Appendices	
None	

NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET REPORT

Report Title	Cabinet Response to the Recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Review of Child Sexual Exploitation

AGENDA STATUS: **PUBLIC**

Cabinet Meeting Date:	17 October 2018
Key Decision:	No
Within Policy:	Yes
Policy Document:	No
Directorate:	Housing and Wellbeing
Accountable Cabinet Member:	Councillor Stephen Hibbert
Ward(s)	All

1.   Purpose

1.1   On 21 June 2017, Cabinet received a report on the findings and recommendations of an Overview & Scrutiny Panel Review of Child Sexual Exploitation.

1.2   The purpose of this report is to ask Cabinet to approve the response to the Overview & Scrutiny Panel's recommendations.

2. Recommendations

2.1   It is **recommended** that Cabinet:

(a) Accepts the recommendations included in the Overview & Scrutiny Panel's report on Child Sexual Exploitation; and

(b) Congratulates the task and finish group on a high quality and comprehensive report and thanks the group for the time and effort given to produce it.

3. Issues and Choices

3.1   Report Background

3.1.1   At its work programming event in April 2016, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee agreed to carry out a pre-decision review to ensure that Northampton Borough Council plays an active role in tackling Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). An in-depth review commenced in May 2016 and concluded in March 2017.

3.1.2   This review links to the priorities in the Council's Corporate Plan, especially 'Safer Communities – Making you feel safe and secure'.

3.1.3   The key lines of enquiry were:

- 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

3.1.4   A number of meetings were held to gather evidence from a broad range of stakeholders. During this process, a significant amount of evidence was heard.

3.1.5   The Overview & Scrutiny Panel's Report includes 11 recommendations. They are broadly focused on how the Council can raise awareness of Child Sexual Exploitation and work closely with other agencies to provide a more joined up approach to tackling and preventing Child Sexual Exploitation.

Responses to Overview & Scrutiny Recommendations

3.1.6   Cabinet accepts all of the recommendation in the Overview & Scrutiny Panel's report. Its response to the 11 recommendations is set out below.

3.1.8   **Recommendation 1**
Northampton Borough Council establishes its own CSE Officer Group (to direct and co-ordinate all of the action the Council takes to detect, prevent and reduce child sexual exploitation).

Response

A CSE Officer Group – comprising representatives from Private Sector Housing, Homelessness, Community Safety, Taxi Licensing, Neighbourhood Wardens, Environmental Protection and CCTV – has now been established and will meet quarterly to direct and co-ordinate all of the action that the Council takes to tackle child sexual exploitation in the borough. Northampton Partnership Homes will attend the Group as and when required.

3.1.9   **Recommendation 2**
Northampton Borough Council and Northampton Partnership Homes undertake a systematic review of all public spaces within their control to ensure that those spaces are made as safe as possible.

Response

Using an intelligence-led, targeted approach, the Council and Northampton Partnership Homes will review and risk assess all public spaces within their control – starting with those that the RISE Team has identified as posing the biggest risk – and develop and implement an action plan to make them as safe as possible.

3.1.10   **Recommendation 3**
Officers of Northampton Borough Council meet with the Service Manager of the RISE Team on a quarterly basis to plan a programme of joint operations in Northampton in order to detect, prevent and raise awareness of CSE.

Response

Although the Service Manager of the RISE Team is aware that he can always rely on Northampton Borough Council to support joint operations, everyone recognises the benefits of regular liaison, sharing information and pooling resources. If necessary, the frequency of the meetings will be adjusted.

3.1.11   **Recommendation 4**
Officers of Northampton Borough Council work with Northamptonshire County Council's E-Safety Officer and the RISE Team to explore ways in which the Borough Council's website can be used to promote safe internet use by children and young people, and to publicise the services and information portals where young people can receive information and support.

Response

Although Northamptonshire County Council's website contains advice and information about cyber-bullying and online safety, this is targeted at parents and professionals. Work is ongoing to develop the content of Northampton Borough Council's new website; this will include advice on safe internet use and where children and young people can access information and support.

3.1.12 **Recommendation 5**
Northampton Borough Council recommends to Northamptonshire County Council's Director of Education Services that healthy relationships and sex education are included within the school curriculum.

Response

This has been done.

3.1.13 **Recommendation 6**
All Members of Northampton Borough Council are issued with a copy of the LGA toolkit, "Tackling CSE – A resource pack for Councillors" and the NSPCC's "Solution Focused Practice Toolkit – Helping Professionals use the approach when dealing with children and young people".

Response

Copies of these documents will be sent to all Members, as part of a CSE Information Pack, at the beginning of November 2018.

3.1.14 **Recommendation 7**
All Members of Northampton Borough Council should take positive steps (as Ward Councillors and School Governors) to persuade the all the borough's secondary and academies to show the short video, "_Kayleigh's Love Story_" to their students.

Response

'Kayleigh's Love Story' is a warning to young people, both girls and boys, about the dangers of speaking to people they don't know online. The 5-minute film highlights just how quick and easy it can be for children to be groomed online without them, or those around them, knowing it is happening. Its purpose is to protect children.

Details of the film will be sent to all Members, as part of a CSE Information Pack, at the beginning of November 2018.

3.1.15 **Recommendation 8**
All Officers and Members of Northampton Borough Council receive training on how to recognise the signs of CSE and how they should report it.

Response

Using a mixture of online and face-to-face training, we will ensure that everyone:

- Has an awareness of the background to child sexual exploitation, including definitions, the key legislation and guidance and research findings;
- Understands the risk assessment process;
- Knows the categories of risk, and what vulnerability factors to look for when undertaking an assessment; and
- Has a basic knowledge of the responsibilities of the key agencies involved in helping children that are being, or at risk of being, sexually exploited.

3.1.16 **Recommendation 9**
The Chief Executive of Northampton Partnership Homes is asked to ensure that all of its Officers and relevant Board Members receive training on how to recognise the signs of CSE and how they should report it.

Response

Northampton Partnership Homes ensures that all of its Officers receive training on safeguarding, which includes recognising the signs of CSE and how they should report it. Board Members have not received any CSE training.

3.1.17 **Recommendation 10**
Relevant Officers and Members of Northampton Borough Council undertake online training for practitioners on national best practice.

Response

The CSE Officer Group will determine the most appropriate way for Officers and Members to access, and learn from, national best practice. Examples of the type of best practice that might be disseminated include the following:

- Identifying the core characteristics and signs of children facing online abuse or grooming including behavioural changes, mental health concerns and changed attitudes to phone usage;

- Engaging all agencies, parents, carers and schools in a unified strategy to educate and support children in identifying CSE; and

- Sharing lessons and practical examples of multi-agency strategies that have proved successful in combating CSE.

3.1.18 **Recommendation 11**
Northampton Borough Council actively encourages and hosts a series of briefings and training sessions for community groups in the borough (including community centres and youth groups), in order to raise awareness of how to recognise the signs of CSE and how to report it.

Response

Guided by the RISE Team, the Community Safety & Engagement Manager will consult with community groups and youth groups on their appetite for receiving briefings and training on CSE and how to recognise the signs and report it. Local Ward Members will be invited to attend those sessions.

3.2   Choices (Options)

3.2.1   Cabinet could choose not to adopt any of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel's recommendations.

3.2.2   Cabinet could choose to adopt some of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel's recommendations.

3.2.3   Cabinet could choose to adopt all of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel's recommendations. This is the preferred option.

4. Implications (including financial implications)

4.1   Policy

4.1.1   The action that the Council is proposing to take is in line with Council policy and reflects the priorities in the Corporate Plan 2016-20.

4.2   Resources and Risk

4.2.1   Implementation of the recommendations in the Overview & Scrutiny Panel's report will be met from each Service's existing resources.

4.3   Legal

4.3.1   There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

4.4   Equality and Health

4.4.1   Implementation of the recommendations will have a positive impact on people with protected characteristics.

4.4.2   A Community Impact Assessment was completed as part of the Overview and Scrutiny process, and this has been updated to take into account the Overview and Scrutiny Panel's recommendations.

4.5   Consultees (Internal and External)

4.5.1   The Panel took evidence from a wide range of Stakeholders and Councillors from Northampton Borough Council and Northamptonshire County Council:

Internal expert advisors

- Leader of the Council, NBC
- Cabinet Member for Community Safety, NBC
- Director of Customers and Communities, NBC
- Environmental Health and Licensing Manager, NBC
- Chair of the Community Safety Partnership
- Service Manager, Anti-Social Behaviour Unit

External expert advisors

- Head of Protecting Vulnerable Persons, Northamptonshire Police
- Service Manager, RISE Team
- Senior Manager, Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children's Board
- Director, Education Services, NCC
- Representative, Children's Rights' Group, Corporate Parenting Board
- Chief Officer, Northamptonshire Victim Support
- Cabinet Member for Adult Services, NCC
- Cabinet Member for Children's Services, NCC

- Chair, Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board
- Service Manager, Barnardo's
- Service Manager, Save the Children
- Chief Officer, Service Six
- Chief Officer, Lowdowne Centre
- Manager, Free to Talk Group
- Chief Officer, Rape and Crisis Centre
- Chief Executive, Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH)
- Chief Officer, Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

4.6 How the Proposals deliver Priority Outcomes

4.6.1 Implementation of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel's recommendations will help meet the following priority in the Corporate Plan:

- **Safer Communities**: It will help people to feel safe and secure by improving people's awareness of the signs of Child Sexual Exploitation and taking positive, joined-up action to tackle and prevent it.

Appendices

None

Background Papers

Overview & Scrutiny Panel Report on Child Sexual Exploitation (Pre-Decision Scrutiny) May 2017

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