

CHILDREN'S HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND EDUCATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2019

PRESENT:- Councillors Barbara Parry (Chair), Abdul Amin, Alan Bishop, Nick Martin and Bob Wright.

Also in attendance: Councillor Mary Martin (Cabinet Member for Children's Services), Anne Gray (Clinical Commissioning Group), David Haley (Corporate Director Children's Services), Sonja Leith (Wiltshire Police) Detective Superintendent Debra Smith (Wiltshire Police) and Bernice Weiss (Lead Safeguarding Advisor – Swindon Borough Council).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Matthew Courtliff (Vice-Chair), Fay Howard, Oladapo Ibitoye, Carol Shelley, Bazil Solomon and Nadine Watts, and Gill May (Clinical Commissioning Group) and Alison Paul (Swindon Association of Special School Headteachers).

21. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting.

Councillor Barbara Parry made a personal and non-prejudicial declaration of interest as she worked for Ridgeway School.

22. Public Question Time

No public questions were received during the meeting.

23. Swindon's Multi-Agency Response to Child Exploitation and Missing Children

The Committee considered a report by Jeanette Chipping, Child Exploitation and Missing Manager, providing an overview of multi-agency work currently being undertaken in Swindon to address the issues of Child Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Missing Children. A presentation of the report by David Haley, Jeanette Chipping, Anne Gray (Designated Nurse) Sonja Joseph (Virtual School Head) highlighted the following issues:

- The importance of work in relation to Swindon's Multi-Agency Response to Child Exploitation and Missing Children and a presentation to all Councillors in December 2018 in respect of the issue and work being undertaken by partner organisations at that time.
- The way in which the Council, Police, Health organisations and other agencies were working effectively together to strengthen the protection offered to children and young people against Child Exploitation.

Health

- The newly created Information Sharing System operated by the National

Health Service which allowed authorised healthcare professionals and administrative staff to share information in relation to Female Genital Mutilation and ensuring concerns raised would be captured.

- That there was a Mandatory Reporting Duty in healthcare introduced in the Serious Crime Act (2015) legislation and that Section 73 of that Act requires regulated health and social care professionals and teachers to report to the police cases of FGM in girls under 18.
- That there was a FGM Enhanced Dataset which was the information standard for all NHS organisations and detailed which information should be recorded within healthcare records about FGM (the Great Western Hospital was part of this system that went live in September 2018).
- On-going NHS training for staff, in particular midwives with 25 staff currently having received this FGM training.
- That all acute Trusts report to Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) their activity regarding FGM through safeguarding schedules which was then reported quarterly to NHS England.
- The challenges of training and operating a new reporting system.
- The low number of FGM cases identified locally and work to confirm this was representative.
- That a Multi-agency Risk Panel (MARF) is attended by the Designated Nurse for Looked After Children to ensure that the CCG is aware of individual children at risk. Concerns raised around Looked After Children are shared with the Named Nurse for Looked After Children.
- The role of the Designated Nurse for Looked After Children in attending a Priority Focus Child Exploitation Group for the CCG so that the CCG has strategic oversight of CSE, CE and Missing Children.
- The role of the CCG in leading on one action from the CE delivery plan in relation to awareness and prevention and ensuring that agencies are raising awareness of CE and identifying resources to raise awareness of CSE and CE.
- That a member of the Children Looked After Health Team attended all Missing and Looked After Children strategy meetings, sharing information with other health agencies including GPs as required.

Council

- The commissioning of an independent review of Child Exploitation and Missing Children in May 2018, and the implementation by the Council of key findings and recommendations including:
 - A reduction in the number of Multi-agency group meetings across the partnerships in relation to Child Exploitation and Missing Children to avoid duplication.
 - The development of a multi-agency strategy (into focused work on Child Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation and Missing Children) and a plan on a page to focus work and understanding on key areas under the moniker of GUARD (Governance, understanding of the situation in Swindon, Awareness and Prevention, Response and Disruption Response).
 - Work under GUARD relating to Child Exploitation (including County Lines and drug exploitation), CFE, Missing Children, Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery, Cyber Exploitation and Radicalisation which lead to the

creation of a Child Exploitation Delivery Plan.

- The development of a new approach to safeguarding adolescences, when it is recognised that the main risk is coming from outside of the family (Contextual Safeguarding) and work undertaken with Wiltshire Council.

Multi-Agency

- Swindon's response to Missing Children, which in the recent OFSTED positive feedback. There had been a significant reduction in the number of children going missing in Swindon.
- The multi-agency mapping of vulnerable children which resulted in exploitation being identified and disruption taking place.
- Intervention by the Youth Offending Team exploring exploitation both to individual young persons and the widening of risk to other children, connections being young people and adults trying to exploit them and in trying to prevent children becoming criminalised.
- The creation of a Digital Investigation and Intelligence Unit by Wiltshire Police.
- Early intervention work being undertaken by the Family Service, Youth Engagement Workers and the Police.
- The work of the Pan Swindon and Wiltshire Violent Crime Executive in relation to serious violence, including information sharing and the development of a joint approach to education relating to exploitation and knife crime.
- Police activity during County Lines operation which resulted in 63 people being arrested across Swindon and Wiltshire; drug gang leaders were targeted in the operation and the level of County Lines activity taking place in Wiltshire to close the lines down.
- A forthcoming multi-agency debrief arising from the County Lines operation.
- Increased understanding of the risks to children outside of the family and adopting the Contextual Safeguarding approach.
- The work of further education and alternative providers to deliver a two week 'Save a Friend' event which focussed on criminal exploitation and knife crime, (a leaflet was produced for the families of home educated children).
- Positive feedback from OFSTED in relation to work by the Council to reduce the risk of child exploitation.
- The success of the recent County Lines operation across Wiltshire.
- The identification by the multi-agency risk panel (MARF) of adults potentially exploiting children, themes used to exploit children and hotspots used by children at risk.
- Disruption tools used by multi-agency partners both locally and nationally.
- Joint partnership working to tackle Domestic Abuse.
- The work of the Fair Access Panel in co-operation with schools within the Borough.

Challenges

- The low number of FGM cases being identified and how partners were engaging with local communities to identify and deal with this issue.
- The reduction in number of children being identified as at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation and work by officers to reassure authorities that they could

be confident that children are not being missed.

- The challenge of children on part-time timetables or who regularly move schools because potentially these children were at greater risk of being exploited if they aren't at school.
- Ways to tackle persistent absence from school.
- Increasing knowledge of ideas that work locally and nationally in preventing child criminal exploitation and identifying what additional resources might be needed to further this work.

Future Actions

- A review of the FGM Protocol and the low numbers of children identified to increase joined up working and to agree future actions. This would be led by the Community Safety Partnership.
- Child Sexual Exploitation national day on the 1st in March with Swindon wide events to highlight CSE. This would be led by the Child Exploitation and Missing Focus Group.
- The reduction in the number of children on part-time timetables and school moves with a roll out of an electronic monitoring system to be tested in 2020.
- Implementing the contextual safeguarding approach across Swindon.
- A Police review of its policing footprint within the partnership model.

Following the presentation Members of the Committee challenged Council officers and representatives of partner organisations in respect of:

- When profiling of FGM cases identifying ethnic and cultural backgrounds whether community leaders were approached to offer leadership in work to influence change.
- The work of the Police in liaising with community leaders and the sharing of work and best practice across the region in this and other areas.
- Examples of education provided by multi-cultural community groups to effectively deter illegal actions within sections of those communities.
- The involvement of Oxford Health Mental Health teams within the partnership work relating to Child Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation and Missing Children and the resourcing of this work to permit a timely response.
- The differences between family and gang related child exploitation.
- The role of schools in identifying and reducing incidents of missing children.
- Work with young people to help them recognise the need for change to avoid their exploitation and trauma related training for staff dealing with young people.
- Examples of joint work involving Ward Councillors, the Police and local people to identify and tackle local criminal activity. There was a recognition that a relationship with local communities needed to be built to make this type of interaction effective.
- The need for agencies to report outcomes back to local communities in order to encourage their interaction.
- The reasons for children changing schools at the behest of their parents and a recognition that usually part-time educational timetables were used for children with medical needs.
- The monitoring and outcomes of the pilot "Call In" Intervention on knife crime in Swindon.

- Schools that participated in FAKE (Fire Arms and Knife Education) educational sessions.
- Whether budgets could be utilised more effectively to undertake more outreach work with young people in the community and work to provide school, community and school based working.
- The future roll-out of compulsory Child Exploitation training for all Council staff.

Resolved - (1) That officers be requested to arrange a presentation for all Councillors in early 2020 regarding Swindon's Multi-Agency Response to Child Exploitation and Missing Children.

(2) That officers be requested to investigate and report back to this Committee how greater engagement of community leaders, and wider multi-cultural communities, can be facilitated in the work of partner organisations in order to prevent Child Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation.

(3) That this Committee supports work by the Wiltshire and Swindon Police and Crime Commissioner to recruit additional police officers for Swindon and Wiltshire.

(4) That partner organisations be requested to report back to this Committee any assistance this Committee might offer to support their work in relation to Child Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation and Missing Children.

(5) That this Committee endorses the impact of work being undertaken in respect of early intervention and prevention and supports the continuation of this work by the Council and partner organisations.

(6) That, where community based intervention and prevention work is undertaken by this Council in relation to child protection, officers be requested to work with Parish Councils where possible in the provision of services.

(7) That officers investigate how the positive work undertaken by Wiltshire Police in respect of youth working can be more widely used across the Borough.