

North Yorkshire Police

Corporate Performance and Scrutiny Group (CPSG)

Report of DCS Simon Mason - Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Health Check 15th October 2014.

Context

At the North Yorkshire Police (NYP) Corporate Performance and Scrutiny Group (PSG) meeting on 10th September 2014, members were briefed on the Publication of the 'Jay report' into Rotherham.

The PSG chairs decided that although well established safeguarding protocols were in place, in light of growing national concerns and media interest specifically in relation to CSE, a 'one off health check' or thematic examination would be beneficial.

Terms of Reference were set and public announcement of such an approach was made on 9th October 2014

The terms of reference included.

- The purpose of this one-off health check is to reassure the Police and Crime Commissioner, on behalf of the public of North Yorkshire, that the Chief Constable has a well-developed plan for addressing all aspects of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- The Report will provide an overview of practices within North Yorkshire Police when dealing with CSE, against recognised national best practice self assessment which includes partnership working.

'Well developed Plan and overview of Working Practices'.

National Picture

Nationally a series of authoritative documents and Plans have informed NYP and its Partners strategic and operational activity. Namely but not exhaustive:

- The association of police officer (ACPO) national plan to tackle CSE
- CSE National Working Group best practice, self assessment guidance.
- H M government Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013
- Childrens commissioner- 'It takes a lot to build trust' Oct 2013

- Banardo's Tackling Child sexual Exploitation 2012
- NSPCC – How safe are our children? – April 2013
- College of Policing review of Surry police's approach to historic child abuse and approach to victim care June 2013 (used to formulate NYP CRU)
- National reports such as 'Jay report' etc

Together many of these documents draw upon common themes but with a myriad of advice and recommendations on how best to prevent and tackle CSE. Recently and most helpfully the National Working Group has drawn together a summary document of all such recommendations. In excess of 190 recommendations grouped together into over 20 themes.

Regional and local picture.

Regionally NYP form part of the Yorkshire and the Humber (YaTH) force CSE sub group. That group meets quarterly with Intelligence and PVP managers to discuss and share best practice and understand cross border issues from a regional perspective.

NYP also forms part of the North East regional PVP working group which meets quarterly and is in turn informed by the National Policing Child Protection and Abuse Investigation working group and vice versa.

Locally NYP is a statutory member of the Local Safeguarding Childrens Boards (LSCB). In North Yorkshire there are two LSCB's one for County and one for City of York (COY).

Broadly NYP operates a mix of reactive, proactive and community based policing through its Safer Neighbourhood structures. By reactive is meant it responds to calls for service which, in this context, could include incidents whereby a child has already suffered or reported child sexual exploitation.

In contrast a proactive approach would rely upon the gathering and sharing of multiple layers of information and intelligence from a variety of sources and partner agencies to prevent and protect those children thought susceptible to such exploitation wherever possible.

Similar intelligence opportunities exist to target and disrupt perpetrators of such abuse and secure convictions against them. Ultimately post sentence and or release from prison, they are placed on the national Registered Sex Offenders register for life, subject to periodic review. All such individuals are proactively managed within the community by specialist Public Protection Officers.

Operationally NYP works to a nationally recognised method of gathering, accessing, developing and acting upon information and intelligence called the National Intelligence Model (NIM).

NIM processes are such that they create a series of well established daily, fortnightly and monthly operational meetings. All key managers attend and through analysis of current intelligence and information are informed of dynamic events that effect the operational plans and priorities set by senior police commanders.

Those operational plans take account of and are informed by both the longer term Police and Crime Plan and broader analytical products produced by experts who analyse the national and local Police and partnership landscape. Such work produces, for example, strategic documents such as the Joint Strategic Intelligence Assessment or more locally 'Problem Profiles' specific to issues such as CSE.

Notwithstanding the broad range of constantly changing priorities facing everyday policing, NIM processes include a product called a 'Control Strategy' which places a particular emphasis or priority on a subject. Consequently operational plans are produced for control strategy priorities such as CSE which direct activity through the daily, weekly and monthly NIM processes described above.

In so doing emphasis is maintained on a particular priority subject and tactics adjusted as needed to best maximise 'what works' locally without constraint from some aspects of national best practice which may not be best suited to local need.

Assistant Chief Constable Operations, assesses progress against such priorities monthly with commanders and senior crime managers as part of the NIM process.

CSE as a Priority in NYP.

In 2012, NYP adopted 'Vulnerable Persons' as a particular Control Strategy priority. CSE was specifically and deliberately segmented as part of the 'Vulnerable Persons' priority and a strategic plan written covering four themes;

- Deter - aimed at education and awareness
- Disrupt - aimed at diversionary tactics
- Detect – aimed specifically at police processes to best detect perpetrators known to have committed such offending and
- Dismantle- aimed at ensuring all ethical and legitimate legal means were brought to bare on perpetrators to dismantle their future potential to offend.

This strategic approach saw the inception of Op Conceal, a local tactical police plan to achieve the strategic intent and which initially was piloted on Scarborough before roll out across the county with increasing, progressive intensity ever since.

Also in 2012 ACPO launched a national response to CSE in the form of a national plan that was centred on a four Ps theme namely;

- Prevent
- Protect
- Pursue
- Partnerships

In turn this led to NYP and its partners establishing, through the respective LSCB's, a joint Strategic CSE sub group to deliver against the national ACPO plan.

Since then NYP have chaired that sub group reporting progress periodically to chairs of each respective LSCB's. Over time it has proved necessary and appropriate to re-badge and develop the ACPO plan and template to make it less police orientated and more applicable to each LSCB and local need.

Whilst considerable progress has been made by the strategic sub group it is recognised that there is still more to do as CSE and national guidance and best practice develops. The chair has felt at times progress has been hindered by a disparate approach by City and County who understandably have been at differing stages of development in this area. Both are now further advanced and have embraced the approach needed to tackle CSE.

It is intended that the strategic sub group will continue but that membership will be lessened but include Assist Director or Director level or similar from now on. To compliment this further, each respective LSCB will have a 'Task and Finish' sub group for CSE to complete work to the satisfaction of each LSCB.

A separate report highlighting progress and benchmarking against both the 'Jay report' recommendations and national working group themes is being produced for each LSCB.

The next iteration of the strategic sub group, and its senior members, will concentrate and prioritise work and development still required.

Meeting was provided with copies of action plan, progress and response to Jay report recommendations.

Both LSCB's have their own published strategic plans and local strategy. Both have CSE at a priority. Both take account of police plans and vice versa.

Underpinning each are a series of operational sub groups that work to achieve the plans aims for example;

- NYCC e-safety strategy which covers exploitation on line (appendix E)
- Missing Children and CSE strategic and operational subgroups
- NYCC signs of safety Sub group
- NYCC Young People who sexually harm sub group

Police - Op Conceal

Over time Op Conceal has remained the tactical plan and NYP's response to CSE whilst taking account of partnership work described above. Vulnerability and CSE has remained a control strategy priority for NYP since 2012 and although plans have been updated periodically the forces commitment to tackle CSE and safeguard children with its strategic partners is clearly evident.

Restricted Power point presentation on 'Op Conceal' processes and case studies presented that included the following statistics;

As of 15th October 2014.

North Yorkshire Police had flagged on its systems 143 **Potential** victims of CSE of which 122 are under 18 (remainder are now 18 and risk assessed into vulnerable adulthood)

Of the 122, following assessment of their potential susceptibility to CSE, – 29 have been 'adopted' by police with specific intervention and or safeguarding plans around them in conjunction with safeguarding partners.

Spread is;
York – 6
Selby – 1
Harrogate – 5
Scarborough – 10 (3 are male)
Craven - 7

93 **potential** perpetrators are also flagged on Police systems.

NYP is not complacent about the progress made with its partners in preventing, tackling and responding to CSE and recognises there will remain a continuing need

to innovate and work collaboratively with its partners to safeguard children from CSE and wider sexual abuse.

However reassurance can be taken from the work and progress that has been achieved in the last two years and which can demonstrably be shown to be effective.

To aspire to prevent all such offending against children may, sadly be unrealistic. However where offending is shown to have occurred NYP and its partners can point towards a number of successful robust investigations and prosecutions to safeguard others.