

Foreword

The objective of this Scrutiny Review was to ensure Northampton Borough Council (NBC) plays an active role in tackling Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Key lines of Inquiry:

- 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 Scrutiny Panel was made up from members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee: myself, Councillors Rufia Ashraf, Janice Duffy, Brian Sargeant, Zoe Smith and Graham Walker together with other non-Executive Councillors Councillor James Hill (Deputy Chair); Councillors Muna Cali, Cathrine Russell, Danielle Stone

The Review took place between May 2016 and March 2017.

It was a very interesting and informative Review; with clear evidence received. I would like to extend my thanks to those that have taken the time to contribute to the extensive evidence base of this Scrutiny Review, by either attending a meeting of the Scrutiny Panel, or by submitting written evidence where this was not possible.

The Scrutiny Panel held interviews with the Cabinet Members, Senior Staff at Northampton Borough Council and a number of external expert witnesses. Desktop research was carried out by the Scrutiny Officer.

Child sexual exploitation is still a largely hidden crime and the Scrutiny Panel acknowledge that the way to tackle this is for Agencies to work together. I highlight that from the wealth of evidence received it became apparent that Agencies are working together in Northamptonshire on this.

Our recommendations have been based on the evidence that was submitted to us over this ten month thorough period of putting the Review together.



Councillor Dennis Meredith

Chair, Scrutiny Panel 1 – Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

Acknowledgements to all those who took part in the Review: -

- Councillors Rufia Ashraf, Janice Duffy, Brian Sargeant, Zoe Smith and Graham Walker
Councillors Councillor James Hill (Deputy Chair); Councillors Muna Cali, Cathrine Russell, Danielle Stone who sat with me on this Review, Councillor Alan Bottwood, Cabinet Member for Environment, Councillor Anna King, for providing evidence to inform the Review, Julie Seddon, Chair, Community Safety Partnership, Sophie Heasman, Senior Case Manager, Anti-Social Behaviour Unit, Sargeant Julie Parsons, Anti-Social Behaviour Unit, Detective Inspector Rich Tompkins, RISE Team, Mike Kay, Chief Executive, Northampton Partnership Homes, Keith Makin, Chair, Northamptonshire Safeguarding, Nicola Scott, Service Manager for Educational and Inclusion Partnerships, Northamptonshire County Council, Councillor Mary Markham (Leader of the Council at the time of presenting evidence to this Review), Councillor Mike Hallam, (Cabinet Member for Community Safety at the time of presenting evidence to this Review), Julie Seddon, Director of Customers and Communities and Ruth Austen, Environmental Health and Licensing Manager, NBC, Simon Ashton, E-Safety Officer, Northamptonshire County Council, Vicki Martin, Head of Commissioning, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (Northamptonshire), Jodie Low, Director, Free2Talk, Jane Dreamer, Chief Executive, ServiceSix, Dawn Thomas, Director, Northants Rape and Crisis Centre.