

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 18th FEBRUARY, 2014

**AT 6.00 PM
IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2
AT THE COUNCIL HOUSE
DUDLEY**

If you (or anyone you know) is attending the meeting and requires assistance to access the venue and/or its facilities, could you please contact Democratic Services in advance and we will do our best to help you

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MEETINGS IN DUDLEY COUNCIL HOUSE

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3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive declarations of interest in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.

4. MINUTES

To approve as a correct record and sign the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 19th November, 2014 (copy attached)

5. PUBLIC FORUM

To receive questions from Members of the public

6. ANNUAL REPORT OF DUDLEY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD 2012-13 (PAGES 1 - 6)

To consider the report of the Interim Director of Children's Services

7. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (PAGES 7 - 13)

To consider the report of the Interim Director of Children's Services

8. KEY FEATURES OF CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

To receive a presentation on this issue by the Safeguarding Development Manager. A video will be shown.

9. INVOLVEMENT OF MEMBERS IN SCRUTINISING THE WORK OF THE DUDLEY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD

An oral report on this issue will be given.

10. TO ANSWER QUESTIONS SUBMITTED UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 11.8 (IF ANY)

To: All Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee:

Councillors Arshad, Bills, Boleyn, Casey, Hill, Islam, Marrey, Perks, Vickers, Mrs Simms and Mrs Walker; Mrs Ward, Reverend Wickens; Mrs Verdegem or Ms Sinden; Mr Taylor; Mrs Coulter, Mr Ridney, Mr Lynch or Mr Nesbitt.

cc: Councillor Crumpton (Cabinet Member for Children's Services)

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 19th November, 2013 at 6.00 pm at the
Council House, Dudley

PRESENT:-

Councillor Marrey (Chair)
Councillor Boleyn (Vice-Chair)
Councillors Arshad, Mrs Billingham, Bills, Casey, Islam, Perks, Mrs Simms,
Vickers and Mrs Walker; Reverend Wickens; Mr Lynch, Ms Sinden and Mrs
Verdegem

Also in attendance:

Councillor Crumpton (Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Lifelong
Learning) attended at the invitation of the Committee

OFFICERS

Assistant Director of Adult, Community and Housing Services (Housing
Management) – Lead Officer to the Committee, the Director of Children's
Services, Assistant Director of Children's Services (Children and Families),
Director of Children's Services (Quality and Partnership), the Treasurer and Mr
Sanders (both Directorate of Corporate Resources)

7. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received on behalf of Councillor
Hill, Mrs Coulter and Mr Ridney.

8. **SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

It was reported that Councillor Mrs Billingham was serving in place of
Councillor Hill for this meeting of the Committee only.

9. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

A declaration of non-pecuniary interest was made by Councillor Vickers in
respect of Items 6 and 7 on the Agenda (Revenue Budget Strategy 2014/15
and Scrutiny of Children's Centres – Feedback, respectively) in view of his
office as Chair of the Management Committee of Tenterfields Children's
Centre.

10. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23rd September, 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed.

11. PUBLIC FORUM

No issues were raised under this item.

12. BUDGET STRATEGY 2014/15

(During consideration of this item, Councillor Marrey declared a non pecuniary interest in view of his son being in respite care and Councillor Mrs Walker declared a non pecuniary interest in view of her daughter's employment in Special Educational Needs. The declarations were made in respect of both this item and the following item on the agenda (Scrutiny of Children's Centres – Feedback)).

A report of the Chief Executive, Treasurer and Director of Children's Services was submitted on the proposed Revenue Budget Strategy for 2014/15 and the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

In presenting the reports submitted, the Treasurer referred to Appendix C of the report submitted, outlining the proposed savings in line with the terms of reference of the Committee.

In his presentation, the Treasurer reported on questions asked by members at the meeting of the Adult, Community and Housing Services Scrutiny Committee held on 11th November, 2013 on the risk to Children and associated matters which might arise from the proposed budget savings for Children's Services, to which the Director of Children's Services and the Assistant Director of Children's Services (Children and Families) responded.

In respect of funding for Looked After Children, the Director was satisfied that, although a high demand across the whole of Children's Family Services was being experienced, the additional expenditure of £3million provided for should be sufficient to meet demands. In the event of the budget for looked after children being exceeded, however, whereas, in the past, it had been possible to vire monies within Children's Services from other budget heads to meet requirements, that facility was no longer an option owing to the reductions in allocations elsewhere.

The Assistant Director (Children and Families) confirmed that numbers of looked after children had risen steadily over the previous five years and that, although the numbers of new children going into care had now plateaued, children were tending to stay in the system longer. External placements were necessary for the more challenging children due to capacity because of increasing demand and this factor increased the pressure on the budget for looked after children.

Regarding risk, the Assistant Director indicated that there had been an increase in Adoption and Special Guardianship Orders, and the Council was achieving completion of care proceedings on an average of 22 weeks against the government target of 26 weeks. The Director of Children's Services confirmed that monitoring of Looked after Children was rigorous and was reviewed quarterly by the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning and herself, as Director. The aim was to ensure that the system was properly supported.

Questions were asked in relation to the percentage of the Budget spent on respite provision and on the level of replacement for the Willows, to which the Director of Children's Services and the Assistant Director (Children and Families) responded. Regarding the Willows, it was confirmed that equivalent provision was being made.

In response to the question asked at the Adult, Community and Housing Services Scrutiny Committee regarding the number of full time equivalent posts would be lost, should the budget proposals proceed, it was indicated this would equate to some 112 full time equivalent posts for 2014/15.

In response to the Council's responsibilities as corporate parent, further to the question asked at the Adult, Community and Housing Services Scrutiny Committee on risk to children, The Director of Children's Services and the Assistant Director (Children and Families) confirmed that they were confident that the Council would be able to continue to act in this capacity appropriately notwithstanding the proposed budget reductions.

On the issue of children potentially at risk, the Director and the Assistant Director were satisfied that delivery could be maintained at the moment but the point was made by the Director that the unintended consequences of other agencies' financial savings could impact on the Council. Discussions with other agencies were therefore continuing and the overall situation was being monitored by the Assistant Director. The Director cautioned, however, that because of a rising number of complex referrals, further to some recent child care cases in other authorities, the increasing need to safeguard or take early interventionary measures would cause pressure and could result in a tipping point being reached.

In response to a question in relation to the High Needs Block, the Director of Children's Services indicated that discussions were ongoing on special educational needs requirements and the Plan was being monitored as implementation approached. The Board monitored where children had been placed and this influenced decision making. Children's needs were being scoped and a lot of work had been undertaken in this regard within the Directorate and with providers.

Further to reference being made to parental concerns about the continuation of such issues as home to school transport and special breaks for special educational needs pupils at the same level, the Treasurer advised that on current predictions it was likely that the Council would be limited to delivering at best the level of its statutory duties within the next three years. The issue of home to school transport was raised again later in the meeting, regarding which the Director of Children's Services indicated that alternative provision to that currently made could be feasible but that changes would be likely to require consultation and perhaps legal advice before being made.

Further to a request from a Member for the information from other authorities, as referred to in paragraph 10 of the report, to be circulated when available and analysed, the Director of Children's Services referred further to the issue of looked after children and advocated prudence in assumptions on numbers in view of the impact of the current economic situation on families in the Black Country. In relation to early intervention, the Director referred to the redesign now the subject of consultation and which, if approved, would bring to Children's Centres further involvement of partner agencies.

Reference was made to the numbers of children with Care Orders whom were placed at home and the support provided by Children's Centres with regard to those children was explained by the Assistant Director (Children and Families). The point was also made by the Assistant Director that, in appropriate circumstances, external provision was better for some children. Since children subject to Care Orders were considered on a case by case basis, predictions regarding the category of care needed were difficult.

In response to a question by the Chair in respect of paragraph 12 of the report, the Director of Children's Services confirmed that provision for looked after children, including placements, was monitored vigorously with a view to looking at more affordable options if they were available but that it had to be remembered that for some children their Local Authority placement was their home. In relation to paragraph 12, the Treasurer indicated that the injection of £3 million had been proposed to meet current demand regarding looked after children but the risk was that numbers of such children could rise further.

In reply to a question, the Treasurer indicated that an increase in Council Tax of around 40% over three years would be necessary to avoid the need for any further savings beyond the £26million budget reduction already proposed.

Further to a question on any additional grant aid that might be available to supplement the directorate's finances, the Director of Children's Services indicated that the only grants available were the Troubled Families Grant and the Dedicated Schools Grant, the latter being allocated by the Schools Forum, rather than the Council. Grants were available to the voluntary sector, however, and therefore the Directorate was seeking to support the voluntary sector in making applications as appropriate.

Further to a comment by a Member that Children's Centres be supported and their budget allocation not significantly reduced, the Treasurer responded that, although current delivery models for all Council services needed to be considered to effect the further £32million required to be saved by 2016/17, decisions taken were not within the province of officers to determine and could not be predicted by them without direction.

Further to the consideration of the report and to the discussion it was

RESOLVED:

That the budget proposals, as set out in the report now submitted be noted and that the Cabinet be asked to consider fully the priority needs of Children and Vulnerable Adults and that they consider further the reduction by £2.3 million for Children's Centres and the impact this will have at putting children at risk.

13. CHILDREN'S CENTRES - FEEDBACK

Consideration was given to the report of the Chair circulated by him to Members of the Committee and included on the Committee Management Information System as a supplementary document, in respect of which it was RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning be recommended:

That the report of the Chair be approved as the report of the Committee on the scrutiny of Children's Centres and that:

1. Local Partners, during the consultation period, work together to develop alternative proposals that support the future development of integrated services in relation to early intervention. This should include proposals for 5 hubs rather than the 4 currently proposed.
2. Local Partners should explore opportunities for Children's Centres to become Community Hubs for health, social care and other services such as Credit Unions, Citizen's Advice Surgeries and be the meeting place of choice for community groups.

3. Anecdotal evidence gathered during visits to Children's Centres by Committee Members highlighted the importance of Health Workers introducing families to Children's Centres and that the Committee believes that there are untapped opportunities to improve the reach of Children's Centres particularly in relation to Health Workers sign posting prospective families to Children's Centre Services and that work should be done to build on this over the next 12 months.
4. Services provided from Children's Centres should continue to give regard to evidence based practice.

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JANE PORTER

This being the last meeting of the Committee attended by Ms Porter prior to her impending retirement from the Council's service, the Chair and other Members paid tribute to Ms Porter's outstanding service to the authority, during which she had continued unstintingly to represent the voice of the Borough's children in an unprecedented time of change and challenge. Ms Porter, in turn, thanked the Committee for their support during her period of office.

RESOLVED

That the Committee place on record its appreciation of Ms Porter's service to the Council and the children of the Borough during her period of office.

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm

CHAIR

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee – 18th February 2014

Report of the Interim Director of Children's Services

The Annual Report of Dudley Safeguarding Children Board 2012-13

Purpose of Report

1. To present to Children's Services Scrutiny Committee the Annual Report of the Safeguarding Children's Board 2012-13.

Background

2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children requires effective co-ordination in every local area. For this reason, the Children Act 2004 requires each local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).
3. The Local Safeguarding Children Board is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in each local area will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in that locality and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.
4. The core objectives of the Local Safeguarding Children Board are set out in S 14(1) of the Children Act 2004 as follows:
 - To co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority
 - To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for that purpose
 - Protecting children from maltreatment
 - Preventing impairment of children's health or development
 - Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
 - Understanding that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully
5. The scope of Local Safeguarding Children Board's role includes safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in three broad areas of activity
 - Activity that affects all children and aims to identify and prevent maltreatment, or impairment of health or development and ensure children are growing up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care
 - Proactive work that aims to target particular vulnerable groups
 - Responsive work to protect children who are suffering or at risk of suffering harm
6. The functions of the Local Safeguarding Children Board are laid out in statutory guidance – *'Working Together to Safeguard Children'* (March 2013).

7. Dudley Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) has an independent chair in accordance with Government and Ofsted guidance. Under the new arrangements for Ofsted inspections of Local Authority arrangements for safeguarding children safeguarding boards will be subject of inspection. The evaluation schedule for the inspection of boards can be found at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/children-and-families-services/for-children-and-families-services-providers/inspecting-children-and-families-services/inspect-12>.
8. The Dudley Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report (enclosed) provides an outline of the key achievements and developments during 2012-13 and progress in respect of its key priorities.

Finance

9. Dudley Safeguarding Children Board has annual budget of £222,500 for 2013/14 financial year, receiving core funding from the local authority (52%), Primary Care Trust (26%) and West Midlands Police (6%). The remainder of income is received from contributions from other partner agencies and through training.
10. The local authority funds the Head of Safeguarding & Review post and a number of administrative posts within the Safeguarding & Review Unit which contribute directly to supporting the business of the Board.

Law

11. The key legislation underpinning the work of the Local Safeguarding Children Board is the Children Act 2004, supported by statutory *Working Together to Safeguard Children* guidance.

Equality Impact

12. The work of the Dudley Safeguarding Children Board supports parents, families, communities and partner agencies in providing safe homes and environments, security and stability for all children and young people in the Borough. The Dudley Safeguarding Children Board responds to the needs of vulnerable groups to minimise the incidence of child abuse and neglect to ensure that all children can maximise the opportunity to achieve positive outcomes.

Recommendation

13. Children's Services Scrutiny committee receive and comment on the report.



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Interim Director of Children's Services

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List of Background Papers

Appendix 1 – DSCB – Executive Summary

Dudley Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2012-13 -

<http://safeguardingchildren.dudley.gov.uk/what-is-the-safeguarding-children-board/business-plan/>

Dudley Safeguarding Children Board

'Working Together to Keep Children & Young People Safe'



What is Dudley Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB)?

The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how relevant organisations will co-operate and work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Dudley, and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.

Safeguarding children – the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm – is *everyone's responsibility.*'

Safeguarding means:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

The Board is made up of senior representatives from a range of organisations from the statutory and voluntary sector. The LSCB is not accountable for operational work, but holds partners to account on the effectiveness of their safeguarding services for Dudley's children and young people.

The Board is chaired independently by Roger Clayton.

<http://safeguardingchildren.dudley.gov.uk>

promoting an understanding that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
improving the safety and wellbeing of children and young people across all communities
developing safer services and employment practices across all organisations



Working together to keep children and young people safe

What does DSCB aim to achieve?

Since its inception in April 2005, Dudley Safeguarding Children Board has been working to 3 key objectives. In order to achieve this Dudley Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) will work to ensure that:

- *All* children and young people have safe environments to help promote their welfare and well-being
- Action is targeted at *vulnerable groups* such as disabled, children in care; and
- Responses to children who have been harmed to minimise lifelong impact are co-ordinated and effective

The revised 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' guidance (2013) requires the Chair of the LSCB to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding in their local area:

- DSCB's responsibility to **co-ordinate** work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people
- DSCB's responsibility to ensure that local work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people is **effective**

How will the Board achieve its aims?

The Board has a number of defined functions and responsibilities, which are outlined within statutory guidance known as 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' and underpinned by the Children Act 2004 and LSCB Regulations 2006. These are:

- Thresholds, policies and procedures
- Training & Development
- Communicating and raising awareness
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Participating in planning and commissioning
- Functions relating to child deaths and Serious Case Reviews

What safeguarding activity happened during 2012-13?

From a population of 74,830 children and young people aged 0-19, during 2012-13:

- ⇒ 386 children were reported as missing from home to the Police, an average of 32 children per month;
- ⇒ 989 children (under 18 years of age) were victims of recorded crime, of which 26 were victims of knife crime and 6 victims of gun crime
- ⇒ 40 young people (under the age of 18 years) were charged with drug related offences, 39 of whom were in respect of Class B drugs and 1 young person in relation to Class A drugs
- ⇒ there were 6,653 referrals made to Children's Social Care
- ⇒ Section 47 child protection investigations took place in respect of 625 children and young people
- ⇒ there were 281 child abuse recorded crimes by the police and 90 cases were detected as child abuse related offences
- ⇒ 1516 notifications were made to social care involving children living within the household where a domestic abuse incident had taken place
- ⇒ 117 child protection medicals were undertaken by a Consultant Paediatrician or other suitably qualified clinician
- ⇒ 40 young people were referred to the Young People's at Risk of Sexual Exploitation Panel
- ⇒ there were 170 concerns or allegations in respect of people who work with children, leading to 114 independently chaired 'Position of Trust' Complex Strategy Meetings concerning 80 individual members of the workforce
- ⇒ there were 182 Initial Child Protection Conferences, 21 'Receiving-In' Conferences and 332 Review Conferences – a total of 354 children were the subject of an Initial Child Protection Conference

As at 31st March 2013:

- ⇒ 3082 children (around 4% of all children and young people) were defined as 'in need' by children's social care,
- ⇒ 248 children and young people were subject to a child protection plan
- ⇒ 730 children and young people were looked after by the local authority

What did we do during 2012-13?

- ⇒ Made progress in respect of our previous years 3 key priorities, for example:
 - Introduced new inter-agency child protection standards aimed at improving the consistency and quality of inter-agency child protection practice
 - Increased the number and completion of common assessments to help ensure that children and young people who are vulnerable received earlier support and help to meet their needs;
 - Strengthened inter-agency responses to children & young people at risk, or who have suffered, sexual exploitation or abuse
- ⇒ Introduced new inter-agency guidance for frontline practitioners and their managers in respect of professional resolution/escalation, serious or significant safeguarding incidents, standards of recording, protecting children living in highly resistant families or who move across local authority borders
- ⇒ Facilitated a total of 8612 safeguarding training places, of which 1730 places were part of the multi-agency training programme, with an additional 730 people attending briefings conducted by DSCB
- ⇒ Facilitated a major Conference and launched a public awareness campaign on Child Sexual Exploitation in May 2012, just ahead of the London Olympics
- ⇒ Concluded and published a Significant Incident Learning Process (SILP) in respect of Child D in June 2012 and a Serious Case Review in respect of Child C in April 2013
- ⇒ Conducted 35 reviews of expected and unexpected child deaths
- ⇒ Held a series of events as part of European Safer Internet Day in February 2013, attended by over 500 adults and children



How well did we do it and what difference are we making?

The Board is highly committed to improving both the consistency and quality of safeguarding practice across services working with children, young people and their families.

During 2012-13, over 500 individual cases were audited by partners on the Board and a range of improvements implemented to improve both the quality and effectiveness of safeguarding practice.

In respect of multi-agency safeguarding training, 92% of delegates said that the training was excellent or very good in respect of 'usefulness in terms of their practice' and 92% described the quality of training as 'excellent' or 'very good'.

The Board's will be working to strengthen the 'voice' and participation of children, young people and their families during the next 12 months as part of its commitment to continuous learning and improvement.

The full annual report contains some examples of impact and how agencies and safeguarding is making a difference in promoting the wellbeing of children and young people in Dudley. The Board will continue to strive to improve the outcomes of all, and the most vulnerable children, through effective partnership working at all levels. For most, this will mean continuing to live with their families and in their communities, but for a small number it is necessary to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded through the provision of 'care' – in 2012-12, 151 children became looked after by the local authority as a result of 'abuse or neglect'.

What difference are our safeguarding arrangements?

The last external judgement of Dudley's safeguarding arrangements was made by Ofsted in January 2012 – they were deemed to be 'adequate with good capacity to improve'.

In August 2012, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission undertook a 3-day thematic inspection of adult services' arrangements for the safeguarding of children where they are parental substance misuse or mental health services. An action plan has been developed in respect of the feedback to address key areas of improvement identified by the inspectors.

Inspections in respect of regulatory services such as early years, schools, children's homes and health trusts include their safeguarding arrangements. For example, in September 2012, 93% of child care providers in Dudley were judged by Ofsted to be either good or outstanding.

How effective are we as a Board?

Currently, there is no formal judgement of the Board's effectiveness, although this is likely to be introduced into the national inspection framework during the coming 12 months.

The Board has refreshed its own self-evaluation against the Ofsted good practice criteria as:

Good Practice Area	Self-Assessment	
	2012	2013
Governance arrangements	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Partnership working	Good	Good
Engagement with children and young people	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Business planning and relationship with Children's Trust/Partnership	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Quality Assurance	Poor	Satisfactory

What are the Board's key priorities for the next 12 months?

The Board's full Business Plan & Work Programme outlines in greater detail planned activity during the next year, taking account the risks and challenges that we face.

DSCB has set 5 key priorities for 2013-15. These are

PRIORITY 1

Improve the protection of children from abuse and neglect, through more effective inter-agency working and consistent approaches to minimising risk and strengthening resilience within families

PRIORITY 2

Improve the effectiveness of early help and intervention for children and young people who are vulnerable

PRIORITY 3

Strengthen the effectiveness of support and challenge provided by partners of the Board to improve safeguarding outcomes for children, young people and their families

PRIORITY 4

Improve inter-agency responses to young people who are at risk of, or who have suffered, sexual abuse or exploitation

PRIORITY 5

Improve the safeguarding and protection of children and young people who are living in households where there is domestic abuse, parental mental health and parental substance misuse

For more information about the work of Dudley Safeguarding Children Board go to <http://safeguardingchildren.dudley.gov.uk> or contact Graham Tilby at Safeguarding & Review Service, 6 St. James's Road, Dudley, 01384 813016 – graham.tilby@dudley.gov.uk

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee – 18th February 2014

Report of the Interim Director of Children's Services

Child Sexual Exploitation

Purpose of Report

1. To present to the Scrutiny Committee a Report on Child Sexual Exploitation and how this is being addressed by Dudley Safeguarding Children's Board.

Background

2. Child Sexual Exploitation is a form of child abuse which is complex and can manifest itself in many ways.
3. Essentially it involves children and young people (boys and girls) receiving something – for example accommodation, food, drugs, alcohol, status, 'friends' 'boy friends', gifts, money or affection in exchange for sexual activity or having others perform sexual activities on them.
4. It can occur through use of technology with or without the child / young person's knowledge for example a child / young person being persuaded / bullied / coerced to post sexual images on the internet / mobile phones. 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.
5. Public awareness of sexual exploitation has grown enormously, fuelled by media and public outrage at the pain and suffering of the victims exposed during high profile court cases. The Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups 2013, revealed the true scale of Child Sexual Exploitation and violence that children and young people are suffering from perpetrators operating in gangs and groups. *Berelowitz, S. et al (2013). 'if only someone had listened' The Office of the Children's Commissioner's Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and groups final Report. London: Office of the Children's Commissioner.*
6. National research and service case reviews identify a significant range of common features relating to this area of concern:
 - a. Violence, coercion and intimidation, 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.

- b. Perpetrators target areas where individual children and young people frequent or young people gather including shopping centres, cafes, takeaways, pubs, bus / train stations, parks, taxi ranks, children's homes, schools and colleges etc...
 - c. Perpetrators may use other young people to build initial relationships
 - d. Perpetrators can operate individually as well as part of a group/organised gang
 - e. Young people can be groomed and sexually exploited by their peers
 - f. Young people may be groomed into 'party' lifestyles where they may go to houses/flats with numerous adults and other young people. These parties introduce young people to alcohol and drugs as a means to exploit them.
 - g. The majority of sexually exploited children and young people will be hidden from public view, probably houses / flats.
 - h. Sexual exploitation may also take place over the internet, through mobile phones, online gaming and instant messaging, with social networking sites and mobile technology playing a role in the grooming process.
 - i. There are clear linkages between Child Sexual Exploitation by perpetrators and the use of alcohol and drugs as part of the grooming process to reduce resistance to abuse.
7. Dudley Safeguarding Children Board and Dudley Children's Services are represented on West Midlands Regional Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy Group which includes 7 Local Authorities and West Midlands Police and is chaired by Stephen Rimmer, seconded by the Home Office as the region's strategic leader on action against the sexual exploitation of children and other vulnerable people. The focus of the strategy group is to determine three broad themes – prevent, protect and justice. The aim of the Strategy group is to:
- Coordinate responses to Child Sexual Exploitation
 - Develop a consistent minimum standard in responding effectively to Child Sexual Exploitation in the West Midlands
 - Ensure effective multi agency arrangements to tackle Domestic Violence across the West Midlands
 - Build an intelligence and information function across the West Midlands. Support a range of work to improve collective capability
8. Looked After Children are an additionally vulnerable group to Child Sexual Exploitation and being defined as 'Absent' or 'Missing'. Dudley Safeguarding Children's Board commissioned an independent review of children and young people missing from home and care which was completed in 2013.
9. The report found that Dudley has positive strengths including good working relationships between West Midlands Police and Youth Offending Service runaway project, the genuine concern that everyone has for the young people, and In the house provision for Looked After Children.
10. A number of recommendations were made to strengthen the work currently undertaken including future development of listening and responding to the views of parents and young people, interim support whilst the young person waits to access some services, development of a strategic protocol and pathway and broader use of some existing services.

11. In the period April to December 2013 there were 29 Child Sexual Exploitation cases referred to Young Persons Sexual Exploitation Panel. Of those, 2 were reported as frequently missing to the police (3 or more occasions within a three month period). This equates to a fifth of all cases of young people in the borough (10 in total) who were reported as frequently missing during the same period.

Prevention

12. Dudley Safeguarding Children's Board has an identified Child Sexual Exploitation Lead, a Vulnerable Children's Task Group and a Child Sexual Exploitation Strategic Group to address this critical and multifaceted agenda. Dudley is well represented at Regional and National forums.
13. Dudley Safeguarding Children's Board with its partner agencies is engaged in a wide range of awareness raising and training for professionals in the Dudley Borough as well as support to parents and individual young people. A sample of the training undertaken is attached at Appendix 1. The main focus of the awareness raising is to ensure that professionals are supported in assessing a child's level of risk of sexual exploitation in a consistent manner.
14. In 2013 a Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Tool Kit and Resource Pack entitled Child Sexual Exploitation, Child Trafficking and Young Runaways was launched which provides guidance for professionals, contact details and how to report concern.

Protection

15. Dudley Young Persons Sexual Exploitation Panel is a multi agency panel that meets regularly to discuss the needs of children and young people where there is a concern that they are being sexually exploited. The remit of the panel is to:
 - Discuss young people who have been referred to agree a support package from one or more services/agencies
 - Consider the need for more specialist intervention from Dudley Street Teams and agree whether targeted or specialist intervention is required for the case in discussion
 - Gather and share information through the formal referral process with a particular focus on adults and locations, which can be considered for grading as intelligence by the police
 - Support the shared understanding, consistency and quality of responses (and provision/support) to children and young people sexually exploited and trafficked in Dudley and across it's borders
16. Dudley Safeguarding Children's Board work closely with the Community Safety Team who are represented on the Board. The focus on this collaboration is the provision of

alcohol and substance misuse services, responding to victims of domestic abuse, gang related crime and community cohesion.

17. In Dudley there are a range of Child Sexual Exploitation victim support services which are delivered directly through the Local Authority and its partners or commissioned through the voluntary and private sector. A list of service available are shown as Appendix 2.

Justice

18. All offences of alleged Child Sexual Exploitation are reported to and investigated by police teams and taken very seriously with positive action taken with all offenders and disruption tactics used (whether the victim supports a prosecution or not). Social Care and Safeguarding Services work very closely with West Midlands Police and the local Protection Unit to ensure that there is appropriate identification of potential victims, evidence gathering and information sharing through a coordinated multi agency approach.
19. It needs to be acknowledged how challenging this area of work is in relation to victim disclosure and prosecution. Perpetrators are often highly organised, determined, manipulative and highly controlling of children and young people who become victims of this activity. This then makes information sharing and evidence gathering extremely difficult. In Dudley there have to date been no prosecutions of Perpetrators of child sexual exploitation.
20. As the tactics of Perpetrators becomes more sophisticated and different mediums of contact and control are used the Police are responding proactively in terms of how Perpetrators are dealt with to maximize our ability to protect children at the earliest opportunity.

Finance

21. Dudley Safeguarding Children Board has annual budget of £222,500 for 2013/14 financial year, receiving core funding from the local authority (52%), Primary Care Trust (26%) and West Midlands Police (6%). The remainder of income is received from contributions from other partner agencies and through training.
22. The Local Authority funds the Head of Safeguarding & Review post and a number of administrative posts within the Safeguarding & Review Unit which contribute directly to supporting the business of the Board.

Law

23. The key legislation underpinning the work of the Local Safeguarding Children Board is the Children Act 2004, supported by statutory *Working Together to Safeguard Children* guidance.

Equality Impact

24. The work of the Dudley Safeguarding Children Board supports parents, families, communities and partner agencies in providing safe homes and environments, security and stability for all children and young people in the Borough. The Dudley Safeguarding Children Board responds to the needs of vulnerable groups to minimise the incidence of child abuse and neglect to ensure that all children can maximise the opportunity to achieve positive outcomes.

Recommendation

25. The Children's Services Scrutiny Committee note the content of the report.



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Interim Director of Children's Services

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Dudley Safeguarding Children Board is committed to engaging and empowering staff working with children and young people to recognise, respond and act to safeguard children & young people's well-being

Child Sexual Exploitation & Trafficking provided by Dudley Safeguarding Children's Board

Training and Awareness Raising

(No's attended)

1 day x 4 Multi Agency CSE/Trafficking training	(88)
2 hr workshops x 6	(281)
CSE Toolkit launch x 4	(260)
Teacher awareness sessions x 8	
2 x Awareness/Good Practice workshops to Children's Homes Staff / Foster Carers across Black Country (Inc Private/Independent Services)	(70+)
2 hr awareness sessions to Dudley Foster Carers / Residential Staff	(30+)

Walsall Street Teams Awareness Work

Schools and colleges	(594)
Training to staff team meetings (professionals & Carers)	(153)

Safe & Sound media campaign – posters & YouTube film
Saltmine Theatre Company Production
Conferences
Sentinel Campaign
Free online awareness programme for parents

Child Sexual Exploitation Victim Support Services

- **Children and Families Social Care Services**
- **Barnardos First Step Counselling Project** – provide 1:1 counselling service to young people up to the age of 18 years that have been sexually abused / exploited, and their parents and siblings.
- **GU Medicine (Sexual Health Services)** -sexual health screening for anyone at risk of STI, free treatment if necessary, pregnancy testing
- **Dudley Youth Offending Service** – The Manager is a member of the Young People’s Sexual Exploitation Panel, Staff undertake return home interviews for children who have been missing; Staff supervise certain young people who are sexually exploited and make referrals to other agencies as appropriate.
- **Walsall Street Teams:** Preventative Action (work in schools and small groups in residential units etc)
Provision/direct work, 1:1 and group workshops for ‘high risk’ young people,
Tertiary Prevention (treatment) for victims;
Co-ordination of YPSE panel;
Ongoing specialist advice for local agencies;
Regional and national networking and participation multi-agency forums, conferences and groups;
Awareness raising for professionals, delivery of Child Sexual Exploitation training and briefing sessions for organisations.
- **Respect Yourself & Teenage Pregnancy** - Aiming to achieve a reduction in primary and second conceptions in young people and improve the outcomes of teenage parents and their children.
- **Sandwell Women’s Aid:** Children’s Sexual Exploitation Team has a Regional Child Sexual Exploitation Coordinator that works within the Black Country area (Sandwell, Wolverhampton, Dudley and Walsall). The coordinator offers support to organisations that offer Child Sexual Exploitation support within a black country wide forum, support is also offered to individuals across the borough where service provision is limited or not currently offered. The Children’s team also offers Children’s Independent Sexual Violence Advocates (CHISVA) within the Dudley area; this is emotional support to children that have been victims of sexual violence, this team works with 11-17 year olds. Anyone wishing to access this service can call directly to refer.