

Report for Public Petitions Committee

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) sub group of the Child Protection Committee Chairs Forum (SCPCCF)

This report is in response to a request by the Public Petitions Committee in respect of the inquiry into issues around child sexual exploitation.

This sub group was set up by the SCPCCF in May 2013 and has subsequently met on four occasions. Initially the Central and North East Child Protection Consortium agreed to be the lead Consortium for the issue of CSE but membership was open to CPCs in any area of Scotland. The remit of the group is attached to this report.

The SCPCCF was aware of disparate activity throughout Scotland on this issue and keen to be more fully informed as CSE was highlighted as an important issue on the SCPCCF workplan. As the strategic lead for child protection in Scotland, Child Protection Committees (CPCs) were keen to identify how to progress this issue.

The strength of SCPCCF sub groups is that they are embedded and report to a national forum linked closely to the Scottish Government and that there is buy in from all CPCs in Scotland

The sub group is chaired by Anne Salter Lead Officer of Clackmananshire and Stirling CPC co chaired and supported by Catriona Laird, National Child Protection Committee Coordinator, based in WithScotland.

Initial work identified

1. The main impetus and initial focus of work was to take forward a pilot in conjunction with the University of Bedfordshire, who had been commissioned by the Scottish Government to undertake an exercise to determine the scale and nature of CSE in Scotland. The University of Bedfordshire had developed various data monitoring and self evaluation tools, which had been piloted in England and actively promoted as part of England's National Child Exploitation action plan. The Scottish Government was keen to adapt and develop this material for a Scottish context, working in partnership with the University of Bedfordshire and CPCs. The sub group has been instrumental in identifying that the Forth Valley CPCs would progress this work on behalf of the Scottish Government, while some other CPCs within the C&NESPC will be involved in utilising the self evaluation tools. Forth Valley is currently working on this pilot and sharing the learning with the sub group.

2. The National Guidance for Child Protection is currently being refreshed and WithScotland is leading on this work in conjunction with the SCPCCF and partner agencies. It has been agreed that CSE requires to be expanded within the guidance. Barnardo's have contributed to this work and their contribution has been considered by CPC members on the CSE sub group.
3. The sub group has also shared and discussed recent reports and enquiries and practice issues arising from CSE. This material will be disseminated further through the WithScotland resources for professionals. There is also the opportunity to use the public pages of the website to provide appropriate messages for the public. WithScotland is a resource for child protection set up by the Scottish Government and now funded by local authorities, NHS and Police Scotland. It is in unique position to disseminate information to practitioners.
4. Links are also well established with the Child Protection Lead Officers group and the Training Coordinators group enabling work to be taken forward on a broader spectrum as regards learning and development. This link can be developed as the Chair is a member of the Lead Officer's group and the Coordinator sits on both groups.

Issues arising for the group

The sub group have had stimulating discussions around a variety of topics such as:

The definition of CSE;

Links between the statutory and voluntary sector;

Whether CSE is a stand alone topic, requiring discreet attention or linked closely to the wider work of child sexual abuse;

The need to invite wider representation on to the group in order to better identify current activity by various partnerships as CPCs are only one part of this complex jigsaw. This was by far the most challenging issue for the sub group and it was agreed that we should widen the representation and invite many new representatives of agencies and organisations active in this work.

Tasks in progress

1. There has been discussion regarding the need for a specific risk assessment tool around CSE. This issue has not been progressed as yet as it links in to other work of the SCPCCF and other wider interests.
2. The group intends to develop a template identifying current activity on CSE. This will go out to all Lead Officers of CPCs. Survivor Scotland has also agreed to map

activity in their areas of interest and there is also a possibility of achieving this across the Multi Agency Partnerships (MAPs)

3. It has also been suggested that this group consider merging with the West of Scotland CSE sub group and this will be pursued to discuss feasibility.
4. Widening the membership to include both third sector and statutory partners and be inclusive of other partnerships has resulted in good sharing of information and presentations on various new initiatives. There has also been agreement to share practice tools.

Summary

The group reports to the SCPCCF and a full report of progress will go to the meeting in December and also in March 2014. The SCPCCF will then determine whether there is further work requiring to be addressed. Future work will also be influenced by other current strategic high level activity and child protection's response.

Catriona Laird National CPC coordinator

Anne Salter Lead officer CPC Clackmannanshire and Stirling CPC