an integrated approach, with effective joint working and a shared understanding of the problem. A key aim of the document is to ensure that the multi-agency response is child centred.

In Cheshire we will work together across agencies to identify those vulnerable to sexual exploitation, build resilience, and prevent exploitation taking place. Across the partnership, we are committed to making a difference for children and young people up to the age of 25yrs through:

- enabling children and young people to make safe choices through a concerted campaign of awareness raising and education,
- providing accessible, early support, to target vulnerable groups, build resilience and prevent exploitation occurring, with development around longer term support



**We will:**

- ensure there is greater consistency of support from trusted adults, drawing on innovative practice to help young people to regain control and break free from exploitation.
- proactively work across the partnership to identify, disrupt and prosecute perpetrators of this crime, to reduce the duration of abuse and minimise the impact on the victim
- challenge each other and all key agencies to ensure that this very important issue is being given continual priority

There is a Pan Cheshire Strategic group responsible for CSE, Missing from home/ care and Human Trafficking, this group has developed a Pan Cheshire action plan which feeds into each LSCB. Each Local Safeguarding Children's Board within Cheshire have a CSE action plan that has been developed across the partnership the broad sections are highlighted below. The action plans are regularly reviewed and updated to build on local need and learning from national practise.

- Raising awareness: Professionals, volunteers and parents/carers understand CSE and how to respond. Children and young people recognise CSE and know how to stay safe and seek help
- Understanding what is happening: The LSCB knows the nature and extent of CSE. Partnership approaches to tackling CSE are tailored to need
- Developing a strategic response: The LSCB is effective in its co-ordination of a multi-agency response to CSE across a broader geographical area.
- Supporting victims of exploitation: Commissioning is responsive to the needs of children and young people. Children and young people get the support they need when they need it
- Facilitating policing and prosecutions: Early identification and proactive intervention of offenders. Diligent, expeditious investigations by appropriate trained investigators. Victim focussed investigations resulting in outcomes that meet the needs of the victim and are fair and firm with offenders.

In writing the strategy the partnership recognises the recent issues from Rotherham, Rochdale and Oxford. Relevant Independent Inquiries, serious case reviews and other key documents are key to further enhancing our knowledge into Child Sexual Exploitation.



## WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT CSE

### CSE as a National Issue

The prevalence of CSE is difficult to ascertain with any accuracy due to:

- Low levels of reporting by young people
- Variable levels of awareness & confusion around definition
- Inadequate intelligence gathering & information sharing
- Inconsistent recording

### Existing national estimates are:

- 1875 cases localised grooming (CEOP 2011)
- 2409 confirmed victims over 14 month period; 16,500 at risk (OCC 2012)
- 3000 CSE service users (NWG 2010)
- 2379 offenders (CEOP 2011)

The majority of victims were identified as female though it is important to recognise that there is likely to be an even greater under representation of males due to difficulties in recognising sexual exploitation amongst boys and young men. The average age when concerns are first identified is between 13-15 years.

Nationally victims known are from a range of ethnicities though the vast majority are white. CEOP's strategic overview found that 61% are white, 33% unknown, 3% Asian and 1% black (CEOP 2010).

Some children or young people do not recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and do not see themselves as victims of exploitation, as they consider they have acted voluntarily. The reality is their behaviour is not voluntary or consenting. It is important to remember that a child cannot consent to his or her own abuse.

There is a link between trafficked children and CSE. Children are known to be trafficked for sexual exploitation and this can occur anywhere within the UK, across local authority boundaries and across international borders.

There is evidence that children are now vulnerable to this abuse from a younger age: studies suggest victims range in age from 4 to 19-years-old, with a peak age of 15-years-old.<sup>1</sup>

Some of this abuse is based on a group of adults abusing young people - often via a

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<sup>1</sup> 'Inquiry into child sexual exploitation in gangs and groups' Office of the Children's Commissioner Interim report (2012).

'boyfriend'. Other patterns of exploitation involve gangs, and this can form part of the gang rituals including 'initiation'.

The internet, social media and mobile technology are also utilised by perpetrators to identify potential victims;

- Online grooming of children, by perpetrators is easy to do via social networking sites, where children are very vulnerable and easy to locate as they often post detailed personal information including home address, school etc.
- Meeting children offline following online grooming, whilst less common, is very high risk and is now a criminal offence.

Non-contact sexual abuse involves children being persuaded, manipulated, groomed or threatened into exposing themselves or performing sexual acts over a webcam or sending indecent images of themselves. Offenders often record these images or use various forms of coercion to get the child to disclose their social networking user name and password and then blackmail the child by threatening to expose what they have done. This then forms the basis for further threats and incitement to perform more serious sexual acts.

Sexual exploitation is based on perpetrators exerting power over their victims. This can take the form of emotional abuse, demanding sexual acts in exchange of money or commodities, using coercion, intimidation, threats of violence or humiliation.

Although there are recent high profile cases involving prosecution of groups of adults,<sup>2</sup> these are the exception, and require concerted multi-agency effort and resources to achieve. Recent studies<sup>3</sup> suggest that a proactive, joined-up strategic approach is necessary to increase the number of prosecutions brought against perpetrators.

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2 Rochdale (2010), Derby (2010), Oxfordshire (2013)

3 Barnardo's (2012), University of Bedfordshire (2012); CEOP (2011); Department of Education (2011)

## CSE in Cheshire

Cheshire covers 2,343 square kilometres (905 sq mi) and has a population of around 1 million. It is mostly rural, with a number of small towns and villages.

The overall population of Cheshire in 2010 was 1.004 million of which 51.3% of the population were male and 48.7% were female. Of those aged between 0–14 years, 51.5% were male and 48.4% were female; and of those aged over 75 years, 62.9% were female and 37.1% were male. Ethnic white groups accounted for 97.3%, 1.7% Asian, 0.6% Black and 0.4% White Other.

Each of Cheshire's Safeguarding Children Boards has a sub group with a focus on Child Sexual Exploitation, Missing and Human Trafficking. Each subgroup is responsible for ensuring the effective partnership working of key agencies who respond to children at risk of sexual exploitation, those being sexually exploited and/or trafficked and/or those that are missing /absent from home/ care and education.

Work continues at a regional level to develop shared priorities of which the Cheshire Local Authorities and partners are actively involved. The Pan Cheshire Strategic CSE, Missing, Trafficking Board is responsible for tracking regional developments and understanding impact locally. This CSE strategy will be regularly reviewed to ensure it is fit for purpose and reflects changes in local, regional and national developments.

Between April 2012 and March 2013 there were 158 children or young people in Cheshire that were identified as being at risk of or being sexually exploited. They were provided with a holistic support plan and targeted intervention to reduce the risk of harm.

## What Children, Young People and Carers Think

As we listen and learn from the victims, their families and friends who have been affected by these terrible experiences, it is vital that we translate what they tell us into positive action so we can tackle these crimes more effectively. In the recent 'Real Voices report' from Ann Coffey MP in October 2014 she clearly prioritised the voices of children and young people with their thoughts and feelings around CSE.

*'I get approached all the time when I'm in school uniform'*

Young people talked about the pressures they feel under, with the increased sexualisation of children and lack of respect for girls. Shockingly, they also talked about being approached regularly by older men in the street. They spoke out about their fear of speaking to 'suits' and 'uniforms' in the agencies that are supposed to protect them, but which they feel look down on them. They also talked of child sexual exploitation being a new 'social norm' in some communities.<sup>4</sup>



*"The men are nice at first and after a couple of months when they think everything is fine they start forcing them to do things they do not want to do like sleeping with them and all their friends or forcing them to keep drugs in their mum's house or asking them to carry things. By then the girls are too scared to say no."*



*'I was being bullied in school and pretty much at home and the only time I felt OK was when I was with these men.'*

Across Cheshire we are actively listening to the experiences and views of children and young people, families and professionals. The Pan Cheshire Missing from Home, Care and CSE commissioned service is a key part to helping young people and victims speak out. More work around this needs to be undertaken, only by continuing with this approach and having young people at the heart of the solution will we be able to make true progress on tackling CSE.

*'When I was younger the main reason I got into that cycle was because there was no-one there for me and then these men came along and they were there for me so I grabbed it with both hands, as instinct.'*

*'You want someone who has been there and understands and is not just reading a text book.'*

*'Social workers. If you need help after office hours you cannot get hold of them.'*



## PRINCIPLES IN TACKLING CSE

### Pan Cheshire Principles In Responding To CSE

The principles underpinning a multi-agency response to the sexual exploitation of children include:

- Recognition - Sexual exploitation includes sexual, physical and emotional abuse, as well as, in some cases, neglect
- Children do not make informed choices to enter or remain in sexual exploitation, but do so from coercion, enticement, manipulation or desperation
- Children under sixteen cannot consent to sexual activity; sexual intercourse with children under the age of 13 is statutory rape
- Sexually exploited children should be treated as victims of abuse, not as offenders
- Children under sixteen will always be dealt with as actual or potential victims



- Many sexually exploited children have difficulty distinguishing between their own choices around sex and sexuality and the sexual activities they are coerced into
- The primary law enforcement effort must be against the coercers and sex abusers, who may be adult, but could also be the child's peers or young people who are older than the child
- Sexually exploited children are children in need of services under the Children Act 1989 and 2004. They are also children in need of protection

A Multi-agency network or planning meeting/discussion should take place for all children considered at risk of sexual exploitation. Child Protection Procedures should be followed where:

- The child is at immediate risk of significant harm and has other additional vulnerabilities
- There is concern that the sexual exploitation is being facilitated by the child's parent/carer
- There is concern that the sexual exploitation is facilitated by the child's parent/carer failing to protect
- There is concern that a related or unrelated adult in a position of trust or responsibility to the child is organising or encouraging the sexual exploitation

## PRIORITIES FOR 2015-2017

### Priority 1 – Strategic Commitment Across all Agencies

Child sexual exploitation takes place in local communities and information known to partners could be used to highlight the threat and establish risk. It is anticipated that an improved intelligence picture will enable effective action in a greater number of cases of child sexual exploitation, thereby reducing the harm which would otherwise be caused to the young victims and their families.



**Action: PAN Cheshire strategic group will use intelligence to build a picture of the population across the footprint to inform activity to prevent, protect and pursue.**

Within each Cheshire LSCB partners have signed up to work together to meet the core aims and principles set out within this strategy. It is clearly acknowledged that only a proactive, co-ordinated, multi-agency approach will be effective in disrupting child sexual exploitation and prosecuting perpetrators.

Multi-agency partners will conduct meetings/discussion to share relevant intelligence and information and co-ordinate responses. This will result in greater ability to disrupt and prosecute perpetrators and provide early intervention to reduce harm and promote well-being.

This full range of responses will go beyond traditional law enforcement and the multi-agency meeting/discussion will provide a range of support for children, families and others, raising awareness and disrupting activity for the purpose of protecting and safeguarding children and young people. This improved intelligence picture will inform partners of the extent of the risk posed by perpetrators.

The organisations will work together to keep children and young people safe from sexual exploitation. These organisations will be drawn from the statutory, voluntary, community and faith sectors and their work will follow recognised principles of effective practice to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people.

The multi- agency meeting will have the potential to call upon the diverse skills and experience available from amongst its members. In conjunction with sharing information to increase the understanding of the threat posed by CSE, they will bring together a range of specialist knowledge and partnership agreement to ensure that each organisation plays its role, collectively, effectively and individually.

As well as each individual LSCB having a stand -alone CSE action plan there is a strategic CSE action plan. This plan is monitored and reviewed by the Pan Cheshire Strategic Group led by Cheshire Constabulary. The action plan in respect of the implementation of this strategy is set out in **Appendix A**.

Cheshire LSCB's have close links to partnerships across the North West and in particular with Merseyside. We want to ensure that cross border activity takes place at an operational level and to share good practise.



## Priority 2 – Identify - Improve Awareness, Understanding and Recognition

### What we know

Identifying the early signs associated with CSE is vital and a multi-agency approach is key in reinforcing these principles. A multi-agency meeting is to enable practitioners to share information and intelligence or additionally to discuss operational issues on individual CSE referrals. Depending on the processes that exist locally, these meeting can be used to assess new cases in relation to identifying the category they fall into and deciding how the case will be managed. This may be particularly relevant to lower level cases that may not have reached the threshold for other interventions (e.g. early action process) but may require further discussion.

A multi-agency meeting gives an opportunity for the identified CSE leads for each agency to come together and;

- Review progress of cases and ensure action is being taken by whichever agency is involved in individual cases.
- Identify any trends or problem locations and ensure they are dealt with.
- Look at cross border issues and ensure there is a co-ordinated approach with other boroughs.
- Ensure looked after children placed away from the county and at risk of CSE are being protected by the agencies where they are located.

### What we will do to:



There are Operational Groups held across Cheshire where children at risk are discussed within a multi-agency setting. This Operational Group will extend to discuss and problem solve locations and offender management and will identify themes, patterns and gaps in service provision. (see **Appendix B** for further details)

Each area will develop their own operational tactical response driven by local demands. Activity will be driven and delivered through either multi agency operation groups that will meet on a regular basis or colocated multi agency operational teams.

There is a Pan Cheshire CSE screening tool in place. All agencies are expected to use this at any point they have concerns about CSE, this tool then informs assessments, decisions and next steps.

One of the aims of this strategy is to deliver a consistent approach across Cheshire through the development of multi- agency operational teams.

**How we will know its effective:**

- We will manage risk at the lowest level, to prevent escalation, increase the numbers referred in, and achieve good outcomes for children.
- We will implement wider activities with children and young people to ascertain their awareness and what they can do.



## Priority 3 – Prevent CSE

### What we know

Prevention requires a co-ordinated systematic approach across each LSCB area and prevention is critical to the identification and protection of children and young people from CSE as well as raising awareness amongst agencies and communities about child sexual exploitation and its indicators. Patterns and prevalence should be understood about how child sexual exploitation can operate in an area and strategies adjusted in accordance with this knowledge. Prevention work related to CSE should be part of community engagement and safety planning.

### What we will do to:

One of the key elements within this strategy is to raise the profile of CSE and develop a shared approach across all partner agencies. We will achieve this by:

- Creating CSE champions within key agencies such as Health, Police, Probation, Licensing, Youth Offending, Social Work)
- Use of shared screening tool to identify vulnerable young people.
- Providing targeted training to key professionals
- Linking vulnerable young people to early help/ intervention services
- Ensuring professional working at all levels of need have access to expert advice and consultation, and understand their duty to identify vulnerability and risk, and ensure young people are provided with appropriate support.
- Continually reviewing and assessing 'what works' to ensure preventative strategies can respond to developing issues and changes in victim or offending patterns of behaviour

### How we will know its effective:

Cheshire does have in place a Child Sexual Exploitation multi-agency operating protocol which sets out the standards and provides guidance for multi-agency working in tackling child sexual exploitation. The protocol will:

- Ensure that responses to concerns about child sexual exploitation are managed via a multi-agency process and in accordance with the protocol

- Ensure information is shared appropriately and especially with children's services and the Police
- Ensure agencies work together in recording and monitoring the prevalence of child sexual exploitation

## Communication

### What we know

One of the aims of this strategy is to raise awareness amongst children, young people, families and the community. This will help young people to understand the potential dangers of exploitation, make safe choices, and to build their resilience. We will promote learning about healthy relationships including respect, what is acceptable and unacceptable, and how to access support.



**Action:** PAN Cheshire strategic group will continue to develop a brand of material under the banner of 'the more you know, the more you see' including a dedicated website, [www.knowandsee.co.uk](http://www.knowandsee.co.uk)

This strategy will continue to build on the brand, 'the more you know, the more you see' using this to underpin all communication and awareness activity. **(Appendix C)**

### What we will do

We will provide information to teachers, parents and communities, helping them to understand these risks, recognise the signs that a child may be vulnerable or subject to this abuse, and take appropriate action.

Across Cheshire we have implemented a media strategy to assist with the raising awareness of CSE. This includes key messages such as;

- Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a form of child abuse where victim is given something- food, money, drugs, alcohol, gifts- in exchange for sexual activity with the abuser. Offenders target vulnerable young people and use their power- physical, financial, emotional etc. - over the child to sexually abuse them.

- A common feature of CSE is that the child or young person does not recognise the coercive nature of the relationship and does not see themselves as a victim of exploitation. This means that they are unlikely to report the abuse so police and partners must be alert to the signs of CSE and actively look for victims.
- CSE can occur through the use of technology without the child's immediate recognition; for example being persuaded to post images on the internet/mobile phones without immediate payment or gain.
- There is not one type of victim or offender of CSE. CSE can take many forms in many settings. If we look at just one model, such as group or gang CSE, we risk missing other victims who do not fall into that category. There is also a risk that victims don't recognise their abuse as CSE because it doesn't fit a particular model.
- CSE is not an indictable offence but police and prosecutors can charge offenders with rape and other sexual offences as well as kidnapping and trafficking.

### **How we will know its effective:**

The communication strategy will be subject to regular reviews to ensure that we are responding to local and national issues. Our initial response over the coming months is to

- Launch the know and see website
- Undertake high profile campaigns with different target audiences
- Work directly with parents and young people to obtain their views

### **Identifying and managing geographic hotspots and venues**

General awareness of CSE amongst key groups of professionals and community organisations is a critical protective factor for children and families. Mapping of potential access points to vulnerable children and young people will assist in targeting those areas where perpetrators prey on children. Police should lead on this but information and intelligence from all agencies will be used to map the 'hotspots'. These areas may include; Hostels, Care Homes, Youth Clubs, Schools, Taxi Ranks, Local Food Outlets etc.



## **Reducing vulnerabilities through support and education**

Raising awareness includes sending out regular material to all places where children and young people gather e.g. Youth clubs. This should be general material telling 'stories' to engage children and young people in discussions, with a focus on safety and safe relationships and should also contain material aimed at professionals to recognise the signs of CSE and how children and young people can access advice and services. Umbrella services such as Childline, CEOP or other signposting sites should be included with all material.

Training/Awareness packages should be identified for schools/other settings that deal with large numbers of children or those agencies that offer targeted services to vulnerable children and young people such as Pupil Referral Units or Residential Children's homes.



## Priority 4 – Protect - Improve Effectiveness of Interventions

### What we know

Young people who are victims of sexual exploitation are often distrustful of adults and may have had negative experiences of statutory services.

Whilst there may be situations which require emergency interventions to protect young people, often the best approach is to work collaboratively with the young person and their family.

### What we will do

Taking the right approach to engaging these vulnerable young people is crucial if we are to stand any chance of supporting them to break free from exploitation. We want to improve victim's experiences of being supported, ensuring that they are listened to, respected and given choices about how they are helped. We will work with our commissioned services to ensure they reflect the needs of our community. We will work with our health colleagues around the development of longer term support for victims.

### How we will know it's effective

Effective help is child or person-centred, and based on building a consistent relationship of trust with the young person over time. We must understand their journey and work at a pace that is accessible to the young person. Young people must be supported to build resilience and empowered to make choices to regain control over their lives.

We are committed to involve parents and key family members in the assessment and planning process, and ensure that young people are central to any decision making. The aim is to support and empower young people and their families to find solutions themselves wherever possible.



**Action: Consult with Cheshire young people on what they think a Missing from Home and Care and Sexual Exploitation service should do.**

## Support for Victims and Families

Child sexual exploitation has a devastating impact, not only on the child victim but on the whole family. Parents and carers will want the perpetrators arrested and prosecuted and can be valuable partners in supporting an investigation by providing intelligence, corroboration and other evidence. Practice has shown that providing effective engagement and support to both the victim and their family can significantly improve criminal justice outcomes.

The actions of alleged offenders or their associates in attempting to intimidate the child can be devastating for a victim. There may be direct action against the victim and family, or subtle threatening messages via social media, or to siblings and friends. Dealing promptly and robustly with any intimidation will help. It may be beneficial for any investigation of intimidation to be managed by officers not involved in the original investigation.

Supporting victims and their families must be based upon a multi-disciplinary assessment of their circumstances. However, evidence has shown how important families are in helping young people in their recovery. Families also need help to deal with the impact of CSE and LSCB's must ensure there is access to appropriate support both on a local basis and through national organisations.

In Cheshire during 2014/15 there is a service in place for missing young people and those young people at risk of CSE. There is a continued commitment across the four Local Authority areas to take initial learning from the commissioned service and review and reconfigure future service delivery around Missing and CSE.

## **Priority 5 – Disruption - Improve the prosecution of perpetrators**

### **What we know**

It is vitally important that all efforts are taken to bring to justice perpetrators who exploit and abuse children. We are committed to ensuring that we will do all we can to disrupt perpetrators who are sexually exploiting young people and where possible prosecute them.

### **What we will do**

We will build on the work of committed and skilled professionals, and take a more strategic approach to identifying, disrupting and prosecuting perpetrators. We will be developing systems to enhance information-sharing and providing clear guidance to support effective collection and recording of evidence are crucial to improve performance in this area. Police will continue their efforts to secure prosecutions and maximise opportunities to disrupt child sexual exploitation locally.

### **How we will know it's effective**

Learning from national and local experience is vital to ensure continuous improvement. We will build in regular reviews, analysis and feedback to learn from successes and failures, and disseminate this learning. The Crown Prosecution Service will work to improve the effectiveness of prosecutions; promote within its organisation examples of good practice in relation to child sexual exploitation; and work to increase the use of 'special measures' in appropriate cases.

### **Disruption**

Victims do not always perceive themselves to be victims and may not see that they are being abused, therefore it is vital that all agencies seek to disrupt activity in a co-ordinated manner with criminal justice partners seeking opportunities to prosecute for other offences should there be insufficient evidence for sexual offences.

Across Cheshire we will be developing a strategic overview of investigations. We will support a multi-agency approach to developing support plans. We will develop links to specialist police resources to escalate cases and draw on external resources.

There are a number of targeted actions that we can focus on:

- Maximising opportunities for prosecution
- Use of Child Abduction Warning Notices and other Court orders
- Targeted activity across vulnerable locations
- Single and multi-agency training in regards to risk assessment and intelligence submission
- Multi-agency data collection
- Information to LSCB regarding local investigations and CSE profiling
- CPS specialist lawyer(s) to prosecute CSE cases
- Victim support throughout investigation / court process
- Use of licensing powers



**Action: PAN Cheshire strategic group to ensure membership of the CPS to the group as well as regular information exchange.**

## DELIVERING ON OUR PRIORTIES

### Governance

Each Local Safeguarding Children's Board has established an appropriate sub group that is responsible for Missing children from Home and Care / education, CSE and Trafficked young people. Reports will be fed into the LCSB as appropriate. The subgroups will meet quarterly, the purpose of these meeting are;

- To review the local implementation of relevant protocols
- Analysis of missing from home/ care/ education incidents; patterns and outcomes
- To identify any patterns and trends in running / missing episodes and links to CSE and trafficking.
- To develop local strategies / plans to address concerns / patterns / trends.
- Safeguarding implications
- Practice and procedural issues

The meeting will be attended by:

- Senior manager from the local police
- Senior manager from the relevant Local Authority Children's Service Department
- Senior manager from the relevant Local Authority Residential / Fostering Services
- Registered managers of local Care homes
- Health Safeguarding leads
- Education Leads
- Other professionals may be co-opted on to the group depending upon local needs.

Quarterly Pan Cheshire meetings will also take place with strategic representatives from the Local Safeguarding Children's Boards, the Local Authorities, the Police and NHS England. This meeting will be arranged and chaired by the police. The purpose of this meeting will be;

- To review the implementation of protocols on a Pan Cheshire basis;
- To consider the provision of services for CSE and children missing from both local authority care and home;
- To identify any patterns and trends in CSE /Trafficking /running / missing episodes and any cross border issues
- To consider the provision of training for those responsible for management of, and services to, children at risk of victim of CSE , Human Trafficking and children missing from both local authority care and home;
- To monitor on a Pan Cheshire basis the provision of single and multi-agency data collation and information sharing processes.
- Identify, apply and disseminate good practise and promote consistent implementation
- Offer peer challenge and review of effective practice – including audit and tracking of interventions

The representatives from the relevant Local Safeguarding Children's Boards are responsible for ensuring updating their respective Board with any Pan Cheshire issues or areas for concern.

## Measuring Success

With regard to measuring success each LSCB is working towards a common data set that will assist with the intelligence picture. However each LCSB through their own action plans will be looking to monitor effectiveness of activity, understand the quality and impact of the operational response of local agencies to individual children and young people and their families as well as look to identify any unmet need and/or gaps in service provision/practice.

## Outcomes for children and young people

Across the partnership we will be improving our outcome framework to assist with measuring impact of service provision on outcomes for young people. A sample outcomes framework for measuring the impact of multi-agency intervention at an individual case level is listed below.

- Increased awareness of risk/ protective behaviours
- Re-engaged in appropriate education provision
- Reduction in “missing” episodes
- Reduction in contact (frequency and duration) with coercive/abusive individuals
- Increased knowledge of positive sexual health behaviours
- Engagement (or increased engagement) in positive social/ recreational activities)
- Improvement in family relationships
- Increased self-esteem (self report: measured pre and post intervention)
- Disruption of perpetrators
- Investigation of perpetrators
- Increased parental awareness of risk/protective behaviours

In addition to the outcomes framework, all the boards will undertake co-ordinated case audits at agreed times and will cross-reference our findings to maintain and improve assurance.



## **Criminal Justice Outcomes**

Criminal justice outcomes aim to support victims and bring individuals and organised criminal networks involved in CSE to justice. Data of these outcomes should be routinely gathered and monitored including, and specifically the attrition rates for cases referred to the CPS to ensure learning captured.

The below measures will ensure positive interventions for victims and where suspects are identified, they are prosecuted or appropriate disruptions are put in place. These measures are key in establishing an accurate picture for tackling CSE across Cheshire.

- Interventions delivered to safeguard vulnerable children
- Arrest of individuals involved in CSE
- Charging of offenders for CSE related offences
- Convictions of offenders for CSE related offences
- Identification and disruption of individuals and organised criminal networks (OCN) engaged in CSE

We will continue to appraise the performance frameworks that are in place in light of local and national findings so that we can have a clear understanding of how prevalent child sexual exploitation is across Cheshire and how effectively we are responding to this.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Pan Cheshire Strategic Group Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan 2015/16

This strategic action plan will inform a more detailed SMART action plan owned by the Pan Cheshire Strategic group and it will be developed and implemented by the group during 2015/16.

**Ref Action By When**

#### OUTCOME 1 – STRATEGIC COMMITMENT ACROSS ALL AGENCIES

1a	Co-ordinate Launch of CSE Strategy	March 2015
1b	Agree baseline data for measuring success of strategy	March 2015
1c	Embed CSE in LSCB outcomes framework	April 2015
1d	Report impact of strategy in Annual report to LSCB, Children's Trust and Health and Well-being Board	Annually
1e	All agencies to commit to CSE audits and subsequent reporting to LSCB	Ongoing
1 f	Work with the Adult Safeguarding Boards and wider partners across the voluntary, statutory and business communities to cascade information and learning around CSE.	Ongoing

#### OUTCOME 2 – IDENTIFY, IMPROVE AWARENESS, UNDERSTANDING AND RECOGNITION OF CSE

2a	PAN Cheshire strategic group will use intelligence to build a picture of CSE across the footprint to inform activity to prevent, protect and pursue.	Quarterly
2b	Review current multi-agency work in respect of CSE and identify ways of improving awareness across frontline practitioners	April 2015
2c	Revise training programme to incorporate standard use of new screening tool. This will include a review of the effectiveness of the Pan Cheshire Screening tool	Summer 2015
2d	The commissioned service for CSE to undertake a piece of work with children and young people around their experiences of CSE, to inform future service delivery.	March 2015

#### OUTCOME 3 - PREVENT CSE – COMMUNICATION

3a	Development of the 'know and see' web site to provide information for children and young people, parents and professionals	Quarterly
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3b	Develop and co-ordinate a strategic communication plan in respect of CSE for the public and professionals	Completed in January 2015
3c	Develop impact measures for campaigns and report on effectiveness	Summer 2015

#### Outcome 4 – Protect – Improve effectiveness of interventions

4a	Review existing interventions and agree a best practice PAN Cheshire approach – practitioner guide/ protocol	April 2015
4b	Evaluate and share the development of the models for CSE multi-agency teams across Cheshire	December 2015
4c	Feedback to front-line practitioners in respect of best practice	Quarterly
4d	Undertake peer review of practice	Annually
4e	Research effective interventions that are available to prevent perpetrators repeat offending	September 2015
4f	Research effective interventions that are available for long term therapeutic support for victims of CSE	September 2015

#### Outcome 5 – Disruption – Improve the prosecution of perpetrators

5a	PAN Cheshire strategic group will ensure membership of the CPS to the group as well as regular information exchange	
5b	Develop best practice guidance for front-line practitioners that places the needs of the child first and promotes the collation of evidence	April 2015
5c	Act as an influencing group on a regional and national level for ensuring effective legislation for prosecution	Ongoing
5d	Review with the CPS the current provision to avoid delay in prosecution	Summer 2015

## Quantitative Measures

Below are some examples of measures that will be used with LSCE data sets.

- Number of children at risk or victim of CSE and flagged
- Number of 'persons of interest' identified and flagged on the police system
- Number of referrals to Children's Social Care which CSE is identified as a concern
- Number of children in need (CIN) that have CSE as a risk that is being addressed within a CIN Plan
- Number of children subject to a CP plan that have CSE as a risk that is being addressed within a CP Plan
- Number of children in care where CSE has been identified as a concern/ risk
- Number of children placed out of the relevant local authority borough where CSE is a factor
- Number of Young People receiving an intervention as a result of CSE, or a service to reduce the risk of CSE
- Number of young people who have received direct work to reduce risk of CSE report feeling safer
- Number of young people that show improved ability to recognise risky and exploitative relationships
- Number of cases where CSE screening tool has been used
- Number of young people that have accessed sexual health services where CSE has been identified as a concern
- Number of child abduction notices by police
- Number of 'person of interest' flagged where arrested for CSE related offences
- Number of Convictions of offenders for CSE related offences
- Number of CSE related offences referred to CPS that were refused charge
- Number of audited CSE cases where feedback from parents and children is recorded
- Number of children where CSE is identified where missing/absent/away from placement incidents are recorded

## Appendix B: Cheshire Principles for CSE Operational Meetings

### Introduction

CSE operational meetings have three primary functions:

- To ensure that all children at risk of sexual exploitation
  - Are identified and acknowledged
  - Have a lead professional supporting them
  - Have an effective safeguarding plan in place.
  
- To ensure that all cases are considered by a single multi agency group who are then able to identify any links between individual cases.
  
- To ensure that intelligence relating to patterns of abuse and risk can be identified and action taken where necessary. This will include the sharing of intelligence relating to:
  - Victims
  - Perpetrators
  - Locations

The meeting will be victim focused and it will not duplicate or replace the functions of statutory child protection processes in relation to individual children.



**NB The Group is not an emergency response and does not replace existing safeguarding procedures for the investigation of child protection concerns or individual case planning.**

**It will achieve its objectives by:**

- Identifying children in Cheshire who are victims and/or at risk of sexual exploitation and/or trafficking and ensuring that they are referred into the appropriate agency and managed at the appropriate level.
- Identifying individuals responsible for perpetrating child sexual exploitation and trafficking and links and networks between individuals and those who harbour children.
- Identifying locations where CSE is taking place.
- Tasking group members with actions to achieve the overall aims of the groups in relation children, perpetrators and locations identified.
- Having identified those most at risk, monitoring the multi-agency response to that risk, ensuring that existing child protection processes are being used to protect them.

**Family and Victim Participation:**

- The Group is a professionals meeting held to discuss strategies to achieve the objectives of the group. Victims and their carers will not be invited to attend and will not routinely be informed of discussions.
- The meetings share sensitive and confidential information about suspected perpetrators and potentially a number of children who they may be involved with.
- Information may only be shared by members with other professionals within their own organisation.
- Any sharing of information with victims or their families may only take place with the agreement of the Chair(s) of the Group and to ensure the protection of a child from further harm.

Information may be shared via the chair(s) with the chairs of counterpart meetings in other Local Authorities areas to ensure that links between potential abusers across the North West and beyond are recognised and actioned.

## Appendix C: Cheshire CSE Communications

In 2013 the Pan Cheshire CSE Strategy Group developed a Communications Strategy. This was drafted in direct response to a requirement through the CSE Action Plan for all areas to develop their own strategy to support a national strategy. All four Local Safeguarding Children Boards are committed to the delivery of this strategy. The strategy informs all multi-agency CSE communications activity across the Cheshire area.

The Strategy has three core aims:

- Provide a Pan Cheshire key messages that reflect the national key messages around CSE for communication purposes that resonate with individual key target audiences locally
- Provide guidance on identifying opportunities to communicate CSE and the Pan Cheshire response to the public
- To ensure a coordinated, structured and accountable approach to media and communications

Phase 1 started in November 2013 and had the launch in January 2014 'The more you know, the more you see' brand. The material designed for this campaign has formed the basis of all future communications activity. A dedicated website was also launched; [www.knowandsee.co.uk](http://www.knowandsee.co.uk). This includes stories from young people and key messages for children and parents.

Phase two started in September 2014 and has identified specific dates and target audiences that the next phase of the campaign will focus on. There is a clear strategic and co-ordinated plan to manage CSE communication across the area.

The full strategy can be found on the LSCB websites.

