

**BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL**  
**CHILD EXPLOITATION WORKING GROUP**

Minutes of the Meeting held on 01 November 2022 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr R Burton – Chair

Present: Cllr E Coope, Cllr L Lewis and Cllr S Moore

Also in attendance: Cath Thomas, Interim Service Manager, Complex Safeguarding and  
Edge of Care  
Juliette Blake, Director for Safeguarding and Early Help

1. Election of Chair

Cllr Burton was elected as Chair for the working group.

2. Apologies

None.

3. Terms of Reference

Noted and accepted.

4. Child Exploitation Progress Report

The interim service manager for complex safeguarding presented the report which had previously been circulated to the working group.

The report provided an overview of the current profile of child exploitation profile in BCP and the effectiveness of partnership working to protect children and young people facing contextual safeguarding risks. The Safeguarding and Early Help Service continued to provide a specialist resource through the Complex Safeguarding Team, through which evidence indicated that a small number of young people experience robust and effective support, strengthened by strong partnership working.

For some young people however, more needed to be done to ensure that contextual safeguarding risks were recognised and addressed more preventatively, both within Children's Services and across the partnership. The report set out the strategic priorities for the service.

The working group discussed the report and presentation and comments were made, including:

- The group agreed child exploitation was a complex issue and were provided with further information about the tool used to identify those at risk of exploitation which included possible push and pull factors, that it identified whether a child was being exploited now, at significant risk or whether there were early indications which could be a cause for concern.
- The tool was currently only used by allocated social workers for their children and young people but a briefer tool was being developed for use within the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and the work of bringing partner agencies on board was highlighted.
- It was noted there was a CE tool on the Pan Dorset Safeguarding website which was being promoted for use within school settings and the follow up work which would be undertaken following the use of the tool was detailed.
- The design of the tool was detailed and the group was advised it worked well as long as the user was confident in using it and had had some training around contextual safeguarding and needed to be backed up with a robust training offer.
- In response to a query regarding identifying those being exploited or at risk who may not fall within the vulnerable or under the care of social services, the group was advised that the Pan Dorset tool was not just for social services and could be used by any agencies such as a school.
- The varying degrees of exploitation were highlighted including the use of online and social media and it was acknowledged how difficult it was to identify and what would meet the social care threshold was highlighted
- The group was advised of the work ongoing with the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) in trying to promote communications on the issues surrounding exploitation
- The work led by the Police called Safer Schools was highlighted and the work they did around exploitation within schools. The group was advised that exploitation was now mandatory part of PHSE within schools as it was acknowledged that peers would be the first to know of any emerging risks of exploitation
- The working group was advised of specific locations across BCP where young people were more likely to be targeted, certain wards where children and young people were more at risk of exploitation and the work that was undertaken by the CSP to divert and disrupt exploitation and activity within those areas
- Going forward the plan for the Multi Agency Child Exploitation Panel (MACE) would be to focus on individual children and perpetrators and the work of the CSP would be to focus on making specific locations safer
- The group was advised that there was good evidence to suggest that targeting areas and individuals through preventative programmes was beneficial in the reduction of exploitation and the turnaround programme funding was highlighted, with consideration being given to how best to target that preventative work at an early help level

- In response to a query regarding the possible negative impact due to the current vacant posts within the complex safeguarding team, or the use of agency staff, the group was advised of the full system approach which was planned as social workers alone could not fix exploitation. It was noted that the pay review being completed and the outcome of the most recent Ofsted would help to attract staff, however it was acknowledged that it was a long journey.
- It was noted that the complex safeguarding team was a small specialist resource with four social workers who had been in post between 9-18 months.
- A group member highlighted that it wasn't just those classed as vulnerable who were at risk and that greater joined up working between the Council, Police and schools was imperative to help reduce exploitation including sexual and county lines issues.
- The group was advised that children facing exploitation in the local area included knife crime, drug running and dealing and were by far the biggest concern in the area. It was highlighted that usually the child or young person's profile usually started with antisocial behaviour
- The education of exploitation within PHSE was highlighted and it was noted that it was delivered at age appropriate times within the education system
- PHSE was discussed further and how monitoring could take place to ensure exploitation was being taught within schools and the group was advised that the Virtual Headteacher worked closely with schools around exploitation and ensuring the messages were being delivered throughout the school system
- The group requested further information regarding exploitation being taught in PHSE be provided for their information.
- The group was advised of the role of the navigators who were attached to schools within BCP and were part of the early help offer. They would provide support to schools when dealing with any concerns of exploitation and provided advice on signals to be aware of
- The youth work using youth buses was highlighted and how the work had reduced and disrupted anti-social behaviour. The joined-up working was detailed which helped identify locations for the bus to visit
- A group member expressed concern about foster carers not being given information or contacts if they had concerns about exploitation or knife crime
- A group member referred to an area in their ward where anti-social behaviour occurred and that it had been highlighted to the local PCSO, but nothing seemed to change. She felt an increase in youth services may help reduce this
- A group member stated that education was key to preventing some young people being exploited and whether someone who had previous lived experience of exploitation could mentor, educate and guide children and young people

- The MYPs were highlighted as a valuable resource regarding investigating the PHSE taught and raising awareness of exploitation within their peer groups and the great work they did

The working group agreed to feedback to the Committee and decide what further actions should be progressed.

Possible actions to be considered:

- Request an update on the Tool being used by MASH at an appropriate time following its commencement
- Invite Police to brief group on work done through Safer Schools
- Invite Virtual Headteacher to brief the committee on work done with schools regarding exploitation being taught in PHSE and how is it monitored
- Invite Director of Education to provide more information regarding the work the navigators do in schools around exploitation
- Possibly invite the Youth Services officer in to discuss the work done by the youth bus
- See how the MYPs can assist in their school environment

The meeting ended at 7pm.

CHAIR