



Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation together

Cabinet meeting
29 March 2018



Telford & Wrekin
COUNCIL

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET: 29 March 2018

TACKLING CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE) TOGETHER

REPORT OF DIRECTOR: CHILDREN'S & ADULT SERVICES – CLIVE JONES

**LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR PAUL WATLING: CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN & ADULTS EARLY HELP & SUPPORT
CLLR RICHARD OVERTON, CABINET LEAD, COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP
CLLR SHIRLEY REYNOLDS, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & SKILLS**

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

- 1.1 For Cabinet Members to receive an update on the multi- agency work happening over the last 12 years in Telford & Wrekin to protect children and young people from sexual exploitation.
- 1.2 For Cabinet Members to re-state the Cabinet's collective position in respect of the review of historical and current working practices to protect children and young people from sexual exploitation within the Borough in accordance with the key principles of protecting people, listening to the voices of vulnerable people and maintaining public confidence in the work that the Council undertakes. Cabinet encourages anyone having experience of child sexual exploitation, either as a victim, survivor or as parent/ guardian or friend speaks of their experience to the Truth Project
- 1.3 To note that every time there has been new learning that has enabled services to develop resources, in terms of skilled workforce or funding, has been provided.
- 1.4 For the Cabinet to commit further resource to supporting children and young people from this exploitation and supporting survivors who have been exploited in this way in the past, particularly resources to support the Telford Truth Project and commission resource from the voluntary sector to provide on-going support to victims and survivors
- 1.5 To consider the implications of recent public announcements by IICSA that they will be coming to Telford as part of the Truth Project in the next few months to hear from victims and survivors in the area and calls and their on-going considerations and imminent decision about whether or not to include Telford as a specific part of the wider institutional inquiry.
- 1.6 For Cabinet Members to agree to circulate this report and appendices to all Members before the full Council on 10 April 2018 as important background information to enable full and effective debate

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Cabinet agree that NWG is commissioned to work with the CATE team to undertake a health check of the existing partnership working arrangements in respect of working to prevent child sexual exploitation in Telford & Wrekin and support those affected by it.
- 2.2 Cabinet delegate authority to the Assistant Director: Children's Safeguarding & Early Help in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children and Adults Early Help & Support to submit a bid to the Government's Trusted Relationships Fund to support the Council's continuing work in this area.
- 2.3 Cabinet agree that funding from the Capacity Fund should also be committed to commission partners in the voluntary sector to provide on-going support for victims and survivors generally and those who come forward as a result of the work of the Truth Project. This funding to be committed for an initial period of 2 years with a review at that time
- 2.4 Members note and acknowledge the 2 year funding contribution of £70,000 from John Campion, the Police & Crime Commissioner to support work in respect of child sexual exploitation in the Borough. This supplements the extra contributions that the Cabinet is being invited to commit to in these recommendations.
- 2.5 Cabinet agree that the Council's Capacity Fund should be used to support the appointment of a co-ordinator post to ensure the most effective liaison between the Council and the Truth Project from now until its work in Telford is completed and reported and to ensure that this takes place as soon as possible.
- 2.5 Cabinet Members note the current position in respect of the IICSA inquiry and the arrival of the Truth Project in Telford & Wrekin and commit the Council to supporting this in every way to ensure that anyone affected who wants to is aware of the Truth Project and can use the opportunity to help the whole country to learn from their experiences.
- 2.6 Following recent statements from IICSA, Cabinet recognise that the Truth Project should first complete before IICSA takes any decision on a Telford specific investigation. After this a fully informed decision on a local inquiry can be made. Cabinet confirms that this decision must be informed by independent advice on the work undertaken by all partners in stopping child sexual exploitation in the Borough and the scope and effect of any future local inquiry
- 2.7 Having done so before in September 2017 the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing and Enforcement write again to the Minister for Transport re-iterating the Council's call for standard national hackney carriage and private hire vehicle operator conditions to include provisions regarding safe-guarding and the protection of vulnerable adults and children as are currently included in this Council's conditions.
- 2.8 Cabinet Members confirm that this report and appendices should be circulated with the papers for the Extraordinary Council meeting on the 10 April 2018

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-operative Council Priority Plan objective(s)?	
	YES/NO	<i>Putting our Children and Young People first Protecting and supporting our vulnerable adults and children Ensuring that neighbourhoods are clean, safe and well-maintained</i>
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	YES/NO	<i>Stamping out child sexual exploitation is good for our entire community but supports our children and survivors who have been impacted by this crime</i>
TARGET COMPLETION /DELIVERY DATE	<i>On-going</i>	
FINANCIAL/ VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	YES/NO	<p>The Council's Service & Financial Planning Strategy includes a clear priority to protect the most vulnerable in our society and will use its resources as effectively as possible to deliver the best possible outcomes for the Community. The 2018/19 Strategy includes a Capacity Fund which will be used to fund the co-ordinator post and commission additional capacity as detailed in the report.</p> <p>The Council believes that the most appropriate way forward to give the breadth and depth of investigation required is a national Inquiry. For the reasons outlined in the report, a Local Inquiry could not deliver the same quality outcome or value for money. It is very difficult to estimate the costs of running a Local Inquiry of this nature and costs could significantly exceed the £0.350m referred to in the report. Given the high degree of uncertainty, costs associated with a Local Inquiry would need to be regularly monitored and considered as part of the development of future Service & Financial Planning Strategies.</p>
LEGAL ISSUES	YES/NO	<p>The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse [IICSA] was originally announced on 7th July 2014 by the Home Secretary and the Inquiry opened on 9th July 2015.</p> <p>Outside the ambit of the Inquiries Act 2005, most public bodies have the authority to commission an inquiry into their own activities.</p> <p>Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 requires each local authority to make arrangements to promote co-operation between itself and its partners with a view to improving the wellbeing of children in its area relating to physical and mental health and emotional well-being; protection from harm and neglect; education, training and recreation; the contribution made by them to society; social and economic well-being.</p> <p>Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 requires local authorities and their partner agencies must make arrangements to ensure that their functions are</p>

		<p>discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and any services are provided having regard to that need.</p> <p>The Children Act 2004 requires every local authority to appoint a Director of Children's Services and a Lead Member for Children's Services.</p>
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	YES/NO	<i>As detailed in the report</i>
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	YES/NO	<i>Borough wide impact</i>

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. INFORMATION

Background

Section 1 - Some facts/ explanation of the statistics

- 4.1. A number of figures in respect of CSE offences have been presented to the media without context. It is important that the Cabinet are aware of the context.
- 4.2. Reference has been made to Telford and Wrekin having the 3rd highest rate of child sexual offences at 20.6 per 10,000 population. There is a context to this - Telford and Wrekin has been working hard to identify and support victims and survivors for a long time and works hard to raise awareness of the issue. This inevitably affects the reported figures, and this is a measure of success that it does so because it helps to inform an understanding of the scale of the problem and planning strategies to combat child sexual exploitation.
- 4.3. It is very important that members note that this figure relates to child sexual offences, not child sexual exploitation alone. Child Sexual Offences cover all recorded sexual offences against children, using official Home Office statistics from all English and Welsh police forces. This has nine different categories of sexual crimes against children of both sexes under 16. The specific recorded crime of child sexual exploitation is one of those offences.
- 4.4. At the end of 2017 analysis published by the Council in the Community Safety Partnership Strategy 2017 – 2019 showed that in 2015/16:
 - **308** sexual offences against children were recorded in the borough of which:
 - 41% of those offences involved victims under 16 where the offender never physically met face to face, with these offences occurring entirely online. Police have recognised that this reflects growing use of social media.
 - In 37% of offences both the offender AND the victim were under the age of 15.
 - In 52% of offences, both offender and victim were under the age of 18.
- 4.5. Some comment has also been made of offenders' ethnic origin. This 2015/16 data also showed that 89% of offenders were white males. 2% were asian males and 1% were black males.
- 4.6. The Council has requested that West Mercia Police provide a further update on these figures and as soon as this is available, this information will be shared with members.

- 4.7. Mapped over time, the number of child sexual offences recorded in the borough has shown a significant increase since September 2014, when, using the same methodology, the rate was 6 offences/10,000. This increase mirrors measures that partners have undertaken to further raise awareness of child sexual exploitation and encourage reporting. It also matches the experience in other parts of the UK where there have been high profile cases of child sexual exploitation which have also led to significant increases in the number of child sexual offences recorded.
- 4.8. It has been repeatedly reported that the Council “only referred half of cases” between 2013 and November 2016 and that only a third of child sexual exploitation complainants were referred to the Children Safeguarding Service. This is not accurate: A referral to Children’s Safeguarding Service is just one of a number of appropriate outcomes to a contact of this type depending on the specific issue and circumstances.
- 4.9. All the contacts received a proportionate response. 33% of contacts were referred to a Children Safeguarding Service such as CATE, a further 38% were referred to another Council or partner service and the remaining 29% receiving information and advice.

Individuals working with the CATE team

- 4.10. In 2016-17, the Council’s CATE team, see below, which supports young people at risk of sexual exploitation, was working with 68 young people – 62 females and 6 males. The CATE team are currently working with 46 young people at risk of sexual exploitation. An individual who is working with the CATE is not necessarily a victim of CSE as this team works with individuals to help prevent young people becoming victims of CSE.
- 4.11. Initial contacts are made through our Family Connect Service, the single point of contact for the Local Authority. A CSE contact is recorded when the referrer has identified CSE as a potential area of vulnerability. Following the contact all information will be screened and then referred for an appropriate response which will include advice and guidance, a referral to another agency, a direct referral to the CATE team or referral to children’s safeguarding. Within this cohort there will be cases already open to either the CATE team or safeguarding services.

5. Section 2 - an explanation of the current position in respect of inquiries, actual and suggested

- 5.1. The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA) was established on 12 March 2015. (IICSA is an independent inquiry established by the Government into child sexual abuse arising from serious concerns that some organisations had failed and were continuing to fail to protect children from sexual abuse).
- 5.2. Its lines of inquiry include “An Inquiry into institutional responses to the sexual exploitation of children by organised networks”. This is explained as:

“The systematic grooming and sexual abuse of children by groups of offenders in cities and towns of England and Wales is widespread. Building upon the body of work on child sexual exploitation following specific instances in places such as Devon and Cornwall, Oxford, Rochdale, Rotherham, and Telford, this investigation will assess the extent to which a wide range of relevant authorities have learned

lessons, implemented recommendations, and put in place effective strategies to prevent child sexual exploitation in future.

We will consider whether the police and other agencies are using civil prevention orders effectively; whether the current regulation of the night-time economy and taxi licensing is effective in protecting children from abuse; and whether the criminal justice system is treating victims and survivors of child sexual exploitation appropriately.”

- 5.3. The Council received confirmation from IICSA on 26 March 2018 that the Truth Project, one element of the Inquiry structure is coming to Telford as part of its on-going inquiry.
- 5.4. The Truth Project is an integral part of the Inquiry and provides the local opportunity for victims and survivors to come forward and explain, in a supported way, what happened to them. This gives the Inquiry a clear and first hand picture of what has happened in Telford in the past. The Truth Project has already been to several places across the country, recently in Nottingham, Newcastle, Bristol and Swansea. Generally their work starts with a conference with local experts to highlight local issues in respect of the sexual exploitation of children and to plan how to best serve victims and survivors in the area. The programme is widely publicised by the Inquiry.
- 5.5. Current arrangements, which are not finalised, are:
11th and 12th April 2018: Introductory Visits
- 5.6. IICSA visits Telford and meets key stakeholders to promote and explain the Truth Project, and visit suitable venues for the Truth Pop-Up venues and distributes awareness raising materials.
24th April 2018: Stakeholder Engagement Event
- 5.7. Stakeholder Engagement event in Telford inviting a wide a range of key organisations and stakeholders.
Week of 21st May 2018 and Week of 4th June 2018
- 5.8. IICSA - to deliver the Telford Will Be Heard Project at a central venue. Venues/ invitations/ bookings and high-visibility awareness-raising campaign in the town to maximise participation in the Project will be arranged independently.
- 5.9. The Council and partner agencies will of course be working to support this Inquiry. (See the recommendation contained in this report regarding the funding of a dedicated liaison officer to liaise with the Inquiry team in the planning of the local arrangements to ensure that its time here in Telford is as effective as it can be).
- 5.10. A copy of the News release from IICSA confirming these arrangements is include in Appendix 1.
- 5.11. The Council welcomes this commitment from IICSA and has to consider the impact of this on existing calls for a local inquiry.
- 5.12. The Council continues to be transparent. It accepts that there is a serious issue to be addressed and wants to understand better and stop the sexual exploitation of children within Telford & Wrekin. This is why it has already commissioned two reviews, an independent review and a scrutiny review. In March 2018, The Home Office has said

to media: "Telford and Wrekin Council's own scrutiny committee undertook a robust review of its response, which does not suggest it is a council in denial".

5.13. These reviews have addressed the post 2006 period but not the position prior to 2006, now dating back more than 20 years: The Truth Project will allow this historical and any more recent perspectives to be addressed.

5.14. The position of IICSA into a Telford specific reviews has been clarified in a statement on its web-site on 28 March 2018 as follows:

"We have reviewed the reports and other papers sent to us by Telford and Wrekin Council. They show the council is taking steps to address child sexual exploitation. In our investigation into child sexual exploitation by organised networks, we are currently looking at documents gathered from institutions within a number of different local authority areas. We will consider whether we need further information from Telford and Wrekin Council as we plan for the next phase of this investigation"

5.15. Paragraph 5.16 outlines the differences between a statutory and a local inquiry but there is an important point for members to consider alongside this. The inclusion about whether or not to include Telford as a specific site in the national Inquiry is being made by that Inquiry. The inquiry is led by Professor Alexis Jay OBE, the person who chaired the Rotherham inquiry and who is widely acknowledged as the leading expert in this field. If the conclusion is that Telford should be included in the IICSA inquiry than that would indicate that there was further learning to do in Telford and the involvement of the IICSA inquiry would be welcomed by the Council for that reason. If however, IICSA determine that there is no need for Telford to be included in the wider inquiry then that is an important consideration for members considering a local inquiry.

5.16. In terms of deciding how best to move forward the issues can be summarised as follows:

Issue	IICSA	Local Inquiry
Establishment	IICSA is a statutory inquiry already established and working across the country.	A local inquiry would need to be designed and established locally.
Timescale	IICSA plan to arrive in Telford to start work to being the Truth Project within the month.	It would be reasonable to plan for it to take up to 3 months for an independent local inquiry to be established and begin hearings. Depending upon the scope of the terms of reference an inquiry could take more than 6 months to complete hearings and report back.
Powers	Hearings are held in public (whilst protecting victims and survivors) IICSA's Truth Project enables people to come forward confidentially.	A local Inquiry could be held in private.
	The inquiry has the power to compel Council, Police, Health and retired employees of these	A local inquiry has no power to compel former employees, (and given the timescales involved many have now left the Council)

	<p>organisations to give evidence.</p> <p>Evidence is given under oath.</p>	<p>police, health or other agencies to give evidence.</p> <p>Evidence is not given under oath.</p>
Duplication	<p>IICSA's confirmation that they are coming to Telford means that there could be duplication and/or disengagement with a second, locally commissioned, inquiry.</p>	<p>Victims are faced with the prospect of giving evidence twice. Notwithstanding the extra emotional impact that this could have it could reduce the engagement with the local inquiry which would in turn impact/ on the quality of the findings of such an inquiry.</p>
Budget	<p>Centrally funded.</p>	<p>In the absence of alternatives a local inquiry would be funded locally but, as there is an alternative (and, it is suggested, a more effective alternative) there is a question about whether a second, local inquiry would be the best use of public funds. Officers would advise members make provision for a budget of £350,000 if a local independent inquiry is initiated. (Depending upon the nature of any inquiry established the figure could be significantly more than this).</p>
Public confidence	<p>IICSA is independent of central and local Government.</p>	<p>Given the limitations above a local inquiry is unlikely to give the victims or the public the answers that they are looking for.</p> <p>Telford & Wrekin Council would be involved in the appointment of the Chair and set the terms of reference and remit would be limited to the time after the Council was created – 1 April 1998.</p>
Independence	<p>IICSA is independent from all influence.</p>	<p>Establishing a local inquiry would always risk allegations that the local authority was looking to protect its position through the approach that it took to the inquiry.</p> <p>There is potential for conflict of interests – this issue covers successive administrations and risks</p>

		issues of conflict of interests of councillors involved in decision making.
“Pre 2006” Historical – more than 20 years ago	IICSA Truth Project will enable this to be addressed in the way that will be support the survivors from that time.	Practically speaking, taking into account the limitations of the powers of a local inquiry there is very little relevant knowledge still within the Council. (As above, former employees cannot be compelled to give evidence).

6. Section 3 - current arrangements for the work to prevent the sexual exploitation of children including how to identify and work with children at risk of CSE, take action to safeguard them and promote their welfare and take action on perpetrators

- 6.1. The Children Abused Through Exploitation, (“CATE”), team is a team of Council officers who work in partnership with key agencies and children at risk of sexual exploitation supporting activities to safeguard and promote children’s welfare and supporting actions against perpetrators and developing prevention strategies.
- 6.2. The CATE team has developed over the years and is central to the ability of local agencies to protect children from sexual exploitation. Their experience is that young people who are at risk from sexual exploitation will not effectively engage with social workers or Police. The CATE team provides this vital link and help to break down that barrier.
- 6.3. The CATE Team is committed to identifying and working with young people who are at risk of sexual exploitation. They build positive and trusting relationships with the young people to increase awareness and reduce their risk of becoming a victim. Each young person is allocated a CATE practitioner who assesses, plans, coordinates and delivers the appropriate intervention for that young person. The team works in partnership with all relevant agencies such as Police, Safeguarding Social Workers, Education, Health Services and organisations from the voluntary sector.
- 6.4. The CATE Team is successful in gaining the trust of young people who are hard to engage due to the methods perpetrators use in grooming and child sexual exploitation. They help the young people to trust and engage with other professionals such as the Police. They support young people to access other services/agencies as needed. The team works with young people for as long as it takes and for as long as the young person wants their support.
- 6.5. Each young person referred to CATE has a risk assessment that informs a tailored package of support provided. The CATE team works with young people who have very varied needs. A small group of those they work with are assessed as high risk and are likely to be victims of CSE or are suspected to have suffered past abuse. A number of young people who present with complex needs which would include being vulnerable to exploitation where indicators of child sexual exploitation are present. There is a further cohort where, within the presenting information and assessment, there are some vulnerabilities in terms of child sexual exploitation and then young people who are working with universal services.
- 6.6. The Team’s specialist pathway includes a referral, multi-agency risk assessment, planning and risk panel process and service for each young person considered to be

at risk from sexual exploitation. Parents, if they are aware of the risks, do everything that they can to keep their child safe from sexual exploitation and they are central to the Team's ability to develop safe plans and interventions to reduce the risks.

- 6.7. The Team has got stronger over the years and has been responsible for awareness raising, encouraging the reporting of crimes of this nature, supporting the victims and their families and pursuing allegations that they receive.
- 6.8. Their actions have been successful. There has been a significant increase in the reporting. In the 5 years since Operation Chalice, the Police, working as part of the CATE team continue to investigate serious allegations of sexual exploitation. In 2016, in a time of drastically diminishing resources and budgets across the public sector the CATE team had its funding increased by £180,000 annually by the Council.
- 6.9. The CATE team is constituted of 7 dedicated people, a manager and 6 practitioners.
- 6.10. National support is provided by a charity called NWG who are funded by the Government to offer support and advice to those working with children and young people affected by sexual exploitation. The CATE team continue to work with this organisation and have recently invited them to come to Telford to review our existing arrangements/ current working practice, focussing particularly on partnership arrangements to take advantage of their experience across the Country. NWG is coming to Telford later this year. Through NWG the CATE team also shares their expertise with other authorities dealing with the same threat across the Country.
- 6.11. One case of child sexual exploitation is one case too many. If anyone has any concerns, they should contact police in the first instance by calling 101, call Childline on 0800 1111 or report to Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) online.
- 6.12. The partners, led by the Police have a campaign called "Tell Someone". Supported by all Partners it is specifically designed to raise awareness of child sexual exploitation across 4 localities in the West Mercia region including Telford & Wrekin and provide another pathway in for people who may be directly affected or have concerns for someone they know that might be directly affected.

7. Section 4 - historical context of the work in the past to prevent and protect children and young people from sexual exploitation

- 7.1. The sexual abuse of children is, sadly, not a new phenomenon but the abuse of children through sexual exploitation is a crime only recently recorded. Before 2006 there was not the awareness nationally and locally to Telford & Wrekin that this occurred in the widespread and organised way that has subsequently come to light. From 2003, the Council's Area Child Protection Committees and partners were leading work to address incidences of sexual abuse and raise awareness of the sexual abuse of children.
- 7.2. In 2006 the local Safeguarding Children Board developed an action plan to tackle and record sexual exploitation of children. As reports of this type of abuse increased additional resources and specific strategies were put in place to support children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation.
- 7.3. (NOTE - Local Safe-Guarding Children Boards were established by law from 2004 – an Independently chaired partnership board consisting of, amongst others, representatives from the local Council, Police, probation services and the Youth Offending team, NHS and the local clinical commissioning group and CAF/CASS

(Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service), lay-members and local education representatives who, together, have the statutory duty of developing local safe-guarding policies and producing and scrutinising local arrangements).

- 7.4. A dedicated team to deal with the sexual exploitation of children was introduced in Telford & Wrekin in 2006. It was originally known as the CATE Project. Closer working relations developed with the Police from 2008. Operation Chalice commenced in January 2009 and Child Sexual Exploitation was adopted as a key strand of concern for the local Safe-Guarding Children Board.
- 7.5. In 2013 successful joint work between the Police and the Local Authority under the name Operation Chalice, a 3 year police investigation, led to the successful conviction for various child sex offences for 7 men, sentenced, between them to 49 years imprisonment. Offences ranged from sexual abuse, trafficking, prostitution, rape, sexual activity with children and inciting child prostitution. These were amongst the first successful convictions for these types of offences in the country.
- 7.6. In 2010, 2011 and 2012 there were 3 unannounced inspections of Children's Services by OFSTED where partnership arrangements were identified as being an effective way of supporting children and young people who were at risk of exploitation and vulnerable to exploitation.
- 7.7. In the following years and to date, a lot of work continues to provide training on, raise awareness of, and deal with individual cases of child sexual exploitation.
- 7.8. In 2012, commissioned by the local Safe-Guarding Children's Board, Newstart, a community interest company completed a review of Child Abuse through Exploitation Learning from 2008 – 2013. Reporting in 2013 the conclusion commented that

“Telford & Wrekin is to be commended for the work it has undertaken in order to protect young people from CSE. In this Review it has become clear that the focus was on the ‘rescue’ of the young women involved and that knowledge and resources evolved very quickly from 2006. A specialist team was created, systems were put into place and multi-agency working was encouraged as part of that rescue process.”
- 7.9. A copy of the report is attached at Appendix 2
- 7.10. The report's Conclusion and Next Steps informed the development of a work programme to manage the future response to child sexual exploitation within the Borough.
- 7.11. This was followed up in April 2014 with a local Safeguarding Children's Board Report – Child Sexual Exploitation Learning Overview Report. It provided assurance that the services to protect children at risk from sexual exploitation continue to develop and improve. The conclusions were:

Telford & Wrekin has been aware and actively working to reduce the risk of CSE to children and young people for a number of years. During this period there has been a significant police operation which, with the support of the Council and other partners and organisations, has resulted in the successful prosecution of a number of perpetrators of CSE.

Telford's journey with CSE has enabled a significant amount of learning to have taken place which has been used very proactively in developing a multi-agency and partnership response to tackling and supporting children, young people and their families who are at risk from CSE.

This learning has enabled a CSE Care Pathway to have been developed and implemented which offers an effective model for addressing CSE. Partnership arrangements and the commitment to continuous learning and development of our response and services to children, young people and their families affected by CSE are fully supported by the LSCB

- 7.12. Following the publication of the Independent Inquiry into Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham in 2014 the Safeguarding Children Board (including Council officers) reviewed the report and its findings. The 15 recommendations within the Rotherham report were used to inform the multi-agency action plan for 2014/15. This action plan has been completed.
- 7.13. In November 2014 the Children and Young Persons Scrutiny Committee started a review of Child Sexual Exploitation. This took 18 months and was supported by a senior members and officers including the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, the Director of Children's Services and the Chair of the Local Safe-guarding Children's Board. A copy of the report and the recommendations of the Committee, published in May 2016, are included in Appendix 3.
- 7.14. (NOTE –the work of the Scrutiny Committee was recognised by the CLG Select Committee report into the Effectiveness of Local Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committees in December 2014
- “it was encouraging to receive evidence from Telford and Wrekin Council's Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee about the significant work it has undertaken to assess its own practice and performance in relation to child sexual exploitation”*
- 7.15. The Scrutiny Committee made 38 recommendations for improvement which included developing more of a co-ordinated approach to Child Sexual Exploitation, raising greater awareness of the issue generally, including in schools from primary age upwards, better support for victims and setting up a helpline. It was agreed, when the Report was considered by Cabinet on 21 July 2016, that the implementation of these recommendations would be overseen by the Local Safe-guarding Children Board. Since then the Board has received regular reports about progress against the implementation of these recommendations. An interim report in January 2017 was followed by the latest report from the local Safe-guarding Board, dated 12 September 2017, updating scrutiny on the implementation of these recommendations, included in Appendix 4.
- 7.16. To show the width of the impact that this report has had, in April 2017 new conditions for licence for hackney carriages and private hire vehicles required drivers to be provided with a designated CSE contact for them to use to raise confidential concerns and all operators now must display material raising awareness of child sexual exploitation at their premises. There is a recommendation to Cabinet in this report that this work is followed up again to influence national best practice in this area. A copy of the letter is at Appendix 5.
- 7.17. In June to July 2016 the Council received its Single Inspection framework OFSTED inspection. This was a four week inspection that covered the whole of Children's Social Care and included a review of the Local Safe-Guarding Board. No specific recommendations were made in respect of the Council's work on protecting children from sexual exploitation. (The service was judged to be “requires improvement to be good”. The Local Safeguarding Board was judged to be Good).

7.18. However, reporting on 26 August 2016 OFSTED did comment

“Work with children and young people at risk of sexual exploitation is very strong. The local authority has been a champion for tackling this issue. It provides leadership to partner agencies, with who this work is well co-ordinated. Work to protect children who go missing from home or care is thorough and improving”

7.19. and

“There is a strong commitment from the local authority and its partners to tackle child sexual exploitation. A dedicated children abused through exploitation team (CATE) provides good quality risk assessments, planning and interventions. Although relatively small, the team also reviews progress and updates plans effectively. Consequently, young people receive comprehensive and well-co-ordinated services that make a positive difference.”

7.20. There were reports in a national newspaper in September 2016 about the sexual exploitation of children in Telford.

7.21. Council met on the 22 September 2016 to consider a motion, (as reflected in the Minutes approved by Council on the 24 November 2016)

Councillor A J Eade moved, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 7, the following Motion:

“This Council notes with extreme concern the recent reports concerning vulnerable children in Telford & Wrekin and calls on the current Administration to:-

Present a comprehensive plan at the November Full Council Meeting demonstrating a clear commitment to the improvement of Children’s Services and detail exactly how the administration intends to raise all Children’s Services in the Borough to a minimum standard of ‘Good’.

Also to present to the same meeting, details of measures the current Administration.

Will now introduce to ensure that vulnerable children in the Borough are fully protected in future and precisely how it will tackle the serious problems currently facing the Borough.”

Councillor T J Nelson seconded the Motion.

Following a lengthy debate and clarification that the Motion did not seek support for the commissioning of an Independent Inquiry, the motion was unanimously approved.

RESOLVED – that the motion be approved

7.22. This decision re-iterated the position detailed in a letter to the Home Secretary Amber Rudd signed by Senior Members and officers from the Council and from key partner organisations. A copy of the letter is appended at Appendix 6.

7.23. Following on from this motion a detailed report was considered by Cabinet on 17 November 2016 and reported to Council on the 24 November 2016. A copy of the report is included in Appendix 7. Before this Agenda item was considered the Council

was addressed by John Campion, the Police & Crime Commissioner, Andrew Mason, Chairman of the Independent Chair of the Local Safe-guarding Board and Claire Burgess, the regional representative of the Local Government Association. After debate the following Motion was carried with 28 Councillors voting for the Recommendation and 18 Councillors abstaining.

RESOLVED that the measures set out by the Director of Children's & Adult Services and Independent Chair of the Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board for raising all Children's Services in the Borough to a minimum standard of good and for ensuring that vulnerable children in the Borough are fully protected in the future be endorsed.

7.24. In January 2018 the Council approved its Community Safety Strategy "Safer Telford & Wrekin Strategy 2017 - 19" that identifies "Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and its impact on victims" as one of 3 priorities. A Report to Council dated 11 January 2018 and a copy of the Strategy is attached at Appendix 8.

7.25. Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) were developed under Section 5 to 7 of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 and are made up of representatives from:

- The Local Authority
- Police – every Chief Officer whose police area lies within the Local Authority area
- Each Fire and Rescue Authority within the Local Authority area
- Probation Services
- Health –every Clinical Commissioning Group within the Local Authority area

Who must work together to protect their local communities from crime and to help people feel safer.

7.26. In early March 2018 a national newspaper published an article about child sexual exploitation, concentrating on Telford. On 2 occasions during March 2018 the Council has written to Home Office re-iterating its support for a statutory inquiry to look into these matters within Telford & Wrekin and has also written to IICSA requesting that they bring forward and extending existing review plans to change focus to be more Telford specific. Copies of these letters are included at Appendix 9. To date there has been no response from the Home Office.

7.27. There have also been calls from other quarters, including from the local MP for Telford for a local inquiry and, recently, from local opposition members of the Borough Councillors, for an EGM to consider the following motion:

"This Meeting requests that the Cabinet of Telford & Wrekin Council approve the commissioning and implementation of a 'non-statutory' Independent Inquiry into all aspects of historical and current instances of CSE within the Borough.

"This Meeting also requests the Cabinet to instruct Council Officers to commission such an Inquiry as soon as practically possible.

"This Meeting also notes that such a 'non-statutory' Inquiry will allow the opportunity for victims and survivors to give evidence in private and free from any other pressures or interference. Such arrangements will hopefully also encourage other victims to come forward."

8. The motion has been proposed by Cllr Andrew Eade and seconded by Cllr Nigel Dugmore.

9. The EGM is due to be considered by a meeting of full Council on 10 April 2018.

Appendix No.	Document
Appendix 1	IICSA News release – 26 March 2018.
Appendix 2	Newstart – Child Abuse through Sexual Exploitation Learning 2008 – 2013 – 30 October 2013.
Appendix 3	Scrutiny Report – Everybody’s Business – Scrutiny Review of Multi-Agency Working Against Child Sexual Exploitation – May 2016.
Appendix 4	Local Children Safe-guarding Report – update on Scrutiny Recommendations 12 September 2017.
Appendix 5	Letter from Cllr Richard Overton to the Minister of State for Transport, John Hayes – 7 September 2017.
Appendix 6	Letter from partners to the Home Secretary Amber Rudd about Support for victims and survivors of child sexual exploitation and their families – 22 September 2016.
Appendix 7	Report to Full Council – Ensuring Children are Fully Protected in Telford & Wrekin – Report of the Director of Children’s & Adult Services and the Independent Chair of the Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Board – 24 November 2016.
Appendix 8	Report to Full – Community Safety Partnership Strategy 2017 – 2019 – Report of Superintendent Tom Harding, Chair of the Community Safety Partnership – 11 January 2018.
Appendix 9	Letters dated 12 (9A) and 13 March 2018 (9B) from the Director of Children’s Services, Clive Jones the David McGroarty at the Home Office. Letter (9C) dated 12 March 2018 from the Director of Children’s Services, Clive Jones to Professor Alexis Jay.

6 PREVIOUS MINUTES

6.1 As referred to in this report.

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