

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 18 November 2014	Meeting Name: Cabinet
Report title:		Child Sexual Exploitation – scrutiny recommendations	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Education & Children's Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the cabinet endorses the recommendations by the Education & Children's Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee on the Southwark Safeguarding Children Board's (SSCB) Draft Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Strategy.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The Education & Children's Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee received the draft CSE strategy at the 15 October meeting in order to scrutinise it prior to the report going to cabinet.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

3. **The committee's recommendations for the CSE are listed below:**

See Me Hear Me

- 3.1 The committee notes the recent report from the Children's Commissioner on CSE and its new framework, See Me, Hear Me, specifically designed for those who commission, plan or provide protective services. Developed with CSE victims, the model forces professionals to 'focus relentlessly on the child'. It is accompanied by two other reports from the inquiry, which highlight the risk to young people and the complexities around their understanding of sexual consent.

The committee recommends that the SSCB apply the principles of the 'See Me, Hear Me framework' to the strategy. These are:

- The child's best interests must be the top priority
- Participation of children and young people
- Enduring relationships and support
- Comprehensive problem-profiling
- Effective information-sharing within and between agencies
- Supervision, support and training for staff
- Evaluation and review

- 3.2 The SSCB should consider how it will obtain the views of the 98 children potentially at risk of CSE (of which only a few were actual targets) identified

by the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and/or the shadow board and/or any other young people who are actual or potential targets of CSE, and provide a paper setting out their views on CSE and how best to tackle it.

- 3.3 The SSCB should emphasise engagement with families in the strategy, particularly given the evidence that it is often family members who young people confide in or who realise a child is at risk.
- 3.4 The SSCB should adopt a clear evaluation plan so that the strategy's effectiveness can be properly monitored. An evaluation should be reviewed by the Cabinet a year after the strategy's adoption. The SSCB should consider the opportunity to work directly with the office of the Children's Commissioner on CSE as part of the monitoring process.

Schools

- 3.5 Scrutiny welcome the commitment in the strategy to ensure CSE is in Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum at all schools and that targeted work is done at schools with the highest number of 'at risk' children. However, scrutiny thinks that closer involvement is needed with schools to develop and implement this plan; in particular the committee recommend more links are made between the SSCB and the Head Teacher Executive to investigate:
 - Best practice for delivering CSE in PSHE
 - Making sure the new social work clusters are communicating with all schools in order to identify any children at risk of neglect or abuse, including CSE
 - Whether there are any other ways that schools could contribute to tackling CSE

Social Care

- 3.6 Southwark Council should continue to sustain and prioritise the recruitment and retention of social workers. This is in recognition of the importance of long-term quality relationships in protecting children & young people at risk or harmed by CSE.

Communication

- 3.7 Scrutiny welcome the emphasis in the draft strategy of raising awareness of CSE across the community and the additional training of staff working with children across all agencies to recognise signs of vulnerability and of abuse. However, the SSCB should consider adding a clear strategic priority to the strategy. This could set out a comprehensive plan for a multi-channel communications campaign on CSE to raise awareness a) within all the partner organisations and b) in the local community, including local children and adults. Scrutiny thinks there should be particular emphasis on digital and social channels so that we can measure internal and community engagement. The desired outcome is that CSE becomes increasingly socially unacceptable, that young people are protected from abuse and believed, and that tell-tale signs are spotted and reported..

Champion

- 3.8 Scrutiny welcomes the new CSE co-ordinator post that is set out in the strategy and suggests that they not only maintain links between agencies and manage the CSE action plan but that they are a champion across all agencies. In addition scrutiny think that each partner of the strategy should have a named person who has direct accountability for their service area and the implementation of the CSE strategy.

Faith communities

- 3.9 Include work with Faith groups in the strategy. Councillor Jamille Mohammed, Deputy Cabinet Member for Inter-Faith Community Relations, has offered to raise the profile of the work on CSE within the faith communities and advise the safeguarding board.

Children in Care

- 3.10 Given the increased risk of CSE that Looked After Children face, protection of these children need to be given additional focus in the strategy, perhaps through mention in the pledge or further inclusion in the strategic priorities.

Internet

- 3.11 The internet is all too often used to groom children for sexual exploitation. It is important that Southwark use the internet and social media to help safeguard children. The committee suggest that all agencies look into new ways of working through the use of online platforms and social media to help frontline workers share important information in the protection of children from the threat of sexual exploitation. There are a number of organisations that could help with this including Futuregov who are currently working with a selection of local authorities on a system known as "Patchwork" which provides frontline professionals with technological solutions for 'working together to safeguard children and young people.
- 3.12 The committee also recognise the important work done by Child Exploitation Online Protection centre (CEOP) and suggest that the SSCB ask a representative to help inform any communication plan.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Education & Children's Services & Scrutiny Sub-Committee Agenda 15 October 2014	Scrutiny Team 160 Tooley Street London SE1 2QH	Julie Timbrell 020 7525 0514

AUDIT TRAIL

Report Author	Councillor Jasmine Ali – chair	
Version	Final	
Dated	6 November 2014	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments included
Director of Legal Services	N/a	N/a
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	N/a	N/a
Chief Officers	N/a	N/a
Cabinet Member	N/a	N/a
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	6 November 2014	