

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY



SCRUTINY PANEL 1 – CHILD SEXUAL EXPOITATION

CORE QUESTIONS – EXPERT ADVISORS

The Scrutiny Panel is currently undertaking a review that is investigating Northampton Borough Council (NBC) plays an active role in tackling Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Key Lines of Enquiry

- To gain an understanding of the work currently being undertaken by partnerships, statutory and voluntary organisations, and the Police to address these issues
- To investigate how NBC contributes to the above work
- To raise awareness of CSE, human trafficking and domestic slavery of children in Northampton
- To explore best practice elsewhere in identifying and providing support to victims of CSE
- To understand what NBC is doing outside the Scrutiny process in relation to human trafficking and domestic slavery of children

The expected outcomes of this Scrutiny Review are:

- To make evidence based recommendations to improve the role that NBC has in tackling CSE
- To make recommendations, as appropriate, regarding partnership working in tackling CSE

CORE QUESTIONS:

A series of key questions have been put together to inform the evidence base of the Scrutiny Panel:

1. Please provide details of the work currently being undertaken by your organisation to address child sexual exploitation (CSE)

Voice is the Victim and Witness Service for Northamptonshire. It aims to deliver the PCC's Police and Crime Plan objectives for victims and witnesses:-

- Supporting Victims and Witnesses
- Swift and Sure Justice

The Voice family of services works closely with statutory agencies to offer advocacy and guidance to victims of CSE as appropriate. Voice works closely with statutory services to ensure children and young people are safeguarded against CSE.

Voice Children and Young People's Service offers advocacy to all children and young people who are victims or witnesses seeking support for all crime by supporting access to commissioned and third sector support and by delivering emotional and practical support. Victims of CSE are not currently in scope of Voice CYP services as specialist support is managed by the RISE Team and through statutory safeguarding pathways in the county.

The OPCC also commissions the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) with NHS England which support children and young people and adults who have been raped, sexually assaulted or abused. Two Child's Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (CHISVA) and two adult Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA) offer support to victims who self-refer and report to the Police.

The OPCC will be recommissioning Victim and Witness Service in the county in 2017 and will include new services to help prevent CSE with partner's agencies within the county.

2. Is there a clear and robust multi-Agency strategy for information sharing, preventing and managing CSE?

Yes the Voice Services work closely within safeguarding policy and are colocated with other agencies to promote collaboration and information sharing.

3. What other multi-Agency forums exist to facilitate joint working?

N/A

4. What is the extent and profile of CSE in Northampton? How do we know this?
As the OPCC representative I sit on the County Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy Group (VAWG) and the CSE sub group tasked with overseeing and understanding our responses to CSE in Northamptonshire.

As a Victim and Witness Service receiving referrals directly from the Police, other agencies and the public we currently collate information on those who present to the service and therefore gain an understanding of the level demand and need from this data. National data is also used to inform our delivery of services.

5. How effective has NBC, its partners and the Police, been in engaging with the local community and other organisations in raising awareness of CSE?

High profile campaign for CSE in the county in the last year lead by the Police on behalf of working group.

The OPCC have led two consultations on online safety and teen relationships which have drawn a number of recommendations to improve the way services are delivered in the county.

6. How can awareness be raised further of CSE, human trafficking and domestic slavery of children in Northampton?

Bottom up engagement with communities and with agency touch points is the most effective way of continuing to spread our messages regarding CSE. This can include initiatives such as those currently targeting taxis drivers and hotel staff.

7. How is CSE incorporated into local training programmes, and who is able to access this training?

All staff in commissioned service receive training on CSE and take part in delivering training out in the community on healthy relationships.

8. What support is available to current, potential and historic victims of CSE?

All victim and witnesses can contact Voice or the SARC for support regardless of status of the offence.

9. Do you have further information regarding the role of NBC in tackling CSE?

I was only made aware of this scrutiny panel on the 4th January 2017. The information supplied is a snap shot of the service provided by the OPCC for Victims and Witnesses. As a member of the countywide strategic board for VAWG

and the CSE sub group more involvement from NBC on drawing attention to this scrutiny review would have been helpful.